LEADING CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE ESTABLISHED

CHURCH THROUGH PREACHING: SELECT DISCOURSES

FROM THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF JESUS

IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

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A Thesis

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by

Andrew Charles Stucker

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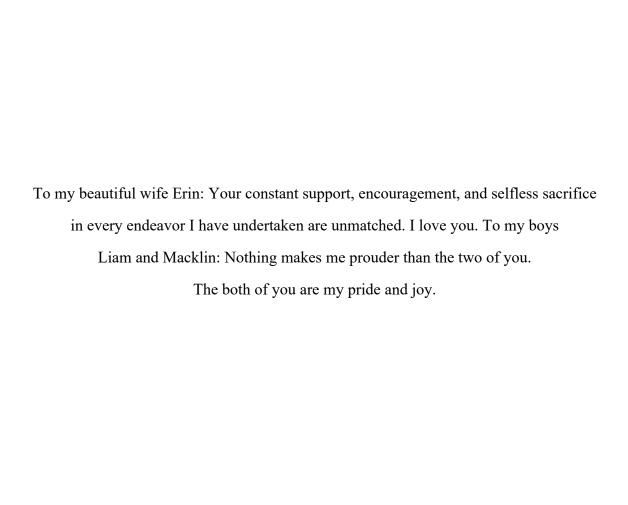
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To my beautiful wife Erin: Your constant support, encouragement, and selfless sacrifice

in every endeavor I have undertaken are unmatched. I love you. To my boys

Liam and Macklin: Nothing makes me prouder than the two of you.

The both of you are my pride and joy.

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PREFACE

This thesis would not have been possible without the encouragement and support of numerous people. First, I need to say thank you to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for the opportunity to pursue this degree. I also need to thank Dr. Irving for his constant encouragement as my faculty supervisor. He was a tremendous help in completing this thesis, and I am grateful for the amount of time he spent reading and editing even while on his sabbatical.

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<div align="right">Andrew Stucker</div>

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Attempts to understand organizational culture and define this elusive term are made time and again. This is partly because people and organizations recognize the need for healthy and dynamic cultures. To help create healthy organizational cultures, definitions are created and recreated, hoping to provide the most precise answer possible. Some have defined culture as two-tiered, identifying both visible and invisible organizational cultures. For example, John Kotter and James Heskett say, "At the deeper and less visible level, culture refers to values that are shared by the people in a group and that tend to persist over time . . . at the more visible level, culture represents the behavior patterns or style of an organization that new employees are automatically encouraged to follow by their fellow employees."[1] Others have defined culture as a set of espoused values, articulating culture as "the unique expression of an organization's shared values and beliefs."[2]

Organizational culture is also often defined by how the organization functions. Some experts say culture is "the beliefs, values, and meanings used by members of an organization to grasp how the organization's uniqueness originates, evolves, and operates."[3] Edgar Schein provides an overview of twelve different definitions of organizational culture over time and provides a succinct and all-encompassing definition

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[1] John Kotter and James Heskett, *Corporate Culture and Performance* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 4.

[2] Aubrey Malphurs, *Look Before You Lead: How to Discern and Shape Your Church Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 20.

[3] Majken Schultz, *On Studying Organizational Cultures: Diagnosis and Understanding* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 5.

of culture, saying, "The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group . . . this accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness."[4]

Despite the complex and numerous definitions of culture provided over decades of research, organizations and churches have discovered how critical it is to possess a healthy organizational culture. Some experts even deem organizational health the most critical measure of an organization's success. Patrick Lencioni says that once organizational health is appropriately understood, "It will surpass all other business disciplines as the greatest opportunity for improvement and competitive advantage."[5] Peter Drucker, the famed management consultant, is credited with coining the axiom, "Culture eats strategy for lunch."[6] Christian authors Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro speak similarly to the church's organizational culture: "Culture is the most important societal reality in your church. Though invisible to the untrained eye, its power is undeniable. Culture gives color and flavor to everything your church is and does."[7] Since culture is critical to organizational health, leaders must know how to reshape established organizational cultures. This is especially true of churches and particularly Southern Baptist churches.

Data suggests many Southern Baptist churches have a culture problem. Year after year, Southern Baptists have been shocked by the downward trends in evangelism

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[4] Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), 6.

[5] Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 4.

[6] No exact citation can be found originating this phrase with Drucker; however, the point that culture beats the best organizational strategies is made by multiple management and organizational consultants. For example, see Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 10.

[7] Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro, *Culture Shift: Transforming Your Church from the Inside Out* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 3.

and baptisms. Southern Baptists experienced enormous growth for decades, followed by a statistical plateau for several years. The numerical decline has been evident for more than a decade now.[8] For nearly twenty years, the Southern Baptist Convention has witnessed "the longest decline in baptisms in its history."[9] Charles Kelley, former president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and author of *Fuel the Fire*, says,

> The SBC received its remarkable growth by doing what no other American church family had ever succeeded in doing on so large a scale—engaging completely autonomous congregations in a deeply rooted and broadly-based strategic plan that combined intentional evangelism and comprehensive discipleship as the twin focal points of normal congregational life.[10]

In other words, the Southern Baptist Convention had created a culture of evangelism within its cooperating churches, which propelled its evangelistic growth. However, Kelley says, "Time passed, and with the passage of time came change. With change came a lessening of Southern Baptist statistical greatness."[11]

This is true not only of Southern Baptist churches but also of churches in all American denominations. George Hawley, author of *Demography, Culture, and the Decline of America's Denominations*, notes, "Over time we see a significant increase in the percentage of the population that never attends religious services. In fact, between 1972 and 2014, this percentage nearly tripled, increasing from less than 10 percent to more than 26 percent."[12] Hawley points out that Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Episcopalians continue to experience steady declines in their churches, and some

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[8] Charles Kelley, *Fuel the Fire: Lessons from the History of Southern Baptist Evangelism*, ed. Paige Patterson (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 5.

[9] Kelley, *Fuel the Fire*, 5.

[10] Kelley, *Fuel the Fire*, 5.

[11] Kelley, *Fuel the Fire*, 5.

[12] George Hawley, *Demography, Culture, and the Decline of America's Denominations* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 9.

denominations, particularly Methodism, will need to find a way to turn this around by 2030, or turn around in the United States will be impossible.[13] Hawley concludes that this will not only be true of Methodism, but "the reality is that a massive number of churches—both mainline and evangelical—are going to close their doors for the last time in the coming decade."[14]

The unfortunate conclusion to be made from the current decline in Southern Baptist churches and their sister denominations is that church cultures no longer promote and advance evangelism as a congregational priority. The American church-at-large appears to have done precisely what Edgar Schein describes. Where once existed a set of values and behavioral norms that guided churches and congregations, those values are now taken for granted as underlying assumptions and have dropped out of awareness.[15] As the primary leaders and communicators in the church, pastors need to understand how to reshape established organizational cultures so their churches can realize an increase in evangelistic effectiveness.

Church leaders are not without hope, though. Throughout the New Testament, Jesus consistently reshaped the established religious culture around him. Therefore, this thesis will examine select discourses from the teaching ministry of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke and demonstrate how pastors can reshape church culture by providing direct instruction to the congregation, confronting the barriers to healthy church culture, and communicating high expectations that align with the mission of the church.

Familiarity with the Literature

How can organizational culture be changed, especially when the culture of an organization is well-established? Within current research, little has been written

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[13] Hawley, *Demography, Culture, and the Decline*, 158.

[14] Hawley, *Demography, Culture, and the Decline*, 200.

[15] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 6.

describing how leaders can reshape cultures through communication; even less research has been focused on how church leaders can reshape cultures through preaching.

The following survey of pertinent literature is separated into three categories. The first category examines research detailing organizational health and culture from a secular point of view. These works offer a foundation for the organizational culture conversation; they provide definitions of culture, describe how culture is established within an organization, and detail how leaders can revive established cultures. The second category examines literature describing organizational health within the church. While secular works are beneficial to explore and understand, churches operate very differently from secular businesses. Many works detailing church organizational culture offer insights similar to those made by secular organizational health specialists, but they tailor their research to the church. Lastly, because this thesis focuses on reshaping evangelistic culture within the established church, it is also vital to review literature pertaining to healthy evangelism practices in the local church. These works describe how to mobilize members for evangelism and see evangelistic renewal take place.

**Organizational Culture from
a Secular Perspective**

Edgar Schein authored *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, which offers a thorough introduction into the organizational culture and health conversation.[16] There are a variety of definitions for organizational culture; Schein distills decades of research on the subject into one overarching statement that defines organizational culture. He provides leaders with information about how culture is developed and embedded in the life of an organization over time; he details how leaders can assess their culture and plan necessary change; and he offers a model of change management. Throughout the book, Schein provides case studies as real-life illustrations supporting his research.

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[16] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2017).

Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn have co-authored *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*.[17] Cameron and Quinn describe four significant organizational cultures: market culture, adhocracy culture, clan culture, and hierarchy culture. They provide a framework leaders can use to identify their organizational culture, teach leaders what skills they will need to transform the culture, and teach how each of the four cultures can be changed over time.

Laurie Lewis is the author of *Organizational Change: Creating Change through Strategic Communication*.[18] Lewis argues that the key to organizational change is effective communication with the organization's stakeholders. Lewis describes various stakeholder identities and how each identity responds to change differently. She then offers five communication strategies to target specific groups of stakeholders in order to bring about cultural change. Most notably, Lewis synthesizes a vast array of organizational health material, particularly in the field of communication, and uses these resources to support her claims.

Stephen Denning has authored *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action through Narrative*.[19] Denning theorizes that the traditional model of communicating a message, which follows the pattern of defining the problem, analyzing the problem, and recommending a solution, does not work in communicating for change and only makes situations more complicated. Instead, Denning argues that successful leaders effect change by gaining the listener's attention, stimulating their desire to change, and reinforcing that desire with reasons. Within this framework, Denning also offers six "key enablers," which allow the language of leadership to work.

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[17] Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

[18] Laurie Lewis, *Organizational Change: Creating Change through Strategic Communication* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

[19] Stephen Denning, *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action through Narrative* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007).

Throughout the book, Denning provides examples of how this approach has been effective in real-world events.

Lastly, John Kotter is the author of *Leading Change*.[20] Kotter has become ubiquitous in organizational health and culture conversations. While the book does not explicitly discuss organizational culture, Kotter outlines his eight-step change process that leaders can follow to bring about needed change in established organizations. His eight-step process has become foundational for many other experts in change management and organizational cultural renewal. Although Kotter's eight steps are quite broad and far-reaching, they have become commonplace in organizational health circles and are essential to evaluate.

Organizational Culture from an Ecclesiological Perspective

Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro co-authored the book *Culture Shift: Transforming Your Church from the Inside Out*.[21] Lewis and Cordeiro provide a practical resource to help pastors identify and change their church culture. They do this by asking questions to help pastors identify their church's "totems," or values. The church's totems are those values that anchor the church and give identity to the congregation. Lewis and Cordeiro then discuss how pastors can instill new values over time using a four-step process. Both Lewis and Cordeiro pastor churches that have used this model and provide personal examples to show how their church cultures were transformed.

Much like John Kotter has become ubiquitous in organizational health circles, Aubrey Malphurs has become just as prominent in conversations about church health and culture. He has authored *Look Before You Lead: How to Discern and Shape Your Church*

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[20] John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Brighton, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012).

[21] Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift* (2005).

Culture.[22] In this book, he describes how pastors discover their church's culture and how healthy organizational culture leads to the accomplishment of the church's mission and vision. Malphurs provides several discourses that others writing in the field do not. Not only does he help leaders understand and identify their church culture, but he also helps position pastors and churches for success by helping leaders determine their own personal culture. More importantly, Malphurs recognizes that changing an established church culture requires a method that is different from building a culture from the ground up. He offers one chapter for church planters trying to create a new church culture and offers three chapters of insight for pastors shepherding existing churches.

Lastly, Mark Dever is the author of *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*.[23] Dever outlines nine principles that create a healthy church culture and argues that healthy churches will strive to meet each benchmark elucidated in the book. While his book is not a practical resource for shaping or altering church culture in the most immediate terms, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* helps demonstrate the spiritual principles needed to create a healthy organizational culture and structure within the church.

Works on Cultivating Evangelistic Culture within the Church

Charles Kelley has written extensively about Southern Baptist evangelism practices over the last several decades in his work *Fuel the Fire: Lessons from the History of Southern Baptist Evangelism*.[24] In this book, Kelley outlines five lessons learned from previous SBC evangelism strategies and explains how those strategies can be adapted for a new day.

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[22] Malphurs, *Look before You Lead* (2013).

[23] Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013).

[24] Kelley, *Fuel the Fire* (2018).

Matt Queen is the author of *Mobilize to Evangelize: The Pastor and Effective Congregational Evangelism*.[25] Queen's book is a practical resource offering details from his own church experience. Queen helps pastors assess how their congregations conceive, practice, and perceive evangelism within the church.

Finally, Alvin Reid has authored *Revitalize Your Church through Gospel Recovery*.[26] Reid's book is designed for churches that have stagnated or declined and have an unhealthy evangelistic culture. Reid argues that for a church to turn around and become healthy, it must wholeheartedly embrace the Great Commission.

Void in the Literature

Much has been written on changing organizational culture by defining mission, vision, and values. Other authors discuss at length the need for proper staff alignment and church governance.[27] Additional authors have offered solutions specifically addressing intentional discipleship as an organizational change tool.[28] Other research has also been done regarding preaching as a cultural formation tool. For example, Jason Esposito has written an extensive thesis on this subject.[29] Esposito has examined how preaching leads to cultural transformation and developed nine communication strategies that help shape a

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[25] Matt Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize: The Pastor and Effective Congregational Evangelism* (Fort Worth, TX: Seminary Hill Press, 2018).

[26] Alvin Reid, *Revitalize Your Church through Gospel Recovery* (Wake Forest, NC: Gospel Advance Books, 2013).

[27] For example, see Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*, 173-79. Dever argues that there exist three types of church models. These include liberal, seeker sensitive, and traditional. Dever says that each of these models was created with the motive of producing more successful evangelism. Dever explains that while the motive is noble, a recovery of a biblical model is needed, and he argues for a model of church that focuses upon the internal structure and workings of the church.

[28] See Robby Gallaty and Chris Sawin's book, *Replicate: How to Create a Culture of Disciple-Making Right Where You Are* (Chicago: Moody, 2020). Gallaty and Swain argue that what has been missing in church cultures for too long is a robust discipleship model (23-29). In their book they offer five marks of healthy disciple making churches and argue discipleship is what ultimately turns dying churches around (237-84).

[29] Jason Esposito, "Preaching as a Cultural Formation Tool" (DMin thesis, Bethel Seminary, 2015).

church's culture. While his thesis focuses on the nature of preaching, it does not focus on the nature of Jesus's preaching but rather the Hebrew understanding of learning and rabbinic discipleship.

Andrew Hebert has written about culture creation modeled after the ministry of Jesus in his thesis.[30] Hebert focuses exclusively on table fellowship and the meal motifs found throughout Luke and Acts and analyzes how Jesus and his disciples used these intimate moments to shape culture. While Hebert does examine a ministry model used by Jesus, he does not focus specifically on how Jesus preached to shape culture. While all of the above concepts are necessary and have their place in shaping ecclesiological culture, little material exists that helps pastors effectively change established church cultures by modeling the preaching ministry of Jesus. Some secular authors, such as Stephen Denning and Laurie Lewis, address communication as the key factor in cultural change, but their works are targeted primarily at CEOs and corporate leaders; they do not research preaching as a communication method. While their models could be adapted for use in the church, their work is not primarily intended to be used by pastors, nor is crafting a narrative or stakeholder communication the goal of preaching.

Ultimately, the pulpit drives the church. What pastors communicate from the pulpit shapes the beliefs and attitudes of the congregation. Therefore, there needs to be an examination of how pastors can preach to bring about cultural change, specifically, how preaching can renew an evangelistic culture within the church.

Thesis

Churches today are facing an evangelism crisis. Research indicates this is due to unhealthy church cultures that do not prioritize evangelism, leaving churches to struggle to engage the world around them. Considering the lack of evangelistic

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[30] Andrew Hebert, "Shaping Church Culture: Table Fellowship and Teaching in Luke-Acts" (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).

organizational culture found in churches today, research is needed into examining how pastors can preach to reshape an established church culture into a culture that is more evangelistically focused. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus used teaching and preaching as a primary means of reshaping the established religious culture around him. In Luke 11:1-13, Jesus taught his disciples and reshaped their cultural religious understanding of prayer. In Luke 11:37-54, Jesus taught about rightly obeying the law by confronting the Pharisees' religious cultural beliefs concerning ceremonial washing and other extra-biblical practices. Finally, while teaching in Luke 14:25-35, Jesus taught his followers what it meant to truly be a disciple by setting high expectations that aligned with his mission, thereby changing their established understanding of discipleship.

This thesis contends that pastors can learn from Luke's Gospel the practical ways in which Jesus challenged the established cultural practices of his disciples through his preaching and that pastors today should follow the same patterns to reshape organizational culture in their churches. Jesus effected this change through his teaching and preaching by using direct instruction, confronting established cultural values, and setting high expectations aligned with God's mission.

Rationale

Before addressing how Jesus preached to transform religious culture, it is necessary to provide the rationale for focusing on the Gospel of Luke and focusing on evangelism in particular.

Focus on the Gospel of Luke

The primary reason for the use of the Gospel of Luke is theological and comes from examining the purpose of Luke's Gospel. When looking at the Gospel as a whole, especially in connection with the book of Acts, Luke "seeks to show that the coming of

Jesus Christ the Son of God, launched the long-promised new movement of God."[31] Luke understood his first-century audience and recognized that a new movement of God, or a reshaping of old religious norms, would be under-appreciated if not outright rejected by the established religious community. Therefore, "Luke explains that this seemingly new movement is actually rooted in old promises and in a design that God promised and now has executed through Jesus, the sent promised one of God."[32] Ultimately, Luke tells the story of God working through Jesus to bring about a new perspective from an old-covenant understanding of religious devotion.

Furthermore, the teaching ministry of Jesus plays a primary role in Luke's Gospel, and it is through his teaching that Jesus reshapes longstanding religious understandings of what it means to follow God. The discourses selected for this thesis are examined because they are central to Jesus bringing about the long-promised new movement of God and because of specific events surrounding these discourses. For example, in his discourse on prayer in Luke 11:1-13, Jesus instructs his disciples concerning the practice and nature of prayer because they specifically requested, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1).[33] Although the discourse itself does not advance Jesus's overall mission, it is an example of Jesus using direct teaching to change the hearts and minds of his listeners.

Jesus's confrontation with the Pharisees in Luke 11:37-54 is necessary to bring about the new promised era prophesied in the Old Testament. In this discourse, Jesus confronts the established ideas of what it means to be justified before God—it is not ceremonial washing and cleaning that makes one truly pure. Jesus could not have

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[31] Darrell Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 29.

[32] Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, 29.

[33] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the *English Standard Version*.

established a new and better understanding of holiness without confronting these incorrect assumptions.

Finally, in Luke 14:25-35, Jesus teaches his followers about the true meaning of discipleship. Jesus sets high expectations for his disciples that are meant to prepare them for the cost of following him. Without outlining the clear expectations Jesus had for his disciples, it is likely they would have continued to expect the Messiah to be some kind of warrior-king and followed him thusly. These three discourses fall in line with the greater purpose of Luke's Gospel but also help demonstrate how Jesus reshaped the behavior, values, and beliefs of his followers.[34]

Focus on Evangelism

Finally, this thesis will use evangelism as an ongoing illustration of how a new culture can be embedded within an established organization. The passages that are examined in Luke's Gospel are not explicitly related to evangelism but offer insight into how Jesus attempted to change established cultural understandings of those who listened to his instruction. This thesis shows a way that pastors and church leaders can use the teaching methods of Jesus to change an existing culture and embed a new one within their congregations. The methods examined in this thesis could be used to embed a host of different cultures, not only an evangelistic one. For example, readers of this thesis could model Jesus's preaching and teaching and embed a culture of prayer or discipleship into their church. However, the purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how pastors and church leaders could model Jesus's teaching and preaching to embed an evangelistic

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[34] Malphurs defines culture as "the unique expression of an organization's shared values and beliefs," and these values and beliefs give way to behavior. Malphurs, *Look Before you Lead*, 19. More specifically, Malphurs says that behavior is "all that you would see, hear, and feel" as you first encounter an organization (21). Values are beliefs that the church acts upon, and beliefs are "convictions or opinions that a person holds to be true about the organization and its world as based on limited proof." Malphurs concludes that beliefs are the core of any organizational culture. To reshape behaviors and values, beliefs must be reshaped first, which is what Jesus does in these three separate discourses. Jesus fundamentally shifts what his followers believe, which in turn produces a different set of values and behavior.

culture in a church. Many Southern Baptist churches are facing an evangelism crisis due in large part to issues with organizational culture; the pressing need is to combat this crisis by establishing an evangelistic culture in the church.

CHAPTER 2

LEADING CULTURAL CHANGE THROUGH
DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Jesus did not minister in a society that was void of culture. On the contrary,

Jesus was born into a particular cultural context.[1] Jesus was a first-century Jew living in

Palestine; the culture in which he ministered was influenced by Hellenism and Second

Temple Judaism.

