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Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader an Invitation to a Life-Long Journey of Stability, Fidelity, and Obedience

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

PROJECT PORTFOLIO:

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

AN INVITATION TO A LIFE-LONG JOURNEY OF STABILITY, FIDELITY AND OBEDIENCE



IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

PORTLAND SEMINARY

BY:

BRAD PEMBLETON

PROJECT FACULTY:

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PORTLAND, OREGON

FEBRUARY 2023



CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This certifies that the doctoral Project Portfolio of

Brad Pembleton

has been approved by
the Evaluation Committee on March 16, 2023
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation.

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Dedication

To my dad and mom, Tom and Marcia Pembleton, who have inspired me through word and deed to love my family and the Church as Christ has loved us. May I continue to live into the legacy you have given through your unconditional service to the mission of God.

Acknowledgments

To Dr. MaryKate Morse, Dr. Ken Van Vliet and Dr. Kurtley Knight for allowing me to sit at your feet as I continue the life-long journey to becoming a spiritually formed leader.

To Dr. Jeffery Savage, my Project Faculty Advisor, an unwavering anchor and a faithful presence that nurtured and spurred us on to serve the local church well through our doctoral projects.

The Little Savages: Michael, Nathan, Wes and David. I will be forever grateful for your stability, fidelity and obedience. Looking forward to continuing the life-long journey as co-laborers and brothers in Christ.

To LSF6 cohort, the Awesomes, thank you for allowing me to sit at the table as we shared, broke bread, learned and encouraged one another along the path.

The stakeholders who gave their time, talent and treasure to this project: Travis, Nate, Chad, Jackie, Mary, Slick, Elizabeth, Tina, Jason, Kristen, Johnnie, Mike, Rob and Sandra. Thank you for lending your voices, experiences and perspectives that have shaped this project. Thank you to Butch, Jeff and Lubega for your friendship and your theological and grammatical input.

To Crossbridge Christian Church, the staff, elders and faith community for allowing me space to learn and grow as a leader and pastor. Thank you for being a place where my family is able to believe, become, belong and be sent.

Finally, to my wife Tanya, son Brant and daughter Camden who inspired me every day to keep running the race before me and to finish strong; you are my joy and crown!

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Glossary

Cairn. A Scottish word that literally means “heap of stones.” Rock cairns are often constructed and used for navigation in the wilderness to guide hikers along the path.

Restoration Movement. The Restoration Movement was birthed in the early 1800’s by Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone after the American Revolution. These autonomous, non-denominational churches hold to, “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love” as an effort to create space for people to grow and learn the essentials of the Christian faith but not be legalistic with non-salvific issues that tend to rise within the church. There are roughly five thousand Restoration Movement churches within the United States.

Research Method

This Doctoral Project utilized a blended research and design methodology called ‘Collaborative Design for Ministry and Nonprofit Contexts’. In Collaborative Design, practitioners work with stakeholder representatives to address a Need, Problem, or Opportunity (NPO) in their context. Using a combination of bibliographic resources, local knowledge derived from stakeholder Workshops, and an iterative process of continuous adjustment using ‘just enough’ feedback information at each juncture of development, practitioners produce an application-oriented Project that seeks to effect Christ-centered change.

Abstract

The project was developed in response to the following need within non-denominational churches that lack vision and resources to invest in their spiritual leaders: Leaders of non-denominational churches should be trained and equipped to attend to a life-long process of being spiritually formed to effectively nurture God's people. To address an overwhelming need for spiritual leaders to grow in their spiritual formation to the glory of God and for the sake of others, this is a two-fold strategy that utilizes both the left and right brain to engage beliefs, doctrine and strategies while also focusing on relational experiences, emotional development and character formation: first, a five-session interactive curriculum designed for participants to discover the need for leaders to be spiritually formed; second, an invitation to those who have been through the curriculum to commit to a mentoring community of three or four individuals for twelve months. The purpose of the five-session curriculum is to help participants understand that leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process that one must attend to faithfully and effectively nurture God's people. It is also designed to inspire participants to invest in their spiritual formation long term. Those who accept the invitation to begin the life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed are provided their next step by committing to a mentoring community. This covenantal community that is marked by stability, fidelity and obedience will embark on a spiritual journey by meeting twice a month to grow and learn together as participants develop their own rule of life, a guide that allows God's Spirit to work through different rhythms of grace to continue the process of cultivating leadership and spiritual formation within the participant for the next season of life.

Introduction

Through the process of discovery, design and delivery, my journey brought me to developing and addressing the following NPO: *Leaders of non-denominational churches should be trained and equipped to attend to a life-long process of being spiritually formed to effectively nurture God's people.* To address the NPO I have created a five-session interactive curriculum designed for participants to discover the need for leaders to be spiritually formed and to invite them to commit to a mentoring community. The purpose of the five-session curriculum is to, first, help participants understand leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process that one must attend to faithfully to effectively nurture God's people; second, to inspire participants to invest in their spiritual formation long term. Those who accept the invitation to begin the life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed are provided their next step by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. This covenantal community will embark on a spiritual journey by meeting twice a month to grow and learn together through a mentoring guide as they develop their own rule of life. In short, the curriculum provides a compelling "why?" participants should invest in leadership and spiritual formation, while the mentoring guide cultivates a space for life-long transformation for the individual and for the faith community. The Doctoral Project consists of lecture notes, student notes, presentation slides and an abbreviated version of the mentoring guide.

Discovery

My NPO ministry context includes the Independent Christian Churches that are tied to the Restoration Movement and their leadership teams. These evangelical communities and their leadership teams are a part of the greater Houston area that are primarily suburban. The suburban culture is well defined; it is family oriented and educationally driven. Many of the leadership teams consist of pastors, elders, deacons and ministry team leaders. Non-denominational churches rooted in the Restoration Movement typically hold to the complementarian view of marriage, family life and church leadership within the local faith community. Although there has been progress in a more equitable understanding of women in church leadership, the male gender is the overwhelming recognized influence of spiritual leadership within my context. Acknowledging the reality of my current context, but desiring inclusion of women in spiritual leadership, the Doctoral Project will be offered to men in leadership positions (elder, deacon and ministry leaders), but designed to accommodate mixed groups when applicable.

Researching an NPO required me to embrace our brokenness as a faith community, listening with humility, trusting the process and being patient in offering transformative solutions. The journey began with the following NPO: *Leaders of non-denominational faith communities are not addressing those who were once connected and have drifted from their faith community.* It seems families and individuals tend to isolate themselves and emotionally detach from any meaningful relationship within the church so it would be easier for them to leave a local faith community. I saw drifting in the church an issue and sought stakeholders and key voices to help me discover if this was a viable NPO.

A youth pastor, children's pastor, a women's ministry leader, a female parishioner and an elder emeritus made up the stakeholders that attended the Discovery Workshop. The activities within the workshop helped us articulate the following discovery statement: Considering *church leaders* (audience), we've discovered *people who were connected have drifted from the faith community* (NPO), which is caused by *having a truncated ecclesiological view* (root cause). If solved, it would mean a *vibrant faith community that is fully connected to each other and those within the greater community* (outcome). The Discovery Workshop revealed several critical insights that would guide my research. First, there were many factors as to why people might drift: a lack of rootedness within the faith community, wounds, social norms, overcommitment and the perceived benefits of viable communities like sports clubs, music, theater, dance and other groups. Determining the root cause could be unattainable and difficult to decipher. The second insight from the Discovery Workshop was that isolation and drifting are two separate issues and might be too broad for the scope of the NPO.

The one-on-one interviews proved to be essential to the process. The one-on-one stakeholders, not being a part of the Discovery Workshop, brought a unique perspective to the table as they offered feedback and encouragement. They all agreed the audience to be addressed was the leadership team in the church as discipleship begins and ends with spiritual leadership. What was still unclear was determining the root cause of those drifting and how leaders are to address such an issue. Although the NPO was looked upon favorably by the one-on-ones and stakeholders, there was still a need to continue to develop and fine-tune a working and vibrant NPO.

Design

The Design Workshop and the one-on-one interviews became a watershed moment for the Doctoral Project as it brought clarity and intentionality to the NPO. Seven stakeholders were able to attend and participate in the five activities. Revisiting the NPO was helpful as it became clear there were two different sets of people that need to be attended to: those who are connected or engaged in the faith community and those who are drifting for various reasons. Several questions emerged out of the workshop and interviews. Questions like, "Who is the audience we are seeking to serve in the NPO?" or "Are we trying to reach those who are already gone or those who are thinking about leaving the church?" and "What are the signposts that indicate they are wanting to leave the church?" The final question came from two of my one-on-ones: "Are you wanting to solve a leadership problem or a people problem?" These questions from the stakeholders and interviewers solidified the need to address leaders within the church to embark on a life-long journey of becoming spiritually formed leaders that can nurture and care well for the church community.

The lack of clarity during the Design Workshop impeded the creativity while creating the "Concept Pitch" ideas. Having a split audience and not having a clear direction for the NPO consumed our time and attention. Reflecting on the process, I would have preferred to have had the one-on-one interviews and then return to the stakeholders with better clarity and direction to help brainstorm concept pitch ideas. The concepts centered around: a) leaders being able to listen and hold

parishioner's stories well; b) asking relevant, thought-provoking and spirit-led questions; and c) train and equip leaders of the church to become spiritual leaders.

From the Discovery Workshop to Design Workshop, the NPO had morphed into the following: *Leaders of non-denominational churches need to be trained and equipped to become spiritually formed well leaders to better nurture God's people.* To address the NPO the MVP (Most Viable Prototype) was a two-day retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. Based on the feedback from eight different leaders representing six different churches, it was clear this concept resonated with the leaders and its potential to be life-giving to the local church. To adequately develop the MVP, I recognized the need for additional research on curriculum development and mentoring communities. Learning how to develop compelling curriculum and understanding key elements to a thriving mentor community became the foundation I needed to produce a practical and robust curriculum that engaged both the left and right brain.

Although the left brain is designed to comprehend Christian beliefs and doctrines that are taught from the pulpit or in the classroom, its understanding is derived from the right brain and the relational experience of a loving and faithful God. Unfortunately, many churches have served the left brain well but have neglected the right brain in spiritual formation. Wilder explains, "Left-brained discipleship emphasizes beliefs, doctrine, willpower, and strategies but neglects right-brain loving attachments, joy, emotional development, and identity. Ignoring right-brain relational development creates Christians who believe in God's love but have difficulty experiencing it in daily life, especially during distress."¹ A discipleship strategy that does not encompass both sides of the brain fall short of creating an environment for people to become rooted in a community that is relationally committed and offers spiritual transformation. For this reason, I felt it was imperative to add the mentoring community to the Doctoral Project to exercise the right brain in an attempt to attend to the left and right brain, working in synchronization, tilling the soil for people to believe, become and belong while being transformed into the likeness of Christ.

Delivery

Acknowledging the reality of my current context, but desiring inclusion of women in spiritual leadership, the Doctoral Project will be offered to men in leadership positions (elder, deacon and ministry leaders), but designed to accommodate mixed groups when applicable. Addressing the eldership first, as they are the commissioned spiritual leaders of my local church, is essential for the spiritual growth of our faith community and any future opportunities to expand the Doctoral Project to deacons, ministry leaders and women who are in leadership positions.

¹ Jim Wilder and Michel Hendricks, *The Other Half of Church: Christian Community, Brain Science, and Overcoming Spiritual Stagnation*, Illustrated edition (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020), 25.

Developing the current benchmarks (See Benchmarks on page 121), was birthed from gathering feedback from stakeholders, pastors, elders, ministry team leaders and lay parishioners. The feedback was obtained through surveys, one-on-one interviews, questionnaires and participants who attended a prototype class. The feedback was invaluable as they shared what resonated, what was challenging, what was confusing and what needed to be developed more within the material and the mentoring guide. The current benchmarks are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound in nature. The benchmarks address the quality of the work being produced as well as measure the effectiveness of the material and its participants growing in their understanding of leadership and spiritual formation.

The long-term objectives for the Doctoral Project include completing the mentoring guide, offering the material and mentoring guide to my current leadership and offering the project to other churches who desire to challenge their leaders to a life-long journey of leadership and spiritual formation. Another objective is having the material used multiple times within a local church and measuring how it affects the discipleship strategy, the health of the community and the leadership pipeline that is being nurtured for years and decades to come.

Evaluation

The greatest challenge was clarifying and articulating the NPO. A myriad of versions of the NPO consumed much of the early days of the project. Another challenge was holding space to immerse myself into the NPO before attempting to solve it. Giving two years in listening, understanding and defining the NPO was difficult when our Western culture demands real-time solutions. However, the time spent in writing, reflecting and tweaking the NPO yielded a viable MVP that addresses and attends to the leadership of the local church.

There are two areas that demand further improvement. First, the field of leadership is as wide as it is deep. Offering a five-session curriculum does not allow the time or space to explore all aspects of leadership. An area that should be improved and possibly added is guiding participants in discovering their particular leadership style. Exploring leadership styles in conjunction with spiritual formation could only enhance the participants' understanding of how they were created and called to lead as spiritual leaders of the church. The other area of improvement is in the mentoring guide. There is risk in inviting participants to a twelve-month mentoring community and having them complete it. The length of the mentoring guide has not allowed me to adequately test the material or discover if participants would be willing to commit to twelve months. Understanding the risk, I know there will need to be improvements and adjustments to the mentoring guide in future iterations.

The research journey revealed alternative approaches to the NPO as well as key learnings that have shaped the MVP. One viable approach was a lecture-based teaching where participants download information. Although this approach is viable and has been used to disseminate information, one of the key learnings is that the Western church has served well only half of the church, those who are left brained. To effectively teach leadership and spiritual formation to the whole church, one

must attend to both the left and right brain. Another viable approach was through adaptive or transformational leadership. Both leadership styles lean towards a mentor/mentee relationship that is one-directional in nature; this approach also leans towards the concept of mentees learning more from what is caught than taught. Another key learning is the desire of participants wanting to commit to a mentoring community that is equitable in power and willing to learn from the diversity of knowledge and experience. There is a deep desire and need for community that provides a safe place for doubts, struggles, acceptance and learning.

Next Steps

The Doctoral Project has been a three-year journey that is not finished; it seems it has just begun. The collaborative work with stakeholders, one-on-one interviews, pastors, elders, ministry team leaders and parishioners have created an MVP that is compelling and offers real next steps for participants to take on their life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed. Yet there are areas that should be researched or developed for clarity, accessibility and usability.

First, I envision developing ways for participants to discover and name their own leadership style. Incorporating leadership styles with the Myers-Briggs personality test or the Enneagram would guide participants to discover the different personality types and their giftedness to better serve and nurture their faith community. Second, the mentoring guide is designed for twelve months. In an instant gratification culture that demands flexibility and lacks commitment, I desire more data and research determining what the optimal time for a mentoring community is to gather; given the material that needs to be covered and the amount of time needed to build trust and intimacy within the group. Finally, the mentoring guide showcases seven out of twenty-five cairns. Several of those cairns still needed to be developed that center around leadership. Further research for compelling and challenging articles on leadership from a diverse group of authors is still required.

The continuation of developing, improving and completing the mentoring guide is a priority as it is an essential piece to the overall Doctoral Project. Upon completion, I intend to offer the MVP to my local leadership in my ministry context as well as to other churches who have expressed interest in piloting the curriculum for their leadership. Another priority after graduation is promoting the material through a website and social media for churches to learn about the resources and services I will be able to offer pastors and their leadership teams.

Final Reflection

The research journey was life changing as it caused me to pause often and evaluate why I chose to pursue a doctorate in leadership and spiritual formation. Along the journey there were valleys and peaks, twists and turns that taught me a lot about the character of God and how God has designed me for his purposes. It was truly a joy to interact with stakeholders through workshops and interviews; the collaboration of voices, perspectives and experiences has shaped this project for the better. Another joy was knowing I was not alone on the journey. My project faculty advisor, Dr. Jeff Savage, was a non-anxious presence that encouraged me to finish and to finish well. There are

too many joys to share in the space provided, but to say I am blessed to have been on this spiritual journey is an understatement.

The journey, with all its joys, had several disappointments. There were several stakeholders I invited to be a part of the process, but they rejected the offer; I was disappointed in some of the responses and their posture of indifference. In pursuing several one-on-one interviews with experts in the field, I was once again rejected by several prominent individuals, even when I offered to pay for their time. I was also disappointed in the creative process of developing concept pitch ideas during the Design Workshop. I was longing for more “out of the box” ideas but time was a factor along with needing more clarity in defining the NPO.

With any journey on which one embarks there should be an awareness of the unknown. One of the surprises of the journey was the number of times my NPO was revised over the course of the three years. I was expecting wordsmithing to be the norm; however, I was not expecting to change the audience nor how the NPO would be addressed. Another surprise was how vital the project cohort was to the success of completing the doctoral program and project. The project cohort was my foundation that supported me through encouragement, laughter, prayer and listening. I was not expecting to bond with such an amazing group of diverse individuals that have become dearly beloved co-laborers and brothers of the faith.

Being on this doctoral journey has been transformative as it has humbled me, challenged me, encouraged me and blessed me beyond any words that I could express. Not only am I a better husband, father and pastor, but I am spiritually more aware of my desperate need for the image of Christ to be formed in me as I serve and nurture those around me. The research has exposed successes and failures in my own ministry context but has given me the tools to begin addressing them through the process of discovery, design and delivery.

My personal mission statement is: *By the grace of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit, I invest in leaders' spiritual formation so they may faithfully attend to those who Christ has called them to shepherd.* My hope and dream is this project will be a resource for many churches who desire to challenge their leadership in becoming spiritually formed leaders, especially those churches who lack the ability, bandwidth or resources to invest in their leaders. My prayer is the local church will be better served and nurtured because their leaders have committed to the life-long journey of becoming spiritually formed.

Doctoral Project

Introduction

Leaders of non-denominational churches should be trained and equipped to attend to a life-long process of being spiritually formed to effectively nurture God's people. The doctoral project is a two-fold approach offering a class and a mentoring community to learn and commit to a life-long journey of leadership and spiritual formation. The purpose of the class, a five-session curriculum, is to first help participants understand leadership and spiritual formation as a life-long process that one must attend to faithfully to effectively nurture God's people. Second, to inspire participants to invest in their spiritual formation long term. Those who accept the invitation to begin the life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed are provided with their next step by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. This covenantal community will embark on a spiritual journey by meeting twice a month to grow and learn together through a mentoring guide as they develop their own rule of life.

The Doctoral Project will showcase the five-session lecture notes, student guide and a selection from the mentoring community guide. The presentation slides for the class are in Appendix E.

Lecture Guide

SPRING OF 2023

Lecture
Notes

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

AN INVITATION TO A LIFE-LONG JOURNEY OF STABILITY, FIDELITY
AND OBEDIENCE



Dr. Brad Pembleton

Introduction and Overview

INTRODUCTION:

Leaders of non-denominational churches should be trained and equipped to attend to a life-long process of being spiritually formed to effectively nurture God's people. *Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader* is a five-session interactive curriculum designed for participants to discover the need for leaders to be spiritually formed and to invite them to commit to a mentoring community. The purpose of the five-session curriculum is to, first, help participants understand that leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process that one must attend to faithfully to effectively nurture God's people; and second, to inspire participants to invest in their spiritual formation long term. Those who accept the invitation to begin the life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed are provided with their next step by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. This covenantal community will embark on a spiritual journey by meeting twice a month to grow and learn together through a mentoring guide as they develop their own rule of life.

Class Overview:

SESSION ONE OVERVIEW:

- Participants will be reminded they have been given the gift of one life, a life that must be stewarded well for the glory of God.
- Through a historical and biblical study of II Chronicles 26 and Isaiah 6, participants will learn pride breaks down our ability to steward well the one life God has given.
- Pride manifests itself in passion, possession and position.
- Humility grounded in gratitude is the foundation to combat pride.
- Participants will be challenged to engage in the remaining material that will place them on a trajectory to live out their one life well as they become spiritually formed leaders.

SESSION TWO OVERVIEW:

- Participants will be given a working definition of leadership that includes four crucial components: Leadership is a process, Leadership involves influence, Leadership occurs in groups; and Leadership involves common goals.
- Participants will discover the difference between trait leadership and process leadership.
- Participants will learn leadership is not neutral but moral.
- Participants will discover leadership can be learned and is available to all according to God's economy and divine calling.

SESSION THREE OVERVIEW:

- Participants will continue to develop a working definition of leadership that is grounded in biblical understanding.

- Participants will learn that leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ.
- Participants will come to understand leadership is a life-long process.
- Participants will be encouraged to see their leadership matters to those people whom God has entrusted them to serve and lead in their homes, faith communities and workplaces. To lead well, one must be spiritually formed.

SESSION FOUR OVERVIEW:

- Participants will develop a working definition of spiritual formation.
- Participants will learn the four elements of spiritual formation.
- Participants will come to understand spiritual formation is a life-long process allowing the Holy Spirit to form us into the likeness of Christ.
- Participants will learn spiritual formation is not done in a vacuum but must be lived out in community through the power of the Holy Spirit.

