BEST PRACTICES IN LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH: A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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May 2023

APPROVAL SHEET

BEST PRACTICES IN LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL

CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:

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This work is dedicated to my Lord and Savior Christ Jesus for his enduring provision and mercies toward me; to my wife, Michelle, my best friend, and unfailing support system; and to our precious girls, Ana, Daniela, and Gabriela, our Lord's most gracious testimony of his sweet and endless love toward us.

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PREFACE

As I reflect on the work and sacrifice that has gone into completing this project, I am immediately reminded of the Word of God. Paul writes the following to the church at Corinth: “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth” (1 Cor 1:26). I feel a kinship with Paul’s audience due to the sense of awe and gladness I have in knowing that the Lord of the universe loved me and died for me. Additionally, I feel privileged and humbled by the many opportunities the Lord has afforded to me to pursue all kinds of unimaginable dreams, including higher education degrees. I am beyond grateful to my Savior for his kindness to me.

The last three years have brought a tremendous assortment of personal and professional experiences that I will always treasure. I have been blessed beyond measure in discovering new ways of studying and knowing God, his Word, and his church, and how to acknowledge his divine providence amid the many challenges, joys, and experiences found in leadership. In addition, my theological training and experiences have acquainted me more deeply with Baptist denominational life and the remarkable work that the Southern Baptist Convention continues to do to further the kingdom of Christ. For these reasons and many others, I am proud to be associated with Southern Baptists and to have had the privilege of studying at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Through it all, I have always found unconditional love and support from my best friend and wonderful helper, my loving wife, Michelle. She has supported and cared for me without reservations throughout this entire experience and then some. Mitch,

thanks a million for your constant love, unfailing presence, and unconditional support. I love you very much! Please know that I am humbly aware that this degree, and all the previous ones, is as much yours as it is mine. You have earned them, too.

I also want to acknowledge the cheerful and sweet encouragement from our daughters, Ana, Daniela, and Gabriela. I love you, my girls, with all my heart. You make me very happy and proud to be your father! This challenging but rewarding journey could not have been completed either without the prayers and encouragement from my mother, Ana. I love you very much. To my sister, Francis, I am grateful for your love and kindness. To my little brother, Luis Enrique, and big brothers, Erick and Francisco, I love you. Finally, I am eternally grateful to every person in my congregation at Lakeland Baptist Church and at my place of employment, the Irving Independent School District, for their prayers on my behalf, continuous encouragement, and support. Thank you, Jenn Stec, for your assistance, reliability, and professionalism concerning this project. You were an answer to prayer and made this experience academically enriching.

I am also indebted to God for the friends, professors, and godly colleagues I met through my years of doctoral and theological studies at Southern. I will never forget you and cherish our friendship. Finally, I thank my chair professor, Dr. Justin Irving, for his kind disposition, flexibility, and guidance. It has been a privilege to know you and learn from you. I will always treasure this wonderful, gratifying, life-changing experience through SBTS. Praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Juan Carlos Martinez Robleto

Hickory Creek, Texas

May 2023

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the church is made clear in Scripture. Christians are commanded to proclaim the gospel to everyone. They are to start this mission at home and then make disciples of all people around the world who would receive the message of salvation (Matt 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–48). Since its inception, the church has endured the challenges of cultural trends and moods and has adapted its methodology and approach in order to fulfill its commission.

The endurance of the church is a well-established historical fact.[1] The church is an institution that has been able to withstand the despotic treatment and persecution of a ferocious world power, the relentless attacks from those who abhorred its steadfastness and uncompromising tenets, and even the betrayal of false converts who sought to destroy it from within.[2] Nonetheless, in accordance with the Lord's promise, "the gates of Hades, will not overpower it" (Matt 16:18).[3]

As the church enters the twenty-first century, it faces a crucial battle for survival and relevance amid a generation that has become disenchanted with and estranged from the religious traditions of their predecessors.[4] Since Jesus has affirmed the

[1] Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church: From the 1st to the 20th Century*, 6 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910). This work by Schaff is considered one of the finest to date.

[2] Eusebius, *The Church History*, trans. Paul L. Maier (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007). From book 3 to book 10, Eusebius chronicles the perils and triumphs of the early church while it faced consistent and terrible persecution under the Roman Empire until the reign of Constantine around AD 324.

[3] All Scripture quotations are taken from the New American Standard Bible.

[4] John S. Dickerson, *The Great Evangelical Recession: 6 Factors That Will Crash the American Church . . . and How to Prepare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 99–103.

continuity of the church until his return, informed Christians know that the institution will not become extinct. However, every responsible and mature believer in a position of leadership should recognize the current state of affairs, especially as it pertains to modern culture, and be ready to act by demonstrating good stewardship.[5]

The current generation's increasing indifference toward the church has led many to render faith in God and involvement with his church as non-essential elements in their lives.[6] Amid a postmodern world that embraces relativism and holds no absolutes, the church faces a formidable challenge.[7] This critical situation presents three concerns. First, should the church separate itself from the world in order to preserve itself? Obviously, the answer is no. The church is called to be salt and light to the world (Matt 5:13–16). John Stott writes, "Christ sends His people into the earth to be its salt, and sends His people into the world to be its light."[8] Yet, to accomplish this task, church leadership must be diligent, engaging wisely in organizational change and making the necessary adjustments so the church can adapt to remain culturally relevant and, with the Lord's guidance, continue to fulfill its mission.

Second, should the church as an organization rethink its present approach and organize itself with an uncompromising determination to reach out to those who are perishing without Christ? The answer is yes. Thom Rainer points out that the United

[5] For specific example on how mature believers should engage the changing culture in proactive fashion, see John Stott, *The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 13–18.

[6] For more on the decline in religious affiliation in the United States since the early 2000s, see Jim Hinch, "Here Is the Church, Here Is the Steeple. Open the Doors, and . . . Where Are All the People?" *American Scholar* 83, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 18–29.

[7] For more on the challenges of the today's church brought by postmodernism and relativism, see David F. Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

[8] John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 349.

States is becoming less Christian, less evangelized, and less churched.[9] Aubrey Malphurs adds that churches are struggling with low attendance and possible dissolution.[10]

The third concern is whether the church can accomplish its mission without compromising its doctrinal orthodoxy. Once again, the answer is a resounding yes. This answer is not intended to sound simplistic or ignorant of the challenges that cultural change brings to the established church. The church can respond to cultural change in three ways: isolation, assimilation, or contextualization. Malphurs explains that isolation rejects cultural change and seeks to withdraw the church from interacting with the culture. Assimilation goes to the other extreme by completely embracing cultural norms without distinction or careful analysis, to the point of accepting proposals and views that are incompatible with Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy.[11]

Malphurs proposes a contextualized approach to cultural change. Contextualization "views culture as a means or vehicle that God, man, and Satan can use for their own purposes, whether good or evil."[12] This approach does not mean embracing unchristian methods and practices; rather, it means "understanding the culture well enough to articulate and communicate to the people of that culture in ways they hear and, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, understand the gospel."[13] Church leaders must be diligent to adopt the changes that are necessary to remain relevant and fulfill the Great Commission.

Selecting the right approach for leading change can be challenging for those

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[9] Thom S. Rainer, "Shattering Myths about the Unchurched," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 47.

[10] Aubrey Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church: Understanding Models of Ministry for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 25.

[11] Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church*, 102–4.

[12] Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church*, 105.

[13] Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church*, 105.

guiding an organization through such a process. Theories, methodologies, and philosophies of organizational change are plentiful, as much has been written on the subject,[14] yet the topic of change leadership rises to the top as one of the most critical elements of the process. The literature produced from the study of change leadership has proven to be a reliable commodity in academia and publishing, as consumers of leadership literature continually seek the latest trend, research, or formula for strategizing and developing plans that can help their organizations increase their productivity levels and, ultimately, their bottom lines.[15]

Christians are not immune to the desire to learn how to become more effective leaders and stewards of the ministries God has entrusted to them. Albert Mohler observes, "For the better part of the last three decades; leadership has been a major cultural preoccupation and a professional obsession. Walk into an airport bookstore, and you will find the front tables filled with books promising to make you a better leader. Walk into a Christian bookstore, and you will find ample evidence of the same hunger."[16]

However, not all leadership models are suitable for adoption by Christian leaders and organizations. Caution is needed, as problems arise when those in ministry contexts attempt to adopt secular proposals and leadership models without proper examination.[17] In *The God Who Goes before You*, Timothy Paul Jones and Michael Wilder refute the idea that adopting worldly leadership models for their reputed practicality and usefulness and implementing them in Christian settings should be a best

[14] Christiane Demers, *Organizational Change Theories: A Synthesis* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2007), 1–4.

[15] Arthur Boers, *Servants and Fools: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015), xvii–xx.

[16] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 15.

[17] Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda*, rev. ed. (Nashville: B&H Books, 2011), 9–10.

practice. They argue that using these models in the Christian arena can create unintended negative consequences, and this is prone to occur when the foundational aim of leadership is not grounded on the central idea of Scripture, namely the Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom.[18]

When leadership literature is produced from a secular worldview, the question is whether its proposals belong in the local church or with Christian leaders in the marketplace. This challenges Christians to develop a robust theological foundation for leadership and to evaluate all proposals with sound biblical exegesis and theological lucidity.

Although the Bible is not a textbook on leadership and does not explicitly use the terms leader or leadership in its written text, the Old and New Testaments are replete with examples of leadership models and their implications, from excellent and fair to disastrous and despotic.[19] God has a great deal to say about leadership, including the traits, behaviors, structures, and approaches of sound leadership. Timothy Laniak makes a significant observation on God's approach to carrying out his divine plans through humans:

> A third observation involves what we have called the "divine preference for human agency," a trend which appears already in the creation account. The God of Scripture passionately seeks humans to enlist in his mission, risking it regularly in their hands. This predilection is rooted in an ideal whereby human rule is a derivative extension of divine rule. Our theology of leadership is informed by this breathtaking choice of God to grant royal prerogatives to his creatures. To be made in his image is to rule with him and for him. Reigning with him is the destiny of all those who follow the Lamb.[20]

God sets apart human beings to be his co-regents and steward his creation. He

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[18] Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 8.

[19] Benjamin Forrest and Chet Roden, eds., introduction to *Biblical Leadership: Theology for the Everyday Leader*, Biblical Theology for the Church (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017), 28.

[20] Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 20 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 248.

gives them innate characteristics of leadership and the need to be led. This does not assume that every human will lead in the right way but that leadership is something humans are designed to do. Understanding this should motivate Christians to develop a robust theological foundation of leadership that is firmly grounded in the Scriptures.

Research Problem

One of the most daunting tasks facing an organization is how to bring about change, and the church is not immune to this challenge.[21] Change can be a sensitive issue in the church, particularly if the congregation believes that staying the course is acceptable or the need for change is neither apparent nor urgent.[22] Given the desire of many churches to hold tightly to established traditions, it is not surprising that the prospect of change creates a sense of anxiety.[23]

Gilbert Rendle argues that a posture of non-change is "a formula for disconnecting the congregation from the very culture or community [the church] has been called to address."[24] However, the task of the church's leadership is to help the congregation reassess the approach and methodology with which it carries out its ministry so that it can respond appropriately to the challenges brought by radical cultural change and a postmodern worldview.[25] Of course, at the heart of such change should be

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[21] W. Warner Burke, "Leading Organization Change," in *Organization Change: A Comprehensive Reader*, ed. W. Warner Burke, Dale G. Lake, and Jill Waymire Paine (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 738.

[22] W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed., Foundations for Organizational Science (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 11.

[23] Aubrey Malphurs, *The Dynamics of Church Leadership*, Ministry Dynamics for a New Century (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 98.

[24] Gilbert R. Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1998), 276.

[25] Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 357.

the fervent desire of God's people to fulfill the Great Commission.[26]

Churches, like any organization, have a unique internal culture, and understanding this culture is essential to leading a congregation through change.[27] Tensions may rise between those who find comfort in the status quo and those who desire to bring about organizational change to further the mission's effectiveness. The uncertainty of change affects some people's comfort level and exacerbates fears of the unknown. Some church members, for example, may recognize that time and circumstances bring forth the need for change but are conflicted by the amount of change necessary.[28] Consequently, the leader must first recognize that the fundamental difficulty in dealing with change is emotional and psychological rather than logistical.

Every individual brings an assortment of emotions and experiences that can make the change process difficult.[29] This may be due to previous failure, fear of too much change, or fear of being out of control.[30] Countless church initiatives enacted in the name of change have produced regrettable mishaps that have deeply hurt the community of believers rather than led them to trust in leadership.[31] Some churches have abandoned biblical orthodoxy and embraced doctrinal compromise in a futile attempt to be culturally relevant and reach the unsaved world. These failures have severely hindered the

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[26] Roxburgh and Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, 429.

[27] Alan E. Nelson and Gene Appel, *How to Change Your Church (without Killing It)* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson), 71–72.

[28] Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation*, 183–261.

[29] Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 431.

[30] Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation*, 186.

[31] Bob Whitesel, *Preparing for Change Reaction: How to Introduce Change to Your Church* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2007), 171.

development of organizational change and adaptation among Christian congregations.[32] However, adapting to change in order to reach the unsaved world is a relevant issue that cannot be ignored.

Churches must be open to reexamining their current methodologies while protecting themselves from embracing the values of the secular postmodern world. David Clark states, "Those who engage the culture correctly show that the priority of Scripture must be lived in connection with the culture outside the church."[33] Therefore, along with implementing change from within, the church must resolve not to abandon biblical and theological orthodoxy; instead, it must allow Scripture and theological thinking to influence the decision-making process.

Current Status of the Research Problem

John W. Moran and Baird K. Brightman define organizational change as "the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers."[34] These authors clearly approach the subject from a business perspective, but the general understanding of their definition could equally apply to the church as an organizational entity. Therefore, identifying the right type of organizational change process is a critical need in the church. New and credible voices contend that churches must be better equipped to respond to the needs, concerns, and dilemmas facing believers and non-believers. Yet, this need has sometimes precipitated the adoption of exclusively secular methodologies and strategies

[32] John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World*, 3rd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 188.

[33] David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003). In chap. 3, "Theology in the Cultural Context," the author makes a compelling case for the Christian church to participate in cultural engagement.

[34] John W. Moran and Baird K. Brightman, "Leading Organizational Change," *Journal of Workplace Learning: Employee Counseling Today* 12, no. 2 (2000): 66.

without the proper doctrinal examination.

Although effective in the secular marketplace, some of these new approaches can be out of place or inappropriate for the ministry arena. However, though secular strategies should not be embraced too quickly, neither should they be rejected outright without the proper analysis. It is necessary and wise to strike the right balance between accepting and rejecting secular proposals. Some secular recommendations are neutral in nature and can be brought into compliance with the principles promoted by the church. Christian scholar John David Trentham developed a helpful hermeneutical protocol, based on the principle of inverse consistency, to evaluate secular proposals. In his model, Trentham proposes that it is possible to interact with the social sciences and to "faithfully appropriate them."[35] He recommends caution in seeking truth in the social sciences. Christians should not assume that any leadership model can be appropriated to lead the people of God.

The availability of literature on the topic of organizational change within the church has increased in the last thirty years and yet has much room to grow. Past publications have featured individuals who have successfully led their congregations through organizational change while pursuing cultural engagement. However, only one book, Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr's work *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*, specifically addresses the process of leading change in the ministry arena.[36] Another book, Gilbert Rendle's

[35] John David Trentham, "Reading the Social Sciences Theologically (Part 2): Engaging and Appropriating Models of Human Development," *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 3 (2019): 487–88. See also John David Trentham, "Reading the Social Sciences Theologically (Part 2): Approaching and Qualifying Models of Human Development," *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 3 (2019): 476–94.

[36] Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000). *Leading Congregational Change* is one of the leading works produced by Christian authors that treats the change management process in a systematic and complete fashion. The authors did an outstanding job studying, analyzing, and vetting secular and Christian research related to methodologies and strategies for organizational change. The final product is a practical proposal for leading change in the ministry arena that combines scriptural principles and innocuous secular processes and strategies.

Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leader, combines some aspects of change theory with leadership strategy.[37] Some book titles flirt with the idea of organizational change but focus heavily on leadership attributes and approaches to strategic planning rather than the dynamics of transformational leadership and systemic organizational change.[38]

The bulk of secular organizational change models created in the last twenty years deal with the societal and cultural changes that have taken place in American society. As mentioned, these models focus on helping secular organizations change and adapt to protect market share or prevent organizational obsolescence. Selecting the right change model can result in an organization's continued success and growth, while failure to pick the right model can bring extinction. Though the church is not facing extinction, it does face a challenge of effectiveness unless it can successfully facilitate organizational change within its membership to fulfill its mission to spread the gospel and make disciples of all nations.

This argument reveals a void in the literature related to an existing body of best practices for leading organizational change in the local church. This void is amplified by the absence of specific research studies that call attention to best practices for leading organizational change that are grounded on a sound biblical and theological framework.

This research work attempted to fill that void by conducting an empirical study

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[37] Rendle, *Leading Change in the Congregation.* The author provides a wholistic and respectful description of the change experience and people's resistance or reluctance to change. Rendle combines theory, research, and his experience working with churches facing change to provide leaders with practical diagnostic models and tools. However, the book primarily deals with change management from a spiritual perspective and does not provide a step-by-step sequence for systematically leading an organization through the change process.

[38] See Josh Hunt, *Change Your Church or Die* (self-pub., CreateSpace, 2014); Andy Stanley and Lane Jones, *Communicating for a Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communication* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2106); Carey Nieuwhof, *Leading Change without Losing It: Five Strategies That Can Revolutionize How You Lead Change When Facing* Opposition (Cumming, GA: The reThink Group, 2012); or Bob Whitesel, *Preparing for Change Reaction: How to Introduce Change in Your Church* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2007).

and content analysis of the methodologies used by model local churches that have successfully engaged in the process of leading organizational change while upholding biblical and theological orthodoxy. This work contends that existing best practices may be improved by applying a specific model of transformational leadership in the ministry context.

Purpose

This study aimed to present, describe, and recommend biblically and theologically orthodox best practices and methods for leading organizational change in the local church. Additionally, this study attempted to further an understanding of the organizational change process in the local church.

Research Questions

This study focused on two research questions. First, "What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?" Second, "How might the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership improve the best practices of the sites participating in this research study?"

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the review and analysis of best practices and methods as exemplified by three model ministry organizations that engaged in leading organizational change in the ministry arena. These model ministries are evangelical Christian in nature and located in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. They are also members of the Southern Baptist Convention and have actively engaged in establishing and supporting other churches while conducting missional work in their urban context for the last three decades.

The scope of the study was further narrowed to an in-depth analysis of two aspects of leading organizational change in the local church: (1) identification of clear markers that demonstrated how these model ministries engaged the culture around them to fulfill their mission, and (2) evidence that these model ministries have not forsaken biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Methodology

I used a qualitative content analysis research methodology in this study. Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts and other matter meaningful to the contexts of their use.[39] I read and analyzed all materials, images, and symbolic matter produced by the three model ministries. I also interviewed the leaders of the model ministries on the subject of leading change in the local church. Klaus Krippendorff establishes the use of structured and open-ended interviews to draw inferences and meanings from events and contexts through the use of content analysis techniques.[40] Using NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis software (QDAS), I examined these ministries to identify markers and strategies that can be adapted for implementation in the church.[41]

To inform my analysis of best practices, I interacted with three models that focus on leading organizational change. The first model, the Transformational Journey Model (TJM), was produced by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr and documented in their book *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*. The TJM focuses on leading congregational change from a

[39] Klaus H. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), 24.

[40] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 33.

[41] NVivo is a software used in research projects involving interpretation of unstructured or semi-structured data. Hence, it can be used for exploration, description, comparison, pattern analysis, theory testing, theory building, or evaluation of data.

Christian perspective. I also interacted with John Kotter's 8-Step Model (8SM), written from a secular perspective and published in his book *Leading Change*.[42] Part of my analysis centered on evaluating whether his methods aligned with Scripture. Finally, I used Mark McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership to determine whether the existing best practices at the participating sites could be improved using the 4R Model's components of leadership development: Relationships, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results.[43]

The conclusion of this study presents a summary of viable, successful strategies and best practices for implementing change. These best practices have been evaluated through the lens of Scripture for the purpose of providing the ministry arena with sound and reliable data for leading the church in organizational change.[44]

Definitions

To provide clarity, the following words and their definitions are utilized throughout this dissertation:

Church. Gregg Allison defines the church as "the people of God, who have been saved through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and have been incorporated into the body through baptism and sealing by the Holy Spirit."[45] Wayne Grudem defines the church as an assembly of "all true believers for all time or all true believers since Pentecost."[46]

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[42] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 21.

[43] Mark W. McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World: Virtue and Effective Leadership in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 79–86.

[44] See chapter 6.

[45] Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 29–30.

[46] Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020), 1047.

John Frame states that the church is the "people of God in all ages." He adds that the church is both visible and invisible—visible in the sense that society can observe it and invisible in the sense that only God can assess the hearts of those within it who actually belong to him.[47]

The church is an organizational unit with a unique blend of cultures that play a significant role in the way the church functions. Consequently, this study focuses on the biblical aspects of change as it pertains to the church as a God-ordained institution, but it also focuses on the organizational unit known as the local church and its leadership. The reason for such an approach is to fully engage all dynamics of organizational change within the church as a spiritual institution as well as an organization.

Christian. This term represents a person who has made a public confession and commitment to Jesus Christ. The term Christian has been used and applied to different groups, including some who do not believe in Christ as the one and only source of salvation. This study uses H. F. Vos's description of Christian, applying the term to those who proclaim "Christ as their one and only Savior and belong to a recognized mainstream evangelical denomination."[48]

Biblical orthodoxy. Although it could be assumed that this term speaks for itself, the radical shift away from biblical orthodoxy in some sectors of evangelicalism requires clarification. The *Holman Bible Handbook* defines "biblical orthodoxy" as taking "the historical position that the Bible is an authentic disclosure of the nature and will of God. In context, those who hold to a high view of biblical orthodoxy seek to make the unchanged content of the biblical gospel meaningful to people in their various

[47] John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013), 1019–20.

[48] H. F. Vos, "Christian," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, ed. Daniel G. Reid et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), n.p.

cultures and existential situations."[49]

This dissertation recommends, in part, the proper level of engagement with the culture while preserving biblical orthodoxy. It also addresses whether the church can make the necessary adjustments to present the gospel of salvation accurately and without compromise to the unsaved in this current culture.

Culture. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines culture as "a refined understanding or appreciation of the arts and other manifestation of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively, as well as the customs, ideas, and social behaviors of a particular people or group."[50]

Clifford Geertz defines culture as that which "denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about attitudes toward life."[51] Finally, Edgard Schein's classic definition of culture as it pertains to an organization is that of a "collective or shared learning of [a group] as it develops its capacity to survive in its external environment and to manage its own internal affairs."[52]

Postmodernism. Although this philosophical worldview is difficult to define, its primary goal is to react against modernism and reason. Bruce Benson characterizes modernism by its general repudiation of tradition and authority while seeking absolute

[49] Bruce Nicholls, "Biblical Orthodoxy," in *Holman Bible Handbook*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville: Holman Bible, 1992), 890.

[50] Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. "culture."

[51] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 89.

[52] Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985), 19–20.

truth.[53] While modernism seeks to find ultimate truth in reason alone, postmodernism gives equal standing to all arguments. Postmodernism stands out for its rejection of established norms. It does not represent a unified worldview. Instead, it advocates the continuous promotion of old and new philosophies to the market of ideas without holding to an absolute.[54] This refusal to hold to any absolutes causes its proposals to contradict each other at times. Benson notes that postmodernism is a philosophical movement that "places great emphasis on the individual, assuming that human beings both are and ought to be free to define themselves."[55] Consequently, the postmodernist determines the concept of truth and rationality, not God.

Success. The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* defines success as "the accomplishment of an aim or purpose; the attainment of fame, wealth, or social status."[56] Although the first part of the definition does not create a concern, the association of the term with fame, wealth, and social status does create a problem. In this study, success will be measured by the level of accomplishment on the part of the church to adapt to change while also engaging the present culture. Both success and engagement will be determined by how closely one aligns with Scripture while leading the local church through the process of change.

In order to reach the culture, a church or ministry organization and its members will need to engage the culture rather than merely tolerate it. Since the Bible clearly stipulates that believers must love God and their neighbors, there is no option for non-

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[53] Bruce E. Benson, "Postmodernism," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 939–45.

[54] George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006), 89–91.

[55] Benson, "Postmodernism," 939–44.

[56] Soanes and Stevenson, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "success."

engagement.[57] The New Testament explicitly and implicitly commands in Matthew 28, Mark 16, and Luke 24 that preaching the gospel and making new disciples will require believers to go beyond their communities and borders to engage the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is based on the leader's ability to influence, inspire, and empower, thus positively impacting those he leads and his respective organization. Authors Bernard Bass and Ronald Riggio write that transformational leaders stimulate and inspire followers to "both achieve extraordinary outcomes, and in the process develop their own leadership capacity."[58] A transformational leader also inspires members of his group to engage in positive organizational change without forsaking the goal of attaining success and fulfillment for every member-follower of the team.[59] Another important aspect of transformational leadership is "follower empowerment." Bass and Riggio define an empowering leader as one who provides autonomy to his followers, which involves delegating important tasks and responsibilities.[60] Irving and Strauss define follower empowerment as "a process by which leaders and followers partner together for the purpose of achieving common goals and a shared vision."[61]

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[57] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Culture Shift: The Battle for the Moral Heart of America* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2011), 2.

[58] Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership: A Comprehensive Review of Theory and Research*, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Psychology Press, 2005), 3.

[59] James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010), 4. Burns claims that transformational leaders focus developing followers into leaders. This demonstrates the moral aspect of leadership, which, among other things, ensures that a follower's fundamental wants, needs, aspirations, and values are taken into consideration.

[60] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 193. The authors acknowledge the empowerment-delegation aspect of transformational leadership. However, they state that it is not a type of "hands-off" approach but rather one in which the leader provides direction, support, and coaching to their followers to ensure their growth and development.

[61] Justin A. Irving and Mark L. Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 1.

Organizational change. This term is used interchangeably with the concepts of change management and leadership management in the secular environment. One of the best descriptions of leading change is provided by Moran and Baird: "The process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers."[62] Although the church is not a business, it does possess business-like attributes that are a conduit for adapting organizational change strategies to help improve and enhance its primary objective of evangelizing the world and making disciples.[63] This understanding and purpose for organizational change and how it manifests itself in the local church will be the focus of this dissertation.

W. Warner Burke argues that organizations should be treated as living organisms in the process of leading change.[64] The church as an organizational unit is not exempt. John MacArthur also relates the church to a living organism by referring to Colossians 1:18, which describes the church as a living body and Christ as the head of the body.[65] Peter O'Brien notes that when Paul refers to the body, he addresses the individual living members of the congregation "who have mutual duties and common interests which must not be neglected."[66] In this light, it is reasonable to think of the church as a living organism in reference to organizational change. Thus, the term "*leading change*" will be used to identify and describe the efforts of the local church leadership in guiding

[62] Moran and Brightman, "Leading Organizational Change," 66.

[63] Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 26.

[64] Burke, *Organization Change*, 161–62.

[65] John MacArthur, *Colossians and Philemon*, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 48.

[66] Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians-Philemon*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 44 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 49.

the church to adapt its approach and methodology in order to engage the surrounding society.[67]

Procedural Overview

The research methodology for this dissertation was text-based, and some aspects relied on a qualitative content analysis and field interviews that yielded essential principles and best practices for leading churches through organizational change. The scope required a comprehensive acquaintance with the precedent literature, particularly the models used to evaluate the best practices in and across the participating sites.

The process of researching and writing this study required developing an understanding of and expertise in the phenomenon of change and how it affects individuals and organizations. It also required an understanding of best practices in leadership, management techniques, culture, organizational behavior, and strategic planning. Knowledge in these areas facilitated the identification, analysis, and evaluation of markers related to successful organizational change, which culminated in the best practices for leading change in the ministry context proposed in my final chapter.

General Outline of the Dissertation

The following chapter reviews the most relevant precedent literature on the dynamics of leadership and synthesizes the research done on the topic up to the present, with a particular view toward organizational change in the local church. It compares and contrasts the best practices in two models of organizational change leadership: the Transformational Journey Model (TJM) developed by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr, and the 8-Step Model developed by John Kotter. This chapter also briefly introduces the major tenets of McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership,

[67] See appendix 5 for interview questions and appendix 7 for demographic information on sites and participants.

which is further explored in chapter 5 via RQ2. This chapter addresses the void in the research on leading organizational change in the local church and describes how the current dissertation helps fill the void.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research methodology of the research study while explaining the case studies in detail and the content analysis approach for conducting empirical research. This chapter describes how the first research question (RQ1) was applied to the relevant best practices identified by the 8-Step Model and the Transformational Journey Model (see chapter 4).

Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the findings, examining each individual best practice identified by the research study and correlating its implications to the practice of leading organizational change in the local church. It accomplishes this task by answering RQ1: "What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?" The chapter uses graphs and charts to reflect the results generated using NVivo 10 QDAS. Interviews and other participant-generated material and artifacts were analyzed using three content analysis data verification procedures: triangulation, member-checking, and thick description.

Chapter 5 addresses the second research question (RQ2), "How might the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership improve the best practices of the site participating in this research study?" This chapter examines McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership and explores its components and subcomponents in detail. The chapter also interacts with the precedent literature in chapter 2 and the analysis of findings in chapter 4 to bridge the best practices and leadership traits observed in part 1 of the case study. This chapter also documents a retrospective analysis of the best practices exhibited by the sites participating in part 1 of the case study against McCloskey's 4R Model using NVivo 10 QDAS.

Chapter 6 takes the previous chapter's examination of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership and concludes the answer to RQ2 by providing insight into the viability of McCloskey's 4R Model as an alternative for local churches seeking to engage in the organizational change process. This chapter offers concluding thoughts regarding the dissertation's implications and applications for the local church. The chapter closes by providing possible considerations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF PRECEDENT LITERATURE

Although the church shares many characteristics with other organizations, its founding, history, body of values, and submission to a higher authority create a unique organizational model. Consequently, leading organizational change in the church can be a challenging process. Nevertheless, if implemented effectively, change within the church can be a tremendous instrument for the effective spread of the gospel.

The church faces a serious challenge in the present cultural climate. The culture has become entangled with postmodern disdain toward any absolute truth and has adopted an "anything goes" mentality. John Stackhouse says, "Postmodernity concurs. No human being knows anything for certain."[1] This denial of absolute truth stands in clear opposition to the principles taught in Scripture.

The Word of God contains perfect and absolute principles, and its truth and counsel are applicable to all that mankind needs in regard to life and godliness (Ps 119; John 17:17; 2 Pet 1:3). The church that can recognize the shaky ground and shifting winds of postmodernism (Eph 4:14) can reach the unsaved with the message of salvation, baptism, and discipleship (Matt 28:18–20; Mark 16:14–20; Luke 24:44–48). Rather than isolating from or assimilating to the culture, the church must evaluate how it can adapt to its current cultural context and deliver the lifesaving gospel of Jesus Christ.

[1] John Stackhouse, *Humble Apologetics: Defending the Faith Today* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 111.

Literature Review

Leading organizational change is a daunting task. Systematic and meaningful change requires sound and cohesive leadership. In the church context, leading change can seem overwhelming because, unlike business organizations and comparable institutions, the church is a unique entity in what is known as the social sector of society.[2] Its organizational system, including its structure, culture, and people are shaped by the fact that its calling has an eternal purpose.

The Church as an Organizational System

Mark Dever asserts that Christians who proclaim the gospel make the message audible to people, but "Christians living together in local congregations make the gospel visible."[3] The members of the church are part of an organizational system that visibly operates outside its "organizational walls" every day. The church cannot be passive about the challenges and realities that currently affect society. Rather than embracing the culture, the church has always been counter-cultural, impacting the culture by shaping it through the gospel.

To conceptualize the church as a network of interrelated components that interact internally and with the outside environment, one must understand organizational system theory.[4] In their handbook on leadership, Bernard Bass and Ruth Bass write that leaders who understand system theory recognize that "what takes place outside the

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[2] Jim Collins, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great* (Boulder: HarperCollins, 2005), 4. Collins asserts that the successful performance of a business organization is measured in financial returns over time. However, social sector organizations (those that serve society, e.g., churches and non-profits) measure their success relative to their mission. Simply put, the church does not measure its organizational success in profits but on how faithful and impactful it is in delivering on its mission objective—the proclamation of the gospel and making disciples for Christ.

[3] Mark Dever, preface to *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*, 9Marks (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), xi.

[4] Allen W. Graves, "Gaines S. Dobbins—Mr. Church Administration," *Review and Expositor* 75, no. 3 (1978): 393.

system is likely to affect what takes place inside it."[5] Understanding system theory can help church leadership strike the right balance between goals that maintain the system and goals that require adaptation, as both contribute to the fulfillment of its mission.[6] The church's failure to balance strategies in support of these goals can precipitate distress within its organizational system.

System theorists including George Parsons and Speed Leas use the term "homeostasis" to define the tendency among people in an organization to keep doing things the same way.[7] William Cook explains that in the past, it was assumed that once a system had reached maturity and could continue to exist perpetually, the only necessary aim of the leadership was to stabilize and maintain the system.[8] Cook's research refutes the assumption that homeostasis should be an organization's ultimate goal and is an example of the dramatic change in this particular understanding of systems.[9]

Homeostasis creates a level of comfort and complacency that can result in a false sense of security. Thom Rainer's research revealed that lifeless churches could live for a substantial period with the past as their hero.[10] Awareness of homeostasis can help an organization establish different norms and behaviors among its members, such as developing a learning attitude, recognizing how parts of the organization work together,

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[5] Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 719.

[6] Graves, "Gaines S. Dobbins," 393.

[7] George Parsons and Speed B. Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System: The Manual* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1993), 154.

[8] William J. Cook Jr., *Strategics: The Art and Science of Holistic Strategy* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 2000), 80.

[9] Cook, *Strategics*, 81.

[10] Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2014), 18.

and appreciating the need to move beyond their current state.[11] Henry Cloud argues that without the ability to recognize and embrace the end of things as well as adapt to change, people remain stuck, never accomplishing their full potential. Sometimes, endings are essential for an organization or an individual's turnaround or growth.[12] Parson and Leas attest to a similar principle regarding congregations' past achievements, noting that "the seeds of decline are found in our successes. . . . Many congregations are stuck in their success."[13]

An organization at the peak of achievement should be looking forward, recognizing that sustaining success requires planning for upcoming change.[14] Parson and Leas maintain that the church will accomplish much in a constantly changing culture by developing the ability to adapt and renew itself. The church can do this by connecting people in need with its unique resources and capabilities.[15] To remain relevant in the present culture, the church must refuse to make a hero of its past and learn how to successfully engage those beyond its walls.

The church's first task as an organization is to define itself and its reason for being. Dever defines the church as "the body of people called by God's grace through faith in Christ to glorify Him together by serving Him in His world."[16] Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert argue that the church's calling is to go "into the world to witness about

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[11] Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System*, 182.

[12] Henry Cloud, *Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2010), 7.

[13] Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System*, 86.

[14] F. E. Emery and E. L. Trist, "The Causal Texture of Organizational Environments," in *Organization Change: A Comprehensive Reader*, ed. W. Warner Burke, Dale G. Lake, and Jill Waymire Paine (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 11.

[15] Parsons and Leas, *Understanding Your Congregation as a System*, 86.

[16] Mark E. Dever, "The Church," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, rev. ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014), 604.