Jesus understood that Hellenism was everywhere, and its expressions were

found "in Greek language and customs, in religious observance and custom, in the style

of coinage, in literary and theatrical conventions, as well as in a variety of philosophes."[2]

Jesus was forced to address Hellenism's secular and pagan worldview that had become so

pervasive in his contemporary setting. For example, Jesus rebuked pagan prayer

practices, telling his followers, "Do not keep babbling on like the pagans, for they think

they will be heard because of their many words" (Matt 6:3).[3]

Furthermore, Jesus was aware of the immense social upheavals of the first

century. Not only did he address pagan religious practices, but he also spoke about

specific political and social events surrounding Palestine. In Luke 13:1, some of those

listening to Jesus desired to hear his thoughts on Pilate's scandalous action of mingling

some Galileans' blood with their sacrifices. When answering them, Jesus also remarked

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[1] For helpful and exhaustive discussions about Jesus and his cultural context, see N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

[2] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 153.

[3] Another example is Jesus's conversation with the Pharisees about rendering unto to Caesar that which is Caesar's and rendering unto God that which is God's. This encounter begins with Jesus asking them to bring him a denarius to inspect and his recognition of the engraving of Caesar's image and the inscription upon the coin.

on the eighteen individuals who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them. Jesus was also embedded within the social customs of the day. He attended weddings (John 2:1-12) and funerals (John 11:34), spoke the native language of Aramaic (Matt 27:46; Mark 5:41), learned carpentry from his father (Mark 6:3), and would have grown up like many other children of the time (Luke 2:52).

Jesus was also entirely familiar with the religious expectations that flourished during the Second Temple period. He would have been aware of Jews' disdain for the Roman occupation of Israel, as well as the contemporary Jewish belief that the coming Messiah's primary task would be to liberate Israel through military action and reinstate her as the true people of God.[4] Jesus would have been familiar with the various Jewish sects of the day and their impact on Jewish customs, as is seen in his interactions with the Sadducees and Pharisees.

It is within this socio-religious context that Jesus shaped the ideas, convictions, and behaviors of his followers. From the broader societal culture, Jesus formed a subculture within his band of disciples. Jesus did not try to protect the culture of his day; rather, he focused on reshaping the religious culture and understandings that had become deeply ingrained in the minds of the people. As Andy Crouch rightly remarks, Jesus was not merely a preserver and guardian of culture but was instead a cultural shaper and creator: "Whenever Jesus touched part of Israel's cultural inheritance, he brought something new to it."[5]

Defining Culture

Before addressing how Jesus reshaped the established religious culture around him, a definition of culture must be provided. As noted, culture does not merely describe

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[4] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 320.

[5] Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 137.

societal customs and norms. While culture can describe the customs found in all societies, it can also describe the customs and values of organizations and even individuals. Moreover, there is an interplay between various cultural realms. For example, Jesus lived within a societal culture affected by a host of factors, including time, language, and customs. Nevertheless, Jesus also created an organizational or team culture, which in some ways would mimic the societal culture but in other ways would run contrary to the macro-culture.

Specific organizations, like specific societies, will possess unique types of culture. For example, this thesis argues that churches should strive to create a specific kind of culture, namely an evangelistic one. Therefore, definitions must be provided for societal, organizational, and evangelistic culture.

Societal Culture

Culture is a problematic term to define. Culture is said to be "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language."[6] As early as 1952, A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn identified 134 definitions of culture.[7] Edward Tylor provided one of the earliest definitions in his 1871 work, *Primitive Culture*. Tylor defined culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[8] As the nineteenth century advanced, two viewpoints emerged: the idea that a plurality of cultures existed and the belief that cultures were the attempts of different societies to shape the human

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[6] Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Society and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 76.

[7] See A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, "Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions," *Journal of Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology* 47, no. 1 (1952): 559-63.

[8] Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom* (London: Bradbury Evans, 1871), 1.

spirit.[9] Kevin Vanhoozer notes that over time, the term culture "came to stand for all those institutions, practices, and objects that nurture the human spirit."[10] What becomes apparent when studying the variety of societal cultures that have existed is that "every part of life signifies something about the values and beliefs that shape culture."[11] In other words, definitions of societal culture attempt to explain the values, convictions, and behaviors that make up a society. These characteristics change from context to context because societies have different beliefs about what is beneficial to human life. Matthew Arnold, the nineteenth-century poet and societal critic, made the same observation when he said culture is "the pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world."[12] All societies, regardless of time and place, desire to bring about the best for their people and, therefore, attempt to shape people's values, convictions, and behaviors to cultivate human flourishing. Over time, these values, convictions, and behaviors become deeply ingrained in society as they are implicitly understood and lived out. Therefore, this thesis defines societal culture as the implicitly and collectively understood values, convictions, and behaviors embedded in society that ideally exist to cultivate human flourishing.

Organizational Culture

Organizations exist within broader societal cultures and therefore do not exist apart from the social norms and customs of a particular society. Edgar Schein says,

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[9] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Charles A. Anderson, and Michael J. Sleasman, *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Them* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 24.

[10] Vanhoozer, Anderson, and Sleasman, *Everyday Theology*, 24.

[11] Vanhoozer, Anderson, and Sleasman, *Everyday Theology*, 24.

[12] Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. Samuel Lipman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 5.

"Organizational cultures are nested in the broader macro cultures."[13] According to Schein, this means "at the core of every culture are assumptions about the proper way for individuals to relate to each other to make the group feel safe, comfortable, and productive."[14] When broader societal norms ingrained throughout an individual's life are not widely shared within an organization, organizations experience anarchy and anomie.[15]

However, just as societal cultures want to flourish, so do organizational cultures. Therefore, an organization may adopt a different set of norms and behaviors distinct from the macro-culture to be able to accomplish its intended mission. For example, many sociologists classify the United States as an individualistic society, meaning more emphasis is placed "on personal accomplishment . . . and a high premium is placed on personal ambition while intimacy and love are defined in very personal terms."[16] However, a church existing within the United States' broader societal culture may read passages like Acts 2:44-45 and 2 Corinthians 8:12-14 and decide to emphasize voluntary collectivism rather than individualism.

An organization adopts its own norms and behaviors not because it deems the macro-culture's norms incorrect, but because a different set of norms will allow the organization to flourish within the broader societal culture. Consequently, organizations can be viewed as microcosms of the societal culture. Organizations do not exist outside of the society in which they are rooted, but at the same time may have a different set of shared assumptions about what makes life flourish. Therefore, organizational culture can be defined as the collective values, convictions, and behaviors that function as the

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[13] Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), 103.

[14] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 100.

[15] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 100.

[16] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 83-84.

organization's shared worldview and exist to allow life within the organization to flourish.

Evangelistic Culture

If organizations exist as microcosms of the macro-culture, each organization may have its own type of culture as well. Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn came to this conclusion and identified four cultural types as well as "an instrument that allows you to diagnose the dominant orientation of your own organization."[17] Cameron and Quinn assert that each of the cultural types "represent opposite or competing assumptions" about what makes an organization healthy and thriving.[18] For example, companies focusing on new and emerging technology will likely have cultures described as adaptable and innovative, while organizations such as government entities would likely have cultures described as stable and predictable. This does not mean that one cultural type is better than another, but each organization will have competing values about what they believe will best allow the organization to advance its mission.

Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro come to the same conclusion about churches in their book *Culture Shift*.[19] Lewis and Cordeiro say every church has totems that make up a church's culture. Because every church is distinct from another, each church will have different totems, or values, that anchor the church and provide the congregation with an identity. Lewis and Cordeiro say church leaders must identify a church's totems and know how to instill new values over time if cultural change is

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[17] Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 34. Cameron and Quinn identify the four cultural types: the hierarchy culture, the market culture, the adhocracy culture, and the clan culture. Each has competing values and, as such, must be led and changed differently. Furthermore, Cameron and Quinn do not argue that one cultural type is better than another; instead, each type of culture will work best for different organizations.

[18] Cameron and Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, 25.

[19] Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro, *Culture Shift: Transforming Your Church from the Inside Out* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 3.

desired. Like the competing values found in secular companies, churches also have competing values. Again, this does not make one church wrong and another right, but it does mean every church will elevate and prioritize different values to accomplish its mission. For example, a church with a disciple-making culture may elevate and prioritize exegetical preaching as a fundamental value. In contrast, a church with a seeker-sensitive culture may elevate and prioritize community engagement as a fundamental value.

While there are numerous cultural distinctives a congregation can adopt, this thesis attempts to persuade pastors and church leaders to reshape their church's evangelistic culture. Evangelistic culture is a particular *type* of organizational or congregational culture. Evangelistic culture is defined as a congregation's mutually agreed-upon values, convictions, and behaviors that promote evangelism as the means by which the gospel message is shared in order to cultivate human flourishing.

Jesus and Changing Organizational Culture

Jesus did not live and minister within a cultural vacuum. Jesus had to contend with the societal and cultural forces at play, but he also sought to engrain values, convictions, and behaviors within his followers that sometimes ran contrary to the religious culture. There is no doubt that Jesus shaped and reshaped the culture around him. The question is, how did Jesus go about reshaping his religious culture?

When looking at the portrayals of Jesus in the Gospels, one finds numerous examples and means of culture creation exhorted by today's organizational culture experts. For example, John Kotter says one essential element of creating cultural change is empowering people for broad-based action.[20] Likewise, Jesus empowered his followers in Luke 9 when he "gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases" (9:1). With this empowerment, the disciples departed and "went through

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[20] John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Brighton, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 105.

villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere" (9:6) and excitedly returned to Jesus and "told him all they had done" (9:10). Another example of Jesus using culture creation methods is his selection of a particular set of followers in Luke 6. Luke describes Jesus going out to the mountain to pray: "And all night he continued in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles" (6:12-13). Edgar Schein refers to this as the process of selecting, promoting, and excommunicating the right people.[21] Schein says, "One of the subtlest yet most potent ways through which leader values get embedded and perpetuated is the process of selecting new members."[22] Many other examples exist, but the point is that the Gospel writers consistently portray Jesus as shaping his religious culture.[23]

Jesus as Teacher

Despite the plethora of culture creation strategies one could identify Jesus using, one of the most prominent ways Jesus reshaped the established religious culture around him was through teaching. Andy Crouch notes, "All four gospel writers stress Jesus' innovative teaching."[24] For instance, Mark regularly portrays the crowds as astonished by Jesus's teaching because he taught them as one with authority and not as the scribes. In Luke's Gospel, "Jesus takes a commonplace rabbinic story of an injured

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[21] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 183.

[22] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 195.

[23] Other examples include Jesus's use of storytelling or parables. Luke's Gospel contains twenty-four parables of Jesus, the most of any other Gospel, eighteen of which are unique to Luke. Jesus's use of storytelling falls in line with Stephen Denning's theory that for a message to be meaningful to its listeners, "the speaker needs to clear the way and create an open space for the audience so that their minds can consider something different." Denning explicitly says this can be done through storytelling. Stephen Denning, *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action through Narrative* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 149-52. Another example would be Jesus driving out the money changers in the temple in Luke 19. Schein says, "When an organization faces a crisis, how leaders and others deal with it reveals important underlying assumptions and often creates new norms, values, and working procedures." Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 190. Jesus's encounter with the money changers certainly instilled new norms and values in his followers' minds regarding the purposes of God and the temple.

[24] Crouch, *Culture Making*, 137.

man on the road to Jericho being ignored by religious leaders, but creatively retells it with a Samaritan, rather than an ordinary pious Jew, in the starring role."[25]

Jesus's teaching is featured prominently in the Gospel of Luke. In his thesis on shaping culture, Andrew Hebert notes that no less than ten major teaching discourses are found in Luke's Gospel.[26] Through teaching, Jesus begins to reshape his listeners' understanding of what it means to know and be right with God. It could be argued that teaching was the primary means by which Jesus performed all his culture reshaping. Teaching was his primary method because Jesus primarily came as a preacher-teacher and was viewed as such by his first-century audience. Walter Elwell and Robert Yarbrough note that Jesus

> was not a researcher and writer who sat down and wrote out systematic treatises on theology. We have no books written by Jesus, as we do Plato, Aristotle, and Philo. Thus what we do have of Jesus's teachings is taken from live situations where the needs of the audience, the moods and circumstances of the moment, and Jesus's specific intentions supplied the shape that his message took.[27]

Like all communicators, this means Jesus was "constantly shifting focus to communicate most effectively" to accommodate his listeners and the changing dynamics of the moment.[28]

The teaching of Jesus is an essential culture-reshaping tool because Jesus was adept at "sharing fundamental assumptions with his audience" to help them "understand the theological principles he was trying to get across."[29] As mentioned, Jesus did not necessarily try to preserve a culture, but neither did he try to create something altogether

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[25] Crouch, *Culture Making*, 137.

[26] Andrew Hebert, "Shaping Church Culture: Table Fellowship and Teaching in Luke-Acts" (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 46.

[27] Walter Elwell and Robert Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 124.

[28] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 124.

[29] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 124.

foreign to his hearers. Jesus and his listeners were committed to the authority and veracity of the Old Testament. Jesus did not so much impart brand new information as he corrected misconceptions and breathed new life into a religious culture that had gone askew. Therefore, Jesus "knew how to take everyday words and use them in such a way that it took his hearers by surprise. His vocabulary in most settings was that of his audience, the common people, and he avoided the technical, theological jargon of rabbis."[30]

Also noteworthy is how Jesus used his teaching throughout the Gospel of Luke. Jesus taught privately and in public; he taught Jews and Gentiles; he used parables and direct instruction. Jesus straightforwardly reshaped his followers' ingrained religious concepts, understandings, and expectations through direct instruction. Therefore, this chapter focuses on Jesus's use of direct instruction to reshape his listeners' cultural-religious assumptions and apply those observations to reshaping church evangelistic culture today.

Direct Instruction and Teaching on Prayer

In Luke 11, Jesus had just prayed in a particular place when one of his disciples asked him, "Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples" (11:1). In response, Jesus took the opportunity to directly instruct his disciples on the nature and practice of prayer. In the twelve verses that follow, much of what Jesus taught was unexpected, especially considering their preconceived Jewish understanding of God, how he was to be addressed, and how he would respond to their prayers. Darrell Bock explains, "The outline Jesus gave came in three steps."[31] The first step, found in verses 1-4, stressed the need for the disciples to be dependent on God—not a God who was a

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[30] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 125.

[31] Darrell Bock, *Luke*, vol. 2, *9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 1045.

distant and unknowable deity but a benevolent and loving Father. The second step, found in verses 5-8, was a lesson exhorting the disciples to be bold, persistent, and aggressive in prayer. In this lesson, Jesus told them the story of a friend going to a neighbor at midnight to ask for bread. The third and final step, found in verses 9-13, was an instruction to the disciples to come to God the Father as a child, knowing that God wants to meet their needs eagerly and willingly. In each of these steps, Jesus began to reshape the cultural understanding of the disciples about prayer, providing them with lessons that allowed their relationship with God to flourish.

The Fatherhood of God

As he often does before a major transition in his Gospel, Luke begins this new account by introducing Jesus praying in a solitary place.[32] The disciples waited for Jesus to finish praying, and one disciple asked him to teach them how to pray. Bock highlights, "There may be a slight note of urgency in the request, since the word for teach is an aorist imperative (teach us now to pray)."[33] This sense of urgency may stem from the fact that "rabbinic disciples were known to request renowned rabbis to teach them prayers that would characterize and differentiate them from other rabbinic schools."[34] Joel Green recognizes that this is not the first time the disciples had asked to be distinguished from John's disciples. Green says, "That John's followers were known for certain practices is evident within the Lukan narrative (e.g., 5:33; cf. 7:33); these served as boundary markers distinguishing John's disciples from other sects within first-century Judaism."[35]

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[32] Robert Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: B&H, 1993), 323. For example, see also Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28.

[33] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1050.

[34] James Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 220.

[35] Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 292.

Since there was a strong desire for rabbinic disciples to distinguish themselves from followers of other religious teachers, Jesus responded to the disciples' request and taught them a way to pray that would uniquely identify them as his followers.[36] Instantly, from the opening of his model prayer, his way of praying made his disciples distinct from other religious devotees and the broader societal culture.

Jesus opened his prayer by addressing God as Father. This would have been somewhat shocking to the disciples, as "this direct, unadorned, even daring address is unique to Jesus, for Jews normally did not refer to God without adding the epithet 'heavenly.'"[37] In fact, "Jesus' use of *abba* was unique among Jewish rabbis, for no evidence has yet been found in the literature of Palestine of 'my Father' being used by individuals to address God."[38] The disciples and other Jews of the day would have been familiar with the Old Testament's demonstration of the fatherly love of God, but the idea of addressing him as Father would have been entirely foreign. Robert Stein makes this point when he says, "As a title for God, 'Father' is found only fifteen times in the entire Old Testament, and in none of these instances is God being addressed in prayer."[39] When God's fatherly character is attested to in the Old Testament, it is always in the context of his fatherhood of the nation and not the individual.[40]

Furthermore, this simple utterance of God as "Father" differed markedly from pagan prayer behaviors with which the disciples would likely have been familiar. Within pagan prayers, "the gods were also believed to be touchy about being addressed properly,

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[36] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 220.

[37] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 220.

[38] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 221.

[39] Stein, *Luke*, 323.

[40] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 220.

and one had to be careful not to offend them."[41] In pagan religion, the gods were said to have different functions and domains; to have them respond benevolently and correctly, one had to utter the right name, of which there could be many.[42] For example, such a prayer is seen in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*. Here, the character Lucius appeals to one of his gods:

> Blessed Queen of Heaven whether thou be the Dame Ceres which art the original and motherly nurse of all fruitful things in the earth . . . whether Thou be the celestial Venus, who, in the beginning of the world, didst couple together male and female with an engendered love . . . being now worshipped within the temples of the Isle of Paphos . . . or whether Thou be the sister of the god Phoebus who hast saved so many people by lightening and lessening with thy medicines the pangs of travail . . . or whether Thou be called terrible Proserpine by reason of the deadly howling's which Thou yieldest . . . Thee, I pray Thee to end my great travail and misery and raise up my fallen hopes, and deliver me from the wretched fortune which so long time pursued me.[43]

In stark contrast, Jesus demonstrated to his disciples that calling out to God as Father was sufficient. Jesus taught that this simple "address presupposes a close, intimate relationship between the disciple and God. It is to a caring, kind Father that Jesus' disciples can make their requests."[44] Jesus's reshaping of the disciples' understanding of God as a caring and kind Father would have come into conflict with the societal understandings of fatherhood as well.

Green makes the case that both Jesus and Luke had good reason to identify God as Father, not merely because it is true, but also because of the realities seen in Greco-Roman fatherhood. Green says that within this Greco-Roman system,

> a father had virtually unlimited authority over his children (and their children) as long as he lived. Would a newborn child be reared in the family? Sold? Exposed? Killed? Would the children be scourged? Pawned? Allowed or refused marriage or

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[41] David Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 461.

[42] Garland, *Luke*, 461.

[43] Stephen Gaselee, ed., *The Metamorphosis of Lucius Apuleius* (London: William Heinemann, 1922), 541-43.

[44] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1052.

divorce? The resolution of such issues and many others concerned with the well-being of even adult children was a father's prerogative.[45]

In presenting God as Father, Jesus taught the disciples how God should be viewed and in what sense he was Father. Jesus did not present God as an overbearing Father whose actions towards his children depended upon his changing moods or his children's faithfulness. Instead, God is presented in Luke's Gospel "as the Father who cares for his children and acts redemptively on their behalf."[46] Jesus's model prayer "is a conversation with a God with whom we have an intimate relationship. Prayer is to be as simple as a child making known his or her request to a parent, with no need for eloquence or pretense. In Luke, the image of the father is one of love, mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, in jubilation over recovery of a lost child."[47]

The Friendship of God

Jesus continued to teach his disciples about prayer and reshape their understanding of God by telling them a parable. In verses 5-8, Jesus told the simple story of a man who received an unexpected visitor at midnight and had nothing to feed him. Desperate to be a gracious host, he awakened his neighbor to audaciously ask for three loaves of bread. In Jesus's story, the neighbor initially refused the would-be host's request because it was late at night and because rummaging through the kitchen and unlocking the door would awaken his sleeping children. However, Jesus concluded by telling his listeners that because of the man's boldness, his neighbor would eventually relent, unlock the door, and give him the bread he requested. The parable makes one point: "God is approachable and should be approached often with confidence."[48]

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[45] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 291.

[46] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 291.

[47] Garland, *Luke*, 461.

[48] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1057.

James Edwards helpfully points out that the parable hinges on the indefinite subject, "who among you," in the original Greek; the effect of the construction is "to make the hearer (and reader) the fictional subject of the parable."[49] In other words, the reader is to see himself as the audacious host asking his neighbor for bread at a late hour. Jesus was telling his disciples—and by extension modern readers—how they should approach God in prayer.