SESSION FIVE OVERVIEW:

- Participants will develop a more robust definition of spiritual formation that will bring clarity and purpose to why and how we are becoming spiritually formed leaders.
- Participants will learn about mentoring communities and their elements and commitments.
- Participants will learn mentoring communities thrive when there is stability, fidelity and obedience.
- Participants will be challenged to respond to the invitation to push out into the deep and take the life-long journey to become a spiritually formed leader by committing to a mentoring community.

Class Structure:

The interactive class is designed for participation and reflection as the participants take inventory of their leadership skills and personal spiritual formation. To guide a robust conversation and help participants practice spiritual disciplines that will be used in the mentoring community, below are elements that will be used throughout the sessions.

Silence: There will be a time of silence before each session. First, the silence is an invitation for those who are coming to the class space to center themselves and become aware of God's presence in the room by reflecting on God's goodness and faithfulness. Silence is also an invitation to acknowledge how you and the other participants are coming into this communal experience.

Check In: Participants at the beginning of the session might be asked to give a word that describes their state of personhood. The question, "How are you entering this space?" will

be asked and given time for each person to answer with a single word or phrase. An example might be: overwhelmed, anxious, tired, hopeful, excited, expectant, etc.

Means of Grace: Participants at the beginning of the session might be asked to share a means of grace they are needing from God. Defining reality and what a person needs from God is a valuable step in spiritual formation. The question, "What means of grace do you need from God?" will be asked and given time for each person to answer with a single word or phrase. An example might be: peace, strength, wisdom, patience, love, understanding, healing, etc.

St. Patrick's Prayer: Maewynn Succat (387-461) was captured at sixteen by Irish pirates and was sold into slavery in Ireland to herd sheep and swine. Six years later Maewynn heard a "voice" to run away and find a ship that was to set sail. Maewynn found a ship 200 miles away and convinced the captain to bring him aboard as they set sail for Britain. After years of religious study to become a priest and missionary, Maewynn had a second vision to become a missionary to Ireland, to serve the people that once enslaved him. This is when Maewynn took up the name Patrick. To help us center ourselves, the class will contemplate a portion of Saint Patrick's Hymn and Prayer. The prayer spoken repetitively and slowly will guide our hearts and minds to be aware of Christ's presences in our lives: *Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me. Amen.*

Reflection Questions: Although the class will require participation, each class will have time for reflection questions to allow smaller groups to discuss what they are learning and experiencing. Participants will be given 10 to 12 minutes to discuss questions and will be given a chance for each group to share with the larger group their insights.

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

Session One Lecture Notes: Barriers

Session One Overview:

- Participants will be reminded they have been given the gift of one life, a life that must be stewarded well for the glory of God.
- Through a historical and biblical study of II Chronicles 26 and Isaiah 6, participants will learn pride breaks down our ability to steward well the one life God has given.
- Pride manifests itself in passion, possession and position.
- Humility grounded in gratitude is the foundation to combat pride.
- Participants will be challenged to engage in the remaining material that will place them on a trajectory to live out their one life well as they become spiritually formed leaders.

Open Activity: (Slides 3-4)

We all have one life to live. The question is what do we do with it? Walking through a cemetery one will find marked tombstones. On the tombstones will be a person's name, a description or saying with two dates. The first date indicates when the person was born while the second date marks the day they died. Between those two dates there is a marking; a dash. This dash represents all the life experiences, relationships, joys, heartaches, pain, sorrow, happiness, and decisions a person made during their lifetime.

Write down the date of your birthday then put a dash next to it, leaving space for a future date you will pass away. We don't know when that date will be, but we do know we are living in the dash. We don't know how long or short our dash will be, but we do know we are living in the dash. How have you filled in the dash so far? How have you managed the time God has given you?

Here is the question we want to wrestle with in this session: How are we going to choose to live in this finite, limited space called life, a gift God has given us to steward and live out well?

Isaiah 6 & II Chronicles 26: King Uzziah (Slides 5-8)

There is a famous passage that will help us work through this question. It is found in Isaiah 6. The passage begins, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up and the train of his robe filled the temple" (Is. 6:1).

To understand this divine encounter Isaiah had with God, we need to have a greater understanding of who King Uzziah was and how he died. For a brief history lesson, let's look at II Chronicles 26 to get Uzziah's life story.

Reading II Chronicles 26:1-15 we learn the following about Uzziah:

- Uzziah was made king at sixteen years old (1-2)
- Rebuilt the city of Eloth, a port city (2)
- Uzziah reigned for fifty-two years (3)
- Did what was right in the eyes of the LORD (4)
- Uzziah sought the LORD by being taught to fear God (5)
- God made Uzziah prosper (5)
- Uzziah made war against God's enemies (6-7)
- Uzziah's fame spread to the border of Egypt (8)
- Uzziah became strong (8)
- Uzziah built towers (9)
- Uzziah cut out cisterns (10)
- Uzziah had large herds (10)
- Uzziah had farmers (10)
- Uzziah had vinedressers (10)
- Uzziah had fertile lands (10)
- Uzziah had a mighty army (11-12)
- 2,600 men of valor (12)
- 307,500 in his army (13)
- Uzziah had shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows and stones for slinging (14)
- Uzziah made machines for mass destruction (15)

Questions regarding King Uzziah:

1. Based on our observations so far, what can we say about King Uzziah?
2. What grounded King Uzziah?
3. How did staying grounded impact King Uzziah's leadership?

Impressive by any measure, one could say he was living out his dash very well. Yet, there was a stronghold in Uzziah's life, "And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong" (II Chronicles 26:15). What happened? We continue to read II Chronicles 26:16-21:

- Uzziah became proud (16)
- Pride destroyed Uzziah (16)
- Uzziah was unfaithful to the LORD (16)
- Uzziah performed a job he wasn't supposed to do in the temple (16)
- Eighty priests tried to stop him from going (17)
- Uzziah dishonored God (18)
- Anger overtook Uzziah (19)
- The LORD struck Uzziah with leprosy and lived with thousands of others that had to proclaim, "Unclean, unclean, unclean" (20-21)
- Uzziah was excluded from the house of the LORD (21)
- The last thing recorded about Uzziah was, "He is a leper." (23)

Lessons we can learn from Uzziah: (Slide 9)

First, pride is the root of all destruction. Why? Pride was the first sin recorded in Genesis 3:6-13. Pride spoils and distorts human relations, it plunders all signs of life around us, and it causes us irrationally to see God as the Enemy rather than as the Giver of true life, everywhere and always. Lest we forget, it was the man who blamed God for giving him a partner (Genesis 3:12).

Second, pride is the strongest idol we face. It is the idol that is most appealing as it offers instant gratification. Pride automatically gives a false sense of being in control. Pride shows the areas in which we have yet to turn over to Christ and continue to try and control ourselves.

Third, pride is standing on the timeline of life, having no respect for the past and no responsibility toward the future.

Pride is the most stubborn and hardest sin to kill, but one we must die to if we are to have an abundant and thriving life that Christ offers through the Holy Spirit.

Manifestation of Pride (Slide 10)

But what does pride look like? We tend to use the word “pride” as a catch-all response to sin. Yet how can we make pride tangible so that we can see the destructive power it has over us? Pride usually manifests itself in three ways: passion, possession and position.

- Passion = fleshly desires; self-centered
- Possession = visual cravings
- Position = social position/power and influence

The world sees these three ways as normative and something we must admire, attend to and attain if we are to find happiness and purpose. Pride invites us to get what we want, whenever we want it and at any cost.

Uzziah stopped seeking God, a gradual progression as “he grew proud.” Pride had seeped in and flooded Uzziah’s heart. How often do we struggle with passion, possession and position? We become obsessed and usually justify our desires as entitlement. After a few successes and victories, we begin to lose the awe and wonder of God’s blessings. Our view of God fades to the back while our pride takes center stage. We tend to become self-centered and isolated from our community that keeps us grounded and accountable.

What are the good things in your life that have become ultimate? What are some good things in your life that could lead to pride? If so, what are the “80 Priests” in your life that has spoken truth into your life and you have ignored it?

In his pride Uzziah felt he was entitled! Uzziah was called to be king, not a priest. Our accomplishments are not a statement of our glory but only of the grace and mercy of Christ.

How do we deal with pride? If pride is self-worship, placing us at the center of everything, how do we deal with it?

Isaiah 6: The True King (Slides 11 - 13)

With a historical understanding of King Uzziah's life, let's look again at Isaiah 6. Just as we made observations in II Chronicles 26, what observations can we make of Isaiah 6:1-7?

- It was the year King Uzziah died...who was once powerful and now has leprosy (1)
- Isaiah had a vision of seeing the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up (1)
- The train of God's robe filled the temple (1)
- Seraphim, holy creatures with wings, hovered around God (2)
- Seraphim were calling to one another a song, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (3)
- Foundations shook and the house was filled with smoke (4)
- Isaiah's response was first personal, "Woe is me; for I am lost." (5)
- Isaiah's second response was communal, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." (5)
- Isaiah proclaims his eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts (5)
- Isaiah's confession leads to the seraphim bringing a burning coal and touching his lips (6)

Isaiah's only response to the encounter he had with a holy God was to worship the true King. Humility grounded in gratitude is the foundation to combat pride. Comparing and contrasting King Uzziah to the King, the LORD of hosts:

King Uzziah:

Earthly

Small

Low and weak

Full of pride

Unclean

Dead

King, "the LORD of hosts"

Divine

Majestic

High and strong

Full of glory

Holy

Alive

There is no comparison. We can learn much from King Uzziah's prideful life and Isaiah's humble response to his divine encounter with the one true God. From King Uzziah's life we see pride as making a disciple of yourself. From Isaiah's experience we see humility as a lived-out expression of

being a disciple of God. Humility is something that cannot be taught but caught. How we approach our spiritual formation is being humble and open to what God will do in us for his glory.

Reflection Questions: (Slide 14)

Around your table take 10 minutes to discuss the reflection questions. After the table discussion we will take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

1. What word or words would you want written on your tombstone that would describe you?
2. Pride manifests itself in passion, possession and position. In what particular way(s) do you struggle with pride? Why?
3. Based on what we learned, how can you deal with your pride?
4. How are we going to choose to live in this finite, limited space called life, a gift God has given us to steward and live out well?

Takeaways: (Slide 15)

- Pride breaks down our ability to steward well the one life God has given us to live.
- Gratitude is the foundation to combat pride.
- We have a choice in how we live out our dash. When we invite Christ into our dash, the dash becomes significant, no matter how short or long the dash is.
- Engaging in this class will place you on a trajectory to live out your dash well as you become a spiritually formed leader.

An Encouraging Word: (Slides 16-17)

In 1984 there was a movie that changed the lives of thousands of young teenagers. *The Karate Kid* was about a boy named Daniel who moved from New Jersey to California. Being an outsider Daniel found himself at odds with a group of kids, led by Johnny, who belonged to the same karate school, Cobra Kai. Daniel meets Miyagi, the maintenance/gardener of the apartment complex, who also happens to know karate. Miyagi begins to train Daniel for the All Valley Karate Tournament. Miyagi trains Daniel by having him wash his cars, painting the house, the fence and sanding the deck. Daniel is mad and says he is done...watch what happened:

Show clip of Miyagi teaching Daniel the skills he has learned while washing, waxing, sanding and painting.²

As we make our way through the next four sessions, I want to encourage you to invest and engage in the process. All the small activities we will do, the paintings and pictures we are going to discuss, passages we will study and the reflection questions we will ponder are designed to train and equip you to do well with the journey you might commit to. It may not make sense in the moment, just as the chores Daniel was asked to do while he was being trained by Miyagi, but hopefully you will soon see these are all practices that will prepare you for the long but fruitful journey toward becoming a spiritually formed leader.

² *The Karate Kid - Mr. Miyagi Teaches Daniel*, 2013,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1cCjWKWKb8>.

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

Session Two Lecture Notes: Evolution of Leadership

Session Two Overview:

- Participants will be given a working definition of leadership that includes four crucial components: Leadership is a process, Leadership involves influence, Leadership occurs in groups and Leadership involves common goals.
- Participants will discover the difference between trait leadership and process leadership.
- Participants will learn leadership is not neutral but moral.
- Participants will discover leadership can be learned and is available to all according to God's economy and divine calling.

Introduction: (Slide 20)

We began our first session with this statement, "We all have one life to live." The question then is, "How are we going to choose to live in this finite, limited space called life, a gift God has given us to steward and live out well?" We have a choice. We have a choice as to how we will lead as we live out the life God has given us. We live in the finite and most of the time we live in the mundane. Yet being aware of our dash and what God has asked us to steward well, the little insignificant moments build towards leadership and spiritual formation.

Open Activity: (Slides 21-22)

Who do you consider to be a good leader? It can be an individual you personally know or a person you know from afar. Thinking of that person, what are some qualifications to being a good leader? In what ways have you seen their leadership lived out?

We are going to break up into groups and you are collectively going to produce three things:

- 1) Define leadership.
- 2) Provide three to five functions of a leader.
- 3) Provide a symbol that reflects your working definition and its functions.

Give groups time to share their definition, functions and symbols with the larger group. As each group shares, observations will be made regarding each group as well as comparing statements on their definitions, functions and symbols.

Evolution of Leadership Definitions: (Slides 23-27)

J.C. Rost in *Leadership for the Twenty-first Century* analyzed materials from 1900 to 1990. Rost found there were over 200 different definitions for leadership. Over the decades leadership has evolved. I have adopted the work from *Leadership: Theory and Practice* to give a simple understanding of the complexity and evolution of leadership over the past hundred years. See below:³

1900 - 1929:

Emphasis on control and centralization of power with a common theme of domination.

1930s:

Traits became the focus of defining leadership, with an emerging view of leadership as influence rather than domination.

1960s:

Made the shift to leadership as behavior that influences people toward shared goals.

1970s:

"Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers." J.M. Burns, *Leadership*.

1980s:

Scholarly works exploded over the concept of leadership with the following themes: 1) Do as the leader wishes 2) Influence 3) Traits 4) Transformation.

1990s:

Much debate regarding leadership and management and the difference between the two. Some leadership approaches emerged like servant leadership and adaptive leadership.

2000s:

An emergence of moral approaches such as authentic leadership, ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, discursive leadership, humble leadership and inclusive leadership.

³ Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, Ninth edition (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2021), 2-5.

Even though there has been an evolution to leadership over the past hundred years there are several components that are essential to leadership that Northouse unpacks:

- A) Leadership is a process
- B) Leadership involves influence
- C) Leadership occurs in groups
- D) Leadership involves common goals

Northouse then gives us a working definition: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."⁴ This definition will be the foundation we will use as we continue our conversation in developing spiritually formed leaders. This definition will help us shape what kind of process we must go through as leaders, how we are to use our influence, identifying what group(s) we are leading and what are the common goals we are working toward in each group we lead.

Traits vs Process: (Slides 28-31)

There are at least two questions we must address when it comes to leadership now that we have a working definition. Many of us have heard the statement, "She is a natural leader" or "He was born to lead." Is leadership trait driven or can it be learned? Northouse adapted a chart from J.P. Kotter in his work called *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs From Management* that is beneficial in helping us answer this question.⁵

Trait leadership: is built around the special innate or inborn characteristics or qualities that differentiate leaders from non-leaders. Traits can consist of height, intelligence, driven, outgoing and a self-starter. If leadership is based on traits, who can be a leader? How are leaders chosen? Does trait leadership work in all situations? Why not?

Process leadership: is not driven by traits or characteristics that reside in a certain person, but rather it is a transactional event that occurs between the leader and the followers. Just as the leader affects the followers, followers affect the leader as well. The relationship is not

⁴ Northouse, *Leadership*, 6.

⁵ John P. Kotter, *Force For Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York : London: Free Press, 1990), 3-8.

linear as seen in trait leadership; rather, it is an interactive relationship making it more dynamic in nature. If leadership is based on process, who can be a leader?

This is not to say we exclude trait leadership. Leaders must be aware of such natural traits and steward them well for the good of those one is leading. Rather, trait leadership, as we have seen in the evolution of leadership, is not the sole indicator of who can and cannot be a leader. Leadership is a process, a learned experience and is available to all according to God's economy and divine calling. Meaning we are all divinely appointed to lead something or someone, whether that is an organization, a non-profit, a family, co-workers, friends, or a ministry team. Process leadership focuses on the character of the leader while trait leadership focuses on the talent of the leader.

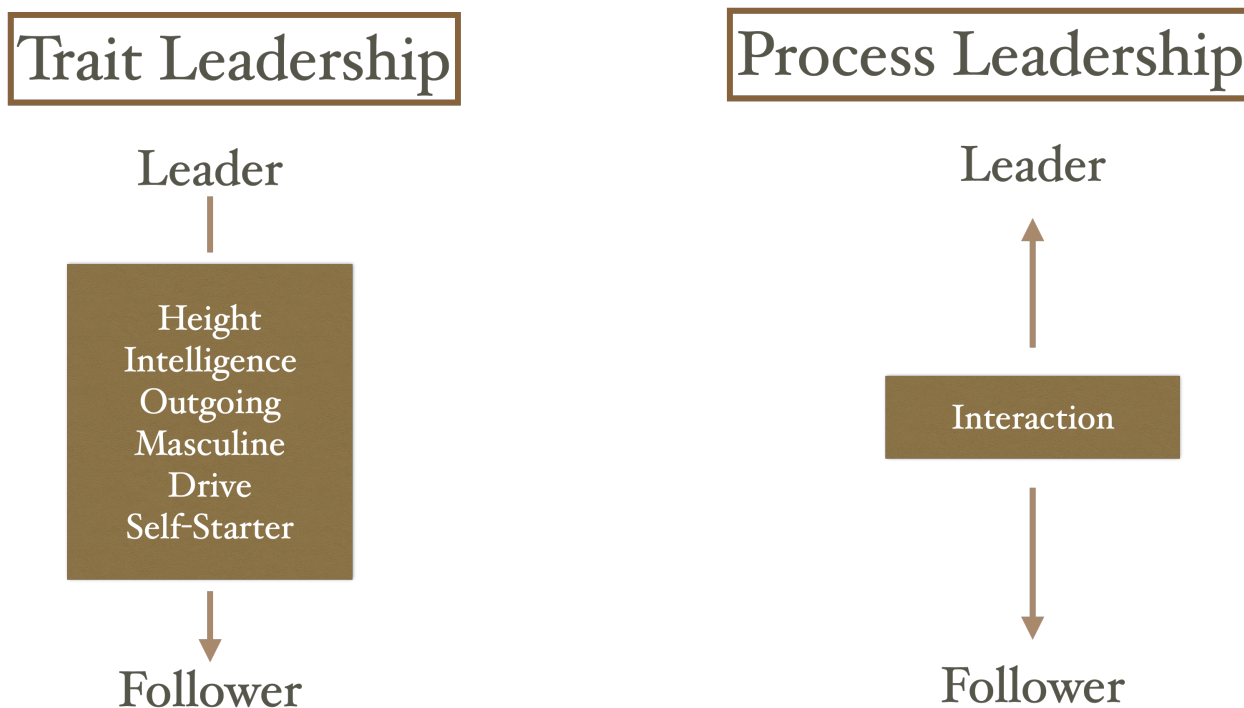


FIGURE 1. THE DIFFERENCE VIEWS OF LEADERSHIP BY KOTTER

Neutral vs Moral: (Slides 32-34)

The second question we should address regarding leadership: Is leadership neutral or moral? To help us work through this question, I am going to make a statement and I want you to agree or disagree: "Hitler's rule in Germany could be considered a good example of leadership."⁶

If you agree with this statement, then you see leadership as neutral. Leadership can be used for good or for bad. You would say Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, Hitler and Osama bin Laden are all great leaders. Why, because leadership is about achieving goals, even if they are destructive. The end always justifies the means. Charisma, persuasion, fear and deception can and must be used to accomplish the task at hand.

If you disagree with this statement, then you see leadership as moral or has having a moral dimension to it. Hitler's agenda was personal and not for the common good. Leadership cannot be divorced from values; leaders aim to do what is "right" and "good." Hitler did the opposite as he used fear and intimidation to devalue humanity and lowered the moral levels of his followers. Hitler was a raging lunatic, not a great leader.

Why does this matter? What shapes us as a leader matters! If we are going to lead, we need to understand that leadership is a process (learned), and we must be spiritually formed well so that we can lead well. It is not an option!

Reflection Questions: (Slide 35)

Around your table take 10 minutes to discuss the reflection questions. After the table discussion we will take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

1. Who in your life has shaped you as a leader? In what ways has he/she shaped you? Why did you follow that leader? What attributes were you attracted to?
2. Do you see yourself as a leader? If not, why not? After what we have learned, do you now see yourself as a leader? Where might you be a leader?
3. What kind of leader do you desire to be?
4. Since leadership is a process, what might it require of you to become a better leader?

⁶ Northouse, *Leadership*, 13.

An Encouraging Word: (Slide 36)

To finish our time together let's look at Philippians 2:6-11. As we read this passage, notice the chiastic structure that will be displayed on the screen. Derived from the Greek letter *chi*, which looks like the letter X in English, chiasmus is a figure of speech or literary device that takes a series of phrases and repeats them in opposite order to highlight or emphasize a point. A simple chiastic structure would be: A, B, B', A'. The chiastic structure used in Philippians 2 will highlight Christ's servant leadership.