Jesus by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples of all nations."[17] John Stott writes that the term "Mission concerns [God's] redeemed people and what he sends them into the world to do."[18] According to George Barna, the need for organizational change in the church is beyond debate—it is necessary for survival. Barna insists that Christians must recapture the truths of Scripture in order to determine a course for the church as "God's kingdom on earth."[19]

Organizational Structure

In *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church*, Gregg Allison explains that not only is Jesus Christ the supreme head of the church's organizational structure (Col 1:18), but he is also the foundation of the church (Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:11; Eph 1:19–23).[20] Dever calls Jesus Christ "the head and chief shepherd of the church" in a local and universal sense.[21] God subjected all things to Christ's authority, including the church (Eph 1:22).[22] Historically, church governance has taken many forms.[23] The scope of this dissertation and review of the literature concerning organizational change does not include the particulars of different types of church government; rather, it focuses on general aspects of the church's organizational structure.

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[17] Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 27.

[18] John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 21.

[19] George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church: A Blueprint of Survival* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 73.

[20] Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of The Church*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 56–57.

[21] Dever, "The Church," 48.

[22] Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 68.

[23] Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 254–95. These traditions are the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist models of church government.

Organizational Culture

Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn define organizational culture as "the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories and definitions that characterize an organization and its members."[24] Clifford Geertz's definition of culture seems rather appropriate in the context of discussing the church: "The culture concept denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, as systems of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."[25]

As Cameron and Quinn allude, the people inside a church organization are part of its culture.[26] Anthony Robinson defines church members as "a gathering of those who are in the process of being changed, of those who are being saved and made new, and who invite others to join them in this adventure called life."[27] The way church members interact with one another and how they live out their Christian lives is part of the church's organizational culture.

Organizational Performance

The success of a church's organizational performance is measured by its ability to fulfill the Great Commission. A high-performing church fully embraces its "unique

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[24] Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 18.

[25] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic, 1977), 89.

[26] Cameron and Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, 38. Although this is a secular work, the authors' argument that people within organizations make up part of the organization's culture applies to the church as well. The church is an organization of believers that share a universal culture as well as a culture within a local church context. An individual church's operation can have many similarities to the operation of a secular organization.

[27] Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 37.

and central calling" to make disciples and engage the unsaved world.[28] The church's optimal functionality is consistently portrayed in the Scriptures as a fully functioning body. David Garland writes that this metaphor emphasizes the interconnectedness, diversity, and relationships of the church's members. It also calls attention to the church's inability to perform optimally if its members refuse to live up to their God-given capacities and roles.[29]

Managing Organizational Change in the Church

Because of its nature and mission, church management requires a unique administrative leadership.[30] God calls men into church leadership, and this call is confirmed by the church assembly.[31] Derek Prime and Alistair Begg describe such a calling as "the unmistakable conviction an individual possesses that God wants him to do a specific task."[32] God calls those he chooses to live a life of service in the leadership of his church. Christ grants leadership authority to those called into service.[33] Consequently, Christian theological principles must always inform the procedures and methods used to manage church matters.[34]

First Timothy 3 and Titus 1 detail what the Lord expects from those who aspire

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[28] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 26.

[29] David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 589.

[30] Allen W. Graves, "Factors in Church Staff Effectiveness for Today's Churches," *Review and Expositor* 78, no. 1 (Winter 1981): 29–43.

[31] Roy A. Andrews, "10 Commandments of Pastoral Leadership: A Theological Study of Pastoral Leadership in the Brethren Church (Ashland, Ohio)," *Ashland Theological Journal* 37 (2005): 77–87.

[32] Derek J. Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody, 2013), 18.

[33] Paul Benware, "Leadership Authority in the Church," *Conservative Theological Journal* 3, no. 8 (April 1999): 5–24.

[34] Graves, "Factors in Church Staff Effectiveness for Today's Churches."

to leadership offices in his church. First Timothy 3 describes a man who is "the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, noncontentious, free from the love of money as well as able to manage his own household" (3:2b–4a). John MacArthur argues that management of the Lord's church goes beyond moral characteristics; the church's leaders must also be skilled both as teachers and managers.[35] Hans Finzel furthers MacArthur's point: "Leaders of Christian enterprises tend to be spiritually qualified but often organizationally illiterate. The problem is, leadership requires both the head and the heart."[36] Michael Anthony and James Estep write that effective ministry management is necessary in order to serve God's people, adding that most church leaders are "removed from office over matters of mismanagement rather than doctrine."[37] The body of Christ is a corporate entity, and accomplishing its mission necessitates a coordinated and effective management effort.[38]

Maintaining Biblical and Theological Principles

Any theological proposal for change in the church must proceed from a solid scriptural framework. Therefore, one must carefully examine the biblical and theological principles related to leadership and change before reviewing the academic literature on these subjects. This section considers the biblical principles for leadership and the theological premise for change. The review of biblical principles provides a foundation for understanding the role of a leader as the agent of change in the church. The review of

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[35] John MacArthur, *The Master's Plan for the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 188.

[36] Hans Finzel, *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2007), 16.

[37] Michael J. Anthony and James R. Estep Jr., eds., introduction to *Management Essentials for Christian Ministries* (Nashville: B&H, 2005), 10.

[38] Anthony and Estep, *Management Essentials*, 10.

the theological premise for change will give a framework for understanding the role change plays in the lives of people inside and outside the church. Furthermore, understanding the terms "change" and "leadership" will provide clarity for exercising a full evangelistic engagement with the current culture without risking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Before sending out his disciples to make more disciples, Jesus proclaimed that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him (Matt 28:18). John Piper points out that one cannot ask people to forsake a master and take a new direction without the authority to ask and without giving the reason for the change. Jesus's authority and the gospel are essential to effecting change in a person or in the church.[39] John Stott asserts that true Christians are aware that human fulfillment is impossible to achieve outside God's authority and through his righteousness.[40] Scripture and our own testimonies bear witness to this fact. The first change that must occur is internal, as a heart of repentance responds to the gospel message and transforms from a mindset of rebellion to one of obedience to God.[41] The church will be unable to make new disciples without the true gospel; thus, maintaining biblical and theological orthodoxy is a prerequisite for any change in approach or methodology within the church.

Francis Schaeffer contends that the Christian life is comprised of three concentric circles that must always be kept in balance.[42] The outer circle represents "the correct theological position, true biblical orthodoxy and holding to the purity of the visible church. The second circle should contain intellectual training and comprehension

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[39] John Piper, *What Jesus Demands from the World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 42–43.

[40] John Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 56.

[41] Piper, *What Jesus Demands from the World*, 42–43.

[42] Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, vol. 3, *A Christian View of Spirituality* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1985), 51.

of the current generation, and the last circle must contain a humble heart along with love and devotion to God."[43] As Albert Mohler writes, leaders must be driven by the right beliefs.[44]

How People Manage Change

Change is certain in every person's life. Physiological change is a part of the growing and aging process, stages that are normal to human development and part of God's creation plan.[45] Becoming a Christian is a spiritual change, transforming people from enemies of God into his children (John 1:12; Rom 5:10). Timothy Lane and Paul David Tripp remind the Christian that "change is the norm for everyone, and God is always at work to complete this process in us."[46]

Change is a fearful prospect for many people. A person's life, work, and culture are filled with traditions, feelings, and emotions that are very powerful artifacts. These artifacts also include language as well as anything that can be observed, heard, and felt.[47] Individual churches and congregations have powerful artifacts: traditions, emotions, and even an internal language that is unfamiliar to those outside the church. In their book on church revitalization, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson describe the emotions of church members who hold on to their old artifacts as indicative of a love for tradition

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[43] Schaeffer, *A Christian View of Spirituality*, 3:51.

[44] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 19–20.

[45] James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim, eds. *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 10.

[46] Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp, *How People Change*, 2nd ed. (Greensboro, SC: New Growth, 2008), 7.

[47] Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23.

more than the lost.[48] John Kotter says that tradition often "dies a hard death" in the face of change.[49] However, unlike business organizations that stand to lose market share and profits, the church stands to lose souls and new disciples for Christ if it loves tradition more than the change required to fulfill the Great Commission.

The Church's Struggle with Change

Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert write that the church's mission is "to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches that they may worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father."[50] To accomplish this goal requires eliminating or limiting encumbrances in the structure of the church and focusing on the church's mission and vision.

Peter Senge notes that would-be change leaders limit themselves when they do not go deep enough into what their organizations represent. Such leaders can harm the organization by promoting their own ideas for what they wish the organization was like instead of reinforcing what the organization stands for.[51] This does not mean, as organizational change expert John Kotter suggests, that the leadership should not cast "a vision that helps direct, align, and inspire action."[52] However, the church's mission and vision must be clear in the eyes and ears of its leaders.

Kotter believes that vision plays a key role in leading change by helping

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[48] Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2007), 61.

[49] John P. Kotter, *Our Iceberg Is Melting* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005), 120.

[50] DeYoung and Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church?*, 62.

[51] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday/Currency, 2006), 304. Of course, in the case of the church, its mission is clear—to evangelize the world.

[52] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 8.

"direct, align, and inspire actions on the part of large numbers of people."[53] Most of the failure of current ministries and churches across this nation can be attributed to a lack of focus and vision regarding the Great Commission. Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer maintain that church members who have an evangelistic vision know and understand their communities and "will minister in contextually appropriate ways to reach [people] with the gospel."[54] Thom Rainer and Sam Rainer insist that "churches should be about the business of reaching out to the fallen world," and mission and vision statements of their church should become their personal reality.[55]

Casting an attainable vision and celebrating small victories along the way are extremely useful tools in uplifting members' spirits and hopes for the future. Max De Pree notes that the leader can build momentum by having a clear vision and a sound strategy to achieve objectives.[56] Adapting to new challenges and endeavors are a key part of leading organizational change. The church's process of adapting is not one that embraces the philosophy and attitudes of the target culture. Instead, this adaptation takes to heart the apostle Paul's approach found in 1 Corinthians 9:22–23: "I become all things to all men so that I may by all means save some. I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it." Barna proposes that the church of tomorrow is a community of faithful believers driven by a fervent desire to facilitate a highly personalized ministry for those it is trying to reach.[57]

Robinson reminds us that "adaptive challenges are, at their core, spiritual

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[53] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 8.

[54] Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2010), 34.

[55] Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer, *Essential Church: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville: B&H Books 2008), 83.

[56] Max De Pree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Crown Business, 2004), 18.

[57] Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church*, 44.

work. These challenges ask of the individual and group of believers the right learning, authenticity, risk, and change. Adaptive challenges require the kind of spiritual practices and discipline that our different traditions offer and teach."[58] Establishing a solid vision and mission helps develop a picture of the destination that an organization is striving to reach. This motivates the spiritual work necessary to fulfill the church's divine calling. With the power of the Holy Spirit, the church can make great strides and achieve tremendous evangelistic success amid a challenging postmodern culture.

The Role of Leadership in Organizational Change

Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck define leadership as "the process of influencing others toward a common purpose."[59] Barna adds that effective leaders "must be well informed and ready to act on the possibilities that emerge."[60] Church leaders must first focus on rearranging ministry priorities with God's purposes as mandated by Scripture. They must help their members understand their roles and what will help the church achieve its mission and vision. Finally, they must put systems in place that measure and evaluate successful movement toward the mission and vision.

Resistance to change within the membership is a certainty. Members who are unaccustomed to innovative ways and other platforms for doing church and outreach will be tested beyond their comfort zones. Leaders will undoubtedly hear the familiar, "We have *always* done it this way." John Kotter and Dan Cohen note that "behavior change

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[58] Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture*, 19.

[59] Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving Others*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 12.

[60] George Barna, *Futurecast: What Today's Trends Mean for Tomorrow's World* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2011), 118.

happens . . . mostly by speaking to people's feelings."[61] Robinson proposes that the leader's task is to "challenge the accustomed roles and expectations and to dislodge people from their well-known roles."[62] To change how people see and do things, they must be challenged to define themselves. Members' discovery of their identity within the church organization will be essential to establishing their future within it.[63] In the church, this is the equivalent of members learning their spiritual gifts and putting them to work for the glory of God. Ken Davis's research indicates that churches whose members have a greater spiritual awareness and embrace their spiritual gifts demonstrate higher growth potential and maturity.[64]

Arranging ministry priorities and helping members understand their spiritual gifts and their part in the body of Christ are vital endeavors, but they should be evaluated and guided by the appropriate tools to measure and evaluate success. In their book on influencing and leading change, Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, David Maxfield, and Ron MacMilan suggest that plans, initiatives, and strategies for change will remain mere ideas if a system for measuring the effectiveness of change is not developed.[65] After all, most churches have numerous programs and copious resources; however, programs and resources by themselves do not bring about meaningful change. Grenny et al. recommend that church leadership develop systems to frequently measure the level of change in the

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[61] John P. Kotter and Dan Cohen, preface to *The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), xi. The authors also argue that in highly successful change efforts, the change agent helps others to see problems or solutions in ways that influence their emotions and not only their thinking.

[62] Robinson, *Transforming Congregational* Culture, 21.

[63] Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 27.

[64] Ken L. Davis, "An Evaluation of the House Church Model for North American Church Planting, Part 2," *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 90–122.

[65] Joseph Grenny et al., *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013), 21.

targeted areas.[66]

Then, instead of leaders responding to challenges with additional programs, leaders should work with members to come up with good questions on how to resolve the challenges.[67] This helps mitigate the potential of damaged relationships and hurt feelings among church members affected by change.[68] Leaders recognize that it may take time to measure the impact of these various efforts within the organization, but an essential element of transforming people's perception and valuing of change is to promote any short-term success in order to build momentum, increase excitement, and demonstrate interdependence amongst the ranks.[69]

Philosophy of Leadership

In *Great Leader, Great Teacher: Recovering the Biblical Vision for Leadership*, Gary Bredfeldt defines biblical leadership: "At the most basic core of biblical leadership is one indispensable, unchanging function, of the Christian leader—the task of teaching God's Word with clarity, in its original context, in a way that is relevant to those whose hearts are open to hear."[70] Leadership in the church is not synonymous with secular leadership. The secular marketplace of ideas on leadership has completely saturated our society, evident in the overwhelming number of texts, seminars, and workshops on the latest methodologies for leading people and organizations.[71]

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[66] Grenny et al., *Influencer*, 21.

[67] Jim Collins, *How the Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 1.

[68] Heuser and Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation*, 289.

[69] Kotter and Cohen, *The Heart of Change*, 123.

[70] Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher: Recovering the Biblical Vision for Leadership* (Chicago: Moody, 2006), 14.

[71] Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda*, rev. and exp. ed. (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 9.

Nevertheless, a key question for the church is whether secular theories, principles, and ideas can be implemented in a church ministry setting.

Bredfeldt claims an essential role of a biblical leader is that of a Bible teacher and that God's people are "a distinctive community . . . where the principles of business leadership may not always apply."[72] Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby claim that the "trend among many Christian leaders has been for an almost indiscriminate and uncritical acceptance of secular theory without measuring it against the timeless precepts of Scripture."[73] The Blackabies note that many secular authors have started to use Christian principles in their work because the appeal is "good for business."[74]

Since all truth is God's, any truths expounded by secular writers are not beyond God's purview.[75] Linking leadership principles to biblical values should not surprise those who know what God has revealed about moral character, leadership, and the certainty of change. This dissertation primarily addresses aspects of leadership and change from a Christian perspective, yet it also interacts with proposals and principles of secular writers when such principles are in alignment with God's truth. As Frank Gaebelein asserts, educated Christians have "the holy obligation to stand for and honor the truth wherever it is found."[76]

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[72] Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher*, 14.

[73] Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, 10.

[74] Blackaby and Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, 11.

[75] David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 283. It is possible to obtain the truth from models that are not inherently Christian, but God's Word must be the litmus test. Clark presents the pros and cons of the premise that "all truth is God's truth." He claims that this principle is usually brought up by those who seek to integrate faith and reason. He believes that the statement is valid to some extent. He argues that Christian thinking takes precedence over Christian theology and that everything true and good belongs under God's purview. Consequently, he claims that when human thought is correct, it produces results that can agree with a Christian worldview. He also claims that there are cases in which Christians can benefit from disciplines and good practices that are not necessarily inherently Christian. Yet, Clark cautions against adapting academic proposals and models that oppose God's Word to gain social acceptance.

[76] Frank E. Gaebelein, "The Pattern of God's Truth," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 111, no. 441 (January 1954): 73.

Transformational Leadership

Scholars and practitioners continue to write on leadership, how it operates, and what makes it effective.[77] As a result, consumers of leadership and management literature continually seek the newest formula for strategizing and developing plans to help their teams and organizations increase their productivity and, ultimately, their bottom line. One such theory is known as transformational leadership, which authors Justin Irving and Mark Strauss say is "focused on organizational transformation and effectiveness through leader behavior."[78]

In the last few decades, transformational leadership has captured the attention of many leaders in the corporate world and in the local church.[79] Transformational leadership theory (TLT) emerged in the early to late 1970s. The moniker "transformational leadership" is known to have originated with sociologist James Downton through his work, *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in the Revolutionary Process*.[80] However, historian and political scientist James MacGregor Burns expanded research on the subject and contributed significantly to popularizing its use through his seminal work, *Leadership*.[81]

Transformational leadership is based on the leader's ability to influence, inspire, and empower, thus positively impacting those he leads and his respective

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[77] John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 3. People use the term leadership and management interchangeably, but they are not the same thing. Kotter acknowledges that both disciplines overlap and that one does not exist without the other. He rightly argues that while management helps keeps complex organizations on time and on budget, leadership produces movement. Such movement is exercised in three specific areas: direction [vision], alignment of people, and motivating and inspiring people to perform by overcoming obstacles.

[78] Justin A. Irving and Mark L. Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 9.

[79] Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 114.

[80] James V. Downton, *Rebel Leadership: Commitment and Charisma in the Revolutionary Process* (New York: Free Press, 1973).

[81] James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010).

organization. Aubrey Malphurs asserts that the tenets and principles undergirding transformational leadership find support in the Christian Scriptures.[82] Theologian David Clark states that the rising interest in this topic in church circles should enable "Christian ministers to lead transformationally so that people can receive, understand, internalize, and integrate theology into life."[83] Likewise, church leaders argue that the local church as an organization is uniquely designed to develop and deploy leaders to fulfill its divinely ordained mission. Ultimately, Christ reigns supremely over everything, especially in how his chosen leaders guide and mentor his people into transformed lives focused on accomplishing the advancement of the gospel and the plans God designed for them.[84]

An individual's outward behaviors are essential to his ability to lead others. One characteristic of a transformational leader is the level of influence he can exert over his followers. W. Warner Burke states that "power is the capacity to influence others; leadership is the exercise of that capacity."[85] Bruce Avolio asserts that leadership is not the exercise of power but rather the capacity to increase the sense of power among one's followers, thereby fulfilling the leader's most important job, which is to reproduce leaders.[86]

According to Bass and Riggio, transformational leaders also display charisma, which causes followers to want to identify with and emulate them. They inspire followers and intellectually stimulate them to reflect on their skills and performance. Lastly, the

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[82] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 114.

[83] David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 168.

[84] Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2016), 1.

[85] W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed., Foundations for Organizational Science (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 249.

[86] Bruce J. Avolio, *Full Range Leadership Development*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2011), 10.

effective transformational leader is considerate of his followers by providing them with the appropriate level of support, mentoring, and coaching.[87]

The four components mentioned above—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—were identified by Bernard Bass and are known as the "Four I's." They represent the foundational pillars of transformational leadership efforts in organizations.[88] As such, they are common to many organizational change models and models for effective leadership. Chapter 5 engages more deeply with one derivative framework of transformational leadership called the 4R Model and discusses its helpful approach to successfully lead organizations through change. The following section provides an overview of the Four I's.

Component 1: Idealized Influence

Idealized influence describes transformational leaders who exemplify charismatic behavior. Avolio and Bass describe these leaders as "role models for their followers."[89] Bass clarifies that although not impossible, it is improbable for a leader to be transformational without being charismatic.[90] Followers find these types of leaders easy to identify with and seek to emulate them. One distinctive characteristic that endears charismatic leaders to their followers is their ability to put the interests of their followers

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[87] Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership: A Comprehensive Review of Theory and Research*, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Psychology Press, 2005), 5. Regarding charisma, it is imperative that transformational leaders are self-aware. Charismatic transformational leaders are at the top of their game in crisis situations, and in those circumstances, this particular trait shines. Nonetheless, charisma must be rooted in virtue and oriented to the service of others if it is to be transformational. See Mark W. McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World: Virtue and Effective Leadership in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 86.

[88] Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, *Developing Potential across a Full Range of Leadership: Cases on Transactional and Transformational Leadership* (New York: Psychology Press, 2002), 1–2.

[89] Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M Bass, eds., *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1994), 3.

[90] Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Application*, 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 620.

ahead of their own.[91] They lead by example and are willing to share risks alongside their followers.[92] They communicate a strong sense of collective mission to their followers while reassuring them of their combined ability to overcome any eventual challenges.[93] These leaders further influence their followers by arousing strong emotions and loyalty in them.[94]

Idealized influence is a unique component of transformational leadership in that it must be understood from two distinct perspectives: the *self-idealized influence* viewpoint and the *attributed idealized influence* viewpoint.[95] The former is based on the actions and behaviors of the leader. The latter is based on the attributes and elements ascribed to the leader by his followers and others.[96]

Although each of the Four I's is equally important to the successful implementation of transformational change in people and organizations, idealized influence is the foundation for the other "I's" and sets the tone for a particular approach to leading. When these four components are strategically aligned, they can become a

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[91] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 3.

[92] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Everyday People, Extraordinary Leadership: How to Make a Difference Regardless of Your Title, Role, or Authority* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2021), 12. The authors say leaders perform best when they are able "to enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared ideals and aspirations" (12).

[93] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 6.

[94] Brian J. Hoffman et al., "Person-Organization Value Congruence: How Transformational Leaders Influence Work Group Effectiveness," *Academy of Management Journal* 54, no. 4 (August 2011): 780.

[95] Bernard Bass writes that responses to leaders are in the "eye of the beholder." In the eyes of many followers, charismatic leaders are "bigger than life" (Bernard M. Bass, "Personal Selling and Transactional/Transformational Leadership," *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management* 17, no. 3 [1997]: 21).

[96] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 6. The authors note that perceptions of leadership are often highly subjective. Those who follow charismatic leaders often have an idealistic perception of their leadership. They (followers) respect and admire him and tend to give him a great deal of praise and accolades.

remarkable formula to help transformational leaders bring about the much-needed change their organizations seek.

Component 2: Inspirational Motivation

Although not entirely separate from charisma, inspirational motivation has enough unique qualities to stand on its own.[97] The inspirational aspect of the leader's approach conveys meaning and encourages followers to find their work worthwhile.[98] Inspirational leaders create a vision of the future that builds a strong sense of teamwork and enthusiasm. Leaders accomplish this by demonstrating a spirit of excitement and optimism to which followers respond positively.[99]

James Kouzes and Barry Posner call this "encouraging the heart," and it requires the leader's deepest level of honesty and sincerity.[100] In this scenario, the transformational leader focuses on two areas that authentically encourage and motivate followers: (1) recognizing followers' contributions and individual excellence by demonstrating genuine appreciation, and (2) celebrating values and achievements by fostering a sense of community.[101] Recognition is one of the transformational leader's most powerful tools. It is quick, attention-getting, effective, and long-lasting, and above all, it comes at zero cost with the possibility of a tremendous payoff.[102] Likewise, by fostering community and creating a climate of trust, leaders help facilitate strong

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[97] Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 620.

[98] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 3; James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 6th ed. (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2017), 92. Two editions of *The Leadership Challenge* are utilized in this study. Hereafter, the sixth edition of will be cited using publication date: *The Leadership Challenge* (2017).

[99] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 6.

[100] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 19–20.

[101] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 246.

[102] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 22.

relationships among stakeholders.[103] These types of relationships help maintain personal and organizational health.[104]

Vision casting also falls under this component of transformational leadership. Kouzes and Posner claim that leaders who focus positively on the future attract followers, develop intrinsic motivation, and mobilize them into teams that usually perform and achieve success.[105] Although every leader needs a vision, inspirational leaders use this vision to motivate and unite followers while also moving the organization forward.[106] Transformational leaders can intuitively recognize challenges and obstacles that may oppose the vision/mission objectives and can identify the actions that help push their team and goals forward.[107] Implementing these measures instills trust in their followers and confidence in their leadership. Inspiring and motivating leaders communicate expectations with simplicity and clarity, which their followers find appealing.[108]

Component 3: Intellectual Stimulation

The transformational leader is able to stimulate his followers to think creatively, find new ways of doing things, and solve problems for the organization's

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[103] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 217. The authors note the leader's challenge in facilitating relationships across an organization. To meet this challenge, leaders and followers must recognize how much they need one another to succeed.

[104] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 278.

[105] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 104.

[106] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 99.

[107] Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 115–16. Bass describes leadership intuition as the ability to know directly without reasoning. An intuitive leader can anticipate future eventualities. The authors consider this one of the marks of a great leader.

[108] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 151–52. The authors highlight the importance of communicating clearly and with confidence. They also explain that these elements are the responsibility of the leader as a communicator. The quality of the message is as important as its authenticity. Therefore, when leaders communicate the message of the organization, it is imperative that they do so with the right voice and tone. Leaders have an obligation to convey their beliefs and confidence in the message they communicate to foster and cultivate trust with their followers.

benefit.[109] Peter Northouse suggests this allows followers to "challenge their beliefs and values as well as those of the leader and the organization."[110] Transformational leaders give followers license to challenge the systems in place and the processes by which things are traditionally done.[111] They are encouraged to seize opportunities by taking the initiative and exploring innovative ways to improve performance. They are given a safety net to engage freely in creative work, allowing them to make mistakes without fear of ridicule or criticism.[112] The goal of leadership is to create other leaders. One must learn from successes and failures to become an effective leader. This means future leaders must be comfortable with trying and failing as part of their growth process.

Leaders with who intellectually stimulate model teachability. Kouzes and Posner assert that the best leaders are the best learners. The authors further contend that this learning attitude in leaders causes them to be in a constant state of development throughout their lives.[113]

Component 4: Individualized Consideration

Individualized consideration is the personalized attention that each follower receives from the leader[114] and is crucial because an individual's performance can impact the achievement of organizational goals. Bass and Riggio explain that when a

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[109] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 7.

[110] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 9th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2021), 353. The author explains how this type of transformational leadership is conducive to innovation because it encourages followers to develop potential practical solutions to organizational problems that management may overlook or do not perceive.

[111] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 144. The authors argue that when the leadership grants permission for followers to freely engage in a process of taking risks and generating small wins, it benefits the overall health of the organization, and it increases their followers' personal level of effectiveness.

[112] Avolio and Bass, Improving Organizational Effectiveness, 3.

[113] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Learning Leadership: The Five Fundamentals of Becoming an Exemplary Leader* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016), 33.

[114] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 3.

transformational leader acts as a coach or mentor, this individualized consideration fosters the achievement and growth of each follower.[115] The coaching-mentoring element provides followers with short- and long-term development plans to chart their individual success.[116]

Leaders must also develop a supportive environment that provides followers with opportunities for customized learning and development.[117] This discourages the "cookie-cutter" approach in addressing the growth areas of followers, which is precisely what makes individualized consideration a tremendous tool for follower and organizational transformation.[118] Instead, leaders can identify and implement targeted professional development based on individual needs. For example, a leader may focus on providing more encouragement to some followers and giving more autonomy to others. Likewise, the leaders may recognize that some followers need more autonomy while others may need more task structure.[119]

Individualized consideration encourages two-way communication in the workplace. A leader should build on previous conversations to provide coaching and

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[115] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 7.

[116] Daniel Goleman, *Leadership: The Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Northampton, MA: More Than Sound, 2011), 30.

[117] Taly Dvir et al., "Impact of Transformational Leadership on Follower Development and Performance: A Field Experiment," *Academy of Management Journal* 45, no. 4 (2002): 735–44. In a longitudinal, randomized field experiment, researchers tested the impact of training on the ability of transformational leaders to increase follower development and performance. The experimental group leaders received transformational leadership training, and control group leaders received eclectic leadership training. Results indicated the leaders in the experimental group had a more positive impact on direct followers' development and on indirect followers' performance than did the leaders in the control group

[118] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 33. In chapter 3, Francis J. Yammarino contends that the interests of an organization do not need to be divorced from followers' interests. When looking in detail at how individualized consideration plays into organizational development, the author argues that transformational leaders must continually "work to better align [their] staff's interests with the organizational interest" (Francis J. Yammarino, "Transformational Leadership at a Distance," in Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 26).

[119] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 7.

mentoring opportunities.[120] In addition, the leader becomes personally aware of the follower's concerns and aspirations, which facilitates his view of the follower as a whole person rather than simply an employee.[121] Research has found that transformational leadership and emotional intelligence share various characteristics; emotionally intelligent leaders can gain the trust and respect of their followers.[122] Successful leaders demonstrate emotional intelligence by developing relationships and empathy while influencing and developing others.[123]

The transformational leader delegates responsibilities to followers. Irving and Strass write, "His primary role is to work him or herself out of a job, to equip and empower others to utilize the gifts and abilities they have been given."[124] He also provides active monitoring to assess progress and evaluate the need for more direction or support. However, the leader does so in a way that followers "do not feel they are being checked on."[125] In this increasingly diverse society, fostering individualized consideration becomes even more crucial to organizational success. Considerate leaders will be more adept at dealing with followers with diverse backgrounds, values, and perspectives.[126]

Concluding Thoughts on the Four I's

The Four I's of TLT provide a guide for leaders who want to transcend their

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[120] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 7.

[121] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 4.

[122] Barbara Mandell and Shilpa Pherwani, "Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership Style: A Gender Comparison," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 17, no. 3 (March 2003): 398–99.

[123] Daniel Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 2000), 37.

[124] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 22.

[125] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 3.

[126] Avolio and Bass, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, 100.

basic managerial scope and lead by serving as role models for followers.[127] Leaders who exemplify the values and practices promoted by the Four I's can be a tremendous resource for organizational transformation. Further, these values point to a model of leadership in which leaders' and followers' goals and aspirations are in alignment, producing powerful, meaningful, and mutually beneficial engagement.

Models of Change Leadership and Associated Best Practices

Leading change in the church is a formidable task, and Heuser and Shawchuck remind us that "change-agent leaders, who are willing to take risks, learn how to disturb the system without destroying people in the process."[128] As Bredfeldt says, "Leadership is dynamic and requires openness and flexibility on the part of those who must exercise leadership."[129] There are many theories and methodologies for implementing organizational change, but this dissertation presents three approaches in an attempt to define a set of strategies and best practices for leading change in the church without compromising biblical and theological orthodoxy. These approaches will be presented in two sections. In the first section, I present two models that make up part 1 of the research project. These two models are compared and contrasted below and form the basis of chapter 4, which presents part 1 of the empirical case study and content analysis. The second section presents the third model, which is a "third way" of leading organizational change through transformational leadership. Though summarized here, this model is explicated in chapter 5 and retrospectively applied to part 1 of the empirical study and

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[127] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 26. The authors state that "classic management and leadership wisdom argue that followers need to be controlled in order to get them to do what they do not otherwise want to do." The authors add that contemporary research shows that leadership focused on empowering followers causes followers to develop trust in leaders with a non-transformational approach. However, the development of trust was found to be even greater when the leaders had a more transformational approach.

[128] Heuser and Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation*, 10.

[129] Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher*, 14.

content analysis depicted in chapter 4.[130]

The 8-Step Model and the Transformational Journey Model

The first approach is the well-known 8-Step Model (8SM) for implementing organizational change, proposed by Harvard research professor John Kotter.[131] Kotter's model has been widely and successfully used by secular and social sector organizations at the national and international levels. It is a proven methodology that is more than sufficient for secular organizations but one that church organizations would need to modify before adopting in their unique settings.

Kotter's model first emphasizes a sense of urgency for implementing change. The second step involves building a guiding coalition, and the third step involves forming a strategic vision. The fourth step entails communicating the vision. In the fifth step, leadership enables action by removing barriers and empowering members of the organization. The sixth step calls for the generation and celebration of short-term wins; the seventh step consolidates the gains and steps up production. The eighth and final step in Kotter's model ensures that a system is in place to establish the new approach in the organization's overall culture.[132]

The second model examined in this dissertation is the work of Christian

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[130] The original empirical case study and content analysis of this research project was part of the central thesis for the Doctor of Education degree obtained by the researcher at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2015. The original thesis was conducted under the supervision of Shane W. Parker, former associate professor of leadership and missions and Michael S. Wilder, former associate vice president for doctoral studies. In 2020, the researcher was invited to participate in the EdD to PhD Bridge Program at SBTS which consists of additional doctoral level coursework and typically an extension or enhancement of the student's original EdD thesis.

[131] Kotter is the Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership, Emeritus at Harvard Business School. He is also a *New York Times* best-selling author and the chairman of Kotter International, a management consulting firm. Kotter's best-selling book *Leading Change* is considered a classic in business literature and one of the foundational pieces for this dissertation.

[132] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37–165. The visual model of the 8-Steps for Leading Change is available on John Kotter's website, https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/.

authors and church leaders Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr. In *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for a Transformational Journey*, the authors synthesize the best strategies and methodologies for change to create a practical guide for church leaders who desire meaningful and profound change in their congregations.[133] According to the authors, their Transformational Journey Model (TJM) is designed for and applicable to new and veteran congregational bodies and parachurch organizations facing the challenges of cultural change.[134]

The TJM comprises eight stages and four disciplines. The first stage is unique to faith-based organizations. The authors begin by explaining what they believe is the principal foundation for leading change in the church: spiritual and relational vitality. They define spiritual and relational vitality as two dimensions of a single reality, namely the uncompromising love of God and neighbor.[135] They consider this an essential stage, as it lays the groundwork for change by encouraging personal preparation in the life of the leader.

The second stage is creating a sense of urgency, and the third stage is establishing the vision community (teams). The leadership (with input from the vision community) discerns the vision in the fourth stage and communicates the vision to the congregation in the fifth stage. The sixth stage includes empowering the teams and leadership to enact the vision, and the vision is implemented in stage 7. In stage 8, leaders reinforce momentum by aligning the congregation to the vision. Alignment occurs when

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[133] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr set out to develop a practical guide for leading change in the church. The authors admit that they were influenced by the work of a variety of Christian and secular writers, but they believe that their model is sound and guided by Scripture as the ultimate authority. Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 36–66.

[134] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 10.

[135] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 14.

"all aspects of congregational life are consistent with and supportive of the vision."[136]

The TJM model supplements the organizational change process by recommending four disciplines that describe a transformational leader: (1) generating and sustaining creative tension, (2) harnessing the power of mental models, (3) enabling team learning, and (4) practicing systems thinking.[137] Herrington et al. assert, "Congregational leaders can become more effective by mastering [these] learning disciplines of transformational leadership."

The next section explores seven best practices: one that is unique to the TJM and six that the two models have in common. These practices were evaluated for their contribution to the discipline of leading organizational change as well as their practical implementation. They were used to assess the practices of the churches participating in the part 1 of the research implementation phase of this study.

Best Practice 1: Personal Preparation and Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership is addressed in chapters 2 and 3 of Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's work. However, spiritual leadership is absent from Kotter's model. Herrington et al. maintain that the pastor, as God's representative and the leading change agent in the congregation, must possess the elements of spiritual and relational vitality.[138] These two elements are summed up in two very simple yet profound truths: he must love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, and mind, and love his neighbor as himself (Matt 22:37–38). The spiritual leader must seek God and be in alignment with his will and guidance. This takes on the form of having a prayerful, faithful, and obedient life before God, for he

[136] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 83.

[137] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 154–58

[138] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 31–32.

can only be effective in teaching and leading others as he is taught and led by his Lord. Likewise, he must not only love his brothers and sisters in the faith but also those who do not know Christ as Savior. All of them are his neighbors and deserve the best that he has to offer in terms of spiritual and relational leadership.