The use of this parable to reshape the cultural understanding of the disciples was effective because of the well-known social constructs employed by Jesus. First, Bock notes that "in first-century Palestine, food was not as readily available as it is today. There were no evening shops, and bread was baked each day to meet the day's needs."[50] The would-be host was not asking his neighbor for much—only three loaves of bread— and only asked to be loaned the bread. The needy neighbor uses the word χρῆσόν (*kichrēmi*), which "means lending without interest, while 'δανείζω' (*daneizō*) is the usual term for the interest-bearing loan that is part of a more formal business deal."[51] In other words, "the host plans to pay back his groggy neighbor."[52]

Second, being a good host was also a cultural expectation at that time. The fourfold use of the term "friend" in the parable would have signaled a flood of social scripts and etiquette to play out in the minds of Jesus's listeners.[53] It was not just the friend who had the obligation to care for the late-night visitor; the community was also responsible to help. In the Greco-Roman culture familiar to the disciples, "to share

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[49] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 223.

[50] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1057.

[51] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 464.

[52] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1057.

[53] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 294-95.

friendship was to share honor."[54] Despite the late hour, the host was still obligated to feed his guest or face the shame of the community. In this parable, everyone's honor was at stake. The would-be host, the neighbor, and the entire community would be disgraced if unable to meet their cultural obligation to feed the late-night visitor. In fact, "the only action in this parable that could be construed as utterly shameless is refusing to grant the request and giving such inane excuses."[55]

Third, it is also worth noting that "the ancient house was basically a one-room affair, so waking the master of the house was literally to wake everyone else."[56] Banging on the door at this late hour almost certainly would have awoken the entire house. The precarious dilemma in which Jesus places this fictional character is stunning. To put it bluntly, Jesus asks the disciples, "Which of you has the nerve to wake up his neighbor— and his family—at midnight to ask for bread?"[57]

Jesus presents a fictional situation that is rife with tension. He describes a would-be host caught off guard, unable to perform his cultural duty, with only two last-resort options. He could bring shame on himself and his village by telling his guest he has nothing to serve him, or he could irreverently awaken his neighbor at midnight to demand help in meeting his obligation. "Jesus invites his disciples to envision a scene that encompasses all of vv 5-7: Can you imagine a friend who refuses to assist you in your undertaking to provide hospitality at the arrival of an unexpected friend? The answer to this question is, of course, No!"[58] In a culture with such a deeply ingrained sense of shame and honor, the neighbor's response—"Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything" (11:7)—is

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[54] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[55] Garland, *Luke*, 469.

[56] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1057.

[57] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1057.

[58] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 294.

"laughable in its absurdity."[59] The disciples and Luke's first readers would have known such a response from an individual in the community was inconceivable. Certainly, the neighbor would open his door and give the guest the required bread.

As Green says, "The punch line of Jesus' story comes in v 8, where he both admits that the scene he has envisaged is preposterous and outlines why the householder will arise from his sleep and assist his friend."[60] Jesus told his disciples the neighbor would eventually get up and help his friend because of his "impudence" (11:8). Likewise, the disciples too could approach God with the same level of shamelessness or boldness "because God is not offended by honest and urgent prayer. As the following section establishes, it is God's good pleasure to give good gifts to his children."[61] In other words, if a mere human is willing to entertain his friend's bold request, how much more will a fatherly God consider the bold requests of his children?

Some scholars, including Stein, argue that the phrase "because of his impudence" (11:8) means the neighbor will open the door because of the host's persistence.[62] However, nothing in the passage points to the host continually asking for bread. Instead, the passage emphasizes the host's boldness in asking, despite the awkward circumstances and inconvenient time. Bock comes to the same conclusion:

> ἀναίδειαν (anaideia), a NT *hapax legomenon*, with the particle γέ (ge, indeed), is key here. The term introduces the clause and as such is emphatic. It is a hard word to translate in English, for it refers to a combination of boldness and shamelessness.

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[59] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295. Garland also offers a humorous but striking analogy about the neighbor's comment:

> This would be like a friend who calls in the middle of the night to say that his wife is in labor, and he needs to get her to the hospital right away but his car won't start. Could he borrow your car? Who of you would say, "I'm sorry, I left the car keys in the kids' bedroom and I'm afraid to wake them up?" No one but the worst cad would come up with such a weak excuse to put him off and leave his friend in the lurch during such an emergency. (Garland, *Luke*, 466)

[60] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[61] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 223.

[62] Stein, *Luke*, 323.

Thus, the stress is not on the persistence or repetition of the request, as much as it is on the boldness or nerve of the request.[63]

This interpretation makes more sense, especially in light of the disciple's initial request at the start of Luke 11, when he asked Jesus to teach them to pray. The disciples wanted to be set apart and to pray in a way unique to their rabbi. Therefore, it would make sense for Jesus, who was reshaping their understanding of prayer, to tell them they can approach God boldly, shamelessly, and even with nerve. The disciples would likely have expected an instruction on persistence in prayer as they would have known this was customary in other religious practices.[64] But the idea of approaching God with this level of audacity would have been unheard of to them. Even the pagan gods found shamelessness improper: a carving in the temple of Athena at Sais read, "God hates shamelessness."[65]

While it is true that the disciples can pray this way because God is not offended by honest and urgent prayer, they can also approach God shamelessly because of the relationship they have with him as Father. Jesus impressed upon the disciples the truth of God's fatherly character in his model prayer, and if God truly is a benevolent Father, he will not allow himself to be put to shame. If God is the good Father Jesus declared him to be, God will act when his children beseech him because "God also has a name and reputation to preserve, who makes a name for himself by redeeming his people and doing great and awesome things for them. God acts for the sake of his name that it not be profaned in the sight of the nations."[66]

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[63] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1059.

[64] For example, see Jesus's admonition to the disciples that they "do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words" (Matt 6:7). The point is not that persistence in prayer is wrong (see Luke 18:1-8) but that the disciples would have expected this kind of admonition. In this discourse, Jesus is reshaping the disciples' understanding of prayer and of God. Of course, Jesus wants the disciples to approach God not only with persistence but also with boldness and audacity.

[65] Garland, *Luke* 468.

[66] Garland, *Luke*, 469.

Even more amazing is that God not only acts to preserve his fatherly name among the nations, but he acts because he is a friend. David Garland notes, "Friendship is mentioned four times in the parable: in the introduction, in the request, in the description of the guest, and the conclusion. Friendship created a tight bond with mutual obligations and God is Israel's friend."[67]

The Fidelity of God

As Jesus concluded his instruction on prayer to his disciples, he provided one final parable teaching them to come to God as children coming to a father who wants to bless them. In Luke 11:9-13, Jesus told his disciples to be persistent in prayer by continually asking, seeking, and knocking, because those who ask will receive, those who seek will find, and to those who knock, the door will be opened. As in the preceding parable, Jesus again utilized a lesser-to-greater argument: "If earthly fathers will behave benevolently, how much more so will your heavenly father?" (11:13). Jesus introduced this lesser-to-greater argument by asking his disciples, "What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (11:11-13).

As Jesus had consistently done with his exhortation on prayer, he infused his language with themes and words familiar to the disciples. As Jesus began this final discourse in answer to their question, he said, "And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (11:9). According to Edwards, "The substance of Jesus' teaching on prayer in vv. 9-10 is also present in the OT (Isa 55:6; Jer 29:12). Jesus does not simply repeat the OT material, however, but

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[67] Garland, *Luke*, 469.

infuses it with his authority. 'I say to you' (v. 9) is emphatic in the Greek, indicating the importance of the teacher in understanding prayer."[68] In other words, Jesus was taking the former, familiar teaching about prayer and authoritatively telling them to pray this way "because God will arise and act on behalf of those in need," and, therefore, "they ought to bring their requests to him."[69]

However, what would have reshaped the disciples' understanding of prayer and God with this instruction "is its universality: 'everyone' is encouraged to recognize God's fidelity and the expansiveness of his goodness and to respond with a confidence expressed in venturing forth in relationship to God with one's entreaties."[70] Jesus was teaching his disciples that it was no longer only Jews, or only a particular class of Jews such as the priests, who could have direct and definite communication with God, but anyone in relationship with him could pray in this way.

Jesus then gave them the reason why: if earthly fathers, being evil, give good gifts to their children, certainly a perfectly righteous father would be even more generous with his children. As with the previous parable, Jesus made the listener the subject of the fictional story. The parable begins "with the phrase 'Who of you,' which appeals to an everyday norm that again prompts the answer, 'Certainly none of us.'"[71] Certainly, no earthly father would give his child a serpent if he asked for bread, nor would he give him a scorpion if he asked for an egg. Likewise, "God is a good Father—far better than any human father—who wills to give good gifts to his children."[72]

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[68] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 224. Isaiah 55:6 reads, "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near." Jeremiah 12:29 reads, "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you."

[69] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[70] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[71] Garland, *Luke*, 470.

[72] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 224.

Yet, Jesus astonished the disciples even more by pressing the analogy, telling them, "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (11:13). Jesus demonstrated that "the superiority of the fatherhood of God is realized in the superiority of his gift. Human parents give 'good gifts,' while God gives what he has determined to be the best gift, the Holy Spirit."[73]

As Jesus concluded his teaching on prayer, his "final statement has established a new narrative need—namely, the Father is to give the Holy Spirit to his children."[74] Although the disciple's direct question was related to prayer, Jesus taught them that not only can they pray like him, but they can be empowered like him as well. Not only had "Jesus introduced to his followers language for God consistent with his own," but "he now also anticipates that they will be given the Spirit in some fashion analogous to his own Spirit-anointing."[75]

Direct Instruction as a Culture Change Tool

This chapter demonstrates that Jesus used direct instruction as a primary method to begin reshaping the religious culture of his listeners. Bock summarizes Jesus's exhortation on prayer well:

> In Luke 11:1-13 Jesus speaks to the importance of looking to God and approaching him. In teaching the model prayer and in addressing God as a heavenly Father, Jesus shows that God has a tender concern for his children. He is not so great nor so distant as to be unavailable. The disciples should be bold in their request for blessing and be assured that God is more gracious than human parents to give good things to their children.[76]

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[73] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[74] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 295.

[75] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 296.

[76] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1063.

Jesus utilized a multitude of culture change tools that are now exhorted by today's experts. However, it was Jesus's teaching that had the greatest effect on shifting the cultural beliefs and practices of his followers. In fact, teaching is what the disciples would have predominantly expected from their rabbi. Those listening to Jesus in his day would know "anyone in the role of rabbi was a core influencer for the formation of Jewish culture serving as interpreter, teacher and group leader."[77] Through teaching his disciples, Jesus disseminated new information and passed along ideas which would have been difficult for the disciples to understand by other means. Presenting God as a benevolent Father willing to hear the audacious and persistent prayers of his children would not have been a conclusion the disciples came to by reading between the lines of Jesus's day-to-day ministry. This understanding could only be formed by directly teaching them this truth.

The same reality is true in the church today. Without direct instruction about the need for evangelism, how to evangelize, and why the church evangelizes, the likelihood of creating an evangelistic church culture is almost non-existent.[78] Therefore, pastors must diligently work to directly instruct their congregations on the necessity of evangelism. This can happen in three ways, all of which are used by Jesus in Luke 11:1-13.

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[77] Jason Esposito, "Preaching as a Cultural Formation Tool" (DMin thesis, Bethel Seminary, 2015), 41.

[78] Recent studies have shown this to be true. In a study done by LifeWay Research, researchers found that "a majority of churchgoers (56%) say they pray for opportunities to tell others about Jesus," but "more than half (55%) of those who attend church at least once a month say they have not shared with someone how to become a Christian in the past six months." LifeWay Research, "Evangelism More Prayed for than Practiced by Churchgoers," last modified April 23, 2019, https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/04/23/evangelism-more-prayed-for-than-practiced-by-churchgoers. Barna Research also concluded that half of U.S. churchgoers (51 percent) say they are not familiar with the term "Great Commission." Only 17 percent are certain they know the term and can identify it in the Bible, while 25 percent are only vaguely familiar with the term. Barna Research, "51% of Churchgoers Don't Know of the Great Commission," last modified March 27, 2018, https://www.barna.com/research/half-churchgoers-not-heard-great-commission.

Direct Instruction through Modeling

Jesus provided direct instruction to his disciples on prayer as the result of a request made by one of the disciples to teach them how to pray. However, Luke notes that the disciple's question stemmed from witnessing "Jesus praying in a certain place" (11:1). In fact, the disciples were greatly aware of Jesus's prayer life because he constantly modeled it for them, and Luke seems to indicate it was the disciples' awareness of Jesus's prayer life that led them to want to pray like him.[79]

Edgar Schein says that deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching is one of the "six primary embedding mechanisms" for changing culture.[80] He posits, "Leaders of organizations generally seem to know that their own visible behavior has great value for communicating assumptions and values to other members, especially newcomers."[81] Direct instruction does not mean solely verbal instruction. Leaders who begin by modeling desired behaviors in front of their followers are directly instructing them about what is expected. Modeling, however, should lead followers to a place where they become so engaged in the process, verbal instruction becomes necessary. This way, more precise and specific information can be learned that would not be acquired by observing modeled behavior alone.

J. Mack Stiles, author of *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus*, connects teaching and modeling: "One of the key elements for a culture of evangelism is the leadership of the church or fellowship. If it is important that the members be 'on

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[79] This is not the first time the disciples witnessed Jesus's commitment to prayer. Earlier in Luke's Gospel, the disciples saw Jesus "withdraw to desolate places and pray" (5:16), and they would likely have known about Jesus's night of prayer prior to selecting the disciples (6:12-13). The other Gospel writers also present Jesus's modeling a life of prayer in front of his disciples (Matt 14:1-13; Mark 6:30-32).

[80] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 183.

[81] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 193.

game,' it is doubly important for the elders and pastors to lead by teaching and modeling

evangelism."[82] Stiles continues,

> Besides modeling, one of the most important things leaders can do is just talk about evangelism. If you are a pastor, it's important that you set aside a place in staff meetings and elder meetings to talk about your personal efforts to share your faith. Look for ways to pray and encourage evangelism in other church leadership gatherings. . . . If evangelism is to be a front-burner issue in our churches, it needs constant encouragement, ongoing training, and long-term, focused leadership.[83]

In other words, Stiles advocates for the ministry pattern Jesus utilized when he taught the

disciples to pray. Jesus modeled prayer so consistently in front of his disciples that it led

to their desire to pray like he did. Jesus then took the opportunity to directly instruct the

twelve how to pray, and through this direct instruction he communicated to them truths

that they would not have learned simply by observing.

To create a culture of evangelism in the church, pastors and leaders need to

model evangelistic behavior, but modeling must transition into verbal instruction.

Without question, pastors must practice evangelism themselves, but they must also

preach about evangelism. Frequent preaching about evangelism does more than provide

pastors the opportunity to give their congregations practical insights about how to

evangelize. Consistent teaching about evangelism, or any topic for that matter, sets the

agenda and priorities in the life of the church. As Esposito's research concluded, "What

preachers say and how they say it shapes the culture of a local church."[84]

Direct Instruction through Repetition

If new values and ideals are to be embedded in the minds of listeners, frequent

and consistent instruction on the topic is critical. Jesus demonstrated this while teaching

his disciples about prayer. He not only told his disciples they could refer to God as Father

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[82] J. Mack Stiles, *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 97.

[83] Stiles, *Evangelism*, 97-98.

[84] Esposito, "Preaching as a Cultural Formation Tool," 148.

(11:2), but he reiterated the fatherhood of God in his concluding parable about the kindness of earthly fathers versus the kindness of the heavenly Father (11:11-13). Jesus taught his disciples they should be persistent in prayer (11:9-10) and reenforced this truth later in Luke when he told the parable of the persistent widow (18:1-8). Jesus told his disciples they could ask God for their most basic daily needs (11:3) and repeated the claim by way of illustration when he described one man going to his neighbor at midnight to ask for a small loaf of bread (11:5).

To reshape the culture of a church, leaders need to constantly communicate the new values and ideals they are seeking to instill. Aubrey Malphurs speaks to this critical reality: "Regular values casting affirms and reaffirms primary beliefs. When this does not take place, people begin to assume the beliefs are not really important or that the leaders are no longer committed to them or that the beliefs may be changing."[85] The most effective messages rarely become ingrained in the life of an organization with only one announcement or cleverly crafted message. Values and ideals must be repeated time and again for any lasting change to take effect.

John Kotter claims, "All successful cases of major change seem to include tens of thousands of communications that help employees to grapple with different intellectual and emotional issues."[86] Kotter does not mean that one individual using only one method of communication repeats the same message again and again. Rather, Kotter's argument is that handfuls of key leaders, at multiple levels of the organization, using a multitude of mediums, communicate one key theme over and over. He avers, "A sentence here, a paragraph there, two minutes in the middle of a meeting, five minutes at the end of a

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[85] Aubrey Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership: Discovering and Developing Your Core Values for Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 109. Malphurs also notes that as important as frequent communication is, using multiple methods of communication is even more important. Malphurs outlines sixteen communication strategies pastors can use to embed new cultural values in the life of their congregation (109-23).

[86] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 96.

conversation, three quick references in a speech—collectively, these brief mentions can add up to a massive amount of useful communication, which is generally what is needed to win over both hearts and minds."[87]

In trying to renew a culture of evangelism in the life of the church, not only the lead pastor, but the associate pastors, support staff, and instrumental lay leaders (for example, Sunday School teachers and deacons) all communicate the priority and importance of evangelism. This looks like the pastor preaching a sermon series on evangelism, showing how to effectively communicate the gospel in every sermon; associate pastors incorporating evangelism strategies and prioritizing the Great Commission in their specific ministry contexts; Sunday School teachers asking members whom they have shared the gospel with during the week and praying for the lost by name; and deacons exemplifying what it means to take the gospel into the workplace and sharing Jesus wherever they are.

Message repetition does not solely happen from the pulpit. Pastors and church leaders must remember that "people perceive and learn in different ways. That is why using multiple methods, as opposed to a single method, will prove more effective" when communicating for culture change.[88] Change occurs when "vision is effectively communicated using a variety of vehicles."[89] People are more likely to accept culture changes to an organization both intellectually and emotionally when "the same message comes at people from six different directions . . . this includes large group meetings, memos, newspapers, posters, and informal one-on-one talks."[90] Not only is repetition of the message crucial, but repetition through a variety of mediums is the goal.

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[87] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 97.

[88] Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership*, 109.

[89] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 95.

[90] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 95.

Direct Instruction through Storytelling

Organizational change experts agree that one of the best mediums for communicating change and instilling new values is storytelling. Edgar Schein says, "Thus, the story—whether it is in the form of a parable, legend, or even a myth—reinforces assumptions and teaches values to newcomers."[91] Jesus was a master storyteller. However, Jesus's use of parables and storytelling was not original to him. The compelling nature and usefulness of parables to communicate spiritual truth "can also be found in the Old Testament as well as in the writings of the rabbis."[92] Jesus used parables "to reveal just enough truth to raise intense curiosity, promising more if listeners followed but also concealing enough of the truth so that the complacent would walk away uninspired."[93]

In Luke 11, Jesus utilized two parables to communicate the new truths he wanted his disciples to understand about the nature of God and prayer. In the first instance, Jesus told the story of a would-be host beseeching his friend at midnight for some bread to attend to his late-night visitor (11:5-8). In the second instance, Jesus told the simple story of a father offering good gifts to his children who asked for them (11:11-13). In both parables, as in all the parables he told, Elwell and Yarbrough note that Jesus used

> down-to-earth examples from everyday life. He referred to such things as animals, birds, houses, work, fields, farmers, women, children, money, landowners, trees, vines, food, meals, clothes, taxes, music, slavery, education, the weather, doctors, and illness. By using illustrations from everyday life, Jesus identified with the people and made his point accessible to virtually everyone.[94]

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[91] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 202.

[92] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 125-26.

[93] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 126.

[94] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 126.

By using examples from everyday life and making his point accessible to everyone, Jesus successfully passed along new spiritual truth to his listeners in an unassuming and inviting way. Modern organizational change experts agree with this approach.

Laurie Lewis says, "A good deal of interaction following the announcement of an organizational change involves storytelling."[95] Research suggests "that many of the values that are adopted as shared vision, as well as the conventions people learn, are passed on through informal stories."[96] Alan Wilkins provides the reason:

> Stories of actual events inside the organization are often more credible than official claims because the person who is telling the story may not be a company official (with obvious pro-company biases) and because the story is concrete, unlike the abstract vision statements. In addition, stories give people a chance to improvise their own implementation of organization-sponsored values.[97]

Stories help people engage at both an emotional and intellectual level and can be useful in overcoming resistance to change because there is "power in metaphors, analogies, examples or just plain colorful language which help communicate complicated ideas quickly and effectively."[98]

Malphurs notes that this is especially true of established organizations: "Those who lead established ministries make a grave mistake if they ignore or neglect the institution's stories, because they are an integral part of the ministry's culture and they play a vital role in defining what the ministry is all about."[99] Therefore, leaders need to collect and compile stories of the organization's past and use those stories to instill new values in the future.

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[95] Laurie Lewis, *Organizational Change: Creating Change through Strategic Communication* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 234.

[96] Alan Wilkins, *Developing Corporate Character* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 90.

[97] Wilkins, *Developing Corporate Character*, 90.

[98] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 93.

[99] Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership*, 114.