Paul is speaking of Jesus in Philippians 2. Notice the servant leadership Christ displayed as he was even obedient to the point of being crucified on the cross; the worst death possible. Yet he was lifted up and he did all this, "to the glory of God the Father." Leadership means nothing unless we view it through the gospel lens of Philippians 2. We will discuss more about biblical leadership and expand upon our leadership definition during the next session.

Takeaways: (Slide 37)

- Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.
- Leadership can be learned.
- Leadership is moral.
- You are a leader.

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

Session Three Lecture Notes: Biblical Leadership

Session Three Overview:

- Participants will continue to develop a working definition of leadership that is grounded in biblical understanding.
- Participants will learn that leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ.
- Participants will come to understand leadership is a life-long process.
- Participants will be encouraged to see their leadership matters to those they love. To lead well, one must be spiritually formed.

Introduction: (Slides 40-44)

At our last session each group spent time defining leadership, selecting functions of a leader, and deciding what symbol best reflects the group's definition. Let's take a moment and review the group's work to reorient ourselves and the discussion we had regarding leadership.

We said leadership is...

- learned; a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Because leadership is a process, leadership is learned and not a trait.
- moral; meaning that leadership is not neutral. There is a moral dimension to leadership that draws us to the greater good as we reach common goals.

Biblical Leadership: (Slides 45-52)

Now that we have a strong working definition of leadership, let's quickly survey a biblical perspective of leadership that is seen and experienced throughout the biblical narrative.

The below is adopted and adapted from a lecture given by Dr. MaryKate Morse:⁷

Pentateuch: Genesis – Deuteronomy

- Leadership comes by divine appointment (*Noah, Abram, Jacob, Joseph, Moses*)
- Leadership moves from one to many (*Moses and Jethro*)
- Leadership requires accountability (*Jacob, Issac, Joseph*)

History Books: Joshua, Judges, Esther, I & II Kings

- Leadership requires a time of preparation (*Joshua and Esther*)
- Leadership requires a sensitive heart to spiritual things (*Joshua*)
- Leadership demands unique skills (*David, Saul, Deborah, Ruth, Esther*)

Poets and Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel

- Leadership requires deep conviction of God's will for leaders and followers (*Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego*)
- Leadership requires clear theological perspective (*Isaiah*)
- Leadership requires an awareness of contemporary surroundings (*Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea*)

Gospels and Acts: Jesus, James and Priscilla

- Leadership is servanthood (*Jesus, Stephen*)
- Leadership is stewardship (*Jesus, James*)
- Leadership is shared power (*Jesus, Lydia, Priscilla, Barnabus*)

Epistles and Revelation: Paul, Peter, Phoebe

- Leadership is ministry (*Philippians*)
- Leadership is modeling behavior (*Philemon*)
- Leadership is mentoring (I and II Timothy, Titus)
- Leadership is membership in the body (*Ephesians, I Corinthians*)

⁷ Dr. MaryKate Morse, "Servant Leadership: What Is Leadership?" (Cannon Beach, March 2022).

To help us put this biblical leadership into perspective, we will rely on Kenneth O. Gangel. Gangel writes, "Biblical leadership takes place when divinely appointed men and women accept responsibility for obedience to God's call. They recognize the importance of preparation time, allowing the Holy Spirit to develop tenderness of heart and skill of hands. They carry out their leadership roles with deep conviction of God's will, clear theological perspective from God's Word, and an acute awareness of the contemporary issues which they and their followers face. Above all, they exercise leadership as servants and stewards, sharing authority with their followers and affirming that leadership is primarily ministry to others, modeling for others and mutual relationship with others in Christ's body."⁸

In other words, "Leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ."⁹ Leadership is more physical, more relational and more in Christ. Doing for God leads to spiritual pride, whereas being with God brings about humility. Being with God invites a different posture: to dwell and be present with God, others and creation. Being fully present with God informs our doing for God. Our obedience to the divine calling is then an act of worship.

Leadership takes hard work as each is called by God for a purpose. It requires a communal effort as we are called not to just lead organizations but people in those organizations. Leadership requires leaders not to simply know Christ but allows Christ to abide in them, to dwell and take up residence in the individual, allowing the Spirit to shape and mold us into the image of Christ. Therefore, we can say, "Leadership is a relationship process in Christ and with the Spirit for God's intended transformational purposes."¹⁰

This definition seems more robust and trinitarian than our working definition. What differences do you see between these two definitions? Which one resonates with you? How can you use the latter definition within your home, community, or workplace? How might this definition become diagnostic? Meaning, what areas of your leadership do you need to invite God to take hold of and rework?

⁸ Kenneth O. Gangel, "Accepting and Applying Biblical Leadership," studylib.net, accessed September 30, 2022, <https://studylib.net/doc/10110137/accepting-and-applying-biblical-leadership>.

⁹ Morse, "Servant Leadership: What Is Leadership?"

¹⁰ Morse, "Servant Leadership: What Is Leadership?"

Reflection Questions: (Slide 53)

Around your table take 10 minutes to discuss the reflection questions. After the table discussion we will take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

1. In what ways does our working definition change through the lens of biblical leadership?
2. How would you write your new definition of leadership? Would it change?
3. What specific area(s) of leadership do you need to grow in to lead others well?
4. What leadership qualities do you see in each other?

An Encouraging Word: (Slides 54-57)

I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are the hallmark texts used by non-denominational faith communities to depict spiritual leadership. Although both passages prescribe characteristics in a spiritual leader as one who should be above reproach, sober-minded, self-controlled, not a lover of money and is able to teach, I Thessalonians 2 describes the posture in which a spiritual leader lives out the gospel in community. According to Paul a spiritual leader suffers hardship (vs 2), their motive is pure (vs 3), and their approval is from God, not man (vs 4). They lead with humility, integrity and honesty while not being diverted by greed or power (vs 5). They are hard workers as they labor and toil to not be a burden as they live holy, righteous and blameless lives (vs 9-10).

Yet the most compelling description is the parent motif defined in verses 7-8 and 11-12. Paul writes in I Thessalonians 2:7, "But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children." A spiritual leader is one who is gentle and compassionate towards the faith community. They are willing to patiently walk along the path of those who are needing to be nurtured in the faith. This type of nourishing leadership is balanced with discipline and expectation when Paul writes in I Thessalonians 2:12, "For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God." King David wrote about such an experience when he writes in Psalm 23:4, "your rod and your staff, they comfort me." The nourishment and discipline of a mother and father are essential characteristics of a spiritual leader as they faithfully lead their community, whether that community is family, a small group or a church.

The greatest reward for any spiritual leader is seeing their faith community thriving and living the gospel out in every aspect of their lives. Transformed lives, straying souls found and restored relationships, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is what motivates spiritual leaders to lead well. As Paul would proclaim at the end of I Thessalonians 2:19-20, "For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy."

Think about the people who God has placed in your life as a gift to steward and empower. Our spouse, kids, co-workers, family members, small group, etc. Paul reminds us they are our joy and crown. They are the ones we love and serve. They are the ones we lead with grace and truth. And when we do, we get to boast about them to our Lord and God. This is the reason we must be spiritually formed leaders!

Takeaways: (Slide 58)

- Leadership is a life-long process.
- Leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ.
- Leadership is about a shared transformation; in you and in others.
- To lead well we must be spiritually formed.

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

Session Four Lecture Notes: Spiritual Formation

Session Four Overview:

- Participants will develop a working definition of spiritual formation.
- Participants will learn the four elements of spiritual formation.
- Participants will come to understand spiritual formation is a life-long process allowing the Holy Spirit to form us into the likeness of Christ.
- Participants will learn spiritual formation is not done in a vacuum but must be lived out in community through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pop Quiz: (Slide 61)

We are going to take a pop quiz. I know for some of you this brings back dark memories but stay with me...as the teacher I plan on grading on a curve. Ready? No cheating!

Define the following: spiritual, religious, evangelism, mentor, spiritual disciplines, discipleship, spiritual formation.

Introduction: (Slides 62-63)

There are many words that are used to describe and prescribe the Christian walk. Discipleship, evangelism, spiritual disciplines, accountability, worship, servant, spirituality and spiritual formation, to name just a few. Over the years certain buzz words have risen to the surface and have taken on new meaning as they have evolved to help make sense of what we are called to be and do as Christ followers in a post-Christian world. For instance, one might say they are spiritual but not religious. What does that really mean? We are both religious and spiritual; they are not mutually exclusive from one another. Dr. Steven Argue says, "*Religious* describes the cultural background and worldview narrative that contributes to the way one makes meaning of one's daily experiences and practices," while "*spirituality* describes one's meaning-making efforts that inform the way one lives in and relates to the world and others, transforming the person toward the goal of a more mature, congruent and faithful way of living."¹¹

¹¹ Dr. Steven Argue, "Faith + Faithing: Emerging Adult Spirituality" (Fuller Seminary, April 2019).

We long for what Paul describes in Romans 12:1-2: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." This way of living is not conformed to the world, but choosing to be transformed by the power of God through the Holy Spirit. What a powerful reminder that it is a daily choice in how we are being formed.

The remix of Christian words to describe and prescribe the Christian walk has caused debilitating confusion as we become indifferent, paralyzed, entitled and consumeristic in our faith. To free us and make a clear path to what we mean by spiritual formation, may we spend a moment and define what we mean from the following concepts. The below concepts are adopted from a presentation by Dr. MaryKate Morse:¹²

Gospel Narrative: Evangelism ~ Intentionally sharing the gospel with others. The gospel is the true story of how Jesus the Son was sent by God the Father to become the saving king who now rules forever at his right hand through the sending of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling God's promise in Scripture. There is a decision from the individual to believe, repent and be baptized. The gospel is declaring, "Christ is King!"

Faith Culture: Discipleship ~ One responds to the grace of salvation through Christ by listening, obeying and teaching the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 28. They are devoted to Jesus Christ and his way of living.

Process: Spiritual Formation ~ "Spiritual formation is a process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others."¹³

Tools: Spiritual Disciplines ~ They are means of grace that enable the Spirit to form us: Prayer, fasting, study, solitude, submission, worship, service, celebration, etc. Dallas Willard writes about such disciplines, "The disciplines are activities of the mind and body purposefully undertaken, to bring our personality and total being into effective cooperation with the divine order."¹⁴ Richard Foster in his *Celebration of Discipline* writes, "The needed change within us is God's work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can

¹² Dr. MaryKate Morse, "What Is Spiritual Formation" (Cannon Beach, Oregon., March 2021).

¹³ M. Robert Mulholland Jr. and Ruth Haley Barton, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*, Revised and Expanded edition (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016), 7.

¹⁴ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*, Reprint edition (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1999), 68.

work from the inside...We must always remember that the path does not produce the change; it only puts us in the place where the change can occur."¹⁵

Spiritual Community: Mentor/Friend/Community ~ Individuals seeking relationships with other individuals who are longing and actively pursuing a more Christ-life. This includes engaging in bible studies, small groups and/or having a spiritual mentor. The focus is in living in community with others seeking spiritual friendship. (Acts 2)

In this session we will be unpacking a working definition of what we mean by spiritual formation.

First, let's look at what spiritual formation is NOT: (Slide 64)

- A static possession one manages by exercising the right techniques, learning a specific program or a method. Rather, it is a dynamic and ever-developing growth one experiences.
- An add-on to our personality to deal with the spiritual aspects of our lives. It is the very essence of our being. We don't need "more" of something (prayer, Bible reading or confession).
- A one size fits all. There is no secret formula to conquer or achieve. We are wonderfully and uniquely made by God.
- Private or individualistic in nature.

Spiritual Formation Defined: (Slides 65-66)

Mulholland gives us a four-part working definition, "Spiritual formation is a process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others."

Process: (Slides 67-68)

We all understand the concept of a natural process. A seed that is placed in the ground that becomes a plant to a baby being born and then maturing to an adult requires a natural process of growth. That is true of spiritual formation. Not only is spiritual formation a lifetime process, it is also holistic.

¹⁵ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* by Foster, Richard J., n.d., 5-7.

We are all being spiritually formed. Every thought, decision, action, emotion, behavior, reaction, relationship, etc. shapes us. Mulholland writes, "We are being shaped into either the wholeness of the image of Christ or a horribly destructive caricature of that image, destructive not only to ourselves but also to others, for we inflict our brokenness upon them."¹⁶ We are not neutral or static beings; we are organic and dynamic. We are ever changing by the internal and external experiences of life that make up who we are.

Therefore, spiritual formation is not an option but an awareness to what is being conformed by the Spirit to be made in the imago Dei:

1. Orthodoxy ~ our thoughts or the cognitive aspect of faith
2. Orthopraxy ~ our behaviors and actions
3. Orthopathy ~ our emotions and feelings; desiring what God wants

Being Formed: (Slides 69-70)

Notice that we are not "forming ourselves." To form ourselves means we have complete control. "Being formed," on the other hand, is giving up control. From birth we desire to be in control. We want to be in charge, be in the driver seat of pursuing our own destiny. We live in a do-it-yourself culture, especially now more than ever. If you do not know something or how to perform a particular task, there are two specific places we turn to: Google and YouTube.

We also live in a culture where "doing" is more significant than "being." You meet someone for the first time and to help keep the awkward silence to a minimum we ask, "What do you do?" Unfortunately, we have this backwards. Our doing flows out of our being. In spiritual formation if we believe we are responsible to form our spirituality, then it is all about doing the right things and becoming the right Christian. The issue is not doing but being with Jesus. See Luke 10:38-42.

"Spiritual formation is not something that we do to ourselves or for ourselves, but something we allow God to do in us and for us as we yield ourselves to the work of God's transforming grace."¹⁷ This means that our spiritual journey is not setting out, to simply gather information or to find God as someone to figure out and control. Rather our spiritual journey gives way to being intentionally present with Christ.

The story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42 is a prime example of being versus doing. Martha is busy with much work preparing a meal for the Jesus and the rest of the company. Yet Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus listening. Mary had chosen the good portion. Mulholland rightly reminds us that, "Our doing flows out of our being. In spiritual formation the problem with being formed is

¹⁶ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 28.

¹⁷ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 38.

that we have a strong tendency to think that if only we do the right things, we will be the right kind of Christian, as though our doing would bring about our being."¹⁸

Image of Christ: (Slide 71)

What we ultimately desire to become are image-bearers of Christ. Just as spiritual formation is not an add-on but the essence of who we are, so is the image of Christ. Paul speaks clearly of our relationship with Christ in Ephesians 1:3-6. Before the foundation of the world, he has called us out to be holy and blameless. In love he has predestined us to be adopted as sons and daughters through Christ.

So, if we are image-bearers of Christ, what is Christ forming us to? "If indeed the work of God's formation in us is the process of forming us in the image of Christ, obviously it's going to take place at the points where we are not yet formed in that image...That part of you which has not yet been formed in the image of Christ is not simply a thing in you—it is an essential part of who you are."¹⁹ This is what Jesus is pointing to when he calls us to take up our cross, "Our cross is the point of our unlikeness to the image of Christ, where we must die to self to be raised by God into wholeness of life in the image of Christ."²⁰

Sake of Others: (Slide 72)

We were created to live in community. Since Genesis 2 humanity was formed to live together, to cherish one another, to be co-creators and to steward the gifts God has given. It is only when community was created did we flourish as a people and became fully human. We were created to be in relationship with creation, God and others. We cannot be formed in the image of God outside of community as community is at the core of the triune God: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Before the physical world and spiritual world, there was the triune God in perfect community and in perfect relationship.

Often our spiritual formation stops with becoming more like Christ, but if we stop there in our definition, we are not being holistic in who we are as humans. If we stop short with our definition and exclude "for the sake of others," then spiritual formation becomes purely a self-help guide to self-centeredness...which is not Christ.

¹⁸ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 36.

¹⁹ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 45-46.

²⁰ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 46.

"Our relationships with others are not only the testing grounds of our spiritual life but also the places where our growth toward wholeness in Christ happens."²¹ We need each other to grow in our spiritual formation.

A Holistic View of Spiritual Formation: (Slide 73)

What might spiritual formation look like? What is actually being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others? Diane Chandler in her book *Christian Spiritual Formation: An Integrated Approach for Personal and Relational Wholeness* offers a helpful figure that captures seven dimensions that are being formed by the Holy Spirit into the imago Dei through the love of Christ.²²

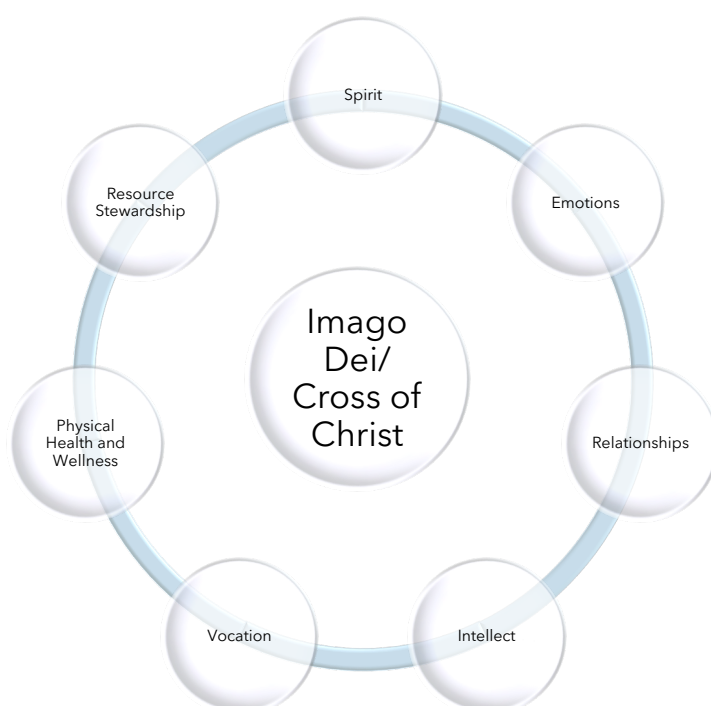


FIGURE 2. CHRISTIAN FORMATION MODEL BY CHANDLER

²¹ Mulholland and Barton, *Invitation to a Journey*, 51.

²² Diane J. Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation: An Integrated Approach for Personal and Relational Wholeness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 18.

Imago Dei/Cross of Christ ~ Humanity was created in the image of God to reflect the glory of the Divine (Genesis 1:27). Because sin has marred our image, love, which is the essence of the triune God manifested in Christ and communicated through the Holy Spirit, is restoring our imago Dei. God first loved us; therefore, our response is gratitude to what is being formed into the image of Christ for the sake of the world.

Spirit ~ The formation of the spirit is essential to our faith journey and is the key to the other six dimensions. "The human spirit is the core capacity and repository of one's deepest longings and desires, and it directs all of the issues of life."²³ The spirit directs and gives purpose to the other dimensions.

Emotions ~ Emotions are tied to our early childhood and sets us on a relational trajectory with others that are healthy or hindered. "The goal of emotional formation relates to reconciling self-image with biblical truths of how God sees us. Becoming free from emotional bondages in order to experience emotional freedom is a process that most often involves forgiving and releasing others for their offenses."²⁴ Emotional formation is grounded and matured through the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.

Relationships ~ We were made for community. We were made to be in relationship with God, his creation and with others. Others, whether it is family or friends, shape us negatively or positively. Our relationship with God forms our relationships with others as well as our relationships with others forms our relationship with God. It is no wonder God has placed individuals in our lives to help form us into the imago Dei.

Intellect ~ Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). Followers of Christ must exercise the mind through reason, reflection, thinking and understanding while seeking truth and wisdom. Formation of the mind without spirit, emotion and relationship is only knowledge that is puffed up.

Vocation ~ A calling, a vocation, is an invitation to partner with God. First, to respond to the goodness and faithfulness of God through accepting salvation through Christ. It is also a calling to engage in the work God has ordained for you to do in the world for his glory. Your calling as a spouse, co-worker, pastor or friend matters to God. How one uses talents, gifts, abilities and skills matters to God. Therefore, vocational formation is essential to our overall spiritual formation as our vocation is being formed for God's purposes.

Physical Health and Wellness ~ We are embodied spiritual beings. The Apostle Paul reminds us that our bodies are temples and are worthy to be stewarded well (I Corinthians 6:19). Chandler concludes, "Healthy nutritional choices, physical exercise, adequate sleep, periods of rest and

²³ Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation*, 69.

²⁴ Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation*, 270.

leisure to release stress, and sexual purity combine to forge physical wellness practices that honor God.”²⁵

Resource Stewardship ~ We were created for community to steward well the resources that God has graciously given us. Resources like our bodies, time, creation, family, friends, possessions, money, job and hobbies are all gifts that should be stewarded well to the glory of God. As Christ is being formed in us through the Holy Spirit, our view and care of stewarding the good things of God will be transformed.

Reflection Questions: (Slide 74)

Around your table take 10 minutes to discuss the reflection questions. After the table discussion we will take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

1. Keeping in mind the imago Dei diagram, what has shaped you spiritually? Good or bad?
2. To take up the cross is to die to self and allow Christ to work in places that are not formed yet in his image. Where does Christ need to work in you?
3. Why is your spiritual formation not private nor individualistic?

An Encouraging Word: (Slide 75)

We are going to take a quick spiritual growth test. To assess our spiritual growth, one can ask two simple questions:

1. Are you more Christ-like today than you were this time last year? Are you more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled?
2. How would your spouse, kids, boss or a co-worker answer the above question?

Share in your groups briefly where you are on your faith journey.

²⁵ Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation*, 272.

