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A Discussion Starter on the Possibilities and Implications of Cultural Intelligence for Worship

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

A DISCUSSION STARTER ON THE POSSIBILITIES
AND IMPLICATIONS OF CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE FOR WORSHIP

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

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for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Global Perspectives.

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After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

—Revelation 7:9-10

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GLOSSARY

In this essay, the following terms are used interchangeably, as a standalone, but sometimes together, to paint a picture of the interaction between *Cultural Intelligence* (CQ) and worship.

Assimilation. This suggests that one culture absorbs another.

Biblical Christian. A person who subscribes to the Bible as the only source for developing a relationship with God, but faith activates the relationship.

Corporate Worship. A designated time where members of the church body gather to ascribe glory to God, which may include prayer, teaching, and the singing of songs.

Cross-Cultural. This involves two or more cultures.

Cultural Christian. A person who subscribes to some aspects of Christianity such as doing good deeds but often rejects the biblical requirements.

Cultural Competence. When someone has the attitude, knowledge, or skill to relate to other cultures, but there is no guarantee of adapting to the culture.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ). “The capacity to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures.”¹

Culture. This “is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.”² Culture also refers to a combination of the societal, internal, and external behaviors that influence the church culture.

CQ Worship. The capacity to function effectively across cultural diversity with theology to create a balanced worship experience.

Diversity. This refers to the variety of cultural differences that exist in our society.

¹ Geert and Gert Jan. Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 2005), 327.

² Ibid.

Emotional Intelligence. Means being able to recognize and manage our emotions; as well as others'. It helps to guide our thinking and behavior while helping us manage our emotions.

He, Him, and His. These words are capitalized when referring to God because the lower casing is a sign of disrespect in my culture. This academic research also appeals to a religious readership who understands the cultural sensitivity of capitalizing such pronouns.

Humanism. This is a system that values the human self-worth while rejecting supernaturalism.

Identities. “Consist of people’s answers to the question: Where do I belong?”³

Individual Worship. To ascribe glory to God through private or personal devotion.

Integration. To unite two or more processes from separate environments.

Intercultural. This suggests an involvement of people of different cultures.

Multicultural. Involves many or several cultures.

Multiculturalism. This refers to our acknowledgment and support of several cultural groups within the society.

Nominal Christian. Someone who attends church, but does not identify themselves with religion and/or has not responded to repentance.

Secularism. This is a system that believes in the separation of state (or politics) from religion.

Unchurched. These are individuals who “do not seek Christ’s sanction for everything in their culture, but only for what they find to be the best in it; equally, they tend to disentangle Christ from what they judge to be barbaric or outmoded Jewish notions about God and history.”⁴

Worship Leader and Worship Pastor. The person responsible for the musical direction of the service.

Worship Service, Corporate Worship, Church Service are terms used interchangeably to describe the gathering of the congregation to worship.

³ Geert H. Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 10.

⁴ D.A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2008), 16, Kindle.

ABSTRACT

Globalization influences the development of international interactions among leaders serving in cross-cultural settings and creates challenges for those who are unprepared to lead cross-culturally. For this project, cultural intelligence is the phenomenon investigated as a recommendation for cross-cultural worship. Cultural intelligence (CQ) refers to a person's capability to adapt to the cultural environments they engage. This research examines how CQ may influence the strategic design of a church congregation's worship practices, while honoring their cultural and biblical behaviors.

Leading worship with CQ is of paramount importance if churches desire to engage people inside and outside their congregations effectively. One observation from thriving businesses in multicultural communities is that they implement CQ to equip their teams with the ability to distinguish behaviors that are unfamiliar and blend in with complementary responses. As the ethnographer of this research, I believe some of these business principles are adaptable in equipping church leaders with CQ for their multicultural congregation.

The logic of the argument for this research is to equip readers with "a conceptual framework and practical model to better understand" and lead worship "effectively to various types" of audiences.⁵ Chapter One explores cultural identity and its significance in society. Chapter Two surveys cultural intelligence and its four dimensions: drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. Chapter Three provides a broad overview of worship, its purpose and the diversity found in corporate worship. Chapter Four broadly examines

⁵ Matthew D. Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People Who Hear Our Sermons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 200, Kindle.

biblical worship and its relationship with culture. Chapter Five provides a possible blueprint to create culturally intelligent worship. Without applying these principles, a person's actual self-concept may affect how they engage worship cross-culturally.

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, an informal conversation with my academic advisor, Dr. Glenn Williams, inspired the research of cultural intelligence in worship after he shared the following situation. Dr. Williams said, “Imagine losing your job, your child is suffering from a severe illness, and it became difficult to have faith. Now, imagine attending a church service, and the pastor says, ‘lift your hands and worship. I don’t care what you are going through.’” While this hypothetical situation reflected an emotional state, ministry leaders also show neglect when there is an absence of cultural sensitivity in their church services. Therefore, is it possible for ministry leaders to display skills and theological content, but lack cultural intelligence in their leadership?

This author will be drawing on years of personal experience as a worship (and reflective) practitioner of a multi-racial church with multiple campuses to help support the basis of this research. The objective is to use this lens to identify challenges and recommendations in applying cultural intelligence (CQ) principles for ministry leaders in churches where numerous cultures are represented. Similar to preaching, worshipping “with cultural intelligence requires biblical exegesis and cultural exegesis.”¹ It is impossible to exegete every cultural context, but cultural intelligence influences effective cross-cultural worship. “Every human community has a story which it tells both itself and others concerning its distinct origins and *raison d’être*, and about the sort of place this

¹ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 214.

world in which it exists is.”² In this project, it is a story of how churches could manage the tension of leading worship with cultural intelligence.

According to Sandra Van Opstal, “worship leaders take people where they want to go, help them enter into God’s presence and encounter God in ways that are familiar and comforting.”³ Opstal continued by suggesting that worship leaders take people to a place where they can understand God more deeply.⁴ This depth becomes significant when considering the worship contrast outlined in the Old versus New Testament readings of the Bible. Worship in the Old Testament focuses on a rubric that guides a ritualistic routine. However, the New Testament reveals a transformation to a more relational response where people can choose to honor God. This transformation of worship to God is enhanced with cultural sensitivity and provides comfort among church participants.

Throughout this research, readers will learn how globalization has perpetuated the interest of worship leading in churches. How will the church survive to perpetuate its worship to God? Cultural diversity challenges ministry leaders to develop attractive services for everyone through the reliance on trends. Constance M. Cherry reveals that “the trend is either (1) to use a routine order of service with changes from week to week only in the musical selections and sermon titles. Or (2) to design every service from the ground up by bringing all of their creative forces to bear so that worship can be ‘fresh’

² Trevor Hart, *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1995), 107.

³ Sandra Van Opstal, *The Mission of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2012), 32, Kindle.

⁴ Ibid.

and new each week.”⁵ If Cherry’s observation is correct, either ministry practitioners effectively duplicate and design worship services that produce encouraging results, or they are guilty of failing to offer a balance between culture and theology because they spend more time deliberating over song selections. Effectiveness requires the church to move beyond the song choices and become intentional in connecting people to the totality of the worship experience, which includes cultural trends. “Many leaders still do not know there are simple, practical steps that can result in biblically faithful, corporately authentic, and culturally relevant services of worship.”⁶

Does the absence of cultural intelligence influence how churches lead people in corporate worship? When more than one nationality is represented in a church, it is tempting to suggest a multicultural or global church exists, but nationality is only one aspect of diversity. Intercultural and cross-cultural interactions are also the result of differences in thinking, thus making it possible to have diversity in culture with two people living in the same household. Therefore, the same thinking translates into worship settings to suggest that people may have a different ideology of worship when they choose to worship God. It is also possible for members to become internally focused and segregate themselves socially from opposing cultural backgrounds within their church communities. How do ministry leaders become sensitive to such diversity of worship?

Cultural intelligence is one of the capabilities through which people demonstrate leadership in a cross-cultural context. “CQ or cultural intelligence is the capability to

⁵ Constance M. Cherry, *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 106, Kindle.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

function effectively in a variety of cultural contexts—including national, ethnic, organizational, and generational.”⁷ Therefore, when God designed Christian worship, He designed it to help people foster a relationship with Him. Although ministry leaders carefully design each worship service, God remains the orchestrator of the worship experience and ministry leaders “discover God’s expectations for Christian corporate worship.”⁸ Losing sight of God’s expectations in worship creates space for cultural assumptions. For example, when the congregation lifts their hands as the choir sings a heartfelt song, it is possible to assume that they are worshipping or engaging the service. How do congregations interpret the behaviors of those who sit during the same song or someone who leaves thirty-five minutes into the sermon? Is it possible for leaders to prayerfully and intentionally design a biblical worship program without CQ? Leaders ask introspective questions and evaluate the design of corporate worship to ensure cultural sensitivity because God is not seeking just one kind of people to worship Him; there is a desire for everyone to worship Him.

The Pretense

If the purpose of the Christian gathering is to worship God, then opposition to this purpose is a pretense to the worship event. The pretense in this project refers to those who engage corporate worship out of obligation, as well as worship leaders who are disrespectful of or insensitive to the spiritual needs of others and their ability to enter into

⁷ David A. Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference: Master the One Skill You Can't Do without in Today's Global Economy* (New York: AMACOM, 2011), xiii, Kindle.

⁸ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 117.

worship. It is important to move beyond behavior modification approaches where leaders pretend to be respectful and move toward becoming leaders who genuinely respect and value people from different cultural backgrounds.⁹ Outside of explicitly false doctrines, many church leaders fail to teach their congregations how to honor God with their worship. This practice was a critical warning to the teachers in scriptures found in Matthew 23:15. Many people live a double life by habitually attending worship services to find favor with God, but secretly seeking the approval of people. It is possible for the pretense of worship to cause some individuals to create an emotional event out of church attendance. If church engagement is habitual, it becomes difficult to measure the authenticity of the worship experience and engagement.

The reality of globalization creates a necessity for church leaders to acquire skills and an awareness of the diversity that exists in their communities before designing ways to engage this global society in corporate worship. Scholars such as David Livermore, L. Deng, P. Gibson, Soon Ang, and Linn Van Dyne have successfully researched cultural intelligence in multiple contexts, specifically in the business context. However, none provides substantial work on its relationship with corporate worship in church communities. Therefore, after reading and researching more than three hundred books, this study seeks to determine how a successful framework for managing CQ in the business context can create a more balanced worship practice needed in the global church. To achieve this, I become the ethnographer who evaluates the relationship between cultural intelligence and corporate worship and examines the importance of adapting CQ capabilities.

⁹ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 38.

This dissertation represents the first stage in researching the importance of developing culturally intelligent worship in church communities. Lack of information and deficient CQ can create insensitivity toward the communities that ministry leaders wish to engage. Traditional experiences may cause people to miss the movement of culture or know how to engage it. The possible challenge for ministry leaders is to design worship services according to biblical guidelines while honoring cultural parameters. The global church has an opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and practice to enhance its multicultural interactions.

Ministry Context

Although many churches are located in large, multicultural communities, this does not always translate to a strong church presence within the communities. In fact, there can be a disconnect between the church and its surroundings, contradicting the assumption that churches in multicultural areas have an active presence in their communities. Without intentionality to connect cross-culturally, congregations may segregate themselves socially and fail to leave their comfort zone. This behavior would reveal a lack of cultural intelligence. “As the study of Christology is significant to one’s faith, understanding, and advancement in God’s kingdom, the study of a theology of multiethnic context is critically necessary to a greater understanding of our unity in Jesus Christ.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Stephen Michael Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box: Theology of Music & Worship and Multi-Ethnic Ministry* (Enumclaw, WA: Redemption Press, 2015), 30-31, Kindle.

In worship, the lack of CQ means rejection or redefinition of traditional cultural values that once made a community unique. “Cultures change. People change. Leadership changes. Churches change. Congregations can be challenged by change. Change is constant, and time changes everything.”¹¹ Globalization continues to influence dramatic social change, which can sometimes lead to the occurrence of a ‘cultural divide’. It is important for church leaders to become less internally focused, and balance cross-cultural worship by understanding the beliefs, values, and behaviors that shape their church communities. When a pastor teaches their individual congregation to understand why they gather for worship, it will prevent them from turning each gathering into something scripted. An organization’s definition of culture also shapes how they attain that which is the biblical mandate for worship. Bridging the gap between culture and worship requires churches to respond and adapt to change.

In 2012, Rick McDaniel wrote a fascinating article for the Huffington Post that addressed one possibility of how churches could adapt to change— shift to a contemporary service to bridge cultures in worship. The article highlighted that “many of the new churches that start are contemporary and many traditional churches have added contemporary services.”¹² The increased number of megachurches in the last ten years does suggest that there is a new influence in the church’s cultural landscape. McDaniel continued in his article by suggesting that the generation of boomers and busters were “trying” church and found that the contemporary church met their needs. The need the

¹¹ Ibid., 41.

¹² Rick McDaniel, “The Growing Contemporary Church,” The Huffington Post, September 5, 2012, accessed February 1, 2018, www.huffingtonpost.com/rick-mcdaniel/the-growing-contemporary-church_b_1842885.html.

author referenced was the cultural relevance of the contemporary service because it was “quite enticing to experience worship in a culturally relevant way.”¹³ Relevance in any culture suggests inclusion of behaviors.

Worshiping in diverse cultures creates an immediate need for multiple perspectives within churches. “The growing presence of other religions in the United States creates a particularly challenging situation for American churches and the clergy who lead these churches.”¹⁴ This variance in religion creates tension because clergies can no longer subscribe to a single religious culture. In addition, these leaders must identify their church’s willingness to engage such religious diversity. American society reflects diversification, which creates new challenges to find ways to adapt to and understand the uniqueness of each culture. It is possible for people to spend their moments of worship in utter fascination with the design of a worship service because it is different from their custom. Does this difference mean it is culturally relevant?

Who Should Read This?

This dissertation specifically addresses ministry leaders or readers who want a basic understanding of CQ and its application to worship. While researching this project, several of the scholars listed in this research, like David Livermore, revealed that many leaders tried to solve cultural differences by studying ethnicity. Understanding the role of ethnicity helps an individual become competent in world cultures but does not help them adapt to diverse cultural situations. If leaders are seeking ways to develop the ability to

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Robert Wuthnow, *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2008), 230.

adjust culturally in designing their worship services, CQ gives that capability. While ethnicity is important in our globalized world, the constant interactions in local contexts might be with people who look similar but believe and think differently from us.

CHAPTER 1:
THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE AND IDENTITY

How do people interpret cultural integration? Cultures, communities, and identities have emerged in contemporary academic debates, and have become the focus of current debates on policy and practice.¹ This is because culture helps define situations, attitudes, and values, sometimes even careers, and when it is understood, it helps people discover how they fit. Before a person engages a new culture, it is critical to understand their culture and the culture they may intentionally or unintentionally engage. Since people view the world differently, there is a responsibility to consider the significance of other perspectives, even when they oppose individual preferences.

According to author Richard Lewis, “Americans think America is the biggest and the best, the newest and the richest, and all others are a bit slow, old-fashioned, rather poor and somewhat on the small side. They cannot call the British foreigners, so they call them limeys.”² While Lewis’ statement is a bold assumption and possibly offensive to others, the diversity of the American population helps form the uniqueness of his opinion. With the growing number of immigrants to the United States each year, it is possible to use this diversity to feed the national pride an American may have regarding their country.

¹ Marjorie Mayo, *Cultures, Communities, Identities: Cultural Strategies for Participation and Empowerment* (Houndmills, England: Palgrave, 2000), 1.

² Richard D. Lewis, *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures: A Major New Edition of the Global Guide* (Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey International, 2005), 656, Kindle.

People living in any culture can help others understand what makes them unique. However, cultural identity is complicated, and if someone has never spent time in another culture, he or she are ignorant to its inner workings. Those who have moved between cultures, especially migrating from one country to another, understand the personal challenges in adjusting to a new culture. Similarly, a person serving in the military may relocate several times with their family throughout their career [or service], thereby creating several cultural adjustments. People “can achieve a good understanding of [their] foreign counterparts only if [they] realize that [their] ‘cultural spectacles’ are coloring [their] view of them. What is the route to a better understanding? To begin with, [they] need to examine the [unique] features of [their] own culture.”³ This knowledge does not suggest that foreigners have all the answers; it only recommends the importance of having a cultural integration process that allows cultures to coexist. If Lewis’ claim is accurate, then ‘cultural integration’ has a great deal to do with balance.

There is a unique challenge in how leaders relate to diversity because many people form their perceptions of others before having a conversation, and as the conversation progresses, their opinions continue to change. For instance, in Jamaica, the custom is to avoid looking directly into someone’s eyes during a conversation because it reflects a sign of disrespect. For some Americans, looking someone in the eyes reflects confidence and excellent communication skills so there is assumed respect when someone makes eye contact in a conversation. Being someone of Jamaican descent, it took years to get comfortable staring someone in the eyes during a conversation because of cultural embedding.

³ Ibid., 673.

After relocating from Jamaica to Boston, Massachusetts, many people assumed the habitual practice of looking down during conversations was a lack of self-esteem. Unfortunately, it was a personal disadvantage of trying to balance both the American and Jamaican culture. While these characteristics represent one aspect of the Jamaican culture, and even several cultures within Jamaica, it does not reflect the overall Jamaican culture. Culture is not a part of a person's birth; it is learned through the development of their lives and interactions with those around them.

What is Culture?

The concept of culture has immeasurable significance in the understanding of diversity and begins with the perspective of its relationship to human interaction. Although there is a general assumption that culture has a relationship with history and worship, it is important to identify the cultural matrix in the context of this research. "As almost everyone belongs to a number of different groups and categories at the same time, we unavoidably carry several layers of mental programming within ourselves, corresponding to different levels of culture."⁴ Therefore, cultures do not communicate the same way, whether speaking or listening, yet it is invisible, sometimes intangible, and often separate from our social construct. In Geert Hofstede's book *Software of the Mind*, he argues that "every person carries within him – or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting that were learned throughout the person's lifetime."⁵ A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn believe culture involves "patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting,

⁴ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 523.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 297.

acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in [artefacts]; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas especially their attached values.”⁶

If culture “is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others,” what is the role of a person’s mind?⁷ In this definition, “the ‘mind’ stands for the head, heart, and hands—that is, for thinking, feeling, and acting, with consequences for beliefs, attitudes, and skills.”⁸ If there are consequences for a person’s belief within a culture, it is possible that strangers are unaware that culture is also a social game with unwritten rules that individuals try to learn. There is a television show that airs in the United States called *Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)* that masters the unwritten rules that many cultures develop. In this show, Agent Leroy Jethro Gibbs is the supervisor of his field agents, and at any given moment he would refer to an unwritten rule. Those who work specifically on his team know and respect these unwritten rules. His team stays compliant because they learned his culture through the development of their employment relationship. Those outside the team often ask how they know the rules if they were unwritten. The team would always give the same answer: “you just know.”

Everyone living in his or her culture may consider themselves ‘normal’ so would that imply everyone else is ‘abnormal,’ as though culture is genetically related? Culture

⁶ A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Meridian Books, 1951), 181.

⁷ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 323.

⁸ Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, 10.

has nothing to do with genetics and is separate from human nature. “Culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from an individual’s personality on the other, although exactly where the borders lie between nature and culture, and between culture and personality, is a matter of discussion among social scientists.”⁹ Mankind possesses human nature in common as a representation of “one’s mental software.”¹⁰ History informs us that a person’s cultural identity was believed to be something stable and coherent, which meant that behaviors and thought patterns were similar among members of the same culture. “[Society] must connect with people from other cultures to understand them. To understand people who are different from [other], [individuals] must engage in meaningful communication.”¹¹ Intercultural leaders develop an understanding of how communication works, which includes respecting the communication styles of other cultures.

Culture helps to connect pieces and make them function as one. This implies that “all communication is cultural. People communicate by drawing on learned patterns, rules, and norms.”¹² Reflecting on the example of the television show above, Jethro’s team functioned as one because they learned to communicate using unwritten rules that became accepted as part of a culture. That team understood that in order to become effective, it was important to learn how Jethro communicated by drawing on his pattern of behaviors.

⁹ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 325.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Eileen Wibbeke, *Global Business Leadership* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2009), 2529, Kindle.

¹² Ibid., 2196.

Culture is not biologically inherited, so people do not have cultural instincts at birth, but learn behaviors that are socially acceptable to the culture they are born into. Robert Lewis implied that people “fail to learn the lessons of history – and indeed [they] have seen mistakes repeated over hundreds of years by successive generations. But, in the very long run (and we may be talking in millennia) people will adhere collectively to the set of norms, reactions, and activities which their experience and development have shown to be the most beneficial for them.”¹³ For example, who decided that a man should get on one knee and ask a woman to marry him? Or who decided that dinner and a movie is socially acceptable for going on a date? All these behaviors (and others) have developed to become significant for many relationships cross-culturally. There are many social factors within our cultural sphere. “We live in new worlds of social and cultural organization.”¹⁴ In fact, it is possible that the average person never gave thought into why they would design creative ways to kneel on one knee when asking his girlfriend to marry him.

Traditions have a starting point but are a process that continues to evolve. Culture grows with historical achievements, and individuals try to make provisions for these accomplishments. The historicity of culture and information transmitted through the centuries from generation to generation is referred to as social heritage. “The behavior of the members of any cultural group is dependent, almost entirely, on the history of the people in that society.”¹⁵ Since the historicity of a culture continues to evolve, it is fair to

¹³ Lewis, *When Cultures Collide*, 1911.

¹⁴ Anthony Elliott, *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2014), 571.

¹⁵ Lewis, *When Cultures Collide*, 1911.

suggest that the cultural process is continuous. Many interconnected pieces enable the development of culture, and these values that people hold in a given community connect to customs, traditions, religions, and beliefs. As an alumnus of Liberty University, a Southern Baptist school, I learned some of the uniqueness of their values and traditions. For example, women could obtain seminary degrees from the university, but the school's leadership (in 2008-2010) did not believe in women preaching from their pulpits. Dr. Ergun Caner, former staff and administrator, was consistent in his stance while working at the university. Although they had a gender bias against women leadership roles in the church as a core value, they remained fluid in educating women who may wish to serve in ministries outside the Southern Baptist Churches. While Liberty University is one example, there are many other stories that reflect the non-negotiables of a culture.

For those involved in any military school programs such as the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) in America or the scouting (unit) in some countries, they are taught to have an appreciation for their national flag. People living in a country identify with the social meaning of their flag, which makes it more than a piece of colored cloth. The flag is symbolic of the nation, which connects to the country's history. When watching the Olympics, one will notice the first thing the athletes do after finishing in the top three of an event, is to find their country's flag to use as part of their celebrations. While the event is often individualistic, these athletes understand they stand for something bigger—their country. A learned behavior creates a unique appreciation for any culture.

Hofstede believes that each “person carries within him or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting which were learned throughout their lifetime.”¹⁶ People develop learned behaviors through both conscious and unconscious learning, which form beliefs that are often justified as facts. Eventually, these behaviors become the normalcy of their culture. In the average Jamaican home, the portion of food on a person’s plate was based on the age of the person, so a child never gets the same amount of food as an adult. In contrast, in the average American home it is often difficult to distinguish which plate is the child’s or adult’s because the food portions look similar. The cultural traits of a Jamaican can cause them to prepare the meals and serve each food portion with the same distinctiveness of the Jamaican culture.

Cultural biases exist because of the temptation to seek those who have similar beliefs or values. Avoiding these biases requires intentionality. Engaging those that are the same often allows people to feel full of life. However, while similarities in culture enable unification in one sense, they create division in another by segregating people from the broader culture. Eventually, this creates roadblocks in decision-making and the smaller community within a larger culture cannot get over its own niche.