This is only possible when the leader spends adequate time in prayer and spiritual preparation before engaging his congregation in the organizational change process. The preparation before the process is as important as the process itself. Obviously, Kotter's model completely misses this aspect of the change process due to the secular nature of his approach and perhaps his general target audience. Nonetheless, since this step involves leading Christ's church, it is an essential part of the process.

Best Practice 2: Establishing a Sense of Urgency

After the spiritual groundwork has been laid and the biblical foundations assessed, the next step is to establish a sense of urgency for change. The need and agenda for accomplishing change must be widely communicated.[139] This carries the message that maintaining the status quo is not an acceptable course of action. Thom Rainer articulates a sense of reality and urgency for the church: "America is clearly becoming less Christian, less evangelized, and less churched. Yet, too many of those in our churches seem oblivious to this reality."[140]

Herrington et al. place building a sense of urgency just after the first stage of making personal preparation. Leaders should indicate that "a small and diverse group of members has been formed to help lead the change process."[141] This strategy helps

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[139] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 47.

[140] Thom S. Rainer, "Shattering Myths about the Unchurched," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 41–57.

[141] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 47.

promote ownership and participation in the change process. In providing reasons for urgency, leaders can employ information about the current reality. They suggest that it is also appropriate to include statistical information about the local congregation and its community as well as appropriate illustrations and supportive biblical and theological argumentation.[142]

Kotter places a sense of urgency as the first step in his model, arguing that establishing a sense of urgency is crucial in initiating the change process.[143] He correlates a high level of complacency within an organization with a failure to see the need for change, making potential change initiatives "dead on arrival."[144] Therefore, a sense of urgency is required to gain the cooperation of members.[145] He suggests that leaders never "underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency and that help maintain the status quo."[146] If the leader fails to engage the interest of enough people to address the problem, organizational transformation is in peril.

Kotter says the change process requires of members "a great deal of cooperation, initiative, and willingness to make sacrifices."[147] He contends that in an organization of one hundred members, at least twenty-four must go beyond the call of duty to produce significant change.[148]

Best Practice 3: Casting a Vision

Casting a vision is present in the TJM and the 8SM. Herrington et al. readily

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[142] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 52–53.

[143] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37.

[144] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 39.

[145] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37.

[146] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 43.

[147] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37.

[148] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 37.

admit that terms such as "vision" and "vision-path" are used interchangeably by secular and Christian authors. However, they also note that these terms have "separate and distinct meanings."[149] The authors effectively define the difference between "mission" and "vision," terms that are often erroneously intertwined. They define mission as "God's eternal purpose for the church" and the term "that provides the framework and boundaries for the vision."[150] Vision is "a clear, shared, and compelling picture of a preferred future to which God is calling the congregation."[151]

Peter Senge asserts that vision is the "what" of an organization, "the picture of the future [it] seeks to create."[152] Kotter's model aligns with Senge's definition of vision but adds descriptors to enhance its purpose. He defines vision as "a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future."[153] Kotter proposes that a vision "clarifies the direction of change, it serves to facilitate major changes by motivating actions that are not part of the member's short-term self-interests, and it helps align individuals and coordinate the actions of motivated members in a more efficient way."[154] Kotter describes an effective vision as imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable.[155]

Best Practice 4: Effective Communication

Herrington et al. see the communication stage as the "uninterrupted

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[149] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 47.

[150] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 47.

[151] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 48.

[152] Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 207.

[153] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 69.

[154] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 71.

[155] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 73.

continuation of vision development."[156] The authors encourage the congregational leadership not to underestimate the importance or the implications of an effective transition from the casting of the vision to its communication.[157]

In *The Purpose Drive Church*, pastor Rick Warren highlights the importance of the continual communication of the organizational vision. He recommends that the church's vision and purpose be reaffirmed every twenty-six days to keep the congregation moving in the right direction.[158]

The strategy for communicating the vision is also important. Research by John Hammond, Ralph Keeney, and Howard Raiffa demonstrates that "when considering a decision, the mind gives disproportionate weight to the first information it receives. Initial impressions, estimates, or data ignite subsequent thoughts and judgments."[159] Kotter contends that the real power of vision is unleashed when those within the organization have a common understanding of its goal and direction. The unsuccessful communication of the vision across the organizational spectrum will cause a "stalled transformation."[160] Social organizations such as the church could experience the same phenomenon if effective communication fails to communicate the vision to its ranks.

Herrington et al. suggest the following strategies for communicating a vision of change: the development of an explicit communication strategy; the use of a creative communications medium; the enlistment of the entire vision community; the development of terms, phrases, and analogies that have special meaning to the

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[156] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 60.

[157] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 60.

[158] Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth without Compromising Your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 111.

[159] John S. Hammond, Ralph L. Keeney, and Howard Raiffa, "The Hidden Traps in Decision Making," in *On Making Smart Decisions*, ed. Harvard Business Review, HBR's 10 Must Reads (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2013), 3.

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

congregation; the constant repetition of the vision; and seeking feedback on the vision.[161] Similarly, Kotter offers the following elements of effective communication: simplicity; the use of metaphor or examples; multiple forums; repetition; leadership by example; explanation of seeming inconsistencies; and give and take (two-way communication).[162]

This is the stage in which both models most closely align. Kotter's work precedes that of Herrington et al. and, although Christian in their approach, they do not hesitate to cite Kotter and other secular writers whose work complements their proposal. Unique to Herrington et al., however, is their challenge to Christian congregations in the communication stage to find "creative ways that enable the entire congregation to understand God's vision thoroughly for their future and its implications."[163]

Best Practice 5: Empowering Members of the Organization

The best practice of empowering members of an organization to be change agents is present in both models. According to Kotter, there are barriers prevalent within structural systems, whether mechanical or man-made, that impede the successful implementation of the vision. He describes four different types of roadblocks to progress that leaders must remove so that members are empowered to change and effect change: the structural makeup of an organization; a lack of skills to implement the necessary tasks; personnel or information systems that create difficulty in getting things done; and supervisors who get in the way or discourage actions leading to the desired change.[164] Kouzes and Posner point out that exceptional leaders have always understood how

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[161] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 62–65.

[162] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 91.

[163] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 66.

[164] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 105.

important it is for their constituents "to feel strong, capable, and efficacious."[165] For top leadership to implement vision change requires the participation of all members.

Some studies have found that pay continues to motivate, but many other important factors such as job satisfaction, workplace culture, and trust between members of an organization and their leaders are equally important motivators.[166] Organizational members who feel empowered by their leaders to make decisions that affect the organization's productivity are more likely to feel appreciated and help the vision change become a reality. John Gardner argues that there is "nothing more vital to the renewal of an organization than the arrangements by which able people are nurtured and moved into positions where they can make the greatest contribution."[167]

Some of the same elements are at work in the local church. Members of the local church respond in a similar fashion when entrusted to lead and make decisions about things that matter to them. Timothy Keller and Katherine Leary Alsdorf argue that there is a distinct need for humans to work and feel productive that is not dictated by the mere need to make money but rather to "live fully human lives."[168] Herrington et al. suggest that a paradigm shift is needed within church leadership. A ministerial staff must recognize and accept that they cannot devote all of their energy to move the entire church

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[165] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*, 5th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012), 244. Hereafter, the fifth edition of this book will be referred to as *The Leadership Challenge* (2012). Kouzes and Posner attest that the power of influence actually increases when leaders give their constituents power to make decisions. They also contend that constituents who feel weak, incompetent, and insignificant will consistently underperform.

[166] Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz, "Job Satisfaction Jumped in 2014, Report Says," *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 2015, http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-job-satisfaction-0428-biz-20150428-story.html.

[167] John W. Gardner, *On Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 127. On the topic of nurturing members as they grow and contribute to the organization, see also Jerry C. Wofford, *Transforming Christian Leadership: 10 Exemplary Church Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013), 147.

[168] Timothy J. Keller and Katherine Leary Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Penguin Group, 2012), 37. Keller and Alsdorf argue that work is as much a basic human need as food and that meaningful work can be food for the soul.

organization forward without the contribution of its members. They must grant those willing to carry out the mission the capacity to make decisions and then remove the obstacles that would prevent the leaders in the new model from serving effectively.[169]

Best Practice 6: Effective Use of Teams

In *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization*, Jon Katzenbach and Douglas Smith share that organizations struggle to make the most out of using teams to create a higher-performing organization. They attribute this failure to the lack of clarity and shared purpose surrounding the existence of teams.[170] Patrick Lencioni studied the most common dysfunctions within teams and asserts, "If an organization is able to get all of its members pulling in the same direction, it would be possible for such an organization to dominate any type of enterprise in any market at any given time."[171]

According to Katzenbach and Smith, the change leader must consider factors such as team size, purpose, goals, skills, approach, and accountability when organizing a team.[172] Furthermore, what sets apart high-performing teams from less reliable teams is their level of mutual commitment to one another.[173] In his work on leading a team-based church, George Cladis argues that developing a healthy ministry and strong Christian community are closely associated with "a stable and high-quality relationship among the members of the principal leadership team" and the congregation.[174] He notes that the

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[169] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 68–71.

[170] Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, prologue to *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1993), xiv–xv.

[171] Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 2.

[172] Katzenbach and Smith, prologue to *The Wisdom of Teams*, xv.

[173] Katzenbach and Smith, *The Wisdom of Teams*, 63.

[174] George Cladis, preface to *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), ix.

"depiction of God as [triune] is an excellent Biblical and theological model for building meaningful ministry teams in the church of the twenty-first century."[175]

The principle of creating teams occurs early in Kotter's model, in the second stage, after establishing a sense of urgency. Kotter calls one vital team "the guiding coalition" that comprises the right members, a high level of trust, and shared objectives. Kotter considers building this type of team essential to the early efforts of leading change in an organization. Kotter argues that in a world in which trends and information are moving at an increasing rate, it is necessary to have a guiding coalition that functions effectively and can process and make decisions on high levels of information.[176]

Kotter believes that a guiding coalition can also help accelerate the implementation of new approaches because they will be truly informed and have the power to make key decisions.[177] Essential to Kotter's guiding coalition are the following characteristics: position power, expertise, credibility, and leadership.[178] Members of the guiding coalition can find the right people, create trust, and develop a common goal.[179]

Citing Katzenbach and Smith's research, Herrington et al. argue that the growing body of research related to teams and organizations suggests that the development of high-performance teams is needed to reach the present demands of the present day. They place "Establishing a Vision Community" (establishing teams) as the third stage in their model. Teamwork is so vital to the change process that Herrington et al. define "Enabling Team Learning" as one of the four traits of a transformational leader. Team learning is "the process of enabling a team to produce results far beyond its

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[175] Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church*, 6.

[176] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 53.

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

[178] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 58.

[179] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 67.

combined capabilities as individuals."[180]

Herrington et al. also make a compelling biblical case for a team-like approach in the congregational setting, noting that the nature of the church demands the participation of many talents and gifts for the institution to perform as a high-functioning unit. The authors use Paul's metaphor of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:1–27) and the collective work that builds on one another's labor (1 Cor 3) as the scriptural basis to describe the ideal way that teams should function. They conclude that passages like 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 3 communicate a clear message about teams. Church members have diverse backgrounds, skills, talents, and spiritual gifts; all are important roles that contribute to building up the body of Christ.[181]

Herrington et al. conclude by stating that would-be change leaders must be willing to pay the price to put together high-functioning teams in the church.[182] Team building takes time and discipline, and effective dialogue is the most critical skill to develop among teams. Change leaders can "accelerate the learning process for a team" through team building and performance challenges.[183] Finally, they recommend that leaders in the church commit to working with the team, providing opportunities for team members to develop their skills, and monitoring the team's progress.[184]

Best Practice 7: Establishing a New Culture through Transformational Leadership Disciplines

Herrington et al. state that transformational leadership is both a science and an

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[180] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 124.

[181] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 125.

[182] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 138.

[183] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 138.

[184] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 138.

art; it requires continuous learning and skill development on the part of the would-be change agent.[185] They encourage the leader to hold a mental model of the nature of transformation and remember that each congregation and member will experience transformation journeys that may not be alike. Nonetheless, they remind the leader that some aspects of the transformation process are predictable due to how people and organizations handle change.[186]

Herrington et al. provide six dynamics they believe capture their perspective on the successful transformation of a congregation: (1) spiritual and relational vitality drives transformation, so (2) congregational transformation requires transformed leaders; (3) transformation occurs through intentional processes, and (4) each transformation process is unique; (5) congregational transformation also requires specific skills, and (6) healthy change takes time.[187]

On the other hand, Kotter takes an unexpected approach in the last stage of his model for leading organizational change. He does not address the transformational leadership approach; rather, he discusses establishing a new organizational culture. He rejects the theory that the biggest impediment to implementing change in an organization is culture and that the first step in bringing transformation is changing norms and values.[188] He argues that culture is not an artifact that can be easily manipulated. He claims that culture change occurs only after the leader has successfully altered members' actions and after new behavior benefits the organization for a sustainable period.[189] Only then, says Kotter, can members of the organization correlate the new actions and the

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[185] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 155.

[186] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 156.

[187] Herrington, Bonem, and Furr, *Leading Congregational Change*, 154–57.

[188] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 163.

[189] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 163.

performance improvement, thus bringing an opportunity to establish a new cultural climate.[190]

A Third Way: The 4R Model of Transformational Leadership

Developed by scholar and leadership expert Mark McCloskey, the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership is a helpful tool that can be used to lead different types of organizations through various stages in their life cycle.[191] McCloskey developed the 4R Model to respond to what he calls the "New Normal" in the organizational leadership landscape.[192] The New Normal is an approach that moves away from the "Old Normal" leadership of the charismatic strongman who possesses all the answers and leads organizations to outstanding achievement through sheer determination and skill. Instead, McCloskey contends that the Old Normal is swiftly disappearing and being replaced by an onslaught of cultural, social, and economic forces drastically transforming organizational environments. As a result, charismatic and task-driven only leaders are

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[190] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 163.

[191] Mark McCloskey is professor of transformational leadership and the program director for the master of arts degree in transformational leadership at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. His expertise and current instructional focus cover the biblical theology of leadership, leadership formation, organizational leadership development, team building, virtue-based leadership, and strategic planning. Additionally, McCloskey consults with businesses, churches, and non-profit organizations in the areas of leadership development, strategic planning, and team building. One of his most important contributions to the field of TLT is the development of the "4R Model of Transformational Leadership," which he calls a useful framework that can provide a roadmap and a sense of direction in leading teams and organizations. The 4R Model is based on four specific and inter-related important areas: Relationships, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results. Of great importance is the role each component plays alongside their sub-components in leading organizations in real transformational fashion. McCloskey's 4R Model serves as the foundation for a detailed content analysis of the best practices and leadership approaches identified in the case studies of this research project (see chapters 5 and 6). The objective of this analysis is to identify the presence of the 4R Model within the organizational change efforts implemented by the local leadership teams at the three participating sites.

[192] Mark W. McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World: Virtue and Effective Leadership in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 16–17. The author acknowledges that the term New Normal was first coined in 2004 by venture capitalist Roger McNamee in his book, *The New Normal: Great Opportunities in a Time of Great Risk* (New York, Penguin, 2004), to describe the new state of affairs in the twenty-first century. More precisely, McNamee claims that the New Normal began in the first trimester of the year 2000. Having credited McNamee with originating the term, from this point forward in the dissertation, the term will be used in the context McCloskey uses it in reference to his own work.

quickly exposed as inadequate to respond to the challenges presented by the New Normal.[193] McCloskey distinguishes leaders in the New Normal as having an attitude of learning and leading that emphasizes the personal and collective capacity to thrive in dynamic and unpredictable environments.[194] In this new business arena, McCloskey argues that effective leadership "is less about the charisma and competence of the few and more about the collaborative effort of many."[195] Furthermore, he claims that organizations embracing the New Normal begin to appreciate challenging experiences and disruptors as opportunities to respond to new problems from new perspectives, helping them to increase their knowledge base, develop new competencies, and refresh their understanding of their values and assumptions.[196]

McCloskey and Jim Louwsma identify five marks that distinguish transformational leaders; foremost among them is their ability to "function as effective agents of personal and corporate change."[197] Researchers have found that when organizations mature, they begin to experience challenges from external factors that force them to wrestle with their assumptions and values. These challenges compel organizations to consider whether their profoundly rooted assumptions and values require

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[193] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 16. In pages 17–21, McCloskey provides a useful framework developed by the US Army War College to help their officers understand and assimilate the cultural, technological, and geopolitical factors impacting the world as it entered the twenty-first century. The military created the acronym VUCA, which stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It is the US Army's way of interpreting the New Normal and equipping its personnel to engage in the contexts and complexities brought forth by this new reality. VUCA is not only the military's new reality but the reality of all leaders and organizations today.

[194] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 56.

[195] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 41.

[196] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 58.

[197] Mark W. McCloskey and Jim Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership: Building Strong Businesses, Organizations and Families* (Kearney, MO: The Wordsmith, 2016), 20. This work also contains significant information from McCloskey related to the content, process, and implementation of the 4R Model. It is written for wide market consumption; hence it avoids a more in-depth discussion and exploration of the theoretical model. Nonetheless, there are specific examples in the work and contributions from both authors that make it unique and profitable.

adaptive change.[198] Essential to this change process is the concept of organizational culture and identity. Avolio and Bass maintain that organizational culture is the glue that keeps organizations unified. However, it is also the same element that can constrain the need for organizational change and innovation due in part to an organization's tendency to dwell on past successes.[199]

These challenges give rise to the need for transformational leaders who can be catalysts for personal and organizational change. Such leaders are at a premium in a changing landscape in which volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity are endemic to the New Normal.[200] On a personal level, transformational leaders empower individual change in the lives of their followers by motivating them to become the best version of themselves and by increasing their level of accountability toward others and their organizations.[201] Northouse affirms that "transformational leaders set out to empower followers and nurture them in change."[202]

Transformational leaders help shift followers from being mere bystanders to actively engaging in their personal and organizational endeavors. Moreover, transformational leaders affect meaningful organizational change by uniting all stakeholders in the organization's vision and values and by fostering a culture in which stagnation is rejected and the prospect for a healthier and better future is established.[203]

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[198] Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, "Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture," *Public Administration Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (1993): 114.

[199] Bass and Avolio, "Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture," 114.

[200] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 17–21. The author mentions that the New Normal has been accepted as a legitimate phenomenon in the cultural and socio-economic landscape. Business leaders have acknowledged the VUCA framework and embraced the task of constructively engaging the challenges to help their organizations survive and thrive.

[201] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 20.

[202] Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 365.

[203] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 20.

Amid this enormous challenge, a framework like the 4R Model helps map a course of action by which actual transformational organizational change can occur.

Chapter 5 explores in more detail the components comprising McCloskey's 4R Model and each component's role in the organizational change process.[204] The four components of McCloskey's 4R Model are Relationship, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results.[205] In addition, McCloskey lists several practical benefits that derive from implementing the 4R Model in an organization. For example, the 4R Model serves as a roadmap helping leaders navigate various leadership theories and practices. It can serve as an instrument for drawing inferences regarding the type of behaviors and practices modeled by an organization. As a result, it can be function as a diagnostic tool to help identify critical elements of effective leadership practice.[206]

Conclusion

In times of change, organizations either rise to the level of the challenge or crumble under its weight. The church has a tremendous opportunity to rise to the level of its challenges by embracing change and working diligently to thrive amidst challenge.

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[204] Mark W. McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," unpublished course document for ML513 (Bethel Seminary, 2010), 12. The theoretical version of the 4R Model exhibited in this paper will prove valuable to this research project due to its theological implications for transformational leadership. McCloskey offers here three possible uses for his 4R Model. Chief among them for the purpose of this research project is his proposal that the 4R Model can be used "to picture what might be happening" (12). In summary, the 4R Model proposes causal pathways, suggests possible cause and effect relationships, and proposes probable interrelationships between critical leadership factors and situations. Researchers can use the model as a lens to observe and analyze leadership situations and traits to evaluate what is taking place and why. Furthermore, they can observe organizations and people in positions of leadership as they attempt to lead others to new and better organizational futures.

[205] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 78–80. There are several other sub-elements embedded in each main component of the 4Rs. They will be discussed in detail along with their significance to the faithful implementation of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership.

[206] Mark W. McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership: A Virtue-Based Curricular Model for Business Education in a Global Context" (paper presented at the American Society of Business and Behavioral Sciences Annual Conference, Las Vegas, February 2009), 11. The uniqueness of the 4R Model construct is found in the level of flexibility its theory offers researchers and leaders. In this paper, McCloskey offers a version of the model for use in the marketplace. This version of his proposal is embedded in the foundation of a virtue-based curricular model for business in a global context.

The intent of this dissertation is not to formulate strategies to develop a successful ministry by the world's standards. At the heart of this endeavor is the desire to present a body of best practices for leading organizational change in the ministry arena.
The apostle Paul, an example of Christian leadership and passion for the lost, states, "I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some" (1 Cor 9:23). D. A. Carson points out that Paul does not advocate engaging in ungodly practices to gain converts; rather, he is humbly stating that he is willing to adapt to certain practices so that the gospel may reach those who are unsaved.[207]

While the postmodern worldview presents truth as relative, the church holds that truth is absolute as proclaimed by the Word of God. Christian psychologist David Powlison proposes that all models and arguments must first be evaluated against the Word of God. Moreover, he adds that it is the obligation of believers to expose, debunk, and reinterpret alternative models whether secular or religious. Believers must reject faulty models while also learning anything valuable from them. In Powlison's words, Christians must be "stimulated and informed by those with whom [they] disagree and whom [they] aim to convert."[208] If the church desires to thrive and be sensitive to its calling, it must have the courage and humility to submit in obedience to Christ's mandate to evangelize the world by adopting best practices and approaches that can help reach and transform the culture without theological compromise.

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[207] D. A Carson, *The Cross and Christian Ministry: Leadership Lessons from 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 117–21.

[208] David Powlison, "Questions at the Crossroads: The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies," in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips, Exploring the Intersection of Psychology & Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 32–36. Powlison argues that Christian thinkers should not be so quick to dismiss all epistemological arguments on the basis of their secular origins. He rightly argues that Christians, through the lens of Scripture, should be able to articulate biblical truth, expose, debunk, and reinterpret alternative models, and learn everything they can from defective models while discarding what Scriptures negate. Personally, I believe that this is precisely the approach that Christian leaders should embrace in their approach to evaluating non-Christian proposals for leading organizational change in the local church.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology employed in this study, which sought to identify best practices for leading local churches through change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. This chapter reviews the research questions, provides a design overview, identifies the research population amd defines the population sample, lists delimitations and limitations of generalizations, and describes the research instrumentation. This chapter concludes with a review of the data collection protocol and a report of the study's findings.

Research Questions

This dissertation focused on two research questions. Research question 1 was explored in part 1 of the study: "What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?" Research question 2 was explored in part 2 of the study: "How might the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership improve the best practices of the sites participating in this research study?"

Design Overview

This study was designed using a qualitative research methodology and featured a multiple-case study approach with significant content analysis.

Qualitative Research

John Cresswell writes, "Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive,

material practices that make the world visible."[1] He further defines qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world; the observer then explores and tries to comprehend the meaning that individuals and groups ascribe to a social or human problem.[2] The researcher attempts to make sense of, draw conclusions on, and interpret certain phenomena.[3] This approach requires the researcher to study artifacts, individuals, and organizations in the settings in which they occur.

Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss posit that the qualitative research method "allows for the identification of general concepts, the development of theoretical explanations, beyond the known and offers new insights into a variety of experiences and phenomena."[4] Creswell writes, "The procedures of qualitative research or its methodology are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing data."[5]

Corbin and Strauss contend that qualitative research allows the researcher to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture and to discover rather than test variables.[6] In contrast to the more rigid and structured format of quantitative research methodology, qualitative research work is fluid, evolving, and dynamic in nature.[7]

A research study seeking to identify best practices makes good use of

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[1] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013), 43.

[2] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 4.

[3] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 44.

[4] Juliet M. Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 6.

[5] Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 22.

[6] Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 4.

[7] Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 5.

qualitative research methodology. This research utilized a qualitative multi-case study approach, which provided opportunities for employing multiple methods of data collection, observation of participants in their natural setting, the opportunity to engage in inductive and deductive analysis, and reflection based on the participants' meanings and experiences. Access to interview participants and gathering documentation, including printed and audio-visual materials related to the specific case being studied, were also important components of this process.[8]

Case Study Approach

The case study approach provides a practical vehicle for answering questions about a certain phenomenon within a given context.[9] The case study is an appropriate research method when the focus of study is a contemporary occurrence, and the investigator has little to no control over behavioral events.[10]

A case study approach can incorporate two sources of evidence that increase its validity: (1) direct observation of the events and (2) interviews of those involved in the events.[11] In this study, I conducted observations at the participating sites and organized in-depth interviews with the participating site leaders and other church members.

Open-ended questions are helpful in a case study approach, as they result in gathering more information that may shed light on the research question. Open-ended questions should be formatted in a non-threatening way that allows the interviewee to respond freely while satisfying the needs of the line of inquiry that addresses the research

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[8] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013), 211.

[9] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 4.

[10] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 2.

[11] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 12.

question.[12] This enables the researcher to document how the participant perceives the evidence in connection with the research question.[13] Based on the literature review in chapter 2, I conducted interviews and content analysis on a number of artifacts to establish themes and patterns for coding purposes.

Since case study research involves studying issues through one or more settings or contexts, it was necessary to identify multiple sites for the study. The participating sites are local churches actively engaging the culture in their ministry contexts. Each participating site had to meet pre-defined selection criteria to receive an invitation to participate.

Case Study Selection Criteria

Case studies begin with the identification and selection of one or more participants. The case may involve an entity such as a group of people or an organization. This type of research requires collecting significant data associated with the target entity over a specific time period.[14] According to Sharan Merriam, qualitative researchers make use of a case study design to "gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning of those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research."[15]

The principal concern in case study research is understanding the interest from the perspective of the targeted leadership population. This is only possible if the

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[12] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 110.

[13] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 126.

[14] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 97–98. Creswell identifies case studies as "bounded systems" because they are bound to a time and place of occurrence.

[15] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, rev. and exp. ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), chap. 1, "What is Qualitative Research?," sec. 3, "Case Study," para. 1, Kindle.

participants have acquired meaning based on their organizational beliefs and cultural values.[16] The three cases selected for this study shared a common trait or phenomenon: local churches (organizations) that appear to be engaged in constant organizational change within their ministry contexts.

The three participating sites were selected through a purposeful sampling process, using the following criteria:

1. An evangelical congregation associated with the Southern Baptist Convention.[17]
2. An evangelical congregation that has undergone a significant amount of change in the last ten years.
3. An evangelical congregation that is located in the urban metropolitan region of Dallas-Ft. Worth in Texas.

The sites selected for this study were Lakeland Baptist Church (LBC) in Lewisville, Texas; Sunnyvale First Baptist Church (SFBC) in Sunnyvale, Texas; and The Village Church (TVC) in Flower Mound, Texas. These sites were selected based on the following: (1) they were located in a large yet accessible urban area that made it feasible for the researcher to allocate equal time among them to coordinate visits, interviews, and observations; (2) the time-table allotted was sufficient to conduct and complete the present research project with fidelity; (3) there were essential gatekeepers at the sites who facilitated the research process and made the interactions with the leadership at those sites more accessible and attainable.

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[16] Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, chap. 1, sec. 2, "Characteristics of Qualitative Research," para. 5.

[17] D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 444. Carson argues that defining evangelicalism in the current cultural context is becoming increasingly difficult, as more individuals and groups are appropriating the label without fulfilling the traditional descriptors traditionally associated with the term. Carson narrows his definition to congregations of Christians that hold to the final authority of Scripture, the historical saving work of God in Scripture, eternal salvation only through Jesus Christ, a heightened importance of evangelism and mission work, and the importance of a spiritual transformation in the believer. Although slight variations in practice and implementation are to be expected, all three congregations participating in this study fit Carson's definition of an evangelical congregation.

Case Histories

This section offers a brief survey of individual case histories to understand why these cases were selected.

Lakeland Baptist Church in Lewisville, Texas, is a medium-sized congregation that was established in 1961. It is one of the most prominent Baptist churches in an area populated by over 100,000 people. Lakeland's reputation as a church planter is well known. Lakeland planted Highland Village First Baptist Church, which later became The Village Church in Flower Mound, Texas.[18] Lakeland has a new pastor, who has initiated significant organizational change in the church. He leads with great passion, maturity, and insight. He believes that the church of Christ should continually engage the culture to spread the gospel and make new disciples.

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a large congregation that has been a leading SBC church in the north Texas area for many years. North Texas has seen an explosion in new residents, and Sunnyvale is situated near new residential and single-family housing. The congregation has started to prepare to reach these new residents with the gospel, which is clearly indicated in the church's mission and vision statements.[19] SFBC's new pastor is a seasoned leader with a visionary and relentless attitude toward the proclamation of the gospel beyond the church's walls. In the two years he has been at SFBC, he has gradually implemented organizational change that he believes will favorably position the church as it engages the surrounding community.

The Village Church is a mega and multi-site congregation based in Flower

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[18] The Village Church, "History," accessed July 14, 2015, http://www.thevillagechurch.net /about/history/.

[19] Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, "Mission and Vision Statement," accessed July 14, 2015, http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us.

Mound, Texas. TVC ranks among the top ten largest Baptist churches in America.[20] The main campus provides services and pastoral care for a combined 4,000 members every Saturday and Sunday. TVC has three additional congregations in the north Texas area comprising approximately 10,000 members.[21] TVC has experienced an average annual growth of about 1,000 new members for the past ten years. The increase in attendance has created significant challenges and opportunities for the leadership, transforming how they guide the congregation through constant organizational change.[22]

Content Analysis

Since qualitative research is a situated activity that places the researcher in the world of the participants, it is only natural that a case study approach would include inductive and deductive discernment that identifies patterns and themes associated with the organizational change process occuring in the participating sites.[23] The inductive process requires the researcher to work back and forth between the themes and the designated database until he is able to establish a comprehensive pattern within the study. The deductive process requires the researcher to look back at the data to determine if more evidence can be found to support the established themes or if more data needs to be

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[20] Thom Rainer, "Largest Churches in the Southern Baptist Convention," accessed July 14, 2015, http://thomrainer.com/2014/07/2014-update-largest-churches-southern-baptist- convention/. This link is no longer active. In 2015, SFBC reported over 1,500 members while TVC reported over 10,000. Lakeland reported 1,000 members, 500 of whom were considered active members. In my 2022–23 research, I accessed update membership data for the three participating sites. SFBC now reports over 1,500 members, while TVC reports over 8,500. Lakeland currently reports over 400 active members. Diana Chandler, "Fastest Growing, Largest Churches: Who Made the List?," Baptist Press, accessed February 4, 2022, https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/fastest-growing-largest-churches-who-made-the-list/.

[21] In 2016, TVC's membership decreased to approximately 8,500 members, due in part to a change in the church's bylaws granting independence to two of their satellite congregations.

[22] Matt Chandler, "Does Church Size Matter?," The Gospel Coalition, March 25, 2014, YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQa6lmCYF1Q&t=345s. This link has been updated since the 2015 study.

[23] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 43–44.

gathered.[24] I selected content analysis as the most efficient and effective strategy for answering the research questions posed by this study. Content analysis is a method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from different texts.[25] Klaus Krippendorff defines content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use,"[26] and claims that "recognizing meanings is the reason that researchers engage in qualitative content analysis rather than some other kind of investigative method."[27] He adds that content analysis has evolved into a repertoire of methods of research and promises to yield inferences from all kinds of verbal, pictorial, symbolic, and communications data.[28]

Krippendorff notes that the field of content analysis has three distinguishing characteristics:

1. It is an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent;
2. It transcends traditional notions of symbols, contents, and intents; and
3. It has been forced to develop a methodology of its own, one that enables researchers to plan, execute, communicate, reproduce, and critically evaluate their analysis, whatever the particular results.[29]

I was the primary instrument of data collection and inductive content analysis.[30] The rules of the inferential process were dictated by my theoretical and

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[24] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 186.

[25] Robert Philip Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, 2nd ed., Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1990), 9.

[26] Klaus H. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), 24.

[27] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 27.

[28] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 23.

[29] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 1–5.

[30] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 266.

substantive interest in this topic.[31] Completing the content analysis required reading all literature, materials, images, and symbolic matter produced by the leadership and ministerial staff of the three participating sites to extrapolate the processes, strategies, and best practices that can be adapted for implementation by the local church.[32] This is further described in this chapter's section on data collection and analysis.

Population

The theoretical population for this study consisted of individual SBC church leaders who were motivated by the desire to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ and intentionally engaged in organizational change and cultural engagement. Since this study focused on churches in an urban context, the population included individual church leaders in all congregations of between 400 and 8,000 members currently ministering in the urban setting of the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

Sampling

Due to the time and cost restraints of large-scale qualitative studies, researchers separate a portion of the larger participant group into a smaller cross-section and conduct the research with the smaller group, the population sample.[33] This study utilized purposeful sampling to produce the most diverse findings possible related to the

[31] Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, 9. The researcher establishes variables by which the content analysis is measured according to the research intent. The reliability of data is preserved by continually using the same variable designed for each element being analyzed. Krippendorff writes, "We must do our best to explicate what we are doing and describe how we derive our judgments, so that others can replicate our results" (Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 5).

[32] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 10.

[33] Neil Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 128. Salkind suggests that samples be selected from populations in such a way that the sample matches as closely as possible the characteristics of the entire population.

research problem.[34] The sample consisted of the church leaders in three medium to large SBC congregations doing ministry in an urban setting who met the research criteria and agreed to participate.

Delimitations

The scope of the study was delimited as follows:

1. The study was delimited to leadership in local SBC churches within the urban Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area.
2. The study was delimited to leadership in local SBC churches that have undergone and/or are currently undergoing organizational change.
3. The study was delimited to leadership in local SBC churches with medium to large membership numbers.[35]

Limitations of Generalization

Though this study's research findings were limited to leaders in the three participating sites, they may be transferable to other churches ministering in an urban context. They may also be transferable to church leaders considering organizational change in their congregations. The Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area was selected to increase the possibility that the results could apply to the general leadership population from which the sample cases were taken.[36]

One limitation of case studies in qualitative research is that the approach is

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[34] Although the selected congregations are differently sized, I was interested in their geographic location, current engagement with the culture for discipleship purposes, and the urban context of their ministries. All three congregations are SBC churches ministering in the region for the last twenty years. The Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area has one of the largest and fastest-growing populations in the United States. It is an area primed for ministry.

[35] Although TVC comprises over 10,000 members, they are spread over five different campuses and overseen by strategically assigned pastoral staff. The main TVC site in Flower Mound, Texas, has over 4,000 members under its immediate oversight. This study focused only on the dynamics of leadership at the main campus.

[36] Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research Design: Planning and Design*, 10th ed. (New York: Pearson, 2013), 230.

more exploratory than confirmatory.[37] Additionally, generalization is not possible, and the transferability of findings is limited.[38] However, Creswell suggests that the abundant and descriptive narrative in qualitative research studies allows readers to make decisions regarding transferability due to similarities in content, language, and settings.[39]

Instrumentation

Research instrumentation for this study included collecting data from personal interviews with the leadership of the churches, interviews with selected members, direct observations, and analysis of organizational documents. All interview questions, observation protocols, and analysis methods were evaluated and approved by my faculty advisor and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) Research Ethics Committee.[40]

Data Collection

To increase the reliability of the case study research, Robert Yin recommends taking as many steps in the research process as possible and conducting the process in a way that another researcher could, in principle, repeat the procedures and perhaps arrive at the same results.[41] The study proceeded in nine steps: identifying potential research

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[37] Dawson Hancock and Bob Algozzine, *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011), 15–16. The authors readily affirm that the researcher using case study methodology is not trying to prove relationships or test propositions but is identifying themes or categories of behaviors and events.