Takeaways: (Slide 76)

- Spiritual formation is a life-long process.
- We are being spiritually formed, either in the likeness of Christ or in a distorted caricature of Christ.
- Spiritual formation is something that is done in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Spiritual formation is communal.

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

Session Five Lecture Notes: A Community and A Call

Session Five Overview:

- Participants will develop a more robust definition of spiritual formation that will bring clarity and purpose to why and how we are spiritually formed.
- Participants will learn about mentoring communities and their elements and commitments.
- Participants will learn mentoring communities thrive when there is stability, fidelity and obedience.
- Participants will be challenged to respond to the invitation to push out into the deep and take the life-long journey to become a spiritually formed leader by committing to a mentoring community.

Introduction: (Slide 79)

At the beginning of each session, you have seen this picture. What do you see? Take a few minutes to make observations and then we will share with the group. Reflecting on the picture, let's make several observations. It seems to be an abandoned church. From surroundings of the inside, one can gather there was a fire in the church. Pews are charred, the floor is burnt. Windows have smoke residue. Perhaps the building has potential water damage.

There is also light. Light coming through the windows. The light is highlighting the vacancy and the destruction. The light is highlighting what was and what might be. Is the church destroyed or is there room for restoration and redemption?

What might the outside look like? It appears the fire and destruction were from within. But the glass windows are not broken or damaged. The outside may look completely fine.

What might this picture represent? May I suggest, this picture represents our hearts. Maybe from the outside everything looks fine, but inside we are broken. Broken by choices we have made. Broken by choices our loved ones have made. Broken promises, broken relationships, broken expectations. Maybe it represents a heart that needs restoration and redemption. Perhaps a heart that might have been neglected and is in need of attending to. As suggested, there is still hope. In the kingdom of God, there is nothing too broken that cannot be restored.

Spiritual Formation Defined: (Slides 80-82)

Our working definition of spiritual formation was from Mulholland: "Spiritual formation is a process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of the world." Based on what we have talked about I would like to suggest the following, more robust, definition that gives color and depth to Mulholland's definition.

Greenman's and Morse's adapted definition defines spiritual formation as "our continuing response to the reality of God's grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, *for the glory of God* and the sake of the world."²⁶

Notice the four elements of spiritual formation are in both definitions. It is a process, there is shaping and forming, the image of Christ is being developed and the community is essential to the formation. However, this more robust definition offers:

- a) our response to spiritual formation.
- b) clarity to who is doing the forming.
- c) the role the community of faith plays in our formation.
- d) the two purposes for our spiritual formation are to bring glory to God and to serve others.
- e) a trinitarian view of the work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit in our spiritual formation.

We have already said:

- Spiritual formation is a life-long process.
- Spiritual formation is not private.
- Spiritual formation is something that is done to us through the Holy Spirit.
- Spiritual formation is for the sake of others.
- Spiritual formation is done in community.

But what does that look like? How we anchor ourselves to being available for spiritual formation is being accountable to the people of God. In other words, spiritual formation cannot flourish in isolation.

²⁶ Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis, eds., *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 24.

Mentoring Relationships: (Slides 83-84)

Much has been researched and much has been written about mentorship and the value it brings to a variety of familial, communal and corporate settings. Mentorship is an ancient practice that can be described as “an intentional and appropriately reciprocal relationship between two individuals, a younger adult and an older, wiser figure who assists the younger person in learning the way of life.”²⁷ Ancient Greek literature describes this kind of relational mentorship in Homer’s epic Greek poem *Odyssey* written between 725 to 675 BC. Before King Odysseus journeys off to the Trojan War, he charged his trusted household manager and servant, Mentor, with educating and guiding his young son Telemachus.²⁸ Telemachus’ education would not have been one dimensional but rather it would have encompassed every area of his life: relational, intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual. In the article, *Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring*, Anderson and Shannon say this kind of mentor modeling from an ancient myth would suggest mentoring is an intentional, nurturing, insightful, supportive and protective process.²⁹

Mentoring over the centuries has taken on different forms. In the Middle Ages a craftsman, such as a blacksmith or carpenter, trained apprentices by passing off skills through demonstration and supervision. In modern times businesses have internships and medical doctors have residency programs to ensure the protégés have the skills and knowledge to perform the tasks their respective trade requires of them with confidence and excellence. The role of mentor has also shifted and expanded over the years as mentors are often seen as teachers, trainers, sponsors and positive role models.³⁰ As the roles of mentor and mentorship have ebbed and flowed throughout the centuries, so it has in the church.

Relationships in the Church: (Slide 85)

Michael Crow in his article, *Multiplying Jesus Mentors*, attempts to define the difference between discipling, mentoring and coaching. Crow describes discipling as “a more mature believer helps a new believer grow in following Jesus,” mentoring as “a mature leader helps an emerging leader both clarify and implement God’s call,” and coaching as “a coach helps discover his/her own

²⁷ Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*, 10th edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 165.

²⁸ Peter F. Wilson, “Principled Mentoring: Identifying Core Values for the Practice of Mentoring,” n.d., 1.

²⁹ Eugene M. Anderson and Anne Lucasse Shannon, “Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 39, no. 1 (1988): 38-42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002248718803900109>.

³⁰ Beverly Hardcastle, “Spiritual Connections: Protégés’ Reflections on Significant Mentorships,” *Theory Into Practice* 27, no. 3 (1988): 202, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1477192>.

solutions and strategies.”³¹ In short, the differences between the three is the desired relationship and their outcomes. “Mentoring becomes a focused relationship around sharing life together through one person helping another person discover and live into one’s unique calling of guiding people to God’s kingdom work.”³²

Mentoring relationships provide a sacred space for questions, silence, listening, discovery, doubts and soul searching that many seminars, lectures and conferences don’t allow. Most mentoring research has focused primarily on the traditional model: one mentor, one protégé. Yet recent findings from the Harvard Assessment Seminars have suggested students have the most positive learning experience when they are in a group setting.³³ Mentoring communities can serve as a network of belonging for those who desire to explore spiritual formation, purpose and faith.

Elements to a Mentoring Community (Slide 86)

To create a mentoring environment, one needs “a container, a community, and a conversation (content).”³⁴ Let’s work backwards through these elements:

- *Conversation*: Content, good content, is essential to spur on a robust conversation. Content allows the group to center themselves on common themes while moving the group towards a resolution, more questions or space for contemplation and reflection.
- *Community*: In this context a community consists of a minimum of three and a maximum of four that are willing to enter into a covenant relationship.
- *Container*: The third element, a container, is essential to a mentoring community. A “container” is similar to what Ronald Heifetz in *Leadership Without Easy Answers* defines as a “holding environment” that creates space for people to do the hard adaptive learning and work for personal and communal transformation. It is a sacred space, usually in the form of a covenant, that articulates how the group will live that is faithful to God and the group.

³¹ D. Michael Crow, “Multiplying Jesus Mentors: Designing a Reproducible Mentoring System: A Case Study,” *Missiology* 36, no. 1 (January 2008): 90.

³² Danny Wayne Russell, “Congregational Leadership Development through Mentorships: Preparing Each Generation for the Church’s Future through Family Systems Theory,” n.d., 118.

³³ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 174.

³⁴ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 175.

Commitment to a Mentoring Community: (Slide 87)

Along with the three elements in creating a mentoring environment (a conversation, a community, and a container), those who decide to participate should commit to: stability in community, fidelity in community and obedience to community like that which is found in *The Rule of St. Benedict*.³⁵ The Rule of Saint Benedict was written in 516 to provide guidance and balance to a monk's life through prayer, work and contemplation. To join one had to make a vow of stability, fidelity and obedience. Making such commitments within the mentoring community will push against the path of private spirituality, antinomian spirituality and nomadic spirituality.

- *Stability*: Stability is a home for those who are tired of nomadic spirituality. Nomadic Christians are those who never settle down and plant deep roots in a faith community. A nomadic spirituality that is not invested in community becomes fluid and individualized. Isolation breeds distortion. Stability in a faithful community is essential for growth in Christ.
- *Fidelity*: Loyalty to others and to God pushes against private spirituality. Our relationship with God is personal but not private.
- *Obedience*: Obedience to the Word of God is our anchor and challenges antinomian spirituality, a spirituality that is conviction-less and repentance free. The Law is not abolished but is fulfilled in the person of Jesus; the Law makes us aware of our need for redemption and restoration.

Mentoring communities who accept these commitments embrace their desire not to live in isolation but rather invite the support from others to grow in Christ, push against the false and temporal emotions of feel-good spirituality through embracing the authority of Christ through Scripture, and stop moving from church to church and intentionally plant roots so one can truly know and be known. When we say stability, fidelity, and obedience...we are really talking about trust!

³⁵ David G. Robinson, *Ancient Paths: Discover Christian Formation the Benedictine Way*, Reprint edition (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2010), xvi.

Reflection Questions: (Slide 88)

Around your table take 10 minutes to discuss the reflection questions. After the table discussion we will take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

1. Who has mentored you? In what ways did they mentor you? What did you appreciate or cherish about the relationship?
2. What are some obstacles do you see that might keep you from participating in a mentoring community?
3. Why do you think community is essential to your spiritual formation?

An Encouraging Word: (Slides 89-91)

Luke retells the story of Jesus calling his first disciples. Like we have done in past sessions, let's read Luke 5:1-11 and make several observations:

- Crowd pressing on Jesus (vs 1)
- Jesus was standing on the shoreline of Lake Gennesaret (1)
- Two boats on the shoreline (vs 2)
- Fishermen gone to wash their nets (vs 3)
- Jesus asks Simon to put the boat into the deep and lay down his nets (vs 4)
- Peter's first response was, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing." (vs 5)
- Peter's second response was, "But at your word I will let down the nets." (5)
- Caught such a large amount the nets were breaking (vs 6)
- Peter's third response, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (vs 8)
- Jesus commissions Peter (vs 10)

It is interesting that Luke describes two boats that were on the shoreline. It is also interesting that Luke tells us which one Jesus picked to teach from, Simon Peter's. After teaching, Jesus, a carpenter, invites Peter to go back out into the deep where he fished all night and caught nothing. Peter's first response to Jesus was valid. Peter, the fisherman, pushed back and spoke from frustration and exhaustion while the nets were drying from a long night of work. They had worked the entire night and came up empty. This was not a hobby for them, this was their job, their livelihood. I am sure they were ready to go home, get some rest and try again the next night. Yet Peter, being humble and obedient, said, "But at your word." Because Jesus said so, Peter was willing to take the risk to push off from the shoreline, into the deep, and lay down the nets one more time.

Catching a large number of fish, Peter spoke one more time: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." Does this sound familiar? Remember Isaiah 6 and Isaiah's response to seeing the true King

in the temple? Isaiah and Peter were both commissioned to go be leaders among leaders. Both responded with humility and grace. Both felt unworthy, yet both were called out by God.

"But at your word..." How will you respond? God has chosen you and your boat. It is not about being perfect but being willing to accept the invitation. God is calling you to push out into the deep and lay your nets down. You might be tired. You might be frustrated because you have tried and tried and you seem to get nowhere in your spiritual journey. There might be a ton of excuses not to go out again, yet the invitation is given. How are you going to respond?

Takeaways: (Slide 92)

- Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God's grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and the sake of the world.
- Mentoring communities thrive when there is stability, fidelity and obedience.
- To lead well we must be spiritually formed well.
- Christ has chosen your boat; what is your response?

Invitation to the Journey: (Slide 93)

After a time of reflection, you are ready to respond to the invitation, the call to go on a spiritual journey. What does the journey look like? Let me briefly share with you the finer details of what it means to be a part of a mentoring community.

- A group of 3 to 4 make up a mentoring community group or "Bridge Group."
- The group meets twice a month for twelve months. Each gathering will last an hour.
- Content will be provided in a mentoring guide to read, reflect and discuss at each gathering.
- Twice during the year, all Bridge groups will gather for fellowship, accountability and continued teaching.
- By the end of the twelve-month commitment, each participant will have a working and sustainable rule of life, a one-page living document that provides direction and support for the next season of life.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

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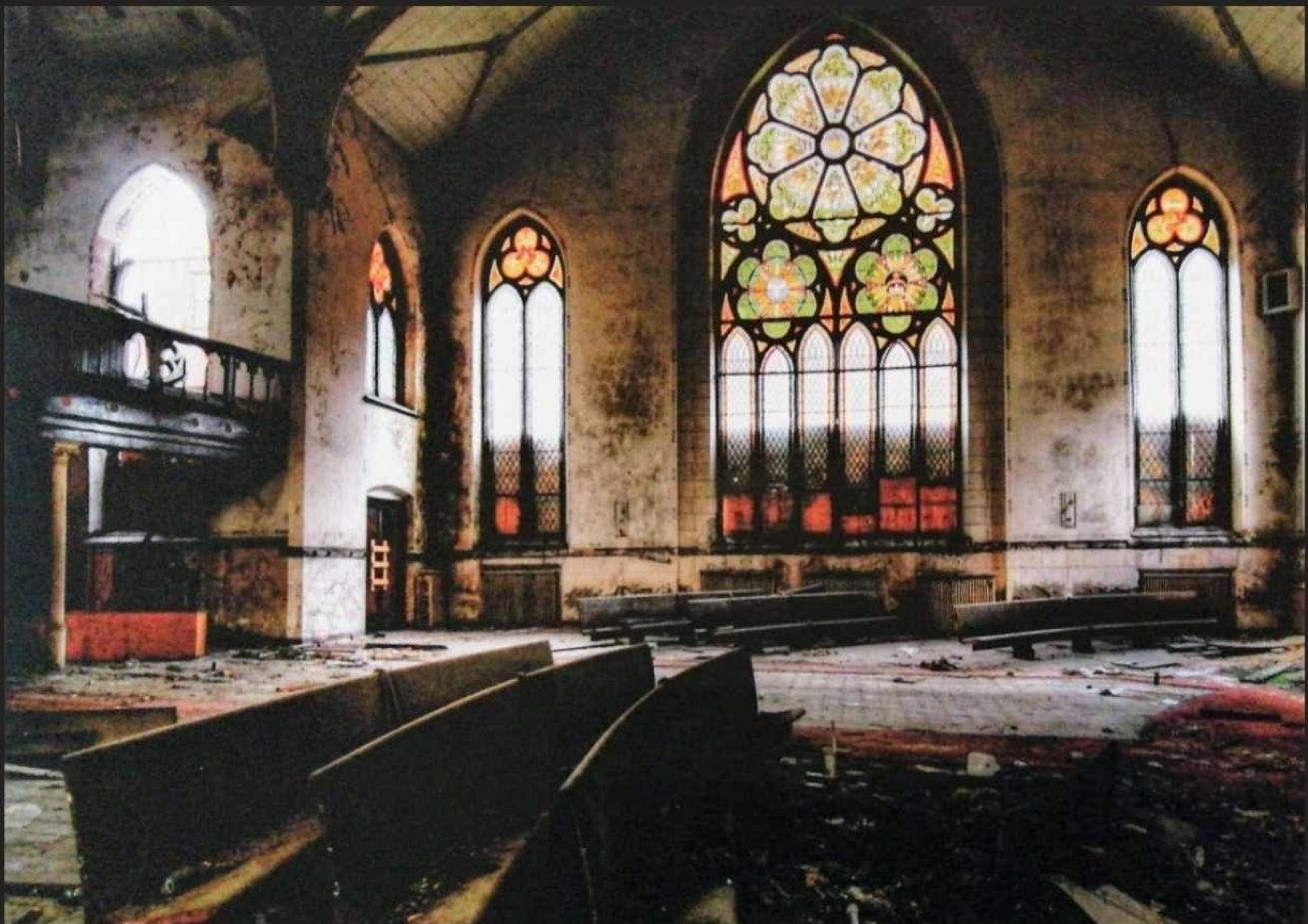
Student Guide

SPRING OF 2023

Student
Guide

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

AN INVITATION TO A LIFE-LONG JOURNEY OF STABILITY, FIDELITY
AND OBEDIENCE



Dr. Brad Pembleton

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION ONE: BARRIERS

We all have _____
life to live!



"In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple."

Isaiah 6:1

II Chronicles 26:1-15

II Chronicles 26:16-23

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION ONE: BARRIERS

Lessons of Pride from Uzziah:

Pride Manifests Itself in Three Ways:

Isaiah 6:1-7:

Pride is the most stubborn and hardest sin to kill but one we must die to if we are to have an abundant and thriving life that Christ offers through the Holy Spirit.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION ONE: BARRIERS

Compare and Contrast:

King Uzziah	King, "the LORD of Hosts"

Reflection Questions:

1. What word or words would you want written on your tombstone that would describe you?
2. Pride manifests itself in passion, possession and position. In what particular way(s) do you struggle with pride? Why?
3. Based on what we learned, how can you deal with your pride?
4. How are we going to choose to live in this finite, limited space called life, a gift God has given us to steward and live out well?

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION ONE: BARRIERS

An Encouraging Word:

Takeaways:

- Pride breaks down our ability to steward well the one life God has given us to live.
- Gratitude is the foundation to combat pride.
- We have a choice in how we live out our dash. When we invite Christ into our dash, the dash becomes significant, no matter how short or long the dash is.
- Engaging in this class will place you on a trajectory to live out your dash well as you become a spiritually formed leader.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION TWO: LEADERSHIP IS...

What is a good leader?

Defining Leadership:

Definition:

Functions of a leader:

Symbol:

Components of Leadership:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Over 200 different definitions of leadership over the past 100 years.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

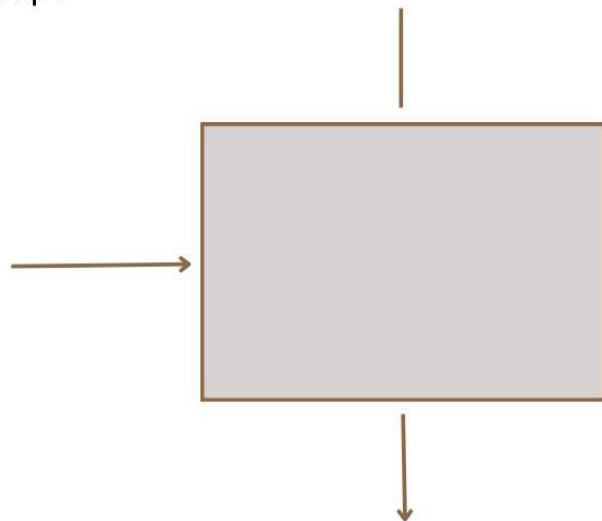
SESSION TWO: LEADERSHIP IS...

A Working Definition:

Leadership is a _____ whereby an individual
_____ a group of individuals to achieve a
_____.

Trait vs Process:

Trait Definition of Leadership:



Process Definition of Leadership:

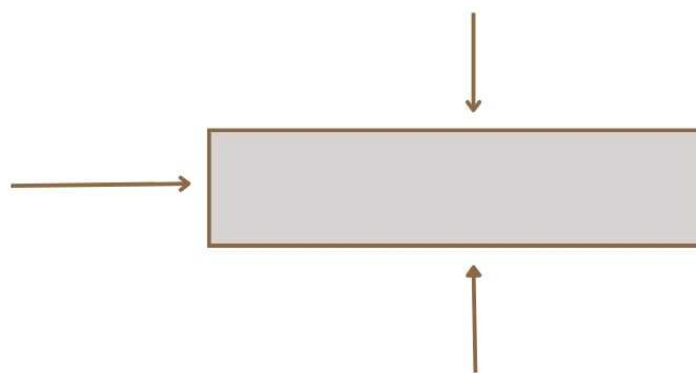


Figure 1: Different Views of Leadership by Kotter

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION TWO: LEADERSHIP IS...

Natural vs Moral:

“Hitler’s rule in Germany could be considered a good example of leadership.”

Reflection Questions:

1. Who in your life has shaped you as a leader? In what ways has he/she shaped you? Why did you follow that leader? What attributes were you attracted to?
2. Do you see yourself as a leader? If not, why not? After what we have learned, do you now see yourself as a leader? Where might you be a leader?
3. What kind of leader do you desire to be?
4. Since leadership is a process, what might it require of you to become a better leader?

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION TWO: LEADERSHIP IS...

An Encouraging Word:

"Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

Takeaways:

- Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.
- Leadership can be learned
- Leadership is moral.
- You are a leader.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

Working Leadership Definition:

Leadership is a **process** whereby an individual **influences** a group of individuals to achieve a **common goal**.

A Biblical Lens to View Leadership:

Pentateuch: Genesis - Deuteronomy

- Leadership comes by divine appointment
- Leadership moves from one to many
- Leadership requires accountability



History Books: Joshua, Judges, Esther, Kings

- Leadership requires a time of preparation
- Leadership requires a sensitive heart to spiritual things
- Leadership demands particular skills

Poets and Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel

- Leadership requires deep conviction of God's will for leaders and followers
- Leadership requires clear theological perspective
- Leadership requires awareness of contemporary surroundings



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP



Gospels and Acts: Jesus, Lydia, Priscilla, Stephen

- *Leadership is servanthood*
- *Leadership is stewardship*
- *Leadership is shared power*

Epistles and Revelation: Paul, Peter, John

- *Leadership is ministry*
- *Leadership is modeling behavior*
- *Leadership is mentoring*
- *Leadership is membership in the body*



"Biblical leadership takes place when divinely appointed men and women accept responsibility for obedience to God's call. They recognize the importance of preparation time, allowing the Holy Spirit to develop tenderness of heart and skill of hands. They carry out their leadership roles with deep conviction of God's will, clear theological perspective from God's Word, and an acute awareness of the contemporary issues which they and their followers face. Above all, they exercise leadership as servants and stewards, sharing authority with their followers and affirming that leadership is primarily ministry to others, modeling for others and mutual relationship with others in Christ's body." **Kenneth O. Gangel**

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

“Leadership is **more physical** than mental, **more relational** than getting things done, **more in Christ** than about Christ.”