Consider any of the United States presidential elections. Americans voted based on the values they hold as a group, whether Democrat or Republican. Even with limited information about the presidential candidates, voters base their judgments on the merits of the overall group because of the shared group values. Therefore, even if it makes sense to have an alternative opinion, loyalty to the shared values help guide the decision-making.

¹⁶ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 4.

The consistent process of culture is imperative because there are interconnected parts that enable the effectiveness of cultural diversity. Each culture has behaviors learned over time that become important for people to live out. While there are some actions in people's casual engagement, they rarely see the practices that contribute to those behaviors. It was the ignorance of these behaviors that led to the Trayvon Martin vs. George Zimmerman trial in America. Zimmerman was the neighborhood watch coordinator when he fatally shot 17-year-old Martin for allegedly suspicious behavior. Zimmerman's 911 call indicated that the residents of his community had previous break-ins in their gated community. Martin, on the other hand, was visiting the area, so he was unaware of the precautionary behaviors in the gated community or Zimmerman's role.

No one knows Zimmerman's perception of an intruder within the community culture or how guests were supposed to behave. Martin had been there before, but this time the residents' behaviors had shifted because of the break-ins. Although the dispatcher told Zimmerman not to engage Martin, he felt it was necessary to do so because Martin started running in the rain. Cultural systems (or processes) experience gradual changes, so the casual human engagement does not always reflect the principles (or patterns) that help run that system. Zimmerman believed most people in his gated community thought like him. This embedded pattern led to the visible behavior, which ultimately resulted in the death of a child and a national uproar.

The symbolic nature of culture can be both verbal and nonverbal because humans create the meanings of what they want each symbol to represent. In 1999, there was an event known as Y2K in the United States where many people thought all the computers would crash. On the brink of the Y2K paranoia, a few Japanese mobile operators led by

Shigetaka Kurita introduced the concept of Emoji, which are ideograms and smileys used in electronic messages to show feelings, emotions or other sentimental moods. Emojis were unique to the Japanese culture. Before these images, society adopted the use of an emoticon to express the same sentiments. Even prior to that, the use of Morse code traces back to the 1800s. Throughout history, there is a continuous use of both verbal and nonverbal symbols to communicate in and through culture. Symbols used in culture are not universal in every cultural context. According to Julie R. Thomson of the Huffington Post, finishing a meal in India is “considered a respect for the served food” because food is sacred in India. However, finishing a meal in China tells the host the food was not enough, which suggests the guest is still hungry. “No matter what country or province the food comes from, it is steeped in a particular culture, but it can have religious connections as well (e.g., Peter’s dietary restrictions in Acts 11)” in the Bible.¹⁷ There is a heightened use of symbols to show the difference in cultural communication.

Every country has something that characterizes its country referred to as the national culture. When visiting London, tourists are often encouraged by the residents not to leave without trying their fish and chips. While in Hong Kong, visitors discover a cup of hot tea complements every meal served in the local restaurants. Both scenarios reveal values that most of the population of both countries consider critical to their culture. The remarkable thing about these cultures is that most of the residents are unsure about the reason for their shared behavior because these practices developed unconsciously over the course of their lives. However, these practices become a value when they consciously uphold these in contrast to other countries. While the average American may not drink

¹⁷ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 196.

hot tea throughout the day, someone in Hong Kong would think it unusual not to. When people become aware of their national cultures, the values become stable. Hence, national culture has everything to do with values that reflect a country's tradition as non-negotiable.

Since culture is used in a wide range of disciplines, scholars who investigate organizational culture also define this term differently based on their background. Nonetheless, it is important for this project to introduce an understanding of the role of organizational culture in the relationship between cross-cultural worship and ministry leaders. Hofstede defines organizational culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organization from others.”¹⁸ Schein suggests that organizational culture is “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members of the organization as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.”¹⁹ These definitions are consistent with the reality that organizational culture is inclusive of the values, beliefs, and assumptions that individuals use to guide their behaviors within an organization. If these behaviors are assumed or accepted, then a person's unconscious behavior is a societal culture while their visible and conscious practices are more of an organizational culture.

In people's daily lives, they develop preferences and gain experiences because of the diverse influences, whether through family or geographically—where they live. When

¹⁸ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 5581.

¹⁹ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 12.

these experiences or preferences uniquely shape their values, culture absorbs them and reinforces them. While society shares an interest in national culture and subcultures, each decision shapes an individual's culture based on personal convictions. When Hofstede made his research available in 2000, he revealed that he studied work-related values of IBM employees from 70 countries worldwide to produce four dimensions of national culture. These include power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. Power distance is "the extent to which the less powerful members of [organizations] and institutions (like the family) expect and accept that power is distributed unequally," while uncertainty avoidance is an intolerance for uncertainty or ambiguity.²⁰ Individualism vs Collectivism refers to "the extent to which individuals are integrated into groups."²¹ Masculinity vs Femininity suggests "assertiveness and competitiveness versus modesty and caring."²² These dimensions help in the understanding of an organization's culture and, to a greater extent, help define the cultural identity of the people that engage a given culture. For Christians, "cultural identity is the makeup of the multiethnic rendering that God desires for His church."²³

Defining Cultural Identity

In recent years, cultural awareness has become of utmost importance for humanity because of terrorism, politics, and religious differences that are overwhelming the media

²⁰ Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, 403.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box*, 30.

circuits. According to the Pew Research Center, “there were a record 43.2 million immigrants living in the U.S. in 2015, making up 13.4% of the nation’s population,” which “represents a fourfold increase since 1960, when only 9.7 million immigrants lived in the U.S.”²⁴ Such awareness will help in understanding the challenges of integration. The ‘melting pot’ of cultures means that everyone contributes by sharing his or her culture. “Diversity is a way of describing any group that includes two or more cultures working and/or relating together.”²⁵ Cultural identity is not merely about defining a group or culture. It consists of religion, sexuality, gender, and race. All these factors help to create a person’s identity.

“Culture is not the same as identity. Identities consist of people’s answers to the question: Where do I belong?”²⁶ Living in America, most of my family members worked multiple jobs because they felt having two or more jobs secured financial stability. In an article written by Patrick Gillespie for CNN Money, he revealed that in 2016, 6 million part-time workers were seeking full time jobs, while 2.1 million people worked multiple part-time jobs.²⁷ For three years, I worked both a full- and part-time job while going to school full time because that was the cultural norm for the average immigrant living in Boston in 2004. However, according to Gillespie’s article, that was the norm for 1.6 million Americans in 2004. Part-time workers live with the identity that they have a

²⁴ Gustavo López and Jynnah Radford, “Facts on U.S. Immigrants, 2015,” Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project, May 3, 2017, accessed May 3, 2017, www.pewhispanic.org/2017/05/03/facts-on-u-s-immigrants-current-data.

²⁵ David A. Livermore, *Driven by Difference: How Great Companies Fuel Innovation through Diversity* (New York: AMACOM/American Management Association, 2016), 165, Kindle.

²⁶ Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences*, 10.

²⁷ Patrick Gillespie, “U.S. Problem: I Work Three Part-Time Jobs,” CNN Money, May 17 2016, accessed February 1, 2018, money.cnn.com/2016/05/17/news/economy/job-multiple-part-time/index.html.

greater chance of experiencing poverty than full-time workers or are more likely to become unemployed. After working multiple part-time jobs for many years in fear of losing financial stability, the realization is that while a country's economy has the ability to dictate employment, each individual has a choice in the behavior they model within their culture. Being exposed to a culture does not have to create permanent normalcy.

History is clear about perceived identity. In America, Caucasians and Africans had an owner-slave relationship, in which the perception regarded Africans as uneducated and uncivilized. Nazi troops killed over 6 million Jews because the Germans felt superior. In both cases, racial identities were at the forefront, and these tensions still exist in many communities and countries today. Ignorance of cultural identities limits people to perception. Assuming a person is like everyone else in your culture suggests stereotyping. It is entirely possible that knowing someone's culture does not give reliable information about them.

According to Hofstede, "identity is explicit" because "it can be expressed in words, such as 'a woman,' 'a [bi-cultural] individual,' 'an American citizen.'"²⁸ He believes that the same person could subscribe to any of the mentioned distinct identities; it depends on the cultural setting. "Values are implicit: they belong to the invisible software of our minds."²⁹ It is impossible to speak of people's values without questioning their motives and emotions because values refer to something desirable. Therefore, if someone values something, they hold fast to a belief or behavior that is personally or

²⁸ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 612.

²⁹ Ibid.

socially preferred over another. Lewis suggested that “others are not aware of our values by simply looking at us. They may draw certain conclusions from the way we dress.”³⁰ A person’s appearance only gives a partial representation about them, but when they speak, the details about them become clearer.

J. Banks and C. Banks state, “Behavior is shaped by group norms...the group equips individuals with the behavior patterns they need in order to adapt.”³¹ Therefore, when someone sits in a room with strangers, each has behaviors and characteristics that make them unique, so each person will naturally try to identify themselves with others based on perceived race, social class, or religion. According to Lewis, “All of us have our place on a complicated spectrum of comportment, with dizzying extremes of rudeness and courtesy, violence and gentleness, humility and conceit, and dozens of other behavioral dimensions.”³² The point is that people’s judgment or perception is in the spectrum where they stand rooted. “Identity is conscious and not to be confused with culture, which is usually unconscious.”³³ Culture relates to preferences and how society behaves regarding their choices. Individuals either adapt traditions through daily behaviors or they use socialization to shape their decisions. In defining cultural identity, it is important to not use cross-cultural influences to spread one culture.

³⁰ Lewis, *When Cultures Collide*, 639.

³¹ J.A. Banks and C.A. McGee Banks, eds., *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, 5th ed. (New York: Wiley, 2005), 13.

³² Lewis, *When Cultures Collide*, 11098.

³³ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 8892.

Is the process of cultural integration economically beneficial? The process is not just inevitable, but it is unstoppable because countries create policies based on economic justifications, which control the pace and even the nature of cultural integration. If people can “see [themselves] or [their] culture from the outside and think more objectively as a consequence, [they] will have a good chance of clearing away certain cultural barriers that would have impeded access to others’ thoughts or personalities.”³⁴ Integrating cultures does not mean stereotyping, because it gives points of reference in determining someone’s behavior toward strangers. However, people can learn how to manage stereotypes by appreciating the positive values that they perceive.³⁵

Engaging Culture

“In the last tens of thousands of years, human cultures have diversified in a way similar to groups of species in the natural world, only much faster. Culture has become a vehicle that helps people build civilizations.”³⁶ With such diversity of cultures, there is also the challenge of learning how to engage each other within the context of our lives. Integration and assimilation refer to the outside world and its internalization. Depending on the cultural context, any one of these terms may dominate the moment or environment. Nonetheless, these words help to shape how people engage culture, and they form a cycle of experiential learning. “The world is full of confrontations between

³⁴ Lewis, *When Cultures Collide*, 11109.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 11152.

³⁶ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 7082.

people, groups, and nations who think, feel, and act differently.”³⁷ One of the biggest contributors to these confrontations is immigration. The United States is known for its variance and acceptance of immigrants who come from diverse countries to live and work. These immigrants differ in ethnicity, skills, education, and spirituality. With the acceptance of such a mixed population, do individuals integrate or assimilate these new cultures?

Many migrants and refugees often transition from temporary to permanent residency even when there was a temporary intent. However, the strenuous immigration process can provide insight into how the church has often created unreasonable demands with how it engages culture. As an immigrant, memories remain from the rigorous process of becoming a legal resident of the United States. Before applying for American citizenship, the embassy granted a visiting visa, then a student visa, and eventually permanent residency (green card holder). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, America offered lottery visas to residents living in the country illegally, but they eventually suspended the process for Jamaicans when they felt too many of them were moving there. Living in Jamaica, residents often felt barred from entering America after these changes. “Nobody can develop a country but its own population. Development is in the minds, not in the goods.”³⁸ Some churches have one culture, while others try to manage several simultaneously. This concept is popular among churches that consider themselves to be a mega or multi-site organization. When a person tries to look and feel like the majority, this is categorized as integration or assimilation. Many treat these processes as being

³⁷ Ibid., 292.

³⁸ Ibid., 6841.

similar or even interchangeable. However, there are subtle differences between assimilation and integration, as will be discussed next.

Integration Versus Assimilation

Integration is a process of cross-influences between both the new culture and the existing culture. How will a country integrate its residents into the churches if they only promote absorption? Assimilation is one culture getting absorbed by another. This process is rarely smooth because it suggests that one culture is inferior to another. In March 2016, while watching the *Track & Field Indoor Championships* on television, Ato Boldon, the commentator, stated, “after this commercial break, we’ll close out the event with the four by four hundred meter (4x400m) relays, where it’s the United States versus the world.” He continued by stating that the American team was so superior in those games that they were guaranteed to win, so the ultimate race was for second place.

Such is the reality with many religious institutions, as well, when people classify churches as mega, storefront or small. When my former church started launching new church campuses, one of the congregants asked, “will we absorb some of these small churches?” “There are numerous ways that congregations shape their relationships and activities to care for strangers, migrants and those who are excluded by a dominant culture.”³⁹ Naturally, there was no malicious intent, but this is the thought behind many churches that have multiple campuses. They sometimes believe their ministry is superior, especially if the membership exceeds one thousand members.

³⁹ Mark Branson and Juan F. Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 353, Kindle.

Assimilation sometimes carries a negative tone because the process forces some people to neglect some (if not all) of their culture, to conform to the new ways of another culture. One of the reasons the assimilation process works is because of the desire for acceptance of a larger or superior community, which influences conformity. Imagine if a person had to relocate after several years in one culture and someone told them, “we only assimilate.” It would be devastating because it would mean starting over, which can be difficult and is a constant tension in the church world. If someone feels there is no room to integrate, he or she may satisfy that desire by planting a new church. The argument could be made against such an ill-advised practice, but people believe that rejection forces them to make decisions. These decisions become a part of their shared rules.

Since the events of 9/11 in New York, many countries, including America, became more intentional with how they communicate with people of diverse cultures. Countries became more alert as it pertained to religion, values, and loyalty. However, “language and culture are not so closely linked that sharing a language implies sharing a culture, nor should a difference in language always impose a difference in cultural values.”⁴⁰ When Donald Trump was sworn in as the president of the United States, one of the first things he did in his first 100 days was to restrict people from targeted countries from entering America. He also vowed to build a wall between Mexico and the United States. In both cases, President Trump believed that although people enter America from these countries and eventually improve their English language, their cultural values are different from those born and raised in America.

⁴⁰ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 6332.

While the culture of different countries and nationalities changes as those with different backgrounds come to reside, immigration is not the only change agent. As a society, the inability to define culture has contributed to the cultural rules of engagement. Therefore, one purpose of this chapter is to show an understanding of the cultural principles of integration versus assimilation as it relates to Christian experiences. Our challenge as a church is that integration is often through an absorption process, which suggests a fixed agenda. 1 Corinthians 12:18 records that “our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where [He] wants it” (NLT). If God puts people where He sees fit, it is possible to anticipate engaging the church relationship with the belief that there is room to integrate their culture. However, in a subtle deception, they find themselves slowly shaped (or being shaped) into a culture they were not willing to embrace.

Many new head coaches of American sports teams hire their own assistant coaches regardless of the experience of the current coaches on that team. Conor Orr interviewed NFL Network’s Charley Casserly (among others) and wrote an interesting article on NFL.com. Orr documented an interview with Tony Dungy that when the Pittsburgh Steelers (an American Football team) was seeking a new head coach, “Pittsburgh had two great candidates on staff; everyone said, ‘Hire one of these guys and get on with it’” but the owner felt like exploring other options.⁴¹ In the same article, Casserly stated, “I always tell candidates [coaches] – your staff is going to get you fired”

⁴¹ Conor Orr, “How to Hire an NFL Coach or GM: A View from the Inside,” National Football League, November 30, 2016, accessed February 1, 2018, <http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000748959/article/how-to-hire-an-nfl-coach-or-gm-a-view-from-the-inside>.

and explained that his “experience has been they’re [coaches] all going to come in with a staff.”⁴² One reason for this is that head coaches want assistants who are familiar with their system and can help assimilate their cultural values. They do not intend to integrate anything outside their coaching system or culture. Churches manage the tension of integrating both the diversity of cultures and diversity of people. Individuals who represent diverse cultures (and sometimes countries), help to influence the values of a church organization.

In the international business world, when a company hires someone to speak Spanish, they are intentional in not just hiring someone who speaks Spanish, but a Hispanic who speaks Spanish. This process is called *greenfield start* and is used as one of the five ways of international expansion when a corporation sets up a foreign subsidiary. This process allows the founders of the subsidiary select the best “employees from the host country who fit the corporation’s culture.”⁴³ The companies will never admit to such practices because it will make them guilty of discrimination. However, when traveling to Hong Kong, passengers will notice that all the flight attendants are Asian, as the airline wants to reflect the culture each passenger is about to engage. Companies are intentional in who they hire, so they can attract the people they desire.

As an immigrant, cultural integration seemed like an obvious principle because there were cultural practices I intended to maintain. America has afforded the opportunity to integrate my cultural background in many social environments, but there were challenges when it came to religion. There are hundreds of books geared to the

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 6659.

integration of countries, businesses, and the economy. However, when it came to religion, most books covered the assimilation or accommodation of religious practices. Is it possible that churches do not intend to integrate? Why do people promote a multicultural church if they only intend to assimilate?

As individuals, culture is meant to be shared as a group for permanency or longevity. Family traditions or even holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Independence Day exist because something was shared or owned by a group. This sharing reveals that culture is something adopted, believed, and practiced. The transmissiveness of culture guarantees the passing of culture from one generation to another primarily through language rather than genetics. People pass on culture traits to other people, and these people keep passing it on (from parents to children to grandchildren). Language is more than speaking because it involves helping people understand the history of earlier generations and the importance of the transmittal. Language by itself is not the culture. It is the vehicle of culture because once it is acquired or understood, the possibilities are endless.

“One of the reasons why so many solutions do not work or cannot be implemented is that differences in thinking among partners have been ignored.”⁴⁴ My senior pastor loves the contrast on his leadership team because he believes it creates value. The staff has a balance of millennials and boomers with differences of opinion, sometimes allowing emotions to create tension. Integration will create manageable tensions and emotions but it also produces values that complement the problems. The “ability to hold things in tension is absolutely essential for effective adaptation cross-

⁴⁴ Ibid., 393.

culturally.”⁴⁵ Some of the tensions between integration and assimilation was specifically created for this project in the table below to highlight the common processes.

Table 1 – A Comparison of Common Integration and Assimilation Processes

Integration	Assimilation
Minority cultures are absorbed into majority cultures without losing their identities.	Minority cultures are absorbed into majority cultures by conforming to new cultures while losing their identities.
Minority cultures try to gain access to the same opportunities as larger cultures.	Both majority and minority culture get affected in the process, but both become part of a larger culture.
Minority culture tries to look like the majority culture.	The assumption is that people need to be told what to do before they were ever asked.
Often feel they have failed if the cultural practices are rejected.	They have a feeling of entitlement because they are not bound to reciprocity.
Often fearful when engaging new cultures because they are unsure of the acceptance.	Often falls into isolation because they feel they are different from the world and leave no room for inclusion.
Often feel incompetent because they rely on other cultures to make them adequate or complete.	Sometimes have a feeling of mistrust because they believe others will abuse or manipulate the systems they create.
Often unpredictable because they come hoping to fit into the group.	They often reject surrendering control or tolerance for anything outside their culture.

What Is Your Vision for the Desired Culture?

“Most people think of ‘vision’ as the ability to see the future. But in today’s rapidly changing world, vision is also the ability to [assess current changes and take

⁴⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 174.

advantage of them accurately]. Vision is being alert to opportunities.”⁴⁶ What is your vision for the desired culture? This question probably has a clear answer, but leaders rarely ask themselves this question when engaging new communities (or culture). Rather, they simply *go with the flow* and allow the culture to dictate the ebb and flow. In any cultural exchange, and especially in the church, congregations identify, connect with, and care for newcomers hoping they will return. It would be challenging for them to sit through an entire service feeling disengaged, unwelcomed, or even disheartened based on their expectation of the church.

Before engaging new cultures, a vision is necessary to help guide the decision of whether to assimilate or integrate cultural practices or whether to pursue the target culture. “Our goal should be” for “life change. Specifically, to teach people how to live a life that reflects the values, principles, and truths of the Bible.”⁴⁷ Instead, some leaders make their ministry attractive enough for people to stick, but distasteful when they realize the church system does not accommodate new influences or cultures. Hence, the ministry becomes a church with attractive structures, but lacks retention of people.

Before contributing to any culture, it is important to answer critical questions regarding the creation and maintenance of a healthy church. What is the existing church culture? Are there demographic preferences? Is the church multi-cultural with several layers? Have leaders reviewed their strategies and compared them to social and cultural trends? Do leaders know how a person feels when they engage the church culture? There

⁴⁶ Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message & Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 27, Kindle.

⁴⁷ Andy Stanley and Lane Jones, *Communicating for a Change* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2006), 100.

needs to be an understanding of the society and a culture congregations desire to commit themselves to so they can find a practical vision for that new culture. Then, they can figure out if these strategies will make the church healthy or integrative enough for the community.

While the church might create policies and systems to support their mission, they rarely create a vision for their cultural process. Our engagement as a church is birthed from desires to achieve goals. As a result, our first encounter with someone becomes meaningful, if there is a cultural vision in place. It is imperative to have the right system in place when someone walks through the doors of any church for the first time. How does your church front door look? Is it based on a culture of integration or assimilation? Like several companies in corporate America, they invest financially in evaluating the marketplace because they want to know their customers, so they can find the best products to sell. Leaders study the culture of the people they intend to engage to know if their church culture fits that community and to understand bias tendencies.

Implications of Integration and Assimilation

Until now, this project has been engaging the subtle differences between integration and assimilation. Since both terms involve how people engage culture, it is equally important to share the commonality and practical implications of these connections. “Creating shared rules, even if they are never written down, is a precondition for group survival.”⁴⁸ Intentionality is necessary to allow all cultural elements to coexist for the survival of humanity, in all facets of our daily lives. For this

⁴⁸ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 417.

essay, there is an intentional focus on the general values of the Christian faith, rather than denominational values.

We Share Christ

“We need our hearts and minds aligned with Jesus Christ and his mission to live lives of [worship] sacrifice and service.”⁴⁹ Regardless of cultural and denominational preferences, Christians share the same Christ. It is Christ who binds them as one church with His love. Such unity often looks different because of denominational traditions, but the desire for eternal life in heaven causes an adoption to spiritual unity. In one sense, church polity becomes the accountability process to God if used as a guide to righteousness. Although some individuals try to separate themselves in their cultural engagement, when one Christian behaves out of character, it triggers a negative misrepresentation of the overall church, but the church also reaps the benefits when one acts positively. Hence, culturally, people might be different, but the fact that they share the same Christ makes them vested in each other spiritually.

We Share Our Spiritual Confession

The reality is that even if people behave differently culturally, they share the same gospel confession and are expected to embrace a similar doctrine of the incarnation. In believing the same truth, there is no reason people cannot learn from each other's culture. 1 Thessalonians 1:7; 2:4 and 2 Thessalonians 1:4 reveal that the churches encouraged each other to conform to the same godly living as the apostles. Churches do not have to

⁴⁹ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 50-51.

exercise power when sharing information. Instead, they consider the desire to reach unchurched people by showing a shared spiritual confession.

We Share the Same Confession

It is amazing that in Christianity there is one book (the Bible) that was designed to guide believers to a right standing relationship with God, yet there are so many church problems. Paul shared a great perspective in how Christians could relate to diverse church cultures. His reminder in Galatians 1:9 was that “if anybody is preaching to [us] a gospel other than what [we] accepted, let them be under God’s curse” (NIV). Subscribing to a belief in the Bible, regardless of the cultural barriers, there is an assumption of a universal faith in the same truth about God. It is possible to learn from each other about the biblical principles because “iron sharpens iron.” Christians have the right to challenge each other from diverse cultural backgrounds, to conform to the same biblical patterns of life even in difficult times. According to 2 Thessalonians 1:4, people “proudly tell God’s other churches about [their] endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships [they] are suffering” (NLT). Paul was encouraging other churches by showing them that regardless of their culture, they all pattern the same life as God’s church.