Pastors and church leaders can use stories to celebrate and promote evangelistic practices in their attempt to reshape evangelistic culture in the church. Malphurs specifically says about congregations, "If a core value is evangelism, then leaders will pounce on opportunities to share their faith with lost people. Then later they will tell their evangelism stories, which communicate to their people that 'evangelism is important around here.'"[100] In their book *Culture Shift*, Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro speak of similar practices of using stories to reshape an established church culture and embed new values. Specifically, they say to look for people in the congregation who are practicing and living out the values and culture the church is trying to adopt.[101]

For example, a church seeking to establish an evangelistic culture should find people in the congregation practicing evangelism and then "feature them in church services or sermon illustrations. Let them tell their story through testimony. Make video clips to profile them. Give awards or host parties for those who exemplify and embody what the church is all about."[102] Over time, what church leaders praise and talk about repeatedly will lead others to want to imitate those practices, and a new culture will be established.

Conclusion

Church leaders today would do well to imitate the direct instruction of Jesus as they seek to establish an evangelistic culture in their churches. Direct instruction is one of the most beneficial ways to impart and embed new values and ideals into the life of a congregation. However, direct instruction does not mean delivering mundane lectures in which every piece of information is distributed all at once. Rather, as seen in the ministry

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[100] Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership*, 114-15.

[101] Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*, 63.

[102] Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*, 63.

of Jesus, direct instruction should be compelling and engaging. Church leaders should tell stories using a variety of outlets. Pastors should use personal illustrations from their own lives, interview church members practicing evangelism, and share the testimonies of those who have come to faith because of the evangelistic efforts of church members.

It is crucial that pastors and church leaders repeat these themes. One sermon series on evangelism is not enough. Producing church tracts and a handful of training courses and will not create a culture of evangelism. Evangelism must become the running theme behind everything the church does. The new values and behaviors must be seen and felt everywhere. However, these repeated messages must also be modeled by leadership.

Jesus modeled a life of prayer in front of his disciples, and pastors must model a pattern of evangelism if they are to create a culture of evangelism in their churches. New behaviors, beliefs, and values can be effectively imparted by "imitating a role model and psychologically identifying with that person."[103] This works best when "it is clear what the new way of working is to be and when the new beliefs and values to be adopted are themselves clear."[104] By modeling what is most important and central to the church, leaders can encourage followers to join them on the journey, and over time, the organizational culture can shift.

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[103] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 330.

[104] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 331.

CHAPTER 3

LEADING CULTURAL CHANGE
THROUGH CONFRONTATION

Even the most effective communicators and teachers find that more than direct

instruction is needed to create cultural change. No matter how clear the leader has been or

how plain his words are, there will always be those who wish to maintain the status quo.

The same was true of Jesus. Despite being the most effective and clear communicator to

have preached, there were still those ready to resist his new outlook at every turn.

Resistance to change is not uncommon. Laurie Lewis asserts, "resistance is a perennial

concept in the organizational change literature."[1] Generally, "resistance is characterized

as a negatively valenced activity driven by fear, ignorance, stubbornness, or some

nefarious political motive."[2] This was certainly true of those who resisted Jesus, namely

the Pharisees. However, resistance, and confrontation of that resistance, can be powerful

tools in reshaping the thinking and culture of an organization. Edgar Schein notes, "When

an organization faces a crisis, the manner in which leaders and others deal with it reveals

important underlying assumptions and often creates new norms, values, and working

procedures."[3] This is because "no better opportunity exists for leaders to send signals

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[1] Laurie Lewis, *Organizational Change: Creating Change through Strategic Communication* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 177.

[2] Lewis, *Organizational Change*, 187. Lewis goes on to argue that not all resistance should be viewed this way. In fact, she suggests some resistors should be "regarded as partners in the change process" because they are "focused on the improvement and protection of their organization or of change efforts" (187-88). While this is true, and church leaders should keep this insight in mind when leading change within the church, this is not the type of resistance Jesus encountered throughout his ministry and the kind of resistance that will be discussed in this chapter.

[3] Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), 190.

about their own assumptions about human nature and relationships than when they themselves are challenged."[4]

As Luke 11 concludes, Jesus is confronted and challenged by the scribes and Pharisees. Rather than indifferently ignoring their accusations, Jesus takes the opportunity to confront the values and ideals critically opposed to what he has been attempting to teach. Through this direct confrontation, Jesus continues to instill new values and norms in the lives of his listeners. Luke 11 can be used as a case study in confrontation that leads to cultural change.

Jesus's Resistors: The Scribes and Pharisees

As one reads the Gospels, a glaring reality is apparent: "First-century Palestine was not a tolerant religious environment, and yet Jesus pressed for religious reform."[5] The Gospel writers consistently present Jesus in conflict with the scribes and Pharisees, despite the clarity with which he taught.[6] For example, Mark regularly depicts the crowds and religious leaders as "amazed and astounded at his teaching because he taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes" (Mark 1:22). It was not that Jesus was unclear about the kind of religious reform he was attempting to inaugurate; rather he was perfectly clear, and his teaching about the heart of the Father was vastly different from that of the scribes and Pharisees. To better understand the nature of Jesus's conflict with the scribes and Pharisees, it will help to briefly examine the backgrounds of each group.

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[4] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 191.

[5] Darrell Bock, *Luke*, vol. 2, *9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 1109.

[6] Other examples of Jesus's confrontations with the Pharisees include his rebuke of their questioning hearts (Luke 5:22), his denunciation of their hypocritical obedience to the law (5:27-6:11; 14:1-6), his correction of their view of "neighbor" (10:25-37), his warning to others about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (12:1-3), his condemnation of their idolatrous hearts (16:14-17), his renunciation of their self-righteousness (18:9-14), and his challenging of their unbelief (20:1-47). These examples do not include the multitude of others found throughout the other Gospels, some of which—such as Matthew—contain entire chapters dedicated to Jesus's confrontations with the religious leaders of his day.

Who Were the Pharisees?

The Pharisees appear numerous times throughout the New Testament. Anthony Saldarini notes that "the Gospel of Luke is notable for adding the Pharisees a number of times."[7] Their status in Luke and several other Gospel accounts is one of immense political and religious power. The Pharisees are predominantly depicted as "independent leaders, essentially part of the governing class in Galilee and in John and Acts they have power in Jerusalem as well."[8] This corresponds to the historical record in Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*. Josephus records the rise in the political power of the Pharisees under the reign of Salome Alexandra, writing, "So, Alexandra spake to the Pharisees, and put all things into their power. . . . [S]he also restored again those practices which the Pharisees had introduced, according to the traditions of their forefathers. . . . [S]o she had indeed the name of the regent, but the Pharisees had the authority."[9] N. T. Wright agrees with the conclusion that the Pharisees acted as political power players of the day: "The power they wielded, though in modern terms 'religious' in origin and intent, was emphatically 'political' in effect."[10] This comment by Wright is helpful because it points out that although the Pharisees may have had political interests, their influence on national politics was wielded through a rigorous religious way of life.

In reading the Gospels, the Pharisees are depicted as much more religious than political. Throughout the biblical account, "the Pharisees are presented as the guardians of the normal social boundaries."[11] The Pharisees saw themselves as guardians of the

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[7] Anthony Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 174. Saldarini goes on to specifically say that "Luke increases the number of mentions of the Pharisees as follows: alone 7:36; 13:31; 14:1; 16:14; 17:20; 18:10-14; with scribes 11:53; with lawyers or teachers of the law 5:17; 7:30; 14:3."

[8] Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 174.

[9] Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13.16, in *The Genuine Works of Flavius Josephus the Historian*, trans. William Whiston (London, 1737), University of Chicago, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/index.html.

[10] N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 187.

[11] Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 179.

past, detailing for the Jewish people the proper response to intrusions on their way of life, including "paganism from without and assimilation from within."[12] The Pharisees hoped for a national restoration of Israel in which God would be honored and their ancestral traditions valued. Wright remarks that because the Pharisees felt they were "faced with social, political, and cultural 'pollution' at the level of national life as a whole, one natural reaction was to concentrate on personal cleanliness, to cleanse and purify an area over which one did have control as a compensation for the impossibility of cleansing or purifying an area over which one had none."[13] This suggests the Pharisees of Jesus's day could be rightly understood as "sectarian."[14]

The sectarian nature of the Pharisees helps explain their resistance to Jesus. This features in Luke more than in other Gospel accounts. Saldarini notes, "The Pharisees in Luke have an important social station in Galilee and their relations with Jesus show that they considered him, and his leadership of the people, as a threat to their position and thus rejected him."[15] From their portrayal in the biblical narratives, the Pharisees have so demarcated boundaries between holy and unholy, pure and impure, they are forced to challenge Jesus and his formation of a new society when he refuses to uphold their social order. The Pharisees desired a king who would conquer by military might and scrupulous religious piety. The Pharisees "were looking for a builder to construct the home they thought they wanted, Jesus was the architect, coming with a new plan that would give them everything they needed, but within a quite new framework. He was the king, but he

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[12] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 187.

[13] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 188.

[14] Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 190.

[15] Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 179.

had come to redefine kingship itself around his own work, his own mission, his own fate."[16]

Who Were the Scribes?

Like the Pharisees, the scribes appear numerous times in the Gospels, but their role and function are not as clearly understood. What is clear is that the scribes never appear apart from the Pharisees or High Priests and are always presented in opposition to Jesus.[17] Saldarini remarks that the "word 'scribe' in Hebrew, Greek, and other languages had a wide variety of meaning which changed over time and could denote several social roles."[18] However, "in the post-exilic Jewish community the roles of the priests, Levites, scribes, and other Jewish leaders overlapped."[19] Many modern commentators, such as Darrell Bock, see the scribes as the interpreters of the law "and aided the Pharisees in their study of tradition."[20] James Edwards goes so far as to say the scribes "were renowned for their mastery of Torah, for which they commanded unrivaled esteem in the Jewish religious hierarchy."[21] I. Howard Marshall suggests that "the scribes must be presumed to be a member of the Pharisaic party as indeed most scribes were," suggesting,

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[16] N. T. Wright, *Simply Jesus: A New Vision of Who He Was, What He Did, and Why He Matters* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011), 5.

[17] Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 241.

[18] These other roles could have included administrative secretaries, such as typists, high-level administrative assistants, highly responsible organizational or corporate officials, and finally cabinet officers at the highest level of government. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 242.

[19] Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees*, 246. For example, Ezra "was a priest, scribe, and community leader and possibly a government appointed leader." Furthermore, Zadok, who appears in Ezra and Nehemiah, "was appointed with a priest and Levite to be treasurer of the storehouses where the tithes were brought (Neh. 12:12-13). This suggests that scribes were part of society and its leadership in Jerusalem."

[20] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1118.

[21] James Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 238.

as does Saldarini, an overlap in their function.[22] Joel Green also presents the scribes and

Pharisees as being in close league with one another, stating,

> Like the Pharisees, legal experts are already known to Luke's audience via the narrative. They often appear in tandem with the Pharisees as persons concerned with Jesus' observance of the law; in particular, as "teachers of the law," their message has consistently been set in opposition to that of Jesus. Additionally, they have recently been named as persons who will become affiliated with the religious elite of Jerusalem in a successful plot to have Jesus executed (Lk 9:22).[23]

While there is undoubtedly more that could be said about the scribes, it

suffices for this thesis to have demonstrated that the scribes, like the Pharisees, find

themselves in constant conflict with Jesus. Their religious understandings and practices

also conflict with Jesus's attempt to establish a new understanding of God and his

purposes.

Controversy with the Scribes and Pharisees: Luke 11:37-54

This background is helpful when examining Jesus's confrontation with the

scribes and Pharisees at the end of Luke 11. As he concluded his direct instructions on

prayer and the need for people to authentically respond to the activity of God in world, he

was invited to the house of a Pharisee. Darrell Bock notes, "It is clear from the

subsequent remarks that the meal is not a private one, but that others, especially other

religious leaders, have been invited as well (11:45)."[24] Though the scene seems innocent

enough, the invitation to share a meal was almost certainly another attempt by the

Pharisees to entrap Jesus. This is evidenced by the fact that "in the original Greek a

Pharisee extends an invitation 'while Jesus was speaking' (v. 37; not '*after* Jesus had

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[22] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 499.

[23] Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 306.

[24] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1111.

finished speaking,' NIV)."[25] Almost immediately upon entering the house, Jesus was accused of uncleanliness because he did not wash before dinner; this accusation directly challenged his purity and holiness. Those invited to the meal witnessed the interruption and the accusation, giving the strong impression that this was not a polite gathering in which the Pharisees sought to honestly understand what Jesus had been teaching, but rather another attempt to feign sincerity in the hopes of entrapping him (Luke 20:20).

James Edwards notes that the source of the conflict stemmed from the Pharisees' astonishment that Jesus did not first wash his hands before dinner: "Washing was technically necessary only if one had touched a bodily discharge (Lev 15:11), but Pharisees, along with the Qumran community, expanded both the number and significance of washings as signs distinguishing observant Jews from nonobservant Jews and Gentiles."[26] Evidently, the Pharisees had become greatly concerned with ritual purity, and the regulations regarding ritual washings extended to all observant Jews at all times.[27] David Garland explains the Pharisees' belief that "the righteous could not be filled with Torah and prayer if they were defiled. Therefore, the righteous sought to avoid it."[28] Inevitably, this minor issue of ceremonial hand washing caused a major conflict; Bock explicates, "For the Pharisees, the issue is ritual purity before God; for Jesus, it is additional burdens to God's revelation."[29]

Jesus harshly rebuked those questioning him (Luke 11:37-54). In fact, the harshness almost seemed out of place for Jesus the meek and mild. However, recognizing

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[25] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 236.

[26] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 237.

[27] This is further demonstrated by the fact that "25 percent of the Mishnah is devoted to issues of purity, and archaeological excavations continue to reveal mikwaot, cleansing baths, in ancient Jewish localities—even on the summit of Masada, one of the hottest and most arid places on earth." Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 237.

[28] David Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 493.

[29] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1113.

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the heart of Jesus's conflict with the scribes and Pharisees reveals that the severity of his remarks was fair and necessary. At the heart of the conflict is the nature of God. The scribes and Pharisees essentially ask, "What does God deem holy behavior?" And for Jesus, holiness requires much more than ceremonial handwashing. The accusation from the Pharisees and the response from Jesus demonstrated that what was at stake "was how one understands the very nature of God, as well as, how one construes the nature of faithful response to God."[30] Throughout Luke 11, Jesus had taught the disciples about the nature of God and how they were to respond to him. As clear and direct as this teaching may have been, it would not change the religious expectations and habits of the disciples if Jesus did not first confront the vain religious culture of the Pharisees.

The dispute set up Jesus's pronouncement of three woes upon the Pharisees and three woes upon the scribes. Jesus declared that the Pharisees would be judged for neglecting God's love and justice, seeking self-promotion, and leading people to death. In similar fashion, the scribes would be judged for burdening others with the law, building the tombs of the prophets, and removing the key of knowledge.[31] The pronouncement of each of the woes highlighted the dominant religious culture surrounding Jesus and the new culture he was attempting to implement. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the six woes pronounced upon the scribes and Pharisees, examine how these condemnations were used by Jesus to confront a religious culture opposed to the one he was attempting to create, and describe how leaders today can confront barriers to evangelistic culture in the church.

Woe: Neglecting Love and Justice

In the first woe pronounced upon the Pharisees, Jesus said, "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of

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[30] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 304.

[31] For summaries of the woes pronounced by Jesus, see Bock, *Luke*, 2:1109.

God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others" (Luke 11:42). This first denouncement was directly related to the nature of God and what he desired.

Previously when confronted by the Pharisees, Jesus told them they had correctly summarized the law, saying, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27). Despite this correct summation of the law, the scribes and Pharisees still failed to see the heart and character of God "because they allowed minor external observances, about which the Old Testament is ambiguous, to displace central matters such as 'justice and the love of God,' about which the Old Testament was unambiguous."[32] The Old Testament was clear that the people of God were to love and care for their neighbors, a major theological point found throughout the Torah. The Old Testament was also clear on the obligation of the people of God to tithe. However, as Bock notes,

> Much care went into getting tithes right, and the Pharisees tithe precisely. The tithe was the donation of a tenth of one's material possessions for the nation, temple, or clergy. Appeal is made to Leviticus 27:30 for the practice of tithing mint, rue, and herbs but since the rabbinic regulations of this practice are later than the Old Testament text, we are dealing with a tradition in this pericope.[33]

In other words, the issue of tithing mint, rue, and every herb was an issue of obedience to external regulations rather than the Word of God itself. Yes, God had commanded a tithe to be given but not to the specificity evidently mandated by the Pharisees.[34]

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[32] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 238.

[33] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1116.

[34] Three main Old Testament passages describe the nature of what was to be tithed. In Deuteronomy 14:22-27, a tithe of farm produce, oil, and wine was to be given. In Leviticus 27:30-33, God commanded a tithe of crops and animals be given to the priests. Finally, in Numbers 18:21-32, God commanded that food be reserved for the Levites and their families. While tithing is certainly commanded by God, nothing ever stipulates the tithing of mint, rue, and every herb. This is a later development that the Pharisees are now attempting to impose on the people.

However, it should be noted Jesus did not condemn their tithing in total. Tithing was commanded in the Old Testament, and Jesus did not condemn them for their obedience in this area. Rather, Bock explains,

> Jesus condemns the Pharisees selectivity in choosing to follow only certain minor rules while consistently ignoring the important matters. What they practice does not rile him, but they fail to practice and what they emphasize does. They omit the important matters while scoring well on more trivial pursuits. They should tithe, but they should also be kind to their neighbor and honor God.[35]

Ultimately, the question comes down to "what does God deem as holy behavior and proof of righteousness?" And in this confrontation with the Pharisees, Jesus himself "changes the paradigm of what really counts for holiness. Those who are holy devote themselves to the love of God and its corollary, the love of neighbor, which entails devotion to justice."[36]

Woe: Seeking Self-Promotion

The second woe pronounced by Jesus concerned the Pharisees seeking self-promotion. Jesus said, "Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces" (Luke 11:43). Bock notes that this woe rebuked the Pharisees "for seeking attention; it alludes to the pride that comes from receiving such honor."[37]

Robert Stein suggests this rebuke closely parallels the lesson taught by Jesus in the parable of the wedding feast in Luke 14:7-14. In the context of Luke 14, Jesus was again dining with a Pharisee when he noticed guests picking places of honor at the table.[38] Jesus exhorted those listening not to rush to the take seat of honor, lest someone

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[35] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1116.

[36] Garland, *Luke*, 495.

[37] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1116.

[38] This phrase "places of honor" literally means "first seats" and is the same term used in Luke 11:43. See Robert Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: B&H, 1993), 406.

more honorable arrive and they be forced to give up their seat in humiliation. Rather, the guests should seek the seats of least honor; therefore, when the host arrived, he would elevate them in the presence of all. Jesus made the point of the parable clear: "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

Paralleled with Luke 11:43, the condemnation could not be more forceful. Stein posits that Jesus was pointedly telling the Pharisees "pride and arrogance are abominations before God. The great reversal should be understood as a rejection of the proud, who exalt themselves, in favor of those who humble themselves. To know God is to understand both his infinite greatness and our own impotence and sinfulness."[39] To the shock of those who heard this rebuke, Jesus had in effect told the Pharisees they did not know God.

Perhaps even more shocking was Jesus's allusion to the fact that the Pharisees sought this kind of self-exaltation in every sphere of life. The mention of greetings in the marketplaces "is not so much a quick hello as an involved salutation of respect. In the Talmud, such elaborate greetings were compulsory for teachers of the law."[40] The Pharisees were known for desiring "respectful greetings in the streets, for it was a sign of respect to a superior if he was greeted first by another man."[41] Beyond the greetings in the marketplace, Jesus said the Pharisees loved the best seats in the synagogue. David Garland highlights "the seats of honor in the synagogue may refer to elevated seats, separate from the congregation and restricted to those with the highest status."[42] The synagogue was meant to be a place of worship of God, but the Pharisees had even found

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[39] Stein, *Luke*, 408.

[40] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1117.

[41] Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 499.

[42] Garland, *Luke*, 495.

a way to usurp the honor due to God by loving "to be the center of attention, but neglecting the love of God."[43] Reading between the lines of his rebuke, Jesus made the point that "meekness and humility are basic to the proper attitude believers should display in their relationship toward God, and service to the needy is characteristic of the proper attitude one should have towards others."[44] Unfortunately for the Pharisees, they did neither.

Woe: Leading People to Death

In the final woe leveled against the Pharisees, Jesus said, "Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it" (Luke 11:47). This was the most pointed and clear woe directed at the Pharisees. Jesus had declared those who followed their way were defiled before God.

Jesus's audience would have known "contact with a grave rendered a person unclean for seven days (Num 19:16), and consequently grave sites were carefully marked."[45] This is why "it was customary in Israel to whitewash tombs (Matt 23:27-28) in the spring of the year so people would not unknowingly come into contact with them. This was of particular importance for priests and Levites, for whom a seven-day defilement might render them unfit for temple service."[46] By referring to the Pharisees as "unmarked graves," Jesus was accusing them of a dangerous deception.[47] To those watching, the Pharisees were "the paragon of purity," but, "they are in fact leaders of

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[43] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 306.