Dr. MaryKate Morse

Reflection Questions:

1. In what ways does our working definition change through the lens of biblical leadership?
2. How would you write your new definition of leadership? Would it change?
3. What specific area(s) of leadership do you need to grow in to lead others well?
4. What leadership qualities do you see in each other?

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

An Encouraging Word:

I Thessalonians 2:1-16:

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.

I Thessalonians 2:17-19

Takeaways:

- Leadership is a life-long process.
- Leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ.
- Leadership is about a shared transformation; in you and in others.
- To lead well we must be spiritually formed.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Pop Quiz:

Spiritual ~

Religious ~

Evangelism ~

Mentor ~

Spiritual Disciplines ~

Discipleship ~

Spiritual Formation ~

Pyramid of Clarity:



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual Formation is NOT:

- A static possession one manages by exercising the right techniques, learning a specific program or a method.
- An add on to our personality to deal with the spiritual aspects of our lives.
- A one size fits all.
- Private or individualistic in nature.

Four Components of Spiritual Formation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

“The needed change within us is God’s work not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside...We must always remember that the path does not produce the change it only puts us in the place where the change can occur.” **Richard Foster**

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

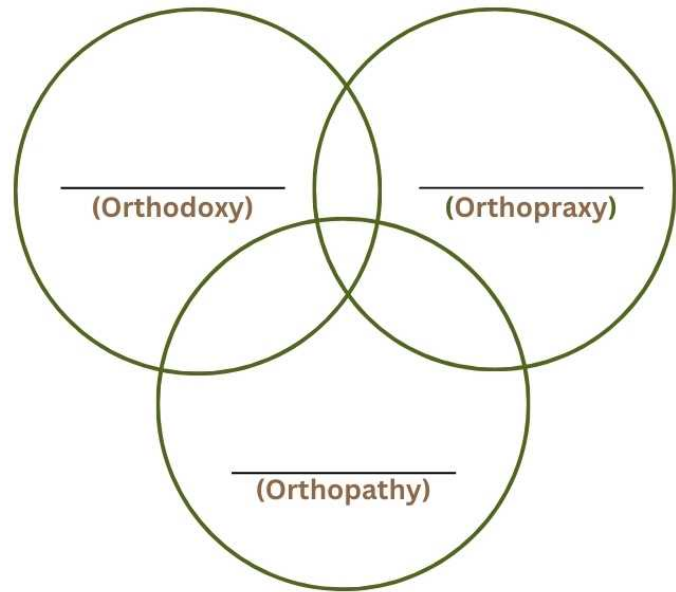
Spiritual Formation is:

Process:

Being Formed:

Image of Christ:

Sake of Others:



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

A Holistic View of Spiritual Formation:

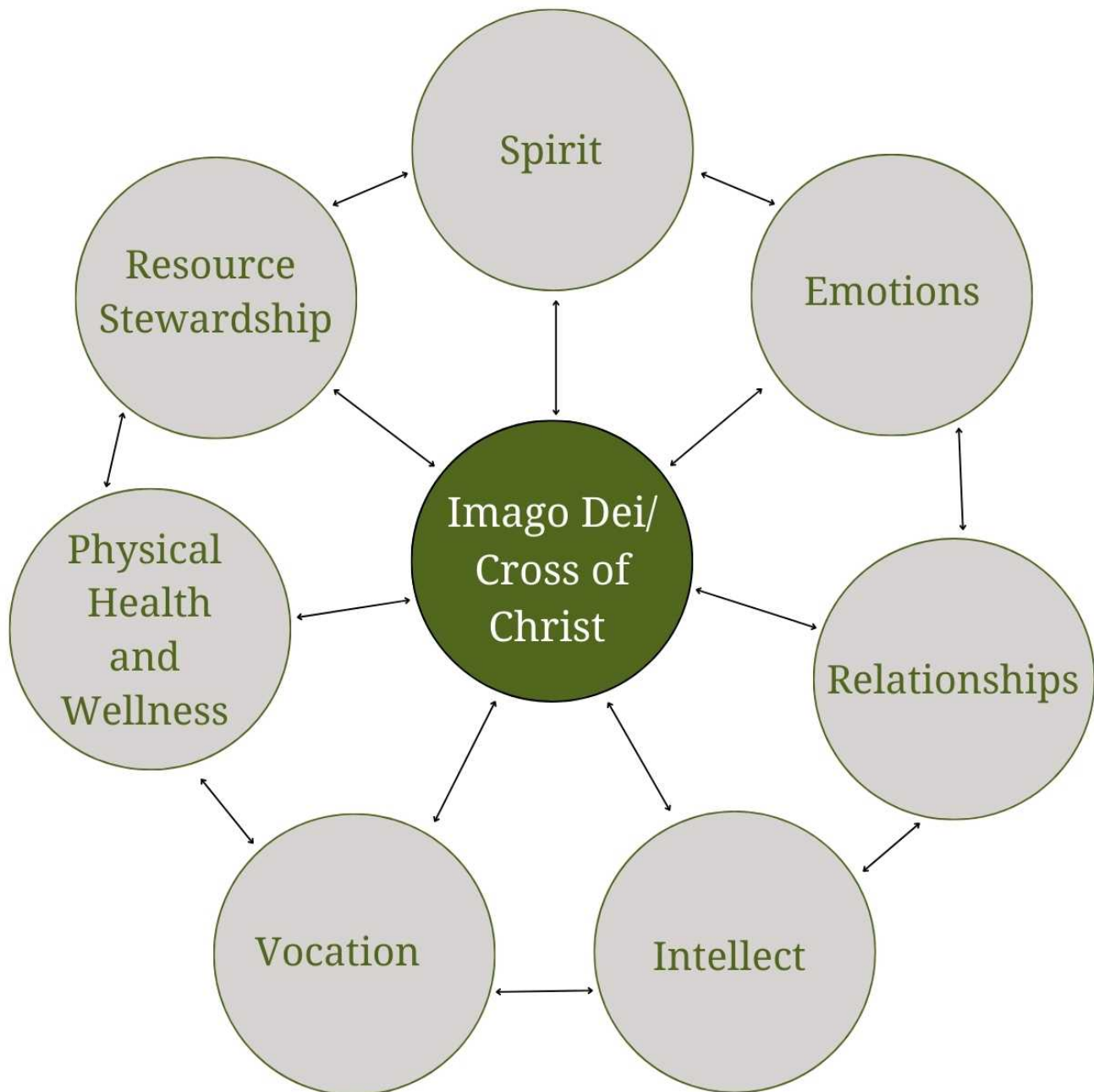


Figure 2: Christian Spiritual Formation Model by Chandler

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Reflection Questions:

1. Keeping in mind the Imago Dei diagram, what has shaped you spiritually? Good or bad?
2. To take up the cross is to die to self and allow Christ to work in places that are not formed yet in his image. Where does Christ need to work in you?
3. Why is your spiritual formation not private nor individualistic?

An Encouraging Word:

We are going to take a quick spiritual growth test? To assess our spiritual growth, one can ask two simple questions:

1. Are you more Christ-like today than you were this time last year? Are you more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled?
2. How would your spouse, kids, boss or a co-worker answer the above question?

Takeaways:

- Spiritual formation is a life-long process.
- We are being spiritually formed, either in the likeness of Christ or in a distorted caricature of Christ.
- Spiritual formation is something that is done in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Spiritual formation is communal.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL

What do you see?



Church by Bauer

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL

Spiritual Formation:

*“Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, **in the community of faith**, for the glory of God and the sake of the world.”*

Mentorship Relationships:

Relationships in the Church:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

“Mentoring becomes a focused relationship around sharing life together through one person helping another person discover and live into one’s unique calling of guiding people to God’s kingdom work.” **Danny Wayne Russell**

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL

Elements to a Mentoring Community:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Commitment to a Mentoring Community:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reflection Questions:

1. Who has mentored you? In what ways did they mentor you?
What did you appreciate or cherish about the relationship?
2. What are some obstacles you see that might keep you from participating in a mentoring community?
3. Why do you think community is essential to your spiritual formation?

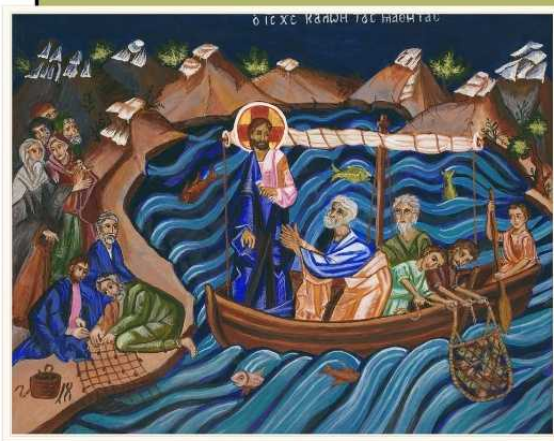
BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL

An Encouraging Word:

On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Luke 5:1-11



"But at your word..."

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL


Takeaways:

- Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God's grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and the sake of the world.
- Mentoring communities thrive when there is stability, fidelity and obedience.
- To lead well we must be spiritually formed well.
- Christ has chosen your boat; what is your response?

Invitation to the Journey:

- A group of 3 to 4 make up a mentoring community group or "Bridge Group."
- The group meets twice a month for twelve months. Each gathering will last an hour.
- Content will be provided in a mentoring guide to read, reflect and discuss at each gathering.
- Twice during the year, all Bridge groups will gather for fellowship, accountability and continued teaching.
- By the end of the twelve-month commitment, each participant will have a working and sustainable rule of life, a one-page living document that provides direction and support for the next season of life.

Mentoring Community Guide



Mentoring Community Guide

Becoming a Spiritually Formed Leader

An Invitation to a Life-Long Journey of Stability,
Fidelity and Obedience

Dr. Brad Pembleton



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02	PURPOSE OF GUIDE
03	STRUCTURE OF GUIDE
04	TIPS FOR THE ADVENTURE
05	RESOURCES
06	OVERVIEW OF CAIRNS
14	CAIRN SHOWCASE

Welcome

The Hobbit, one of the greatest adventures ever told begins with, “In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.”[1] Bilbo Baggins, a well-to-do hobbit, lived in a respectable neighborhood called The Hill. There Bilbo lived a very comfortable and ordinary life until Gandalf, the wizard, comes to visit one good morning. Gandalf’s unexpected knock on Bilbo’s door quickly became an invitation, not to simply spend the morning smoking a pipe, but to go on an epic adventure to the Lonely Mountain. Gandalf responds to Bilbo by saying, “I have no time to blow smoke rings this morning. I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it’s very difficult to find anyone.”[2]

I suspect many of us can identify with Bilbo Baggins. We live in a respectable community trying to live an ordinary and comfortable life. We are entrenched in our routines as we work, play and balance our household. We plan and schedule our lives to avoid as many interruptions as possible so we are not caught off guard or live in fear of missing out. Yet, by picking up this guide and committing to a mentoring group, you have chosen to go on an adventure, an epic adventure. Yes, there might be some uneasiness or buyers’ remorse. There might even be excitement and wonder of what is to come with great anticipation and expectation. Like Bilbo, we might be unsure of what we have agreed to or where this adventure will take us. However, what we do know, what we can be sure of, is that we will never travel this journey alone as the adventure will take us to places we have never been, we will learn much about each other, our ourselves and that our lives will be forever transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit. The adventure proves to be transformative and one that is ready to be taken.

So, like Bilbo, there is no time to waste. No time to finish your second breakfast, no time to grab a hat, a walking-stick or money, for the adventure has begun.

We'll see you along the path.

Purpose of Guide

Committing to a life-long process of leadership and spiritual formation takes intentionality and devotion. To help direct and offer a pathway to sustainable growth in both leadership and spiritual formation this guide is a blueprint for you and your mentoring community to have thoughtful and meaningful conversations that will spur one another to becoming a spiritually formed leader. The content is designed for spiritual formation to interact with leadership principles and concepts that will inform you as a leader and lead you towards a holistic approach to your spiritual maturity and formation in Christ.

The guide's ultimate purpose is to be a launching pad for your mentoring community, or *Bridge Group*, to have robust conversations about leadership and spiritual formation. The articles, activities, resources and rule of life are tools for you to discover what kind of leader God has called you to be and to acknowledge the ways Christ's image is being formed in you as you serve God and others.

The mentoring community guide will culminate in an exercise called the *Rule of Life*. There are two Latin words that are used for rule: *lex* and *regula*. *Lex* can be translated "law" while *regula* is translated as "rule" or "guide." A rule of life is a guide that is unique to you, your calling and your context. The guide acts as a trellis, a structure, that allows God's Spirit to work in you through different rhythms of grace that are needed for your continual spiritual formation. By the end of the twelve-month commitment you will have cultivated and produced a one-page rule of life that will guide you and support you for your next season of life.

Structure of Guide

The times I have been hiking I have had friends and professional tour guides who have provided a list of all the proper gear and food supplies to ensure a fun but safe trip. The guides also had a map, which they were all capable and trained to read, that were studied and then often referenced when determining the best direction to guide us to our ultimate destination. I had to trust the guides and their ability to read the map to lead us on the journey through each twist and turn knowing, that this was part of the adventure. The structure of this guide should be seen as a map to help your group navigate through the twists and turns, the valleys and peaks, of being in community. The map is simple to read so that the group knows where they are along the path and that anyone can lead a stretch of the journey.

The guide consists of twenty-five Cairns for the group to pause and reflect upon while along the journey. Cairn is a Scottish word that literally means, “heap of stones.” Rock cairns are often constructed and used for navigation in the wilderness; for hikers they’re basically the original compass to guide them along the path. Hikers who come across a rock cairn are encouraged as they know someone has been there before them. As we journey and come to each cairn, may we find great solace knowing we are not traveling alone. We will learn from each other and from those who have gone before us.

Each Cairn is a gathering and will require reading, engagement and reflection. Below is the basic structure for each gathering:

- **Before You Gather** will have resources you will need to have read before coming to the gathering. Such resources will consist of articles, specific chapters in a book or statements and questions to consider.
- **While You Gather** will have resources for the group to consider while discussing the material that was read and reflected upon before coming to the gathering. The questions are to draw out opinions, experiences and shared stories to better understand how one can become a spiritually formed leader.
- **After You Gather** will provide space for you to reflect and write down your personal takeaways from each gathering. Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Writing such reflections would be best practiced within 12 to 24 hours of each meeting.

Tips for the Adventure

Going on an adventure requires an understanding that there will be ups and downs, twists and turns, unforeseen errors and roadblocks. However, that does not keep us from pressing forward and preparing ourselves for what is to come on the journey. Therefore, below are a few helpful tips to keep in mind while on the journey:

Consistency: Not to negate flexibility, but consistency needs to be your friend while on the journey. Once the mentoring community is formed, decide on your time, day and place of gathering. Remember, the mentoring community should meet twice a month. Set the dates on the calendar and be consistent in meeting together on the days that have been predetermined. Obviously, life happens and that is where flexibility comes into play, but if at all possible, be consistent with your time, day and place for your gatherings each month.

Preparedness: What you put into the adventure is what you will get out of it. Read and reflect on the material that is required before attending the gathering to make use of the time you have with your mentoring community. Each gathering will require about an hour's worth of prep work, while each gathering should last about an hour. The minimum time being asked each month is four hours. Take advantage of the time and be prepared for what God will do in your personal reflection and mentoring community.

Listen: Scripture says we must harken to the word of God. The idea of harkening is to listen with the intent to obey. Gathering monthly will allow relationships to deepen and widen. Sharing stories and experiences are imperative, but so is listening. Listen to each other with purpose and respect. As James 1:19 says, "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak." In our attentiveness to listen, we don't have the urge to fix people but to sit in solidarity with and hold each other before the Holy Spirit to do a work in us.

Tips for the Adventure Continued

Expectation: As Christ followers we are an expectant people. When reading and reflecting we should expect the Holy Spirit to call to mind the areas of growth we must attend to. When gathering we should expect Christ to have a seat at the table with us to guide and direct our conversations. When devoting time and effort to allow the Holy Spirit space to renovate the heart, we should expect pain, suffering and discomfort. When giving time and effort to be intentional with your mentoring community, expect delays, interruptions and justifiable excuses not to gather. Know that the times you gather are sacred and something beautiful is being redeemed and restored in the world. Be expectant.

Rotation: In a mentoring community everyone comes from a unique context to share stories and experiences, but no one comes as an expert. Therefore, it is imperative that each member of the group has the opportunity to grow in their leadership skills in facilitating a gathering. Rotating the role of facilitator will allow each person to learn, grow and allow each personality to be seen and heard.

Resources Needed:

Pohl, Christine D. *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011.

Shigematsu, Ken. *God in My Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2013.

Leadership Articles

Overview of Cairns

Cairn 1

Covenant

A covenant is basically an agreement between two parties. The first Cairn allows the Bridge group to discuss the differences between a contract and a covenant. After reflection the group will write their own covenant as an encouragement of stability, fidelity and obedience they are making to the triune God and each other.

Cairn 2

Living Into Community: Gratitude

Pohl writes, “Human beings were made for living in community, and it is in community that we flourish and become most fully human.”[3] There are four practices Pohl suggest we need to cultivate to thrive in a community: gratitude, promise keeping, truth telling and hospitality. At this Cairn the Bridge group will read about gratitude and why it is the foundation to living well into community.

Cairn 3

Living Into Community: Promise Keeping

Let’s be honest; we struggle with keeping our promises. To save face we usually don’t commit. Why? Although there might be many reasons, fear of missing out is a common thread in our decision-making in how we make commitments. We are afraid something better is going to come along. Therefore, we tend to live in contract-based relationships desiring a covenant-like intimacy. Pohl writes, “Promises provide the internal framework for every relationship and every community—they function like the ‘hidden supports in a well built house.’”[4] In our reading we will discover the power of promise keeping and how we can become a people of the promise.

Overview of Cairns

Cairn

4

Living Into Community: Truth Telling

You might have heard the saying, “Sometimes the truth hurts.” Usually we hear this saying in the context of our parents, siblings or a friend telling us something hard that we might not be ready to hear. Does the truth have to hurt? Is there a way to speak and live out truth that is gentle and humble that bears witness to a growing and thriving relationship? In our reading we will learn our ultimate purpose in truth telling is to help others grow toward maturity in Christ. It is to strengthen people in goodness and godliness. The Bridge group will discover the complications, weaknesses and strengths in becoming a truthful person.

Cairn

5

Living Into Community: Hospitality

Robert Webber writes, “The church is the primary presence of God’s activity in the world. As we pay attention to what it means to the church we create an alternative community to the society of the world. This new community, embodied experience of God’s kingdom, will draw people into itself and nurture them in the faith. In this sense the church and its life in the world will become the new apologetic.” [5] Biblical hospitality tills the ground for the church to embrace and live out such an alternative community. In our reading we see hospitality as the soil in which gratitude, promise keeping and truth telling truly flourish and nurture a faithful and thriving community.

Cairn

6

Wesleyan Questions to Ponder

Questions--good questions--can reveal much about a person’s character and their relationship with God and others. This Cairn will provide twenty-two questions for the Bridge group to consider that have been used by individuals and communities for almost three hundred years. The Bridge group will be challenged to reflect on these timeless questions while embracing a few to be a part of their daily devotion.

Overview of Cairns

Cairn 7

Christ-like Leadership by Dr. Kevin Pigg

How we lead is as important as what we lead. How we lead matters and what often motivates poor leadership is fear and pride. To lead like Christ and to combat fear and pride, we must put on humility and confidence. Dr. Pigg's article unpacks where fear and pride creeps into our leadership and how leaders can make a PACT to put on humility and confidence.

Cairn 8

Fellowship and Listening: All Mentoring Communities

A predetermined date will be set for all mentoring communities to gather for an evening of fellowship and listening. The purpose of this gathering is to, first, check in with all Bridge groups to encourage and inspire the participants to continue the journey. The journey is long and at times can be tedious. Gathering to encourage one another is essential to the success of all participants who are investing in their leadership and spiritual formation. Second, the listening prayer and group direction exercise will be introduced and practiced for Bridge groups to do on their own in upcoming gatherings.

Cairn 9

Listening Prayer and Group Direction

Before we can love one another, we must understand one another. To understand one another, we must be able to listen to one another. Unfortunately, we don't listen well. The listening exercise we introduced at Cairn #8 is to help facilitate an environment of listening and group direction. Cairn #9, #12 and #15 provide space for the Bridge group to practice the listening exercise, giving each participant a chance to facilitate and share.

Overview of Cairns

Cairn 10

Leadership Article

Leadership has evolved over the past hundred years. What we have learned is leadership is not authority, a title or a position. Leadership is not running smooth and effective meetings or overseeing a project or a group of people. Rather, we have learned leadership is an essential process that must be developed, in Christ through the power of the Spirit, to influence others well in achieving common goals. Cairn #10, #11, #13, #14 and #16 provide space for the Bridge group to read articles on leadership development and apply applicable leadership principles to their home, workplace and church context.