We Share the Great Commission

In Matthew 28:18-19, there is a command (or challenge) to make disciples. There was no cultural stipulation involved. It is amazing that churches can work together to host concerts or conferences, but rarely choose to work together when it comes to evangelism. Are they wanting personal church growth or advancing the kingdom of God? When Paul wanted to support the church in Jerusalem, he relied on other churches to help with this

project. Although individuals share the same commission, they tend to support churches from their organizational affiliation, but it is possible to bridge the gap since the same calling and commission guide them.

The Psychology of Culture

Over the years, a personal resistance in connecting science and religion developed, because of the perceived negativity of scientific research and its attempt to sway the acceptance of God. However, after learning about the word *schema* during my investigation, it became an important part of this cultural discussion. In DiMaggio's writing *Culture and Cognition*, schema refers to an "organized pattern of thought or behavior that organizes categories of information and the relationships among them."⁵⁰

Psychologists who compare individuals from different nationalities or ethnic groups often observe differences between them on the dependent variables that they study. In such cases, they may show that various psychological variables, as well as age, gender, educational level, and more, produce a statistical effect that seems to account for the differences.⁵¹

Our brain uniquely processes information in a framework that represents different aspects of the world. It is possible to assume culture is something people encounter later in their lives, but schema suggests that the brain accesses past experiences to help guide understanding or behavioral patterns. As a child, there is certain information that the brain receives and stores until new data is received through the development of our lives.

⁵⁰ Paul DiMaggio, "Culture and Cognition," *Annual Review of Sociology* 23, no. 1 (August 1997): 263.

⁵¹ Michael Minkov, *Cross-cultural Analysis: The Science and Art of Comparing the World's Modern Societies and their Culture* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013), 10, Kindle.

Here is how schema works: this essay is primarily for a religious readership who may have experience with cultural engagement, so as the writer, I have the option to omit information based on the assumption of what the reader may already know.

Schema allows individuals to accumulate knowledge about themselves by interacting with people who often influence their behaviors. The development of adulthood never ceases because when adults retire, they find themselves in a new situation that needs accommodation or assimilation of new information and experiences. Depending on the social status in Jamaica, some residents may not have access to information on the American culture. After immigrating to America, there was a personal desire for accommodation, integration, and assimilation to feel accepted in this new culture. While that desire for acceptance lingered, the global leadership program at Portland Seminary challenged a new behavior that caused each student to see themselves as part of the solution to the world's cultural insensitivity.

The cultural information and experiences help to support one's cultural identity. Schema is designed to support cultural identity, so if religion is tied to a person's identity, they may reject anything that does not conform to their belief. Foreigners from Caribbean countries are often stereotyped as islanders when they sometimes struggle to conform to many local church settings. However, is it possible that these Caribbean immigrants' brain has not received the information necessary to influence past experiences? "A schema for cultural understanding is more than just a stereotype about the members of a culture. Whereas stereotypes tend to be rigid, a schema is dynamic and subject to revision. Whereas stereotypes tend to simplify and ignore group differences, a schema

can be quite complex.”⁵² It is possible that cognitive science affects how people engage with cultural diversity.

“Without knowing the language, one will miss a lot of the subtleties of a culture and be forced” to be a relative outsider.⁵³ Communication is important when engaging any culture or relationship. The challenge is that some people limit themselves to an understanding of a person’s speech and rarely consider that communication is a form of accommodation. “When people interact they adjust their speech, their vocal patterns, and their gestures, to accommodate to others.”⁵⁴ This accommodation is critical because the individuals who are engaged in the communication process are trying to make a connection with the language and cultural identity. It is through this process of accommodation that leaders decide whether to relinquish their power or adapt to each other’s communicative behaviors to create an interactive social environment. For example, when a church leader speaks of their experiences to inexperienced college interns, the interns often relinquish their power to accommodate the wisdom of that leader. However, when that same leader speaks to other leaders, they may have to adapt to the communicative behavior when those church leaders appear equally experienced. No one is forced to relinquish power, but they decide whether to create an interactive social environment for effective communication.

⁵² Joan R. Rentsch, Iona Mot, and Allison Abbe, *Identifying the Core Content and Structure of a Schema for Cultural Understanding* (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2009).

⁵³ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 6344.

⁵⁴ Lynn H. Turner and Richard West, “Communication Accommodation Theory,” *Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).

Intercultural communication has three phases: awareness, knowledge, and skills. Awareness relates to the recognition that some individuals carry a particular mental software because of their upbringing and that others in different environments carry a different mental software.⁵⁵ Knowledge relates to the idea that if people have to interact with particular other cultures, they have to learn about these cultures.⁵⁶ Even if they never share a person's cultural values, they afford themselves the opportunity to understand where their cultural values differ.

“The missional church framework requires that we deepen our knowledge edge of our contexts, including ethnicities and cultures, so we can become more capable of wise and effective leadership in our churches.”⁵⁷ Regardless of how people choose to apply these phases, “all communication is cultural. People communicate by drawing on learned patterns, rules, and norms.”⁵⁸

Summary

“Every group or category of people carries a set of common mental programs that constitute its culture.”⁵⁹ Regardless of the interaction with people, everyone belongs to a culture that deserves bold engagement. There should be an avoidance of the irresponsible use of the word integration when engaging in multicultural settings. In some cases, leaders want to assimilate, but have not invested enough time in understanding the

⁵⁵ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 6890.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 6901.

⁵⁷ Branson and Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership*, 671-672.

⁵⁸ Wibbeke, *Global Business Leadership*, 2203.

⁵⁹ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 524.

cultural terms that exist. Not all problems are the same, but many of the world problems are solvable through integration. All cultural terms require a comprehensive definition and an agreement on the shared values that each term represents. As previously stated, communication is a two-way process. Majority communities often assume that minority communities have an obligation to lose their values, lifestyle, and cultures, which would suggest assimilation, not integration. Integration is simply a process to connect and develop shared values.

While comparing assimilation and integration, it was revealed that schema also affects how people respond culturally. Factors that influence schema include omission of information considered irrelevant by the participant, a shift in focus if the participant can only remember some of the information, cultural change if the content and style of the story were altered, and rationalization when details of the information are incomprehensible or do not make sense. These behaviors help with the engagement of culture, especially if desire a response or understanding.

The research of culture is necessary for gaining an understanding of cultural terms and figure out how a person's understanding will affect how they engage diversity. People from outside cultures are not always willing to lose their identity and values, even when society demands it, because that could favor social inequality or restricted association. Since diverse denominations exist, the same social challenges may create tension in churches. After personally living and experiencing one church culture for many years, it is often difficult to relocate and start all over. Therefore, some people prefer an established organization like the Assemblies of God, whose strict structure results in a similar culture globally. Are congregations sensitive to those who bring

different attitudes, beliefs, and rituals that influence how people worship? Do these church leaders understand what it means to have cultural intelligence?

CHAPTER 2: A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF CQ

In this chapter, I desire to reflect upon the personal and relational aspects of CQ as a reflective practitioner and Doctor of Ministry Student at Portland Seminary. In addition, there is an intentional reliance on resources from Dr. David Livermore because many of the authors referenced in this project referenced Livermore's books as their primary source for defining the term. Cultural intelligence is a recently developed term and David Livermore is one of the very few leaders who effectively defines the term.

The global leadership studies in the doctoral program at Portland Seminary afford each enrolled student the opportunity to travel to three countries during their three-year journey. The trips allow students to study the culture of the country they are visiting as part of the global learning experience. My first year in the doctoral program, the cohort was scheduled to visit Hong Kong. Our lead mentor Dr. Jason Clark tried his best to prepare each student for this trip by assigning readings to help gain some cultural history and background of the country. Being a staff member of a local multiethnic church, understanding the diversity of cultures is important since the church membership has one hundred different nationalities, but Hong Kong was not one of those nationalities. In fact, there was personal ignorance in understanding the difference between Macau, Beijing and Hong Kong, which influenced visiting websites, blogs, and watching television programs to gain insights from travelers who visited these areas.

Websites, blogs, and television shows were ineffective in preparing me for an immersion into the Hong Kong culture. After watching the food network channel on the plane, it was evident a stimulating trip was ahead when the chef cooked worms and

scorpions to garnish her meal. There were several personal thoughts of how to reject the meals if the residents offered an unfamiliar meal, since it was already difficult to eat from strangers. The television program caused me to become self-conscious and concerned about the meal choices for the next ten days. There was no doubt about safety in the country because of the confidence in the staff of Portland Seminary, but there was significant doubt in the meal choices.

The feeling of anxiety meant that Dr. Clark and the team accomplished their goal of exposing the unconscious internal bias each student sometimes faces when challenged to engage different cultures. David Livermore, in his book *Driven by Difference*, states that “unconscious biases are detrimental to leading effectively in the 21st century” and that “awareness of one’s own culture and the potential biases one may have toward others is the first step toward improving” one’s effectiveness.¹ Disciplining an individual’s subconsciousness is important when attempting to learn another person’s or country’s culture.

On September 27, 2015, the entire cohort embarked on a journey to meet a humanitarian, Jane, and her team, in what some believed to be a secret society.² Upon arriving at the facility, the tour bus left the group at the gate. Not knowing what to expect, things became stranger when the security asked us to sanitize our hands before entering through the secured gate. Jane later gave an acceptable explanation to the group before challenging our cultural intelligence. The team was separated into three groups to get a

¹ Livermore, *Driven by Difference*, 555-568.

² Jane is a fictitious name used to protect the privacy of the humanitarian and her facility.

tour of the facility and have a time of worship with the residents of the rehabilitation program, who spoke primarily Mandarin.

At Jane's facility, it was personally easy to embrace the music, but there was some reservation when the guide offered food prepared by the residents. Immediately, I began looking for nonverbal cues and thinking of polite ways to say, "No thank you." However, I did not speak Mandarin, and the treats were unavoidable since the intent was to learn the culture. It became necessary to adapt to this culture for three more hours, even if it meant ignoring personal biases. This personal experience demonstrated to me that traditional methods of acquiring knowledge about other countries through books, blogs, website, and even television programs does not always prepare people for cultural interactions adequately. CQ relieves the burden of relying on personal cognitive, emotional, and physical reactions to prepare for future cultural interactions.

What is CQ?

Traveling to a different culture, meeting someone from a different culture, or changes to a single culture that happens over time increases the awareness of diversity. "Since the norms for social interaction vary from culture to culture, it is unlikely that cognitive intelligence, EQ, or social intelligence will translate automatically into effective cross-cultural adjustment and interaction."³ People continue to transform as a society, which is evident in their social interactions. These societal changes challenge cultural norms, including cross-cultural conflicts. However, the greatest challenge involves how

³ Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne, *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement, and Applications* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2008), 434-436, Kindle.

individuals respond to these exchanges, because they produce responses that shape human behavior. If there is a poor response to societal changes, this may create new challenges to adopt a new approach in how to think about culture. One of the ways to adjust to cultural changes is through the acceptance of those changes, respect for cultural diversity, and acquiring knowledge of those cultural changes (and society). This research argues that “a separate category of social intelligence reflects a person’s capability to gather, interpret, and act on these radically different cues in order to function effectively across cultural settings.”⁴ The approach that helps navigate cultural changes successfully is CQ.

Cultural intelligence is “the capacity to function effectively across national, ethnic, and organizational cultures.”⁵ It specifically helps people to adapt to new or unfamiliar cultural environments. It is relatively easy for individuals to learn about cultures, but if they have not adopted a framework to understand and adjust to this new cultural environment, then the only thing on display is cultural competence. The story shared earlier about the trip to Hong Kong revealed that CQ was necessary to help the team become flexible in using the understanding of the culture to help reshape our thinking about those we engaged on the trip. While the cohort did not necessarily become skilled in engaging with the culture, as the interaction progressed, their cultural appreciation increased. CQ helped the group identify cultural biases from the American perspective to become aware of how differences between cultures can create an uncomfortable environment.

⁴ P. Christopher Earley and Soon Ang, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions Across Cultures* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2003), 243, Kindle.

⁵ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 3-4.

The temptation for individuals when they engage culture is to “stick with what they know” as if all other cultures are insignificant. In doing this, they fail to adapt to culture. With CQ, the desire is “to adapt to the barrage of cultures around us, while still remaining true to ourselves. We want to let the world change us so that we can be part of changing the world.”⁶ The success of this is activated when the environment allows diversity and culture to coexist.

Multiplicity in culture guarantees conflicting values, but CQ ensures freedom of expression through ongoing interaction, which is an indication that CQ is not automatic. Cultural difference is inevitable. Researchers such as Linn Van Dyne, Soon Ang, and David Livermore identify a “four-dimensional framework rooted in many years of research on intelligence and cross-cultural interaction.”⁷ These dimensions include CQ drive (motivational), CQ knowledge (cognitive), CQ strategy (meta cognitive), and CQ action (behavioral). This framework will help shape the interplay in worship. While emotional intelligence (EQ) helps lead socially and emotionally, CQ helps in adapting to shifting trends in cross-cultural situations. Before engagement in worship CQ, there is an importance in having CQ in worship.⁸

⁶ David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 11.

⁷ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 24-25.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

Understanding the Religious Culture

“CQ reflects a person’s adaptation to new cultural settings and capability to deal effectively with other people with whom the person does not share a common cultural background and understanding.”⁹ Raymond Bakke highlights the potential impact of how the Christian worldview can bring people into conflict or, at the very least, make some individuals feel extremely uncomfortable with the religious worldview of a church they may attend. Bakke references the following regarding preachers: “most of us went to Bible schools or seminaries where we learned to design ministry in our own image, i.e., to sing the songs we appreciate, and to preach sermons we would like to listen to. Unfortunately for us, the challenge now is to retool and design ministry strategies in the image of the unreached who may be very different from us culturally.”¹⁰ According to 1 Corinthians 12:18, God places people in the church as He sees fit, but individuals choose their faith practices based on individual cultural experiences. Therefore, their behaviors and religious assumptions can contradict with God’s desire for them to engage culture. Religious preferences have pressured ministry leaders to market their churches as a product to be consumed.

Faith, regardless of the assumption, helps to define a person’s identity. Therefore, an understanding of these religious tendencies becomes critical in a person’s tolerance. In the United States, religious diversity is acceptable, but some residents fail to understand these diversities. For example, Jehovah’s Witnesses do not recite the Pledge of

⁹ Earley and Ang, *Cultural Intelligence*, 245.

¹⁰ Raymond J. Bakke, “The Challenge of World Urbanization to Mission Thinking and Strategy: Perspectives on Demographic Realities,” *Urban Mission* 4, no. 1 (September 1986): 15.

Allegiance because it violates their beliefs, and they use Isaiah 43:11 to support their faith. They believe that saluting the flag ascribes salvation to man and not God. Ignorance of such practice would cause some to view them as disrespectful. Some Christian organizations object to the drinking of any alcoholic beverage, while others accept drinking alcohol in moderation. CQ is a reliable source in helping people to understand the religious cultures they desire to engage.

Managing Ministry Leaders

Before joining the staff of Christian Life Center, there was one church campus and managing ministry leaders was comfortable because the leadership team was centralized. Three years later, there are four church campuses with multiple languages (English and Spanish), which provides some significant communication challenges. If all the church campuses were English speaking, there would still be a cultural challenge, but with a diverse staff and church campus, the challenge is magnified. “Where there is no leadership, diversity in the preaching of the Word of God, singing, directing the choir, serving on praise teams and in the band, there will be no diversity in the pew.”¹¹

It can be exciting when experiencing a new culture because it presents a potential opportunity to learn. However, it can also be terrifying when the strategies that work for one culture does not work for another, even with having the same leadership structure. This challenge emphasizes the importance of developing mentors who can train others within an organization to help with creating consistency with the values they hope to

¹¹ Newby, *Worship Outside The Music Box*, 76.

keep. “Leaders are needed who can help teams form a local identity while still retaining the values of the organization as a whole.”¹² The reality is that CQ helps ministry leaders find those who are flexible in managing the cultural diversity of their organizations, while leading “with purpose, values, and integrity and who are good stewards of the legacy they inherited from their predecessors.”¹³

Recruiting Volunteers

CQ plays an important role in recruiting volunteers for any organization, especially for non-profit organizations. Volunteers are the ones who will treat a vision as if it is their own without requiring a salary. One of the reasons churches thrive with volunteers is because they often accept positions without force. Volunteers often seek to satisfy personal desires, and the wise leader will continue to make the product attractive to their volunteers. The retention of volunteers is sometimes challenging since their lifespan is unpredictable and uncontrollable. Success is attainable when these individuals are motivated, because “motivation is a force that creates behavior to fulfill a need.”¹⁴ The key to inspiring a person is satisfying the prominent need whenever the leader encounters the volunteer. Volunteers aim to meet personal needs, so when an emotion connects with a need, they will react. Before recruiting volunteers, leaders ask existing team players what led to their retention as a form of self-evaluation on where they are as

¹² Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 16.

¹³ Bill George, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 9.

¹⁴ Sang H. Kim, *1,001 Ways to Motivate Yourself and Others* (Wethersfield, CT: Turtle Press, 1996), 9.

a leader. It is impossible to recruit without the right motivation because people are often attracted to those things that will satisfy their immediate desires.

Adapting Leadership Styles

“When leading across different cultures, we also need cultural intelligence to adapt our leadership style.”¹⁵ The book *Organizational Culture and Leadership* highlights that “many people point out that IBM did much better, in its efforts to revitalize its business in the 1990s, by bringing in an outside marketing executive, Lou Gerstner.”¹⁶ Although IBM is an American multinational technology company, its founder, Tom Watson, was a sales/marketing manager who thought like a salesman. Although it could be assumed that an engineer would be a better fit for executive leader of the company, “the deeper cultural assumptions were always derived more from sales and marketing.”¹⁷ Therefore, although Lou Gerstner was an outsider to the company, he was accepted because his leadership style mirrors the foundational value of the company. “Just as individuals possess varying views and beliefs about preferred styles of leadership, cultures as a whole have varying preferences for certain leadership approaches.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 17.

¹⁶ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 240.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 241.

¹⁸ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 17.

Looking at this scenario, “many of these cultural preferences for leadership style are related to the values embraced by a culture as a whole.”¹⁹ This example indicates that organizations “create cultures through the actions of founders who operate as strong leaders” and “it is important to recognize that even in mature companies one can trace many of their assumptions to the beliefs and values of founders and early leaders.”²⁰

Communicating Respect

All people are affected by their own biases, whether positive or negative, because they have become directed by their internal beliefs and practices. These internal behaviors cause them to interact or exchange ideas in different ways to others due to the inherent assumptions they have learned from the cultures in which they were raised. Cultural biases cause people to ignore the differences of culture in favor of stereotyping the culture.

In intercultural encounters, then, there are several filters that can prevent us from accurately understanding what others are trying to communicate, and that can prevent others from accurately understanding what we are trying to communicate: our tendency to interpret and evaluate behavior before we understand it, and our willingness to stereotype groups of people, which prevents us from interpreting behavior accurately.²¹

When visiting London from the United States, visitors will notice that the typical hotel room could fit inside the average American bedroom. This could prematurely lead to the assumption that not just London, but all of Europe, had smaller rooms. This is the

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 242.

²¹ Gert Jan Hofstede, Paul B. Pedersen, and Geert Hofstede, *Exploring Culture: Exercises, Stories and Synthetic Cultures* (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 2002), 19-20, Kindle.

result of having limited exposure and cultural biases that ultimately lead to a set of assumptions. While engaging new cultures can be frustrating, it is important to look, listen, and try to “increase the range of our perception, to observe and suspend our interpretation (what we think) and evaluation (what we feel), and to ask for clarification when in doubt.”²²

Why should people care about communicating respect? Maybe “a competitive advantage, increased profits, and global expansion are central to why many of us are interested in cultural intelligence; however, most of us would readily agree we’re also interested in behaving in a more respectful, humanizing manner to the people we meet throughout our work.”²³ CQ helps people navigate through their biases to avoid treating others in ways that are disrespectful. Every culture is unique, so there is a constant challenge to convince people that opposing cultures have similar standards. The inherent tendencies often allow societies to create defensive mechanisms in preparation for cultural opposition before the first attempt to engage culture. If the experience does not impress them, their perception remains.

When communicating with cultures respectfully, leaders use filters to help them acquire an understanding of different cultural views. This filter helps them to be aware of personal biases and of their tendencies to devalue other cultures by failing to appreciate the differences. Globalization plays a significant role in affording the opportunity to engage diverse cultures. However, each person has the responsibility to ensure appreciation of the contrast by respecting the differences encountered. Respect is not

²² Ibid., 20.

²³ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 17-18.

about accepting the differences, but displaying a desire to esteem each culture as equally worthy. Differences in culture do not reveal any inferiority; they show that people are willing to embrace the things that make them unique in society.

CQ Drive

“CQ drive, the motivational dimension of CQ, is the leader’s level of interest, drive, and energy to adapt cross-culturally.”²⁴ One of the challenges for ministry leaders in some churches where there is tremendous diversity is that they assume people have a desire to make cultural adjustments. However, one of the reasons to accommodate mixture in churches is because of the biblical principles outlined in the bible. Preaching or worshipping “with cultural intelligence prods us to become more voracious learners about the cultures of our particular people and especially those who sit idly on the margins. To love Others means that we will care for them by interacting with them and getting to know them personally, even when it is difficult.”²⁵ Luke 10:25-37 in the Bible, tells a unique story of how a Samaritan demonstrated love to a person that was marginalized by the majority. Think about the popular phrases: ‘*What Would Jesus Do?*’ or ‘*Extra Grace Required*’. These phrases speak to the reality that there is an alternative driven by preferences. Many traditional worship services have shifted to a two-service model to provide options to connect people to a preferred service, but this disconnects them from others in the church who attend a different service. This is where *CQ Worship* thrives, in that it brings balance to worship practices. Everyone in a worship environment

²⁴ Ibid., 25.

²⁵ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 12.

deserves an opportunity to feel like their culture is valued and that there is room for their cultural expression without having to create a new space to segregate a cultural expression.

In 2016, the annual Oscar nominations for screenplays drew huge criticism for its lack of diversity for the 305 eligible films. Many actors across social media believed that the nominations reflected institutional bias against minorities because a film such as *Creed* was written, directed and starred by an African American but the only nomination was a Caucasian. Some groups of people apply tokenism to accommodate diversity in their church. However, there are two cultural realities people often face: either their communities reject the idea of diversity, or they design culture to fit their preferences. “We live in a culture in which people want a customized tour that takes them only where they feel like going.”²⁶ The freedom of choice enables this customization.

The following table was influenced by Earley and Mosakowski.²⁷ It provides an opportunity for those who take the assessment to measure their CQ Drive. The higher the overall score, the higher the CQ Drive.

Table 2 – CQ Drive Assessment

Equation: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

I can confidently interact with people from different cultures.

I can confidently befriend people whose cultural backgrounds are different than mine.

²⁶ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 62.

²⁷ P. Christopher Earley and Elaine Mosakowski, “Cultural Intelligence,” *Harvard Business Review*, October 2004, accessed April 20, 2016, hbr.org/2004/10/cultural-intelligence.

I can quickly adapt to unfamiliar cultures without judgment.

I can confidently manage stressful situations in unfamiliar cultures.