[44] Stein, *Luke*, 405-6.

[45] Garland, *Luke*, 495.

[46] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 238. This was taken so seriously that "in A.D. 20 Herod Antipas replaced Sepphoris as the capital of Galilee with Tiberias on the west coast of the Sea of Galilee. Tombs were discovered on the construction site of Tiberias, rendering the city unclean for observant Jews. This may be one reason why Jesus never went to Tiberias, and why the city is mentioned only once in passing in the Bible (John 6:23)."

[47] Stein, *Luke*, 357.

spiritual uncleanness whose teaching leads people to death."[48] Those who followed the Pharisees and their way of life found themselves just as defiled as if they had come in contact with a dead body.

An Interruption by the Scribes

As the point Jesus made became blatantly clear, one of the scribes interrupted him to complain: "Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also" (Luke 11:45). Based on the language the scribe used, he and his tribe were more than slightly offended. James Edwards explains that the word "hybrizein, usually denotes physical mistreatment and suffering (Lk 18:32; Matt 22:6; Acts 14:5; 1 Thess 2:2)."[49] However, what was even more emphatically implied was that in this instance, the word hybrizein "bears the special sense of *gaah* in the Hebrew Old Testament (which the LXX regularly translates *hybrizein*), meaning 'arrogance' or 'presumption.'"[50] In other words, the scribes were calling Jesus not only offensive, but also willfully rude and arrogant. What almost came across as an innocent complaint "is a backhanded testimony to Jesus' implicit Christological self-assumption, for his denunciation of the Pharisees could be valid only if made by God."[51]

The scribes' defensive posture was not at all shocking. If Jesus was denouncing the Pharisees, he was also denouncing them "since the scribes interpret the law and aid the Pharisees in their study of tradition."[52] This brief comment made by the scribe highlights the importance of this passage to this thesis. The scribes and Pharisees recognized that Jesus's denunciations were an "extreme departure from social norms,"

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[48] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1117.

[49] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 239.

[50] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 239.

[51] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 239.

[52] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1118.

and if the people adopted his way of thinking and his view of God, the religious culture they had carefully created would crumble.[53] Jesus knew this as well and continued his condemnation of scribes and Pharisees even more emphatically. The denunciations previously issued to the Pharisees seem like batting practice compared to the woes Jesus leveled at the scribes.

Woe: A Burden to Others

In the first woe pronounced upon the scribes, Jesus said, "Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers" (Luke 11:46). When Jesus mentioned "burdens hard to bear," he likely had in mind the scribal interpretations of the law and not the law itself. The law was impossible to maintain through human effort alone, and the additional scribal interpretations only made faithfulness to God more burdensome. Leon Morris observes, "The Mishnah lays it down that it is more important to observe the scribal interpretations than the Law itself (Sanhedrin 11:3)."[54] The rationale being if it is wrong to violate the law despite the law being difficult to interpret, it is more offensive to violate the scribal interpretation the teachers of the law worked diligently to provide. Morris provides a helpful example with an illustration from the Mishnah:

> On the sabbath, they taught, a man may not carry a burden "in his right hand or in his left hand, in his bosom or on his shoulder." But he may carry it "on the back of his hand, or with his foot or with his mouth or with his elbow, or in his ear or in his hair or in his wallet (carried) mouth downwards, or between his wallet and his shirt, or in the hem of his shirt, or in his shoe or in his sandal" (Shabbath 10:3). Multiply this by all the regulations of the Law and ordinary people have a burden beyond bearing even to know what they might do and might not do.

More so, the scribes "do not touch the burdens with one of their fingers." There is some disagreement as to what is meant here. In one view, Jesus meant the

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[53] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 306.

[54] Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 223.

scribes "make no attempt to help the average person keep all these laws."[55] Rather than enabling the people of God to walk in faithfulness to him, the scribes made knowing God nearly impossible and did nothing to help those they led grow in their relationship with him. Another view, albeit a minority view, is presented by Marshall, who suggests that "the scribes escaped the obligations of the laws which they imposed on others."[56] In Marshall's interpretation, the scribes were so exegetically precise, they possessed the "skill of giving the impression of keeping the law while avoiding their minute demands."[57] However, there is no reason to believe both interpretations cannot be correct. This is the conclusion of Bock, who says of both interpretations,

> If this is a type of sophisticated interpretation that occasionally frees the Pharisees and scribes from obligations, it does not automatically rule out that they would still be hardened against aiding uninformed people who take on the burdens and fail. They provide no example and give no compassion. The absence of either is wrong. Jesus condemns both callousness and exegetical subtlety.[58]

Woe: The Only Good Prophet
Is a Dead Prophet

The second woe directed at the scribes was perhaps the most condemning and shocking of them all. Jesus said,

Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, "I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute," so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation. (Luke 11:47-51)

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[55] Stein, *Luke*, 358.

[56] Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 500.

[57] Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 500.

[58] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1119.

As Edwards notes, "Building tombs in reverence of ancestors, and particularly, great ancestors, was an important part of Jewish tradition."[59] This denunciation was like the woe leveled at the Pharisees concerning tithing. When Jesus condemned the Pharisees for tithing, he did not condemn them because they tithed but rather for why they tithed. In similar fashion, Jesus did not condemn the scribes for building tombs but rather for why they built the tombs. Their fathers did not listen and obey the prophets, and neither did the scribes. However, they gave the impression of honoring them by building their tombs and monuments.[60] Edwards notes that in building tombs for these murdered prophets, the scribes wanted to declare, "Had we lived in the days of the prophets, unlike our fathers, we would have heeded them." Edwards continues, "The irony is that they live in the days of the Messiah and their guilt far surpasses that of their fathers."[61] If we were to put the words of Jesus more plainly, he told the scribes, "The only prophet you honor is a dead prophet." Or, as Bock stated, "They killed the prophets; you make sure they stay dead."[62] Dead prophets could not trouble them.

Woe: Removing the Key of Knowledge

The final rebuke laid at the feet of the scribes came when Jesus said, "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering" (Luke 11:52). This last rebuke paralleled the final rebuke made towards the Pharisees in verse 44. Although the scribes believed they were pulling back the veil and revealing God's very heart and nature, their religious efforts had proven the exact opposite. They could not reveal the heart of God to

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[59] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 239.

[60] Edwards helpfully contextualizes this point when he says, "No generation is exempt from this searing condemnation. Is not the attempt of the American government to discredit the character of Martin Luther King Jr. while he was alive and then declare a national holiday in his honor once he was dead an uncomfortable example of such hypocrisy?" Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 239.

[61] Garland, *Luke*, 496.

[62] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1120.

others, as they did not know him. The scribes "have used their 'key of knowledge' to close doors and prohibit access to God" despite their claims to the contrary (Luke 11:47-51).

The most alarming part of Jesus's critique came in the phrase, "And you hindered those who were entering." The force he placed on the word εἰσερχομένους (*eiserchomai*) is conative, meaning people were trying to enter who wanted desperately to know God personally and yet were hindered from doing so by the scribes.[63] Those who had been trying to enter had more hope of finding God had they remained on the path they were on, but unfortunately, they had been derailed by the scribes' misuse and misunderstanding of the Torah.

The Results of the Confrontation

After Jesus's relentless and unflinching denouncement of the scribes and Pharisees, Luke notes, "As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say" (Luke 11:53-54). The tension in the house had reached a peak, and the lines of division between Jesus and the religious leaders around him had become sharper and deeper.[64] The division had become so profound that the questions asked of Jesus as he left the house gave "the picture of a prosecutor examining a criminal."[65] The scribes and Pharisees were so appalled by what Jesus had said that their language became "premeditative and virulent—only a step shy of violence to Jesus' person."[66]

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[63] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1125.

[64] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 240.

[65] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1125.

[66] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 240.

In the span of a few short phrases, Jesus had "censured the Pharisees and scribes as persons lacking necessary credentials . . . to provide leadership for Israel."[67] Their religious thinking, practices, and ways were incomplete and incompetent. They did not know God and could not lead others to him. If their way of thought continued to be propagated, they and those they attempted to lead would only find destruction. Therefore, confrontation was necessary. By confronting the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus accomplished two objectives: he "called into question the interpretive competence of the religious leaders" and "legitimated his own position concerning the law, and presented himself as the divinely sanctioned hermeneut of God's purpose."[68] He drew a line in the sand. People could choose the way of the scribes and Pharisees, or they could choose the way of Jesus, but they could not have both. The two ideologies were diametrically opposed.

Confrontation in the Church

The question must now be asked, how does Jesus's confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees instruct confrontation within the church? It is certainly true that within organizations and churches, there can be viewpoints and philosophies so opposed to one another that they cannot coexist. For example, a confrontation must occur if a church believes the pastor is paid to do evangelism and the pastor believes evangelism is the work of every believer. These two views cannot coexist. As this chapter concludes, Jesus's confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees will be examined to determine why confrontation is sometimes necessary and who should be confronted in the church.

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[67] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 307.

[68] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 307.

Who Should Be Confronted?

Critical to the discussion on confrontation is an understanding of whom Jesus confronted and the purpose of these confrontations. Jesus did not confront all individuals equally, and his purpose for confronting individuals was not always the same. His confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees was quite different in tone and purpose than his confrontations with his general listeners. His rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees in Luke 11 was stern and forceful; it did not include encouragement to change their thinking. Contrast this with his encounters in the general population; Jesus was milder in his correction and even tried to convince those listening to agree with him. An example of this is seen almost immediately after Jesus leaves the meal at the end of Luke 11 and returns to the crowds at the start of Luke 12. One should notice the stark differences between the two encounters.

First, both encounters were initiated by a misunderstanding of what was religiously significant, but Jesus's response in each instance was quite different. In Luke 11:38, "The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner," which began the stern rebuke. Without any friendly dialogue, Jesus immediately repudiated not just the lone astonished Pharisee, but his entire religious class, blanketly labeling them all "fools" (Luke 11:40). This certainty would have been viewed as an insult by the Pharisees who knew "in Old Testament literature, a 'fool' signified a type of person or pattern of behavior that rejected the ways of God in favor of one's own destructive ways."[69] Contrast this encounter with the frivolous dispute Jesus was asked to mediate in Luke 12:13. Luke records, "Someone from the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.'" In contrast to his response to the Pharisees, Jesus referred to this individual as "man." According to John Nolland, this

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[69] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 237.

"address, 'man,' is forceful, but need not be insulting (cf. 5:20, 22:58, 60)."[70] This was radically different from his discourse with the Pharisees, a denunciation that began with his calling them "fools." Moreover, not only was Jesus's address more amicable, but it was also a gentle correction: "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). This one-sentence correction stood in stark contrast to Jesus's thirteen-verse rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees. He even went on to teach a parable in the hope of convincing both the questioner and those listening to consider what was truly important in life. This is significant, because "at the most basic level, a parable is a comparison story, using simile and metaphor to help listeners move from a familiar reality to a deeper understanding of an important truth."[71] It is clear in Luke 12 that Jesus was attempting to do just that—move his audience from one level of understanding to another. However, in Luke 11, his rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees included no such teaching that tried to reshape their religious understanding.

This leads to the second difference: Jesus's motives for sternly confronting the Pharisees and gently correcting the crowds were different. When Jesus confronted the scribes and Pharisees, they were not the primary audience for his culture change efforts. His blistering rebuke was given so that others listening in would witness the condemnation and consider their ways. Green notes, "Luke often portrays Jesus teaching one group in the hearing of another because of the general suitability of Jesus' message." The rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees was not done for their benefit but for the benefit

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[70] John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35B (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian, 1993), 685. In the verses cross-referenced by Nolland, Jesus uses the same term in referring to the paralytic he healed in 5:20, saying "Man, your sins are forgiven." This use of the word in 5:20 is certainly not meant to be taken as an insult but merely as a descriptor, and the same interpretation should be applied in 12:14. In fact, in both cases, the CSB translates *anthropos*, the Greek word for "man," as "friend," interpreting Jesus's response as much more amicable compared to his response to the Pharisees.

[71] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Tell Me the Stories of Jesus: The Explosive Power of Jesus' Parables* (Nashville: HarperCollins, 2022), xiv-xv.

of others. Presumably, the disciples overheard his confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees, and although he continued to denounce the religious leaders at the start of chapter 12, the rebuke was not intended as an invective against the disciples or the larger crowd that had gathered. This is evident based on Jesus's words, "My friends," in Luke 12:4. Such a "designation assured them that the preceding words of judgment were directed not toward them, but toward the Pharisees."[72] Jesus recognized, and Luke makes his readers aware, that the attitude of the religious leaders towards Jesus was not going to change. As chapter 11 ends, "Luke observes that these religious leaders had adopted a new policy concerning Jesus. No longer would they simply scrutinize his practices in light of the law; from now on they would actively stalk him."[73] The primary motivation for Jesus's stern confrontation with the religious leaders was not their own change of heart. Rather, Jesus was attempting to change the hearts and minds of his disciples and the crowd by warning them about "the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1). The Pharisees were not the only ones capable of religious hypocrisy; Jesus's followers were too. The critical difference is that the disciples and the crowd have the opportunity to change their religious understanding and follow Jesus, whereas the scribes and Pharisees rejected that opportunity. Green provides this insight:

> What is this yeast? Jesus defines it as "hypocrisy," an unfortunate transliteration of a Greek lexeme, the meaning of which in Luke is closely aligned with its usage in the LXX; there it describes "a person whose conduct is not determined by God and is thus 'godless.'" This understanding of Jesus' concern with the Pharisees ties in well with his earlier censure of them as persons whose concerns with legal observance were not rooted in the love of God or in a commitment to justice (11:42; cf. 10:25-37). Hence, Jesus' point is not that they are play-acting, but that Jesus regards them as misdirected in their fundamental understanding of God's purpose and, therefore, incapable of discerning the authentic meaning of the Scriptures and, therefore, unable to present anything other than the impression of piety. Important from a rhetorical point of view, Jesus does not regard the Pharisees as unique in their failure to live with integrity a life oriented around absolute love of God and neighbor. His followers, too, are susceptible; hence, he presents this warning lest

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[72] Stein, *Luke*, 363-64.

[73] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 309.

they contract the same ingressive agent whose decay has already become evident among the Pharisees.

What conclusion should be drawn as to who should be confronted in the church? First, pastors and church leaders must recognize that Jesus's confrontational style and speech were strictly limited. Rarely did he ever speak to his disciples or the masses with the same level of ferocity as he did the religious leaders. Even when correcting those closest to him, Jesus was gentle and winsome, using parables and stories to help his listeners reshape their understanding and come to a deeper understanding of spiritual truth. Pastors should recognize that, in large part, their congregations mirror the crowds to whom Jesus spoke; likewise, they should carefully assess both the tone and demeanor in which they address them.

Second, pastors should be aware that confronting false teachings or understandings about God in the presence of the congregation is an effective way to reshape the understanding of those listening. For example, rather than confronting individuals directly, pastors can confront misunderstandings in general from the pulpit. They can correct false understandings about the character of God that may often be exhibited in the universal church, thereby allowing their listeners to consider their beliefs and change as needed.

Conclusion

Countless studies have indicated an evangelism crisis in Southern Baptist churches. For decades, Southern Baptists experienced enormous growth; this was followed by a statistical plateau for several years; and now, for more than a decade, the numerical decline is clear.[74] Church leaders today must imitate Jesus as they confront barriers to thriving evangelistic church cultures. A lack of vigorous evangelism in the church says something about its theology. As Alvin Reid observes, "A conviction about a

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[74] Charles Kelley, *Fuel the Fire: Lessons from the History of Southern Baptist Evangelism*, ed. Paige Patterson (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 5.

great salvation leads to a passion for evangelism."[75] Where a passion for evangelism is absent, so is a joy about the greatness of the salvation Jesus provides. A lack of joy about the salvation Jesus provides says something about what a church believes about his character and reputation. When conflicts arise that threaten the reputation of Christ and his church, those issues must be confronted.

Matt Queen writes of two sources of conflict that can hinder a church's evangelistic culture: theological convictions and practical understandings. On the matter of theological convictions, Queen says,

> Even someone passionate for evangelism either can hold to erroneous theological convictions or alter his theological convictions over time. You and your church members' theological convictions concerning salvation inevitably contribute to the gospel content you present to unbelievers. Therefore, your theological convictions and the gospel message you proclaim must be tested continually by New Testament doctrine, instructions, and principles.[76]

What a church believes about human depravity, God's sovereignty, and man's responsibility affects evangelism in the church. What a church believes about eschatology and the final state of those who have not heard the gospel will affect a church's evangelistic culture. What a church believes about sanctification and the perseverance of the saints affects evangelistic culture. Therefore, Queen recommends that pastors and staff act to "correct any errant soteriological doctrine" in the church.[77] This does not mean pastors and staff need to aggressively confront individual people within the church, but they should correct and confront errant doctrine from the pulpit.

Queen also notes that practical misunderstandings can hinder a healthy evangelistic culture in the church. For example, he highlights the relationship between the social gospel and evangelistic decline:

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[75] Alvin Reid, *Evangelism Handbook: Biblical, Spiritual, Intentional, Missional* (Nashville: B&H, 2009), 141.

[76] Matt Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize: The Pastor and Effective Congregational Evangelism* (Fort Worth: TX, Seminary Hill Press, 2018), 55.

[77] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 55.

In their attempt to obey both the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), Christians since the 20th century have experienced a ministry tension between the spiritual and the social, the soul and the body, the present age and the age to come, and ultimately orthodox and liberal theology. These tensions affect a church's evangelistic culture.[78]

As Queen points out, "Social gospelism usually convinces its advocates and practitioners that they must earn the right to evangelize a stranger," and "over time, the path of social gospelism leads down a road of confusing benevolence with evangelism, or the promotion of an unhealthy interdependence between gospel proclamation and mercy ministry."[79]

However, the tension between gospel proclamation and mercy ministry is not the only practical consideration that can stifle a church's evangelistic culture. Tension between marketing and evangelism can also exist today. Nearly all successful corporations and churches can speak to the incredible growth they have seen because of effective advertising, marketing, and social media campaigns. However, "temptation exists for a pastor and congregation to convince themselves that advertising and evangelism are synonymous endeavors or to abandon the hours and effort of evangelism for dollars they can pay for advertisements."[80] If a church's evangelistic culture is to thrive, Queen writes,

Pastors must not confuse evangelism with marketing. Numerous churches use advertising and/or branding in order to increase attendance at their services and events. Marketing can greatly assist churches in the work of their ministry in many ways. However, pastors may face the temptation to believe that marketing campaigns are the same as, if not a viable substitute for, evangelism.[81]

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[78] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 55-56.

[79] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 56.

[80] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 53.

[81] Matt Queen, "Seeking the Lost and Perishing," in *Pastoral Ministry: The Ministry of a Shepherd*, ed. Deron Biles (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 148.

Not only should errant theological beliefs be confronted, but practical understandings about the practice of evangelism must also be confronted when they undermine the efforts and mission of the church.

This chapter has shown that several barriers to a thriving evangelistic culture can exist in the church, confronting those barriers is at times necessary, and Jesus confronted those who were subverting the message of the gospel. Though confrontation is sometimes necessary, it does not need to be angry and belligerent. In following the example of Jesus, pastors and church leaders should try to keep confrontation as private as possible, even at times choosing to confront indirectly, using stories and illustrations to help individuals come to their own understanding and realization of their sin. In the indirect approach, pastors should frequently preach and teach about evangelism, a robust theology of salvation and sanctification, and the ways in which evangelism should and should not be practiced. In the ongoing formal teaching of God's Word, informal and indirect confrontations can occur that help to build a healthy evangelistic culture. While pastors and church leaders may not want confrontation, organizational culture cannot change without confronting those things that hinder its mission.

CHAPTER 4

LEADING CULTURAL CHANGE BY
SETTING HIGH EXPECTATIONS

This thesis began by demonstrating that leaders need to model the behavior they desire from their followers. Leaders must know what they expect of themselves and their followers before they can model specific behavior. Leader expectations are a crucial component in building a healthy culture. Several management and organizational leadership studies affirm what is called the Pygmalion effect, which hypothesizes a positive correlation between high leader expectations and increased follower performance. For example, in one study conducted by Dov Eden and A. B. Shani, 105 military trainees were evaluated during a fifteen-week combat command course. By the end of their assessment, Eden and Shani demonstrated a high correlation between leader expectations and follower performance. The trainees whose instructors expected high performance "scored significantly higher on objective achievement tests, exhibited more positive attitudes, and perceived more positive leadership behavior. Instructor expectancy explained 73% of the variance in performance, 66% in attitudes, and 28% in leadership."[1]

Similar studies conducted in the church have demonstrated analogous results. In their book *Essential Church?: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts*, Thom Rainer and Sam Rainer sought to discover why a large percentage of young adults have left the church and what churches must do to keep them. Their study, based on research conducted with one thousand dechurched young adults, led them to four conclusions. One

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[1] Dov Eden, and A. B. Shani, "Pygmalion Goes to Boot Camp: Expectancy, Leadership, and Trainee Performance," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 67 no. 2 (1982): 194-99.

conclusion was that "essential churches are, by their nature, high-expectation churches."[2] Part of their study concluded that high-expectation churches required members to complete a new members class, and 59 percent of those classes included an articulation of member expectations.[3] In many of those cases, churches articulated expectations such as attending at least one worship service weekly, committing to involvement with a Bible study group on Sunday morning, completing two discipleship courses every year, and being involved with at least one outreach or mission effort every year.[4] This ultimately led them to the conclusion: "The healthiest churches tend to have a healthy balance of reasonable expectations."[5]

These conclusions are not all that surprising. "Because people often behave in a manner consistent with expectations placed on them, leaders hold the power to influence followers positively when positive expectations are present in the leader-follower engagement."[6] It is also not surprising that the biblical narratives depict Jesus articulating the expectations he had of his followers. In Luke 14:25-35, Jesus describes his expectations of those who would follow him. The expectations set by Jesus are incredibly high for those who choose to follow him, but Jesus also recognizes the necessity of what he requires. Therefore, this chapter will examine the high expectations Jesus placed on his disciples, the reason for setting such high expectations, and why today's church leaders should set high expectations in their churches if they desire to implement an evangelistic culture.