Cairn 11

Leadership Article

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Cairn 12

Listening Prayer and Group Direction

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Overview of Cairns

Cairn 13

Leadership Article

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Cairn 14

Leadership Article

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Cairn 15

Listening Prayer and Group Direction

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Overview of Cairns

Cairn 16

Leadership Article

Leadership has evolved over the past hundred years. What we have learned is leadership is not authority, a title or a position. Leadership is not running smooth and effective meetings or overseeing a project or a group of people. Rather, we have learned leadership is an essential process that must be developed, in Christ through the power of the Spirit, to influence others well in achieving common goals. Cairn #10, #11, #13, #14 and #16 provide space for the Bridge group to read articles on leadership development and apply applicable leadership principles to their home, workplace and church context.

Cairn 17

Rule of Life Teaching: All Mentoring Communities

A predetermined date will be set for all mentoring communities to gather for an evening of fellowship and teaching. The time of fellowship will center around testimonies of what God is currently teaching and challenging them in their spiritual formation. The teaching will introduce the rule of life concept, its purpose and the book, *God In My Everything*, which will be used to help navigate the participants to create their personal rule of life.

Cairn 18

God in My Everything, Part 1: Rules

A rule of life is a way of life that gives space for the Spirit to continually work in us and through us to become more like Christ; to love God and love others. We will be using Shigematsu's working definition of a rule of life, "A rule of life is simply a rhythm of practices that empowers us to live well and grow more like Jesus by helping us experience God in everything." [6] Before we reflect on such practices, we first must understand what we mean by "rule." At this Cairn we will pause and dig deep into the idea of "rule" and how a new understanding will free us to bear much fruit as we develop our own rule of life guided by a trellis.

Overview of Cairns

Cairn 19

God in My Everything, Part 2: Roots

We all want to flourish! We all want to grow and be seen as a thriving individual who is valued and loved. What is seen on the surface comes from a deep-rooted system that nourishes us and makes us strong to weather the storms of life and leads us to a life filled with joy. The root of a plant serves several functions. First, the roots anchor the plant so when extreme weather comes, the plant is secure and has a strong system to stay in place. Second, the root system takes in oxygen, water and nutrients from the soil, to move them throughout the plant to keep it strong and healthy. Third, the roots also stimulate and support microorganisms in the soil that benefits other plant life. In our reading we will be given three ways to root ourselves to ensure we have a strong system to sustain our rule of life.

Cairn 20

God in My Everything, Part 3: Relate

Isolation breeds distortion. In isolation our perceived reality is marred by self-centeredness and self-justification which is rooted in pride. We were created in the image of the triune God for and to thrive in community. We're created to be in relationship with other human beings, in relationship with other embodied creatures who are—like us—not God but who are—like us—created in God's own image. At this Cairn the Bridge group will explore spiritual friendship, sexuality and family life as essential elements that must be addressed and included in their rule of life.

Cairn 21

God in My Everything, Part 4: Restore

In Genesis 2:15 God gave humanity the responsibility to work the garden: "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." We are stewards of the time, talents and treasures God has graciously given us which includes money, play/hobbies and our bodies. At this Cairn the Bridge group will discover how the rule of life helps us restore the gift of time, talents and treasures through how we care for our bodies, how we play and how we steward our resources with a grateful and generous heart.

Overview of Cairns

Cairn 22

God in My Everything, Part 5: Reach Out

We have defined spiritual formation as our continuing response to the reality of God's grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and the sake of the world. The rule of life attends to the space we allow the Spirit to shape and form us in the image of Christ to ultimately influence and serve others. At this Cairn the Bridge group will unpack how work, justice and witness are practical ways to live out our spirituality that brings glory to God.

Cairn 23

Rule of Life:

Participants share a rough draft of their rule of life. They will request feedback by asking their Bridge group the following questions: **1) In what ways do you see this rule of life give space for the Spirit to work in my life?** **2) Is the mission statement clear? Why or why not?** **3) What attribute, behavior or rhythm of grace is missing that can help me in my spiritual formation or leadership?** Participants take all feedback and spend time fine-tuning their rule of life.

Cairn 24

Rule of Life:

Participants share their final rule of life. Participants reflect on their journey in preparation for the celebration at Cairn #25. Participants decide if they want to continue to be a part of the Bridge group for another year. Participants pray for each other and give thanks for the journey they have been on for the past twelve months.

Cairn 25

Celebration: All Mentoring Communities

A predetermined date will be set for all mentoring communities to gather for an evening of fellowship and celebration. The completed journey must be celebrated for participants who set out on the epic adventure and finished. Participants will be encouraged to share their rule of life and how they intend to continue their spiritual journey in becoming a spiritually formed leader.



Cairn Showcase

Before You Gather:

A covenant is basically an agreement between two parties. During biblical times there were two types of covenants that were used: a parity agreement and a suzerain treaty. A parity agreement was often made between equals or “brothers,” whereas a suzerainty treaty was made between a Lord (master) and a vassal (son/servant). A basic structure of a suzerain treaty consisted of: **1) The master establishes conditions, 2) The conditions specifies the rewards and punishments if the covenant is kept or broken and 3) The covenant was ratified by a blood sacrifice showing the depth of the promise to one another.** The two parties would walk together between the carcass of the blood sacrifice as a pledge of loyalty demonstrating what would happen if the covenant was broken. This type of covenant is seen in Genesis 15:7-21 between God and Abraham.

Reflection Questions:

1. Reflecting on Genesis 15:7-21 and the basic structure of a suzerain treaty, what was the purpose of a covenant?
2. What types of covenants do we make today?
3. Christine D. Pohl writes in *Living Into Community*, “Covenantal understandings of promising reflect a set of shared commitments and rarely have exit clauses. Contracts, on the other hand, deliberately define the relationships narrowly, and, once obligations are fulfilled, the exchange is complete—it is finished. In covenantal settings, relationships are extended and deepened. Covenants tend to be comprehensive and vulnerable in ways that contracts are not.”[7] What might be some differences between a contract and a covenant?
4. Why would you want or need to enter a covenant with a Bridge group?

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 1: COVENANT

At the first Cairn, your Bridge group will be asked to make a covenant between each other and God. A covenant that establishes conditions of how you desire to live and thrive in this community. The purpose of the covenant is: **1) To encourage one another, 2) Set guidelines in how you will approach the group and each other and 3) Set clear expectations of how you will keep each other accountable.** Once the covenant is agreed upon by the entire Bridge group, sign the covenant together as a symbol of your commitment to God and to the group.

Take a few moments and write down your “conditions” you would like to offer to the group. Some suggestions might be:

- Extend grace
- Celebrate and lament together
- Expect confidentiality
- Do not fix
- Listen
- Follow through

Be prepared to share them when you meet with your Bridge group.

Cairn 1: Covenant

While You Gather

If you have not already, determine now who will be facilitating this first Cairn. Once the facilitator is chosen, take a moment of silence and center yourselves and acknowledge the presence of God within you and in your group. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group.

Before writing and signing the Bridge Covenant, take 20 minutes and reflect on the questions that were asked in ***Before You Gather***.

Reflection Questions:

1. Reflecting on Genesis 15:7-21 and the basic structure of a suzerain treaty, what was the purpose of a covenant?
2. What types of covenants do we make today?
3. What might be some differences between a contract and a covenant?
4. Why would you want or need to enter a covenant with a Bridge group?

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 1: COVENANT

Take time and let everyone share what conditions they would like to offer the group for consideration. Write them down below. Once everyone has shared, review and begin to form your covenant. Write the final covenant on the Bridge Covenant and have every member sign it. The signed covenant will be shared periodically throughout the journey to remind the group as an encouragement of stability, fidelity and obedience you are making to God and each other.

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to secure the book *Living Into Community* by Christine D. Pohl. Be prepared to discuss the first section, “Embracing Gratitude as a Way of Life” (chapters 2-4) at Cairn #2.
4. Read the Bridge Covenant one more time and close with prayer.

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following questions:

Reflection Questions:

I am excited about being a part of this Bridge group because...

The biggest challenge for me being a part of this Bridge group is...

While I am on this adventure I need's God's...

Bridge Covenant

As a Bridge community who desires to live in stability, fidelity and obedience with God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and with each other we...

Bridge Members:

Name _____

Date _____

Name _____

Date _____

Name _____

Date _____

Name _____

Date _____

Cairn 2: Living Into Community ~ Gratitude

Before You Gather:

In the introduction to *Living Into Community*, Christine Pohl writes, “The character of our shared life--as congregations, communities, and families--has the power to draw people to the kingdom or to push them away. How we live together is the most persuasive sermon we’ll ever get to preach.”[8] This is why spiritual formation matters and why our formation is best lived in and through community. Remember, spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and the sake of the world. To thrive we need community.

Read the first section of *Living Into Community*, “Embracing Gratitude as a Way of Life” (chapters 2-4) and be prepared to discuss at your next Cairn. Reflect on the questions below before you gather.

Reflection Questions:

1. What resonated with you about gratitude as you read?
2. How can gratitude put entitlement into perspective?
3. What ways have you practiced gratitude personally? In what ways have you practiced gratitude corporately?

Cairn 2: Living Into Community ~ Gratitude

While You Gather

Begin your time together with a moment of silence and center yourselves and acknowledge the presence of God within you and in your group. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group.

To facilitate the discussion, here are few questions to consider per chapter.

Chapter Two: Grateful Hearts

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. Where has ingratitude taken root in your home or in your faith community?
3. When you have come upon hard times, how has gratitude guided you in struggling well?
4. How can gratitude put entitlement into perspective? What should be the response to entitlement?

Chapter Three: Complications in Gratitude

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. What were some of the complications in gratitude mentioned? Do you agree or disagree?
3. How can a warped view of gratitude hurt the community? When have you practiced spiritual pornography? (pg. 21)

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 2: LIVING INTO COMMUNITY ~ GRATITUDE

Chapter Four: Going Deeper: Exploring What Weakens and What Strengthens Gratitude

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. Pohl writes, “Gratitude begins with paying attention, with noticing the goodness, beauty, and grace around us.”[9] What are some tangible ways we can notice the goodness, beauty and grace around us? How do we do that in the hard times?
3. Why do you think gratitude is an essential practice for a community?

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to read and be prepared to discuss the next section, “Making and Keeping Promises” (chapters 5-7) at Cairn #3.
4. Close with prayer.

Cairn 2: Living Into Community ~ Gratitude

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following:

Reflection Questions:

I am grateful for...

Where might I need to become more grateful in the coming weeks?

Who needs to hear my testimony of gratefulness? When and where might I share my testimony with them?

Cairn 3: Living Into Community ~ Promise Keeping

Before You Gather:

Let's be honest; we struggle with keeping our promises. To save face we usually just don't commit. Why? Although there might be many reasons, fear of missing out is a common thread in our decision-making in how we make commitments. We are afraid something better is going to come along. Therefore, we tend to live in contract-based relationships desiring a covenant-like intimacy. Pohl writes, "Promises provide the internal framework for every relationship and every community—they function like the 'hidden supports in a well built house.'" [10] In our reading we will discover the power of promise keeping and how we can become a people of the promise.

Read the second section of *Living Into Community*, "Making and Keeping Promises" (chapters 5-7) and be prepared to discuss at your next Cairn. Reflect on the questions below before you gather.

Reflection Questions:

1. What promises have you made? What was the motivation behind making those promises?
2. What promise have you made and not kept? Why were you not able to keep that promise?
3. Are there any unkept promises that need to be addressed in your life?

Cairn 3: Living Into Community ~ Promise Keeping

While You Gather

Begin your time by asking everyone to check in. Give a word or two that defines your reality as you enter this sacred space. After everyone has shared, take a moment of silence to center yourselves in the presence of God. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group. After the time of prayer, read the Bridge Covenant as a gentle reminder of what you have promised each other as a Bridge group.

To facilitate the discussion, here are few questions to consider per chapter.

Chapter Five: Promises, Promises

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. What promise did Jesus make to his disciples in Matthew 28? How can Jesus' promise help us become a people of the promise?
3. How does promise keeping move us from being consumers to coworkers in our faith community?

Chapter Six: Complications in Promises

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. Share a time when you have lived in the tension between a covenant and contract relationship.
3. As follower of Christ, how should we deal with broken promises?

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 3: LIVING INTO COMMUNITY ~ PROMISE KEEPING

Chapter Seven: Going Deeper: Exploring What Weakens and What Strengthens Promising

1. What stood out to you in this chapter? What did you highlight or mark in the chapter?
2. Although betrayed and abandoned, Jesus did not turn his face against those who hurt him. What can we learn from Jesus and his fidelity towards his disciples?
3. Why is promise keeping vital to living into community?

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to read and be prepared to discuss the next section, “Living Truthfully” (chapters 8-10) at Cairn #4.
4. Close with prayer.

Cairn 3: Living Into Community ~ Promise Keeping

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following:

Reflection Questions:

Because Christ has been faithful, I want to be faithful in...

I must allow more time for commitments to develop in the following areas of my life...

Re-telling my story of God's goodness and faithfulness guides my promise keeping. What story do I need to tell?

Cairn 6: Wesleyan Questions to Ponder

Before You Gather:

There was a small group that gathered often for prayer, bible study and discipleship. They fasted and gathered for communion once a week. In their private devotions they asked themselves these twenty-two questions every day:

Wesleyan Questions:

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give it time to speak to me every day?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone else about my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
22. Is Christ real to me?

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 6: WESLEYAN QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Reading these questions, one would think it was written in the 21st century. The questions are relevant, relatable and extremely challenging. So, the two questions are: a) Who wrote them? and b) When were they written? While attending Oxford University, brothers John Wesley and Charles Wesley formed a club that was quickly known by the other students as the “Holy Club.” A small group, never more than 25, gathered regularly for prayer, bible study, fasting, discipleship and communion. As part of their private devotions, they answered twenty-two questions every single day. John and Charles Wesley wrote those twenty-two questions in 1729.

Reflection Questions:

1. Which four or five questions stood out to you personally? Why?
2. Of those four or five questions you selected, how would you answer them today?
3. How can Wesley’s questions be relevant in 1729 and also in 2023?

Be prepared to share your answers when you meet with your Bridge group.

Cairn 6: Wesleyan Questions to Ponder

While You Gather

Begin your time by asking everyone to check in. Give a word or two that defines your reality as you enter this sacred space. After everyone has shared, take a moment of silence to center yourselves in the presence of God. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group.

Take a moment and read the Bridge Covenant out loud as a reminder of what this group has committed to each other and to God. With the covenant as the backdrop to the gathering, ask the following questions.

Questions:

1. Share with one another your four or five Wesleyan questions that resonated with you.
2. If you are comfortable, share with one another how you answered the questions that challenged you.
3. How might these questions deepen your relationship with God and with others?
4. Of these twenty-two questions, share with the group the four or five you are going to ask and answer every single day until the next Cairn. If you are willing, allow the Bridge group to keep you accountable.

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to read the article, Christ-like Leadership by Dr. Kevin Pigg for the next Cairn.
4. Close with prayer.

Cairn 6: Wesleyan Questions to Ponder

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following:

Reflection Questions:

Write down the four or five questions you have selected from Wesley's questions you will be asking and responding to every single day:

What are the potential hurdles that will keep me from daily asking and responding to the questions I have selected?

What definitive measures do I need to take to ensure I will ask and respond to the questions every single day? Be specific.

Cairn 9: Listening Prayer and Group Direction

Before You Gather:

Before we can love one another, we must understand one another. To understand one another, we must be able to listen to one another. Unfortunately, we don't listen well. The listening exercise embedded in the "While You Gather" is to facilitate an environment for an individual to feel listened to and loved. The listening exercise is the same exercise that was demonstrated and practiced at Carin #8.

If you are the facilitator, prepare by reading over the Listening Exercise to become familiar with the exercise. If you are the designated person sharing, spend time reflecting on what you might want to share with the group. All members prepare their hearts and minds by asking the Spirit to be present with them during this sacred time of listening and sharing. Before gathering determine who will be facilitating and who will be sharing.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why is it so hard to listen?
2. When I am sharing, I know that I am being listened to when...
3. When I am listened to, I feel...

Cairn 9: Listening Prayer and Group Direction

While You Gather

Below is the listening guide. The Bridge group should have already identified who will be facilitating and who will be sharing. Follow the guide and allow the Spirit to work in this sacred space. See the Listening Exercise below.[11]

Listening Exercise for Bridge Groups

This exercise is designed to reinforce listening skills. Group members will agree to:

- Listening posture.
- Be transparent.
- Be intentional about spiritual journey.
- Open spiritual journey to consideration of others.
- Participate with prayerful listening and response.
- Do not share person's story outside of your Bridge group.

Format:

1. Check-in: (3-5 minutes) Prompted by the facilitator, each member gives a one or two sentence statement (or one or two words) about how they are coming into the space.

2. Silence: (2-3 minutes) The facilitator will open with a short prayer acknowledging the love and presence of God. Then the group enters a time of centering silence. The silence is broken when the person who will be sharing says, "Amen."

3. Sharing: (15-20 minutes) The designated person begins sharing about a current reality in his spiritual life journey. This may include concerns, struggles, callings, stories, reflections, and processing around his or her ongoing relationship with God and how that is manifested in the other relationships or circumstances. The content is shared with a desire for prayer, support and possibly discernment/clarity.

- a. The rest of the group listens WITHOUT comment or question.
- b. The group holds the person before God in their hearts as he or she shares.
- c. The group listens for God's eyes and response.
- d. The group releases any desire to coach, counsel, admonish, or share one's personal story.

4. Listening Silence: (2-3 minutes) When the person completes his or her sharing, the facilitator invites everyone to return to listening prayer and silence.

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 9: LISTENING PRAYER AND GROUP DIRECTION

5. Directional Inquiry: (1 minute) At this point, the facilitator asks the person who shared, “Would you like us to hold your story here, or would you like us to listen more by asking questions?” If the person would like the group to simply hold the story where it is, go to ‘Prayer for the Person who Shared.’ If they would like the group to listen more through questions, continue to the next step.

6. Questions: (10- 20 minutes)

a. Clarifying Questions: The facilitator asks if there are any clarifying questions. These are factual questions that help the group understand the context or bigger picture of what was shared.

b. Exploring Questions: The facilitator segues to deeper questions. These questions must be Spirit-led and are intended to help the presenter explore their story and/or discover God’s invitation. If you are unsure about a question, wait to ask and see what God does in the group.

7. Listening Silence: (2 minutes) The facilitator invites the group into listening silence again.

8. Response to the Person who Shared: (2 minutes) The facilitator invites the group to respond to the person who shared with a comment/word from God.

9. Prayer for the Person who Shared: (3 minutes) The facilitator asks for one volunteer to pray for the one who shared. The prayer is encouraged to stand or sit next to the person, place their hand/hands on him (with permission of course), listen for God’s guidance, and pray a prayer of encouragement and blessing.

Sample Exploring Questions:

- Can you say more about _____?
- I noticed... I wonder... can you say more about that?
- What was that experience like for you?
- You said _____ (usually a feeling word). Can you tell me more?
- Where was Jesus in this reality? What would you like to say to God about this?
Do you hear an invitation from God?

Note on Questions: Each question carries a portion of your fingerprint on it. Too many questions and the sacredness of the story as well as the lens through which it is seen is marred. Do not be cavalier with questions. At the same time, a spirit-led question can open deep insights into a situation.

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 9: LISTENING PRAYER AND GROUP DIRECTION

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Establish who will facilitate and share at Cairn #12.
4. Remind everyone to read the article on leadership for the next Cairn.
5. Close with prayer.

Cairn 9: Listening Prayer and Group Direction

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following:

Reflection Questions:

What was sacred about participating in the listening exercise?

How did the Spirit work before and during the listening exercise?

Cairn 18: God In My Everything, Part 1 ~ Rules

Before You Gather:

We all have practices, habits, routines or rhythms we live by, even if we don't call them by those certain words. We all have a rhythm to our morning that includes what we do first regarding our hygiene, how we get dressed, how we get to work and what we do when we get to work. Take a moment and think through what kind of practices guide your morning. These are all rules--rules that guide you and prepare you for the morning. We begin our last book of the journey, and it is going to lead us into a conversation about creating, cultivating and articulating a rule of life. Shigematsu reminds us, "A rule of life is simply a rhythm of practices that empowers us to live well and grow more like Jesus by helping us experience God in everything." [12] As you read Part 1 make sure you take time to reflect upon and answer the questions at the end of each chapter.

Chapter Reflections:

Chapter 1: Monks, Samurai, And The Christian Life (pg 20)

Chapter 2: Creating A Spiritual Ecosystem (pg 28)

Chapter 3: A Rule That Bends (pg 39)

Cairn 18: God In My Everything, Part 1 ~ Rules

While You Gather

Begin your time by asking everyone to check in. Give a word or two that defines your reality as you enter this sacred space. After everyone has shared, take a moment of silence to center yourselves in the presence of God. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group.

Work through the discussion questions at the end of each chapter as a group. Make sure you cover the eight important guidelines that will help the group avoid some of the most common pitfalls in developing a rule of life on pages 34-39.