Add the score from each column and divide it by four. Total _____/4 = _____ CQ Drive

Motivational Drive

The motivational drive triggers the big idea of CQ because it influences a desired level of energy and focus needed by worship leaders to effectively engage churches that are culturally diverse. David Smith explains that since a person's default tendency is to stereotype people from contrasting cultures, they create mental categories. He believes we categorize "[young men, middle-aged women, blondes, sporty types, immigrants, academics, rednecks, foreigners, and so on] to help us keep our world straight without mental overload- and to protect our comfortable ways of organizing our world."²⁸ An acceptance of this theory would explain the discomfort when choosing to engage or make immediate decisions in new cultures. If leaders lack the motivation to engage new worship cultures, it will also affect their effectiveness in ministry contexts.

Verbal and Nonverbal Cues

"One of the more subtle uses of space is our use of gestures, body position, and other physical cues to communicate our sense of what is going on in a given situation and

²⁸ David I. Smith, *Learning from the Stranger: Christian Faith and Cultural Diversity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 19.

how we relate to the other people in it.”²⁹ This form of communication has taught some individuals to communicate on autopilot, through these unspoken messages.

Unfortunately, the receiver of these verbal and nonverbal cues form their own cultural interpretation of the messages, which may contradict the intended meaning, provides three ways to

cross the nonverbal communication barrier (1) do not assume you understand any nonverbal signals or behavior unless you are familiar with the culture, (2) don't take a stranger's nonverbal behavior personally, even if it is insulting in your culture, and (3) develop an awareness of your own nonverbal communication patterns that might be insulting in certain cultures.³⁰

In addition to these cues, there are three behaviors that help in understanding the CQ drive: intrinsic, extrinsic and self-efficacy.

Intrinsic Behavior

Intrinsic motivation regarding CQ is “the extent to which you demonstrate a natural interest and enjoyment in multicultural experiences.”³¹ The reason people have these interest is because it is naturally satisfying. In other words, there is an internal behavior that is in play when engaging or deciding to engage culture. “People in occupations demanding more education tend to score intrinsic elements as more important, while people in lower-status, lower-education occupations prefer extrinsic elements.”³² When an individual creates a five-year plan, intrinsic motivation is activated

²⁹ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 167.

³⁰ Hofstede and Pedersen, *Exploring Culture*, 18.

³¹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 46.

³² Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 1858.

at the various milestones to measure the progress of the plan. While there is an intrinsic motivation behind the plan, there is an external reward for completing it. Knowing that others can celebrate the accomplishment of a goal can also increase a person's intrinsic motivation.

Many people have been guilty of only connecting with the things that interest them. For example, when someone invites a friend to an unfamiliar restaurant, one of the first questions asked is, "what's on the menu?" The question is often asked to predetermine the behavior or at least control the cognitive curiosity of the food on the menu. If they do not have something that interests them on the menu, they can prepare a backup plan. Unfortunately, this behavior is practiced with an invitation to a party. If the food does not meet expectations, a guest might leave early to eat elsewhere as part of their predetermined behavior or subconscious behavior. This behavior is never a good practice, because these actions create unintended offense when the host notices an empty plate or the "I am not hungry but will take a drink" excuse.

Extrinsic Behavior

Extrinsic behavior regarding CQ is "the extent to which you see tangible benefits from multicultural interactions and experiences."³³ These practices allow the visualization of real benefits in the cultural experiences. It is possible to become sick after eating unfamiliar food, but that could happen anywhere. Focusing on the potential failures of engaging different cultures affects if and how people engage it. Imagine spending two weeks in Africa thinking about a hypothetical sickness. That would prevent

³³ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 46.

developing relationships, because social events involve food and it would most certainly minimize impact as a global leader.

Regardless of how people desire to engage culture, it takes planning and work because they are challenged to temporarily replace their norms. Therefore, leaders measure the tangibles by creating a checklist of cultural engagement. The Association of Religion Data Archives documents that “the general pattern for multiracial congregations is to attempt to assimilate members of other racial groups into a congregational way of life established by the dominant racial group.”³⁴

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy in CQ is “your level of confidence in doing cross-cultural work effectively.”³⁵ Planning is great, but it is difficult to assume how a person will behave in a new cultural setting. Tourists who travel to different countries but bring extra money to maintain their cultural comfort and remain in control of the situation, do not exhibit self-efficacy. Employees do not always leave their job because they do not like working as sometimes they do not like the demands of having to work that job. Self-efficacy requires that individuals have some level of flexibility, which requires a willingness to release some control or the need to always be in control. Dictating every movement in culture does not allow people the opportunity to adapt organically, because culture can be highly

³⁴ David Briggs, “Racial Power vs. Divine Glory: Why Desegregation Remains an Elusive Goal for U.S. Congregations,” ARDA, February 28, 2014, <http://blogs.thearda.com/trend/featured/racial-power-vs-divine-glory-why-desegregation-remains-an-elusive-goal-for-u-s-congregations>.

³⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 46.

unpredictable. Controlling the variables is not the purpose of cultural engagement; rather, leaders try to control how they will engage the culture when the unforeseen takes place. Travel enhances CQ drive because people cannot predict every experience of each event and therefore must learn to adapt.

CQ Knowledge

“The observation that people of different cultures think, act and react differently is nothing new. Anyone who travels or knows someone from abroad has observed this phenomenon.”³⁶ Knowing someone who lives in another country or culture does not always increase a person’s CQ Knowledge. This table was influenced by Earley and Mosakowski and personally designed as an assessment for readers to score themselves on their level of CQ knowledge.³⁷ The higher the score for each statement, the higher the CQ knowledge.

Table 3 – CQ Knowledge Assessment

Equation: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

Before interacting with people from new cultures, I ask myself what I hope to achieve.

If I experience something unexpected in a new culture, I use this knowledge to find new ways to approach other cultures.

I pre-plan my interactions with people I might meet from unfamiliar cultures.

³⁶ Sarah Lanier, *Foreign to Familiar; A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold- Climate Cultures* (Hagerstown, MD: McDougal Publishing, 2000), 160-162. Kindle.

³⁷ Earley and Mosakowski, “Cultural Intelligence,” Harvard Business Review.

I immediately know when things are going well or going wrong in new cross-cultural settings.

Add the score from each column and divide it by four. Total ___/4 = ___ CQ Knowledge

“CQ knowledge, the cognitive dimension of the CQ research, refers to the leader’s knowledge about culture and its role in shaping how business is done.”³⁸ It is “the extent to which you understand the role of culture in how people think and behave and your level of familiarity with how cultures are similar and different.”³⁹ People study each culture before engaging it because cultural values exist among the residents of that culture they desire to engage. Both the National Basketball Association (NBA) and National Football League (NFL) in America understand the importance of increasing one’s CQ knowledge. Each year, both leagues have teams play each other overseas in an attempt to bridge the cultural gap and increase fans around the globe. When Yao Ming from China played basketball for the Houston Rockets in America, millions of Chinese people became interested in the NBA.

In preparation to engage new cultures, individuals study the culture by learning human behavior, attending cultural events if possible, visiting the local stores, eating the food, and observing the art. Arriving early in London provided the much-needed opportunity to explore the city. Fortunately, my cousin lives in London, so it was a great opportunity to experience the country from a resident’s perspectives. We also searched a mobile app and found an excellent all-you-can-eat buffet.

³⁸ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 26.

³⁹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 69.

Gaining information may come from those living in the culture, or researching online for things that spark interest. After enrolling in this doctoral program, the experiences on the overseas trips influenced the desire to continue studying global leadership after the completion of these studies. While information is available through cultural fads, I have kept my due diligence by reading, researching, and asking questions. It is impossible to differentiate facts and fictions of every culture, but society has a responsibility to become motivated in knowing about world cultures.

Interpersonal Dimension

The interpersonal dimension of CQ knowledge is “the extent to which you know about how cultures differ in their values, norms for social etiquette, and religious perspectives.”⁴⁰ One of the most creative ways to learn about cultures is by watching movies because “almost any novel, memoir, or movie is filled with cultural dynamics because culture is everywhere.”⁴¹ The storyline does not have to be factual for the film to be accepted as cultural experiences because the characters interacting with each other is enough to show how culture influences behavior. “CQ knowledge is the dimension most often emphasized in many approaches to intercultural competency” but “has to be combined with the other three dimensions of CQ or its relevance to the real demands of leadership is questionable and potentially detrimental.”⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 86.

⁴² Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 27.

The desire to increase CQ knowledge also enables people to learn cultural values and even compare the behaviors of a different culture. However, “we shouldn’t carelessly stereotype an entire culture with these values because there will be individuals and subcultures within a larger culture that are exceptions to these norms.”⁴³ Therefore, “formulating opinions and perpetuating stereotypes about all Muslims [as being terrorists and extremists] and people of other religions based on what we hear on the news has undercut truly understanding the actual religion of Islam and other faiths.”⁴⁴ Cultural values have the ability to shape the thoughts and behaviors of the people we engage or the organizations in our society. It is important to understand whether the culture engaged is oriented towards individualism or collectivism. Individualism is “the extent to which personal identity is defined” regarding “individual or group characteristics.”⁴⁵

Regardless of the country or culture individuals engage, it is important to understand and respect the values, which makes CQ knowledge even more important for cross-cultural settings. Table 4 shows some important words to help with CQ knowledge

Table 4 - CQ Knowledge Words

Words	Definition
Being	These cultures “prioritize relationships and social networks and live for the moment.” ⁴⁶

⁴³ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 88.

⁴⁴ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 187.

⁴⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 89.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Collectivism	There is a priority on personal relationships or group outcome, rather than individual achievements. For example, the “Umbrella Revolution” in China.
Competitiveness	These cultures are competitive, aggressive, and assertive in their structure.
Context	Communication is direct and stresses roles and understanding. Low context values direct communication, but high context values an implicit understanding with indirect communication.
Cooperativeness	These cultures value collaboration and a more nurturing approach.
Doing	These cultures are task-focused and outcome-oriented.
Individualism	Emphasize rights and responsibilities of the individual.
Power Distance	Differences in power and status are expected and accepted but low power-distance cultures prefer flat organizational charts, while high power-distance cultures believe “titles and clear authority lines are important indicators of how to relate and behave.” ⁴⁷
Time Orientation	There is an apparent motivation to anticipate success.
Uncertainty Avoidance	Careful planning and guidelines influence risk reduction or avoidance. Therefore, countries like Japan seek ways to avoid uncertainty or risks others like Hong Kong have a high tolerance for risk.

“None of us are merely objective observers of culture. We’re all products of culture, and we all play a part in advancing and morphing the cultures of which we’re

⁴⁷ Ibid.

part.”⁴⁸ CQ knowledge helps people to appreciate other cultural values, but it also helps them to explore their own identity. Cultural identity was covered in the opening chapters, but it is important to reemphasize the concept since culture is mostly subconscious, it is harder to understand. If leaders fail to spend time exploring their own cultural identity, they will also fail to respect and appreciate unfamiliar cultures.

Socio-Linguistic Dimension

Socio-linguistics refers to “your understanding of different languages and your knowledge of various rules for how language gets expressed verbally and nonverbally in various cultures.”⁴⁹ When visiting an unfamiliar environment, the first thing is to search for similarities or nonverbal clues. This practice increases when the language is different because there is no way to understand without nonverbal cues. When there is a diverse perspective on culture, it helps develop CQ knowledge, especially if the diversity conflicts with cultural norms. Having mentors is beneficial in various areas of a person’s life, including when developing CQ knowledge because they “use questions to guide us and offer support and feedback.”⁵⁰ It is equally important to honor the recommendations of trusted mentors.

“The biggest barrier Christians face in developing communities hospitable to people of every ethnicity and culture is their ignorance about their own culture.”⁵¹ One of

⁴⁸ Ibid., 95.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 75.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 101.

⁵¹ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 39.

the principles the leaders practiced well at my former church before launching any new church campus was research. It was not a comprehensive study, but it displayed an interest in the target area. Each campus is unique to the information received from the research. For example, when the first campus was launched, the familiar theme around the organization was “200,000 Reasons.” That number represented the number of residents of the community and potential impact the church could have. The leaders thought it was vital to understand the individual community the church wanted to engage.

CQ Strategy

CQ strategy is also known as metacognitive CQ and is “the extent to which you are aware of what’s going on in a cross-cultural situation and your ability to use that awareness to manage those situations effectively.”⁵² Simply put, “it is our plan of attack when interacting with those who are culturally different from us.”⁵³ Developing CQ strategy ensures that there are three things in place: awareness, planning, and checking, which “represents the process of creating a viable roadmap to help us become more culturally aware and culturally conversant.”⁵⁴ Table 5 was influenced by Dyne, Ang, and Koh.⁵⁵ It is designed for participants to score themselves on their CQ strategy. The higher your score, the higher your CQ strategy.

⁵² Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 107.

⁵³ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁵ Linn Van Dyne, et al., “Development and Validation of the CQS: The Cultural Intelligence Scale,” in *Handbook on Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement and Applications*, eds. Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne (2008), 20.

Table 5 – CQ Strategy Assessment

Equation: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

I am conscious of my cultural knowledge when interacting cross-culturally.

I always adjust my cultural experience when I interact with people from unfamiliar cultures.

I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.

I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge when interacting with people from unfamiliar cultures.

Add the score from each column and divide it by four. Total ___/4 = ___ CQ strategy

Awareness

One of “the biggest barrier Christians face in developing communities hospitable to people of every ethnicity and culture is their ignorance about their own culture. We are unaware of what it means to be us and hyper aware of what it means to be *them*.”⁵⁶

Awareness in CQ is “the extent to which you’re aware of the personal and cultural dynamics occurring in a multicultural situation.”⁵⁷ A person operating in this culture is alert and observant of their cross-cultural interactions. One of the most critical things in this culture is knowing when to respond. Choosing when to respond is often challenging and is “counterintuitive because our natural impulse is to notice something and then immediately interpret its meaning and react.”⁵⁸ Like a psychologist who discerns when to

⁵⁶ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 40.

⁵⁷ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 112.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

listen and how to respond with the right words at the right time, people are challenged to think broadly, which can become a mental strain.

Things may not always fit into the category that leaders envision, so they learn to get comfortable with this internal tension that challenges the reality of their culture. Broad thinking does not mean ignorance or avoidance; it is complete awareness without responding. People have automated habits, so CQ strategy also helps shift automated behaviors. For example, being a Jamaican national, many associate me with Bob Marley and reggae music. Unfortunately, he died before I was born, and reggae music is not a personal favorite. People running their brains on autopilot may offend others when they use one personal experience without focusing on the cultural environment.

Planning

The purpose of having a strategy in place is to execute a plan. Planning is “the extent to which you take the time to anticipate how to best engage in a cross-cultural situation.”⁵⁹ In other words, leaders take “time to prepare for a cross-cultural encounter—anticipating how to approach the people, topic, and situation.”⁶⁰ For example, if someone chooses to take a vacation overseas, they may intentionally plan how they would like to engage the culture for an enjoyable experience. Upon arriving in that country, journaling each experience affords that individual to understand the meaning behind the things they observe. “Writing allows [people] to understand [themselves] and others in ways that few

⁵⁹ Ibid., 112.

⁶⁰ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ*, 121.

others do” because “it forces [an individual] to slow down and become more aware of [their] surroundings and the meanings therein.”⁶¹ However, it is important for leaders to manage their expectations because expectations “alter the way [the] brain makes sense of things, and meeting them reinforces the way the brain thinks about it.”⁶²

Checking

Before traveling overseas, tourists plan their list of places to visit with an understanding that accomplishing everything may not be possible. Once they are on the trip, they start their checking, which is the extent to which they monitor whether they are behaving appropriately in a cross-cultural situation.⁶³ Friends who have visited different places may inform others of their experiences but to help them readjust their expectations. However, having a checklist keeps people focused on the things they had planned to complete during a trip. “The very process of creating a checklist prior to a cross-cultural encounter can help you do the planning that’s essential for CQ Strategy.”⁶⁴

Traveling to unfamiliar cultures requires people to reframe the situation by removing judgment. After reframing the situation, it allows them the ability to see things differently. Having an appropriate level of CQ strategy allows people to test for accuracy in light of how they plan the experiences. The best way to measure those skills in an

⁶¹ Ibid., 124.

⁶² Ibid., 128.

⁶³ Ibid., 112.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 130.

unfamiliar setting is to “question [our] observations, question [our] assumptions, and find appropriate ways to ask questions of others.”⁶⁵

CQ Action

“One of the most important aspects of CQ action is knowing when to adapt to another culture and when not to do so. A person with high CQ learns which actions will and will not enhance effectiveness and acts on that understanding. Thus, CQ action involves flexible actions tailored to specific cultural contexts.”⁶⁶ In *Table 6* below, the assessment was personally designed for readers to score themselves on CQ Action. It was influenced by Dyne, Ang, and Koh.⁶⁷ The higher people score each statement, the higher their CQ Action.

Table 6 – CQ Action Assessment

Equation: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

I constantly change my verbal communication in cross-cultural situations.

I can change my nonverbal behavior when necessary in cross-cultural interaction.

I can quickly alter my facial expressions when necessary in cross-cultural exchanges.

I manage my speech by using pause and silence to interact in cross-cultural situations.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 136.

⁶⁶ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 28.

⁶⁷ Dyne, Ang, and Koh, *Development and Validation of the CQS*, 20.

Add the score from each column and divide it by four. Total _____/4 = _____ CQ Action

“CQ action, the behavioral dimension of CQ, is the leader’s ability to act appropriately in a range of cross-cultural situations.”⁶⁸ The challenge in this area of CQ is that it requires repetition to form the habit needed to create the desired results. A person’s “cultural intelligence is ultimately judged based on how [they] behave.”⁶⁹ Although it is important to understand CQ and the strategy behind engaging in multicultural settings, at some point, people should test the theories with their behaviors and see what the results reveal about them. They also measure their adaptability to the cultural norms. Adapting means that leaders are not trying to assimilate or impose their church life to attendees of their church services. “Cross-cultural church planters must take extra care not to impose foreign expressions of church life, but to creatively develop the new church in ways that fulfill biblical purposes in a culturally appropriate manner.”⁷⁰ When leaders engage people with CQ action, they are always observing which behaviors to adapt to, since they judge them based on their actions. To help guide the potential behavior with this new cultural understanding, there is reliance on three areas of CQ action. These areas include nonverbal behavior, verbal behavior, and speech acts.

⁶⁸ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 27.

⁶⁹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 141.

⁷⁰ Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 215, Kindle.

Nonverbal Behavior

Nonverbal behavior in CQ is “the extent to which you can comfortably adapt your nonverbal behavior in cross-cultural situations.”⁷¹ Nonverbal behavior is a familiar trait with musicians and singers because they use gestures and facial expressions to emphasize the direction of the music. The conducting of an orchestra involves nonverbal cues to signal when to start or end the music or any relevant phrases within the music. The difference is that each musician in the group has individualized music that is specific to their instrument and serves as his or her guide to inform them as to what happens next. These cues will work correctly for anyone playing in an orchestra because the nonverbal cues in music are universal. “They think about shaping a piece of music rather than shifting or changing that music’s purpose into something other than what it is supposed to be.”⁷²

Leaders constantly look for cues on how to develop a social skill set to engage the community or cultural context. A sports fan has the ability to move to unfamiliar cultures and remain loyal to their former teams. While it is ok to support the former team, it is important to know about the sports teams of that new culture. Ignorance of the surrounding culture is not an excuse for ineffective social engagement. Such behavior would show there is no intended action to respect the culture. “Our cultural ignorance can brood feelings of trepidation, awkwardness, and perhaps even distrust. However, increasing our cultural intelligence will calm some fears and concerns when

⁷¹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 146.

⁷² Newby, *Worship Outside The Music Box*, 18-19.

communicating across ethnic differences.” Therefore, “If we lack specific knowledge about a particular religious group represented in our church, this process of empathetic imagination will uncover our cultural ignorance to show us that we need to learn more about it.”⁷³

Verbal Behavior

Verbal behavior in CQ is “the extent to which you modify your verbal behavior in cross-cultural situations.”⁷⁴ Culturally, people from different cultures often speak with a distinct accent that causes them to sound different than the average person born in America. Some speak faster than others, softer than others, and usually with a distinct accent associated with a particular state, country, or culture. This requires people to be more conscious of how they speak, and more importantly, what people may understand. Then, “a common language slowly gets established: and, as shared experience accumulates, more of a sense of groupness arises at the emotional level, providing some reassurance to all that they are be included.”⁷⁵

When an athlete joins a new sports team that involves verbal communication, the coaches provide a playbook to help bridge an expected behavior. The coach believes the athlete is a great fit for the team in terms of performance but if that athlete fails to modify his or her behavior, they could find challenge adjusting in this new culture. “To function as a group, the individuals who come together must establish a system of communication

⁷³ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 202-203.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. 73.

and a language that permits interpretation of what's going on.”⁷⁶ In contrast, “establishing a missional church means you plant a church that's engaging in God's mission, is focused on the kingdom, and is part of the culture you're seeking to reach.”⁷⁷ Seeking to reach a culture requires intentionality and, at times, planning to verbally communicate. Whether at church or in a new cultural environment, “a slower, more rhythmic pace allows us to deepen our insights and to simultaneously become more effective among the many individuals and cultures that aren't nearly as concerned with efficiency and accomplishment as people like me are.”⁷⁸ It can be easier for someone to adjust their behaviors when they slow down; this suggests that they are conscious.

Speech Acts

Speech acts are “the way you alter your communication” to achieve a goal in a cross-cultural situation efficiently.⁷⁹ This altering is less about dialect and more about what is done with this dialect. For example, ethnic minorities cannot hide the physical features that make them distinct from others; those features tend to come to the forefront when identified by others. Therefore, when someone from the majority culture asks about the background of a person labeled as an ethnic minority, they are trying to identify the country. An insensitive person may say, “I hear an accent, what country are you from?”

⁷⁶ Ibid., 111.

⁷⁷ Ed Stetzer and Daniel Im, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches That Multiply* (Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2016), 255, Kindle.

⁷⁸ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 159.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 146.

The framing of this question automatically disqualifies the listener from being born into that culture, although it is possible.

“In contrast, white Americans are rarely asked where they are from in terms of ethnic background apart from their geographic location of where they grew up, unless they speak with a noticeably non-American accent.”⁸⁰ It is possible that “through our speech and actions, we may be complicit in aggravating the pain of our listeners, especially when we have offended them with respect to their ethnicity, race, and culture.”⁸¹ Joining multicultural groups is an excellent opportunity to develop to speech communication CQ action. Therefore, if there is any intent to plant a church in a local community, it might be beneficial to engage in multicultural initiatives that will enhance the cultural influence of the church. “New churches have an opportunity that established churches often do not. They have the opportunity to contextualize the unchanging message of the gospel without any [pre-existing] patterns to copy.”⁸²

Summary

“Our culture has taught us to communicate through unspoken messages that are so automatic that we rarely even think about them.”⁸³ Associating CQ with a person’s religious engagement helps to develop an overall personality for application in any setting. No scientific research is needed to prove that everyone at some point in their lives

⁸⁰ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 111.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁸² Stetzer and Im, *Planting Missional Churches*, 710.

⁸³ Hofstede and Pedersen, *Exploring Culture*, 18.

has experienced some form of stereotype. This has often made people culturally insensitive or it can lead others to live in certain areas and take extra security measures when they live in some communities. “When speaking, we should take care to clarify the intention behind our words and check to see if our message has come across correctly.”⁸⁴ These stereotypes can become a tremendous barrier when engaging communities, but CQ reduces stereotypes and can help in the understanding of these assumptions.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 20.