[38] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 217–18. Yin addresses the perceived limitations argued in some circles surrounding the use of case studies in qualitative research. He attributes some of the apprehension to a lack of trust in the researcher's procedural approach due to the limited number of protective safeguards. Nonetheless, he provides excellent recommendations for increasing trust in case study methodology in the form of increased sources of evidence, use of robust databases, and establishment of strong chain of evidence that can help increase credibility and minimize prejudices.

[39] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 252.

[40] See appendices 1, 4, and 5. All of the research instruments used in this research study were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use.

[41] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 49.

sites, soliciting site participation, securing agreement to study the selected sites, developing instrumentation for the interviews and the general case study, consulting field experts, obtaining instrumentation approval from my advisor and the SBTS Research Ethics Committee, conducting the research, analyzing data, and reporting the findings.

After identifying potential sites and selecting the three participating sites for the study, I collected data in three phases: in-depth interviews, personal observations, and document analysis. I provided the site leadership with a copy of the Disclosures of Case Study document. I sent each intended interviewee a copy of the Informed Consent Letter and proceeded to schedule the site visit dates and formalize the specific research schedule and approach. Site research began with personal interviews of leaders and other members.

Interview Protocol and Implementation

Personal interviews of leaders and other randomly selected team members were completed at each site. The interviews followed an open-ended questioning format. Klaus Krippendorff argues that structured interviews generate predefined question-answer pairs that are later distributed and categorized according to the researcher's analysis. He states that through this process, the researcher's assumptions are imposed on the interviewees as they are not allowed to express the reason behind their choice of answers. Consequently, the interviewees' conceptions are usually ignored. In open-ended interview formats, however, participants are allowed to speak freely and in their own terms, which contributes to a more in-depth understanding of the reasons and motives behind their answers.[42] The questions for this study were designed using a combination of

[42] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 33.

material gathered from the literature review base and the research question driving this study.[43]

As to the level of culture engagement, I sought to identify the church's leadership motivation and level of commitment behind their efforts in leading organizational change. As to the mission of the church, I sought to understand the leadership's level of commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission within the vision for organizational change. As to maintaining Christian identity, I developed questions designed to prompt the leadership to describe how it was possible for their congregation to engage in cultural engagement for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission while preserving biblical and theological orthodoxy. As to defining successful organizational change, I developed questions that allowed leaders to define in their own words what successful organizational change in the church meant to them in light of the Scriptures. Finally, I sought to identify distinctive markers among the church's leadership approach to congregational change that demonstrated best practices for leading organizational change in a church ministering in an urban context.

Review of the interview protocol by three field experts[44] and the SBTS Research Ethics Committee ensured the validity of the data collection instrument. Krippendorff states that validation provides compelling reasons for taking the results of scientific research seriously. He writes, "A measurement instrument is considered valid if

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[43] See appendix 5, which contains all the open-ended questions developed and approved with the help and advice of an expert panel. See appendices 2 and 3 respectively to view a copy of the requested assistance letter to the field experts and their feedback.

[44] I requested and received the support for this part of the research by presenting the interview protocol and question format to my Southern Baptist Seminary thesis advisor, Shane W. Parker. Additionally, I enlisted the expert advice of Dr. David L. Allen, (former) Dean of the School of Theology at The Southwestern Theological Seminary; Paul Chitwood, (former) executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention; and Lindsey Gunn, senior associate with the Cambrian Consulting Group in Montgomery, Alabama. The experts' suggestions and comments are found in appendix 3.

it measures what its user claims it measures."[45] Modifications suggested by the field experts were applied to the interview protocol. Interviews were carried out in person with the leadership participants at each site. Responses to each question were transcribed using Microsoft Office and subsequently transferred into NVivo 10, the qualitative research software analysis used for data analysis.[46]

Observation Protocol

Concurrent with the interview process, I directly observed the normal operational routines and practices at each participating site. I also collected data in walk-throughs of the sites, conversations with participating personnel, and review of official and informational documents stating the philosophy and position of the church on a variety of issues.

I was provided opportunities to become familiar with the layout of each site and gather data during regular services. This also presented a chance to observe the leadership engaging with the congregation and visitors. I also evaluated the preaching for content related to the matters of mission, cultural engagement, and application of the Word. All three participating sites broadcast or post their services online, providing ample opportunity to analyze the preaching content and correlate it to the churches' mission statements and their theological and doctrinal positions. I assembled

[45] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 329. I specifically enlisted the advice of my thesis advisor as well as that of the field experts in order to ensure that the open-ended questions for the interviews were designed to provide ample opportunities to do an in-depth examination and analysis of the responses given by the participating leaders on the topic of leading organizational change in the local church.

[46] Pat Bazeley and Kristi Jackson, *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013), 2–3. NVivo 10 is a computerized qualitative data analysis software used in research projects that involve interpretation of unstructured or semi-structured data. The reasons behind using NVivo are multiple because it can be used for exploration, description, comparison, pattern analysis, theory testing, theory building, or evaluation of data. Overall, NVivo 10 helps the researcher manage data, manage ideas, query data, visualize data, and ultimately report on the data findings in cohesive fashion.

photographic samples from each site.[47] I subjected all data to coding and analysis. The observation data was triangulated with the data collected from interviews and document analysis.[48]

Document Collection

Prior to the site visits, I collected a vast amount of information on the leadership's philosophy and ministry approach through the participants' websites and other platforms.[49] I was able to acquire additional documentation on site during the visits Data from the document analysis was subjected to the same coding and content analysis as interview and observation data to ensure reliability and validity.

Data Verification

Kathy Charmaz argues that the result of any investigative research is a construct of elements and processes that are already in place. In other words, the researcher does not discover anything but merely develops a construction of understanding surrounding given phenomena. She claims that "viewing the research as constructed rather than discovered fosters researchers' reflexivity about their actions and decisions."[50] Further, the treatment of research as a construction means that the researcher acknowledges that events occur under specific conditions independent of the

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[47] See appendix 9 for photographic samples of the three congregations involved in the research study.

[48] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 89. In qualitative content analysis, data interpretation is supported by connecting and interlacing quotes from documents and literature on the subject. Conclusions are then drawn from the textual content and analysis. Triangulation identifies the patterns and parallels within the textual data.

[49] I collected and reviewed materials produced by each participating church. This included documents and artifacts such as books, articles, sermons, and other printed material written by the leadership. This also included information available in the public domain that provided critical or supportive evidence concerning the participating church leadership team's ministerial and theological approach.

[50] Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 12.

researcher's involvement.[51] This study recognized the validity of Charmaz's claims and attempted to conduct the research, validate the data, and analyze the data in a manner that faithfully and accurately reflected what was provided by the participating sites, ministry leaders, and church members.

Robert Weber argues that there are three ways to demonstrate the reliability of content analysis in qualitative research: stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Stability refers to the extent to which the results of content classification remain unchanged over time. Reproducibility refers to the extent to which the content classification produces the same results when the data is coded by a different researcher. Accuracy refers to the extent to which the classification of content corresponds to a standard or norm.[52]

Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba advocate a more naturalistic approach. Rather than terms like internal validation, external validation, reliability, and objectivity, Lincoln and Guba use terms that convey trustworthiness: credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.[53]

John Creswell and Dana Miller consider "validation in qualitative research an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants. This view also suggests that any report of the research is a representation of the author."[54] They suggest several strategies for validating accuracy in qualitative

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[51] Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 13.

[52] Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, 17. Essential to the demonstrating the reliability of this study will be any future findings in research related to SBC churches engaging in organizational change in an urban context. Ideally, this future research would consider utilizing a similar literature review and research methodology involving the same research questions, open-ended interview questions, and content type and categories as researched in this study.

[53] Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1985), 314. Lincoln and Guba's naturalistic research approach to reliability is more flexible in language and implementation than Weber's stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Creswell finds the naturalistic approach to reliability is widely popular in the world of qualitative research. The key element in the naturalistic approach is that the researcher is looking for confirmability rather than objectivity in establishing the value of the data.

[54] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 249–50.

research but recommend using at least two validation strategies in any given study.[55] Using additional strategies increases the validity of the study. This study utilized three verification strategies suggested by Creswell and Miller: triangulation, member checking, and thick description.[56] Creswell and Miller identify three philosophical paradigms or approaches to research: post positivist or systematic; constructivism; and critical. They also describe three lenses through which content is viewed: the lens of the researcher, the lens of the study participants, and the lens of people external to the study (e.g., reviewers and readers). Triangulation validates from a post-positivist/systematic paradigm through the lens of the researcher. Member checking validates from a post-positivist/systematic paradigm through the lens of the researcher. Thick description validates from a constructivist paradigm through the lens of the people external to the study.[57]

Creswell and Miller define triangulation as a "validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories of a study."[58] This study sought to merge the common themes, statements, words, and practices in the data gathered from the participants to formulate a body of best practices for leading organizational change in the local church.

Member checking involves asking the study participants to provide feedback regarding the study's findings. Creswell and Miller note, "It consists of taking data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so they can confirm the credibility of the information."[59] Lincoln and Guba describe this particular validation technique as "the

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[55] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 253.

[56] John W. Creswell and Dana L. Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 124–30.

[57] Creswell and Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," 124–30.

[58] Creswell and Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," 126.

[59] Creswell and Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," 127.

most crucial . . . for establishing credibility."[60] Participants received a transcript from their interviews as well as charts depicting the word frequencies and themes found in their responses. This gave them an additional opportunity to provide constructive feedback, correct misconceptions, or confirm the data's findings.

Thick description conveys a better understanding of the findings by analyzing word frequency data, emphasis, and detailed participant quotes. In so doing, an assortment of themes emerges from the research. Creswell claims that "when qualitative researchers provided detailed descriptions of the setting, for example, or offer many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer."[61]

Data Analysis

Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod explain that data analysis occurs in the following sequence: description, analysis, and interpretation.[62] Upon completion of personal interviews, on-site observations, and document collection, I analyzed the content results for characteristics relevant to the research questions.[63] Data analysis involved five phases: (1) examination, (2) categorization, (3) tabulation and coding of the data, (4) testing the evidence, and (5) reporting the findings in writing.[64] This analysis discovered patterns and themes related to organizational change in the participating sites.

Prior to data analysis, I had developed sets of descriptors based on the research questions: meaningful culture engagement, mission of the church, maintaining Christian identity, successful organizational change leadership, and best practices in leading

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[60] Lincoln and Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, 314.

[61] Creswell, *Research Design*, 201.

[62] Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research Design*, 144.

[63] Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 176.

[64] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 132.

organizational change. These descriptors were used to organize the data during the coding and testing process.

Each case study was reviewed for inductive patterns that helped explain the collected data in each descriptor category.[65] Shared words, common themes, and general ideas were classified into appropriate categories and examined to determine their relevance to the research questions.[66] During this process, unique statements, leadership philosophies, and inferences to organizational change or best practices were reviewed, documented, and categorized.

Due to the significant quantity of data collected, it was necessary to ensure safe storage of all research materials. To preserve the data for future retrieval or examination, data was labeled and stored on multiple devices and saved in the NVivo 10 software.[67]

Report of Findings

After collecting and verifying the data, I summarized the findings using narrative, tables, and figures. Merriam describes two ways of presenting findings from multiple case studies: within-case findings and cross-case findings. Within-case findings treat each participant as a single and comprehensive unit. Cross-case findings create generalizations across multiple cases and therefore require an inductive approach.[68]

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[65] Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 162. Inductive research derives themes, categories, typologies, and concepts from collected data. Merriam explains that inductive research strives to find a theory that explains the collected data while deductive research hopes to find the data to match a theory.

[66] Merriam claims that "focusing on meaning in context requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 97). She argues that human beings are the instruments best suited to this task because "interviewing, observing, and analyzing are activities central to qualitative research.".

[67] NVivo is produced by QSR International, a well-known developer of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (QDA) software products. Creswell recommends keeping the raw data and other research material for a reasonable time period. He states that the American Psychological Association recommends a minimum of five years. Creswell, *Research Design*, 100.

[68] Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, 204.

Robert Yin contends that "both individual cases and multiple case results can and should be the focus of the summary report."[69]

For the first part of the research study in this dissertation, I presented the findings documented in chapter 4 for the individual sites and aggregated findings for the combined sites. These findings were based on examining the best practices of the participating sites against the best practices defined in Kotter's 8-Step Model and Herrington et al.'s Transformational Journey Model. I then interpreted the findings and built a general explanation of established best practices across the cases and unique best practices specific to the ministry context.

For the second part of the research study in this dissertation, I conducted a separate analysis of the part 1 data against the best practices and transformational leadership traits identified in McCloskey's 4R Model. This analysis is documented in chapter 5 with additional conclusions in chapter 6. The objective of this analysis was to ascertain whether the use of the 4R Model validates and/or improves the identified frameworks and leadership practices of the part 1 case study participants.

[69] Yin, *Case Study Research*, 59.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This study endeavored to identify the best practices for leading organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy by conducting case studies of three local churches serving in an urban context. These case studies took place in 2014–2015 as part of my doctoral thesis at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.[1] As such, these studies are "static" in nature. No attempt has been made to update the data in the original case studies. The congregational sizes, staff, and ministries reflect their 2014–2015 state. This chapter describes the compilation and analysis of data collected in the case studies. It presents the findings in quantitative, qualitative, and visual formats and pays particular attention to the distinctive characteristics of each participating site. The overall strengths and weaknesses of the methodology are addressed in the chapter's conclusion.

Compilation Protocol

The study proceeded in three phases. The first phase involved the collection of data from relevant documents, site observations, and informal leadership and staff interviews. Using purposeful sampling, invitations were sent to the leadership teams of more than twenty churches within the geographical area of the study.[2] Purposely selecting participants or sites helps the researcher better understand the problem and the

[1] Juan Carlos Martinez Robleto, "Best Practices in Leading Organizational Change in the Local Church: A Multi-Case Study," (EdD thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015).

[2] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013), 189.

associated research question. It does not require the random sampling or selection of a large number of participants and sites as with quantitative research methodologies. These churches are considered medium, large, or mega-church in size. The purposeful sample comprised three Southern Baptist Churches in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area and twelve leadership-ranking individuals within these churches.

The study focused on the participants' subjective experiences related to their leadership and ministerial responsibilities at each site. It was not the study's purpose to analyze the ministerial success or failure of the individual entities based on their congregational growth and prestige. The objective was to understand their processes for leading organizational change while engaging the culture and remaining distinctly Christian in biblical and theological practice.

Research Process

The research process followed four standard protocols: (1) data collection, (2) data analysis, (3) identifying new questions, and (4) constructing inductive themes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis in Microsoft Word. Preliminary results were compared to the models and best practices described in chapter 2. Relevant statements made by the leadership on the topic of organizational change in the local church were included in the report of research findings. The study used qualitative research verification techniques to validate the data, including triangulation, member checking, and thick description.[3]

Data Triangulation

Data triangulation involves compiling multiple data sources, including

[3] Creswell, *Research Design*, 201. See also John W. Creswell and Dana L. Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 124–30. The authors provide more in-depth information regarding the use of validation techniques in qualitative research.

interviews, documents, and observations. However, experienced researchers have come to understand that utilizing a variety of data sources does not guarantee a lack of error or bias in the data analysis. Therefore, additional verification was necessary.

Member Checking

Member checking was utilized to prevent misinterpretation of respondents' statements.[4] Participants were asked to verify the authenticity of the data and concur with the research findings or provide additional insight that would clarify or enhance the understanding of the research problem.

Thick Description

Thick description was used to help develop conceptual categories such as themes and key linguistic features that helped illustrate, support, or challenge the research proposition. Sharan Merriam states that "thick description . . . is holistic and lifelike, simplifies data to be considered by the reader, illustrates meanings, and communicates tacit knowledge."[5]

Ultimately, the combination of these three qualitative research verification techniques (triangulation, member checking, and thick description) provides a more robust foundation for the research study to make a summative proposition of its observations.[6]

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[4] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014), 198.

[5] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 49.

[6] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2013), 253. Creswell recommends at least two verification techniques, and this research study used three.

Demographic and Sample Data

The sample population for this study included twelve leaders from three sites: Lakeland Baptist Church (LBC) in Lewisville, Texas; Sunnyvale First Baptist Church (SFBC) in Sunnyvale, Texas; and The Village Church (TVC) in Flower Mound, Texas. The demographic data for the participating sites has been made public for this study and is summarized in table A1.[7]

I provided the leaders an opportunity to remain anonymous, as the study primarily focused on gathering information related to best practices and organizational change philosophy. However, each leader graciously gave permission to use their name, position, and years of ministry service (see table A2). Each participating leader was interviewed individually so that they could elaborate on their answers without interruption or the apprehension and concern that can influence a group interview format.[8]

Findings and Displays

The findings and displays in this chapter and relevant appendices are presented in three formats: quantitative (tables, figures), qualitative (narrative, tables), and visual (figures, images). The data is presented in singular and comparison formats, that is, unique characteristics of the leader, participating sites, and a visual and descriptive comparison across all sites. The data in the chart and visual aids were generated using NVivo 10 QDAS.

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[7] See appendix 7 for tables A1 and A2.

[8] While conducting interviews for her doctoral dissertation in qualitative research, Maria Teresa Trascritti found that participants were inclined to give different answers in their responses based on whether they were interviewed individually or together. See Maria Teresa Trascritti, "Marriage Mentoring with Couples in Marital Crisis: A Qualitative Study" (EdD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 68.

Research Questions

Research question 1 asks what are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change in an urban context without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy? Research question 2 asks, "How might the application of the 4R Model of Tranformational Leadership improve the best practices of the sites participating in this research study?"[9]

Research Proposition

It is possible for the leadership in the local church to lead effective organizational change in the urban context through meaningful cultural engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Summary of Findings

When viewed through the lens of organizational change theory, this multiple-case study validates the majority of best practices identified through the literature review. It also validates best practices common to all three participating sites that are unique to the local church ministry context. The analysis suggests that church leaders ministering in an urban context embrace five distinctive best practices: (1) doctrinally and theologically-informed practice, (2) discipleship, (3) preaching, (4) adaptation and flexibility, and (5) internal culture change through transformational leadership. The research findings support the research proposition that church leaders ministering in an urban context practice successful organizational change through meaningful cultural engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Introduction

The research question examined the leadership style of the three individual

[9] Research question 2 is answered in chapter 5.

sites through the perspective of two organizational change leadership models. Primary sources included field visits, data compiled from the participants' websites, and printed materials from training and public relations sources. The review of the website and printed material was a non-threatening method of analyzing the leadership perspectives, attitudes, and norms exhibited by several layers of leadership at each participating site. I endeavored to understand how each participating site creates and maintains an environment of successful and continuous organizational change with meaningful cultural engagement without compromising its Christian identity.

Theoretical Lens

As noted, two theoretical models were used to support this phase of study on organizational change leadership: (1) John Kotter's secular 8-Step Model (8SM), which offers a philosophical and prescriptive approach to organizational change within a business context, and (2) Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr's Transformational Journey Model (TJM), which offers a Christian perspective on leading change in the church and ministry contexts.

Kotter is a well-known authority in the field of organizational change leadership. He has reduced the phenomenon of change to an 8-Step Model that, if faithfully followed, can guide an organization through a successful change process that culminates in a transformed organizational culture ready to accomplish any task. Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's approach openly borrows from Kotter's model in a non-prescriptive way. However, their model is an insightful approach to change that addresses the dynamics and complexity of leading organizational change from a biblical and theological perspective. Although the TJM is not without its critics, it presents a

legitimate model for engaging in organizational change within the church.[10]

Descriptive Data

The data collection process made it evident that the leadership of all three congregations truly understood that engagement in the culture requires purposeful internal culture change. Although each church participating in this study has a distinct culture and identity, it is fully committed to fulfilling Christ's mandate to make disciples of all nations—starting in their own communities.

An organization's vision and mission statements are an excellent representation of how committed the churches are to engaging the culture and making new disciples. The language of these statements shapes their approach to ministry and thus the programs that support their ministry.

For instance, TVC lives by its mission statement, which permeates every programmatic element and function of the organization.[11] Repetitive use of the term "gospel-centered" in their mission statement testifies to the leadership's commitment to center the gospel of Jesus Christ in everything the church does. This is exemplified in TVC's engagement with the surrounding community.

Lakeland Baptist Church proclaims that it exists "to honor and glorify God by obeying Jesus' command to make disciples of all people and nations." LBC clearly explains its strategy for making disciples and turning them into mature believers. LBC

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[10] Most of the criticism directed at the Transformational Journey Model arises from issues pertaining to the authors' perceived borrowing from general and business theories and placing Scripture around these theories and practices to support their methods. It seems that such criticism, although necessary in order to heighten awareness on the part of church leaders, is driven by fear and an unwillingness to accept the common grace, wisdom, and creativity emanating from men and women created in the image of God. Despite their fallen nature, people can provide insightful and practical advice. As always, it is a sound and wise practice to use the lens of Scripture to assess the validity of every epistemological argument.

[11] See appendix 6 for the mission/vision statements of all participating churches quoted in this section.

leadership also explains the role of worship, the duty of funding the mission of the church, the expectation for a multiplying ministry, and the service expected of Christ's disciples.

SFBC combines its mission and vision statements: "The purpose of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is to help people know God personally and make Him known publicly throughout the world." The leadership believes and teaches that only a personal relationship with Christ makes God truly known. The leadership also challenges local and global church members to make God known in the public square. Unique to SFBC's statement was the proclamation of its identity as an SBC church that is "theologically and doctrinally conservative, Bible-believing, and Bible-preaching."

Data analysis suggests that all three participating churches hold to biblical and theological orthodoxy. It informs not only the leadership and the congregational direction but also how they successfully engage the culture while leading their institution through organizational change. The leadership of all three sites believe that engaging the culture is not something they can choose to do but something they are obligated to do; they have a moral and ethical responsibility to faithfully engage the culture and reach people with the gospel of Christ.

Lakeland Baptist Church

Lakeland Baptist Church is a medium-size congregation of over five hundred members. The church has seen a few changes and challenges in leadership in the last six years. Lakeland's third pastor led the congregation for over thirty years. His successor led it for almost five years with limited success and plenty of hardship. Lakeland's current pastor has led the congregation for one year with tremendous results. The power of prayer, dynamic leadership, a visionary spirit, and powerful expository preaching seems to be creating successful organizational change. The congregation's culture has seen a

positive internal transformation, and the outlook seems brighter than ever.

Lakeland has been a very traditional church whose elderly population has been declining as new and younger members fill the seats. It is pastor-led in polity. The deacons serve the congregation and counsel and support the pastor as needed. Lakeland's leadership structure does not include elders. Whereas Lakeland's leadership model is not changing in the foreseeable future, its approach to ministry is changing. The new pastor and leadership team are focusing on cultural change and engagement, and their enthusiasm is infectious. They seek to equip Lakeland's congregational base to impact the culture around them.

Lakeland's transformation in the last year has been unique. Its congregation is reaching out to the community and the world at large with more energy and focus. A new Scripture-based mission statement plays a central role in the life of this church and is beginning to shape the direction and orientation of the congregation in every possible way.

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a 1,500 member SBC church located in one of the fastest growing regions of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. Its polity is also pastor-led. SFBC has non-ruling elders that serve in an advisory role to the senior pastor. The church also has deacons that serve the ministry needs of the congregation in accordance with a biblical model.

The pastor at SFBC has been with the congregation for one year. His goal is to expand the reach of the church to the surrounding population. The church campus is in a prime location near two major highways. The infrastructure of the church allows for plenty of room to grow. The leadership at SFBC has started to implement organizational changes to equip the congregation to engage the community and surrounding culture

more readily with the gospel. This objective has already prompted several minor but significant changes, including the pastor's approach. In order to present a more non-threatening approach to visitors, the pastor has toned down his attire to be more inviting. He has done this while preserving the powerful expository preaching of the gospel for which he is well-known. Although this approach may not seem very significant to those unfamiliar with denominational traditions, it is very significant for this traditional church. This change has led to an increasing number of visitors at SFBC, who often express that the church seems more welcoming.

The Village Church

The Village Church is a mega and multi-site church with approximately ten thousand members across five campuses in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. Although the average growth of the congregation has been about a thousand members per year, the staff count at the church has remained relatively low compared to other ministry organizations of similar size. TVC currently has about 150 staff members, including interns.[12] Structurally, the church polity functions under an elder-led system in which all elders have equal voice and vote in the decision-making process.[13]

The church has three primary leaders who engage in constant discussion and planning regarding the day-to-day operations of the church. One minister, known as the teaching pastor, is charged with preparing and delivering God's Word. A second minister, known as the leadership pastor, oversees the management and direction of the church. A third minister, the pastor of services, oversees the church's day-to-day

[12] This interesting note was provided to me by one of the senior leaders and elders of the main (and original) church office located in Flower Mound, Texas. What is most telling about this number is that, despite a membership of over 10,000, the church has maintained a fairly small administrative staff, which has allowed it to be not only fiscally responsible but able to spend money on other ministry opportunities.

[13] To read more about TVC's polity, visit https://www.thevillagechurch.net/our-beliefs/bylaws.

operations. Due to the multi-site nature of the church, there is an overall executive team made up of all seven lead pastors and nine additional elders for a total of sixteen men.[14]

Best Practices

To produce comprehensive best practices by church leaders in leading organizational change in the local church, it was necessary to identify established best practices in the day-to-day operations of their organizations. Once these practices were identified, this study took a two-fold approach. First, I compared the participating sites' best practices to the seven best practices identified in chapter 2: the best practices promoted by the 8-Step Model and the Transformational Journey. Table 1 provides an overview of the eight steps in Kotter's model and the eight stages and four disciplines of the model developed by Herrington et al. For ease of viewing the data in the following charts, the steps/stages that are common to both models have been combined into one descriptor (see "Legend" below).

Table 1. Comparing best practices of the 8-Step Model and the Transformational Journey Model

Step	Kotter's 8-Step Model	Stage / Disc.	Herrington, Bonem, Furr Transformational Journey Model	Legend
		1	Making Personal Preparation (Spiritual Leadership)	
1	Establish a Sense of Urgency	2	Creating a Sense of Urgency	Sense of Urgency
2	Creating a Guiding Coalition (Teams)	3	Establishing the Vision Community (Teams)	Effective Use of Teams

[14] The seven lead pastors of TVC are also considered elders. All sixteen men make decisions that impact the operations of the central church as well as its sister churches. Each individual campus also has its own team of elders to attend to the daily matters that arise that are unique to each congregation.

Step	Kotter's 8-Step Model	Stage / Disc.	Herrington, Bonem, Furr Transformational Journey Model	Legend
3	Development of Vision & Strategy for Change	4	Vision Discernment & Determining Visionpath	Casting a Vision
4	Effective Communication of the Vision	5	Communicating the Vision	Effective Communication
5	Empowerment of Members of the Organization	6	Empowering Change Leaders	Empowering Members
6	Celebration of Short-Term Wins	7	Implementing the Vision	Implementing the Vision
7	Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change	8	Reinforcing Momentum through Alignment	
8	Establishment of New Culture			Establishing Culture through Transformational Leadership
		*	Transformational Leadership Disciplines a. Generating and Sustaining Creative Tension b. Harnessing the Power of Mental Models c. Enabling Team Learning d. Practicing Systems Thinking	

Second, I examined the findings and identified additional best practices for leading organizational change that were unique to the ministry contexts of the participating churches. Other organizational change practices were observed at each participating church; however, these practices were not identified as best practices as they were not uniformly observed at every site.

Upon gathering and authenticating the data, the collected information was triangulated to verify the phenomenon of organizational change. Once verified, the results were examined to identify (1) best practices correlated to those in the literature review and (2) best practices unique to the context of the local church.

Best Practices Correlated to the Literature Review

I conducted a detailed data analysis of every piece of information from each participating site and compared it with the list of established best practices from the literature review. Using NVivo 10, I isolated every instance in which the local church's leadership utilized the language and descriptors associated with a best practice to define their organizational change efforts. Figures 1 and 2 contain the results of the findings.

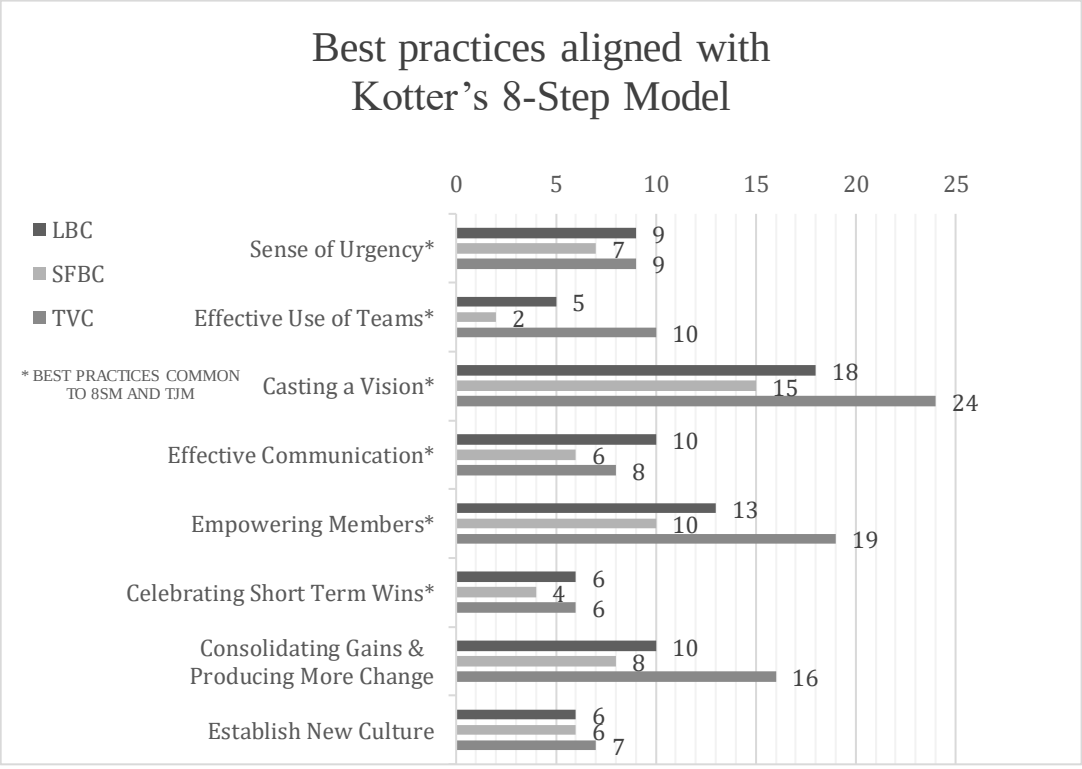

Figure 1. Best practices of participating sites aligned with Kotter's 8-Step Model

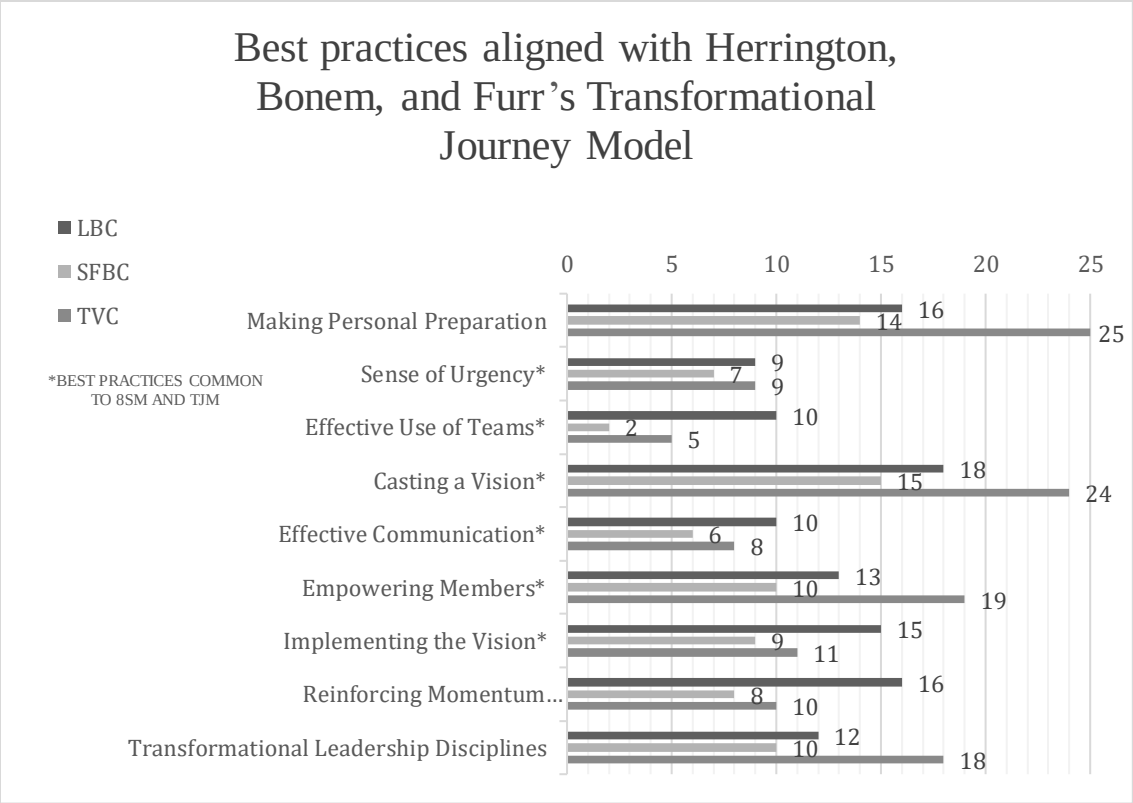

Figure 2. Best practices of participating sites aligned with Transformational Journey Model

All six best practices common to the 8SM and TJM were demonstrated by the leadership in the participating sites. The sites also demonstrated the best practices not selected for the study. Establishment of a new culture are unique to Kotter's model, while making personal preparation and transformational leadership disciplines are best practices unique to the Transformational Journey Model.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of times the best practices were mentioned during the interviews, reflected in field notes, or addressed in discussion during on-site observations. These practices were also present during the deductive and exhaustive data analysis of the organization's produced documents and public data.