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[2] Thom S. Rainer and Sam Rainer III, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville: B&H, 2008), 210.

[3] Rainer and Rainer, *Essential Church?*, 216.

[4] Rainer and Rainer, *Essential Church?*, 205.

[5] Rainer and Rainer, *Essential Church?*, 206.

[6] Justin Irving and Mark Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 81.

Context

A shift in focus occurs in Luke 14:25-35. Until now, Jesus had been in near-constant disputes with various religious leaders as he reshaped their understanding of the kingdom of God and their established religious beliefs.[7] As these confrontations concluded and Jesus neared Jerusalem, he focused on the crowds and described genuine discipleship. Luke's Gospel is nearing a climactic moment, and the Gospel writer begs the question: "If the Jewish leadership does not accurately teach the way to follow God, then what *is* required to follow God?"[8] The answer "constitutes the clearest and most demanding charge on discipleship in the Third Gospel."[9] If disciples want to follow God, they need to count the cost and make Jesus preeminent in their lives. Jesus was ensuring the crowds did not misunderstand his previous teachings, particularly in Luke 13:26-27, when he said, "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!'" Jesus wanted the crowds to understand what the religious leaders had been unable to comprehend: proximity to God did not equal genuine intimacy with him.

Therefore, Jesus described three costs of discipleship: if individuals were truly to follow him, they must "hate" their family, bear their cross, and renounce their possessions. He provided two analogies to demonstrate the cost of discipleship: a builder who counts the cost when constructing a tower, and a king who counts his troops before going to war. He concluded his exhortation on discipleship with a warning about the

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[7] For example, in Luke 12:1-3, Jesus warns "many thousands" of the leaven of the Pharisees in their presence. In 13:10-17, Jesus is confronted by a synagogue leader for healing a demon-possessed woman on the Sabbath. In 13:22-30, Jesus rebukes the religious for thinking their proximity to God is equal to genuine knowledge of God. In 14:1-6, Jesus is confronted again about healing on the Sabbath, this time by the Pharisees. In 14:7-24, Jesus confronts the religious leaders' understanding of who will enter the kingdom of God and who will not.

[8] Darrell Bock, *Luke*, vol. 2, *9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 1280.

[9] James Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 281.

"saltiness" of his followers. Just like true salt, Jesus's followers must act as a preservative in a dark and dying world, as well as a pleasant flavor in a world void of joy and hope.

The Cost of Discipleship

Throughout his Gospel, "Luke characterizes discipleship in terms of *coming to Jesus*."[10] Darrell Bock insightfully notes that Jesus is no minimalist when it comes to discipleship.[11] Those who will follow him must realize "it is not how little one can give that is the question, but how much God deserves."[12] Jesus made it clear that coming to him meant hearing his words and putting them into practice. However, as Edwards notes, "That call was left open, and a disciple might assume that coming to Jesus is one of several relationships he or she might enjoy and hearing the word of Jesus one of several words that he or she might hear."[13] But, for Luke, coming to Jesus does not mean including Jesus as one of many relationships or obeying him as one may obey any multitude of authorities. Rather, coming to Jesus "means acknowledging Jesus as the preeminent relationship in one's life, whose costly mission determines the *way* of one's life, and whose presence takes precedent over all *things* in life."[14] Therefore, Jesus set three high expectations for those who desired to come to him: his disciples must "hate" their families, bear their cross, and renounce their possessions.

First Cost: "Hating" the Family

In Luke 14:26, Jesus said, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple." It easy to see why this verse has caused such confusion

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[10] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 281.

[11] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1290.

[12] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 283.

[13] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 281.

[14] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 281.

and anxiety. Surely Jesus, "who summarized all God's commandments as loving God and one's neighbor (Lk. 10:27-28), could not here have been demanding blind, raging hatred of one's family."[15] Instead, as David Garland notes, Jesus was "using hyperbole to capture the seriousness of his demand. 'To hate' does not refer to enmity but is a Semitic expression that conveys indifference to one and preference for another: 'I love A and hate B,' which means 'I prefer A to B' (see Gen 29:30-33; Deut 21:15-17; Mal 1:2-3 Luke 16:13; Rom 9:13)."[16]

There are some who suggest that when Jesus says "hate" he means more than simply "love less than." John Nolland argues that "the point here is that where there is hate no 'ties that bind' limit one's freedom of action."[17] Nolland presses this thought further by noting, "There is likely to be an allusion to Deut 33:9 with its link in turn to Exod 32:27-29, where the Levites demonstrate that they are on the Lord's side by carrying out the required slaughter [of the Israelites] with a single-mindedness that disregarded their own family ties."[18] However, the parallel passage in Matthew 10:37-38 makes Jesus's meaning clear. Matthew records Jesus as saying, "Whoever loves father or mother *more than me* is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter *more than me* is not worthy of me" (emphasis added). Jesus was not demanding cold-blooded denial and enmity of one's relatives. Rather, he was making the point that "natural affections can undermine faithfulness to God and provide us with excuses to back down in our commitment."[19] Therefore, love of Jesus will supersede the love one has for one's family and friends.

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[15] Robert Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: B&H, 1993), 413.

[16] David Garland, *Luke*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 600.

[17] John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35B (Nashville: HarperCollins Christian, 1993), 762.

[18] Nolland, *Luke*, 762.

[19] Garland, *Luke*, 601.

Even so, to debate what Jesus means by "hate" somewhat misses the point. Jesus was not instructing his listeners about the characteristics of familial love; he was illustrating what is characteristic of faithfulness to God. As Edwards notes, the ultimate point is that

> the bonds of family and friendship are the strongest of all human social bonds, but even those bonds can be broken and twisted. The bond of fellowship with Christ is stronger than all earthly bonds, and it can never be broken. When a choice must be made between the strongest earthly bonds and Jesus, the disciple must choose the unbreakable bond with Jesus.[20]

In other words, disciples were required to choose what was best over what was good. When the good rivals the best, the good must be left behind and rejected.

The first cost of discipleship makes the point that true disciples will have such an allegiance to Jesus that their love for family will look like hate in comparison. Jesus was impressing upon those listening that discipleship was a fundamental claim of allegiance. To follow Jesus means he takes precedence—he must be the first love of the disciple's life, and nothing can stand in the way.

Second Cost: Bear Your Cross

The second demand made by Jesus is found in Luke 14:27. Jesus said, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple." He had previously made this claim in Luke 9:23: "And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Leon Morris notes that Luke 9:23 is "Luke's first use of the word 'cross' and it comes with striking effect. Christ's followers have died to a whole way of life."[21]

Bock points out the change in emphasis from the *decision* to enter into discipleship to the *process* of discipleship: "Because *bastazei*, (bears) and *erchetai*

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[20] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 282.

[21] Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and a Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: 1988), 189.

(comes) are both present tense verbs: 'whoever is not bearing and is not coming after me.'"[22] In other words, bearing one's cross and coming after Jesus is an ongoing and daily process. There is not a singular moment in which one picks up his cross only to lay it down later, but in ongoing commitment, disciples willingly choose "to bear the pain of persecution as a result of following Jesus."[23]

This is a startling cost, and "it is impossible to overemphasize the shame associated with crucifixion in the ancient world."[24] It is highly likely that "the disciples had probably seen a man take up his cross, and they knew what it meant. When a man from one of their villages took up a cross and went off with a little band of Roman soldiers, he was on a one-way journey. He would not be back. Taking up the cross meant the utmost in self-denial."[25]

There is no getting around the demand Jesus was making. Those who will follow him must come to the end of themselves, paralleling the previous verse in which potential disciples were told they must hate even their own lives. Those who do so will "live as though they were condemned to death by crucifixion."[26] Such individuals willingly give up the pursuit of fame and fortune and make it their life's obligation to identify with Jesus and his suffering.

Third Cost: Renouncing Possessions

The final cost set by Jesus is seen in Luke 14:33: "So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple." The verb translated "renounce" is more literally translated "to bid farewell, while here it has the figurative

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[22] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1286.

[23] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1286.

[24] Garland, *Luke*, 601.

[25] Morris, *Luke*, 189.

[26] Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 351.

meaning: to renounce, to get rid of, to break free from."[27] For example, this is what

Simon, James, and John did in Luke 5:11, and Levi in Luke 5:28, when it was reported

that they had left everything to follow Jesus. There is no evidence that Peter, James, John,

and Levi literally sold every possession they ever owned, and that is not what Jesus was

ultimately instructing in this passage. To do so would be merely another example of the

mechanical obedience to the letter of the law, a form of obedience that Jesus dramatically

opposed. Rather, when they left behind everything to follow him, they were leaving

behind their own hopes, dreams, and desires. Jesus and his desires and ambitions took

priority.

The cost of following Jesus requires more than "hating one's family, or bearing

a cross, but one must also distance oneself from materialistic attachment to the world."[28]

Those who choose to follow Jesus understand that doing so may require them to walk

away from everything they have ever known and desired. Jesus must be preeminent, and

nothing can stand in the way of following him. He becomes the sole focus of their life.

True disciples must lay aside "all competing securities in order that they might refashion

their lives and identity according to the norms of the kingdom of God."[29] Because "if

Jesus offers what he says he offers, then there can be no greater possession than

following him."[30]

Two Illustrations

During his discourse on the cost of discipleship, Jesus offered two illustrations

to highlight his point. In Luke 14:28-32 Jesus said,

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[27] Garland, *Luke*, 603. This word is used five other times in the New Testament (Mark 6:46; Luke 9:61; Acts 18:18; 2 Cor 2:13).

[28] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1289.

[29] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 352.

[30] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1290.

> For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

In both illustrations, Jesus "admonishes his hearers to forethought."[31] The decision to follow Jesus must not be made hastily because the cost is so high.

The first parable about building a tower "conjures up the mental images of a civic project, but the reference to 'one of you' (v. 28) suggests something everyday hearers might build."[32] No one would have built a tower of any magnitude in this day without first assessing the expense of the project and considering if the project could be completed. Jesus was making the point that "a wise decision involves reflection, not reaction."[33] To build a tower and not complete it announces to the world the imprudence and foolishness of the builder. Furthermore, "if the tower was built to guard against marauders, it will only serve to advertise weakness and may even become an invitation for attack."[34] For Jesus's listeners, to undertake such a project and fail would have made one the laughingstock of the community, "a state far worse in the honor-shame culture of Jesus' day than whatever the capital losses might be."[35] In relation to discipleship, Jesus was making the point "one should assess whether one is ready to take on the personal commitment and sacrifice required to follow Jesus."[36]

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[31] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 282.

[32] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 282. Edwards goes on to note, "The Greek word for 'tower' *pyrgos*, can refer to the tower of a fortress or city wall (13:4), but it can equally refer to a common watchtower in a vineyard (Mark 12:2), or any tall structure a landowner might build." However, the point is not dependent on the type of tower Jesus is envisioning but on the planning required to build it.

[33] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1287.

[34] Garland, *Luke*, 602.

[35] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 283.

[36] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1287.

The second parable about a king making war was also an appeal to forethought before making a rash decision. No king would hastily go out to make war against an army twice as large as his own without first considering if it were possible; if he discovered it was not possible, he would send out a delegation to make peace before war ensued. Likewise, "the disciple should assess discipleship in preparing to follow Jesus. It is foolish not to consider what it will take to be a disciple."[37]

The second parable differs slightly from that of the first in that in the first parable, the builder had the option whether or not he would build the tower. In the second parable, a decision of life and death is forced on the king. In the first parable, the builder had time to consider if building a tower was something he could afford to do. In the second, the king had to decide if going to war was something he could afford not to do. Bock notes, "The first parable pictures coming to Jesus; the second deals with following after him. First, consider what discipleship will cost. Second, consider what refusing will mean."[38] Leon Morris draws the same conclusion but more forcefully: "In the first parable, Jesus says, 'Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to follow me.' In the second, he says, 'Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to refuse my demands.'"[39] Either way, to follow Jesus is not a decision that is made one day, forsaken the next, and resumed sometime later. Jesus requires total allegiance from the start, and the cost must be considered.

Saltiness

Jesus concluded his teaching on discipleship with an analogy about salt. In Luke 14:34-35, Jesus said, "Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown

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[37] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1289.

[38] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1289.

[39] Morris, *Luke*, 254.

away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." In Jesus's day, salt was used for various purposes including "the temple cult where salt signified the covenant (Num 18:19) and was a requisite element in all Israelite sacrifices (Lev 2:13)."[40] However, Jesus was not referring to salt's religious function in these verses, but rather "to its two most important mundane functions, the preservation and seasoning of food."[41] In the context of discipleship, followers of Jesus will both preserve and season the world around them with the gospel.

Interestingly, the verb "loses its saltiness" or "loses its taste" "is translated everywhere else in the NT as 'to become foolish.'"[42] How can salt become foolish? It may be that "the reality part of this analogy, which involves the 'foolishness' of an unconsidered decision to follow Jesus, has intruded into the analogy itself, with the salt becoming equally worthless/foolish by losing its taste."[43] In other words, just as it would be foolish to follow Jesus without considering the high cost, it would be just as foolish of salt to lose its saltiness as it is then good for nothing. Bock offers a helpful analogy: "the modern idiom would be 'running out of gas.' 'Running out of gas' as a disciple is always the result of not having Jesus be primary."[44]

Ultimately, Jesus was answering the question, "How is one useful to the kingdom of God?" According to Bock, the answer is simple but striking: "To be of use to God, one must respond to Jesus. Useless 'discipleship' is of no value to God, while useful discipleship pays the price to serve Him."[45] How can one know if one is a true disciple? By being salty. And how can one know if one is salty? By making Jesus "more important

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[40] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 284.

[41] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 284.

[42] Stein, *Luke*, 399.

[43] Stein, *Luke*, 399.

[44] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1291.

[45] Bock, *Luke*, 2:1291.

than family and friends, even their own lives. By taking up their crosses and living as martyrs, and who forsaking the claims of possessions."[46] These followers are "savory salt who bring joy to God and make a palpable difference in the world."[47]

High Expectations in the Church

As mentioned, followers respond in a manner consistent with the expectations of their leaders. But the question must be asked, how can leaders set high expectations, and what do high-expectation churches look like, particularly as a church tries to create a culture of evangelism? This thesis asserts that organizations can create a culture of high expectations by sharing a common vision, enabling others to act, and expecting the best.[48]

Shared Common Vision

Speaking on organizational cultures, Aubrey Malphurs rightly says, "A shared organizational vision promotes a standard of excellence."[49] Little can be accomplished without a clear, compelling, and inspiring vision about what the future has in store. A church with a compelling vision for evangelism "has the potential to turn a maintenance mentality into a ministry mentality . . . and it generates the energy that fuels the accomplishment of the ministry task."[50] A shared common vision accomplishes three things for an organization.

A shared vision promotes a shared cause. First, a shared common vision promotes a shared cause among followers. Malphurs says, "With a shared vision, people

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[46] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 284.

[47] Edwards, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 284.

[48] Many of these concepts have been thoroughly researched and studied by James Kouzes and Barry Posner in *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012).

[49] Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 137.

[50] Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 129.

see themselves not just as another congregant or a 'pew warmer' but as a vital part of a church that is having a powerful impact on a lost and dying world. They are not simply in a church; they are on a crusade. They are part of a revolution that has the potential to change this world, to have a wonderful impact for Christ."[51] Such a shared vision creates a strong level of commitment and follower buy-in. For example, a church without a robust vision for evangelism may host evangelistic outreach events or take part in evangelistic endeavors, but only out of a sense of obligation and duty to fulfill a command found in Scripture. However, a church with a compelling and inspiring evangelistic vision will pursue evangelistic efforts not out of duty, but willingly, because they see themselves co-laboring with God to affect the eternal destinies of people in their community.

A shared vision prevents burnout. Second, a shared vision prevents burnout. Ministry, in particular evangelistic ministry, can be difficult especially when fruit is not immediate. However, Malphurs reiterates that a compelling vision "encourages people to look beyond the mundane and the pain of ministry. It keeps a picture in front of them that distracts from what is and announces what could be."[52] A shared vision keeps the focus on a better future. Alternatively, "When followers do not take ownership, their interest in and passion for a project are diminished. . . . A sense of ownership and an entrepreneurial spirit result in greater motivation toward success."[53]

A shared vision fosters goal setting. Finally, a shared vision fosters goal setting. When an organization knows where it is going, leaders and followers can create goals together to arrive at a preferred future. Charles Kelley notes,

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[51] Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 130.

[52] Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning*, 131.

[53] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 54.

> Most Christians would agree that it is important for people to be born again, but few churches set a goal of how many people they would like to win to Christ and baptize or how many times they would like to share the gospel in the community. To encourage a church to be more evangelistic, set a church goal for the number of people your congregation will seek to win to Christ or how many witnessing conversations members will have with others.[54]

Having a shared vision gives organizations permission to set goals to accomplish the vision. Without a well-stated vision, goals become arbitrary targets that may or may not be moving the organization forward.

Enable Others to Act

Even if an organization has a strong shared vision, little will be accomplished without followers who are enabled and empowered to act. If the vision of an organization is to be truly realized, followers must not only be given permission but also authority to act and function in ways that promote and advance the vision. John Kotter comes to the same conclusion: "Major internal transformation rarely happens unless many people assist. Yet employees generally won't help or can't help, if they feel relatively powerless."[55] Enabling and empowering followers to act is crucial in order for an organization to set high expectations. Therefore, to enable others to act, church leaders must create the right structure, provide the necessary training, and demonstrate trust.

Create the right structure. First, churches must create the right structure. This does not mean churches must abandon a church polity they believe to be biblically warranted, but it does mean churches must consider if their structures enable congregants to perform ministry on their own that aligns with the vision of the church. Kotter notes, "Whenever structural barriers are not removed in a timely way, the risk is that employees will become so frustrated that they will sour on the entire transformational effort."[56]

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[54] Charles Kelley, *Fuel the Fire: Lessons from the History of Southern Baptist Evangelism*, ed. Paige Patterson (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 206.

[55] John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Brighton, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 105.

[56] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 110.

Regardless of what church polity is in place, Ephesians 4:11-12 still applies to every church: "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

Mark Dever says there are two things to notice in these verses: "First, church leaders equip us. Second, they equip us for the work of the ministry of building up the body of Christ."[57] In other words, the Bible expects that members of local churches are empowered by their leaders to perform ministry on their own. This same pattern is seen in the ministry of Jesus. In Mark 6, Jesus sent out the twelve apostles two-by-two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits and authority to proclaim the gospel. In Luke 10, Jesus sent out seventy-two more disciples two-by-two, giving them the same authority. Jesus was not seeking to retain the sole ability to share the gospel, and church leaders should also find ways to enable and empower their members for ministry.

Provide necessary training. If people are enabled to act, they must also be provided with the necessary training. Unfortunately, while providing an overview for what evangelistic training could look like, several works bemoan that training must take place at all. For example, David Beck, professor of New Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, writes,

> How did people in the first century get saved without attending an evangelism training seminar? Did Paul invent the FAITH outline, did Peter ever go through CWT, and did James write the *Four Spiritual Laws* booklet? What night of the week was the early church evangelism outreach? Inquiring minds want to know! Why did none of the New Testament authors write and circulate an evangelism how-to manual? Paul may not have been Beth Moore or Bruce Wilkinson, but in his day his material was among the most widely read by the evangelical demographic market. It would seem that evangelism was not something planned or programmed by the early church. Yet consistently and constantly, "The Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved [Acts 2:47]."[58]

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[57] Mark Dever, *Understanding Church Leadership* (Nashville: B&H, 2016), 46.

[58] David R. Beck, "Evangelism in Luke-Acts: More than an Outreach Program," *Faith & Mission* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 86.