Common Pitfalls:

Write down and share one takeaway from each pitfall that will be useful for you when writing your rule of life.

1. Start Simple
2. Build Slowly
3. Prune Regularly
4. Be Energy Conscious
5. Consider Your Life Stage
6. Stay Flexible
7. Make Time For Fun
8. Include Community

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 18: GOD IN MY EVERYTHING, PART 1 ~ RULES

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to read Part 2 or (chapters 4-6) of *God In My Everything*.
4. Close with prayer.

Cairn 18: God In My Everything, Part 1 ~ Rules

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on the following:

Reflection Questions:

Shigematsu writes, “Becoming like Jesus is the greatest gift we can offer others.”[13] Who might motivate me to write a rule of life?

How might a rhythmic life differ from a balanced life? Which one seems more realistic and why?

What is my current season of life? What do I need to consider as I begin to formulate my rule of life?

Cairn 19: God In My Everything, Part 2 ~ Roots

Before You Gather:

We all want to flourish! We all want to grow and be seen as a thriving individual who is valued and loved. What is seen on the surface comes from a deep-rooted system that nourishes us and makes us strong to weather the storms of life and leads us to a life filled with joy. The root of a plant serves several functions. First, the roots anchor the plant so when extreme weather comes, the plant is secure and has a strong system to stay in place. Second, the root system takes in oxygen, water and nutrients from the soil, to move them throughout the plant to keep it strong and healthy. Third, the roots also stimulate and support microorganisms in the soil that benefits other plant life. In our reading we will be given three ways to root ourselves to ensure we have a strong system to sustain our rule of life. As you read Part 2, make sure you take time to reflect upon and answer the questions at the end of each chapter.

Chapter Reflections:

Chapter 4: Sabbath: Oasis For Body and Soul (pg 53)

Chapter 5: Prayer: Deepening Your Friendship With God (pg 67)

Chapter 6: Nourishing Your Soul Through Sacred Reading (pg 77)

Cairn 19: God In My Everything, Part 2 ~ Roots

While You Gather

Begin your time by asking everyone to check in. Take a moment and slowly say the Saint Patrick Prayer: *Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me*. Spend a moment in silence and reflect on the goodness and faithfulness of God. The facilitator will break the silence by offering a brief prayer of thanks and asking God to bless your time together as a Bridge group.

Work through the discussion questions at the end of each chapter as a group.

Reflections and Insights:

Chapter 4: Sabbath: Oasis For Body and Soul

Chapter 5: Prayer: Deepening Your Friendship With God

Chapter 6: Nourishing Your Soul Through Sacred Reading

MENTORING COMMUNITY GUIDE

CAIRN 19: GOD IN MY EVERYTHING, PART 2 ~ ROOTS

Close your time together by doing the following:

1. Confirm the next meeting day, time and place.
2. Establish who will be facilitating next.
3. Remind everyone to read Part 3 or (chapters 7-9) of *God In My Everything*.
4. Close with prayer.

Cairn 19: God In My Everything, Part 2 ~ Roots

After You Gather

Reflecting and articulating the work the Spirit is doing in you is a practice of a spiritually formed leader. Journaling is a discipline one does to keep account of where one has been and anticipates where God may be taking the leader. Take a moment and reflect on “Writing Your Rule” on pages 54, 68 and 78 in *God In My Everything*. After reflecting, write down your rule for Sabbath, Prayer and Scripture.

Rule for Sabbath, Prayer and Scripture:

Sabbath:

Prayer:

Scripture:

Benchmarks and Assessment

Evaluating the doctoral project through the lens of the benchmarks provides space for reflection and determining viable steps to improve practical work in addressing an NPO. The assessment below each benchmark highlights areas of success and improvement of the doctoral project.

1. Participants have clear working definitions of leadership and spiritual formation. They should understand and articulate that leadership and spiritual formation are not exclusive of each other, but rather are intricately and intimately tied together as a life-long process that must be cultivated and nurtured if one desires to be a spiritually formed leader. Fully understanding leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process, participants commit to a twelve-month mentoring community for accountability and developing a rule of life.

The curriculum offers clear working definitions of leadership and spiritual formation. Working definitions are imperative because as participants continue to become aware of their own leadership style and grow in their spiritual formation, they will have a foundation in which to continue to refine their own definitions in further seasons of life. The curriculum also reiterates leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process which is best journeyed in community. Based on feedback from participants who have completed the class many have articulated the need and desire for journey partners.

Although the rule of life is defined and articulated in the mentoring guide, the concept of the rule of life could be better defined, purposed and given examples in the class portion of the doctoral project. Clarity of the purpose of the rule of life in the class portion is an area that will need to be improved on in further iterations.

2. Material and presentation for the class is of the highest quality. Materials and presentation will be well organized, aesthetically pleasing, easy to follow, compelling and engaging for participants. Material will culminate with an invitation to begin a life-long process of spiritual formation by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. The success of this benchmark will be measured by the percentage of those who are in the class to those who commit to the mentoring community.

The feedback from participants has been positive regarding the material being organized, compelling and engaging. There seems to be a good balance between lecture and interactive activities to challenge the mind and heart as they ponder what it means to be a spiritual leader in the home, workplace, and faith community. The invitation was clear and desirable as seven out of eight participants who filled out the survey wanted to commit to a mentoring community.

An improvement that must be addressed is how to organize the mentoring community groups. There are several ways to group individuals into mentoring communities but to find a best practice that takes into consideration personality, life experience, proximity and compatibility is essential to the success of the mentoring communities thriving.

3. Material for the yearlong mentoring community is well organized, easy to follow and engaging. The material will provide creative spaces for participants to do the hard adaptive learning and work for personal and communal transformation. The material adequately provides the necessary expectations (stability, fidelity and obedience) for each mentoring community to thrive while providing clear directives for each community to be self-taught and self-governed.

The mentoring guide is user friendly as it articulates the purpose, structure and tips to effectively facilitate a gathering. The covenant at the beginning of the guide sets the expectations of stability, fidelity and obedience that must be agreed upon in order to build trust along the journey. The rock cairn imagery used as a guide for the mentoring community is unique and carries the adventure theme throughout the guide. The simple and consistent structure of each cairn provides necessary steps for participants to prepare for, engage in and personally reflect upon each gathering as they grow in their leadership and spiritual formation. The reading selection, along with the activities and questions, offer space for robust conversations and action steps if the participants are adequately prepared at each cairn.

The mentoring guide is not finished as it has seven of the twenty-five cairns completed. Therefore, participants have not fully engaged with the mentoring guide and need more time to assess the improvements of the material and the length of the mentoring guide. Currently there are two gatherings built into the mentoring guide for all mentoring communities to meet for further teaching, fellowship and accountability. There are no guarantees the two gatherings will be sufficient in aiding the mentoring communities to finish the journey and complete the rule of life. Time and feedback are needed to evaluate and make adjustments for this portion of the project.

4. 30% of those who attend the class commit to the yearlong spiritual mentoring community. Of those 30% who commit to the mentoring community, 50% finish with a longing to continue to grow in their leadership and spiritual formation, engage in regular spiritual practices that shape their spiritual formation, desire to continue to journey with their mentoring community and have a well-developed and life-giving rule of life.

When developing the different prototypes to adequately address the NPO, I knew time was going to be a factor. If as suggested, leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long journey, then participants who accept the invitation must be consistently present and committed to the process in developing rhythms of grace that are needed to sustain the long journey towards spiritual maturity. Given the reality of our Western culture regarding time, commitment and instant gratification, I set a benchmark of 30% of those who attend the class will commit to the mentoring community. Of those who accept the invitation, 50% of them would have completed the journey with submitting a rule of life. This benchmark is a valid and attainable goal, but is yet to be tested as time and feedback are needed to assess what improvements are needed to sustain and help a mentoring community to thrive and to finish well.

Project Launch Plan

Doctoral Project Description

Leaders of non-denominational churches should be trained and equipped to attend to a life-long process of being spiritually formed to effectively nurture God's people. To address the NPO, I have created a five-session interactive curriculum designed for participants to discover the need for leaders to be spiritually formed and to invite them to commit to a mentoring community. The purpose of the five-session curriculum is to, first, help participants understand that leadership and spiritual formation is a life-long process that one must attend to faithfully to effectively nurture God's people; and second, to inspire participants to invest in their spiritual formation long term. Those who accept the invitation to begin the life-long journey towards becoming spiritually formed are provided their next step by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. This covenantal community will embark on a spiritual journey by meeting twice a month to grow and learn together through a mentoring guide as they develop their own rule of life.

Audience

Non-denominational churches rooted in the Restoration Movement typically hold to the complementarian view of marriage, family life and church leadership within the local faith community. Although there has been progress in a more equitable understanding of women in church leadership, the male gender is the overwhelming recognized influence of spiritual leadership within my context. Acknowledging the reality of my current context, but desiring inclusion of women in spiritual leadership, the Doctoral Project will be offered to men in leadership positions (elder, deacon and ministry leaders), but designed to accommodate mixed groups when applicable. Addressing the eldership first, as they are the commissioned spiritual leaders of our local church, is essential for the spiritual growth of our faith community and any future opportunities to expand the Doctoral Project to deacons, ministry leaders and women who are in leadership positions. As the executive pastor and having a voice on the elder board, I have direct access to the eldership and the leadership structure of my church. My role within the faith community provides natural avenues for engagement with the senior pastor, chairmen of elders and ministry leaders to inquire and suggest strategic ways to lead our people towards leadership and spiritual formation. Along with the influence I have within my local church, I have a network of other pastors and church leaders who have been strategically involved with the Doctoral Project that are desiring for the course to be offered for their church leadership.

Development Plan

The following milestones, deliverables and key assessments will be used to evaluate and execute a plan to complete the doctoral project for practical use within my ministry context.

Milestones, Key Deliverables and Key Assessment Metrics

LECTURE NOTES AND STUDENT NOTES

Lecture notes, student notes and presentation slides will be refined through multiple iterations after feedback from select stakeholders and participants who attend the class. Two classes will be offered (one in the summer and one in the fall of 2023) for willing participants to learn and offer feedback. Final revisions will be completed for lecture notes, student notes and presentation slides by the end of December 2023. The class material, with its newest revisions, can be offered by the beginning of 2024.

Metrics to be used will be the current benchmarks and surveys, as well as one-on-one conversations with pastors, elders and ministry leaders regarding the effectiveness of the class and the request for participants to commit to a mentoring community.

MENTORING GUIDE

Currently the mentoring guide is showcasing seven of the twenty-five cairns. The mentoring guide and its twenty-five cairns will be completed by the end of December 2023. Receiving quarterly feedback from current mentoring communities will provide necessary insight for revisions. Final revisions will be completed by the end of December 2024. Although final revisions will be completed at the end of 2024, the quarterly revisions in 2023 will be implemented so that the mentoring guide will be available for those who have committed to a mentoring community at the beginning of 2024.

Metrics to be used will be the current benchmarks and surveys, as well as one-on-one conversations with pastors, elders and ministry leaders regarding the effectiveness of the mentoring guide, the completion of the rule of life and the desire for another group of participants to participate in the class and mentoring community.

Development Process

The continuation of developing, gathering and improving upon the Doctoral Project will be executed in four ways. First, offer project material to select pastors and elders from different churches for review, feedback and potential opportunities for their church to go through the program. Next, after each opportunity to present the class material and offer an invitation for participants to commit to a mentoring community, there will be a survey to be submitted for feedback. The brief survey will provide data on the content of the class, accessibility of the mentoring guide and their new personal understanding of leadership and spiritual formation. Third, those participants who have completed the mentoring community guide and written their

rule of life will be given an opportunity to complete a spiritual assessment to mark significant behavioral and spiritual changes in their life. The assessment will be requested for data analysis and to inform and enhance the project. Finally, the benchmarks will be regularly reviewed and revised for evaluation and enhancement of the project. New or revised benchmarks will be implemented to ensure the highest quality, clarity of concepts and practical steps to a life-long journey of being spiritually formed.

Appendix A— Milestone 1 The NPO Charter

Personal Research Manifesto

My approach to researching the NPO will require embracing our brokenness as a faith community, listening with humility, trusting the process and being patient in offering transformative solutions.

NPO Statement

Leaders of non-denominational faith communities are not addressing those who were once connected and have drifted from their faith community.

NPO Scope and Constraints

The scope of the NPO will center on a vibrant, expanded and rich ecclesiological approach in developing spiritual formation to effectively shepherd and guide those who engage in faith communities that are evangelical/non-denominational. The NPO will focus on people's connections to a faith community, signposts of why people drift and life-giving solutions for church leaders to actively recognize and address the needs of those who are falling away from their faith community. Although costs are unknown, there will be relational and spiritual equity that must be invested from both the leadership and those who participate in their faith community.

NPO Context

My NPO ministry context includes the Independent Christian Churches that are tied to the Restoration Movement and their leadership teams. These evangelical communities and their leadership teams are a part of the greater Houston area that are primarily suburban. The suburban culture is well defined; it is family oriented and educationally driven. Many of the leadership teams consist of pastors, elders, deacons and ministry team leaders. Although many of these communities are mid-sized churches of around 200 or less there are a few independent churches that have 1,000 or more who attend weekend services. Typically, these faith communities are white and can range from lower to upper middle-class individuals that are from their early 20s to late 80s. The NPO will focus on pastors, elders, deacons and lay leaders of mid-sized churches.

Underlying Causes

The workshop revealed several root causes that might contribute to those who were once connected and now have drifted from the faith community. One possible root cause is underestimating the cost of being fully engaged in a faith community. The financial, physical, spiritual, emotional and relational resources are not properly weighed from the individual or not expected from church leadership. Another potential root cause is that a replacement option of a faith community is perceived to be better. Organizations of various kinds are vying for our time, talents and treasures, promising a better future for ourselves and our families. A third probable root cause is having a truncated ecclesiological view. Both the individual and the leadership have a

narrow scope of the purpose and function of a local church that can offer a transformational environment for those who desire to belong to a holistic and fruitful faith community.

Discovery Workshop Stakeholders

The stakeholders in the workshop included a youth pastor, a children's pastor, an elder emeritus, a women's ministry leader and a parishioner who has struggled with faith communities. One-On-One Interviews

3-5 Key Biblical Texts

Exploring the account of the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-27 and Matthew 19:16-22, the account of Peter being reinstated in John 21, the account of counting the cost of discipleship in Luke 14:25-33 and the parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew 18:10-14 could provide unique perspectives to the NPO. Philemon and I Thessalonians, written by Paul, could also influence how one might see and respond to the NPO.

Academic Resources

Scholars that will have an influence on the NPO and research will include Scot McKnight (PhD), theologian; Christian Smith (PhD) sociologist, Ruth Haley Barton (PhD), theologian, Jim Wilder (PhD) psychologist; Marva Dawn (PhD), theologian; Henri Nouwen, theologian, priest; Peter Steinke, theologian; and Christine Pohl (PhD), theologian. Other fields of research may include psychology, cultural anthropology and church history. Having a historical appreciation of church history and church engagement, along with understanding cultural and psychological behaviors will offer more voices and context to the NPO.

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Appendix A

Discovery Workshop Description

My discovery workshop was held on October 26, 2020 at Crossbridge Christian Church, from 6pm to 9:30pm. The following stakeholders participated in the workshop:

- Youth Pastor
- Children's Pastor
- Women's Ministry Leader
- Parishioner
- Elder emeritus

Four of the five stakeholders attended in-person while the other individual participated via Webex. I had two other individuals that were invited but at the last minute had to cancel for various reasons. I was disappointed because I felt their voices would have added to the conversation.

The workshop followed the script given in our *Discovery Workshop Guide* with four activities. Those activities were: *NPO Definition and Audience Notes*, *Empathy MAP*, *Five Whys* and *Putting it Together*. The four activities addressed the following NPO statement, "Families who were once connected drift and isolate themselves from the church community." Each activity lasted thirty to forty-five minutes with time for reflection and conversation as they collaborated; drawing from their own context and past experiences.

Discovery Statement

Following our ice breaker we broke bread together and began working through the original NPO statement, "Families who were once connected drift and isolate themselves from the church community." The conversation was robust and insightful as time was our greatest enemy. Everyone had a voice at the table and each voice was respected and heard. Each activity was well received and brought clarity to the audience I should address and what topics I need to research moving forward in the process. We finished the evening with dessert and talked through the debriefing questions. I was overwhelmed by the feedback I received from the stakeholders the following day. They called, texted and emailed with more reflections from the workshop and were genuinely excited about where this NPO might take me and the church. At the end of the workshop, we settled on the following discovery statement:

Considering *church leaders* (audience),

we've discovered *people who were connected have drifted from the faith community* (NPO),

which is caused by *having a truncated ecclesiological view* (root cause).

If solved, it would mean *a vibrant faith community that is fully connected to each other and those within the greater community* (outcome).

Critical Insights from Discovery Workshop

The discovery workshop provided several critical insights that will guide me in my research as I continue to clarify the NPO. First, there are many factors as to why people might drift; a lack of rootedness within the faith community, wounds, social norms, overcommitted and fear of the perceived benefit of the replacement of the faith community. However, having a truncated ecclesiology could be the root source and must be addressed. Having a healthy and expanded ecclesiology could offer valuable insights to the role of a spiritual leader and what it means to be a connected member of a faith community.

Second, in the first draft of the NPO we said families once connected “drift and isolate” themselves from the church community. The stakeholders proposed that “drifting and isolation” were two separate issues and might be too broad for the scope of the NPO. Those who drift are people who were connected and have moved away from the faith community for various reasons. Those who have isolated themselves have abandoned the faith community and possibly their faith. The stakeholders considered drifters as a part of the fold and isolators as lost. Drifting and isolation are two separate issues, however, addressing this issue of drifting might be a strategic step in addressing or limiting those who have abandoned their faith or completely isolated themselves from the church body.

One-On-One Interview Discoveries

At a minimum, include the ‘Documentation Content’ materials as outlined in the NPO Discovery Workshop and One-on-One Interviews assignment. The one-on-one interviews were essential to the process of defining and clarifying the NPO. The three interviewees are top in their field of expertise (senior pastor, professor and counselor) and I believe they brought a unique perspective to the table as they offered feedback and encouragement. All three interviewees agreed the NPO was a worthy cause to address and solve. They also agreed the audience to be addressed is the leadership team within the church; discipleship begins and ends with spiritual leadership. All three were extremely helpful in providing resources, books, articles and scholars to consider while researching for the NPO.

One of the major insights that all three interviewees asked for clarity on was the phrase, “truncated ecclesiological view.” This phrase had a different meaning to the senior pastor, the professor and the counselor. In researching and articulating the NPO I must be clear and have a well-defined, holistic and biblical definition for this phrase, as it will have a heavy influence on how one will respond to the NPO and what solutions may be offered.

Synthesis

Walking patiently through the process of the discovery workshop and the one-on-one interviews were vital in developing a clear and concise NPO. The workshop created space for stakeholders to share personal experiences, insights and thoughts regarding the NPO. Brainstorming the root causes of why people drift and discussing how the faith community would function differently if the NPO were solved brought energy and excitement to the conversation. Although there was synergy around the NPO, the one-on-one interviews offered a unique perspective and questioned concepts that were brought to the table at the workshop. The interviewees all asked for clarification and reasoning behind some of the conclusions made at the workshop. The questions and clarifications sought by the interviewees caused me to better explain the process and why the stakeholders landed on a particular point of view; another exercise to articulate the NPO to a different audience.

After facilitating the workshop and conducting the interviews there are several key findings to the process. First, a healthy ecclesiological view must be defined that is inclusive, diverse and rich in meaning for people to participate and engage in consistently; a faith community that becomes a lifestyle not something to consume. Second, drifting is a major concern and the cause may or may not have psychological reasons behind it. I must proceed with caution and invite many different voices to the conversation to have a healthy understanding and a fruitful response to the NPO. Third, connection is subjective as one can be connected to a faith community in various ways. Part of the research will be defining those elements in which one is connected and which ones, if any, are vital to people staying engaged with their faith community. Finally, COVID has put a spotlight on the need for community. COVID has also exposed our inadequacies and strengths where the church has failed or flourished in having abiding relationships within the faith community. The NPO seems to be one that can be seen as a need, problem and opportunity for the church to embrace, own and respond well to for the glory of God and his people.

Next Steps

There are some distinct areas that I need to explore further in my academic research that will enhance my understanding and provide insight to the NPO. The first area is psychology, more specifically, what are the basic human needs to be in a healthy relationship. Are there psychological reasons why people detach from a community? Are there psychological reasons why people gravitate and embrace a community? The second area is cultural anthropology. Understanding the cultural norms and trends of our society should shed light on what our society deems essential for community and how the faith community adapts, embraces or offers an alternative to the cultural norms. The third area to research is church history and the ethos of what it meant to be a part of a faith community over the centuries. What lessons can we learn from those who have gone before us in creating a community where people want to grow and flourish in their discipleship?

Discovery Workshop Documentation

Discovery Workshop Notes

Discovery Statement:

Considering	audience,
we've discovered	NPO,
which is caused by	root cause.
If solved, it would mean	outcome.