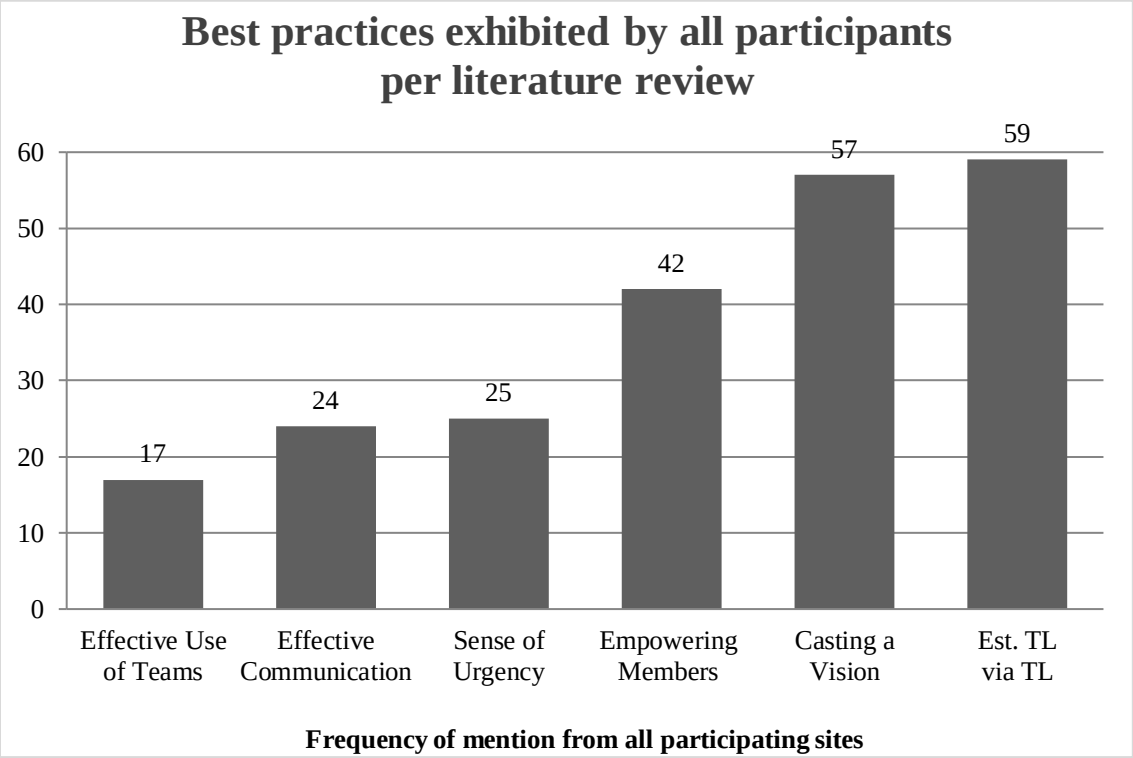

Figure 3. Best practices exhibited by all participants per literature review

The best practices of casting a vision, sense of urgency, and effective use of teams are also prevalent in both models and were widely discussed by the participants as part of their practices and methodology for organizational change implementation. Figure 3 depicts the aggregated data from all participants, and figure 4 depicts the individual data by participating site.

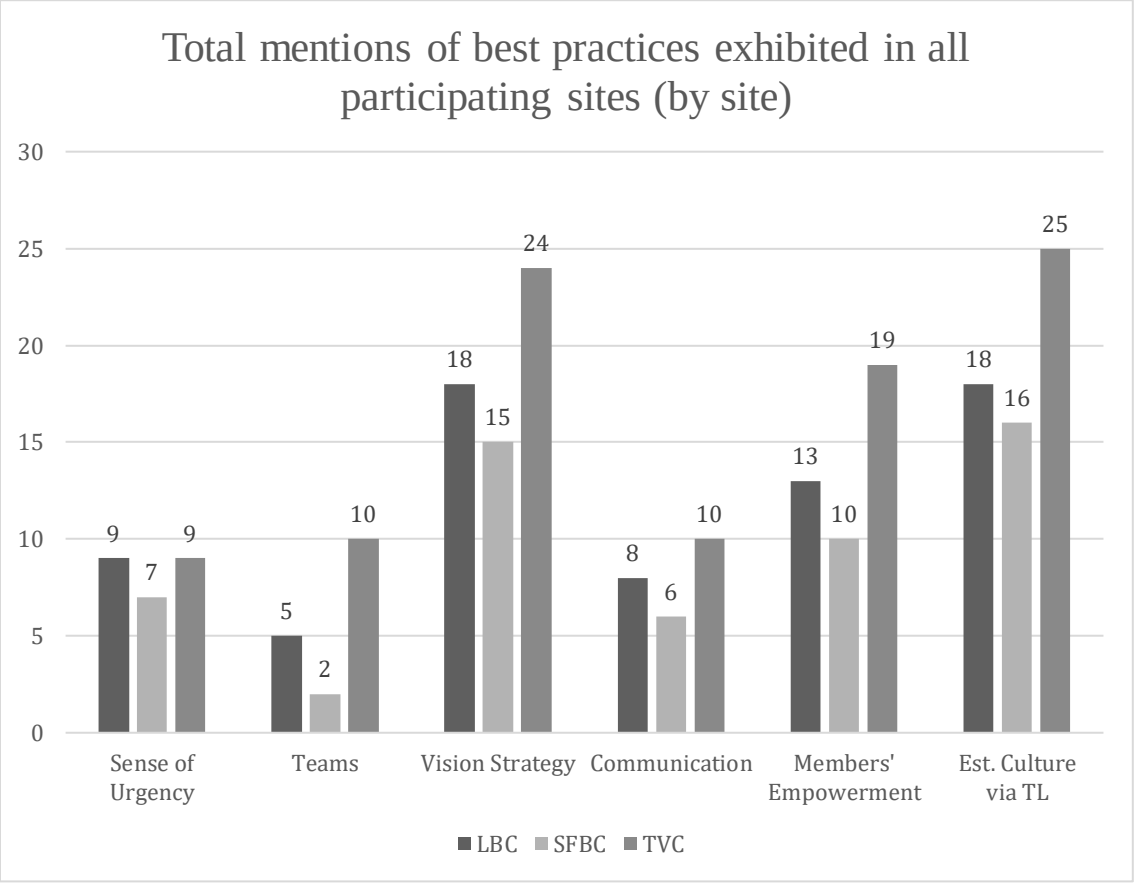

Figure 4. Total mentions of best practices exhibited in all participating sites (by site)

Best Practices Unique to the Local Church Context

The cross-themed analysis revealed three best practices outside of the 8SM and TJM best practices: (1) doctrine and theology-informed practice, (2) discipleship, and (3) preaching. These best practices were distinctive to the participants' context as Christian ministries. Two supplementary best practices were also identified: (1) adaptation and flexibility and (2) internal culture change through transformational leadership practice. Although these practices are not distinctly Christian, the churches implemented these in a biblically informed manner. Figure 5 depicts the additional distinctive and supplementary best practices of all participating sites (combined).

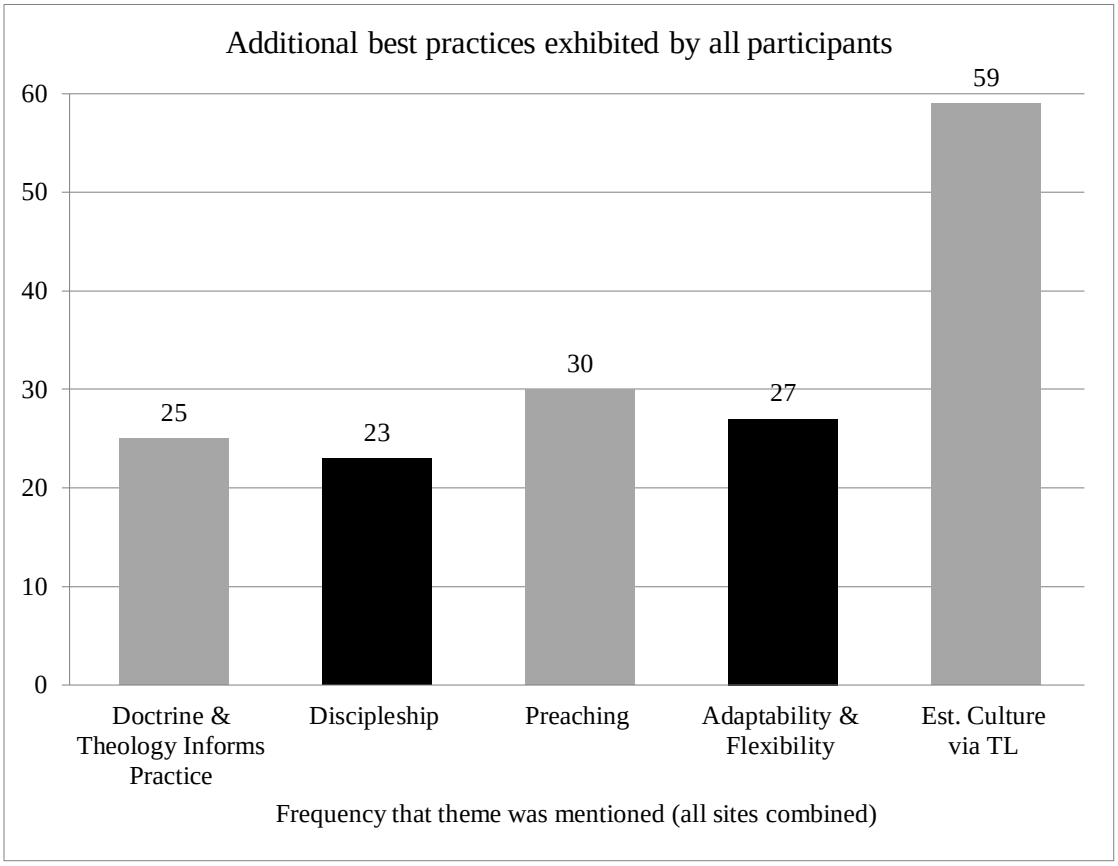

Figure 5. Additional best practices exhibited by all participants

Figure 6 illustrates the number of times each participating site mentioned the three distinctive Christian best practices and two supplementary best practices.

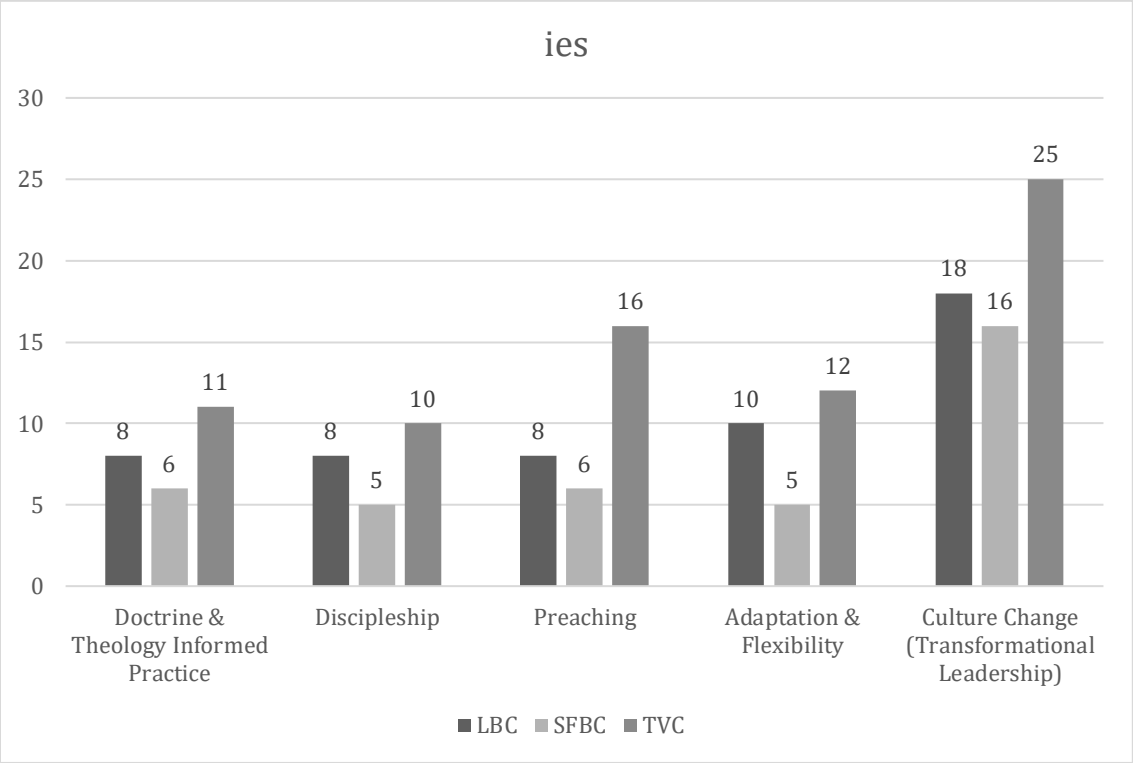

Figure 6. Mentions of distinctive best practices exhibited in all participating sites (by site)

Next, a brief description of each distinctive practice will be given as well as evidence of their presence in the research results through specific illustrations, quotes, and word analysis data.

Doctrine and Theology Informed Practice

A congregation that seeks God will be faithful to his Word, embracing orthodox Christian doctrine and allowing Scripture to shape its theology and ministry practices. Stephen Wellum contends that Christians must apply the Scripture to every aspect of their lives; God's Word must be the final authority that rules their "beliefs,

doctrine, life, and practices."[15] D. A. Carson affirms the centrality of Scripture in the formation of doctrine: "The authority of the Bible must be recognized by Christians. The church cannot exist and flourish without unreservedly embracing the Bible."[16]

God's Word—not historical tradition or church practices—is the basis for all doctrine.[17] John Stott writes that "the kind of God we believe in determines the types of sermons we preach"[18] He argues that our worship of God is poor because our knowledge of him is poor; this is the result of poor preaching and teaching on doctrine and theology.[19] Those whom God calls to shepherd his flock are responsible for teaching the right doctrine and theology.

All three leadership teams agreed that their practices should always be informed by sound doctrine and theology. An LBC participant stated, "Scripture is our standard for doctrine. We identify from Scripture doctrines that develop our theology, [which is] fundamental to Christianity." LBC's leadership states their "beliefs and teachings are summarized in [their] confession of faith, which is thoroughly biblical and also distinctively faithful to Baptist tradition."[20] Another leader added, "We acknowledge

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[15] Stephen Wellum "Postconservatism, Biblical Authority, and Recent Proposals for Re-Doing Evangelical Theology: A Critical Analysis," in *Reclaiming the Center: Confronting Evangelical Accommodation in Postmodern Times*, ed. Millard J. Erickson, Paul Kjoss Helseth, and Justin Taylor (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 161.

[16] D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 151.

[17] Walter C. Kaiser Jr. and Moisés Silva, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 270. Kaiser and Silva argue that although the doctrines of "faith alone and grace alone" constituted the material principle of the Protestant Reformation, "Scripture alone" was its formal principle. Scripture alone became the standard by which church doctrine and theology must be developed.

[18] John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 83.

[19] Stott, *Between Two Worlds*, 83.

[20] LBC refers to the *Baptist Faith and Message*. See Southern Baptist Convention, *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*, accessed February 2, 2023, https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/.

and accept the Bible as the ultimate and final authority for all matters of Christian doctrine and practice."

SFBC leadership stated,

> The starting point of [cultural] engagement should be driven by theology, not methodology. The church engages the culture scripturally and theologically above all by moving people toward Christ so that [they] may know him and embrace him. Biblically, the only way the culture can embrace Jesus Christ is by accepting him as the only and true way of salvation by means of faith through grace and evidence of repentance.

SFBC leadership said that organizational change in the local church must be developed in a way that "allows church [membership] to reach people successfully with the gospel of Christ and disciple them." They argued that simple participation in organizational change "does not necessarily reflect good theology and practice" if the engagement fails to align with the church's mission of preaching the gospel and making new disciples. SFBC's pastor stated, "The ultimate source of authority for leading God's people should derive from the Scriptures and be empowered by the Holy Spirit."

TVC exemplifies a fervent desire to submit to the authority of Scripture in all practices while holding to a theology driven by a conservative interpretation of the Bible. One pastor said, "Doctrine and theology have to inform the practices of our church. Theology informs a philosophy of ministry, and this guides our practical approach." The centrality of the gospel to TVC's ministry is evident in every aspect of the church. Another leader stated that "gospel theology is the filter through which we run everything in our church. If the objective is not centered [on] the gospel, we are not going to do it." Kevin Peck's research on TVC found that the church's epistemological stance is based on the nature of God's revealed Word. Peck states, "This conviction was primarily focused on the centrality of Scripture in all teaching, programming, and published writings."[21]

[21] Kevin Peck, "Examining a Church Culture of Multiplication: A Multiple Case Study" (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 63–64.

TVC's mission statement is the compass that orients its ministry: "The Village Church exists to bring glory to God by making disciples through gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, gospel-centered service, and gospel-centered multiplication."[22] One leader stated that "any type of organizational change that takes place in our organization must be gospel-centered and distinctively Christian on the area of discipleship within the context of community, worship, service, and multiplication of disciples for the glory of God."[23]

Discipleship

The Greek word *mathetes* is usually translated as "a disciple," but it can also be translated as "pupil" or "apprentice."[24] A disciple is a student or learner. Michael Wilkins argues that the words "Christian" and "disciple" are not synonymous.[25] Leon Morris adds that Christian discipleship means first giving one's loyalty to Jesus, which translates into a wholehearted devotion to him and his teachings.[26] Wilkins contends that true disciples are those who have placed their faith in Jesus and are now his followers or

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[22] Matt Chandler, "The Mission of The Village Church" (sermon preached at The Village Church, Flower Mound, Texas, on August 28, 2011).

[23] Joshua Patterson, "Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach as a Long Term Church Planting Strategy at The Village Church in Dallas-Fort Worth" (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 90–92. Patterson, a lead pastor and elder at The Village Church confirms the congregation and leadership's fidelity to the church's vision statement, which includes the centrality of the gospel in the areas of worship, community, service and multiplication. According to Patterson, multiplication includes not only other disciples but also the reproduction of like-minded churches and congregations.

[24] Walter Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), s.v. "mathetes" (p. 609).

[25] Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 12.

[26] Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 3 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 253.

true converts.[27] More than a mere acknowledgment of Christ's identity, a disciple is one who has believed in and is devoted to Christ. Discipleship is an essential component of the Great Commission (Matt 28) and the responsibility of everyone who professes Jesus Christ as Savior.[28] Though Jesus gave this command to his disciples, everyone who has believed in Christ's gospel and follows his teachings is called a disciple.[29]

Discipleship goes together with doctrine and theology-informed practice. The church that desires to practice sound doctrine and theology will be obedient to Christ's command to make disciples. God's glory is displayed as he is worshiped and obeyed and as his people accomplish his purposes.[30]

The practice of discipleship was evident in each participating organization, present in some respect in almost every aspect of this research study. LBC's pastor believes it is his duty to preach the gospel and "instruct new believers to become faithful followers of Jesus," the heart of discipleship is Christian education, and that leaders "should strive to teach the doctrines and all that Jesus commanded so that [the members] will know them and thus be able to live them out practically in society."[31]

LBC's leadership believes that "repentance and belief in the gospel result in a

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[27] Wilkins, *Following the Master*, 249. Wilkins contends that only a real convert can be a true disciple of Jesus. Hence, true disciples are both real followers and converts.

[28] James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 293–95. In his treatment of Mark 9:43–48, Edwards makes a compelling and challenging case for the seriousness of misjudging or trivializing the call and commission of discipleship. Jesus gives a stern warning to his disciples as well as to those who would dare impede or forsake the exercise of obedient discipleship.

[29] David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 689–90. Turner explains that discipleship was literal when Jesus called people to follow him during his earthly ministry, but as he departed into heaven, the concept of following him (discipleship) took on a more metaphorical meaning. Nevertheless, the reality of what discipleship entails for Christians remains the same.

[30] Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 110–11.

[31] This and subsequent quotes in this section are taken from interviews with the leadership teams at the respective churches (July 2014).

transformed life and thus in a new ethic for the people of God. Jesus makes it clear it is necessary for the new community of faith to live out this new ethic in a way that shows society the good works." The leadership is resolute that this new ethic can only be achieved through the proper and faithful implementation of Christian discipleship.

SFBC leadership believes that discipleship helps members buy in to organizational change. SFBC's pastor concludes that "discipleship maturity helps overcome the barrier of believing that the business of the church is more about immature believers than the Great Commission." The leadership maintains that successful organizational change and cultural engagement can only occur when "mature disciples are able to work together despite their differences for the sake of obedience to the biblical mandate to make disciples for Christ." Church members stated that programs and strategies that fall short of making disciples do not align with the church's mission and are discarded.

The TVC leadership team believes that "it is their job to equip believers in their congregation with the tools and knowledge to live out and spread the gospel." One leader at TVC remarked,

> The leadership identifies the need for organizational change by methodical observation and evaluation of programs that have the central objective to grow disciples across the generational and gender groups in the congregation. The idea behind this approach is that every demographic group that makes up the congregation can be properly equipped for the purpose of making other disciples in order to bring glory to God.

Equipping believers to live out the gospel permeated a large part of TVC's approach to discipleship. The leadership and members believe that everyone has the opportunity to reach out to people in every aspect of everyday life and discuss with them at every chance the gospel of Christ and how their relationship with him has caused them to see the world from a different perspective. Another leader put it this way: "Our congregation's mission is also to make disciples in obedience to the Scriptures. In fact,

our existence is to bring glory to God by making disciples."

TVC faces a challenge brought by growth in membership and multiple sites: the need to develop more leaders for the equipping of the saints. Joshua Patterson notes that the multiplication of believers and churches is the byproduct of a "healthy development of leadership and discipleship."[32] As TVC grows, the need to contextualize ministry opportunities at their multiple campuses will likewise increase.

Preaching

Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes, "The primary task of the church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God."[33] He contends that true preaching is the most greatest and most urgent need of the church and the world.[34] He argues that when the church acts according to its mission, its preaching educates believers, grows them in knowledge and information, and brings them joy—making them better than before. However, he affirms that the principal aim of preaching is to "put man into the right relationship with God, to reconcile man to God."[35]

Mark Dever and Greg Gilbert add that the Holy Spirit will use the preached Word "in a unique way to give and ignite faith in a person's soul."[36] Consequently, the only way in which a person can develop a true relationship with God is by hearing his Word and responding to it in faith.

Timothy Keller writes, "In the end, preaching has two basic objects in view:

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[32] Patterson, "Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach," 96–97.

[33] D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), chap. 1, "The Primary Task," para. 1, Kindle.

[34] Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, chap. 1, "The Primacy of Preaching," para. 1.

[35] Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, chap. 2, "No Substitute," para. 2.

[36] Mark Dever and Greg Gilbert, *Preach: Theology Meets Practice*, 9Marks (Nashville: B&H Books, 2012), 30.

the Word and the human listener."[37] He argues that healthy Christian preaching emanates from a love for the Word of God and a love of people; both of these loves arise from a fervent desire to show people the magnificent grace of God.[38] The aim of the preacher is to use the Word of God to debunk the myths established by the secular culture and offer Christ as the only solution to the problems of mankind.[39] If the practice of preaching must be "relevant," may it be relevant to biblically exposit the perilous worldly foundations of the listener's worldview.[40] Al Mohler argues that the preacher is obligated to confront his hearers with the Word of God.[41] Preaching continues to be the most effective means of reaching people for Christ.[42]

All three participating churches exhibited an unbridled desire for the proclamation of the gospel through expository preaching. They considered preaching an essential element undergirding the organizational change process at their sites. The Lakeland pastor believes that "the call to repentance and belief in the gospel of Christ should be proclaimed at every service and should at the heart of every message." This is made clear on the LBC website on the "What to Expect" page. Under "Preaching," the caption reads,

> Our pastor leads us through expository preaching. What this means is that he allows the biblical text to determine the main idea and structure of his sermons. We believe that every word in the Bible is true and from God. Therefore, we seek to explain the meaning of the Bible in its original context and then apply that meaning to our lives

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[37] Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Viking, 2015), 14.

[38] Keller, *Preaching*, 14.

[39] Keller, *Preaching*, 20.

[40] Keller, *Preaching*, 21.

[41] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Chicago: Moody, 2008), 22.

[42] Thom S. Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 1996), 14.

today. Expect biblical, relevant, and applicable preaching at Lakeland Baptist.[43]

LBC's leadership also believes that Christian formation begins "in the form of text-driven preaching from the pulpit; it should extend to the teaching in the Sunday School classrooms and culminate in small discipleship groups." SFBC's pastor, an accomplished writer and Christian scholar whose works focus on preaching,[44] believes that "the ultimate source of authority for leading God's people derives from the Scriptures and must be empowered by the Holy Spirit through the medium of text-driven expository preaching." The sermons at SFBC are all recorded in audio and video format and are readily accessible for download. All sermons are expository and faithful to declaring the original intent of Scripture.[45]

SFBC'S website makes particular mention of its identity as a conservative, Bible-believing and preaching Southern Baptist Church:

> Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a theologically and doctrinally conservative Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Southern Baptist church. We are a church with open arms, receiving and welcoming all people and families of any size. Those who attend will encounter people who are kind and loving. Attendees will hear and participate in joyous praise and worship and be engaged in a Biblically-based sermon message and presentation of the Gospel.[46]

The Village Church also does a tremendous job of making preaching the centerpiece of its ministry. One leader stated, "Every aspect of our ministry approach is anchored by what our preaching pastor is declaring through the counsel of Scripture. Our home groups, youth groups, and every other group type are studying the same content of

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[43] Lakeland Baptist Church, "Preaching," accessed August 31, 2015, http://www.lakelandbaptist.org/about-us/what-to-expect/.

[44] Adam Dooley, "Utilizing Biblical Persuasion without Being Manipulative" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006); Adam B. Dooley and Jerry Vines, "Delivering a Text-Driven Sermon," in *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*, ed. Daniel L. Akin, David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 243–68.

[45] Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, "Messages," accessed August 31, 2015, http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/resources/messages.

[46] Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, "About Us," accessed August 31, 2015, http://www.sunnyvalefbc.com/about-us.

Scripture that is being proclaimed through the preaching." As the church faces opportunities brought by growth, the pastors reinforce the message of internal and corporate change through scriptural examples.[47] One participating leader explained how preaching is connected to organizational change at TVC:

> The why and how behind all of the church's efforts toward cultural engagement and organizational change must be in agreement with the mission that God is to receive glory in everything we do. This is ensured by aligning the staff, the facilities, and ultimately, but—most importantly—the preaching around a simplification process that reflects God receiving glory through the saving of people.

The centrality of the preaching ministry at TVC is evident in its governance. A TVC leader described the functions and importance of TVC's pastor of leadership, pastor of ministry services, and preaching pastor:

> There is a plurality of leadership within our Christian community that leads to better decision-making which is modeled after the Trinitarian model of the Godhead. We have a pastor that leads through preaching and teaching, another pastor that leads through establishing our philosophy of ministry and approaches to fulfilling the mission, and another pastor for ministry operations. These three pastors are always in constant conversation and interaction for the purpose of enhancing the overall ministry of the church . . . . Preaching is the central event of what goes on in this church every single week. Preaching also plays the most essential role in leadership and organizational change because it helps convey the conviction of why change is needed through the counsel of the Word of God.[48]

Adaptability and Flexibility

The ability of an organization to adapt to change is influenced by internal and external artifacts. Artifacts are things observed, heard, and felt inside and outside the

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[47] Patterson, "Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach," 91.

[48] Christopher Kouba conducted research on multi-site churches for his doctoral work at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Village Church is the only participant in this study that fits the profile of those churches studied by Kouba. Kouba found that although preaching and teaching count as top spiritual gifts among pastors serving in multi-site churches, due to those sites' organizational structures, many pastors are not using those spiritual gifts. Kouba's focus was not the exercise of preaching as an effective best practice for leading organizational change but rather the different models of preaching exhibited at multi-site churches and how their pastor deals with the challenges associated with leading from a secondary role. More research is needed to measure the effectiveness in leading change by the unique best practice of preaching. See Christopher Kouba, "Role of the Campus Pastor: Responsibilities and Practices in Multisite Churches" (DMin project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 46–49.

organization.[49] They can be visible or invisible. Understanding the origin of these artifacts and how they impact the organization is essential to leading organizational change. Leaders must know how an organization's internal and external artifacts are perceived, appreciated, and valued.[50] Ronald Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow say this knowledge informs how leaders engage in changing "people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties."[51] The theory of adaptive leadership has been developed to address this dynamic of organizational change. Adaptive leadership is defined as "the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[52]

Heifetz and Linsky state that the effective change leader has "reverence for the pains of change, recognizes the manifestation of change, and also the skills to respond to it."[53] John Stott makes a similar argument for how Christian leaders should carefully and appropriately engage the culture. He contends that the church should not "shout the gospel from a distance, but its members should involve themselves deeply into the lives, problems, and culture of the lost in order to feel alongside with them their fears, pains, and sufferings."[54] These actions can be carried out with confidence because believers have the right response to the afflictions of people everywhere—the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Contextualization is an example of adaptation. Contextualization means to

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[49] Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 23.

[50] Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* 32.

[51] Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 20.

[52] Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 14.

[53] Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 48.

[54] John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity. Press, 2008), 28.

situate something in context. Kouba's research found that contextualization is a best practice exhibited by multi-site church leaders, as they enable congregations to modify their approach and operational style to maximize effectiveness in meeting the unique needs of new ministry locations.[55] Patterson describes TVC's Denton campus as an example of contextualization: "The Denton church would have the latitude, under the leadership of their elder board, to prayerfully change and shape the church, as they deemed necessary to fulfill the call to make disciples."[56] According to Patterson, contextualization is one of the leading factors that prompted TVC to reconsider its original church planting strategy.[57]

An organization's ability to adapt is also connected with its ability to be flexible. Flexibility is driven by leaders who empower members by granting them the opportunities and authority to make decisions and adjustments that lead to increased organizational functionality and performance. According to Max De Pree, this practice "liberates people to do what is required of them, which enables them to reach their full potential.[58]

The church is not exempt from internal or external challenges. It is difficult for people to confront the potential loss of a dearly held artifact and adapt to a new environment.[59] What they fail to envision, however, is the potential fruit brought about by such change. The church must adapt and be flexible to spread the gospel in the current cultural context in which it serves. John Stott writes, "The salt will be effective only if it permeates society, only if Christians learn again the wide diversity of divine callings and

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[55] Kouba, "Role of the Campus Pastor," 72–79.

[56] Patterson, "Leveraging the Multi-Site Church Approach," 102.

[57] Patterson, "Leveraging the Multi-Site Church," 90–93.

[58] Max De Pree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Crown Business, 2004), 1.

[59] Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 22.

if many penetrate deeply into secular society in order to serve Christ there."[60]

LBC has made a conscious effort to empower its members to become leaders. They encourage members to serve the kingdom of God from all spheres of influence. One church leader put it this way: "We have made program changes to position both our leadership and laity for concentrated efforts of evangelism and discipleship for the present time and the future." Another leader was more specific: "We have had to modify our budget expenditures to be able to allocate more financial resources to missional efforts locally and globally."

The LBC leadership believes in adaptive and flexible change leadership. After starting at LBC, the new pastor analyzed the ongoing programs and projects. His evaluation resulted in the enhancement of some programs, the implementation of new mission-driven programs, and the elimination of obsolete programs and strategies. In his words, an adaptive and flexible leader should "seek godly counsel, move at the right pace, and provide follow-through with the target change."

The SFBC leadership approaches adaption and flexibility as necessary to organizational change in the church. They believe change, flexibility, and adaptability are synonyms for missional work. The pastor knows cultural engagement has produced growth, and "this growth necessitates organizational adjustments."

The SFBC leadership offered an insightful observation on the impact of change:

> Decisions must be consistent and firm when dealing with the impact of change. When making decisions, the leadership must always be ready to allow dissenting forces to depart for the sake of a greater good for the organization. Church leaders must always be ready to adapt to the challenges and needs of the community in which they serve. Church leaders must be willing to step out of their comfort zone to improve the perception of the organization and increase the return on investment.

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[60] Stott, Christian Mission in the Modern World, 34.

The leadership at SFBC does not rejoice in losing the dissenting members, but they are cognizant that the result of organizational change brings a return on investment of eternal value and consequence.

TVC is a model of organizational flexibility and adaptability. Their philosophy is grounded on the belief that it is necessary for the church to adapt and be flexible in its practices for reaching the lost without compromising biblical and theological orthodoxy. As one leader stated, "The type of ministry that we do within is going to have to correlate with the culture of the people we serve. The context of ministry in which God has placed us has necessitated the organizational change that has taken place in our church."

In the last ten years, TVC has demonstrated an incredible ability to adapt and provide consistent support to its members. The church has developed a remarkable, robust system that supports local and foreign missions and participants. It has also required a new model of ministry allowing for flexibility and adaptability in its approach to reaching the lost. The mobilization, capacitation, and development of its thousands of members have necessitated an internal plan of action to accommodate member needs. This is captured in the following description of their groups' ministry by one of its leaders:

> The change that this necessitated internally was the development of an action plan of ministry that mobilizes its people to meet the ministry needs on the inside and beyond the church's walls. Hence, we invest heavily in the ministry of groups. Groups are mobile, ever-growing, and they can quickly be deployed to neighborhoods and other places in which our church and other churches in our area could not possibly function. Therefore, group members become the first contact that people in the community have. They make contact with people that would never step inside the walls of our church. However, we are there through our groups, ministering to the people and the culture around us.

The TVC leadership believes that good management calls for "placing the right people in the position to lead." They also believe that preparing people requires foundational teaching and adjustment. This was exemplified in another leader's

statement: “The teaching and practice must be repeated several times through different modes for growth to take hold.”

Culture Change through Transformational Leadership

Culture change in the local church is inward in nature, prioritizing internal transformation before being capable of affecting the external culture. The church engages in internal culture change to become better equipped to fulfill its calling to make disciples beyond its walls. Leading culture change in the local church is a sensitive task that can bring significant difficulties. Carey Nieuwhof writes, “Change challenges assumptions, and people react when assumptions are challenged.”[61] The church is no stranger to change. However, leadership plays a critical role in the change process. How church leadership initiates and handles change are important elements for measuring congregational health.[62]

As the church continues engaging the culture with the gospel, it must be aware that the strategies and methodologies of the past may no longer successfully affect the current culture. In his book *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, Thom Rainer observes that churches are tempted to implement the same plans, programs, and strategies of the past: “The most pervasive and common thread of our autopsies was that the deceased churches lived for a long time with the past as its hero.”[63] Kotter calls these types of people and organizations the “complacent types.” They do not look for new opportunities and rarely

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[61] Carey Nieuwhof, “Introduction: Sometimes it Feels like a Bad Dream,” in *Leading Change without Losing It: Five Strategies That Can Revolutionize How You Lead Change When Facing Opposition* by Carey Nieuwhof (Cummings, GA: The reThink Group, 2012), Intro, para. 2, Kindle.

[62] Sam S. Rainer III, *Obstacles in the Established Church: How Leaders Overcome Them* (Nashville: Rainer, 2014), 9.

[63] Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2014), 18.

initiate or lead; they merely do what has worked for them in the past without consideration for what is happening externally.[64]

Gary McIntosh argues, "As a church ages and changes size, it demands new approaches to leadership, change, programming, and training, and presents a host of new challenges that must be faced."[65] Paul House writes, "There is no reasonable doubt that theology transforms culture or that culture requires constant renewal."[66] To a significant extent, House's argument also applies to the internal culture of the local church. Here, transformational leadership becomes an active player in transitioning the church into a different kind of organizational unit. Transformational leadership can help create a new church culture by developing a community properly equipped to answer the moral and ethical duty to reach the lost. Herrington et al. assert that transformational leadership requires continuous learning and skill development as Christians engage in developing their God-given capabilities.[67]

James MacGregor Burns defines transformational leadership as "a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and converts leaders into moral agents."[68] Although the idea of transformational leadership is not entirely detached from Christian theology, its foundational model could be defined as

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[64] John P. Kotter, *A Sense of Urgency* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008), 21.

[65] Gary McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level: What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 11.

[66] Paul R. House, "Theology Transforming Culture," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 2.

[67] Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 158.

[68] James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010), 4.

non-Christian.[69] However, the two elements Burns mentions are true in the ministry context. Church leaders should equip those under their care to become leaders and disciplers.[70] One could also argue that church leaders are moral agents empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim salvation to the lost through the transforming gospel of Christ.[71]

The LBC leadership has successfully started the process of internal culture change within its congregation. Sound biblical teaching and theological education have played a part in this process. The pastor and ministry team have taken a systematic approach to the preaching of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit to transform the minds and behaviors of its church members. The leadership has moved at an appropriate pace with the collaboration of the membership. They have been able to implement initiatives that focus on spiritual renewal (internal preparation) with the intent to prepare believers to be used by God to impact their local neighborhoods and the world for Christ.