Beck ultimately concludes the early church did "not appear to have programmed their evangelistic outreach or to have been trained in any special seminar. Instead, evangelism happened naturally."[59] Beck clarifies, "This is not to denigrate any modern training or programming for intentional evangelism," and emphatically states, "Modern motivational means and programming to ensure a church's evangelistic outreach are a confession of the failure to be the New Testament church."[60] Beck goes so far as to say that while churches should do whatever it takes to get their congregations evangelizing, they must also readily repent of the fact that special training and programming are necessary.[61] Such statements lead to similar sentiments, including this observation from Matt Queen: "In one sense, the Gospel your church members heard when they first believed is the only evangelism training they should ever need."[62]

While such thoughts may sound noble, they are only wishful thinking and do not concur with research. Thom Rainer's work posited that "a significant reason for using evangelism training is the evangelistic attitude it engenders throughout the church."[63] In a similar study conducted in Georgia Baptist churches, Steve Parr and Tom Crites reported that "churches that provided personal evangelism training baptized 20.6% more than those who did not provide training."[64] Another related study concluded that that only 23 percent of Georgia Baptist churches provided evangelism training, but by contrast, "87%

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[59] Beck, "Evangelism in Luke-Acts," 101.

[60] Beck, "Evangelism in Luke-Acts," 101.

[61] Beck, "Evangelism in Luke-Acts," 101-2.

[62] Matt Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize: The Pastor and Effective Congregational Evangelism* (Fort Worth: TX, Seminary Hill Press, 2018), 83. Queen comes to this conclusion after extensively quoting the same article by Beck. Queen admits that most church members do not feel they have received adequate training to evangelize confidently, so he provides a helpful training outline, but he does so almost begrudgingly.

[63] Thom S. Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches: Successful Churches Reveal What Works and What Doesn't* (Nashville: Broadman, 1996), 39.

[64] Steve Parr and Thomas Crites, "Evangelistic Effectiveness: A Research Report" (paper presented at the annual Georgia Baptist Convention, Duluth, Georgia, June 19-20, 2012), 35.

of the top evangelistic churches in Georgia intentionally provided personal evangelism training for their members."[65] Charles Kelley concludes that the decline in evangelistic training offered in Southern Baptist churches has led to an overall decline in evangelism:

> Today's focus is on inspirational events and some instruction designed for pastors rather than churches. Providing a tool to use is a higher priority than providing a training process to use the tool. . . . Perhaps it would be accurate to say that the more profound change among Southern Baptist churches is the steadily growing apathy toward personal evangelism tools and processes.[66]

Certainly, personal evangelism training not only helps create a culture of evangelism within the church, but it also develops better evangelists. It is not enough to only enable others to act, but followers must also be equipped to act. Irving and Strauss reiterate,

> Those who are empowered but not equipped run the danger of failure. When followers have not been developed through proper direction and equipping, it is unreasonable to expect followers to perform as needed. . . . But when followers are both equipped and empowered, leaders and developed followers are able to work together in service of their shared organizational goals.[67]

Demonstrate trust. Finally, leaders can enable their followers to act by demonstrating trust in them. James Kouzes and Barry Posner have concluded, "Trust is built when we make ourselves vulnerable to other people whose subsequent behavior we cannot control."[68] For an organization to be effective and especially for followers to be empowered, leaders must be willing to collaborate with others and delegate authority. Robert Hurley, the author of *The Decision to Trust: How Leaders Create High Trust Organizations*, argues that organizations that do not empower their people nurture a culture of distrust, thereby stunting the performance and ability of the organization.

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[65] Steve Parr et al., "Georgia's Top Evangelistic Churches: Ten Lessons from the Most Effective Churches" (paper presented to at the annual Georgia Baptist Convention, Jonesboro, Georgia, November 11-12, 2008), 8.

[66] Kelley, *Fuel the Fire*, 85.

[67] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 27.

[68] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 248.

Specifically, he says, "Subordinates with little authority, and thus no recourse, feel more vulnerable than those with power. They are less comfortable trusting. A corporate culture that is characterized by powerlessness, and therefore nurtures distrust, is one of the central impediments to building a high-performance, high-trust, organization."[69] Therefore, what can leaders do to build trust?

Kouzes and Posner are emphatic that one way leaders can gain trust is by showing concern for followers. They conclude, "The concern you show for others is one of the clearest and most unambiguous signals of your trustworthiness. When others know you will put their interests ahead of your own, they won't hesitate to trust you."[70] Kouzes and Posner go on to say that how you demonstrate concern and care does not have to be difficult or complicated. They suggest "actions such as listening, paying attention to followers' ideas and concerns, helping them solve their problems, and being open to their influence. When you show your openness to their ideas and your interest in their concerns, people will be more open to yours."[71]

Translated to church leadership, this looks like pastors listening to church members' ideas about how to best evangelize their communities. The reality is that in many established churches, long-time congregants naturally know and understand their community better than a transplanted pastor. Therefore, pastors should listen to the advice from members about what evangelism strategies would work best. It is also a reality that many church members are hesitant and resistant to sharing their faith. Pastors

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[69] Robert Hurley, *The Decision to Trust: How Leaders Create High Trust Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 29. Hurley's research fully concludes that "relative power" is one of three "trustor factors" that help explain different individuals' disposition to trust. The other two trustor factors include risk tolerance and psychological adjustment (30). These three factors, when also assessed with seven situational factors that define the antecedent to trust as they relate to the situation and one's relationship with the trustee, can help leaders understand how to better build trust both corporately and individually (29-38).

[70] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 201-2.

[71] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 202.

can build trust and influence by genuinely listening to these concerns and fears and gently

discipling those under their care to share their faith.

Kouzes and Posner also say leaders can build trust by sharing knowledge and

information. People want assurance that their leaders are competent and know what they

are doing. Specifically, they suggest,

> One way to demonstrate your competence is to share what you know and encourage others to do the same. You can convey your insight and know-how, share lessons learned from experience, and connect team members to valuable resources and people. Leaders who play this role of knowledge builder set the example for how team members should behave towards each other.[72]

While the axiom "information is power" may ring true, several studies conclude that

leaders who attempt to retain and safeguard information hinder productivity and foster a

culture of distrust.[73]

In church leadership, this looks like leaders sharing how they practice

evangelism and being honest and transparent enough to share unsuccessful stories or even

times when they were too intimidated or unsure of their capabilities to share. Such

transparency and openness will pay huge dividends in establishing an evangelistic culture

in the church.

Expecting the Best

Finally, church leaders can set high expectations by expecting the best of their

church and members. As was said at the start of this chapter, several management and

organizational leadership studies affirm what is called the Pygmalion effect. Nicole

Kierein and Michael Gold explain that the Pygmalion effect "involves a person or a

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[72] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 205.

[73] For examples, see Celia Zárraga and Jaime Bonache, "Assessing the Team Environment for Knowledge Sharing: An Empirical Analysis," *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 14 no. 7 (2003): 1227-45; Abhishek Srivastava, Kathryn Bartol, and Edwin Locke, "Empowering Leadership in Management Teams: Effects on Knowledge Sharing, Efficacy, and Performance," *Academy of Management Journal* 49 no. 6 (2017): 1239-51; Pauline Lee, Nicole Gillespie, and Alexander Wearing, "Leadership and Trust: Their Effect on Knowledge Sharing and Team Performance," *Management Learning* 41 no. 4 (2010): 473-91.

group of people acting in accordance with the expectations of another. That person or group may, on some level, internalize the higher expectations placed on them and then act in ways to fulfill those expectations."[74] Proper training and passionate vision casting can certainly inspire individuals to achieve high expectations, "but research supports the role of leaders in providing additional support for followers through appreciation and positive expectation."[75] Positive expectation and helpful productive feedback enable change and culture renewal to take place much more readily. Edgar Schein notes followers who are coerced into change are not likely to see any progress as better regardless of how positive the change may be.[76]

In creating an evangelistic culture, Matt Queen says that this is understanding "what we celebrate is what we are communicating as most important."[77] He continues,

> Whatever you celebrate is what you're telling people is most important to you. If your church mainly celebrates the budget and offering, then people will evaluate your success and failures based on the bottom dollar. As a leader, if you're mainly celebrating worship attendance, then the congregation will be discipled into believing measures of success—numbers up means God is blessing, numbers down must mean that God is not pleased and it may be time for a new pastor. However, communicating the Gospel and celebrating the lives that are being transformed by it every week is telling your congregation that this is the most important thing we could be doing.[78]

Conclusion

Church leaders should not be hesitant to set high expectations for their church members. Research shows that the higher the expectations, the greater the likelihood

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[74] Nicole Kierein and Michael Gold, "Pygmalion in Work Organizations: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 21 no. 8 (2000): 913-14.

[75] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 81.

[76] Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), 333.

[77] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 75.

[78] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 75-76.

members will stay and be involved in the church.[79] Pastors should communicate that evangelism is expected in the life of the congregation, that ministries are expected to have an evangelistic focus, and that a pattern of practicing evangelism should be seen in someone's life prior to assuming leadership in the church. While this may seem strict, it does not mean expectations are given as ultimatums. Rather, leaders and followers are holding one another accountable, modeling the behavior outlined in the expectations, and helping one another move forward. Such practices will tremendously help in establishing a new culture in the existing organization.

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[79] Thom S. Rainer, *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret for Keeping People in Your Church* (Nashville: B&H, 1999), 1-10.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Healthy organizational cultures promote organizational success. Patrick Lencioni says that once organizational health is appropriately understood, "it will surpass all other business disciplines as the greatest opportunity for improvement and competitive advantage."[1] Recent research documented by D. D. Warrick has concluded that "culture can have a significant influence on performance, morale, job satisfaction, employee engagement and loyalty, employee attitudes and motivation, turnover, commitment to the organization, and efforts to attract and retain talented employees."[2] John Kotter and James Heskett showed early on how important organizational culture was to organizational performance. After an eleven-year study, they concluded that organizations with healthy cultures increased revenues by an average of 682 percent compared to non-healthy organizational cultures, which increased revenue by only 166 percent.[3] Moreso, their research showed that organizations with healthy organizational cultures outperformed those with unhealthy cultures in nearly every business measure. Organizations with healthy cultures expanded their workforces, grew their stock prices, and improved net incomes better than those with unhealthy cultures.[4] It becomes clear why organizational culture is critical to organizational performance.

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[1] Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 4.

[2] D. D. Warrick, "What Leaders Need to Know About Organizational Culture," *Business Horizons* 60 no. 3 (2017): 396.

[3] John Kotter and James Heskett, *Corporate Culture and Performance* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 11.

[4] Kotter and Heskett, *Corporate Culture and Performance*, 11.

However, the necessity of cultivating a healthy organizational culture is not only true for secular businesses but is also crucial for churches. Christian authors Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro speak just as objectively to the church's organizational culture, saying, "Culture is the most important societal reality in your church. Though invisible to the untrained eye, its power is undeniable. Culture gives color and flavor to everything your church is and does. . . . It can prevent your church's potential from ever being realized or . . . it can draw others in and reproduce healthy spiritual life."[5]

In his book *Center Church*, Tim Keller practically and sublimely describes how culture affects the inner workings of the church:

> Keep in mind that the church's *model* and *core values* shape the service. Every church should do worship, evangelism, teaching, community building, and service, but every model relates these elements to one another in different ways. . . . The traditional/free church approach places more emphasis on *instructing* the worshipper, while the praise/worship approach aims to *exalt and uplift* the worshipper, and the seeker-sensitive approach aims to *uplift* the worshipper while it *evangelizes* the non-Christians present. Our own church model will lead us to either use one of these approaches or mix together various aspects.[6]

Culture shapes everything about an organization, whether it is realized or not. Developing a healthy church culture, and in particular a healthy evangelistic culture, is crucial to establishing a thriving church. While the concept of organizational culture can be vague and hard to define, it cannot be ignored. Culture has the capacity to enable a church to fulfill its mission or not.

This thesis contends that the evangelism crisis faced in many churches today is the result of unhealthy church cultures. For the purposes of this thesis, organizational culture was defined as the collectively shared values, convictions, and behaviors that function as the organization's worldview and exist to allow life within the organization to

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[5] Robert Lewis and Wayne Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*: *Transforming Your Church from the inside Out* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 3.

[6] Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 301.

flourish. Stated more simply, every church has a basic set of values, convictions, and behaviors that are shared for the purpose of advancing the mission of the church. The question becomes, what mission is being advanced by the values, convictions, and behaviors of the congregation? Pastors and church leaders must cultivate the values, convictions, and behaviors of their people so the culture of the church advances an evangelistic mission.

This thesis began by arguing that established church cultures can be changed and has concluded that they are most effectively reshaped using the teaching methodologies of Jesus, specifically direct instruction, confrontation, and setting high expectations. As pastors and church leaders develop their use of these methods, they can see the culture of their church change over time.

Research Applications

For pastors and church leaders who are interested in shaping the culture of an established congregation, this thesis firmly concludes that preaching and teaching are critical to that effort and provides three methods by which pastors can teach their congregations. Not all teaching is the same, and various teaching styles are needed to embed a new culture and new way of thinking into an organization. Jesus taught his disciples using direct instruction, confrontation, and high expectations; this research has shown that each of these ways of teaching is necessary for a church to establish an evangelistic culture.

Direct Instruction

For pastors seeking to establish an evangelistic culture, direct instruction is crucial. If pastors are going to reshape an established organizational culture, they "must

have a clear and compelling message worth communicating."[7] In terms of creating a highly evangelistic culture, pastors must know what they intend to communicate about evangelism. They must have a philosophy of evangelism, a method of evangelism, and the ability to teach evangelism to the congregation. When Jesus instructed his disciples how to pray, he was able to do so because of the practices in his own private prayer life. The direct instruction Jesus provided to his disciples about prayer was the result of a request made by one of the disciples to teach them how to pray. The disciples were greatly aware of Jesus's prayer life because they had witnessed him pray and recognized there was something different about how he prayed. Therefore, the disciples "sought a prayer that would express the distinctive piety that Jesus' own life had expressed and into which he had drawn the disciple band."[8] For direct instruction to be effective, teachers and leaders must demonstrate to their followers that they have something worth teaching. This means a congregation needs to see evangelism practiced in the life of the pastor before direct instruction can begin. The pastor or leader's life ought to entice his followers to want to learn more.

It should not be thought, though, that direct instruction only means lectures, or in the case of church leadership, sermons. This thesis has demonstrated that while Jesus did verbally instruct his followers, his direct instruction took on several other forms, such as modeling desired behavior, repeating central themes, and storytelling. In Luke 11:1-13, Jesus modeled the action he expected of his disciples when he taught them how to pray, repeated the theme of the fatherhood of God throughout his teaching discourse, and utilized stories that would resonate with the disciples. Modeling these actions reinforced the new beliefs he was attempting to instill in them. Pastors and church leaders should

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[7] Justin Irving and Mark Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 118.

[8] John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35B (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian, 1993), 612.

recognize that there is more than one way to provide direct instruction. The methods utilized by Jesus should be used by pastors and church leaders as they attempt to reshape established church cultures and create a thriving evangelistic environment.

Modeling desired actions. The axiom "actions speak louder than words" is true in leadership and organizational change efforts. Ken Blanchard rightly remarks, "The leader, above all, has to be a walking example of the vision. Leaders who say, 'Do as I say, not as I do' are ineffective in the long run."[9] Leaders who fail to model the values, convictions, and behaviors they desire from their followers are at best weak leaders and at worst hypocritical. In fact, recent research in the field of servant leadership demonstrates the importance of modeling. Researchers Don Page and Paul Wong conclude, "Excellent leaders in high-involvement and high-impact teams model for others by setting a personal example in meeting high standards and invest considerable energy to champion the common goals of the organization."[10] This is precisely what Luke portrays Jesus doing throughout his ministry. The reason Jesus's disciples knew they could ask him to teach them to pray is because they had personally witnessed his prayer life and knew he had something to offer. In Luke's Gospel, the disciples saw Jesus "withdraw to desolate places and pray" (5:16) and would likely have known about his night of prayer prior to calling them as disciples (6:12-13). The other Gospel writers also present Jesus modeling a life of prayer in front of his disciples (Matt 14:1-13; Mark 6:30-32; Luke 22:39-44).

In the life of the church, this means that the pastor and church leaders must model the way of evangelism if they truly desire to embed an evangelistic culture.

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[9] Ken Blanchard, Scott Blanchard, and Drea Zigarmi, "Servant Leadership," in *Leading at a Higher Level*, by Blanchard Management Corporation (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2010), 279.

[10] Don Page and Paul Wong, "A Conceptual Framework for Measuring Servant-Leadership," in *The Human Factor in Shaping the Course of History and Development*, ed. S. Adjibolooso (Washington, DC: American University Press, 2000), 75.

Evidence shows "pastors who emphasize evangelistic fervor and participate in the Great

Commission with their people in various ways are growing."[11] C. E. Autrey bluntly

states,

> The place of the pastor in the evangelism of the local church is strategic. If he is
> evangelistic, the church will ordinarily be evangelistic. The degree to which the
> pastor is evangelistic will be reflected in the church. If he is lukewarm, the church
> will very likely be lukewarm. If he is intensely evangelistic, the church will reflect
> the warmth and concern of the pastor.[12]

People look for someone to follow. As the disciples looked to Jesus to model prayer, so

too do congregations look to their pastors to model evangelism. Matt Queen expresses

this reality: "If the members of churches never see or hear of their pastor pastors'

evangelizing, their pastors will rarely, if ever, see of or hear of it in their congregants."[13]

Ultimately, modeling desired actions "involves identifying priorities for the

organization and then translating these priorities into meaningful action."[14] It is not

enough for pastors to have a private expectation that evangelism should occur; pastors

must identify evangelism as a priority and communicate it as such. Matt Queen says, "If a

pastor does not habitually communicate his weekly evangelistic expectations of himself,

his staff, and his church, at best, his congregation and staff will assume that he does not

have such expectations, and at worst, that he has not set any evangelistic expectations."[15]

In terms of modeling evangelistic effort, pastors can demonstrate their expectations by

bringing church members with them when they witness, making evangelism an

intentional practice when in the community, and sharing stories in sermons of how his

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[11] Aaron Colyer, "Church Revitalization and Evangelistic Emphasis: A Mixed Methods Study" (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 96.

[12] C. E. Autrey, *Basic Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 63.

[13] Matt Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize: The Pastor and Effective Congregational Evangelism* (Fort Worth: TX, Seminary Hill Press, 2018), 66.

[14] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 25.

[15] Queen, *Mobilize to Evangelize*, 66.

evangelism efforts are proceeding. When members see evangelism modeled for them, they will naturally begin to implement the same practices themselves.

Repeating central themes. A natural result of pastors modeling evangelism is that the necessity and priority of evangelism will consistently be repeated. This is critical because new values, convictions, and behaviors must be repeated in order to embed them in an organization. This was seen in the ministry of Jesus in Luke 11, as he continued to instruct his disciples about prayer. For example, in his model prayer, Jesus not only told his disciples they could refer to God as Father (11:2), but he also reiterated the fatherhood of God in his concluding parable about the kindness of earthly fathers versus the kindness of the heavenly Father (11:11-13). Moreso, Jesus taught his disciples they should be persistent in prayer (11:9-10) and reinforced this truth later in Luke when he told the parable of the persistent widow (18:1-8). Finally, Jesus told his disciples they could ask God for their most basic daily needs (11:3) and repeated the claim by way of illustration when he described one man going to his neighbor at midnight to ask for a small loaf of bread (11:5).

John Kotter says that repetition is required because "all successful cases of major change seem to include tens of thousands of communications that help employees to grapple with different intellectual and emotional issues."[16] Practically, Kotter says this looks like "a sentence here, a paragraph there, two minutes in the middle of a meeting, five minutes at the end of a conversation, three quick references in a speech— collectively, these brief mentions can add up to a massive amount of useful communication, which is generally what is needed to win over both hearts and minds."[17] Wayne Cordeiro and Robert Lewis call this "living and teaching."[18] They conclude that

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[16] John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Brighton, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 96.

[17] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 97.

[18] Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*, 62.

for a culture shift to occur in an established church, pastors must "walk their church through their totems."[19] This can be done "from the pulpit in a sermon series, displaying the vision in key and appropriate places, and discussing the vision in small groups or Sunday school classes with elders or other leaders present for dialogue."[20] Aubrey Malphurs also stresses the importance of constantly repeating central themes and offers churches sixteen "practical values-casting methods."[21] He says,

> Keep in mind that leaders need to constantly communicate the core values, as well as the vision, using as many methods as possible. Regular values casting affirms and reaffirms primary beliefs. When this does not take place, people begin to assume that the beliefs are not really important or that the leaders are no longer committed to them or that the beliefs may be changing.[22]

This is known as "saturation"[23] in organizational change literature. Saturation "means involving every person in ministry 'vehicle' possible with every medium possible."[24] Many change experts recommend leaders begin the saturation process by "expanding their awareness of potential communication mediums."[25] Pastors must find ways to continually place the priority and value of evangelism before their people. This can be a sermon series on evangelism, frequently providing resources about evangelism, or asking people in the hallway how their evangelism efforts are going. Going further,

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[19] Lewis and Cordeiro use the word totem to describe a church's "core spiritual values and practices, signifying their culture and the atmosphere they want to build. Totems are the guiding values that birth the unique culture of a church." Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*, 43. Therefore, they prescribe that pastors and church leaders must first identify their church's current totems, or values, and then slowly replace these values over time to embed a new culture.

[20] Lewis and Cordeiro, *Culture Shift*, 62-63.

[21] Aubrey Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership: Discovering and Developing Your Core Values for Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 109. Malphurs' sixteen values casting methods include the leaders' life (behavioral modeling), the written credo, the leaders' message, formal and informal conversation, stories, programs, visual images, language and metaphors, a brochure, videos, celebrations and heroes, cartoons, skits and drama, newcomers class, and performance appraisals (109-23).