CHAPTER 3:
A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF WORSHIP

I began this essay with a story in order to emphasize the importance of a narrative-praxis approach to doing culturally intelligent worship. Praxis, as a method, unites practice (doing) and theory (knowing) into the same reflective activity. “A praxis approach encourages a critical engagement of theological reflection while affirming that our religious experiences shape our beliefs, and our beliefs shape our activities hence theory and practice are inseparable and mutually informing.”¹

No permission is needed to participate in authentic worship, but cultural diversity and bias may influence whether to engage the worship. “Those who choose to worship God uses their “expression in a variety of cultural forms as each individual's culture shapes both his or her response to Christ in understanding the gospel.”² Regardless of denominational preferences and geographic location, every church has a culture that shapes their worship ministry. The culture may influence song selections and how ministry leaders facilitate corporate worship. Everyone in a given culture has the same option to engage or reject the worship services they attend. People in some churches often experience culture shock in new communities because they become subjected to a new set of attitudes, where individuals exercise their freedom to leave if the church culture is not attractive. As churches take residency in new communities, there is an

¹ Kenneth J. Archer, *The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 1898-1901, Kindle.

² Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 140-141.

immediate challenge: do they worship with this new culture or tolerate it? “The worship we enjoy is affected by multiple factors: our theology, denomination, nomination, social location, ethnicity and culture.”³

One challenge for ministry leaders in the church is that they try to become worship innovators by using church congregations to test what might work. They often spend a great deal in trying to understand the spiritual temperature, while neglecting the culture that shapes people’s engagement in worship. This can cause them to miss a critical trend where “individuals are now ‘spiritual consumers’ who will go to a church only if [and as long as] its worship and public speaking are immediately riveting and attractive.”⁴ This revelation reveals that some views religion as an intruder into everyday life.⁵ Randy Sawyer quoted Donald Hustad in a 2010 article by stating, “We cannot escape the probability that acts of Christian worship are not meaningful to most Americans in our day. This is demonstrated by the fact that the majority of people never participate in worship from week to week and also by the criticism of worship practices with which we are frequently confronted.”⁶

While worship is framed by biblical theology, it was Pentecostalism in 1906 that introduced a new flavor in the worship of God in the American culture; this eventually influenced worship practices in other countries. It was the threefold nature of the camp

³ Ibid., 86.

⁴ Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 11, Kindle.

⁵ Eric A. Lambert, Jr., *The Christian and the Culture: A Study of the Challenges Faced by the Twenty-First Century Christian* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2015), 78, Kindle.

⁶ Randy Sawyer, “The Pastor as Worship Leader,” Web Resources for Pastors and Church Leaders Publishing Inc., March 17, 2010, accessed December 11, 2016, <http://fwbpastor.com/?p=1082>.

meetings that created the framework. The music was supposed to attract the crowd, the preaching would draw the sinners, and the altar call would secure the decision for salvation. There was one goal of these camp meetings—convert sinners. The public display of worship was not a priority. Conversely, “the leading of worship in the public assembly must be seen as a facet of the pastoral care of the congregation.”⁷ God orchestrates authentic worship, although Satan seeks to distort and corrupt Christian worship to prevent salvation through Christ Jesus.⁸ Even with good intentions, it is possible for someone to try to influence another away from what they intended.

“God gives [people] an experience that helps them feel at home and [shaped] the ministry of the early church with a multiethnic flavor.”⁹ The diversity in worship is not a new practice; it is an orchestrated moment for cultures to meet. According to Robert Webber, “worship is a meeting between God and His people.”¹⁰ Many local churches host weekly rehearsals and creative meetings to prepare for the weekly services, but Franklin Segler states, “worship is not a mere preparation for action, but it is the *Opus Dei*, the adoration of God as humankind’s highest privilege.”¹¹ While there are many components of Christian worship, it is important to understand how music specifically engages culture.

⁷ Noel Due, *Created for Worship: From Genesis to Revelation to You* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2005), 234.

⁸ According to Matt. 4:9; Eph.6:11-12; Jas. 4:7.

⁹ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 235-236.

¹⁰ Robert Webber, *Worship, Old and New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982), 11, Kindle.

¹¹ Franklin M. Segler and C. Randall Bradley, *Understanding, Preparing For, and Practicing Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 8.

What is Worship?

At Liberty University, professor Dr. Elmer Towns would give each student a digital copy of his book *Putting an End to Worship Wars*. According to Towns,

The effectiveness of worship is not measured by atmosphere. That means the credibility of true biblical worship is not measured by how fast the songs are sung, or how deeply we meditate in solitude. It is not measured by a new plexiglass pulpit, a split chancel pulpit, or the new trend of using no pulpit at all. It is not measured by raising hands, affirming the Apostle's Creed, or congregational applause. It is not measured by responsive readings from both Old and New Testament, viewing the Living Bible projected on the screen, or listening to an expositional sermon based on a proper interpretation of the text.¹²

The effectiveness of worship is instead measured by a leader's ability to help the congregation encounter God every time a worship service is held. "Various multiethnic/multi-cross-cultural nuances are necessary for practicing multicultural Christian worship arts. If these elements are not held in high esteem and regard, then the discipline and exploration of multiethnic worship arts will not come to fruition."¹³

After years of debating the most appropriate or scholarly definition of worship, Benjamin Sealey, in his book *Restoring the Heart of Worship*, challenges his readers' ideology of worship. He states that "worship, therefore, is not actually the goal," but "the goal is to encounter God and be close to Him. The process by which we achieve the goal is worship."¹⁴ Worship therefore, is about helping people to surrender their desires and

¹² Elmer L. Towns, *Putting an End to Worship Wars* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 4, Kindle.

¹³ Newby, *Worship Outside The Music Box*, 18.

¹⁴ Benjamin Sealey, *Restoring the Heart of Worship* (N.p.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, May 2014), 38, Kindle.

ascribe worth to God and His authority. Regardless of how worship is defined, there is a corresponding action necessary for people to encounter God. The question is not only about the definition of worship, rather, determining what practices to include in the acts of worship.

“When we have a reference for our own cultural norms, we can be genuinely open to new expressions of worship.”¹⁵ In new cultures, congregations are challenged to find new ways to express terms to the unchurched and, because of this, they sometimes inadvertently distort the truth. Since conviction is free, it is never a person’s responsibility to force others to accept personal beliefs about worship. If worship is a biblical mandate for Christians, congregations will sense when their actions engage God’s presence. The problem is not the definition of worship; the problem is losing God as the subject of worship.

As people seek an authentic relationship with God, it is through worship that they engage and communicate with Him. “Sadly, too many Christians are unfamiliar with this broader concept of worship. When thinking of worship, [people] often visualize [others] standing with their eyes closed, passionately singing with their hands raised heavenward, like the cover of many worship CDs, but when the singing ends,” worship is not over!¹⁶ In fact, there is a theory that continues to prompt a Christian’s response of worship to God. John Stott, in his book *Authentic Christianity*, explains that “worship is our response to God for who He is and What He has done” and “arises from our reflection on

¹⁵ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 133.

¹⁶ Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 22.

who He is and what He has done.”¹⁷ It is this reflection that allows individuals to realize that God reveals Himself daily to influence authentic worship. “We do not go to church to worship. But as continuing worshipper, we gather ourselves together to continue our worship, but now in the company of brothers and sisters.”¹⁸

Since worship is a biblical expectation, it is impossible to exist as Christians without worship. Hence, when the community fails to engage worship with the Christian generalized ideology of worship, they are often viewed as unspiritual and, in some unfortunate sense, unsaved or unchurched. “One of the reasons why so many solutions do not work or cannot be implemented is that differences in thinking among the partners have been ignored.”¹⁹ Leaders are in danger of ignoring the reality that culture influences everyone from birth and renews daily as people engage society.

As pastors seek alternatives to attracting people to their churches, they realize that “modern worship songs have emerged as a primary discipleship vehicle, guiding contemporary churches on their courses over the past fifty years. These songs and the churches that enlist them have grown in influence and number, radically impacting the grass roots of Christian faith in our generation.”²⁰ Worship always includes elements such as liturgy, music, prayer, and scripture. The style of worship music is often misinterpreted as the only aspect of worship, but in reality, this is merely a pattern used to

¹⁷ John Stott, *Authentic Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 250.

¹⁸ Harold M. Best, *Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 119.

¹⁹ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 301.

²⁰ D. Wilt, “Contemporary Worship,” in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views*, ed. J. Matthew Pinson (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2009), 143.

help the congregation engage God in one corporate setting. “Style is very different from content and structure. The content of worship is the Gospel. The structure of worship is the form that allows the Gospel to be remembered and enacted. Therefore, both content and structure are common elements to all worshipping communities. But style is open and flexible and relative to each culture, generation, and preference.”²¹

In worshipping communities, members engaging in that community see the abstract differently. Hence, a person with a Roman Catholic background will see authentic worship or church culture differently from someone with a Pentecostal background. The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:14 wrote that Christ “has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility [between Jews and Gentiles]” (NIV). Therefore, “the diverse ways that people of every culture offer praise to God and receive inspiration from God through music are welcomed into the worship of the multicultural congregation.”²²

The Missional Purpose of Worship

“Worship not only allows us to experience God in all his fullness, it also creates a space for us to hear the call to the mission of God.”²³ Understanding worship does not begin or end with doctrine, but it starts with a theological vision. Cultural ignorance causes people to believe that God needs music for authentic worship to be present. Music is an essential element used in worship, but God is ever present and has no reliance on

²¹ Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 263.

²² Kathy Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2000), 95, Kindle.

²³ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 180.

human performance for His existence. “Losing God as the subject can turn liturgy into performance rather than sacrament.”²⁴ A person’s desire may involve shifting tradition into an intentional approach where hymns and contemporary music serve different roles contextually and theologically, so the style does not become the issue. “The real issue is pastors and worship leaders taking responsibility for what their churches are singing, leading them wisely into truth-based affections, and making sure good fruit is being produced.”²⁵ Keller informs us that

A theological vision allows [people] to see their culture in a way different than they had ever been able to see it before. Those who are empowered by the theological vision do not simply stand against the mainstream impulse of the culture but take the initiative both to understand and speak to that culture from the framework of the scriptures. The modern theological vision must seek to bring the entire counsel of God into the world of its time in order that its time might be transformed.²⁶

Music can often act as a window for people to experience other cultures.

However, “we don’t use different music because we want to keep everyone happy or because we’re aiming for a ‘blended’ service. It’s the gospel that blends us together, not music.”²⁷ When someone travels to Louisiana, they could assume the sound of jazz or Mardi Gras, which works the same way when going to a remote village in Africa; they expect to experience a different culture. “Music is one of the very best ways to spread the

²⁴ Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for This Urgent Time* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995), 243.

²⁵ Bob J. Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 168.

²⁶ Keller, *Center Church*, 16.

²⁷ Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 165.

message of the Gospel to an unbelieving society.”²⁸ However, unbelievers are not the only ones who live in a cultural environment.

“More than ever before in Western society, music is part of our lives, ubiquitously present. Whether we love it or ignore it, play it or shut it out, revel in it, it is there.”²⁹ Music has its sphere of influence regardless of the appreciation or acceptance of it. People choose to take up the responsibility of understanding and engaging it to meet cultural demands. “Being wise in the world of music, from a Christian or any other perspective, means being aware of the powers— and especially what powers might belong distinctly to music.”³⁰ One thing to consider is, “ultimately music is a gift. As with any gift, the more we learn to value, use and understand it, the more we may learn about the nature and preferred way of working” with “the one who has given it. Presents are expressive of the presenter” and “for many people music is foremost among those gifts of creation that serve to render the character of God.”³¹

Worshiping with Culture

“If vision is the ‘what’ that describes the future and present realities God wishes to create for the world, then mission is the ‘why’ that explains God’s purpose for

²⁸ Ronald Allen and Gordon Borrer, *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2000), 163.

²⁹ Jeremy Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 277.

³¹ Jeff N. Astley, Timothy Hone, and Mark Savage, *Creative Chords: Studies in Music, Theology and Christian Formation* (Herefordshire, England: Gracewing, 2000), 241.

congregations in the world.”³² For people to experience dynamic worship in their corporate setting, “the entire church system has to develop intelligence, sensitivity, and intuition to cultural differences.”³³ Marva Dawn believes that “how we worship both reveals and forms our identity as persons and communities.”³⁴ If this is true, then one purpose of worship is to build community in such a way that it is embracing of different cultures without losing its own distinctiveness. Instead of seeing culture as a separate entity, see it biblically. Similar to denominational biases, cultural biases exist. Never suggest that your music is sacred and all other music is secular, without understanding or interacting with another genre. With the evolution of internet radio and platforms such as Amazon Music, Spotify, or Pandora, a listener will have the option to choose music from hundreds of genres. These options confirm that listeners (and church attendees) have diverse appreciation for music, so cross-cultural worship involves diversity.

It is possible to create weekly Christian events and limit a church’s community outreach to special events, such hosting an Easter egg hunt or a Christmas program as the only outreach events for the year. However, this practice could also reveal a reliance on an ‘expert’ (outside of the church community) telling a church what events *may* attract their communities, but unless the expert lives in that church community, they are asking permission to experiment with the community while these leaders continue to lose congregational membership. Some local communities are skeptical about engaging in

³² Roger Heuser and Norman Shawchuck, *Leading the Congregation: Caring for Yourself While Serving the People* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), Kindle Locations 4449-4451.

³³ Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 192.

³⁴ Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, 4.

corporate worship with strangers and that is why many churches have a moment during the service or a dedicated area to welcome first-time guests. These guests never asked for the welcome, but leaders, like those in many corporate organizations, recognize the value of it. How can leaders have enough time to adequately prepare for corporate worship if they have no time to engage the culture that influences their church?

A local church in Florida planted another thriving church a few minutes from their central location. Nine months after launching this new church, the worship leader had to attend a conference; the campus pastor figured it would be easy to have a substitute from the central campus to help lead the singing. When he started singing, church members had their hands folded and disengaged from the service until a familiar face started leading the next song. The visiting leader was a great singer, but the congregation had never met him before, so they were curious about this new person (a stranger) leading the songs. It is worth examining if CQ can help Christians show an appreciation for all cultures through the inclusion of diversity so that they might engage and enjoy living in their existing cultural environment. Pastors often plant churches in cultural environments to draw them in for life transformation. Church members may struggle to enjoy the worship or stay in churches if they do not sense an appreciation for their culture.

Another opportunity for the church is to enhance the community instead of building great flourishing churches. It is possible to develop a counterculture where people live, by creating a community that expresses its influences in a Christian context. Hence, if an urban community is typically associated with hip-hop, gun violence, money, and power, the Christian context could show a church influenced by gospel hip hop,

money used to support the poor, and authority in the form of creating effective leadership through mentorship. Replacing hip hop with hymns could create an immediate barrier. However, “it is not enough for Christians to form a culture that merely ‘counters’ the values of the city. We must also commit, with all the resources of our faith and life, to serve sacrificially the good of the whole city, and especially the poor.”³⁵

Summary

One of the terms learned while researching for this project was Christopaganism. The meaning of the word suggests a combination of public Christian teachings with non-Christian beliefs, which tends to happen when people show disregard for existing cultures by suppressing them and causing others to practice suppressed cultures secretly while practicing Christian beliefs publicly. Understanding culture can be challenging, but necessary for effectiveness in delivering the gospel. Culture does not replace worship, but it plays a role in how leaders contextualize the gospel and engage worship. “A leader’s ability to distinguish between what’s universal, what’s cultural, and what’s personal is one of the most important indicators of cultural intelligence.”³⁶

Contextualization is not necessarily about conforming to existing habits; rather, it is communicating with an understanding and appreciation for culture. It plays a significant role in how people engage cultures and faith. Contextualization is the “attempt to communicate the message of the person, works, Word, and will of God in a way that is

³⁵ Keller, *Center Church*, 171.

³⁶ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 90.

faithful to God’s revelation, especially as it is put forth in the teachings of Holy Scripture, and that is meaningful to respondents in their respective cultural and existential contexts.”³⁷ There is the obvious challenge of determining when the line has been crossed during this process, but there is a certainty that “we are in danger of being ineffective messengers at best, and at worst of communicating a gospel that is misunderstood and distorted.”³⁸ It is to attempt to conform the gospel to the intended culture because people interact differently. Spirit-led believers are not led by culture but understand that culture helps to shape their engagement with congregations in worship. “The overall health of any church or ministry depends primarily on the emotional and spiritual health of its leadership. In fact, the key to successful spiritual leadership has much more to do with the leadership internal life than with the leader’s expertise, gifts, or experience.”³⁹ It is always easier to lead by experience and with one’s unique gifts, but part of the mission of Christ was for edification of the church. When experiences become more important than Christ’s mission, a self-evaluation also becomes necessary.

Before my church organization planted campus churches, the thought process involved transplanting gifted leaders into those sites. There were many talented leaders, but many lacked the emotional and spiritual health needed for church planting. After a few months, many of the appointed leaders resigned from leadership roles and returned to the central (main) campus because they realized that the worship would be different. The

³⁷ David J. Hesselgrave, Edward Rommen, and George W. Peters, *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods and Models* (Pasadena, CA: W. Carey Library, 2000), 200.

³⁸ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2006), 141.

³⁹ Peter Scazzero and Warren Bird, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A Strategy for Discipleship That Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 20.

leadership role was meaningless within a new culture because they would no longer have a church choir or orchestra and the Sunday sermon would be video-based. Their biggest challenge was learning new ways to invite the community to a video-based service (although they had the option to attend a live Saturday service) because they were not yet comfortable with the idea.

Congregational worship is often based on the information leaders communicate to them about worship. One thing to note is that worship to God is repetitive. People's "ultimate love/desire is shaped by practices, not ideas that are merely communicated to us."⁴⁰ As Christians, "it is easy to condemn the fruit of lifestyles seen in culture, without taking time to study the root to engage it."⁴¹

As worship leaders and musicians engage culture, they are challenged to find their place in the culture. Research reveals that "gaining theological wisdom about music from Scripture will come from taking account of the whole sweep of God's creative and redemptive purposes that Scripture recounts rather than by scrutinizing specific biblical references to music."⁴² This religious and cultural disconnect often causes members to leave the church when they cannot find their place in it. "Therefore, the church musician is caught between wondering whether he is a paid amateur or a volunteer professional. He does not know, philosophically and theologically, what he is about."⁴³ As each leader

⁴⁰ James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 409, Kindle.

⁴¹ Tim Stevens, *Pop Goes the Church: Should the Church Engage Pop Culture?* (Indianapolis, IN: Power Pub., 2008), 71.

⁴² Begbie, *Resounding Truth*, 59.

⁴³ Harold Best, *Church Music Curriculum* (Proceedings of the 57th Annual Meeting. National Association of Schools of Music, Dallas, Texas, 1982), 137-138.

worships in their context, it is important for them to worship with culture because this is the best scenario in any attempts to fulfill God's mission and vision for His church. The willingness to submit to culture allows God to reach His people.

CHAPTER 4:
AN OVERVIEW OF CQ IN THE BIBLE AND CHRISTIANITY

“Pentecostalism as a Christian religious movement has been given much attention by historians, sociologists and even biblical scholars; yet, little attention has been given to the development of the relationship between biblical worship and cultural intelligence.”¹ This chapter emphasizes the necessity of identifying the influence of biblical and cultural identity in society by means of an integrative methodology and through some personal narratives from leading worship cross-culturally. “By using [narratives] we can produce critical theology for our present-day communities that are in continuity with the manner of the earliest Christians.”²

Within the context of our global society, there are significant barriers to a collaborative effort between *Biblical Christianity* and *Cultural Christianity*. It is impossible to magnify the importance of religion or Christianity without understanding the culture that influences how others believe they are supposed to behave. The greatest success of this project relies on collaborating with culture, to bridge the gap between understanding and perception. “Obviously, people believe their views are accurate [otherwise they would disavow them], but do their perceptions reflect reality? And why do people’s perceptions matter—should they matter [to Christ followers]?”³ There is a

¹ Archer, *The Gospel Revisited*, 248-250.

² *Ibid.*, 420-421.

³ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity— and Why It Matters* (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Books, 2012), 92, Kindle.

personal conviction that while there is a spiritual understanding within the context of some local churches, others may interpret rejected practices based on CQ resources.

Conduct a quick search on Google for the word sin, and the search would reveal more than 2.6 billion results with a definition that suggests an immoral act against God.⁴ However, searching the word *righteousness* on that same site revealed approximately 34 million results.⁵ The word *religion* only accounted for 886 million results in the same search engine as of August 25, 2017. Therefore, even tallying the results of righteousness and religion still could not rival that of the word sin. The results reveal that these interests could shape how individuals of church communities engage the Christian culture.

In researching and writing this dissertation, it became apparent that there was a great challenge for the church in how it engaged cultures with theology. There is no intent in this essay to create a wider gap between these two existing cultures or motivate a conviction towards my religious bias, but to investigate the paradigms that exist. There is an ignorance of each culture, where the assumption of behavior becomes greater than the understanding of behavior. “We have a responsibility to our friends and neighbors to have a sober, reasonable understanding of their perspectives.”⁶

When two objects stand in opposition, they create tension, but standing in opposition with another person creates conflict. Since the evolution of technology, there has been a migration to a culture where people demand immediate access to information. Therefore, “whether consciously or unconsciously, [a two-tiered mentality is developed],

⁴ As of August 25, 2017, there were 2,630,000,000 results for the word sin.

⁵ As of August 25, 2017, there were 33,800,000 results when searching for the word righteousness.

⁶ Kinnaman and Lyons, *Unchristian*, 92.

one for Christians and church functions, and one for the broader cultural encounters that take up most of the rest of the week.”⁷ While having a two-tier mentality is possible, it influences the church leaders to label people with other cultural values. However, some ministry leaders find it easier to “think little about these matters but simply want to get on with evangelism and church planting.”⁸ When ministry leaders have conflicting views in how to engage culture, they are left to seek alternatives. For example, there is no universal approach in how to engage the LGBT community in our churches, so it is sometimes easier to identify the sin and exclude that community from religious settings.

Background of Biblical Culture

“We work with the Bible as an authoritative text, and we see God's enduring love expressed in initiatives to shape a people as a community for worship and mission.”⁹ According to the Great Commission, Christians have a mandate to embrace diversity, but since scripture does not offer a traditional definition of culture, and since the Bible’s original language was not English, the acceptance of scriptures is a belief in the authenticity of the Bible itself. “Humanity has been given a responsibility and duty from the Creator to go forth and create culture;” this “originates from the theological understanding that humanity was made in the image of God.”¹⁰ God had already given humanity the mandate to engage culture and to bear His likeness through their spiritual

⁷ Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*, 7.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Branson and Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership*, 309-310.

¹⁰ Rah, *Many Colors*, 26.

capacity that is enabled by His Spirit. Christian relationship with God was birthed in the spirit but expressed in the physical, by humanity. Even as an image bearer of God, humans did not anticipate contamination with sin. After man's sin, disobedience became a matter of mistrust or misguided intentions.

God understood that at some point man would need to channel their inner creativity, so God never created any culture to remain stagnant. He created the resources and commanded man to do something with them. God said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."¹¹ Creation was never the culture; the culture was more about how humanity would behave with creation. Culture relies on the behavior of people for it to have its existence and since "we were created with a spiritual capacity to reflect the character of God, we also possess the capacity to re-create God's image through procreation. That spiritual capacity extends to our ability to create culture."¹²

"The model of the New Testament church reflects a multiethnic church beginning at Pentecost and reflecting the eventual oneness we see in Revelation."¹³ The New Testament connects with historicity in many ways to show that man was out of alignment with their intended purpose. Culture finds fulfillment in rewarding people for hard work and applauds or admires them for having busy schedules. There is an inadvertent application of this same ideology regarding faith and religion; by doing more, God is

¹¹ Gen. 1:28 (NIV).

¹² Rah, *Many Colors*, 27-28.

¹³ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 245-246.

pleased. Religious activities can never replace having a relationship with God or even engaging God, and it is impossible to become spiritually mature without an authentic relationship with God. Jesus modeled a spiritual character necessary for a biblical relationship with God, but people convinced themselves there is a cultural alternative to biblical Christianity.