LBC's pastor stated, "Our church members have a responsibility to engage the culture and the world with the gospel in both words and works." He explained that cultural engagement is "an ethical and moral responsibility affirmed by sound biblical interpretation, theological understanding, and proper obedience to the mandate of the Great Commission." The leadership believes that "a change of mentality, spiritual conviction, and doctrinal maturity have taken place due to the proper proclamation of the

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[69] Richard Parrott, "Transformational Leadership: Theory and Reflections," *Ashland Theological Journal* 32 (2002): 70. Parrott explains "The transformational model is secular in origin. It uses many terms that have spiritual and Christian undertones. I would not declare the model as anti-Christian or un-Christian, but its foundations are non-Christian."

[70] Thom S. Rainer, *Breakout Churches: Discover How to Make the Leap* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), chap. 1, "The Six Major Components of the Chrysalis Factor," para. 10, Kindle. Rainer calls these types of leaders "legacy leaders." They are not only concerned with making decisions and equipping others in the local church during their lifetime but will also impact the local church in the future as result of their unselfish dedication.

[71] Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 246.

Scriptures, obedient evangelism, and sound biblical discipleship." These efforts have resulted in a transformed culture at LBC.

The SFBC leadership was equally direct in their call for internal culture change. They addressed the need for church members to become active agents of change in the cultural landscape:

> Before engaging the culture, churches must first engage their congregations internally. Thus, it is essential for the church to make its congregations part of its mission and goal to reach the world and make disciples. Programs do not engage the culture; people do. The failure to correlate the objective of existing programs to the mission of the church is not acceptable. Therefore, a fundamental shift in the mind, heart, and culture of the church member has to occur for organizational change to be effective.

The ministerial staff at SFBC has developed a unique perspective on what it takes to build a culture that thrives in the process of reaching people for Christ:

> The leadership of the church must place organizational structures in place that support the role of the leadership in engaging the lost. It must develop a system that leads through agents of change in the congregation. The language and attitude of the leadership becomes the language and attitude of the identified change agents. Our congregation's culture, identity, and mission are established in a group of disciples who are driven to make disciples and therefore will cooperate with any strategy and best practice that helps the church accomplish that mission.

The leadership at TVC provides a powerful perspective on creating a new cultural shift in the life of the church. One pastor expressed,

> Different congregational cultures will help dictate how we do ministry because the type of ministry that we do within is going to have to correlate with the culture of the people we serve. This does not mean that we change the gospel, but we might have to change the delivery and the way in which we serve people in that context. It is extremely important to remember that people can always sense authenticity; therefore, our best practice is always to be sincere about the work we do and filter it through the lens of the gospel.

As TVC began to formulate strategies for reaching people with the gospel, they encountered the following questions: "What are the needs of the people? What is it that the people in our geographical area are looking for? What kind of issues are they confronting? What kind of problems are they facing? All of these questions need to dictate the way in which we do ministry here in suburban Texas." While ministering in

the congregation, the staff discovered that the believers at TVC "wanted to be connected meaningfully." These questions and conversations prompted additional approaches to creating and fostering a culture of believers with a unified purpose and objective: "to bring glory to God" through the full expression of a gospel-centered approach to ministry:

> Our church does not look to create or roll out programs, but rather it focuses on its people as its best asset for internal culture and programmatic change. This is ensured by aligning the staff, the facilities, and, ultimately, but most importantly, the preaching around a simplification process that reflects God receiving glory through the saving of people. Preaching is the central event of what goes on in the church every single week. Preaching also plays the most essential role in leadership change because it helps convey the conviction of why organizational change is needed through the counsel of the Word of God. We believe that this is precisely how culture is changed.

Summary of Research Findings

This study sought to identify best practices for leading organizational change in the local church in an urban context. I hypothesized that it was possible for the local church leadership to effectively lead organizational change in an urban context through meaningful cultural engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. The research indicates that the leaders of the participating local churches embrace standard best practices as identified in the literature review. However, the data also indicates that there are at least three best practices for leading organizational change that are unique to the ministry contexts of the participating churches. Other organizational change practices were observed at each participating church; however, these practices were not identified as best practices as they were not uniformly observed at every site. Further research might validate these unique practices as best practices.

Evaluation of the Research Design

Qualitative research in a multi-case study format serves as a valuable tool for identifying best practices. Case study research allows the researcher the opportunity to

explore the meaning ascribed by various individuals to any particular phenomenon in a given context. Case studies benefit research by acquiring knowledge and leading to a proposition. Through interaction with the case study participants, I collected data, developed impressions, and reported findings supporting the research question: "What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?"

Although the research design was adequate for the current study, the findings of the study may not be generalized to all instances of leading organizational change in the local church or ministry context. The findings of the study, however, are available for people and other researchers to understand and apply as they develop their own best practices for leading organizational change in the local church in an urban ministry setting.

CHAPTER 5

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP: APPLYING THE 4R MODEL TO ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN A MINISTRY CONTEXT

The literature review in chapter 2 provided a general description of the local church as an organizational entity. Although unique due to its divine mandate and authority, the local church functions in many ways as a business organization with daily transactional events, delivery of services and products, efficiency monitoring, stakeholder expectations, checks and balances, and a plethora of leadership and management decisions.[1] All of these components are impacted by its leadership model and approach.

In support of the portion of the study that focused on RQ1, the literature review offered two existing frameworks for leading organizational change: (1) John Kotter's 8-Step Model and (2) the Transformational Journey Model proposed by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr. The 8SM is widely known for its practicality and prescriptive methodology for leading business organizations through change. The TJM has had more limited exposure, most likely because it was not developed for the business sector. The authors of the TJM target ministry and church leaders who are interested in leading organizational change within a ministry or local church context.

What emerged from the study on RQ1 was a set of foundational best practices shared by the two models and clearly demonstrated in the leadership and congregational life of the participating sites. The study also revealed three best practices that were unique to a ministry context. The cases studied showed that two of the foundational best

[1] Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 344.

practices, “adaptability and flexibility” and “establishing culture through transformational leadership,” gained the highest number of mentions from the participating sites. The latter measure became the focus of the post-study.

Building on the findings from RQ1, I am proposing McCloskey’s 4R Model of Transformational Leadership as an exemplar to support the best practice work of leading change among the case study churches. The 4R Model is a framework that is adaptable for use in business organizations and social sector entities such as the church. The 4R Model is unique in that it can be applied to a variety of organizational functions, including leading change. Although some time has elapsed between RQ1 and RQ2, I took a fresh look at the content analysis on the data collected at the three participating sites. I also reviewed everything McCloskey has produced on the subject of the 4R Model. I then applied his model to the original empirical analysis that took place at Lakeland Baptist Church, Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, and The Village Church. I endeavored to evaluate the overall process of change at the three sites but to look specifically at the best practice of “establishing culture through transformational leadership.”

This chapter presents a detailed explanation of the 4R Model, highlighting the best practices that were part of the findings explored by RQ1. This chapter is the foundation for understanding the findings presented in chapter 6, which addresses the second research question posed in this dissertation: “How might the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership improve the best practices of the sites participating in this research study?”

The 4R Model of Transformational Leadership

Developed by scholar and leadership expert Mark McCloskey, the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership is a helpful tool that can be used to lead organizations

through various situations in their life cycle.[2] In this dissertation, the 4R Model was used as an instrument to evaluate the organizational change in three local church contexts.[3] The following sections describe the four components of McCloskey's 4R Model—Relationship, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results—and the best practices recommended by the 4R Model.

Relationships

Relationships are at the center of the 4R Model. McCloskey argues that to understand the leadership process, one must begin with the person in the leading role.[4] This does not mean that the leader alone is entirely responsible for fostering and cultivating every relationship in the organization. However, it means that he sets the tone for the place that relationships play in stakeholders' successful engagement and their commitment to collaborate in fulfilling the organization's mission, values, and goals.[5] A true leader seeks to build genuine relationships with his followers.

As noted, the New Normal has done away with the myths of charismatic and technical managerial ability as the sole drivers of organizational success. Instead, the New Normal requires leadership grounded in a virtue-based model emphasizing cognitive, moral, and emotional strengths that transcend charisma and technical-

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[3] See chapters 5 and 6.

[4] Mark W. McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," unpublished course document for ML513 (Bethel Seminary, 2010), 2.

[5] Mark W. McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World: Virtue and Effective Leadership in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 80.

managerial competence.[6] The 4R Model defines virtue as the "moral strength placed in the service of others."[7] He breaks down the Relationship component into four categories and one sub-category of virtues required of those who would lead well: Dynamic Determination, Intellectual Flexibility, Courageous Character, Emotional Maturity, and Collaborative Quotient. McCloskey calls this structure the DICE+1 configuration.[8]

Dynamic Determination

McCloskey defines dynamic determination as the persistent and resourceful pursuit of organizational goals and objectives in the face of significant obstacles, uncertainty, and overwhelming challenges.[9] Resting on the virtues of faith, hope, prudence, and courage, the transformational leader confronts the New Normal with the inner strength to instigate action. Although failure is constantly present, the transformational leader refuses to be deterred in the face of fierce resistance and provides constructive development amid adversity.[10]

McCloskey draws attention to the elements of passion and prudence, defining passion as "purpose-generated energy" and prudence as a "combination of foresight, humility, and rationality that shapes passion and positions it in service of the greater good."[11] Dynamic determination is not a guarantee for success in every leadership

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[6] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 80–81. McCloskey is not arguing that charismatic and gifted-talented individuals are incapable of achieving success as leaders. However, he does argue that such success will be short-lived in the New Normal. Neither will this type of success serve the collective good of the whole organization in the long term.

[7] Mark W. McCloskey and Jim Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership: Building Strong Businesses, Organizations and Families* (Kearney, MO: The Wordsmith, 2016), 45.

[8] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership: A Virtue-Based Curricular Model for Business Education in a Global Context," (paper presented at the American Society of Business and Behavioral Sciences Annual Conference, Las Vegas, February 2009), 4–5.

[9] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 5.

[10] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 89.

[11] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 4.

endeavor, but its presence does ensure the opportunity to succeed. Meanwhile, the absence of dynamic determination ensures the certainty of failure.[12] The virtue of faith is a significant part of a leader's dynamic determination, testifying to his ability to endure adversity without losing hope. As a result, he can remain deeply convinced that his followers and organization have a fighting chance.

Intellectual Flexibility

Intellectual flexibility is perceptual leadership capacity, awareness, and adaptability. This virtue-based component draws on the elements of prudence, wisdom, and humility. McCloskey warns that the opposite of intellectual flexibility is prideful inflexibility, which brings close-mindedness and rigidity and causes would-be leaders to become trapped in their current mental assumptions on leadership.[13]

The intellectually flexible leader develops the ability to come to terms with his own limitations and is willing to learn from his mistakes. Based on this argument, McCloskey claims that intellectually flexible leaders can change their current attitudes and behaviors based on their observation of the world around them and their thoughtful discernment.[14] The unpredictability of the New Normal requires leaders who can quickly adapt and decipher new ways to navigate an environment where the old rules do not apply.[15]

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[12] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 98.

[13] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 99.

[14] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 4.

[15] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 17. As mentioned, VUCA stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity; all four are major factors in the New Normal of the twenty-first century leadership world.

Intellectual flexibility is similar to what Bass and Riggio define as intellectual stimulation, one of the Four I's of transformational leadership.[16] It comes into play when transformational leaders stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. The intellectually flexible leader develops this competence via intellectual stimulation among followers. By encouraging followers to identify and analyze organizational problems, a leader creates an intellectually flexible environment where followers solve complex organizational problems, make creative improvements, and enhance overall organizational performance.[17] Peter Senge affirms this in his work on learning organizations, arguing that organizations can no longer depend on the "grand strategist" to dictate the course. To succeed in the New Normal, organizations will need to lean on members' commitment and capacity to learn at all levels of the organizational structure.[18]

Courageous Character

The transformational leader displays courageous character, what McCloskey describes as the inner strength to lead others and live by high moral standards.[19] Trust is at the center of a leader with a courageous character; it is not just about how he reasons in his head but in his heart.[20] McCloskey accepts the importance of practical leadership skills; however, he argues that fundamental organizational transformation does not occur

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[16] Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership: A Comprehensive Review of Theory and Research*, 2nd ed. (Mahwah, NJ: Psychology Press, 2005), 7.

[17] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 78.

[18] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday/Currency, 2006), 4.

[19] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 5.

[20] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 198.

because of them but rather "because of what is in the leader's heart."[21] Kouzes and Posner define trust as "the social glue that binds human relationships."[22] It helps the courageous leader create a collaborative environment that is essential to organizational performance.[23]

McCloskey couples a leader's courage with love. Regardless of the risks associated with serving his followers, a leader with courageous character cares for the welfare of those entrusted to him.[24] McCloskey contends that courageous character in a leader is closely aligned with his capacity to live life in accordance with high moral standards and values that drive him to first consider others, even when the risks to him are significant. Altruistic love and courage are the fuel behind his willingness to risk it all for the sake of those he seeks to serve sacrificially. What matters most is the virtuous way in which he faces challenges, not the achievement of success at any cost. Therefore, the leader must practice what he preaches, choosing the virtuous way despite the uncertainty of the outcome.[25] The ability of followers to trust in a leader is significantly affected by the values and principles that govern the leader's life. Likewise, his integrity plays an essential role in his ability to influence and motivate others.[26]

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[21] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 53.

[22] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *A Leader's Legacy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 71.

[23] Justin A. Irving and Mark L. Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective: Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 66.

[24] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 112.

[25] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 36; Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (2017), 284; Samuel D. Rima, *Leading from the Inside Out: The Art of Self-Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 36.

[26] Tom Yeakley, *Growing Kingdom Character: Practical, Intentional Tools for Developing Leaders* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2011), 42.

Emotional Maturity

Noted psychologist Naji Abi-Hashem writes that "maturity is a process, not a destination;" it is not the equivalent of perfection nor "the absence of needs or struggles" but "reflects stability, depth, refinement of character, inner security, and integrity" in a person.[27] Abi-Hashem contends that emotional maturity is achieved through lived experiences and linked to emotional stability, or the ability of the leader to remain composed and steady in the face of harsh criticism or complex organizational challenges.[28]

Interestingly, McCloskey defines emotional maturity in a transformational leader as his "capacity to steward his gifts and talents in such a way that they are expressed in the service of others rather than self-interest."[29] The leader shows maturity in understanding the needs and concerns of his followers. McCloskey identifies faith, hope, and temperance as the three critical elements of an emotionally mature leader.[30]

Leaders with high emotional maturity are stable and collected in challenging situations. Fred Smith argues that undisciplined emotions can negatively impact leadership and organizational productivity, taking away the leader's focus and ability to concentrate.[31] To achieve personal and organizational goals, a leader must master his emotions so that he can remain focused on the task, connect with followers who need encouragement and support, and exert a calming effect on the ranks.[32]

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[27] Naji Abi-Hashem, "Maturity," in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*, ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill, 2nd ed., Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999), 730–31.

[28] Abi-Hashem, "Maturity," 730–31.

[29] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 119.

[30] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 5.

[31] Fred Smith, *Learning to Lead: How to Bring Out the Best in People*, The Leadership Library 5 (Carol Stream, IL: CTi, 1986), 51.

[32] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 39; Rima, *Leading from the Inside Out*, 192.

Collaborative Quotient

The collaborative quotient is the +1 of the DICE competencies, representing the collaborative approach to leadership that is a requirement in the New Normal.[33] The +1 element refers to the leader's ability to initiate, sustain, and grow collaborative partnerships in various settings.[34] The collaborative quotient draws from the other DICE elements: dynamic determination, intellectual flexibility, courageous character, and emotional maturity.[35] The higher a leader's DICE+1 capacity, the greater his capacity to successfully embody the multiple roles found in the 4R Model.[36] Leaders with a high collaborative quotient are also aware of the giftedness, leadership qualities, and capabilities of others in the organization. They are assertive in leadership approach while also honoring and including others' perspectives and talents.[37]

Roles

The second component of the 4R Model is the Roles component, which focuses on shaping, equipping, and empowering individuals to fulfill critical functions in an organization.[38] These roles must be carried out in a collaborative approach in order to effect transformation in the organizational community.[39] The 4R Model identifies five distinctive yet interconnected leadership roles essential to achieving an organization's missional success: the direction setter, the spokesperson/ambassador, the change

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[33] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 131.

[34] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 40.

[35] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 132.

[36] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 5.

[37] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 132.

[38] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 6; McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 143.

[39] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 9.

agent/learner, the coach, and the steward.[40] These are unique roles that every leader must assume at different times within his duties to the organization.[41]

The Direction Setter

As the direction setter, a leader clarifies the organization's ultimate purpose, mission, identity, and core values.[42] He creates a bridge between the reason the organization exists and the behavior displayed by its members in their organizational lives. He also projects the need for the organization's members to see their work as a calling that aims to serve a greater purpose.[43]

McCloskey argues that the direction setter does not set big goals or showcase himself in pursuit of self-serving agendas.[44] Instead, he focuses on helping the team envision a future that can be achieved through collective efforts.[45] The direction setter considers his responsibility to the organizational mission. This requires him to say no to some "good things" the organization could do that may take the focus off its organizational objective. This is a very important point to consider in highlighting the significance of the transformational leader in his direction setter role.

Kotter takes a similar approach in the 8-Step Model, which includes formulating a vision and strategies that support the organization's direction.[46]

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[40] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 143–266. It is important to mention that McCloskey has slightly refined the distinctive roles within the 4R Model throughout its development. Nevertheless, these roles have remained the same in core meaning and purpose. McCloskey has also added an additional functional role called "steward," which was not explicitly present in the original articulations of his proposed model, although it could be tacitly inferred.

[41] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 40.

[42] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 7.

[43] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 7.

[44] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 146.

[45] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 9..

[46] John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 4.

The direction setter helps sustain and propagate the practices and behaviors among the ranks that exemplify the organization's identity and core values.[47] McCloskey stresses that "the mandate of the direction setter is to foster an organizational culture of strategic clarity and missional integrity."[48]

The Ambassador/Spokesperson

The transformational leader acts as an ambassador and spokesperson for the organization. Minimizing or disregarding the role can lead to the organization's failure to connect with its intended stakeholders, rendering it irrelevant.[49] In this role, the leader actively engages with stakeholders, building a bridge between the organization's human capital and services and the needs of the stakeholders.[50]

The ambassador/spokesperson is an advocate, promoting the value and desirability of the organization itself.[51] This ensures that would-be members or associates develop a connection with the organization that brings them worth and meaning. In

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[47] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 145.

[48] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 145.

[49] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 8. One of the main objectives of this research study is to advance the argument that the church, despite the plethora of social-cultural challenges it faces, is still able to remain relevant to people in all the contexts in which it exists. Although the church is not a business, it does offer a unique service (spiritually speaking) to those in the culture it seeks to serve. Furthermore, although the church is not a business entity, its members and especially its leaders consistently function in the role of spokespersons on its behalf when they advocate for the church's message (the gospel) with those in the culture they seek to reach. Consequently, this study argues that the church can engage with the culture and successfully implement meaningful and responsible internal organizational change without losing its identity.

[50] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 41. The church as a divinely appointed organizational entity is in view here. Therefore, it is imperative to mention that the researcher does not argue that the church must provide services that are tailored to the wants and wishes of people in a seeker-friendly fashion. Rather, the researcher argues that the church as a divinely appointed institution is in a unique and exclusive position to provide an answer to the spiritual needs of people regardless of cultural context.

[51] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 7. As an ambassador/spokesperson, the pastor-leader serves in the unique role of promulgating and spreading the word that the church is uniquely equipped and ordained to meet the needs of people. He consistently advocates for the church's singularity and invites prospective stakeholders to partake of it.

promoting the organization's desirability, the ambassador/spokesperson conveys a sense of status and standing that makes doing business with the organization highly valued.

The Change Agent/Learner

As a change agent/learner, the leader generates and maintains a focus on constructive organizational change and collective learning. He uses the organization's purpose, mission, identity, and core values as a roadmap to ensure success.[52] His chief mandate is to establish a culture and climate that facilitate innovation and learning among members.[53]

McCloskey emphasizes that the leader serving in this role ensures that the organization is constantly regenerating and producing new knowledge and ideas. This renewal and innovation expand an entity's capacity to engage new challenges and prosper in the New Normal.[54]

The Coach

The leader's coaching role is at the heart of the organization's sustainability. As the coach, the leader is responsible for facilitating the identification, development, and deployment of new leadership personnel—"to perpetuate and expand the work of the organization."[55] McCloskey argues that leadership development is inevitably connected to an organization's future viability; effective leader development generates the human capital and institutional capacity necessary for organizational continuity.[56]

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[52] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 41–42.

[53] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 8.

[54] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 167.

[55] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 8.

[56] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 177.

As a coach, the leader promotes leadership cultivation at all levels of the organization and develops a climate in which new leaders are embraced and given opportunities to grow and mature while actively contributing to the "welfare and progress of the organization."[57] McCloskey sees the coach and direction-setter working in close partnership. He asserts that the direction-setter role provides the tactical context in which the coach can fulfill his role. Specifically, the direction-setter defines the organization's identity, mission, and values, and the coach identifies, develops, and deploys the qualified members that will serve and lead in alignment with former "directional imperatives."[58]

The Steward

The steward role is McCloskey's latest addition to the Roles component. Although stewardship is present in previous iterations of the 4R Model, it had not been listed as a separate element. In *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, McCloskey defines a steward as "a person employed to manage another's property."[59] He stresses the importance of the steward, who ensures an equitable distribution of time and effort to properly implement the first four roles in the Roles component.[60]

A steward is responsible for the care, supervision, and administration of goods and services. The steward cares for these things as if they were his possessions. Beyond

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[57] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 41.

[58] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 177–78.

[59] Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. "steward."

[60] The addition of the stewardship role found in McCloskey's 4R Model provides rich and valuable insight into the unique contours of what constitutes a true measurement of how successful leadership should be evaluated. The invaluable aspect of faithful stewardship and how it relates to the great responsibility of leading others and particularly God's church provides a measurement for success. It is a success that is not computed by numbers and accolades but rather how faithful an individual has been in managing the investment, development, and deployment of the people and resources with which he has been entrusted.

the material aspects of good stewardship, though, is the careful management of his life.[61] The *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* emphasizes that the steward's resource management directly reflects his conviction that his role emanates from a higher authority.[62] Likewise, McCloskey affirms that the steward "holds something of value in sacred trust for others by providing watchful, wise, and forward-looking care. In this sense, a steward has entrusted with the welfare and progress of something, not their own—[the] organization."[63]

In the 4R Model, the steward's role is not focused on securing capital, identifying operational competencies, or managing the organization's finances, despite the importance of these functions. Instead, his mandate is to create an organizational culture that embraces the New Normal. Consequently, the steward must engage in a three-step process to help shape the change needed in the organization's culture. First, he must manage the organization's collective investment in the human talent and other resources that complement the 4Rs of Relationship, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results. Second, he must wisely manage the tensions that arise between the roles as they coexist. Third, he must give attention to other leaders and members to get the most from their abilities and insights. He accomplishes this by building collaborative partnerships among all leaders and ensuring an equitable distribution of power and authority throughout the organization.[64]

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[61] Joel B. Green, ed., *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 749.

[62] Green, *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, 748. According to the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, this higher source of authority is the Lord God.

[63] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 187–88.

[64] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 188–89.

Responsibilities

The Responsibilities component encompasses the *doing*, or what can be described as the practitioner's side of leading. McCloskey defines this component as "the being of leadership translated into the doing of leadership in the organizational context of leadership."[65] This component of transformational leadership sees the leader defining and communicating a specific path for his organization that balances the actions and behaviors that lead to personal and organizational transformation.[66]

McCloskey outlines the leader's four responsibilities when establishing and communicating the organization's direction: vision casting, strategy making/formulating, aligning, and encouraging/motivating.[67] McCloskey notes that this is not an exhaustive list. He recognizes that more responsibilities may arise within this component, but he argues that these four are essential activities that every transformational leader must perform effectively to ensure organizational survival.[68]

Vision Casting

Vision casting is the first and most important task in the responsibilities category. Kotter defines vision casting as a mental picture of the future accompanied by a clear articulation of why the members of an organization should strive together to create that future.[69] First, Kotter notes that it establishes the need to move forward beyond the current organizational position. Second, it motivates members to take the initial step in moving toward the desired direction. Third, it helps coordinate the collective actions of

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[65] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 8.

[66] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 201.

[67] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 42–44. It is important to state that as McCloskey has refined his 4R Model, the names of the categories and sub-categories within each role have morphed slightly. However, the basic essence of what each area does and is supposed to do has remained consistent from his creation of the model.

[68] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 8–9.

[69] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 67.

all members in the organization. Senge claims that a compelling vision is a shared vision. When a familiar mental picture is analogous among stakeholders, it induces commitment among the ranks, and when stakeholders connect over a shared vision, it produces unity around a common objective.[70]

Kotter asserts that vision casting is not a complex element among the many factors involved in organizational leadership. However, he argues that organizations will have a difficult if not impossible time making and formulating strategies without establishing a vision.[71] Consequently, leading an organization in the New Normal without a sound and compelling vision is a formula for disaster. McCloskey claims that vision casting is about generating organizational momentum; leading with the right type of energy can generate the collective effort needed to move the organization toward a clearly defined and articulated vision of the future.[72]

McCloskey details the vision casting process, taking Kotter's picture metaphor to the next level. He articulates a process that calls for the leader to develop an intelligent and compelling picture of the desired future. This picture must be closely aligned with the organization's directional imperatives. The leader must use a variety of platforms and venues to communicate this picture to stakeholders inside and outside of the organization. McCloskey contends that the leader and his team must consistently revise, adjust, and re-frame the picture of the future "based on the realities and opportunities faced by the organization."[73] When the leader successfully implements vision casting, he creates the

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[70] Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 192.

[71] Kotter, *Leading Change*, 70.

[72] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 203.

[73] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 204.

right conditions for the organization to execute the next steps in leading: strategy making/formulating and aligning.[74]

Strategy Making/Formulating

Writing about meeting organizational challenges amid disruptive change, Clayton Christensen and Michael Overdorf make the case that leaders must consider their organization's capabilities to the same degree they consider their members' individual capacities. They contend that an organization's success or failure in meeting its corporate strategies rests on its resources, processes, and values.[75] Therefore, strategizing is bringing the vision of the future into reality using a framework that makes things work. History offers several examples of how inspirational leaders such as Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi created a sense of urgency in people by communicating broadly and consistently a message that won over peoples' hearts and minds. Nevertheless, behind their inspirational messages, there was always a clear strategy focused on moving people toward the desired end—the vision.[76] McCloskey simply calls it putting vision into action.[77]

Aligning

Kouzes and Posner remind organizations that leadership does not happen without followers. Leadership is about a shared vision, shared values, and effective

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[74] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 212.

[75] Clayton M. Christensen and Michael Overdorf, "Meeting the Challenge of Disruptive Change," in *The Essentials*, edited by Harvard Business Review, HBR's 10 Must Reads (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2011), 20. The authors further assert their claim that the consistent success of an organization is closely aligned to the leader's skillful ability to assess the organization's "abilities and disabilities as a whole."

[76] John P. Kotter, Vanessa Akhtar, and Gaurav Gupta, *Change: How Organizations Achieve Hard-to-Imagine Results in Uncertain and Volatile Times* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2021), 31.

[77] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 9.

harnessing of an organization's membership to align and move forward with a common purpose and cause.[78]

McCloskey writes that aligning requires fostering efficient commitment to the organization. Such commitment is focused firmly on the organization's vision, values, and strategies. It also encompasses identifying and implementing practical ways for the membership to meet its objectives.[79] Bass and Riggio studied successful organizational alignment and found a positive correlation between alignment and the effective implementation of transformational leadership. Successful transformational leaders readily encourage their followers' values, beliefs, and responsibilities. They also found that when such leaders use inspirational motivation with followers, they build collective emotional commitment to meeting the mission and goals of their organizations.[80]

When followers are in alignment with an organization's objectives, their collective impact is maximized, and their counter-productiveness is rendered null.[81] Kouzes and Posner affirm that members' organizational commitment is more robust when their personal values are aligned with the organization.[82] The organization also benefits from greater clarity in expectations.[83] McCloskey contends it is ultimately the leader's responsibility to mobilize the organization's focus, talent, and resources to the task of vision implementation through fostering ownership. He calls the alignment process as "transforming renters into owners."[84]

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[78] Kouzes and Posner, *Learning Leadership*, 87.

[79] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 9.

[80] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, 36.

[81] John Doerr, *Measure What Matters: How Google, Bono, and the Gates Foundation Rock the World with OKRs* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2018), 90.

[82] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 60.

[83] Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 64.

[84] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 32, 43.

Encouraging/Motivating

In an environment of authentic communication, leaders can apply themselves to the crucial task of encouraging and motivating those under their care. McCloskey sees a correlation between encouragement and the "inspirational motivation" that characterizes transformational leadership.[85] The leader strives to uplift stakeholders' morale and strength by inspiring confidence, instilling hope, and promoting a spirit of optimism.[86] Irving and Strauss identify this as the proper type of organizational empowerment, in which followers are equipped and supported to fulfill their assignments while being provided with encouragement and the proper measure of critique and correction.[87]

Celebrating values and achievement further enhances an organization's sense of organizational identity and purpose. McCloskey considers the responsibility to encourage and motivate followers an imperative because all organizations are sure to face adversity in the marketplace.[88] Hence, McCloskey emphasizes the impact of inspirational communication, which he argues is radically different and more potent than conventional motivation because it results in an emotional commitment and ownership on the part of followers. Encouragement and motivation foster greater confidence in the followers by sending the message that their work makes a difference, thus making them more willing to engage in true collaboration and problem-solving.[89]

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[85] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 10. See also chapter 2.

[86] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 10.

[87] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 165.

[88] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 10.

[89] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 43–44.

Results

The last component and outer circle of the 4R Model depicts the Results of implementing the other Rs. The inner ring is Relationships. From Relationships flow the transformational leader's Roles. The Roles have Responsibilities that must be implemented, ultimately leading to an organizational output, the Results.[90] Results are the work of monitoring and sustaining performance and, according to McCloskey, "the unmistakable footprint of effective leadership.[91] Peter Drucker indicates that "intelligence, imagination, and knowledge are essential resources, but only effectiveness converts them in results."[92]

McCloskey recognizes that the transformational leadership process is unpredictable, especially in the New Normal. Nevertheless, transformational leaders have the task of ensuring that the institutional outcomes (or results) are aligned with the "purpose, mission, vision, and values of the organization."[93] The transformational leader and his leader-followers must invest, monitor, and implement the proper amount of time, effort, and resources to meet the expected and valued goals of the organization.[94]

The Responsibilities component assumes leaders continually monitor, observe, and evaluate the progress being made by the organization throughout the entire leadership process.[95] It is unwise and unrealistic to expect organizations to find success in their areas of operation by plain chance. The realities of the New Normal, the changing trends in business and society, the constructive feedback on good performance or the lack thereof,

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[90] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 44–45.

[91] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 251.

[92] Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive: The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 2.

[93] McCloskey, "The 4R Model of Leadership," 10.

[94] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 4.

[95] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 10.

and the presence of organizational effectiveness and missed opportunities are all part of what Results addresses.[96]

McCloskey conveys how crucial it is for transformational leaders to ask pertinent questions of themselves and the stakeholder community as they engage in the daily grind of organizational performance. Fundamental questions such as "What is happening? Why did this happen? Are we seeing the outcomes we expected and invested in? Is our purpose fulfilled and our mission and vision achieved and realized? What is going well? What is not doing well? How can we improve?"—are all under the range of oversight and due diligence that transformational leaders under the 4R Model must exercise and answer.[97] The answer to these questions working in tandem with the perceptive and informed skill set of a legitimate transformational leader will dictate to the organization whether it is on the right path or whether adjustments and change are necessary.[98]

The 4R Model evaluates the Results through categories of outcomes that the leadership and the rest of the organizational community consider essential, given the institution's context and how they relate to its purpose, mission, vision, and values. The Results are categorized as contextual, quantitative, and qualitative.[99] The contextual results reflect the organization's overall performance based on whether its current market design effectively meets the stakeholder demands. The quantitative results include evaluation of numerical data, such as resource investment and consumption, total production output and market consumption, and ultimately a bottom line of return-on-investment.

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[96] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 251.

[97] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 10.

[98] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 251.

[99] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 11.

The qualitative results evaluate the soft but important data involving organizational health, performance quality, stakeholder influence and perception, and community presence and impact. McCloskey emphasizes that the 4R Model does not promise immediate results. However, if implemented with fidelity at the personal and corporative levels and "shaped by the vision and values" of the organizational community, it reveals that "a pattern of transformation . . . will emerge over time."[100]

Achieving consistently good results is not a foregone conclusion. It takes much work, dedication, attention to detail, and perseverance. McCloskey readily acknowledges that even the most reputable organizations move toward progress amid stretches of adversity and challenges, "sometimes taking one step forward and two steps back."[101] He emphasizes that transformational leadership is not an antidote that eliminates poor performance, errors, and complete negligence. However, it does provide organizations with the opportunity for internal revitalization and progress. These are achieved through a disciplined, collective effort to monitor performance and timely response with constructive guidance to organizational feedback.[102] However, the backbone of good results in leading will always consist of exemplary stewardship on the part of those entrusted with such a tremendous responsibility.[103]

Seven Foundational Best Practices of McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership

McCloskey describes and argues for seven foundational practices that substantially impact the contours of outstanding leadership in this new century. He has already explained the volatility associated with the New Normal's current societal,

[100] McCloskey, "Toward a Working Model of Transformational Leadership," 12.

[101] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 115.

[102] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 11.

[103] McCloskey and Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, 117.

cultural, economic, and geopolitical conditions. He has also stated how the old rule book does not apply or has become obsolete for leading under the present conditions.[104] Thus, he suggests a set of best practices that transformational leaders must consider to succeed in leading in the New Normal.

These seven foundational best practices call for a paradigm shift—from maintaining the organizational status quo to a transformational approach to leading organizational change. These seven practices require meaningful change by moving from (1) formal to moral authority, (2) individualism to collaboration, (3) predictive certainty to contingency and clarity, (4) promise-making to honesty, (5) simple problem-solving to adaptive problem solving and discernment, (6) a knowing organization to a learning organization, and (7) short-term results to sustained progress.[105] It is important to remember that each of these practices is virtue-driven and emanates from the framework proposed by the 4R Model. Next, each best practice will be briefly summarized to demonstrate its meaning and purpose for leading organizational change.

Best Practice 1: Moral Persuasion (A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority)

The New Normal requires organizations to be mindful of how they select their leaders. McCloskey suggests that the following questions related to organization type and leadership be considered in leader selection process: (1) What kind of person should the organization look for to lead them? (2) What type of person does this organization require

[104] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 15–23.

[105] Mark W. McCloskey, "A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority: Power and Authority," unpublished course material for LD121 Introducing Transformational Leadership (Logos Mobile Education, 2019), unit 7, "Application," seg. 63, sec. 4, "Seven Foundational Performance Shifts."

to lead it into the future? (3) What type of organization is likely to survive and even thrive in the New Normal?[106]

The 4R Model calls for organizations to shift from formal authority to moral authority. This requires shifting from a rigid, top-down approach in which titles and positions dictate the source of authority to one in which the exercise of authority emanates from the essence of an individual's character and being.[107] That is not to say that positions of authority are irrelevant, but they are no longer the basis for succeeding in a rapidly changing world.

Significant decisions and handling of critical information and processes are now the responsibilities of member-leaders without titles or prominent positions in organizational charts.[108] These member-leaders embody the shift from a formal to a moral authority in the sense that their effectiveness is measured in how they carry themselves and the respect and admiration their personal character draws from others.