[22] Aubrey Malphurs, *Values Driven Leadership*, 109.

[23] Will Mancini and Warren Bird, *God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing Your Church's Future* (Nashville: B&H, 2016), 189.

[24] Mancini and Bird, *God Dreams*, 189.

[25] Mancini and Bird, *God Dreams*, 190.

church leaders should consider how they can foster a culture of evangelism through other means, such as using the church's social media accounts, utilizing other digital resources such as the church website or a church-wide email, or promoting evangelism in graphic form using signage or bulletins. The goal is to saturate listeners again and again with the central message that evangelism is important and a priority.

Storytelling. The evangelism crisis facing churches is a result of the complacency of many towards evangelism. This thesis has demonstrated though "a purposeful use of stories can shift people from complacency to action."[26] This is precisely because "to be human is be drawn to stories—powerfully drawn."[27] Jesus was a masterful storyteller, and "his favorite teaching device was the parable."[28] Included in these parables were "down to earth examples from everyday life . . . that identified with the people and made his point accessible to virtually everyone."[29] In his efforts to reshape the religious understandings of those around him, Jesus knew if he tried to impart this knowledge in a way that was unfamiliar to his listeners, he would have encountered even more resistance to change.

Stephen Denning says stories are so effective in change efforts because

> stories excite the imagination of the listener and create consecutive states of tension (puzzlement and recoil) and tension release (insight and resolution). Thus, the listener is not a passive receiver of information but is triggered into a state of active thinking. The listener must consider the meaning of the story and try to make sense of it. By this process, the listener is engaged; attention and interest are fostered.[30]

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[26] North McKinnon, "We've Never Done It This Way Before: Prompting Organizational Change through Stories," in *Wake Me Up When the Data Is Over: How Organizations Use Stories to Drive Results*, ed. Lori Silverman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 95.

[27] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Tell Me the Stories of Jesus: The Explosive Power of Jesus' Parables* (Nashville: HarperCollins, 2022), xii.

[28] Walter Elwell and Robert Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 126.

[29] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 126.

[30] Stephen Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling: Mastering the Art and Discipline of Business Narrative* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 37.

Consider this in light of the parable Jesus shared in Luke 11 about the man who awakened his neighbor at midnight. The entire scene Jesus depicted in this story would have been audacious to his listeners. How could the man not have any food prepared to give his late-night visitor? How dare he bang on the door of his neighbor at midnight? And yet, despite the terrible inconvenience and abruptness, of course the neighbor will open the door and give him some bread; he would not allow the community to be shamed, would he? All this build-up would have created the consecutive states of tension to which Stephen Denning refers. Then Jesus answers the question for them. Of course, the neighbor will open his door and give him what he needs (providing tension release) because whoever seeks from God, like the impudent neighbor who sought his friend, will receive what he seeks, because God is better than any earthly father or friend. All this combined would have made Jesus's listeners consider what he was saying and try to make sense of it. They would have heard this story and been forced to consider their understanding of God, thereby reshaping their religious beliefs.

How can today's pastors and church leaders use stories to reshape the organizational cultures of their churches? First, pastors utilizing stories must keep them "focused, simple and clear."[31] Jesus's stories do not contain unnecessary details, they do not meander with a plethora of characters and locations, and they quickly reach their point. The best storytellers "present stories on the basis of what happened."[32] They "do not acknowledge ambiguities, qualifications, or doubts"[33] but decide the purpose of their story and share it quickly and effectively.

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[31] Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, 45.

[32] Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, 45.

[33] Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, 45.

Second, the best storytellers "present the story as something valuable in itself."[34] The value of stories comes from selecting "elements that are common knowledge and are put together in a way that gives them broader significance."[35] Doing so provides listeners with meaning and understanding that they may not have reached on their own. Storytellers help their listeners connect the dots and provide meaning to concepts that may be foreign or not readily accepted.

Specifically, pastors and church leaders should tell stories of fruitful evangelism efforts, share personal testimonies of how people they have evangelized came to faith, and tell stories of their own evangelism experiences—both good and bad—to help reinforce the priority of evangelism. Pastors could even create their own parables that communicate the importance and urgency of evangelism in their sermons. Moreso, the congregation should hear stories from other lay members in the church about their evangelism efforts. Such stories communicate that evangelism is the work of every believer and fruitful evangelistic encounters can be had by anyone.

Confrontation

Beyond direct instruction, this thesis contends that when reshaping an organizational culture, confrontation is sometimes necessary. In any change effort there will be resistors. In fact, "resistance is a perennial concept in the organizational change literature."[36] It is well-known that many Christians are resistant to evangelizing. Jonathan Dodson's research concludes there are four main hesitancies, which he calls "defeaters" or "reasons not to share the gospel."[37] For many Christians, evangelism is seen as either

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[34] Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, 46.

[35] Denning, *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, 46.

[36] Laurie Lewis, *Organizational Change: Creating Change through Strategic Communication* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 177.

[37] Jonathan Dodson, *The Unbelievable Gospel: Say Something Worth Believing* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 35.

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"too impersonal, too self-righteous, too intolerant, or they feel uninformed as a witness."[38] Current Barna research also indicates that while nearly all professing Christians believe "part of my faith means being a witness about Jesus," a growing number of Christians also agree "it is wrong to share one's personal beliefs with someone of a different faith in hopes that they will one day share the same faith."[39]

While pastors and church leaders would agree these beliefs are incorrect and should be confronted, they must also remember how Jesus confronted those with incorrect beliefs about God. Jesus's most confrontational and stern rebukes were consistently aimed at religious leaders who eagerly examined the external actions of others but never examined the internal condition of their own hearts. To the humble and struggling listeners, Jesus always exuded the utmost gentleness and care when addressing beliefs and actions that were contrary to the heart of God. Ken Sande recalls an example of this in the ministry of Jesus: "Jesus did not directly confront the Samaritan woman at the well about living in adultery. Instead, he approached the issue indirectly by using questions and discussion that engaged her in the process of thinking about and assessing her own life."[40] This approach is quite different from the way Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees in Luke 11. Pastors should recognize that in large part, their relationship with their congregation mirrors the relationship Jesus had with his disciples, and "Jesus's correction always had the goal of spiritual growth."[41] However, pastors should not place Jesus's confrontational style in a false dichotomy. When it comes to confrontation in the church, pastors can feel as though they have no good option. They "would like to say

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[38] Dodson, *The Unbelievable Gospel*, 35-104.

[39] Barna Research, "Almost Half of Practicing Christian Millennials Say Evangelism Is Wrong," last modified February 5, 2019, https://www.barna.com/research/millennials-oppose-evangelism/.

[40] Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 145.

[41] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 138.

something—but not something abrasive or rude that could lead to an altercation."[42] When it comes to confrontation, "leaders . . . need to resist silence and violence as the only two options."[43] How then can leaders effectively false values, beliefs or convictions that prevent a new culture from being embedded in the organization?

Content, pattern, relationship. The authors of *Crucial Accountability* offer the acronym CPR (content, pattern, and relationship) to give direction to confrontational conversations.[44] When a first infraction occurs, one should address the content of the violation. In a church this could look like a pastor saying to a ministry leader, "At the finance meeting, I noticed you did not allocate any money to evangelistic efforts next year." This response is polite and non-aggressive but also confronts the issue and allows the pastor to stress the importance of evangelism. It even allows the confronted individual to make an immediate correction.

At the second violation, one should talk about patterns and inconsistencies that have occurred over time. For example, a pastor may say to the same ministry leader, "I noticed in the budget meeting you did not allocate any resources towards evangelism, and you also have not participated in any of our outreach opportunities this summer. I want to make sure you understand how important evangelism is to our vision as a church." This approach still politely raises concerns about the content of infraction but also makes the individual aware that their pattern of behavior is not acceptable and a different behavior is expected.

Finally, if there is no change in behavior, one should talk about the relationship. The authors of *Crucial Accountability* state this well: "Relationship

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[42] Kerry Patterson et al., *Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2013), 8.

[43] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 141.

[44] Patterson et al., *Crucial Accountability*, 24.

concerns are far bigger than either the content or the pattern. The issue is not that other people have repeatedly broken promises; it's that the string of disappointments has caused you to lose trust in them."[45] Returning to the previous example, the pastor may say to the offending ministry leader, "I am afraid this issue is starting to affect how we work together, and I am concerned we may not see eye to eye on what we want to accomplish as a church. It concerns me that you are giving the wrong impression to our congregation about the value of evangelism." Focusing on the relationship politely but directly shows how the offending party's actions are hurting more than just organizational goals; these actions are also affecting their relationship with those around them.

What do you really want? When conflict occurs, it can be easier to address peripheral concerns that are not the true cause of the conflict because, in the emotion of the moment, it can be difficult to believe a false narrative about the offense that has occurred. When followers make mistakes, leaders are "prone to interpret the problem as being due to the person, not their situation or circumstances."[46] Pastors and church leaders need to take time to process the issue before entering conflict so they can be as objective as possible. Leaders should ask themselves questions such as, "Were there circumstances outside of this person's control that made it difficult for them to meet expectations?" "Was I unclear in what I expected of them?" "Were they not properly equipped to do what was expected of them?" "Does this individual need more coaching, training, or mentoring to better accomplish what has been asked of them?" Taking time to ask such questions, and even asking these questions during the conflict, can make the conversation much more productive.

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[45] Patterson et al., *Crucial Accountability*, 25.

[46] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 141.

Researchers also suggest "prioritizing" or asking yourself "what you want for yourself, for the other person, and for the relationship."[47] Prioritizing is asking what you hope to achieve from the confrontation. Returning to the previous example, the pastor's main issue is not how the budget meeting ran long, but that no funds were allocated towards evangelism efforts. Perhaps the ministry leader forgot to call and say he would be unable to attend the summer outreach events. The pastor's main concern is not the ministry leader's violation of a policy, although that may be a problem, but what he truly wants to confront is the leader's lack of willingness to help promote evangelism in front of the church. Confronting the issue of not calling in advance does nothing to solve the real problem. Leaders must prioritize what issues are worth confronting because "there are times for leaders simply to bear a pain, offense, or annoyance. Other times, they need to confront this offense because the consequences of ignoring it will damage the leader-follower relationship, the culture of the team or organization, or the organization's capacity to carry out its mission effectively and serve others."[48] Such conversations may be uncomfortable but at times are necessary. However, leaders must remember "all leadership is a magnet for pain, which comes in many forms."[49] Because pastors know the health and spiritual vitality of their churches and people are important, they are willing to step into unpleasant conversations when necessary.

Setting High Expectations

Although confrontation is necessary at times, much confrontation can be avoided if expectations are appropriately set and communicated. The best way for leaders to set high expectations is to collaborate with those they lead. Pastors should ask key

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[47] Patterson et al., *Crucial Accountability*, 27-28.

[48] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 142.

[49] Samuel Chand, *Leadership Pain: The Classroom for Growth* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2015), 6.

leaders in their congregation, "What matters most to us?" and root expectations in "shared values, goals, and aspirations."[50] This thesis has concluded that setting high expectations not only helps in conflict but also invigorates and encourages followers to live out the mission of the organization. James Kouzes and Barry Posner come to the same conclusion, stating, "No matter how grand the dream of an individual visionary, if others don't see in it the possibility of realizing their own hopes and desires, they won't follow."[51] It is not enough for the pastor and other leaders to believe evangelism is a priority; it must become a priority of the entire church. This is why consistent preaching and teaching about evangelism is crucial.

Contemporary research has shown a positive correlation between leader transparency and follower trust.[52] In fact, some research indicates that followers connect "honesty, transparency, authenticity, clarity . . . and saying what you mean and meaning what you say (avoiding understatement and overstatement)" with effective leadership communication.[53] Contrary to what is often assumed, people want to know what is expected of them. Thom Rainer has concluded that churches that are clear about their expectations and set high expectations for their members are the most effective at retaining and assimilating individuals into the life of the church.[54] In his research, Rainer reveals the most common expectations that high-expectation churches communicate to their members: "attendance in a new member orientation class, commitment to attend a discipling program, commitment to tithe to the church, regular attendance in worship

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[50] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 140.

[51] James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 148.

[52] For example, see Steven Norman, Bruce Avlio, Fred Luthans, "The Impact of Positivity and Transparency on Trust in Leaders and Their Perceived Effectiveness," *Leadership Quarterly* 21 no. 3 (2010): 350-64.

[53] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 126.

[54] Thom S. Rainer, *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret for Keeping People in Your Church* (Nashville: B&H, 1999), 1-10.

services, regular attendance in Sunday school classes, and commitment to doctrinal guidelines."[55]

Jesus clearly defined what true discipleship looked like in the kingdom of God and plainly established what he expected from those who would follow him. In terms of the church, this can mean leaders setting evangelistic goals, communicating to newcomers in a new members' class that evangelism is expected, and specifically defining what a life of evangelism looks like. Church leaders should not be afraid to set high expectations of their members. In fact, research has concluded that the higher the expectations placed on members, the greater the likelihood members will stay and be involved in the church.[56]

Areas for Further Research

While this thesis has looked extensively at the teaching of Jesus to reshape an established culture, there are several areas where further research could be conducted to strengthen its contribution. First, any of the teaching methods described in this thesis could be examined more closely and individually. For example, "Jesus' favorite teaching device was the parable, of which there are dozens recorded in the Gospels."[57] This thesis only examined one teaching discourse that utilized a parable, but further research could analyze how parables by themselves helped to shape culture. Such research could even explore the use of parables in the Old Testament and how they relate to Jesus's teaching ministry. Similarly, Jesus's confrontational encounters could be more closely examined to determine what effect confrontation has on culture formation. How should confrontation be handled in an organizational change process, and are there only certain individuals who need be addressed in a confrontational manner?

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[55] Rainer, *High Expectations*, 4.

[56] Rainer, *High Expectations*, 4.

[57] Elwell and Yarbrough, *Encountering the New Testament*, 126.

Second, this thesis examined multiple teachings and teaching methods of Jesus. Future research could be conducted on a single teaching discourse to see what conclusions can be made about culture creation from a single sermon or teaching. For example, when he delivered his Sermon on the Mount to his disciples and the gathered crowd, Jesus was certainly changing their understanding of the religious culture. One could research this single sermon to determine what patterns or methods were used by Jesus to help his followers move in a new direction. Similarly, one could examine Jesus's Sermon on the Plain, which in many ways parallels the Sermon on the Mount but is found in Luke's Gospel. This would continue to strengthen the biblical research about organizational change and culture change found in Luke.

Third, this thesis examined the teaching ministry of Jesus to learn how to embed an evangelistic culture in an established church. Future research could be done to determine if any of those teaching methods vary in the establishment of a new organization. For example, does preaching for culture creation in a church plant look different from preaching for culture change in an established church? One could compare the exhortations Paul gave to early church leaders when the church was in its infancy and the exhortations he wrote to leaders in more established churches.

Finally, while this thesis has established how to embed a new culture in an existing organization, it has not defined precisely what a healthy organizational culture looks like. Future research could examine the biblical material to determine what makes a healthy church and how to assess the organizational health of a church. Having a model to first assess the overall health of an organization before attempting to change the culture would be a critical step.

Research Conclusions

This thesis has concluded that the key components to re-establishing a healthy evangelistic culture in an established church are preaching and teaching. There is

certainly a myriad of ways in which culture can be created and embedded in an organization, but this thesis has sought to demonstrate the critical importance of teaching in the establishment of evangelistic culture. This has been demonstrated by looking at several examples of Jesus's teaching in the Gospel of Luke as he sought to reshape his early followers' understanding of who God was and what it meant to know and follow him. The beginning of this thesis cited Darrell Bock: "Luke seeks to show that the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, launched the long-promised new movement of God."[58] Therefore, "Luke explains that this seemingly new movement is actually rooted in old promises and in a design that God promised and now has executed through Jesus, the sent promised one of God."[59] Ultimately, Luke is telling the story of God working through Jesus to bring about a reshaped understanding of religious devotion.

Though many of Jesus's actions are described in Luke's Gospel, it is his teaching that stands out as the most crucial mechanism for bringing about culture change. This research has shown that preaching and teaching are effective means to change established organizational cultures because they aim to change and challenge core values and beliefs.[60] Tim Keller says preaching "must challenge the culture's story at points of confrontation and finally retell the culture's story, as it were, revealing how its deepest aspirations for good can be fulfilled only in Christ."[61] When core beliefs are changed, new values are established, and new values give way to new behaviors. This is precisely what Malphurs argues when he says that if a church wants to change,

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[58] Darrell Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 29.

[59] Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts*, 29.

[60] Aubrey Malphurs, *Look Before You Lead: How to Discern and Shape Your Church Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 20. Malphurs defines culture as "the unique expression of an organization's shared values and beliefs."

[61] Tim Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2015), 20.

it has to happen at the assumptions or beliefs level. To attempt change at the surface level [behaviors] is problematic and disruptive. People persist in their beliefs and resent the change because leaders haven't addressed it at the beliefs level. Thus the leader or change agent must discover the basic beliefs and address them as the church works through the change process.[62]

This is the pattern of the teaching discourses exegeted in this thesis. When Jesus wanted to reshape his disciples' understanding of the nature of God, he changed their belief that God was a distant impersonal deity and taught them about his fatherhood. When Jesus wanted to change the religious behaviors of the community, he did not demand instant behavior modifications; rather, he changed their beliefs about the function and interpretation of the Old Testament. Finally, when Jesus wanted to change the nature of discipleship, he did not require immediate allegiance to his model, but instead taught his followers a new way of thinking about discipleship and invited them to follow. Jesus consistently and deliberately taught in such a way that his listeners' established beliefs were confronted and then reshaped. These newly-constituted beliefs ultimately reshaped behavior over time.[63] Furthermore, this thesis has demonstrated that Jesus did not just teach in general but taught in different ways to reshape the understandings of his listeners. Jesus used direct instruction to establish new concepts and model new practices, confrontation to challenge established beliefs contrary to the heart of God, and high expectations to encourage a particular kind of behavior.

The conclusion of this thesis that communication is one of the most important factors to embedding a new culture in established organizations is consistent with past research. For example, R. Albert Mohler Jr. concludes,

The most effective leaders are unstoppable teachers. The teach by word, example, and sheer force of passion. They transform their corporations, institutions, and congregations into learning organizations. And the people they lead are active

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[62] Malphurs, *Look Before You Lead*, 57-58.

[63] This is not seen from the immediate context of Luke but is certainly clear from the later writings of Jesus's disciples. For example, the apostle John writes, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1). While Luke's Gospel does not explicitly reveal a change in the disciples' understanding, they nevertheless internalized the teaching and were changed by it.

learners who add value and passion to the work. To lead with conviction is to seize the role of teacher with energy, determination, and even excitement. What could be better than seeing people learn to receive and embrace the right beliefs, seeing those beliefs and truths take hold, and then watching the organization move into action on the basis of those beliefs?[64]

Andrew Hebert's research on the nature of biblical organizational change concludes, "Leaders shape church culture most effectively by grounding any organizational movement in the teaching of Scripture. Church members will likely adapt to cultural changes more readily when they know that the changes are driven by a correct understanding of God's Word."[65] Likewise, similar work by Jason Esposito in the field of communication concludes, "The way leaders in the church preach, teach and communicate directly impacts the church culture, either for the people's harm or healing. It is the power and opportunity of language to positively define, create, and imagine a world that is currently experienced and has yet to be experienced."[66]

Change is natural and often necessary. In our fallen world, it is far too easy to settle into routines and patterns because they are comfortable and familiar rather than biblical and faithful. Far too many churches today have fallen into unbiblical patterns of evangelism or, in many cases, non-evangelism, and leaders need to have an understanding how established organizations can change. Changing an established organizational is difficult but not impossible. The reward from graciously and gently steering people's hearts back towards God far outweighs the momentary struggles and frustrations. There could be no greater and worthy challenge for the leader who is willing to help reinvigorate a passion and culture of evangelism in the established church.

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[64] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2012), 72-73.

[65] Andrew Hebert, "Shaping Church Culture: Table Fellowship and Teaching in Luke-Acts" (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 117.

[66] Jason Esposito, "Preaching as a Cultural Formation Tool" (DMin thesis, Bethel Seminary, 2015), 35.

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ABSTRACT

LEADING CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE ESTABLISHED
CHURCH THROUGH PREACHING: SELECT DISCOURSES
FROM THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF JESUS
IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

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This thesis argues that pastors can reshape an established church's evangelistic culture by utilizing the teaching methods of Jesus. Chapter 1 provides an overview of organizational culture and how cultures are shaped and reshaped. Chapter 2 exegetes Luke 11:1-13, examining how Jesus used direct instruction to reshape the established religious culture and showing how this method can be used to reshape evangelistic culture in the church. Chapter 3 describes how Jesus used confrontation to reshape established religious understandings about the law of God and examines how confrontation can be used to reshape evangelistic culture in the church. Chapter 4 examines how Jesus set high expectations for his followers to help them advance the mission of God and makes application for how pastors can do the same. Finally, chapter 5 offers broader implications for the church and demonstrates the need for further research.

VITA

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