Biblical Christianity

“Cultural intelligence takes on another level of complexity when we consider the biblical-theological aspects of culture.”¹⁴ Biblical Christianity starts with the contextualization of the gospel in the culture leaders wish to engage. In other words, it is “the placing of the gospel in the total context of a culture at a particular moment, a moment that is shaped by the past and looks to the future.”¹⁵ Biblical Christianity in its narrowest sense has always influenced culture. However, it also rejects the world (those outside certain religious convictions) for being different in religious practices. “In Ephesians the churches of the region are instructed to be culturally inclusive in ways that are visible to outsiders—including rulers and authorities of all kinds (Eph. 4); texts here and elsewhere indicate that this inclusivity was not previously a norm.”¹⁶ Biblical Christians in this essay refers to those who subscribe to the Bible as the primary source for developing a relationship with God, which is activated by faith. After studying

¹⁴ Ibid., 26.

¹⁵ Leslie Newbiggin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988), 2.

¹⁶ Branson and Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership*, 346-347.

scriptures, it is clear that God wants people to subscribe to His righteousness, which biblical Christians call holiness. “Holiness is the practice of staying clean, so you are ready when the Lord calls you into service and fellowship.”¹⁷ Also, “God’s plan for diversity design leads to holiness because God’s people are experiencing a wholeness that is only found when the body of Christ is together.”¹⁸

Genesis 3:8 reveals that God walked the garden in the “cool of the day” to signify He had an existing relationship with humanity and expected to find them prepared to engage Him in the garden. Because of their sin, trust was broken between God and man (they were no longer holy). Adam and Eve understood they defiled their relationship with God, so they hid when they heard His voice. “The discipline of holiness is the hallmark of Christianity, and it is what separates Christianity from mere religion.”¹⁹ America is often labeled a religious country, but it is impossible for a country to be religious and its residents are far from being “holy.” However, “America was profoundly shaped by the distinctive biblical values it imported from Western Europe during its formative period. The fact that First Amendment interpretations can still be discussed as matters of church and state is one indication of this lasting influence.”²⁰

The United States Constitution of 1789 starts with three words: ‘*We the People*’ to suggest the government’s priority is to serve the citizens of its country. The Constitution continues by stating that there is intent to “secure the Blessings of Liberty to

¹⁷ Lambert, *The Christian and the Culture*, 268.

¹⁸ Newby, *Worship Outside The Music Box*, 16.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Wuthnow, *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity*, 78-79.

ourselves and our Posterity.” Well, the Bible also shows a priority where Christianity is not merely about doing good, like The Rich Young Ruler in Matthew 19:16-22; it involves a life of separation from sin and contradictory beliefs. “Yes, a Christian must be a good person, in accordance with the standards of ‘a good culture,’ but Christ invites people to attain more, and gives them” the “grace to achieve it: love of God for His own sake.”²¹

It is easy to consider each denomination as a unique culture because each one “focuses on an attribute of God’s character that comes out of the lived experience of that community.”²² Pentecostal churches place priority on the love of God through the work of the Holy Spirit. Southern Baptists observe the believer’s baptism by immersion and reject infant baptism. Traditional churches reject contemporary styles of worship; a clear indication that each denomination continues to lend itself to a unique culture to distinguish its religious bias. It is impossible to expect everyone to behave uniformly in his or her expression of God in this diverse world, which leads to cultural diversity.

The Apostle John, in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, speaks of seven churches. John needed to communicate with them and instruct them for a spiritual significance, so the Seven Churches in Revelation (The Seven Churches of Asia) were named for their location but are symbolic of the church community in local churches anywhere. God addressed each church based on what they were supposed to be doing biblically, and if they contradicted His view of holiness, they were challenged to change. There is an expectation for churches to behave in the same biblical manner, regardless of the cultural

²¹ Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*, 21.

²² Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 138.

influences. Denominational biases lend themselves to alternative beliefs. When individuals believe that the Bible is the only source in developing a relationship with God, they are called biblical Christians. Denominational beliefs can be compatible with biblical Christianity when the scriptural observances are the same

Cultural Christianity

The Barna Group, in a 2011 research, revealed that “more than three out of four self-identified Christians (78%) strongly agreed that spirituality is very important to them. Yet, less than one out of every five self-identified Christians (18%) claims to be totally committed to investing in their own spiritual development.”²³ The research highlights cultural Christianity. The reality is that based on a person’s geographic location, they have the option to choose a god that matches their cultural preferences because people adopt values from their sphere of influences. As the research suggests, some individuals self-identify as Christians but do not commit to the principles that would distinguish them as Christians.

While traditional Christians rave about their faith and their aspirations of heaven, they inadvertently neglect those who are ignorant to the existence of sin, much less an acceptance of Christ (the Redeemer from sin). There is also another group that subscribes to some form of religion, although they “do not seek Christ’s sanction for everything in their culture, but only for what they find to be the best in it. Equally, they tend to

²³ “Self-Described Christians Dominate America,” Barna Group, September 13, 2011, accessed April 21, 2017, <https://www.barna.com/research/self-described-christians-dominate-america-but-wrestle-with-four-aspects-of-spiritual-depth/>.

disentangle Christ from what they judge to be barbaric or outmoded Jewish notions about God and history.”²⁴ Christians often label this group as unchurched. Biblical Christians find it easy to attach a label to transgressors of their (biblical Christian) faith but miss a teachable moment to allow cultural Christians to realize they cannot exchange God’s truth for secularism. The caution for *biblical Christians* is to ensure they do not become overconfident that they are superior.

With the evolution of social media, the amount of personal information each person is willing to share with strangers increases, which reveal that some people are willing to allow religion to see them as long as they do not have to change. “Sin is social: although it is first and foremost defiance of God, there is no sin that does not touch the lives of others.”²⁵ Cultural Christians frown upon the idea that their lifestyle is sinful, but they embrace the idea of living social lives that touch the lives of many. Cultural Christians know that “we humans are continually negotiating the boundaries of our moral circles, and we do it in ways that differ across cultures.”²⁶ These ‘moral circles’ are the ones cultural Christians use to negotiate their faith.

Biblical Christians suggest that “sin is so warping that it corrodes every facet of our being: our wills and affections, our view of others and thus our relationships, our bodies and our minds. Sinners incur guilt, yet they need more than forgiveness and reconciliation to God, since the results of sin are so pervasive: they also need

²⁴ Lambert, *The Christian and the Culture*, 16.

²⁵ Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*, 48.

²⁶ Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 458.

regeneration and transformation.”²⁷ The story of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16-22 suggests that he lived a moral life since his youth, but after Jesus had told him to sell his possessions and give to the poor, the Bible says that he left ‘sorrowful.’ Cultural Christians subscribe to a different conviction than biblical Christians; this belief of morality determines their faith.

A Call to Action

It is important for biblical Christians to become biblically sound and culturally relevant. The relevance is not at the expense of minimizing or distorting biblical truths, but it is important to give others a chance to understand *our* gospel and accept or reject it. This requires intentionality to ensure people become good stewards of God’s Word. The goal is to avoid religious syncretism, which is “the reshaping of Christian beliefs and practices through cultural accommodation so that they consciously or unconsciously blend with those of the dominant culture.”²⁸ “Our natural tendency is to envision planting congregations that look and act something like our home church, even though the church may be planted in another culture or under very different circumstances.”²⁹ As a result, patience is necessary when allowing people to move from a cultural process to a biblical process. The transformational process of cultural practices to biblical practices is not always automatic, even if someone desires to change.

²⁷ Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*, 48.

²⁸ Gailyn Van Rhee, “Contextualization and Syncretism,” *Mission Alive*, 173, accessed April 21, 2017, <http://www.missionalive.org/ma/index.php/resources/articlesmenu/86-contextualization-and-syncretism>.

²⁹ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 197.

“Ultimately, a church grows in one of two ways: It gets more people to come through the front door, or it stops losing people out the back door.”³⁰ Hence, while churches place a high importance on getting members through the front door, they need to prioritize creating a system that fosters retention. “Instead of celebrating how many people came, the most important measurement would be how many came back.”³¹ Embracing cultural beliefs does not imply an acceptance of that culture, but it shows respect towards others with alternative faiths. “In healthy cultures where skilled, caring leaders [often communicate] and well with their teams and value their input, risks are minimized because people feel affirmed, have clear roles and goals, and don’t become embroiled in turf wars.”³² Biblical Christians accept cultural ones through the appreciation of the diversity that exists.

Summary

It is easy to lock into a religious identity with less care for the people in a desired community but “when it comes down to it, Christian ministry at its core is interacting with all kinds of people in ways that give them glimpses of Jesus in us.”³³ How are people to experience Christ’s love if Christians automatically reject the differences without ever hearing or allowing room for shared values? There are unique differences between biblical and cultural Christianity, but “we must actually become more

³⁰ Osborne, *Sticky Church*, 30.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Samuel R. Chand, *Cracking Your Church’s Culture Code: Seven Keys to Unleashing Vision and Inspiration* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 163.

³³ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 46.

multicultural people, so that we might better express love cross-culturally.”³⁴ While some people know how to love those outside their biblical obligation, “adapting [themselves] is the far greater challenge.”³⁵

While it is clear that religion sometimes unites, cultural differences and biblical convictions sometimes create religious conflicts that prevents having healthy congregations. “Healthy congregations are congregations with” a “healthy relationship to Jesus, a healthy understanding of the gospel, a healthy commitment to their calling, and a healthy [and honest] assessment of their strengths and weaknesses.”³⁶ Biblical Christianity models healthy congregations and the reality of Christ, but there can be challenges with how some churches execute those biblical behaviors. Gary Burge cautions people about being colored by their personal cultural biases. He cautions that “we must be careful lest we presuppose that our cultural instincts are the same as those represented in the Bible. We must be culturally aware of our own place in time—and we must work to comprehend the cultural context of the Scriptures that we wish to understand.”³⁷

One of the challenges some people face is that they expect unbelievers to behave like Christians; unbelievers are simply trying to decide whether or not to accept what Christians value as truth. “If our perspective is solely shaped by our own immediate

³⁴ Ibid., 67.

³⁵ Ibid., 111.

³⁶ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 430.

³⁷ Gary M. Burge, *Encounters with Jesus: Uncover the Ancient Culture, Discover Hidden Meanings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 9.

cultural context, then we fail to understand where a person from a different culture may be coming from and may even inadvertently denigrate the other's culture."³⁸

Church history informs that the Gospel crossed both international and cultural borders, according to the Great Commission and the event of the Day of Pentecost (in Acts 2 of the Bible). It may take some time for new believers to behave like biblical Christians. Therefore, flexibility is necessary because another culture (cultural Christians) exists that may challenge the biblical insights Christians often accept. The next chapter answers the research question by proving a blueprint for CQ worship.

³⁸ Rah, *Many Colors*, 84.

CHAPTER 5:
BLUEPRINT FOR CQ WORSHIP

“What I would like to address are those churches that [would like] to take cultural diversity seriously in designing worship.”¹ Notwithstanding the lack of cultural intelligence in some churches, others have a process they use to manage cross-cultural worship. Constance Cherry, in her book *The Worship Architect*, suggests that “for as many occasions of public worship as are offered, worship leaders still struggle with how to go about planning worship.”² If this is true, then many leaders lack the ability to consistently implement successful worship practices in their church services. Cherry’s claim also supports my conviction that “the duties of worship designer and architect are very similar,” and this analogy provides “an insightful way to think about the process of designing services of worship that achieve their intended purposes.”³ Depending on the context, some settings may require an overhaul of the worship service while others may just require a renovation. Regardless of the context, it is a leader’s responsibility to provide people with an opportunity for authentic and effective worship.

There is a lack of resources to prepare churches for leading worship with cultural intelligence. In fact, there are no books as of this date that address the problems identified in this research. This motivation led to an exploration of the relationship between worship, church leaders, and cultural intelligence. The findings influenced the design of a

¹ Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 12.

² Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 97.

³ *Ibid.*, 148.

culturally intelligent worship model that can transform and empower church leaders to lead effectively cross-culturally. Therefore, in designing a blueprint for worshipping with cultural intelligence, I will primarily be concerned with drawing on the personal experiences of twenty-one years as a worship practitioner. This research is not an exhaustion of the cultural challenges that globalization creates for churches desiring to lead worship cross-culturally. However, churches will have an opportunity to implement the recommendations for solving some cultural difficulties encountered in corporate worship and evaluate how cultural intelligence can improve existing worship practices.

Dr. Vernon Whaley, Dean for the School of Music at Liberty University, often argued that God is the orchestrator of the worship experience during his many lectures at the university. However, ministry leaders bridge the congregation's engagement in worship by providing them an opportunity to sing, pray, or anything that is Christ-centered. It is tempting to reduce corporate worship to music but "songs are just a launching point for 'real' worship, and our prayers come spontaneously by the prompting of the Holy Spirit."⁴ Hence, an architectural approach allows the research to focus on building worship in its totality. Therefore, "it is wise to discover *God's* expectations for Christian corporate worship" because corporate worship is more than music or the sermon; it starts with God's expectancy.⁵

How do leaders assess the overall experience or the state of the worship experience in their church? One of the ways is to analyze their processes and ask critical questions with the goal of making adjustments. Leaders "must ask, what does it mean to

⁴ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 86.

⁵ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 127. Emphasis added.

be the church in the face of changing demographics and a changing culture? What is the church's role in this changing landscape? Will we flee in fear from the cultural changes or will we engage the culture in a relevant but transformative way?"⁶ The big idea of transformation involves knowing the distinct behavior differently from the ones we engage. CQ does not ask individuals to lose their identity or lose the character of Christ because God is concerned about the community and its social practices. The "goal in cultural intelligence, therefore, is not to erase cultural differences but rather to seek ways to honor the presence of God in different cultures."⁷ It is possible for the church to thrive when God's presence is evident in worship and people engage Him through their culture. When there is a response to culturally intelligent practices, it means the congregation's perspective of God is relevant and honors their culture. "If there is no one ideal strategy or model for all churches, then each particular church, usually in local networks and other associations, must gain competencies and capacities that are specific to its own time and place."⁸ The remainder of this chapter will identify four phases as a possible solution.

Phase One: Foundations of CQ Worship

"One of the greatest challenges of our generation is that people make choices based almost exclusively on preferences."⁹ These preferences have nothing to do with spiritual depth and would reveal ignorance if people believe choices reflect their spiritual

⁶ Rah, *Many Colors*, 73.

⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁸ Branson and Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership*, 366-367.

⁹ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 27.

maturity. However, “as evangelical Christians, we hold *the* truth about who God is and [His] plan to redeem the world only through the person and work of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ Unfortunately for these Christians, the availability of choice enables other religious commitments. Opstal is convinced that “the worship we enjoy is affected by multiple factors: our theology, denomination, social location, ethnicity, and culture.”¹¹ The hard truth is that people are worship consumers who are looking for convenient worship services. It is presumptuous to believe any given church can accommodate this convenience with multiple conversations or research to understand the culture of the desired community.

As consumers, people may disregard traditional practices to fill the void of that moment, which has both positive and negative consequences. Congregations naturally seek comfort even in worship, so it is not weird to hear someone say, “I will watch the service online” on Easter Sunday. The preference enables the behavior, and churches fill that void each time they update their websites to ensure live-stream is working. Hence, a cultural preference of technology leads to churches accommodating such preferences. It is a great idea to accommodate the evolving culture, but caution is necessary to avoid the lack of personal ‘touch’ in culture.

One of the most important roles when designing a culturally intelligent worship is to avoid blind spots. Designing the practices is not a template to duplicate in various settings; rather, it is an awareness of things to consider in different contexts. The goal of this research is to help ministry leaders move from stagnancy and become intentional in

¹⁰ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 195.

¹¹ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 86.

adapting to the changes of culture. To reiterate the theme throughout this investigation: adapting to cultural practices does not suggest conforming to them. Leaders ensure that comfort does not allow missing an opportunity for deeper authentic worship that engages everyone. Also, “if the church’s leadership has difficulty working outside of her comfort zone, then predictability and the status quo will be the benchmark of her success.”¹² Therefore, leaders choose the best approach to engage everyone.

Establish the Foundation

“Every church is driven by something. There is a guiding force, a controlling assumption, a directing conviction behind everything that happens.”¹³ The foundation in this architectural metaphor of worship is rooted in the culture of the desired community. Ministry leaders face the challenge of understanding that both believers and nonbelievers are affected by the culture where the church is located. Therefore, “worship must take on the expression that reflects the culture of the worshiper if it is to be authentic and make an impact.”¹⁴ Christ’s earthly ministry has not lost its relevance throughout the generations, which is an indication that the foundational practices engage everyone. The foundation of worship is built on biblical truth, so in the contextualization of the gospel, the realities remain. Instead, people conform to the cultural settings that help shape the communities. It is possible to adjust to diversity because God created cultural diversity,

¹² Newby, *Worship Outside The Music Box*, 82

¹³ Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 77.

¹⁴ Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 100.

but He does not persuade a preference in the culture. He does expect people to worship Him according to biblical truths found in scriptures. True, conversion involves repentance, and repentance is renunciation—this does not require the convert to step out of his past culture into a religious sub-culture which is entirely distinctive.¹⁵ However it is possible for a renunciation of culture, which influences how a person accepts biblical truth.

The Word of God never changes, yet religion becomes another element in a culture that people can choose to accept or reject. This foundational phase includes adjustable and unchangeable elements to engage individual communities in worship. “Our changing cultural context also requires that we change our worship forms so that Christians shaped by late modernity can express their faith authentically and honestly.”¹⁶ When leaders teach one way of worshiping, they influence a pretense of engagement in worship services.

Any form of worship pretense would contradict God’s promise because He “promised that people from every race, culture, language, and nation” would “be present to worship [Him] as their culture follows them into heaven.”¹⁷ If creation was created to worship God, life in its totality should become pleasing to Him. This means that everyone in each cultural setting has a responsibility to worship God, as is evident in scriptures.

¹⁵ John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 181.

¹⁶ Darrell Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 157.

¹⁷ Mark Driscoll, *The Radical Reformation: Reaching Out without Selling Out* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 100.

The Old and New Testaments reveal how God created and responded to culture. “Do you have the confidence and motivation to work through the challenges and conflict that inevitably accompany cross-cultural situations?”¹⁸ It is easy to suggest that change is needed, but without self-confidence and the energy to drive your passion for the needed change, nothing will happen. When an architect shows up to a meeting, it means that someone has a motivation to design something. Before determining how to design or redesign any worship services, ministry leaders assess the answer to the following question: Is there personal motivation to discover new cultural ways in worship to engage the congregation with confidence? This answer will determine every behavior is moving forward in your worship practices. David Livermore helps in understanding how CQ can help design a blueprint for culturally intelligent worship by suggesting eight practices, which I use to help establish a solid worship foundation.

Face Your Biases

Consider the following questions: “To what cultures are you naturally drawn? Which ones make you uncomfortable?”¹⁹ No one is exempt from these biases but “the goal is to be honest about our biases instead of pretending they don’t exist. Although our internal biases are automatic, honestly understanding them can help to control and moderate our interactions.”²⁰ A person’s internal bias may be triggered by several factors such as finding a new church after relocating to a new city, but it is possible to suspend

¹⁸ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁰ Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 49.

judgments in decision making. “All the diversity programs and creative cross-cultural simulations are pointless if we don’t actually change the way we view people from within.”²¹

A person’s level of comfort plays a role with how they react to their biases. Mark Labberton explains that “Crosscultural experiences may be ones we seek or avoid in part because of the comfort or discomfort *we* may have with that ‘other.’”²² Denying one’s personal biases could trigger a negative tone, so, when engaging people under this religious pretense, there is a defensive mechanism that makes the worship experience uncomfortable. Naturally, “we feel uncomfortable and suspicious of people who are different.”²³ This feeling is possible because “most of us who have roots in one particular area have special words, or use well-known words in a special way, that we only discover are ‘strange’ to others when we travel away from home.”²⁴ As a result, strangers in a new environment spend the majority of their time looking for clues to determine how or if to engage the culture.

“We all have implicit biases. The key is whether we act on them.” Since these behaviors affect a person’s decision making unconsciously, it is possible for these biases to become pervasive. “Many people have problems in engaging members of other cultures because of some prior prejudice or bias,” which could cause them to avoid

²¹ Ibid., 38.

²² Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor: Seeing Others through the Eyes of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010), 49.

²³ Ibid. Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 49.

²⁴ Clive Upton, “English Dialect Study—an Overview,” accessed February 1, 2018, <http://public.oed.com/aspects-of-english/english-in-use/english-dialect-study-an-overview>.

interaction with other people.²⁵ In order to help people make cultural adjustments in their worship services, it starts with their ability to adjust their attitude in cross-cultural settings. Adjusting a person's cultural bias is not automatic and requires patience throughout this process.

When leaders design worship services, it is important to avoid implicit biases towards their congregations and make an effort to understand how their congregation's personal experiences have influenced their approach to worship. It is possible for leaders to teach their congregations that when they fail to worship implicitly, something is wrong with them spiritually or suggest that their cultural background is preventing them from worshipping authentically. Leaders sometimes "arrange [themselves] in the mirror until it tells a flattering lie" as they try to hide behind their prejudice.²⁶ However, the easiest way to connect with those outside the prejudicial wall is to suspend judgment and "make an effort to connect with them on a human level as early as possible rather than just seeing them in light of their cultural context."²⁷

Finding Mutual Interests

Finding mutual interests does not mean having a right to exploit them. "We have to be careful not to exploit different cultures and people simply to pursue our selfish interests."²⁸ For example, if a gunman threatens the lives of ten people, there is a mutual

²⁵ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Individual Interactions*, 4100.

²⁶ Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human* (New York, NY: Mariner Books, 2013), 172.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 50.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

interest to gain control of the gunman's behavior. However, if one person tries to become the hero by attempting to disarm the gunman by themselves, they could jeopardize the lives of everyone. The better solution would be to find a creative way to unify the group and disarm that person as a group. Since it is important to avoid selfish interests, the priority in a worship service is to find ways to get the congregation to engage God. Sometimes the natural interests can help accomplish that goal.

As worship services are designed, leaders continuously modify their plan to the things that affect and engage the people in their culture. While natural interests may connect, it is much different from trends, which help to shape personal biases. For instance, if the home team of the community or state just won a football game or a member of the congregation just graduated college, using those events to bridge a celebratory moment can be beneficial. However, finding those mutual interests will require intentionality in building relationships with those outside organized worship gatherings.

Managing Uncertainty

One fear people experience in employment is when the supervisor tells them something is no longer working, and to expect changes. At that moment, they are unsure if that means a job loss or a reassignment to a new position. However, until that information is released, they are paralyzed with fear and in search of answers. We use this alertness to analyze every process to find solutions. "Worship is often the first thing that people encounter in our communities. Through our worship we have the opportunity

to make people feel like they are right at home with love, warmth and hospitality.”²⁹

Strangers to a worship service only have the assumptions of how church congregations might behave, and these strangers might not have information about their expectation in these worship settings. Corporate worship is always a sacred moment to engage the body of Christ, so if the worship design is not working, leaders run the risk of a decline in church membership. The challenge for many church leaders is realigning their practices because of the uncertainty of whether the new process will also fail.

Although a worship design can fail, it also can succeed, but fear can paralyze the need for change. Fear distorts the mind into thinking it is impossible to engage everyone that enters a worship space. My former music pastor often deliberated over the song selections because she received weekly emails from the congregation if they felt the songs were poor choices. However, she understood that leaders sometimes take risks when finding solutions. Therefore, the emails were beneficial in assessing the risks, rather than a deterrent from taking them. Taking risks can be a terrifying experience but can also be one of the most efficient ways to find solutions that work.

Visualize Success

“The vision at the end of Scripture shows us that the worship of God is a multilingual, multinational, multiethnic celebration of God’s glory.”³⁰ However, when my former church planted its first campus, it was hard to visualize success because we only had two musicians on staff whom both played the keyboards. Prior to my departure,

²⁹ Opstal, *The Mission of Worship*, 246-247.