Best Practice 2: Collaborative Engagement (A Shift from Individualism to Collaboration)

Highly effective organizations have learned to harness the effort of the membership toward the accomplishment of the organizational mission. They have quickly recognized that when talented employees collectively work on problem-solving without outside prompting, it is best to allow them to do so without disruption.[109] Smart

[106] McCloskey, "A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority: Power and Authority," unit 7, seg. 63, sec. 2, "Two Questions."

[107] McCloskey, "A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority: Power to Authority," unit 7, seg. 63, sec. 5, "A Shift to Moral Authority."

[108] McCloskey, "A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority: Power to Authority," unit 7, seg. 63, sec. 5.

[109] Richard McDermott and Douglas Archibald, "Harnessing Your Staff's Informal Networks," in *On Collaboration*, ed. Harvard Business Review, HBR's 10 Must Reads (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 79.

organizations demonstrate they have evolved in their understanding of collaboration when they move beyond silo performances to a shared partnership approach.

Collaborative organizations also look favorably upon their members bringing together their talents and knowledge. They seek to foster a sense of community by rallying members around a common purpose. This results in more innovation and responsiveness to the needs of their target stakeholders.[110] The 4R Model calls for a change from individualism to teamwork, what McCloskey calls collaborative engagement, or "the process of forging productive partnerships that leverage the unique perspective and diverse talents of the many members of the community or organization to serve the welfare and progress of the organization."[111] McCloskey says it is not about the talent and charisma of the few but the collective contribution of many.[112]

Best Practice 3: Sensemaking (A Shift from Predictive Certainty to Contingency and Clarity)

Insanity is described as continuing to do the same thing while expecting different results. In the New Normal, the same old leadership strategies and approaches amount to some degree of insanity, as they will struggle to effectively answer the current challenges. Organizations cannot continue to operate in the here-and-now mentality of business-as-usual and expect to survive. Thriving in the New Normal requires visionary leadership that is consistently seeking new organizational growth opportunities.

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[110] Paul Adler, Charles Heckscher, and Laurance Prusak, "Building a Collaborative Enterprise," in *On Collaboration*, ed. Harvard Business Review, HBR's 10 Must Reads (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013), 46.

[111] Mark W. McCloskey, "A Shift from the Few to the Many," unpublished course material for LD121 Introducing Transformational Leadership (Logos Mobile Education, 2019), unit 7, "Application," seg. 65, sec. 2, "Collaborative Engagement."

[112] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 41.

Kotter explains what he calls the survival channel mode of leadership, which is incentivized by another leadership mode called the thrive channel. While the survival channel is looking for threats to the organization, the thrive channel is constantly looking for opportunities. Nevertheless, there must be a balance. Kotter contends that a leader must create enough meaningful change to keep the survival channel from becoming overwhelmed and stimulate the thrive channel in as many members across the organization as possible. Smart organizational change keeps the organization moving toward continuous improvement, preventing the organization from stagnating due to a constant focus on threats to its survival. At the same time, smart organizational change catalyzes people across the organization, creating excitement and eagerness to seek new and innovative opportunities to bring forth organizational growth. [113] The challenges brought by disruptive change and uncertainty tend to create anxiety and confusion in organizations.[114] Challenges of this nature can lead to disastrous consequences and the potential extinction of an organization. McCloskey conveys how crucial it is for transformational leaders to think less about a predictive approach to the marketplace and more about making sense of the challenges as they arrive and responding to them appropriately.[115]

Best Practice 4: Candor (A Shift from Promise Making to Truth Telling)

Leaders who make unrealistic promises rather than telling the truth fail in the crucial responsibility to define reality for the people in the organization.[116] Defining reality can be an intimidating task that does not come without risks. Truth telling

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[113] Kotter, Akhtar, and Gupta, *Change*, 22–23.

[114] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 119.

[115] McCloskey, "A Shift from Certainty to Contingency," unit 7, seg. 66, sec. 2.

[116] Max De Pree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Crown Business, 2004), 11.

demands courage; the leader must make sense of the current conditions and call them for what they are. Transformational leaders are set apart by their ability to define the existing situation and tell the truth about it while at the same time inspiring followers to see the potential for what things could or should be.

McCloskey recognizes that most leaders are reluctant to make promises about performance outcomes in organizations, especially in the New Normal. However, he argues that leaders can never compromise on telling the truth about current circumstances and challenges that can affect the organization's welfare, integrity, and mission.[117] McCloskey also warns against leaders who would lead under the Old Normal structure, as they tend to infuse organizations with deceptive notions of confidence and positive self-regard irrespective of the organization's capacity or ability to perform.[118] Leaders must commit to moving their organizations forward, continue to speak the truth about reality, and do so with the right measure of hope and expectation for a better future.

Best Practice 5: Staying Solid (A Shift from Simple Problem Solving to Adaptive Problem Solving)

Leadership experts Ronald Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow say leadership is like medicine in the sense that it involves a diagnosis and treatment of the condition.[119] Organizations are likewise engaged in identifying problems that either impede or facilitate their health, growth, and continuous improvement. Once the problem is identified, a course of action is implemented to address the condition.

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[117] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 49.

[118] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 48.

[119] Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2009), 6.

Although some may think that identifying organizational problems is the least challenging task for a leader, research seems to corroborate the position that, in many instances, leaders are not as successful in diagnosing the real problems in their organizations. Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow argue that the reason for a deficiency in diagnosing organizational problems is that senior leaders are naturally wired for taking swift action and making decisions, but in many instances, they are not really equipped or willing to go deep into the inner workings of their organizations to search for more complex symptoms and knowledge of what may be truly causing problems.[120] This is significant because the wrong diagnosis could lead to the wrong implementation of strategies and solutions. McCloskey contends that the range and complexity of problems in organizations demand a leadership adaptively equipped to deal with them. However, providing diagnoses and solutions to adaptive challenges is different from addressing tame or technical problems.[121] Problem-solving in the New Normal has evolved beyond the mere steps of addressing basic technical issues and into the realm of gathering data, interpreting it, and adaptively acting on it. Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow call this the "what, why, and what next" process of diagnosing and addressing organizational challenges.[122]

Best Practice 6: Generative Learning (A Shift from a Knowing Organization to a Learning Organization)

Leadership and industry experts Jim Collins and Jerry Porras researched what makes great organizations endure and found that their success exhibited a shared ability to manage continuity and change. The researchers also state that this unique discipline is

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[120] Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 7.

[121] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 50.

[122] Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 6.

evident and deliberately promoted by the most visionary organizations.[123] In the continuously changing environment present in the New Normal, the old myth that only top leadership needs to learn and then dictate to followers how they should advance has been rendered obsolete. To this point, Peter Senge contends that if organizations intend to succeed in the future, they must figure out how to tap into all stakeholders' commitment and learning capacity.[124]

Kouzes and Posner claim that good leadership is leadership that is willing to learn. They write, "It has been said that only three things happen naturally in organizations: friction, confusion, and underperformance; everything else requires leadership."[125] The authors emphasize that good leaders are also good learners if they desire to improve, believe, challenge themselves, engage the support of others, and deliberately practice their learning.[126] Kouzes and Posner also debunk the commonly believed myths of "individual strength," "self-reliance," and "it comes naturally" in leadership. They emphatically assert that extraordinary accomplishments in organizations do not happen singlehandedly. They wisely write that "leadership is a team sport, not a solo performance."[127] I conclude then with the fact that the great sage with all the answers is no longer in the arena. In the New Normal, leaders must learn that they must depend on the collective input of all member leaders in the organization if they are to move the organization forward and successfully into the future.

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[123] James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras, introduction to *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1997), sec. 1, para. 10.

[124] Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 4.

[125] Kouzes and Posner, *Learning Leadership*, 13.

[126] Kouzes and Posner, *Learning Leadership*, xviii.

[127] Kouzes and Posner, *Learning Leadership*, 9.

Best Practice 7: Shaping Culture (A Shift from a Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress)

McCloskey breaks down this best practice in three distinct but mutually dependent areas: embedding mechanisms,[128] simple rules,[129] and the shaping of organizational culture.[130] Integrating all of the previous best practices culminates in creating an organization that can play the long game in the marketplace while sustaining productivity and effectively adapting to New Normal conditions.

The first component, embedding mechanisms, focus on what leaders pay attention to, how they react, and where they allocate resources across the organization. Other embedded mechanisms include the coaching of other leaders, how leaders distribute recognition, and how they make effective personnel decisions.[131]

The second component, simple rules, refers to the obligation of the leader to fulfill the responsibilities of his role and thereby strengthen relationships. For example, the direction setter must keep his word, the spokesperson must serve others, the change agent must make any necessary changes to keep his promises, and the coach must train and produce more leaders.[132]

The last component in this best practice is culture shaping—helping to transform the organization into a robust and sustainable entity by fostering the virtues of faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, courage, and temperance. This is the transformational

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[128] Mark W. McCloskey, "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unpublished course material for LD121 Transformational Leadership (Logos Mobile Education, 2018), unit 7, "Application," seg. 70, "Embedding Mechanisms," sec. 4–10.

[129] McCloskey, "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unit 7, "Simple Rules," seg. 71, sec. 4–7.

[130] McCloskey, "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unit 7, "The Relevance of Shaping Organizational Culture," seg. 72, sec. 2–8.

[131] McCloskey, "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unit 7, "Embedding Mechanisms," seg. 70, sec. 4–10.

[132] McCloskey. "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unit 7, seg. 71, sec. 4–7.

element in the 4R Model and what makes it formidable for leading organizational change.[133]

Thought leader Simon Sinek wrote a book called *The Infinite Game* in which he argues that organizations with an infinite mindset approach have a much better chance of succeeding in the future because this approach leads to higher levels of trust, cooperation, and innovation among members. Sinek claims that the opposite occurs when organizations are led with a finite mindset while trying to compete in the infinite game of leading people and institutions into the future.[134] Kotter acknowledges that today's reality teaches organizations that the increased speed and complexity of change limit their ability to make substantive predictions about the future.[135] However, his research and experience have found that the most successful way for organizations to implement enduring change comes from mobilizing and empowering leadership capacity from as many members of the organization as possible.[136]

Retrospective Analysis of Exhibited Best Practices in RQ1 vs. McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership

Chapter 4 describes how the leadership of the participating churches embraced the standard best practices identified in the literature review (chapter 2) and had also developed best practices unique to their ministry settings. The content analysis of the data collected from the RQ1 study implies that the leadership already engaged in some practices associated with McCloskey's 4R Model, including practices related to approach, communication, and virtuous character.

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[133] McCloskey. "A Shift from Short-Term Results to Sustained Progress," unit 7, seg. 72, sec. 2–8.

[134] Simon Sinek, *The Infinite Game* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2019), 4–5.

[135] Kotter, Akhtar, and Gupta, *Change*, 50.

[136] Kotter, Akhtar, and Gupta, *Change*, 10.

Although the leadership teams of the participating sites did not claim to be using the 4R Model components or best practices, the following post-study analysis of the first part data demonstrates empirically a relationship between the practices of the case study site and the roles and practices recommended by the 4R Model. The following section provides evidence supporting a conclusion that the McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership is a viable and effective framework for leading organizational change in a ministry setting.

Post-Study Analysis of RQ1 Data

Case studies help researchers engage in practical, experiential research to study behavior patterns, parallels, trends, and themes. Although subsequent case studies could ideally be repeated under the same or similar conditions with the same or similar results, researchers understand that other variables may impact their outcome or their validity.[137] Even though the case study approach can be more easily disputed than more rigid research methodologies, case studies are opportunities for researchers to have a flexible environment to seek answers to an observed phenomenon. The value of the empirical observations that a researcher can make through personal engagement with the subjects in their environment(s) cannot be denied.

Using NVivo software, I conducted a word frequency analysis on the RQ1 results data to isolate unique words associated with each of McCloskey's 4R Model

[137] The researcher is aware there is a considerable level subjectivity in the implementation of this exercise. Nonetheless, case study methodology allows for a high degree of researcher flexibility in these types of investigations. The overarching objective of this exercise was to develop an educated understanding of the phenomena of organizational change in the local church by engaging the subjects in a less control environment. It was such environment in which the observation of their behaviors, systems, methodologies, and self-declare convictions were observed, recorded, and allocated in order to draw some inferences of their activities based on the results of the study and the foundational information provided in the abundant literature reviewed in this study.

components: Relationships, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results.[138] Using Microsoft Excel, I created representative pictures of the data (similar to the part 1 study graphs) to depict the frequency that words associated with each component (or practices associated with that component) were mentioned in the data.

The following charts and graphs show the results of the content re-analysis of the part 1 study data and are accompanied by a brief explanation of the inferences drawn by the researcher.

Table 2. Word frequency chart: McCloskey's 4R Model

Category	Related Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
Relationships	congregation, people, groups, members, the church, gospel, discipleship, needs, feelings, emotions	352	9.16
Roles	leaders, lead, leadership, teacher, explainer, guide, communicator, informer, pastor, elder, deacon	223	5.66
Responsibilities	engagement, practices, thinking, strategizing, programs, alignment, preaching, leading, coaching	203	5.29
Results	culture, organizational change, organizational cohesiveness, mission, fulfillment	325	8.48

Table 2 depicts the word families selected for each 4R component (NVivo category). These words were assigned to each category based on how close they were in meaning to that 4R component. For example, if a word used in part 1 of the study was

[138] The definitions and associated terminology related to each component of the 4R Model is thoroughly described in the early pages of this chapter. It must be stated that although, there was purposeful intent to search for unique words associated with the each category role in the 4Rs, the researcher had make a decision to allow for a variety of family-like words that could be associated with each role taking into consideration that people in part one of the study were (a) not acquainted with the 4R Model and (b) may describe relationship, roles, responsibilities, and results in a variety of ways without necessarily using those precise words. Nevertheless, they are referring to a descriptor in that 4R component.

most closely associated with the need for establishing relationships, then it was allocated to the Relationships category. The same approach was utilized for the rest of the categories. The researcher acknowledges that there is a level of subjectivity associated with this type of qualitative exercises; however, that is the advantage of using a qualitative case study research methodology.

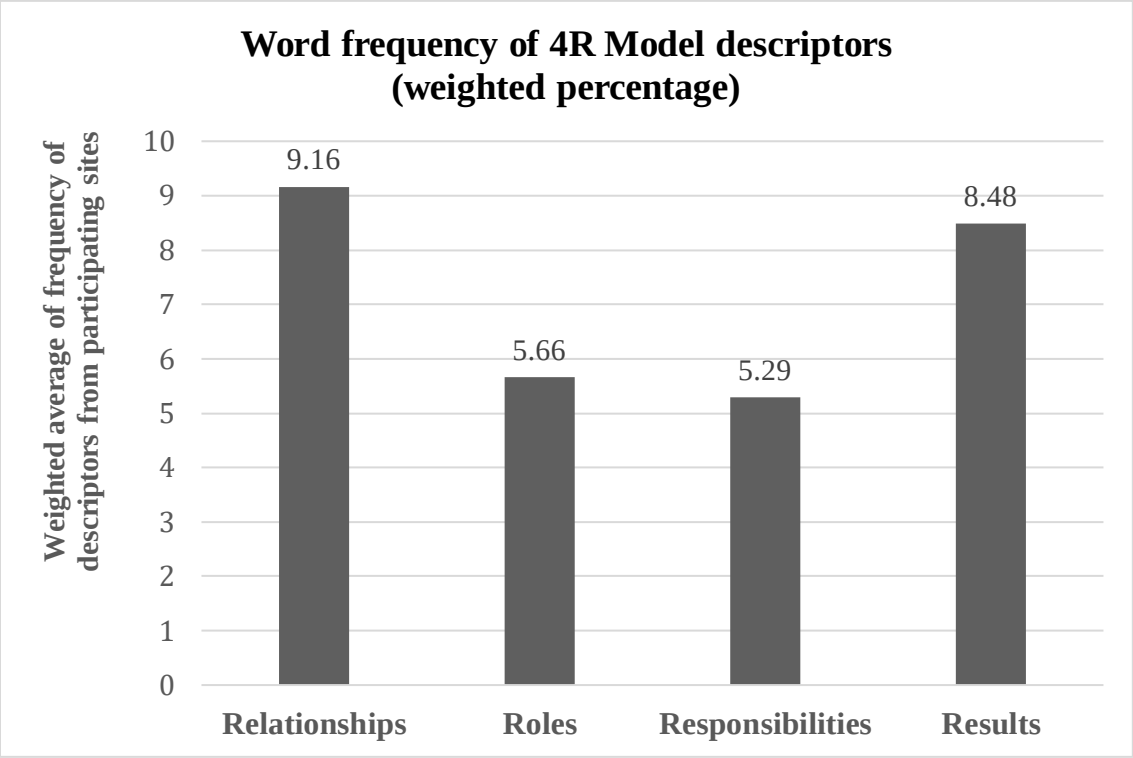

Figure 7. Word frequency of 4R Model descriptors (weighted percentage)

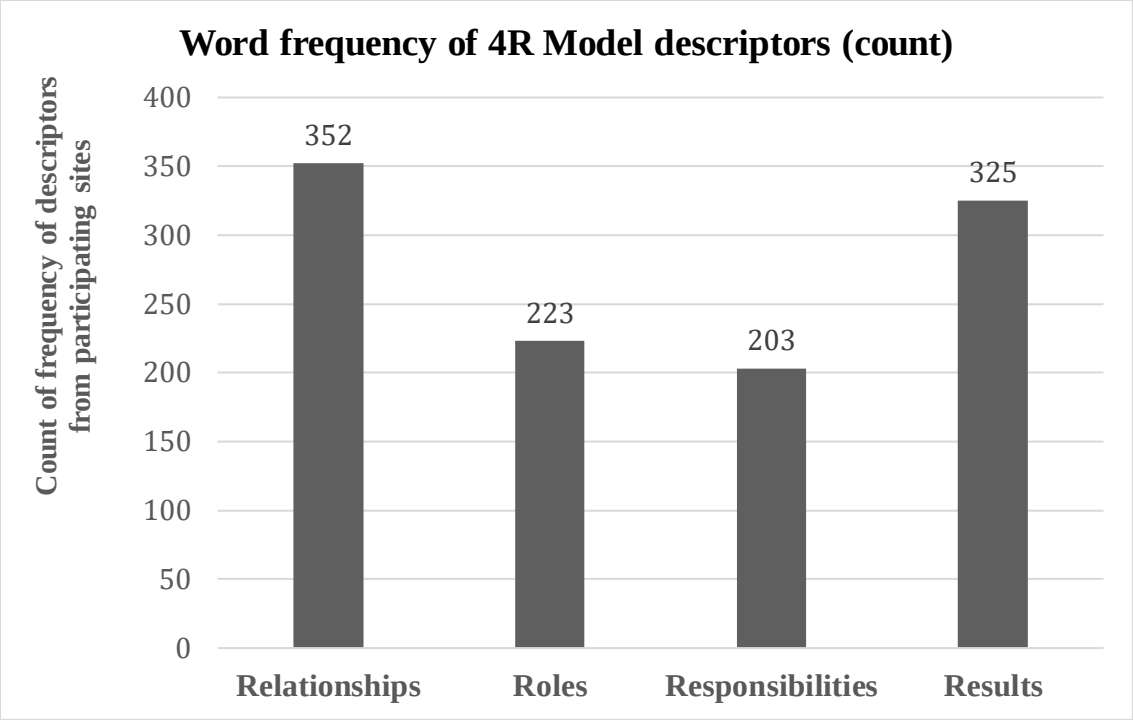

Figure 8. Word frequency of 4R Model descriptors (count)

The table and graphs indicate an embedded presence of the descriptors related to the 4R Model components in the data collected for the RQ1 study results. This presence indicates that the participating sites were using best practices and approaches closely related to the best practices and approaches of the 4R Model. This leads to the conclusion that further study on the relevance and applicability of the 4R Model to the ministry context would increase our understanding of its usefulness as an established and virtue-driven model of leading organizational change.[139]

Conclusions

Leading organizational change is not for the faint of heart. Leaders who have accepted the reality of change and its challenges clearly understand that they must

[139] See chapter 6, "Considerations for Further Research."

develop a growth and adaptive mindset in themselves and infuse, shape, and facilitate the same principles among those they have the privilege to serve.

This chapter provided a detailed review of transformational leadership from a different perspective, namely, McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership. Kotter's 8-Step Model and Herrington et al.'s Transformational Journey Models address leading organizations through change, however, the 4R Model provides a more robust discussion of transformational leadership that I believe could be effectively applied to the local church context. McCloskey's 4R Model is designed to provide a systematic approach to transformational leadership outlined in a functional, simple-to-understand, observable, and evaluative framework for optimal individual and organizational performance.

When considering organizational change, the 4R Model is an excellent tool for navigating the complexities and challenges of leading change. The New Normal requires learning organizations, not "all-knowing" organizations. Learning organizations are development schools that invest in their workforce's individual and collective growth. In the ministry context, the church is a learning environment that invests in the congregation's individual and collective spiritual growth. The 4R Model offers a viable option for developing churches and leaders that are fully engaged in discipleship and evangelism. Churches can not only survive but thrive through organizational change as they are better equipped to minister in a new cultural context.

The local church can benefit through learning from the best practices and other leadership-related content offered by McCloskey's 4R Model. The 4R Model also provides a formidable theoretical framework for transformational and efficient organizational leadership. McCloskey's proposal can be adapted to the challenging cultural landscape in which the local church does its ministry. Finally, it is a proposal infused with moral and virtuous character traits that can easily translate into the practical

theological orientation that Christian leaders in the local church of the New Normal must exemplify.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to present, describe, and recommend best practices and methods for leading organizational change in the local church without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. Additionally, this study attempted to further an understanding of the organizational change process in the local church. To fulfill this study's purpose required answering two research questions. First, "What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?" Second, "Would the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership improve the best practices of the sites participating in this research study?"

Research Conclusions

This research study is atypical in that it took place in two phases. In part 1, a qualitative research study used a case study approach to evaluate three participating sites against two established models for leading organizational change. In part 2, a retrospective research study and analysis of the part 1 data was conducted using an additional "third-way model" for leading organizational change. Therefore, the conclusions will be presented in chronological order.

Conclusions of the RQ1 Study Results

The leadership teams at the participating churches in part 1 of the research study were engaged in various levels of organizational change. Their outward focus on evangelism and their ability to minister to the needs of their congregants had fostered

three successful urban ministries. They understood the importance of balancing traditions and themes cherished by the congregation and ensuring these artifacts do not become idols. All three leadership teams agreed that the organizational change occurring in their churches was motivated by obedience: a desire to be more efficient in spreading the gospel and bringing more people to saving faith in Christ. However, they also understood that cultural changes and other factors place the burden on the local church to adapt and find creative and godly ways to engage the culture.

The research question in the original study sought to identify the representative best practices as exemplified by the participating sites for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy. This question was answered in a two-fold manner. First, the qualitative research compared the church's existing best practices against the best practices identified in two leading models of organizational change. Second, the research identified additional best practices for leading organizational change that were unique to the ministry contexts of the participating sites.

Frameworks for Leading Organizational Change

The literature review in chapter 2 included two frameworks that can be used to conduct empirical research on a site implementing organizational change: John Kotter's 8-Step Model and the Transformational Journey Model proposed by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr. The 8SM comes from a secular perspective, so part of this study (see chapter 4) evaluated its best practices against Scripture and determined what steps/stages the model had in common with the TJM. Herrington, Bonem, and Furr are Christians, and they designed their approach to lead organizational change in a ministry context. The research indicated that the leaders of the participating sites embraced standard best practices as identified in the 8SM and TJM models. The findings in chapter

4 demonstrate the familiarity of the church leaders with several best practices common to many organizations undergoing change. However, the research also indicated that there were additional best practices unique to the ministry contexts of the participating churches.

Three Distinctive Best Practices for Leading Change in the Local Church

Part 1 of the study yielded three distinctive best practices for leading organizational change in the local church. First, organizational change practices, including those focused on cultural engagement, were based on doctrinal and theological principles that informed and guided their actions. Second, each congregation considered preaching an essential best practice for effecting internal and external change, including cultural engagement, as preaching is the articulation of God's absolute truth. Third, each congregation made the best practice of Christian discipleship an integral part of their organizational change process, ensuring that Christian formation and development fostered organizational change one member at a time.

Christians who believe that God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3) know that the right doctrine and spiritual formation transform mindsets, enable Christ-followers to grow in Christlikeness, and motivate believers to make disciples. These three best practices explain a significant part of the leadership's ability to help their members learn to look beyond themselves to meet the needs of those who need Christ.

Conclusions of the RQ2 Study Results

The research into the RQ2 study (or part 2) sought to determine if the application of the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership would improve the best practices of the participating sites.

Chapter 5 explicated Mark McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership, an intuitive and practical framework based on principles of character and virtue that, when combined with the proper level of wisdom, creativity, and dedication, can lead to effective transformational leadership and organizational change.[1] Through Relationships, Roles, Responsibilities, and Results, the 4R Model can provide those in church leadership with a viable framework for shaping and influencing how they lead their congregations.[2] It also provides a number of foundational best practices that help an organization shift from maintaining the status quo to a transformational approach for organizational change.

The 4R Model can be applied in secular contexts but is especially applicable in the ministry context because of its emphasis on virtuous character, moral authority, encouraging and empowering followers, and focus on mission and vision. Part 2 of the research study found that the 4R Model can serve the local church in three practical ways: as a basic framework, a navigational tool, and an organizational development instrument.[3]

A Basic Framework

The 4R Model can serve as a basic framework because it is driven by a virtuous set of principles that focus on character rather than charisma and power-driven agencies. Although the 4R Model recognizes the importance of conceptual and technical skill sets, it focuses on enhancing a leader's effectiveness through character growth and

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[1] Mark W. McCloskey, "A Review of the 4R Model," unpublished course material for LD121 Transformational Leadership (Logos Mobile Education, 2019), unit 6, "Results," seg. 61, paras. 1–4.

[2] Mark W. McCloskey, "A Framework for Understanding Virtue-Based Leadership Practice," unpublished course material for LD121 Introducing Transformational Leadership (Logos Mobile Education, 2019), unit 6, "Results," seg. 62, para. 2.

[3] McCloskey, "A Framework for Understanding Virtue-Based Leadership Practice," unit 6, seg. 62, paras. 2, 6, 9.

development. In the ministry context, the leader's growth and development are built on a foundation of biblical truth and Christ-like character.[4] As local church leaders strive to grow in Christ-like character and invest in others through virtuous actions, they consistently contribute toward the long-term sustainability, welfare, and progress of the local church's organizational life.

A Navigational Tool

As a navigational tool, the 4R Model provides leaders with a means by which they can chart a path for their organization within the context of its reality. It can assist the leadership in identifying and confronting the ever-changing and challenging landscape of opportunities and demands in the New Normal. The leader can anticipate what lies ahead, properly assess the situation, and formulate an adequate response. For the Christian leader, this navigational tool highlights opportunities for ministries and potential challenges to their success. It also allows leaders in the local church to strategize a coherent plan for approaching such opportunities and challenges so that the kingdom of Christ can be advanced.[5]

An Organizational Development Instrument

As an organizational development instrument, the 4R Model provides the right conditions and opportunities for an organization's human capital to grow personally and professionally into the type of leaders needed for the organization to survive and even thrive in the future.[6] Effective leaders produce more leaders, and such is the aim of the

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[4] McCloskey, "A Framework for Understanding Virtue-Based Leadership Practice," unit 6, seg. 62, paras. 1, 2, 3.

[5] McCloskey, "A Framework for Understanding Virtue-Based Leadership Practice," unit 6, seg. 62, paras. 1–4.

[6] McCloskey, "A Framework for Understanding Virtue-Based Leadership Practice," unit 6, seg. 62, para. 1.

4R Model as an organizational development instrument. The model serves as an effective mechanism for transformational leaders to observe, understand, and profit from their own leadership experiences and those of others in the organization.

The 4R Model advocates a constant flow of communication among the members, which facilitates honest feedback and reflective inquiry on the daily leadership interactions within the ranks. In a congregational context, the 4R Model's principles of organizational development can enhance the level and quality of communication and productivity among members. It can also facilitate members' personal and corporative leadership development, which means that the local church will be equipped with ready and effective future leaders that will serve in new areas of ministry.

Recommended Best Practices

As explicated in chapter 5, the 4R Model recommends several best practices for developing the organizational and individual character and fortitude needed to face the challenges of the New Normal. These practices are practical and beneficial for the church that is preparing for organizational change. The following section lists the seven best practices described in chapter 5 and adapts them for application in the local church or ministry context.

Best Practice 1: Moral Persuasion

Like other organizations, the church has positions of authority. The church is distinct in that it belongs to God, and Christ is its head. Unlike an organization in which executives dictate the course based on philosophical orientation and/or market demands, the church ultimately answers to the authority of Scripture and is under the Holy Spirit's guidance. Pastors are called by God to take on leadership roles that help the church move forward from an organizational and spiritual perspective. However, pastors cannot be the sole source for initiating and implementing programs, Bible studies, evangelism efforts,

and more. The pastor and other church leaders must depend on other member-leaders to take responsibility for transforming and growing the organization.

If those who lead with moral authority lead with virtue, then a church member living a biblically virtuous and fruitful life can lead regardless of his position among the laity. He can influence the attitudes and behaviors of others without resorting to manipulation or imposition. He seeks to do and say the right thing because he believes in the morality of his actions.[7] His conduct and character are consistent before the congregation, granting him a level of respect and influence that no title or position of power can afford—that which is freely given by peers and fellow members.

To shift from formal authority to moral authority in the church requires identifying members who can lead with moral authority, coaching and empowering them to lead by character and action. Churches that develop and deploy member-leaders with moral authority are better positioned to engage in organizational change.

Best Practice 2: Collaborative Engagement

The local church is not immune to individualism or a reluctance to collaborate with others in ministry efforts. Shifting from individualism to collaboration means recognizing that other members bring value to the process. According to Justin Irving, healthy collaboration occurs in the presence of humility, a recognition that no one, including the leader, possesses all the answers.[8] Irving says this is a matter of organizational health. Healthy leaders create an environment in which organizations and members can mutually thrive. In a forthcoming work, Irving argues that there is a close

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[7] McCloskey, "A Shift from Formal Authority to Moral Authority: Power to Authority," unit 7, seg. 63, sec. 6, "A New Look at Power and Authority."

[8] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 71. The authors present valuable information about the power of fostering organizational collaboration and the great positive impact it has in member development and the missional success of an organization.

correlation between the personal health of leaders and followers and the overall health of an organization. The latter becomes evident through the cultivation and collaboration of team members working productively, thus leading to higher organizational performance.[9]

Irving maintains that "a self-managed team makes decisions about how to conduct their work, but a self-led team not only decides how they do their work but what work they actually are going to do as a team."[10] Teams that are empowered to collaborate are more effective and successful. Healthy organizations recognize that a prosperous future lies in making the most of their human capital and potential.[11] In the ministry context, church leaders should empower and encourage their members to collaborate, bringing their talents and skills together for kingdom service. This is especially valuable for churches working toward cultural engagement, an effort that requires the investment of many members of the body.

Best Practice 3: Sensemaking

Discerning church leaders approach difficult situations through a clear understanding of the facts, trends, patterns, and other internal and external factors that can potentially affect the local church's present or future sustainability.[12] McCloskey calls this skill a sense-making leadership ability that is complementary to intellectual

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[9] Justin A. Irving, *Healthy Leadership for Thriving Organizations: Creating Contexts Where People Flourish* (Ada, MI: Baker Academic, forthcoming 2023). Professor Irving granted me the privilege to browse through this upcoming work on organizational leadership, and for that I am deeply grateful. In chapters 3 and 4, Irving focuses on the leader's character as the foundation for his personal health and later addresses practices that healthy leaders engage in that lead to creating a healthy and thriving organization. In chapters 5 and 6, Irving draws on the character of a healthy leaders and how they wisely promote collaboration among the ranks, ultimately creating organizational alignment that leads to a thriving culture for both members and the organization itself.

[10] Justin A. Irving, "The Role of a Leader: Part 1," unpublished course material for LD201 Leading Teams and Groups in Ministry (Logos Mobile Education, 2016), unit 6, "Healthy Team Leadership," seg. 70, sec. 2, "A Continuum of Leadership."

[11] Jim Clifton and Jim Harter, *It's the Manager: Moving from Boss to Coach* (New York: Gallup Press, 2019), 7.

[12] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 46.

flexibility. These leaders can transform an organization because they are able to evaluate problems, possibilities, and opportunities amidst obstacles and seek new opportunities for their organizations.[13]

Leaders who can recognize and address problems without becoming stuck in the daily grind of organizational life are at a premium. The church needs visionary leaders who can turn challenges and concerns into opportunities for congregational growth. These leaders provide clarity to the congregation, honestly describing the challenges ahead and guiding the congregation through them. This builds the congregation's trust and confidence in church leadership and provides greater room for members to embrace rather than fear organizational change.

Best Practice 4: Candor

It has been said that one of the most significant crises affecting the world is a lack of leadership and that "the greatest crisis in leadership is a crisis of character."[14] At the heart of this leadership best practice is the virtue of honesty. Albert Mohler argues that Christians in leadership positions must be committed to living in truth and compelled to model personal honesty.[15] Leadership researcher Jim Collins investigated what made good companies become great. His findings became renowned: great companies infuse their entire organizational system with the brutal facts of reality.[16]

Even though church leaders encounter "brutal facts" every day, they are hesitant to embrace them, much less communicate them. This can happen when leaders

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[13] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 210.

[14] Malphurs, *Being Leaders*, 18. The author quotes Howard Hendricks, with whom he conducted a personal interview about the topic of leadership.

[15] R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Conviction to Lead: 25 Principles for Leadership That Matters* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2012), 62.

[16] Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . And Others Don't* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2001), 69.

are enamored with toxic positivity and neglect their duty to confront reality for fear of being the bearer of bad news. They exchange facts for false hope and put off telling the truth to their members for one more day until the inevitable occurs.

Courageous, truth telling leaders will make the tough decisions to abandon programs, redirect focus, or rethink the future. The church's transformational leaders work toward a future that does not yet exist and help motivate the congregation to see and share in the vision. However, their vision must remain grounded in reality—in truth.[17] Especially during organizational change, the truth can be the leader's greatest commodity, helping him to build trust and inspire confidence amongst those he is privileged to lead.

Best Practice 5: Staying Solid
(Adaptive Problem Solving)

The rate and volume of change taking place in society, business, technology, and the world has presented significant challenges to the local church. At the heart of this challenge is a perceived lack of adaptability, which is closely correlated to the effectiveness of organizational leaders.[18]

Adaptive problems are challenges that exceed the talent and skill capacity of an organization's leadership and members. McCloskey warns that the most challenging types of problems that arise are adaptive in nature.[19] These problems are bound to appear

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[17] Clifton and Harter, *It's the Manager*, 239.

[18] The most serious concern with the local church and adaptability has been a fear that in adapting to engage the culture, the church would lose its way and more so its identity. However, what church leaders have found is that the church's failure to adapt has the potential of rendering it irrelevant. The focus of this original research and now its post-study has been the quest to ascertain whether is possible for the church to engage with the culture and conduct meaningful internal organizational change without losing its biblical and theological orthodoxy. The answer is yes. There is a responsive and responsible way in which the church can adapt to fulfill its mandate to evangelize the world. Yes, the rate and volume of change has never as significant as it today, but the church has always found a way to engage the culture in any era while also holding on to its identify.

[19] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 51.

during the life of an organization like the church. They can originate from issues such as low morale, lack of collective agreement regarding vision and direction, or even competing values among members.[20] When church leadership fails to notice a lack of congruence between the church's mission and congregational engagement, trouble is ahead. Church leadership must embrace the discomfort and respond accordingly.

Transformational church leaders can engage an adaptive problem by consistently reminding the congregation of its mission. Serving in their roles as spokespersons, coaches, direction setters, and stewards, leaders can help the congregation focus on the reason the church exists. They can also help to keep fresh the identity and values that make the church unique: it is made up of God's children (John 1:12; 1 John 1:6) who exist to make known salvation through Christ (Acts 4:12) and worship him together in unity.

Resolving adaptive problems requires transformational leaders who provide moral authority and expertise, inspiring the congregation's trust and willingness to step out in faith. The complexity of adaptive problem-solving will challenge a congregation to modify deeply rooted habits, priorities, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.[21] In other words, adaptive problems prompt the congregation to change their organizational culture to survive and thrive.[22]

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[20] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 51.

[21] Heifetz, Linsky, and Grashow, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, 19. The authors speak here of cultural artifacts that organizations hold on to and that many times lead them to created sacred cows that impede adaptation. Although the church is a business organization, it also has a culture and the propensity to create its own idols of programs, initiatives, or customs that can hinder the organizational change process.

[22] McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 51.

Best Practice 6: Generative Learning

In *Learning to Lead: Bringing Out the Best in People*, Fred Smith writes, "I like to have people around me who are excited about learning."[23] He goes on to argue that learning demonstrates an orientation toward growth and that refusing to have a learning disposition leads to a stagnant organization.[24] He could not have stated it any better. Organizations that do not learn are organizations destined to fail. Organizational learning has been recognized by industry leaders as a key indicator for organizational health. Hence, an essential step in conducting effective organization change is to make improvements to enhance collective learning capacity.[25]

A learning congregation does not happen by chance. It takes intentionality and drive on the part of its leadership and willingness to learn on the part of the members. Writing about the rise of the learning organization, Albert Mohler argues that the "organizations of the future will learn fast, learn well, learn together, and learn to keep on learning."[26] Mohler goes on to say that what defines a learning organization fits the mission of the church and captures the essence of Christian leadership.[27]

In *The Living Church*, John Stott alludes to a distinctive characteristic of the first large group of believers that were added to the church after Peter's sermon in Acts 2:41. He writes that a distinctive characteristic of those first believers was that they immediately became a learning church as they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (Act. 2:42).[28] Stott points out that despite the fact these new believers had

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[23] Smith, *Learning to Lead:*, 96.

[24] Smith, *Learning to Lead*, 97.

[25] Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framewor*k, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 244.

[26] Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 69.

[27] Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 69.

[28] John Stott, *The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 23.

received the Holy Spirit, they did not render useless the teaching of their human brethren. Stott continues by saying that these new "Spirit-filled converts were not enjoying a mystical experience which led them to neglect their intellect, despise theology, or stop thinking."[29]

Best Practice 7: Culture Shaping

As leadership capacity increases among members of the local church, the congregation becomes more productive and betters its chances of surviving and thriving in the future. Church leaders must recognize that organizational change will succeed in the long run when leaders and members are aligned with a long-range ministry strategy and plan. Churches must do more than merely survive; they must develop foresight and equip their members to play the long game. Essential to the long game will be fostering the virtues and principles for culture shaping promoted by the 4R Model with Christian emphasis.[30] Believers can relate intimately with the principles of faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, courage, and temperance, as these are elements embedded in the Christian faith. Of course, the main objective of the local church's long game is centered on making as many disciples as possible to enlarge the kingdom of Christ.

Local churches must embrace innovation and creativity to be more effective in engaging the culture. As stewards, church leaders are responsible for paying attention to member and ministry needs. They also demonstrate stewardship by planning for the next generation of church members/disciples and strategizing ways to nourish them to spiritual

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[29] Stott, *The Living Church*, 24.

[30] McCloskey advocates for these virtuous across the organizational spectrum wherever the 4R Model is implemented. Drawing from ancient and biblical wisdom, McCloskey proposes that these virtues are an imperative and must be embedded into the type of character that exemplifies transformational leaders. This researcher supports McCloskey's position and believes that such character in leadership is paramount for Christian believers whether they live their lives in the marketplace or in the local church. For a more detailed overview of McCloskey's argument for the need of these virtues in leadership, see McCloskey, *Learning Leadership in a Changing World*, 62–74.

maturity. Leaders can guide congregations through organizational change while maintaining the unique identity and purpose of the church as the bride of Christ. The future of this precious body compels its leaders to stay on mission.

Research Implications

The church is a living organism made up of people, processes, cultures, customs, and traditions, not unlike most marketplace organizations. Although unique due to its divine mandate and authority, the local church functions in many ways as a business organization with daily transactional events, delivery of services and products, efficiency monitoring, stakeholder expectations, checks and balances, and a plethora of leadership and management decisions.[31] All of these components are impacted by its leadership model and approach.

The findings and conclusions of the two-part research study presented two significant implications. First, the leadership at the three participating local churches exhibited considerable knowledge of the nature of organizational change and the need to implement it through proven and well-established practices. They were well acquainted with the roles that culture, personal views, emotions, and other artifacts play in successfully managing organizational change in the church. The leadership acknowledged that there is usually an overlapping of best practices endorsed by secular theorists that find their way into the church, but as John David Trentham advises, there are ways to evaluate such practices.[32] They agreed that a number of organizational best practices found in the marketplace are inherently neutral when properly evaluated

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[31] Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 344.

[32] John David Trentham, "Reading the Social Sciences Theologically (Part 1): Approaching and Qualifying Models of Human Development," *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 3 (2019): 458–75. See also, John David Trentham, "Reading the Social Sciences Theologically (Part 2): Engaging and Appropriating Models of Human Development," *Christian Education Journal* 16, no. 3 (2019): 476–94.

through the lens of Scripture and used in a non-prescriptive fashion. Material aids inform the change process, but the focus should be on making personal spiritual growth through biblical discipleship. No social science theory should overshadow God's Word and orthodox practice.

Second, though some in leadership at all three sites were acquainted with the framework of the two models, Kotter's 8-Step Model and Herrington, Bonem, and Furr's Transformational Journey Model, none of the leadership teams were familiar with McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership. That said, there was ample evidence that a significant number of best practices and components of the 4R framework were unconsciously implemented in the organizational change process of every congregation.

These implications confirm the importance of this research for the sustained growth and health of the local church and the need for additional research on this topic. The answer to engaging the culture properly is found in striking a precise balance between Scripture and theology, which informs any organizational effort to implement culture change. Traditions and routines are a few among many artifacts affecting congregational culture; however, they can become idols that chain people to the comfort of their environments. Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer point out that "too often the church has become a symbol of gathering for one another rather than scattering for the sake of others."[33] Church leadership that fails to correct this thinking or passively encourages it will eventually address its members "as consumers [rather than citizens of heaven], in a material society of great sophistication but with little sense of purpose."[34]

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[33] Ed Stetzer and Thom S. Rainer, *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations* (Nashville: B&H Books, 2010), 6.

[34] John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 23.

Research Limitations

There are four limitations on how the data and findings in this study should be interpreted. The first is geographic and demographic in nature. The population sample consisted of church leaders in three participating congregations, each having a unique management structure, operational differences, membership size, and staff makeup. These variables may have impacted the findings, as the availability of manpower and skillsets in each site contributed to its ability to establish best practices and/or implement organizational change.

A second limitation concerns the possibility of generalization of the research results. The data was obtained from three sources in different geographic zones of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area. Although the general area is considered an urban setting, there were significant differences in the socio-economic and ethnic makeup of each congregation and its surrounding cultural context. Multiple variables, including social and economic access to services, race, language, and other cultural traits, may have impacted the church's best practices and/or organizational change framework.

A third limitation was that the entire research project used a multi-case study approach. Since case studies occur in a specific time and setting, the findings in this project cannot be generalized to all churches engaged in organizational change or change in an urban ministry context.

A fourth limitation could be common-method bias, which can occur when independent and dependent variables are measured by one or a few researchers. As the originator and author of both parts of the study, I was the only researcher to collect, handle, and analyze the data sources. This could decrease the rate of validity.

Contributions of the Research Study

The findings of this study fill a void in the current literature related to leading organizational change, especially in the context of the local church in an urban setting.

While there is significant research available on the topic of leading organizational change, research efforts focused exclusively on leading change within the structure and nature of the local church are limited. Consequently, some ministry contexts have appropriated secular and/or unorthodox practices to lead organizational change.

This dissertation provides a unique contribution to the existing research by identifying and describing patterns and best practices used by local churches in an urban context to lead their congregations through organizational change. These findings will add to the body of knowledge related to leading change in a ministry context. The findings may be reviewed and used by future Christian church leaders, congregation members, and academic researchers for implementation or further research.

The scope of the study was further narrowed to an in-depth analysis of two aspects of leading organizational change in the local church: (1) identification of clear markers that demonstrated how these model ministries engaged the culture around them to fulfill their mission, and (2) evidence that these model ministries have not forsaken biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Adhering to a framework that promotes and adapts to organizational change without losing biblical and theology orthodoxy is a challenge the local church must successfully meet. While this dissertation does not describe every possible organizational change framework or all conceivable best practices for the local church to engage in organizational change, it does present some unique best practices. It also suggests one particular framework, the 4R Model of Transformational Leadership, through which comprehensive and sustainable organizational change can be implemented in the local church.

Considerations for Further Research

There are several areas in which future research could enhance the present study's findings. First, this study focused primarily on identifying the presence of generally accepted best practices, which led to the discovery of best practices unique to the local church. Further research is needed to compare, contrast, and critique the correlation between secular leadership philosophy versus the unique Christian practices identified in this study. One could, for instance, analyze how the Christian best practice of preaching compares to the best practices of communication, motivation, and influence in secular businesses, non-profits, or educational organizations. Another interesting practice to explore would be how Christian discipleship compares to generally accepted best practices such as employee development and coaching in business, non-profit, or educational entities.

A second option for future research could entail the development of an assessment or other research instrument based exclusively on McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership. Identification and selection of multiple sites in a similar urban context could be conducted through a case study approach to confirm or invalidate this study's inferences that some of the 4R Model's characteristics are already embedded in the local church's best practices.

Third, a researcher could return to the original case study sites, implement the 4R Model's suggested approach described above, and perform a comparative study of the new findings to the findings of this study. The possibilities for further research are intellectually stimulating, formative, and potentially beneficial because they could assist church leaders in developing a more robust understanding of the phenomenon of organizational change to benefit the local church and/or similar institutions.

Conclusion

The church has always wrestled with the appropriate level of association between the established culture of the day and Christians.[35] In an eagerness to engage, some churches so assimilate to the culture that their teaching becomes almost unrecognizable from the world's teaching.[36] Other Christians retreat from the culture and become antagonistic toward engagement, isolating themselves from the reality of the world in which they live.[37] Both extremes are equally unproductive and unbiblical.

This study advocates that engagement with the culture is a scriptural mandate (Matt 28:18–20; 1 Pet 3:15), as the church is to be the salt and light of the world (Matt 5:13–16; Phil 2:15). However, churches must adopt safeguards in their processes for cultural engagement by vetting their approach against Scripture and measuring their initiatives against their organizational mission: the Great Commission.

John Frame asserts that the question should not be whether some products and activities of the culture should be used by the church but rather to what extent they should be used. He writes, "The church is itself part of the culture, and culture is inseparable from the church . . . . The church fools itself if it thinks it can operate apart from cultural influences."[38] Church members have cultural artifacts too: the language they use, the ways they interact with people, their approach to teaching, how they dress, the music used for worship, and even the architecture of their buildings. Leadership practices and

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[35] D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 4. Carson argues that Christians of this age should not fall into the trap of assuming that they are the first generations of believers to think substantially about the appropriate level of engagement that should exist between the church and the culture around it.

[36] John MacArthur, *Reckless Faith: When the Church Loses Its Will to Discern* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 53. MacArthur calls for wise discernment of the part of church leadership and members. He warns against the misconception that the church must win the world's favor in order to bring it to Christ. He argues against the "user-friendly" method in a failed attempt of wining people for Christ.

[37] Richard Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom: Biblical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 54.

[38] John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008), 903.

approaches are also artifacts. When they are too closely held and not adaptable to change, they struggle to make the change necessary to engage with the changing nature of their surrounding communities.

This study has confirmed that at least three models of ministry have implemented a blend of generally accepted best practices as well as best practices unique to their ministry contexts to bring about successful organizational change in their congregations. Further, they have maintained biblical orthodoxy and orthopraxy in pursuit of their mission and vision to spread the gospel and make new disciples. This study has also proposed that further consideration of the 4R Model of Transformation Leadership will significantly benefit the church pursuing organizational change. A church that communicates, believes, behaves, and acts according to the reason for its existence—the transforming of the person from lost to found—will be significantly more successful than the church that does not.[39] To accomplish this requires engaging in purposeful organizational change.

[39] Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (New York: Penguin Group, 2009), 39.

APPENDIX 1

DISCLOSURES OF CASE STUDY

Research Title: Best Practices for Leading Organizational Change in the Local Church: A Multi-Case Study.

Background: The argument of this research study is that visionary leadership in leading organizational change in the ministry arena is essential to efficacy and relevance of the church as it engages the present post-modern culture. The purpose of this study is to review existing models of local church ministries that have been successful in the area of leading organizational change. All three selected and participating sites minister in the urban context. The objective of this study is to create a body of work that describes and advances successful practices and approaches in leading organizational change based on proven and successful models.

The scope of this study will require the researcher to become intimately acquainted with the precedent literature involving leadership in organizational change across the entire spectrum of organizations with particular attention given to the organizational unit known as the local church. Since change affects organizations regardless of their nature, the researcher will have to become an expert on the phenomenon organizational change or change management and learn how it affects primarily individuals and then the organizations in which they function. An in depth understanding of leadership, management, culture and organizational behavior as well as organizational planning will be necessary in order to identify, analyze and evaluate and culminate with a final product of best practices that can be instrumental in helping those in the ministry arena to successfully thrive as they engage the phenomenon of change within their organizations.

Participating Research Sites: Given the assortment of ministry styles, denominational identities and the sizes of congregational bodies in the American evangelical arena, this study will focus on conducting a multiple case study of three widely known evangelical Southern Baptist Churches ministering in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of Texas. These ministries are Lakeland Baptist Church in Lewisville, Sunnyvale First Baptist Church, The Village Church, in Flower Mound, Texas. All three congregations are considered model ministries and they range in size from medium, to large, to mega church status in accordance to their membership. The ministries at these churches have undergone a transformational process of sorts that has helped them thrive in spite of societal change and challenges, while similar ministries that have struggled with organizational change have either disappeared or are only a feeble resemblance of their former selves. Many factors can be attributed to the growth and thriving nature of these

ministries of which first and foremost is sound biblical teaching and doctrine. However, other contributing factors could include the charismatic personalities of their leaders as well as innovative and engaging approaches to ministry but their most successful attribute seems to concentrate on the ability of their leadership to lead and manage organizational change.

Research Question:

What are the representative best practices as exemplified by model church ministries for leading successful organizational change without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy?

Limitations of Generalizations of the Research:

Because the research method for this project will be a case study limited to three evangelical Southern Baptist Convention churches with recorded membership of 500, 1,200 and 10,000 respectively, there will be a gap among churches operating in an urban context of ministry that find themselves with larger or smaller number of members than those in the study. However, the centrality of the research will concentrate specifically on the leadership practices and strategies implemented by the congregations in the case studies and how they have dealt with the phenomenon of organizational change. For the purpose of this study, the ministries that were selected are examples that fit the criteria of "model ministries" that have done exceptionally well dealing with the subject of leading organizational change in the ministry arena.

Case Study Research with Qualitative Approach: This approach is going to rely on the content analysis of text, data, verbal exchanges and visual observations. The reason behind the use of a qualitative case study approach is that it is usually the type of research inquiry that involves an in-depth study of phenomenon within an "actual cultural group in their natural setting." Experts in research identify a natural setting as the place where the issue, problem, or phenomenon occurs. This type of approach is also used by researchers to look in depth at an entire group, more specifically, a group that shares a common culture. Since, case studies are done for the purpose of gaining useful understanding of the particulars habits, customs, and day to day operations, of a certain group; SBC church model ministries functioning in an urban context of ministry, for the purpose of this qualitative case study are considered a "cultural" group.

The researcher plays an essential player to the execution of the research plan.

Research Methodology Scope and Sequence:

A. The first step will required me, as the researcher, to conduct a detailed and exhaustive compilation of literature in the form of books, articles, videos and other archives that relate to the ministries of the targeted ministries in the case study.

B. The second step in the process will be to gain access to key personnel at the target sites that will be provide essential information to the researcher in conducting the study.

C. Access to key personnel will be gained through the proper channels established by targeted ministries in their websites and offices. The key personnel will serve as the researcher's gatekeeper and will introduce the researcher to other key players in order to make the appropriate acquaintances as well as to ensure a smooth transition and access to the sites.

D. Once access has been gained to the sites, I, the researcher will gradually identify the "key informants" who will provide the information and data relevant to the research questions as well as point the researcher(s) in the right direction toward other key people in the ministerial group that can provide further assistance.

E. Multiple sources of data will be considered during the implementation of the plan including, but not limited to, the use of books, articles, commentaries, videos, recordings, personal observations, interviews, active listening, field notes, conversations and organizational charts, etc. Conducting the right type of case study requires a skilled researcher who will not be unsociable but rather professional at all times in order to avoid entanglements. I, the researcher must be aware of the issues, but not become involved in them. As the researcher, I must talk to people but not become too talkative. It is my mission to get people to share information, but not to interject my opinions for the sake of the investigation.

F. The next step is the analysis of the data. This process encompasses three key elements: the description of the data, the analysis of the data and the interpretation of the data. It is imperative for the researcher to do his best in order to provide total objectivity to the evaluation of the information.

G. The last step in this process will be the writing of the research report, which must contain the following parts: an introduction, a review of the precedent literature, an explanation of the research methodology, and analysis of findings, and a conclusion. It is in the conclusion that the answers to the research questions will be confirmed or not. Additionally, the conclusions chapter will contain a summary of the research results, any contributions to the literature base, and recommendations for practice.

APPENDIX 2

FIELD EXPERT LETTER OF ASSISTANCE REQUEST

April 1, 2015

Dear Dr. _____,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area here in Texas. A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a series of field interviews as part of my thesis research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous interaction.

The central thesis of my research focuses on whether it is possible to implement successful organizational change in the local urban church for the purpose of engaging the culture with the gospel of Christ without forsaking biblical Christianity. Additionally, if successful organizational change is possible, as the research seeks to find, what are some of the identifying markers of best practices for leading change in the local urban church without abandoning biblical and theological orthodoxy.

Part of the research instrumentation requires the composition of a set of questions that I will use in carrying out interviews with the leadership and members of three Southern Baptist Churches ministring in the urban setting within the Dallas-Fort Worth area. These local churches seem to have been successful in the implementation of organizational change over the two decades without abandoning the orthodox principles that make them biblically and theologically Christian. I have designed and written ten questions (see attachment) that I am planning to use during the above-mentioned interviews. My humble request is that you assist me in this endeavor by modifying, editing, and offering suggestions for enhancing the strength of the questions as I seek to identify some the trends and markers stated in paragraph two.

I am eternally grateful for your kind response and willingness to assist with this research effort. Your participation will help me assist local congregations in urban settings in

providing valuable insight for church leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

Sincerely,

Juan Carlos Martinez
Doctoral Student
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

APPENDIX 3

FIELD EXPERT CONTRIBUTION

Juan Carlos Martinez **April 1, 2015**
To: Paul H. Chitwood
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Dear Dr. Chitwood,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas. A few weeks ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous at Southern and our phone conversation.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

Paul H. Chitwood **April 6, 2015**
To: Juan C. Martinez
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Juan,

See your attached letter & questions. My thoughts are inserted in blue type. You have done a good job. Hopefully my suggestions will prove helpful.

Blessings,
Paul H. Chitwood, Ph.D.
Executive Director-Treasurer, Kentucky Baptist Convention
email: paul.chitwood@kybaptist.org
blog site: www.paulchitwood.com

Juan Carlos Martinez **April 4, 2015**
To: David L. Allen
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Dear Dr. Allen,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas.

A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous phone conversation.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

David L. Allen **April 13, 2015**
To: Juan C. Martinez
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Juan,

Attached is the list of questions with my suggested thoughts/changes in red.

Blessings!

David

David L. Allen, Ph.D.
Dean | School of Theology

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
2001 West Seminary Drive | Fort Worth, TX 76115
Post Office Box 22140 | Fort Worth, TX 76122
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dallen@swbts.edu | http://www.swbts.edu

Juan Carlos Martinez **April 1, 2015**

To: Lindsey Gunn
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Dear Dr. Gunn,

As you may recall, I am a doctoral student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as well as a public school administrator with the Irving ISD in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area of the State of Texas. A few days ago, I contacted you with the request to assist me with your advice, experience, and expertise in the development of a series of questions for a field interview as part of my dissertation research process. This communication is a follow up to our previous phone and e-mail interaction.

Thank you so much for your prompt consideration and assistance,

In Christ,

Juan Carlos Martinez

Lindsey Gunn **April 5, 2015**
To: Juan C. Martinez
Re: Field Expert Feedback

Juan Carlos,

Attached is a copy of your questionnaire with a few comments. These are not suggestions, but merely considerations. I am sure you have thought through all possibilities. Another thought is the potential value of personal interviews in lieu of questionnaires. I know the value and consistency of written responses but the depth of your questions might benefit from face-to-face interaction. You might even consider personal interviews as follow-up after completion of questionnaires.

Thank you for pursuing this valuable study!

God bless,
Lindsey Gunn, Ph.D.
Senior Associate
The Cambrian Group
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APPENDIX 4

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER

Juan Carlos Martinez
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
104 Briergate Lane Hickory Creek, Texas 75065
972–754–5799
Jmartinez739@students.sbts.edu

PURPOSE OF STUDY

Dear participant you are being asked to take part in this research effort due to your leadership in a Southern Baptist Church in an urban setting context. Part of the research effort requires an interview component dealing with the subject of organizational change and specifically leading organizational change in the context of the local church within an urban setting. Your participation will help assist local congregations in urban settings by providing valuable insight for their leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

The purpose of this research is to investigate whether it is possible to implement successful organizational change in the local urban church for the purpose of engaging the culture with the gospel without forsaking biblical Christianity. Additionally, if leading successful organizational change is possible, as the research seeks to find, what are some of the identifying markers of best practices for leading change in the local urban church without abandoning biblical and theological orthodoxy.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

Greetings and Procedures; Informed Consent Disclosure; Time and Language; Research Tools

RISKS

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Participant's Initials: _____

BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, I hope that the information obtained from this study may help assist local congregations in urban settings by providing valuable insight for their leadership in planning and implementation of strategies for advancing and spreading the gospel.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses to this interview will be used exclusively for the purpose of advancing the researcher's understanding of the phenomena of organizational change. All efforts will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality. Participants' data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents or reveal the names of the study participants to the faculty of SBTS in relationship to the written portion of the research report.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 5

EXPERT-ADVISOR APPROVED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What do you believe is the local church's responsibility, if any, in engaging the culture? Please explain.

2. How does your congregation engage the culture around it while holding on to fundamental Christian doctrine and practice?

3. Has your church's engagement of the culture necessitated internal organizational change? Please explain.

4. How does the church leadership identify the need for organizational change as it relates to cultural engagement?

5. How does the church seek to ensure that organizational change align with the church's mission and objective?

6. From most to least important. What are some of the barriers that your local congregation has had to overcome while engaging in organizational change?

7. What are some of the steps for leading organizational change that you would consider as imperatives in the process? If possible, please list them in sequential order.

8. How helpful do you consider general theories and practices dealing with organizational change in the context of the church? Please explain and provide examples.

9. What are some of the best practices utilized by your congregational leadership in leading organizational change? Please explain how these best practices are compatible with Christian doctrine and practice.

10. How do you define successful organizational change for culture engagement in terms of the church's mission?

APPENDIX 6

CHURCH MISSION STATEMENTS

LAKELAND BAPTIST CHURCH

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19–20

LAKELAND BAPTIST CHURCH EXISTS...
To honor and glorify God by obeying Jesus' command to make disciples of all peoples and nations.

Our strategy for achieving this mission is five-fold:

Make Disciples
In order to make disciples, we seek opportunities to be with people and to use those opportunities to share Christ with them.

Mature Believers
Studying and knowing the Word of God is essential to growing in spiritual maturity. We provide multiple opportunities to study God's Word together through Sunday School, Discipleship Classes, and other Bible study groups.

Magnify God in Worship
Our times of worship are always focused on praising and worshiping God through song, prayer, and preaching.

Maximize Funding
We recognize that God owns everything and requires His people to acknowledge Him and His blessings through the faithful giving of their resources, including the giving of tithes and offerings.

Multiply Ministry
God has given each of us spiritual gifts along with natural talents and abilities. We believe that He also expects us to use those gifts, talents, and abilities in service to Him and to other people. We provide many opportunities through our church for people to invest their lives through serving in ministries, both in the church and in the community.

SUNNYVALE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MISSION/VISION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION

The purpose of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church
is to help people know God personally and make Him known publicly throughout the world.

OUR VISION

Sunnyvale First Baptist Church is a theologically and doctrinally conservative Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, Southern Baptist church.

We are a church with open arms, receiving and welcoming *all* people and families of *any* size. Those who attend will encounter people who are kind and loving. Attendees will hear and participate in joyous praise and worship, and be engaged in a Biblically-based sermon message and presentation of the Gospel.

The members of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church know God personally by participating in weekly corporate worship, through Bible study in Bible Fellowship Groups and other discipleship opportunities, and through the building of relationships by serving one another.

The members of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church are all ministers and make God known publicly by having the capacity and ability to minister to the whole person; to meet physical and material needs [the temporary] and then to meet the more important spiritual needs of the soul [the eternal]. Personal interaction comes from involvement in social and civic community events, local outreach and evangelistic programs and events, and world missions via short-term trips to other states and countries around the world.

OUR BELIEFS

We affirm the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000.
If you would like more information on the Baptist Faith and Message, click here.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of God

All things exist and are being worked according to the triune God's passion, pleasure and plan (*Ephesians 1:11*), which is the demonstration of His own intrinsic glory. God creates, calls, rescues, redeems, saves, restores, restrains and grants all to the end that He might be praised. His desire, which He will surely fulfill, is that the knowledge of His glory would cover the earth as the waters do the sea (*Habakkuk 2:14*). God's mission is the manifestation of His magnificence. His mission is glory.

What is the glory of God? The glory of God is the gravity that keeps those who see and savor it from spinning off into the spacious trivialities of sin. God's desire is that He might be known and enjoyed for His nature and character. He seeks to be recognized as supremely valuable, supremely worthy and supremely splendid. God's glory is sensed when we feel the reality of His presence, goodness and superiority.

Isaiah 48:9–11, Ephesians 1:3–14, Isaiah 43:6–7, Ezekiel 20:14

The Mission of the Church

The mission of the Church universal is to glorify God by making disciples through the gospel of Jesus Christ. God's mission and the mission of His Church are inseparably linked. If God's mission is to be glorified through the redemption and reconciliation of a people, the Church's mission must orient around the glory of God and seek to glorify Him through redemption and reconciliation.

The mission of the Church is highlighted in 2 Corinthians 5. As those who have been reconciled to God through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are now ambassadors of reconciliation to a lost and broken world. We plead, urge, implore, reason, pray, serve, preach, teach and gather to see God glorified through reconciliation.

Mission of the Village Church

At The Village Church, the means by which we pursue the glory of God in the making of disciples is four-fold. Our mission is to bring glory to God by making disciples through gospel-centered worship, gospel-centered community, gospel-centered service and gospel-centered multiplication.

What is a Disciple?

A disciple is a person who has been reconciled into relationship with God through new birth by trust in the gospel and is subsequently growing in a love for God and love for others.

What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the historical narrative of the triune God orchestrating the reconciliation and redemption of a broken creation and fallen creatures, from Satan, sin and its effects to the Father and each other through the life, death, resurrection and future return of the substitutionary Son by the power of the Spirit for God's glory and the Church's joy.

Why Gospel-Centered?

We are gospel-centered because the gospel stands at the center of God's redemptive plan, and in it we see Him most clearly for Who He is and what He has done.

APPENDIX 7

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PARTICIPATING CHURCHES AND INDIVIDUALS

Table A1. Participating sites: Demographic data (2015)

Church Name	Membership[1]	Location[2]
Lakeland Baptist Church	500	Lewisville, Texas
Sunnyvale First Baptist Church	1,500	Sunnyvale, Texas
The Village Church	10,000	Flower Mound, Texas

Table A2. Individual participants: Demographic data (2015)

Name	Campus	Years in Ministry	Leadership Position
Donald Schmidt	LBC	2	Senior Pastor
Glen Blanscet	LBC	20	Executive Pastor
Mitchell Martin	LBC	4	Education Minister
Jesse Payne	LBC	4	Pastor of Students
Adam Dooley	SFBC	15	Senior Pastor
Mickey Henderson	SFBC	30	Spiritual Development Pastor
Wayne Wible	SFBC	30	Membership Development Pastor
Jeremy Fisher	SFBC	5	Pastor of Students
Jered Musgrove	TVC	10	Groups Pastor/Elder
Mike Dsane	TVC	8	Groups Minister
Geoff Ashley	TVC	12	Groups Minister
Rob Daniels	TVC	8	Connections Minister

[1] Thom Rainer, "Largest Churches in the Southern Baptist Convention," accessed July 14, 2015, http://thomrainer.com/2014/07/2014-update-largest-churches-southern-baptist-convention/. SFBC reports over 1,500 members, while TVC reports over 10,000. Lakeland Baptist Church currently reports over 500 active members.

[2] According to the US Census, the combined statistical area (CSA) of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan areas is home to approximately 6.8 million residents, making it the largest concentration of inhabitants in the southern United States. The North Texas area is also the fastest area of population growth in the country; see Eric Aasen, "Dallas-Fort Worth Area Topping the Nation in Population Growth," *The Dallas Morning News*, March 24, 2010.

APPENDIX 8

WORD FREQUENCY CHARTS

Table A3. Word frequency chart: Doctrine and theology-informed practice

Word	Similar Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
theology	divine, theological, theologically, theology	11	4.65
Scripture	bible, biblical, biblically, scripture, scriptures, word	8	3.54
God	divine, God, worship, worships	9	3.32
doctrine	doctrine, doctrines, philosophy	7	3.10
practice	practical, practice, practices, praxis, useful	7	2.88
Christ	Christ, Jesus	5	2.21
faith	congregation, faith, faithful	5	2.21
fundamental	central, essential, fundamental	5	2.21
gospel	gospel	5	2.21
authority	authority, empowered, source, writers	5	1.99

Table A4. Word frequency chart: Discipleship

Word	Similar Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
Christ	Christ, Jesus	10	4.95
congregation	congregation, congregations, faith, faithful	10	4.95
disciples	disciple, disciples	8	3.96
God	God, worship, worships	8	3.47
gospel	gospel	7	3.47
people	people	5	2.48
society	order, society	5	2.48
believers	believers, worship, worships	5	1.98
Christian	Christian, Christians	4	1.98
community	community	4	1.98

Table A5. Word frequency chart: Preaching

Word	Similar Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
preach	Preaching, teaching, proclaiming	7	3.54
mission	commission, mission	6	3.03
communicate	communicate, communicating, communication, convey	6	2.78
people	people	5	2.53
align	align, aligned, aligning, aligns	4	2.02
essential	essential	4	2.02
congregation	congregation	3	1.52
dictate	dictate, order	3	1.52
effectively	effectively, event, issues	3	1.52
gospel	evangelism, gospel	3	1.52

Table A6. Word frequency chart: Adaptability and flexibility

Word	Similar Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
necessitated	necessitated, necessitates, need, needs	7	4.29
people	people	6	3.68
grows	development, grow, growing, grows, growth	6	3.37
ministry	ministry	5	3.07
organization	organization, organizations, organized	5	3.07
groups	group, groups	4	2.45
changes	changes, changing, modify	3	1.84
community	communicate, community	3	1.84
congregation	congregation	3	1.84
excellence	excellence	3	1.84

Table A7. Word frequency chart: Internal culture change

Word	Similar Words	Count	Weighted Percentage
people	people	10	5.41
gospel	evangelism, gospel	6	3.24
congregation	congregation, congregational, congregations	5	2.70
helps	help, helps, serve, support	6	2.70
mission	mission	5	2.70
disciples	disciple, disciples	4	2.16
language	language, word, words	4	2.16
ministry	ministry	4	2.16
need	need, needed, needs, want	4	2.16
programs	program, programs	4	2.16

APPENDIX 9

PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAYS

Lakeland Baptist Church engages in contemporary but gospel rich worship, and its pastor preaches the Word of God expositionally. The leadership of the church is currently engaging in organizational change driven by preaching, teaching, and application. Lakeland Baptist Church engages in urban mission work and gospel outreach. This an example of its youth ministry actively participating in urban outreach in the inner city. The church minister to the needs of families in the community while also taking the opportunity to share the gospel to anyone willing to listen.

The Village Church lives and thrives under the theme of its mission statement, which is constantly communicated to its congregation. The leadership engages church membership, biblical and theological teaching, and gospel-central ministry with passion. The pictographs show the congregation engaging in community prayer, Dr. Russell Moore from the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission of the SBC preaching on contemporary culture engagement, the church announcing its upcoming theological classes, and announcing its group leaders in view of the new fall ministry emphasis.

Sunnyvale First Baptist has undertaken a tremendous organizational change effort under its new leadership. Their intent is to become more increasingly Christ-centered, Discipleship-Centered, and Mission-Centered in its approach to ministry. In its pastor the congregation possesses a tremendously gifted Bible expositor whose personal ministry continues to be blessed. The church understands its new leadership has become more inviting and welcoming of people in its community while holding on the strong and sound biblical and theological convictions of Southern Baptist faith.

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ABSTRACT

BEST PRACTICES IN LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH: A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2023
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This dissertation was designed to identify best practices for leading organizational change in the local church ministering in an urban context. The dissertation also sought to determine whether the leadership in the local church could lead their congregations through successful organizational change and meaningful cultural engagement without forsaking biblical and theological orthodoxy.

The research validates most of the best practices identified in the literature review. However, it also encountered five distinct best practices common to all three participating sites that are unique to their local ministry contexts: (1) allowing doctrine and theology to inform practice, (2) discipleship, (3) preaching, (4) adaptation and flexibility, and (5) internal cultural change through transformational leadership.

Chapter 1 introduces the research problem and the purpose of the research study. Chapter 2 reviews the precedent literature related to organizational change. This chapter emphasizes the church's role as an organizational system and discusses essential information on leadership. It also explores existing models for conducting organizational change, John Kotter's 8-Step Model (8SM) and the Transformational Journey Model (TJM) recommended by Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr, and introduces Mark McCloskey's 4R Model of Transformational Leadership as another model for consideration.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research methodology of the research study while explaining the case studies in detail and the content analysis approach for conducting empirical research. Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the findings, examining each best practice identified by the research study and correlating its implications to the practice of leading organizational change in the local church.

Chapter 5 thoroughly examines McCloskey's 4R Model and details its components and subcomponents. It interacts with the precedent literature in chapter 2 and the findings in chapter 4 to bridge the best practices and leadership traits observed in part 1 of the case study and those of the 4R Model. This chapter also documents a retrospective analysis of the best practices exhibited by the sites participating in part 1 of the study against the 4R Model. Chapter 6 offers concluding thoughts regarding the dissertation's implications and applications for the local church based on its findings and provides possible considerations for future research.

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