³⁰ Ibid., 41.

the church grew from those two keyboard players to fourteen and more than fifty other musicians. While all these keyboardists were actively serving in some capacity at one of the four campuses, the developmental process continued. Before this system was in place, the musicians on staff were stretched beyond capacity, so one of our campus pastors had to play keyboards before preaching at each of his two services when I was unavailable to play. Witnessing the willingness of these new volunteers, made sense in leveraging this opportunity with future campuses in mind. Ecclesiastes 11:4 also warns to avoid waiting for the ideal situations to complete tasks. These developing musicians are not perfect, but they do a great job enhancing the worship service.

The experiences from planting churches through my local church led me to a successful path of interacting with people in the lobby, which led to meeting musicians who wanted to volunteer on the music team. It is easy to focus on the past failure of a worship design, but it is far more important to envision the future. The reality is that both the leader and the apprentice make mistakes even when they envision success. When the architect is designing the structure, they are convinced the plan will work. Effective ministry leaders never develop a worship service while thinking, “Well, this might fail, but I’ll do it.” There is high confidence in the worship design, but if it fails, there is a review of the processes to make necessary adjustments and visualize success again. In planning a worship service while visualizing success, increases the probability of seeing congregational engagement in meaningful worship that balances theology and culture.

Reward the Behavior

“The most important time to reward yourself is immediately after completing a particular task you set out to do. Associating good feelings with the practice and

application of the skill will bring your entire mind into the learning process required for enhanced CQ.”³¹ Sometimes leaders over-spiritualize situations when they think about the practice of worship and miss essential ingredients. There are two identifiable features to observe with the practice of rewarding behaviors. “To benefit from this strategy, first you need to set some goals for increasing your cultural intelligence.”³² First, the reward suggests that there was a plan to design a worship service inclusive of CQ. A carefully designed worship service has to be the goal when engaging in cross-cultural settings. Second, the reward reveals that someone took the time to analyze the execution of the worship design and that it was effective, which meant there was public engagement. The drive behind the reward is a result of using CQ to create the desire to learn how to engage the attendees in a worship service.

During my graduate studies at Liberty University, the students had a week-long session on campus where different individuals led the songs. In a personal attempt to make conversations, I told one of the leaders she did a great job leading the songs. There was an immediate rebuke by one of the professors who stated, “she is supposed to lead well.” Naturally, I was outraged by his response but understood what he meant a few months later. Imagine the pastor of a church saying, “Well I preached the wrong sermon today, but hopefully I will correct it next week.” Alternatively, visualize the scenario where the greeter at the door was rude to a guest but thinks he or she will have an opportunity to correct the behavior the following week. It is each leader’s responsibility to prepare a functional service, but the preparation is nullified when God is not the object

³¹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 57.

³² Ibid.

of worship. The only guaranteed opportunity to engage people is when they gather for corporate worship.

Never Lead on Empty

“Cross-cultural interaction and work” are “fatiguing. Even people with high CQ are more quickly drained by working and relating cross-culturally than when doing so in familiar contexts.”³³ Everything is heightened when engaging unfamiliar contexts because of the unknown expectations; there is a different type of energy needed for each service, so CQ helps to identify how to engage. The way in which people engage the church for Sunday morning worship is much different from a midweek Bible study or prayer service because the expectations are sometimes different for both the leaders and the congregation. If a church decides to host a revival service, the energy might be different each night with an intentional focus.

Ministry involves intentionality. After a year of church planting, my pastor led the church staff through a study of Lance Witt’s book *Replenish*. It was the realization that “our bodies and psyche are wired for health and replenishment.”³⁴ However, “our concentration on skill and technique and strategy has resulted in deemphasizing the interior life.”³⁵ Each new campus required a different type of energy to relate to its unique culture, and it was draining for those individuals who served on multiple

³³ Ibid., 59.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Lance Witt, *Replenish: Leading from a Healthy Soul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 19, Kindle.

campuses, which could eventually cause burnout. The inability to replenish affects effectiveness and resiliency. There are many resources available to help in restoration when leading in different ministry settings. Regardless of how people choose to manage their physical and mental state, the approach requires intentionality. CQ requires a distinct drive for effectiveness and energy, so when one's body breaks down, their energy and drive also fall apart.

Controlled Flexibility

Ministry requires a great sense of flexibility, but not because of poor planning. In fact, one reason to design worship services with CQ is to conform to the patterns of culture. Conforming also suggest being in control of one's action. Control is necessary for cross-cultural environment because of the responsibility of helping everyone engage. "When developing multiethnic worship it is likely that you are training leaders who are newer to crossing cultures."³⁶ Controlled flexibility keeps the goal in sight when flexibility requires deviation from the plan. God is still the object of worship, but the design helps to engage Him in worship. However, "if we've learned anything about cross-cultural relationships and experiences, it's that they're highly unpredictable."³⁷ When a leader cannot predict the ebb and flow of their worship design, they try to predict the outcome by maintaining control of their priority of getting people engaged.

A navigation system is designed to take people to their destination, but the designer cannot predict what may happen in route to the destination. Even when the

³⁶ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 93.

³⁷ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 63.

operator tries an alternative route, the navigation system will calibrate the directions.

Sometimes in a worship service, the leader may engage in an unpredictable manner, but if they recalibrate, they will get to their destination even with the assumed inconvenience.

Look Around

“When experience and frequent travel are combined with the capabilities and priorities of cultural intelligence, it plays a significant role in enhancing our CQ Drive—particularly our confidence.”³⁸ If a person served as an overseas church missionary for twenty years in multiple countries, one of the benefits that they bring to any church context is their years of experience in cross-cultural settings. The need for always adapting creates the experience necessary to lead in a cross-cultural church. Churches can find it beneficial to look at what others are saying and doing to create a sense of confidence. When a ministry leader relocates to a new city, visiting other churches or attending local events helps in identifying a generalized church culture of the community. “For a worship culture to be developed with integrity to the local expression, it is imperative to do the work of contextualization, which considers the context, place or location.”³⁹ This practice can also contribute to building positive relationships with other ministry practitioners.

A cultural pitfall for a church is when they become an entity in isolation. Even if there is no intent to practice every encountered behavior during various travels, looking around allows a person to analyze the effectiveness of their practices and create new

³⁸ Ibid., 64.

³⁹ Opstal, *The Next Worship*, 31.

methods to enhance their worship design. “The church is diverse. And congregational worship should reflect the diversity of God’s people, even if a local congregation itself is not diverse.”⁴⁰ Therefore, it may require some individuals to volunteer at local events or facilitate events to create a space for open discussions.

Phase Two: Creating CQ Structure

“The most important part of CQ Knowledge is developing a richer understanding of culture, its influence on thinking and behavior, and the primary ways cultures differ.”⁴¹ In any architectural project, the workers begin to build the structure after the foundation has been laid. Thus far, this project discussed creating the foundation for a worship service by having a culturally intelligent drive. This next stage of the design phase is reliant on the knowledge to help secure the structure of a church’s worship. Structure prevents a building from falling apart. Therefore, there is an analysis of whether a leader has “the cultural understanding needed to be more effective cross-culturally.”⁴² It is impossible to master every facet of each culture a person engages in the various worship settings, but it is possible to spend time learning the culture of a local church. However, this habit requires an intentional approach to understanding how a faith community thinks and behaves. The word *intentional* is used a lot in this research, to emphasize that culture requires human effort. The energy used to solve culture problems create value in the

⁴⁰ Ibid., 14.

⁴¹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 73.

⁴² Ibid.

church community. To create the structure needed to design an effective worship culture, nine processes will be identified in this phase.

Study Your Local Church Culture

One of the reasons Portland Seminary stands out from other schools is that the leaders of the program understand that some people learn much better about the culture through immersion. As mentioned earlier, as a doctoral student in the global leadership program, students travel to Hong Kong, South Africa, and London for an opportunity to learn from inside the cultures. Doctoral programs such as Liberty University, challenged each student to read books about cultural practices, but at Portland Seminary, students read the books and then test the theories through the various travels. “When you encounter another culture, whether it’s a nearby neighborhood or a far-away city, immerse yourself in it and learn about the culture from the inside out.”⁴³

When Christian Life Center launched a church campus in Coral Springs, Florida, they immediately realized their outreach efforts had to be unique to the community culture. The songs, dress code, and sermon delivery also had to be different because the community had a culture exclusive from their traditional practices. “Cross-cultural church planters must take extra care not to impose foreign expressions of church life, but to creatively develop the new church in ways that fulfill biblical purposes in a culturally appropriate manner. At the same time the church should demonstrate the countercultural values of the kingdom of God.”⁴⁴ As the service coordinator for the worship service, the

⁴³ Ibid., 78.

⁴⁴ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 215-215.

first thing was to study how other churches in the area planned their services. The first thing noticed was that a typical church service in the area lasted 60 to 75 minutes, but our custom was 90 to 100 minutes. There was a choir and orchestra at the central campus, but none of the churches in the area had either one. The most significant part of that culture is that the community was more family-oriented and friendly, and everyone wanted to know each person on a first-name basis. At the central campus, the church had been in the same community for over thirty years, so systems were already in place for execution, but it was important to develop a new routine for this new campus.

For the new campus, each leader immediately became creative in observing how the congregation behaved and began asking questions to help redesign the services. Each leader asked questions about community attractions and the popular hangout spots. After every weekend service, there was a huddle to discuss observations from the services and how well the church engaged. It was challenging to fit the organizational DNA in a 75-minute service, but noticed that attendees would leave the service if it lasted more than 90 minutes. It is as though they had an internal clock that demanded them to leave, because they would leave in the middle of the sermon or altar call. Regardless of personal convictions, everyone knew honoring the time restraints of the culture was important. At first, the perception was that the church community lacked spiritual fervor or maturity, so the team became creative in planning the placement of the songs and the teaching points to adjust to a 75-minute service. It was realized that members were trying to attend community events held on Sundays.

Regardless of the theological interpretation or acceptance, Jesus understood that wine was essential for weddings in that culture and performed the needed miracle.

Communities will not engage worship services unless leaders find value in the things they value. The worship service does not only take place on Sunday mornings or in the church sanctuaries. Therefore, “find ways to experience something more than the faux culture that exists in most places where you travel and instead” identify the authentic life of that location.⁴⁵ Imagine a scenario where a pastor tells the congregation of the suburban church that he would like to leave church early to catch the softball game at the park. The reality is that even if he never made it to the match, the fact that he knows about it tells a story of shared interest; CQ knowledge at its best.

Google It or Go Old School

“Search engines and the Internet provide us with” an “unprecedented amount of information. And the vast resources on the Web can be powerful for enhancing CQ Knowledge.”⁴⁶ However, Google does not help with the information needed to design every worship service. Searching online may provide information for the “how to” of worship design, something unique is needed for each worship context. Will search engines identify why church services need to end early on Super Bowl Sunday or that congregations might stay home on a rainy day rather than going to church? These are the realities of local church communities, and the answers are only available when you “go old school” by asking critical questions.

Some leaders have the tendency to design worship services based on research and trends, but rarely integrate those people they desire to engage. Every few months, it is a

⁴⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 81.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 82.

great idea to conduct anonymous surveys to gain an understanding of a congregation's engagement with the worship services, but also having weekly interactions with a focus group of the church. Search engines provide great information, but the goal is to design worship services specific to one's unique culture.

Increase Awareness

It is hard to engage cross-culturally without a global perspective.⁴⁷ Living in South Florida, people will always encounter diverse ethnicities. Therefore, regardless of size, the average is by default an ethnic church because of the demographics. Although such diversity is present, some ministry leaders ignore the difference and lock into one culture. There is a widespread rumor in Fort Lauderdale that people should learn how to speak Spanish before visiting Miami because of the demographics. The story speaks to the reality that an expansion of knowledge is important. Leaders spend time increasing their global awareness to engage communities by expanding their knowledge, yet some fail to apply the same intentional effort in designing effective worship practices.

Since enrolling in the doctoral program at Portland Seminary, I became more intentional in understanding cultural contrast in worship. It is easy to google the worship styles of other denominations, but the global awareness of specific countries requires effort. In Jamaica, the worship style is different from those living Trinidad, and it is distinct from those in Haiti. It is ignorant to assume that everyone from the Caribbean countries likes reggae or calypso music or that everyone likes Pentecostal preaching. Congregations are not asking to display their global culture in the weekly worship, but

⁴⁷ Ibid., 84.

they expect an awareness of their culture and CQ knowledge to integrate it when possible.

Many churches host international food festivals at the church to allow different cultures to display what makes them unique. It is always amazing to see both the similarities and differences of cultures. One of the strengths of my former church was that the lead pastor was actively involved with *World Missions* under the Assemblies of God. His role afforded the opportunity for our church to continuously increase awareness because of the supported missionaries around the world who shared their experiences with the church, which was used to help shape each worship service. If America is a melting pot of cultures, leaders can use that belief as a motivation to engage such cultures.

Visit Other Churches or Enroll in A Program

The primary reason for attending Berklee College of Music in 2004 was to increase my musicianship to lead the music department of four churches; one in Boston and three in Jamaica. Berklee was a famous school, but it was not a Christian one so when I asked for the Christian department, one student laughed and said, “This is a music school.” I remained in the program but visited every church I could to gain an understanding of the diverse worship styles that existed in the area. In addition to this, I traveled the country attending music and church conferences to learn from other ministry leaders because, while a worship design is unique to a local church, people within the congregation often travel to other places. Therefore, the cultural diversity they experience influences how they worship, so failing to become intentional might result in losing relevance.

Before becoming a staff member at my previous church, I had already planted eight churches and possessed two graduate degrees from a seminary, one of which was Worship Studies. This doctoral degree will be my fourth graduate degree, yet I was not an ordained pastor and served primarily in a support role. Some people in the congregation are studying about the practices that many leaders neglect. While leaders try not to appease the crowd, it is important to serve the communities well by spending time knowing what they like.

One of the overwhelming moments for some worship leaders is after a summer break because members of the congregations would have traveled the world or country and come back wondering why those experiences do not exist in their local church. My former church had a large group of islanders, and when they took vacations to various countries, they returned telling us what should be integrated in the worship set. It is impossible to incorporate all the suggestions, but the team knows the importance of honoring those requests. The moment leaders lose the motivation to redesign or at least analyze worship practices is the moment they begin to lose cultural relevance.

Your Church's Worship Culture is Not the DNA

What is the worship culture of your church? That is one of the first questions I ask when invited to train ministry leaders of local churches. It is easy for leaders to state their mission or vision statements, but they often misrepresent their organizational values with their actual behaviors. Each church functions differently in worship because culture is unique. Christian Life Center, a church in the United States, has four core values for their organization that define who they are as a congregation, but these values are expressed differently at each of their four church campuses. One of my ministry responsibilities at

that church was to develop a music experience that fits the culture of each local church.

“Those who have visited church fellowships in different lands can attest to the great variety of manners in which the church meets for worship, edification, and service.”⁴⁸

Similarly, anyone desiring to visit one of Christian Life Center’s church campuses would first identify their cultural preferences because the preaching style, songs, and language are different for each church campus. Before launching a church campus, it is important to spend time studying the behavior of the target community and find ways to design a balanced worship service.

The understanding of a church’s worship culture is more about the identity of the church. “We’ve grown up with” a particular “set of implicit rules and assumptions by which to live life and view the world” so CQ knowledge helps us to avoid the need to change these engrained practices.⁴⁹ Ethnocentrism is “believing your own culture is the right and best way to go about life,” which is a “major roadblock to CQ Knowledge.”⁵⁰ One of the rules growing up in Jamaica was that people wore suits on a Sunday morning to church. This was not a written rule, but they have always worn suits on Sundays. That tradition has since been challenged with the evolution of culture and influence of the global culture where some people now wear shorts to church. Church planting teams can recognize the culture in a community and implement the appropriate dress code. Once people understand their individual culture, they can appreciate cultural diversity.

⁴⁸ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 2124-2125.

⁴⁹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 95.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

Encountering God and Man

“Once the foundations for Christian worship have been properly laid, it is time to create the structural support for the worship service.”⁵¹ In a previous chapter, it revealed God as the orchestrator of the worship experience, regardless of individual efforts to design a balanced worship. “When we come together to worship we do so, in response to God’s call. In the gathering, we acknowledge that God has invited us to meet with [Him] through [His] Son, Jesus Christ.”⁵² However, never forget that people are encountered through this invitation. An invitation to an event suggests there is some level of consciousness that others are also invited to the same event. Each guest may feel privileged because of the invitation, but the inviter feels a sense of joy when each guest celebrates them the same way. Likewise, God is expecting everyone to engage Him, which puts a smile on His face. The idea is to respond to the invitation of worship but engage each other with the sense of oneness.

God is seeking worshipers to answer His invitation according to John 4:23. When He has found His worshipers, they respond together because of His request to create a divine encounter between God and man. Worship would significantly change “if an entire congregation truly sensed that they were coming to worship in answer to God’s personal invitation.”⁵³ There is often a tendency by some leaders to influence their congregations to respond to them before responding God. This is similar to a created event where guests witness a performance and have the option to appreciate the efforts of the performer.

⁵¹ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 38.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 53.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 54.

Therefore, there is a spectatorship out of the congregation instead of engagement. When God is the orchestrator of worship, leaders invite the church to engage in a moment where everyone responds to Him.

“The book of Revelation describes the culmination of salvation history, emphasizing that God will bring into the kingdom persons from every people, nation, tribe, and tongue (Rev. 5: 9; 7: 9).”⁵⁴ Christ then receives the church similarly to a groom who receives his bride on their wedding day. It does not matter the nature of the attended event; each guest seeks an opportunity to interact with the host (*inviter*). Like a bride who embraces her wedding guests, visualize God walking around the room and hugging everyone that He invited. The guests feel uncomfortable leaving the event until they greet the inviter, even when they encounter other guests. Rethink the processes if congregants leave the worship services comfortably without meeting God.

Each church has a program, and someone does a call to worship to indicate the start of the service but the worship service begins when people encounter each other on the church campus. God uses every moment to embrace His people through conversations, smile, and even a hug. “It makes a great difference who initiates worship, for God’s call transforms church from a meeting of the minds to a meeting with the living God.”⁵⁵ While people believe that they initiate corporate worship, God started His process through the invitation to himself but allows them to be a representation of His church. There is a personal desire to “help leaders construct worship services that are

⁵⁴ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 527-528.

⁵⁵ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 54.

faithful to Scripture, historically conscious, relevant to God, Christ-centered, and engaging for worshipers.”⁵⁶

As a congregation, people gather from different cultures, and they all have a story to share with each other, although sometimes their minds are preoccupied with variables outside of worship. For example, “Jesus used the illustration of a harvest field to emphasize the urgency of gathering true worshipers (John 4: 22– 42) and “in the same way, when a group of people responds to the gospel, they are brought into the fellowship of the local church to worship God.”⁵⁷

However, when people encounter each other, the desire to worship God aligns their hearts and minds. The singing of songs, prayers or even the preached sermon does not necessitate there being a divine encounter with God. These elements in corporate worship guides people spiritually and help them acknowledge that God has called for confession of any sin that could disable their worship, express their gratitude for the presence of their risen Lord, and exhort fellow worshipers to turn their attention to God.⁵⁸ It has always been God’s practice to allow people to affirm His presence. While people do not pay Christ monetarily, they owe Him their lives because He gave Himself freely to enable unrestricted worship.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 169.

⁵⁷ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 949-953.

⁵⁸ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 55.

Phase Three: Following A CQ Path

The third part of the building phase involves the CQ strategy, which asks the question: “can I anticipate and plan appropriately in light of the personal and cultural dynamics involved?”⁵⁹ The reason for spending the time to design the worship services is that leaders anticipate results. Congregants engage God through worship, and worship provides access to God. As ministry leaders develop their worship services, they predict a response through a cultural lens. “Christian worship must be fundamentally viewed as consisting of all the worship acts.”⁶⁰ The CQ worship design involves prayer and music. Prayer allows individuals to capture the heart of worship, but “congregational song is the heart and soul of all worship” and serves as a vehicle for the church community.⁶¹ A church’s worship design is like a story that is scripted from the beginning to the end and geared toward engaging the congregation. The more things leaders can create to engage everyone at the same time, the more effective the results. Christians “sing the story of God. Worship is primarily a proclamation of the whole story of who God is and what God has done through [His] mighty acts of salvation throughout history.”⁶²

Observe the Behavior

In a worship design, the effectiveness is not in the implementation of all the processes at once. However, it is possible to strategize to make weekly changes while

⁵⁹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 110.

⁶⁰ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 125.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 153.

analyzing the process. A few years ago, the leaders of my former church in Fort Lauderdale felt like God was leading them to plant churches, but they also felt the need to change their worship style. Changing the worship style was going to be a significant shift from their traditional cultural behavior, so planning was critical. “One way to improve your CQ Strategy is to intentionally put up your antenna to take note of what’s going on in a multicultural situation. The key to using this strategy successfully is to notice without responding to what you see.”⁶³ The first change started with the style of music and how the team rehearsed. Every Tuesday, the music department gathered for a corporate rehearsal with all the music teams from the church campuses. Although the rehearsal started at 7:30 pm, everyone gathered at 6:30 pm and watched concerts that depicted the new style of music. After watching these videos for an hour, the lead pastor would walk the group through a devotional. This process continued for six months.

One of the main reasons for the observational process is that the engagement would predict how the rest of the congregation would respond, since the team would lead the congregational songs. The decision to plant these new churches and redesign the worship practices was already made, but the leaders needed an opportunity to observe how the music team would respond. People will always react differently to each worship service, although some leaders want to form an opinion based on the general congregational response. In designing worship services, “don’t rush to make sense out of what you observe.”⁶⁴ When designing anything to mold a new cultural behavior, people

⁶³ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 115.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

are also skeptical of the design, so they are also watching in silence. “With time, you’ll be able to form some accurate interpretations” about why people responded the way they did.⁶⁵

Stay Open-Minded

“Another way to enhance your CQ Strategy is to train your mind to think more broadly.”⁶⁶ What if someone spent countless hours working on a project, but when they finished their greatest work, someone says, “that’s a great start and I can’t wait to see the finished product.”? Imagine the emotional state after hearing that unexpected response? In designing worship services, never get locked into a narrow viewpoint or categorize people based on a perceived behavior.

The purpose of the worship design is not to classify for the sake of judging because some behaviors may not fit an ideology. Having an open-mind approach allow the ability to “demonstrate more tolerance for things that might not fit into preexisting categories.”⁶⁷ Therefore, when there is no response to the worship design, ministry leaders need to be open to analyzing what might have happened, and be willing to redesign it. Effective leaders are constantly redesigning their practices to engage individuals that walk through their church doors. As stated earlier, the goal is the big picture, so the worship navigation system might have to calibrate to reach the destination of culturally intelligent worship. Like a navigation system, “multicultural work often

⁶⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 116.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 117.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

requires adapting your thinking to deal with unpredictable situations,” and that is the big idea of CQ, adapt and keep adapting.⁶⁸

The Danger of Routine

Have you ever been so deep in thought or conversation that you missed your bus (or train) stop or drove past your home? It is often because “our brain operates on autopilot as a way to cope with the many things that pull for our attention.”⁶⁹ An experienced worship practitioner can predict the typical worship behavior in a local church. However, there have been moments when I notice that one person in the congregation did not engage according to the prediction, so I looked for an opportunity to have a conversation with them to understand the behavior.

The difference between designing a house and building one is that the design is theoretical and the building is the result of the theory. Even the best-constructed house goes through renovations or internal redesigns, and worship services are the same. Worship architects need mindfulness, which is “complete awareness of everything that happens within your body, mind, and consciousness. In a cross-cultural situation, mindfulness can help us move out of our automated habits of thinking and behavior.”⁷⁰ Although Sunday morning is coming, and the pastor is planning to preach a transformational sermon after a few heartfelt songs, leaders can sometimes get into a

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 121.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 120.

routine and miss other important details. An understanding of the Sunday morning routine does not always give insights into the congregation's behavior.

Pre- and Post-Service Review

Before each weekly service at my church, the team meets to plan the flow of the worship service: the orchestral prelude, worship songs, sermon, and every element involved in the service. Then, after each service, the same team meets to discuss how the congregation engaged the service; this helps with making changes (if necessary) for the following week. While some leaders are personally involved in the service, everyone observe different behaviors based on what is happening at various moments in the service, which is important when the church is in a new community. When Christian Life Center launched a campus in a suburban city in Florida, services were held live on Saturdays with a playback of the sermon for the Sunday morning group. The biggest challenge noticed was that after thirty minutes of watching the video, the congregation automatically disengaged. The problem was that the sermons averaged forty-five to fifty minutes. On Saturdays, it was easy to engage the congregation for an hour. However, on Sunday mornings, the people did not always laugh at the same jokes in the pre-recorded video, and visitors rarely came back.

One year later, the campus shifted to live services on both days, and the membership grew by more than eighty people in four months. The reason for the smooth transition is that the leaders spent 52 weeks journaling every behavior and separated their personal preferences from the congregational responses. "CQ Strategy requires that you

shut down some of your” semi-automatic action and “step outside yourself to see what you’re observing, thinking, and feeling.”⁷¹

Routines often influence semi-automatic actions. My church had choir rehearsals every Tuesday, but sometimes practiced one song for two or three weeks before singing it, and five times during the weekend they are scheduled to sing the song. Here is why: (1) we rehearse as a choir, (2) we rehearse with the band, orchestra, and media, (3) we do a run-through on Sunday morning, and (4) we sing it once for each of the two church services. This routine means that the band, orchestra, and choir would have sung or played this song at least seven times outside of learning the actual song. The music staff would regularly complain when asked to sing any song that twice in a month thinking we had “worn out” the song. The problem with having multiple services is that each member of the congregation might have only heard the choir singing it once. The team needed to step outside themselves and observe the congregational engagement to see how the song connected with them.

When designing worship services, leaders predict every element of conception but avoid locking into any assumptions. The planning of the worship serves as a sign of preparation for God to orchestrate the experience. God chooses how He wants to connect with us at the right moment. A contractor builds a house but has no idea who will live in it or whether the owner has renovations in mind. The architect also has no idea of the owner’s concept of the internal design, although it will happen. Worship services are designed for God, there is an expectation for people to respond but no one controls how

⁷¹ Ibid., 123.

they will respond. However, the architect is pleased if the congregation responds positively.

Food, Fight, and Fellowship

Recently, I attended a graduation party, and the hosts asked each attendee to play a song that reflected the personality of the graduate. Sadly, most of the song selections reflected the culture of the person selecting the music and not the graduate. This attitude is also the challenge when designing worship services because some leaders create the worship to reflect their ideology. Imagine creating a worship service that reflects a Jamaican heritage to a Hispanic congregation. The engagement would produce a mixed response. One of the ways to help in the worship design is to host simple social events.

Dr. Ergun Caner of Liberty University, often joked around in his lectures that Southern Baptist is all about food, fight, and fellowship. The point he was making is that people love to eat, and they love coming together, but the cultural contrast always creates tension. Healthy tensions are important when designing worship because it helps to avoid experimenting too much at a worship event. However, when hosting social events, there are many things to observe that will help in the worship services. For example, as a Jamaican, would it surprise you if shrimp Alfredo was my favorite meal and not jerk chicken or something curried? Alternatively, what happens when someone with a Hispanic name does not speak Spanish and someone brought their Hispanic friends to meet this mystery guest? People live with these assumptions. These tensions and assumptions are maximized in different social settings. “Just as a mirror allows us to

adjust our external appearance, reflecting on our thoughts and experiences is a key way of adjusting our internal assumptions and behaviors.”⁷²

In 1999, I was on the soccer team at Bunker Hill Community College, and the team experienced a life-changing event. The team had a few games in New York, so the coaches drove two school buses for the three-hour trip from Boston. The challenge was that one of the buses had predominantly Hispanics students with one student from Saudi Arabia. The coach who drove this bus thought that it would be a fair trade by allowing this student to sit in the front while they played Latin music. The student was not a fan of Latin music, and he threatened to jump from a bus traveling 70mph if they played another Latin song. Everyone thought he was joking until the next Latin song started and the student opened his door as the coach drove on the highway; everyone took him seriously. Both buses pulled over to the side of the road, to transfer the student to my bus. The head coach chose not to play any music for the remainder of the trip.

As drastic as it may sound, attendees make decisions to not engage or to leave churches when the worship design is poor. Attendees are even more inclined to leave at their leisure if people become insensitive to their culture. Social settings allow individuals to measure their assumptions in an environment outside of the typical spiritual setting to avoid making these same assumptions in the church services. In worship, “sometimes what we intend to communicate and what people receive are at cross purposes because we are unaware of the cultural assumptions that form both the intent of a message and the reception of any verbal or nonverbal communication.”⁷³ The

⁷² Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 175.

⁷³ Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 13.

goal is to find enough information about the desired community to engage and use that to help design a culturally intelligent worship.

What Do You Expect?

“Our natural curiosity drives us to grapple with the shape of the things we see in the environment, the structures, and the land, and to visualize the changes that often span generations.”⁷⁴ Another essential element of worship design centers around the expectations of a diverse group of people, often representing a range of cultures. “Expectations alter the way your brain makes sense of things, and meeting them reinforces the way the brain thinks about it.”⁷⁵ Leaders develop their services based on their experiences and research of a given culture, which provides the necessary information to design an effective worship service. What are you expecting to happen in this service? What do you do if those expectations are not met? These observations of the behavior trigger the desire to create a worship design. Therefore, there is an expectation for that behavior to change because of this design. The expectations in worship do not replace how God orchestrates worship; it allows the space for honesty. The reason someone might say the service was excellent, is that they had an expectation that was met but sometimes they leave the services with unmet expectations. This would not lead to an excellent service; it is excellent when the expectation is met or exceeded.

When someone says, ‘you are beautiful today,’ does that suggest you look shabby on other days? The tendency when congregants tell leaders that they had an excellent

⁷⁴ Hourly History, *Mayan Civilization: A History From Beginning to End* (N.p.: Hourly History, 2016), 2, Kindle Edition.

⁷⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 128.

service ‘today,’ is to say thank you. However, another reaction is to reflect on a possible deeper issue. Is it possible that some of the worship services are not engaging, so attendees leave unfulfilled? What if those conversational moments were used to ask about their usual expectations? Asking questions allow leaders to compare their expectations with the congregants. Since leaders are expecting congregations to engage in the services, attendees also have an expectation. The difference is that leadership teams redesign the services regularly because they are seeking ways to fill the expectations. When leaders fail to ask their congregation questions, if their expectations are always unmet, they may eventually seek another church to meet that expectations. Expectations often change because people attend the services with many agendas. The seasons also affect their expectations of the service. There is a unique crowd in for Easter, Mother’s Day, and Christmas services and some pastors feel disappointed if that expectation is unmet. Likewise, some congregations feel the same way, if nothing special is done on those special on those days.

The reason for the design is to change behavior, so people can identify how we would like it to change. There is no guarantee of the results, but having expectations is part of the preparation, and it also motivates proactive measures in the context of the process.

What Is the Ingredient?

“When you’re working cross-culturally, taking the time to plan ahead by developing a checklist can prevent you from spinning off into what you’ve convinced yourself is just a necessary adaptation culturally when in point of fact it might be

detrimental to your overall success.”⁷⁶ Baking a cake requires several sequential steps to produce a precise result but because of individual interpretations of the instructions, they rarely turn out the same. The goal is for congregational engagement in worship, but there are several important ingredients involved in the service.

Imagine if the song leader says, “The words are on the screen so please sing along with us,” but the words were not actually on the screen because the song was not on the list. Some ministry leaders struggle with this structure because they feel having a checklist restricts them. However, a list allows engagement of the community, according to the created plan.

When someone walks through the church doors, there is an assumption that (1) he or she found a parking space, (2) someone greeted them with a smile, (3) someone offered them a program or bulletin. We continue with the other ingredients of the service, with the assumption that the other elements (parking, greeter, etc.) are in the bowl. If someone leaves feeling unfulfilled, people automatically look to see which ingredient was out of place. “Improving your CQ Strategy can be as simple as creating a few checklists. The very exercise of making them is a tangible way to work on your cross-cultural planning.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Ibid., 130.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 131.

Control the Moment

“The idols of being right and being in control stand out as primary temptations that exacerbate Christian disunity.”⁷⁸ The idea behind this process is flexibility in understanding the inability to predict all cultural behaviors. Imagine you designed the perfect worship service and every element was perfect until the preacher gets up to preach and you realize the congregation never received a sermon outline. At that moment, the architect is no longer in charge, but if they planned well, the preacher can interpret the circumstance and control the time of stress. I have been in churches where the pastor would acknowledge the error of the ushers as an open rebuke, but I have seen successful pastors use that moment to acknowledge a person’s humanity.

“When you learn to harness deep stress by reappraising a situation, you enhance your CQ Strategy and your overall effectiveness.”⁷⁹ Most congregations expect the leaders to be in control, but understand the service may not be perfect. They want to know that they were prepared for the unexpected events, which makes it necessary to have pre- *and* post-service reviews, so everyone involved in the services know how they fit in the execution of the worship design.

After a service like this, it is a perfect opportunity for a post-service review to identify what created that moment of stress in the service, even though it was designed correctly. CQ allows people to adjust when the plan is failing or if there is a time of uncertainty.

⁷⁸ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 79.

⁷⁹ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 133.

Phase Four: Role of Diversity

The big idea of CQ is that of adaptability, and the goal is finding a way of designing a worship service with a balance of theology and culture. The question we ask ourselves is: “What behaviors should I adapt for this cross-cultural situation?”⁸⁰ In other words, when people encounter a cross-cultural setting, they choose how to adjust to the verbal and nonverbal behaviors. “CQ Action includes adapting your verbal and nonverbal behaviors and changing your speech acts—the way you approach different topics and situations.”⁸¹ This new behavior tells us a decision has already been made to adapt to this new culture. However, corporate worship involves everyone, so CQ worship is more about group learning and adaptation than it is individualistic mentality.

Throughout history, most worship services have been “multicultural” to some degree in that they contain elements from diverse cultures, including roots in Jewish worship but claiming that all worship is multicultural in its very nature masks the real differences that congregations are facing today when persons of very diverse cultures worship together.⁸²

Having several graduate degrees meant that information was transmitted educationally to influence personal life change, but the desire is for a global church (at least the majority of the churches) to change. Unless there is an intentional commitment to teaching congregations about CQ worship, they may never change. The goal is to shift from individualism to collectivism. This final phase is more practical than the three previous stages because it puts the worship design into action. For the remainder of this

⁸⁰ Ibid., 144.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 2.

chapter, a list of possible behaviors will be identified to help ministry leaders guide worship design.

Experience is Key

“Our experiences and identities influence who we are and how we communicate scriptural truth. Put simply, who we are and what we’ve experienced in life influence who we are today and even how we preach.”⁸³ After twenty-one years as a worship practitioner, I have not mastered the art of worship, but I have learned various skill sets through my engagement with diverse worship cultures. Individual experiences will also help guide people with an understanding of when to implement the various skills. Having experiences with cross-cultural worship, can help identify nonverbal behaviors much quicker than inexperienced practitioners. Sometimes it is beneficial to have a coach or mentor when designing worship services; I resorted to education because of the lack of mentors at the time.

Unity in diversity helps people to “recognize the Christian story that unites us even though that story has been conveyed through different cultural lenses.”⁸⁴ Having a diverse perspective on culture helps to develop one’s CQ knowledge, especially if the diversity conflicts with cultural norms. Having mentors is beneficial in various areas of people’s lives and is also beneficial when developing one’s CQ knowledge because they “use questions to guide us and offer support and feedback.”⁸⁵ When education or mentors

⁸³ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 51.

⁸⁴ Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 58.

⁸⁵ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 101.

are not available, the best source of experience might be through networking with other ministry leaders in the area. “Don’t worry about doing this perfectly. But pick up on the different nonverbal behaviors used in various cultures and add some to your repertoire.”⁸⁶

Mimic Without Mocking

Good actors live in a world of “imagination and take on the thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and circumstances of the character in a way that seems authentic.”⁸⁷ Ministry leaders would cringe at the idea of being an actor when leading worship, but let us not forget that theater plays a significant role in explaining the Bible stories because it captures the attention of an individual by bringing the story to life. Worship leaders want their congregations to value God and not just their church’s core values. Storytelling engages church members and helps them in their adjustments of cultural behaviors, but it is only effective with great role playing. Therefore, ministry leaders become the role players that influence congregations to respond positively.

Leaders read scriptures and teach people how to worship, but everyone creates the imagery of God based on his or her experiences. Using scriptures to tell a story is helpful but mimicking helps to make it a reality; everyone is sharing a familiar story through this one experience. “The lack of a shared story, a common culture, can be a stumbling block as the people join in worship together.”⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Ibid., 149.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 151.

⁸⁸ Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 86.

One of the main reasons ministry leaders would cringe is due to misunderstanding or ignorance of the definition of culture. Just as worship involves music but is more than the music, culture includes ethnicity but is more than ethnicity. Therefore, if I visit Jamaica and return to my local church mimicking the dialect for fun during the congregational song, it may become a mockery because of the setting. However, if this was done at an international festival hosted by my church, the setting is perfect. “Do not perform a superficial representation just for the sake of diversity.”⁸⁹

The mimicking discussed in this segment is more about understanding the culture and identifying with that culture. “The more you can identify with the individuals from various cultures, the better your ability to act” as they do.⁹⁰ Therefore, a ministry leader wore the jersey or blazer of a local sports team at a worship service, the congregation may have a different perspective. Another way of honoring culture is choosing to host a Super Bowl party for the sake of fellowship in contrast to having a worship service. “One of the crucial parts of having enhanced CQ Action is knowing when you should flex your behavior to mirror the behavior of others and when you shouldn’t.”⁹¹ CQ helps people to assess and improve their practices in and out of the worship settings. However, the art of mimicking can enhance each interaction.

⁸⁹ Rah, *Many Colors*, 172.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 151.

⁹¹ Ibid.

Avoid the Blunder

Since leadership is a multicultural challenge, cultural sensitivity requires intentionality because “the desire to treat other people with honor and respect doesn’t automatically mean our behavior comes across as dignifying and kind.”⁹² Most people forgive “unintentional blunders when it comes to cross-cultural behavior,” but they respect you more when you try to avoid basic cultural offenses.⁹³ Being cultured to the American tradition can desensitize some of an immigrant’s heritage. CQ worship helps us to honor the culture in worship and helps us avoid the blunder in worship settings.

Avoid Theological Jargon

According to Kenneth Burke, “you persuade [individuals] only insofar as you can talk [their] language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, [and] idea, identifying your ways with [theirs].”⁹⁴ Therefore, “the vocabulary of the listener determines whether the sermon [or song] will be accepted or rejected.”⁹⁵ While it is a pastor’s responsibility to preach or a singer’s job to sing songs, they “must establish a ‘commonness’ with someone to have communication.”⁹⁶ Resorting to a basic vocabulary

⁹² Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, 20.

⁹³ Livermore, *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*, 153.

⁹⁴ Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives and a Rhetoric of Motives* (Cleveland, OH: World Pub. Co., 1962), 579.

⁹⁵ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 27-28.

⁹⁶ David J. Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally: An Introduction to Missionary Communication*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 46.

does not mean neglect of theology but “every cultural context requires a custom-made or culturalized sermon [or worship] delivery.”⁹⁷

The purpose of this final stage is to find a practicality in CQ. Imagine this unfortunate scenario where the song leader says, “Let’s stand and sing this song together,” but they start singing in French to their English-speaking congregation. The ability to sing in multiple languages is impressive since “there’s no substitute for being fluent in a language to have the utmost effectiveness interacting, but that simply is not possible for all the cultures we encounter.”⁹⁸ Avoiding theological jargon does not promote hypocrisy in communications. “Rather, [worshiping] with cultural intelligence invites opportunities for [worship leaders] to adjust communication styles and thereby relate to as many cultural groups that worship together as possible.”⁹⁹ Corporate worship ends when the congregation finds difficulty worshipping as one.

Summary

“Until you know what your church exists for, you have no foundation, no motivation, and no direction for ministry.”¹⁰⁰ The church itself was designed to engage everyone in worship, so finding subgroups in some congregations or a decline in membership suggest a need to redefine the purpose as a church or redesign or worship. Whether people choose to redefine or redesign their practices, they intend to “recapture a

⁹⁷ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 24.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁹⁹ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 24.

¹⁰⁰ Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, 81.

clear vision of what God wants to do in and through” their churches.¹⁰¹ In order to win the world for Christ, leaders cannot neglect any group in their churches, and CQ helps to create balance. Although some people use CQ in their practices, “unless the driving force behind a church is biblical, the health and growth of the church will never be what God intended.”¹⁰² This research does not suggest that culture somehow replaces a person’s biblical responsibility; it enhances their ability to enact that which they are biblically responsible for.

The purpose behind the architectural metaphor of this chapter is to show that “a church built on an inadequate or faulty foundation will never reach the height that God intends for it to reach.”¹⁰³ When there is skepticism in one’s worship behavior, congregants become more inclined to leave due to the insensitivity. Therefore, ministry leaders create CQ worship and then teach their congregations to behave in a way that mirrors their design, by default becoming a part of the foundation.

Efficient missional efforts occur when the entire church has a vested interest in the worship practices. There is the tension of designing a worship service to cater to the culture of that location and introducing multi-ethnic worship despite it not immediately matching the culture of a church. Both are important but as stated in previous sections of this project, this is the introductory stage to a more indebt research for a subject with limited available resources.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 82.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 85.

CONCLUSION

This research produced the importance of worshiping with cultural intelligence by using biblical narratives, stories and personal interactions in multiple cross-cultural contexts. It was my desire to use stories to move each reader from the formal aspects of the text to a more interpretative process. Stories have the ability to allow readers to make a personal connection. Since this project serves as a support for ministry leaders, it is important for each leader to organize these stories based on their ministry context.

“As in all readings, there [was] a transaction between the biblical text and the community, and this [resulted] in the production of meaning.”¹ As suggested in the opening pages of this project, this is an introductory dialogue of what it means to worship with cultural intelligence in cross-cultural contexts. It is also not a definitive statement on cross-cultural worship, but recommendations based on personal and professional experiences in multiple worship settings.

When researching any project, there are two distinct possibilities. First, the researcher may effectively answer the question under consideration, or, second, unearth more questions related to the research. “In today’s world, humans live in so many different environments that have played a role in developing their cultures, sustenance and philosophies.”² This study revealed the importance of church leaders implementing a CQ model by becoming culturally aware of the influences that may affect how their churches engage God in worship. People’s inability to coexist culturally also creates a

¹ Archer, *The Gospel Revisited*, 801-802.

² Hourly History, *Mayan Civilization*, 1.

spiritual gap. If ministry leaders desire to see a balance between culture and theology, their CQ must also increase. Therefore, by developing CQ worship, leaders can find the balance needed in their weekly cross-cultural worship.

What does it mean to have CQ worship? “Do the Scriptures say exactly how every Christian group should worship in every place and time?”³ No, scriptures do not offer everything, and I am not suggesting that completing various assessments will automatically solve the worship culture problems because “human lives and cultures are much too complex for us to reduce our understanding of them to a simplistic formula.”⁴ The reduction of this understanding could also cause us to devalue the importance of CQ worship and, even worse, worship itself. “The starting place in understanding Christian worship is to recognize that worship flows from the person and work of God.”⁵

Therefore, in any design of weekly services, it is important that leaders “create appropriate space whereby God and the people of God can be in” a “meaningful relationship.”⁶ CQ worship is about creating an environment that fosters authentic worship to God while reflecting a balance between theology and culture. It involves how individuals use the knowledge they gain about culture to become inclusive of diversity in their worship practices. Worship in the twenty-first century is diverse because of globalization, which increases the need for CQ in churches.

³ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 16.

⁴ Rah, *Many Colors*, 195.

⁵ Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 51.

In this research, CQ worship was introduced as the most critical competency for congregations to engage God in corporate settings. To develop CQ worship, four phases were outlined in chapter five that highlight the importance of engaging with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. While the geographic location may limit or shape how people worship, they learn through this research that others encounter God theologically within the boundaries set by culture. Leaders cannot predict how each community will respond in corporate worship because every community has its unique cultural practices. Therefore, they use assessments to measure the existing behaviors and identify areas in their lives that need cultural improvements.

While a comprehensive CQ worship assessment will be provided in a forthcoming research, several test questions and four simple assessments were offered in this dissertation to help readers evaluate their level of cultural intelligence. Sometimes there is a great failure in realizing that the information received about culture, influences how people adapt to diversity. Culture affects human behavior and helps to shape one's worship identity. "Culture is the measurable expression of a multitude of elements coming together to create how an environment is experienced by others."⁷ Individually, it is our obligation to respond intelligently while engaging culture. Although each society has cultural values that guide decision-making, these decisions should never lead to isolation or alienation from any cultural group. In contrast, these values help in realizing the differences in thought with people from other cultures.

⁷ Ralph Mayhew, *How to Create the Organizational Culture You Want: Leading Cultural Change in Business, Church and the Social Sector*, 1st ed. (N.p.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016), 95, Kindle.

“Intercultural work is full of paradox and contradiction.”⁸ Leaders think *widely*, but focus *deeply* and *manage* their expectations, but *create* checklists. This pressure proves that improving CQ is not reliant on one cultural perspective. One of the reasons to use tour guides in unfamiliar cultures is because of the desire to engage the culture despite lacking the ability to effectively engage in isolation. Likewise, when churches engage a community, they become a tourist with the need for a tour guide to show them the most important elements of that community. Churches show a lack of CQ when they enter new cultures believing that their religious practices will bridge the gap.

Scripture tells us that when Peter was in Capernaum, the temple tax collectors asked him whether Jesus paid taxes (Matthew 17:24). Later in the text, Peter had a discourse in which Jesus explained that the reason they should pay taxes was to avoid offending the culture. Jesus understood that it would be impossible to engage the culture if they were unwilling to honor its values. “Cultural intelligence requires recognition that much of what is going on in a culture is often found underneath the surface.”⁹ Jesus and His disciples were involved in the community and understood the things that would be offensive; offense is not a purpose of the church.

When engaging people in the church communities, there is an expectation to collaborate with the culture. Sometimes leaders become more interested in assimilating their theology while forgetting that it only has *legs* when people respond. “Our natural tendency is to envision planting congregations that look and act something like our home

⁸ Ibid., 174.

⁹ Rah, *Many Colors*, 189.

church, even though the church may be planted in another culture or under very different circumstances.”¹⁰

Some churches get criticized because of the style of their ministry, but God is diverse, which means different churches reach different people. God expects fruitfulness (John 15:16) because this is how people glorify Him (John 15:8); it also pleases Him (Colossians 1:10). Looking toward designing worship in a multicultural context that is culturally conscious, it is important to ascertain why churches were motivated to become multicultural, why individuals have chosen to join a multicultural congregation.¹¹

Churches do not decide to become diverse, but they are distinct because people have choices. CQ worship allows people to use their diversity of cultures to express their worship to God in a corporate setting. Cultural diversity in worship services is becoming increasingly important, so ministry leaders seek ways to create value by ensuring each service has some biblical applications with CQ. While the lack of CQ can lead to a pretense in corporate worship, CQ worship provides a process for bridging culture and theology.

¹⁰ Ott and Wilson, *Global Church Planting*, 197.

¹¹ Black, *Culturally-conscious Worship*, 17.

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