Workshop Agenda:

6:00 pm	Welcome and Introductions
6:10 pm	Overview of the Workshop and NPO Description
6:15 pm	Dinner
6:45 pm	NPO Definition and Audience (Activity One)
7:30 pm	Understanding Those Impacted by the NPO (Activity Two)
8:00 pm	BREAK
8:15 pm	Finding the Cause (Activity Three)
8:45 pm	Putting it Together (Activity Four)
9:15 pm	Discussion and Next Steps
9:30 pm	Dismiss

IceBreakers:

What fad or trend do you hope comes back?
 What job would you be terrible at?
 What's the best single day on the calendar?
 What's the farthest you've ever been from home?
 What are you most looking forward to in the next 10 years?
 What skill would you like to master?

NPO Definition and Audience Notes (Activity ONE)

What is the key issue you are trying to address and why is it important?

Key issues:

- ~ Priorities changed
- ~ Conflict at church
- ~ Speed of life
- ~ Families leaving the church can cause a ripple effect
- ~ False conversions
- ~ Society has changed but the methods of the church have not
- ~ Loss of spiritual support
- ~ Slow, steady numbing of worldview

Why is it important:

- ~ Broken fellowship
- ~ Pastoral moral drop-off
- ~ Families need support and spiritual truths
- ~ Accountability

- ~ Believers need community
- ~ Connecting to a church body promotes acceptance and love of variety of life experiences. It's easier to love people if you know them.
- ~ Connectedness increases with participation in the church
- ~ Care and support of others draws in people

Who is impacted by this NPO and who should I focus on?

Who should we most focus on to *understand the NPO*?

The pastors, spiritual leaders and those who are drifting away

Who should be the core audience *for the project*?

Church leaders, pastors, lay leaders and ultimately the members of the church body

What social/cultural factors shape this NPO?

- ~ Race
- ~ Age
- ~ Upbringing
- ~ Education
- ~ Media
- ~ Over committed
- ~ No Margin
- ~ Societal Norms and Pressures
- ~ Philosophy
- ~ Politics
- ~ Divided home
- ~ No rest
- ~ Faith tradition
- ~ "Options to do church"
- ~ Current economic status

What evidence do you have that this is worth the investment?

- ~ Personal stories of life change
- ~ Not to sacrifice our theology
- ~ Brokenness in families
- ~ Spiritual truth
- ~ Increasing negative view o the church
- ~ Communities degrading around local bodies
- ~ Conflict between members
- ~ Homeless individuals restored to community
- ~ Children and teens benefiting from the grace of relationship
- ~ Pastors working harder to be "cool"
- ~ People who were poured into pouring into others
- ~ Bonds built with schools and teachers
- ~ Lasting relationships

Restate the NPO and agree upon a primary target audience using the formula:

Considering church leaders, **we discovered homes** that were connected have drifted from the faith community...

Notes:

1. There is a need to deal with this problem. The problem is deeper than I thought.
2. Race, social-economic and traditions will play a role in discovering the issue and solution.
3. I need to take into consideration the social norms and philosophy of the day.
4. Seeing those who drift as homeless is a powerful image. Must reflect on this idea.
5. There are many contributing factors to why it is important

Understanding Those Impacted by the NPO (Activity TWO)

Key Question: If solved, what would it mean for the audience?

What are the outliers? In my church?

What themes were repeated in all the quadrants?

- ~ Praying
- ~ Worship
- ~ Hopeful
- ~ Joy
- ~ Blessed
- ~ Relief

What themes only exist in one quadrant?

- ~ Humility
- ~ Leaders would facilitate connection
- ~ Challenged and stretched

What gaps exist in our understanding that may require additional research?

- ~ There was no need to train others of the findings
- ~ How do you start?

Why wouldn't they say (think, feel, do) that now?

- ~ Anxious
- ~ Scared of outcome
- ~ It is going to be messy if they stick around

Finding the root cause ~ 5 Whys (Activity THREE)

	<i>Stakeholder 1</i>	<i>Stakeholder 2</i>	<i>Stakeholder 3</i>	<i>Stakeholder 4</i>	<i>Stakeholder 5</i>
1st Why	<i>They were never deeply rooted</i>	<i>Church was easiest to sacrifice</i>	<i>The need for a faith community is not realized</i>	<i>Changing priorities</i>	<i>Does want the same thing happen again</i>

2nd Why	<i>They didn't connect through fellowship</i>	<i>Least potential negative impact on their daily lives</i>	<i>Growth beyond self did not occur</i>	<i>Commit to other activities or additional work</i>	<i>If I stay away from "them" I will not have to deal with them</i>
3rd Why	<i>They didn't understand why fellowship was so important</i>	<i>It's importance or priority was lesser in comparison to their demands for time</i>	<i>Discipleship methods failed either in personal response or delivery</i>	<i>Financial Social School activities</i>	<i>Stay away is the easy thing to do</i>
4th Why	<i>Their only church experience was more about "the church" as in going and the people</i>	<i>Immediate and tangible effects are more acutely experienced by the decision making individual</i>	<i>Filling of the Holy Spirit did not happen</i>	<i>Job loss, family dynamics, marriage, divorce or death</i>	<i>Just deal with God and not his people.</i>
5th Why	<i>They never saw themselves as the church</i>	<i>Fear, comparison or the perceived benefit of the replacement of the faith community</i>	<i>Lack of faith in the cross and true repentance</i>		

Putting it together (Activity FOUR)

The key takeaways from each activity...

Definition and Audience

~ Audience needs to be the spiritual leaders of the church

Those impacted by the NPO

~ Those impacted by the NPO are the spiritual leaders of the church, those who might be drifting and those who are a part of the greater community.

Discovery Statement 2.0:

Considering church leaders, we discovered homes that were connected have drifted from the faith community, which is caused by having a truncated ecclesiological view. If solved, it would mean a vibrant faith community that is fully connected to each other and those within the greater community.

Debrief Questions:

As I continue researching this NPO, what should I be sure to examine?

- ~ NPO vs scripture
- ~ The view of the church now vs the history of the view of the church and the impact
- ~ Drift and isolation
- ~ Common causes of drifting

- ~ The value of relationships within the church

As I continue researching this NPO, what are potential blind spots that I best explore?

- ~ Tradition

- ~ Ethnic background

- ~ Personal biases

As I continue researching this NPO, what are potential pitfalls that I best avoid?

- ~ Biases

- ~ Judgement and assumption

- ~ Knowing that you will not fix the problem

- ~ Healthy balance, equal weight

Considering Church leaders / Drifters (audience).
 there are homes that were connected
 drift ~~and isolate~~ themselves from the
 broader community (NPO)
 We've discovered
 Which is caused by having a truncated (root cause)
view of "Church"
 If solved, it would mean healthier (outcome)
richer
 Deeper
 Authentic Disciplinary
 Holistic
 Productive Vibrant faith community
 ← Connect and connect
to others

Who is impacted by the NPO and who should I focus on?

Actors

Focus on
Pastors/elders

Members of
Church Body

Everyone is
impacted
Current church
members

Church staff
and leadership

Church
teachers and
supporting bodies

The immediate
community surrounding
the church

Society can
be impacted

Angry
Lay
leaders

Parents

Church and
individual
bodies need to
be protected on

Members of immediate
and outside families

Security at large

Community security
the church

Targeted populations
of the immediate
community the church
is in

Relevant agencies

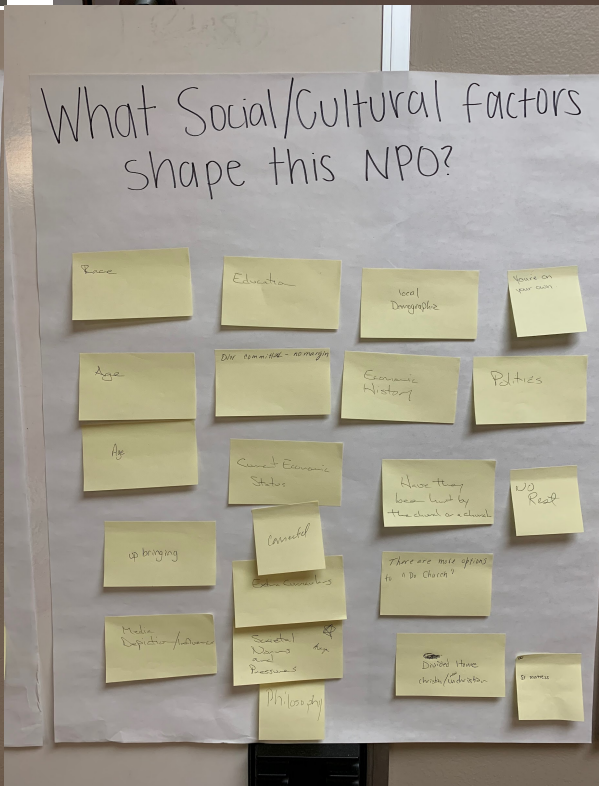
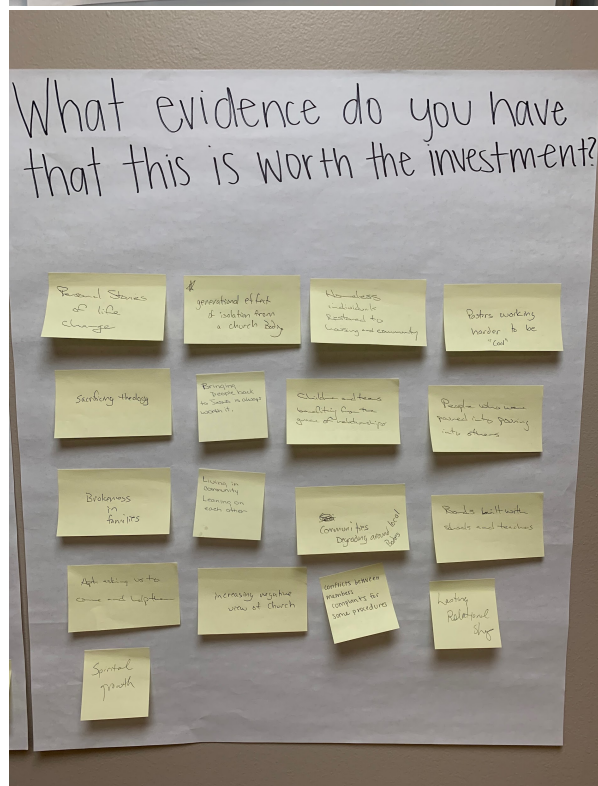
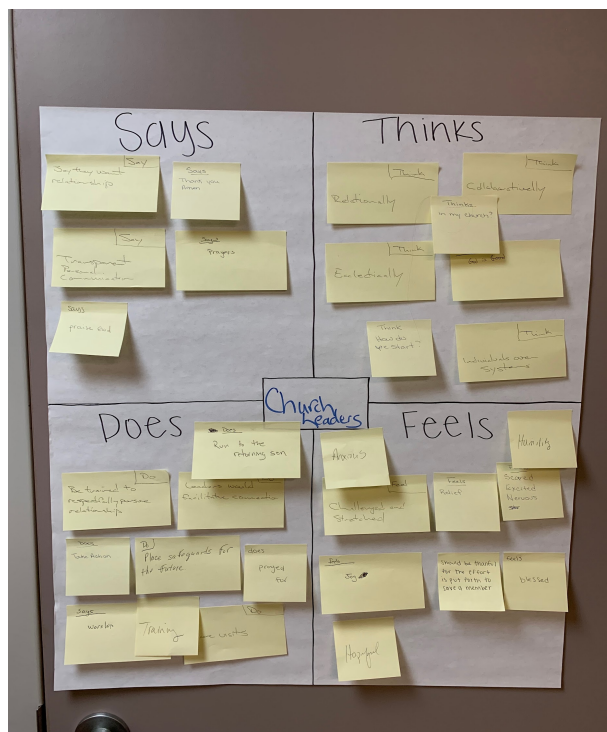
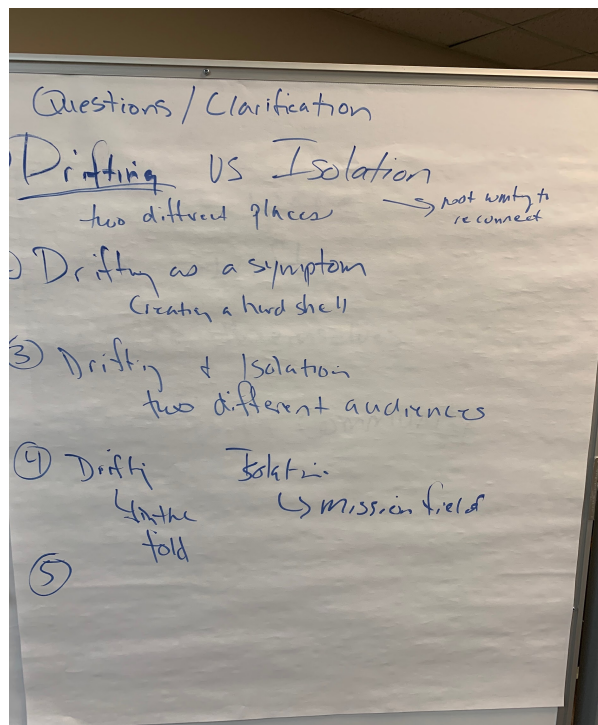
Means achieved by
church

Methods to
find time to
a person need

Internal
Community
and

External
isolate
Drift

Methods which
are impacted



One-Page Post-Workshop Message to Stakeholders

Thank you again for spending time with me this past Monday as you offered invaluable insights to a specific issue many churches deal with today. Your time, insights and perspectives will guide me through the next phase of my doctorate as I research, pray and reflect on the root causes we addressed on Monday. If you have any more feedback or epiphanies, please don't hesitate to send me a text or an email. As I said the other night, I will be working on the "issue" for the next 6 months. There is plenty of time and space for more conversations. Below are some highlights I took away from our time together. Please look over them and provide any feedback or clarification.

To recap we determined the following:

NPO:

Considering church leaders, we discovered people that were connected have drifted from the faith community, which is caused by having a truncated ecclesiological view. If solved, it would mean a vibrant faith community that is fully connected to each other and those within the greater community.

Workshop Findings:

- 1) There is a brokenness among the faith community that needs tending to from church leadership. Humility from the spiritual leadership will be a requirement for owning and responding to the problem within our church tradition.
- 2) There are many factors to why a "home" might drift. A lack of rootedness within the faith community, wounds, social norms, overcommitted and fear of the perceived benefit of the replacement of the faith community. However, having a truncated ecclesiology could be the root source and must be addressed. Having a healthy and robust ecclesiology could offer valuable insights in the role of a spiritual leader and what it means to be connected to a faith community.
- 3) Age, race, upbringing and church tradition will play a role in how one perceives the church and its function.
- 4) Social norms and philosophy are a must to research as to understand the changing dynamics in our Western culture. What has changed? How has our tradition responded to those social norms?
- 5) The evidence of investing into this problem is twofold. First, there is a deep desire for people to be connected as they journey through life. Second, A health and vibrant church is mission-minded regarding those who have isolated themselves and are "homeless."
- 6) If solved, not only will there be a vibrant faith community that is mission minded, but church leadership will be encouraged and multiplied.
- 7) In the first draft of the NPO we said families once connected "drift and isolate" themselves from the church community. We proposed that "drifting and isolation" were two separate issues and might be too broad for the scope of the NPO. Drifting are those families who were connected and have moved away from the faith community and isolation are those who have drifted and abandoned the faith community all together. Another way of saying this is drifters are those who are a part of the fold and isolators are firmly in the mission field. Drifting and isolation are two separate issues, however, addressing drifting might be a strategic step in addressing or limiting those who have completely isolated themselves.

8) My personal biases of being a grandson and a son of preachers can skew my view of church, church leadership and those who have drifted. Judgements and assumptions must be vetted, addressed and held at check when researching.

Thank you again for your time and commitment. As I continue to work the process, I will keep you informed and share with you the progress that is being made. The work you did was an eternal work!

One-On-One Interview Documentation

Interviewer A ~ Senior Pastor

- ~ Drawing a crowd is not going to meet the needs of the broken. Intentional discipleship, walking with and journeying with others in their messiness through the Holy Spirit will bring about spiritual formation and transformation.
- ~ Agrees the NPO is a need and worthy to address.
- ~ Nuggets of theology on Sunday will miss the mark. Living out your theology is where real life change will happen.
- ~ Biblical illiteracy is not an issue. Many know Scripture, they don't live it out.
- ~ We, the Independent Christian Church, have done a poor job training and having clear spiritual expectations for our leadership teams and lay leaders.
- ~ A spiritual leader is a discipleship maker. They have ownership in discipleship making.
- ~ Drifting is a major issue as they become disconnected from the church for whatever reason. Identifying those reasons would be a game changer for pastors, elders and leaders within the church.
- ~ COVID put a spotlight on the issue of people being truly connected to a faith community.
- ~ Many years we have been a centralized faith community. We might need to rethink our method and become decentralized...aka home churches. This is a massive shift in our thinking and how we do ministry. The "Show" is no longer what we are striving for, but rather a faith community that is smaller, deeper and more connected than ever. Our buildings will be smaller. Our programming will be smaller. But our discipleship will be richer, deeper and wider.
- ~ As mentioned in the workshop, we have a lot of "homeless" people who need to find a home that is welcoming, safe and intentional.
- ~ The interviewer offered several amazing resources to consider.

Interviewer B ~ Professor

- ~ Agrees the NPO is a need and worthy to address.
- ~ There are many who drift and isolate themselves but still want the church to be involved in their life on some level. Those events can be funerals, weddings, baptisms etc.

- ~ There is a difference between isolation and drifting.
- ~ Looking at the culture and who and why people have fallen away will provide invaluable insight. Especially as there is a need for destruction of the spiritual vs cultural.
- ~ Having a truncated view of ecclesiology might not be the root cause. It depends on what you mean by truncated. What does robust ecclesiology mean...not an ivory tower view. This will not work. An ivory tower view is what makes people leave the church. Maybe another way of saying it is, we must have an "expanded view" of our ecclesiology.
- ~ Having a robust and vibrant ecclesiology is being involved in the messiness of the life of others. It is not being afraid of coming in and dwelling with others on their life journey.
- ~ There is a great need for spiritual leadership to have healthy spiritual practices. How many of our leaders have a "Rule of Life?"
- ~ Spirituality is messy. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David and others are examples of the faith community being messy.
- ~ One area that I might want to consider are family systems in church. What does this look like in a church? How do family systems affect the church and her mission?
- ~ The interviewer offered several amazing resources to consider.

Interviewer C ~ Counselor

- ~ Agrees the NPO is a need and worthy to address.
- ~ We use our left and right brain to make decisions when it comes to our feelings and desires to be connected in community. Leadership must be aware of such dynamics as we tend to lean heavy on our left brain when programming and providing for our community.
- ~ Mental health and trauma history are crucial in our post-COVID world. Again, understanding these issues as pastors, elders and leaders will only enhance our ability to serve the community.
- ~ The reasons why people drift now might be different from the pre-COVID world we lived in.
- ~ People are looking for healing. People are looking for attachment and acceptance. They might not articulate this need in the above terms, but this is what they are longing for themselves and their family. How do we offer such a place without making it a program?
- ~ There is shame outside of the church and shame inside of the church. In what ways do we address the shame from both perspectives. We must deal with shame!
- ~ If discipleship is truly a viable option, we must be honest with ourselves and ask the question, how do we do discipleship in their messiness and in our messiness? How does the blind lead the blind well?
- ~ Technology and the way we hide behind technology will be an issue that will need to be addressed. The cliché of wearing a mask to church now is literal.

~ Understanding the psychology of the human experience will lead leaders to think holistically in our approach in doing church. We must think relationally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

~ The interviewer offered several amazing resources to consider.

Appendix B– Milestone 2 NPO Topic Expertise Essay

Section 1: Biblical and Theological Foundations

Living in Community in the Biblical World

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes."³⁶ For Paul, the gospel changes everything. In Colossians 1:6, the apostle Paul commends the Colossian church because the gospel had been "bearing fruit and growing...among [them] from the day [they] heard it." The gospel is transformative and calls for a new lens in which to view and experience biblical community. From the genesis of the church, living in biblical community has been an ongoing struggle.³⁷ Yet Paul's desire was for the gospel to pierce through the hearts of the community and establish a people where "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."³⁸ Paul longed for the church to have a sense of belonging and rootedness that anchored people in living out the gospel in community; knowing the journey of life is best, albeit messy and challenging, traveled together.³⁹ Paul addresses the messiness of living in community throughout his letters as the Christian faith called for unity among diverse cultures; a call to not simply coexist but thrive for the sake of the gospel. The tugs and pulls of the culture were evident and took its toll on the church as some had drifted from gathering with the community as mentioned in Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some." From the birth of the church in Acts there have been people who have drifted from their faith community.

People drifting from a faith community is not a new behavior but one that Jesus warned his disciples about in his teaching. Being a follower of Christ had a cost and Jesus urged his followers to do their due diligence if one desired to be his disciple.⁴⁰ Counting the cost of being a disciple included being in community with other believers as Jesus redefined what it meant to love your neighbor. Knowing the heart of humanity, Jesus forewarned the disciples that some will be led astray seeking other places to fulfill their longing to be loved and accepted.

³⁶ Romans 1:16. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced employ the English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2016).

³⁷ See Acts 5, Acts 11 and I Corinthians 1.

³⁸ Galatians 3:28.

³⁹ See Acts 13:1-3; 15:36-41 and I Thessalonians 3:1-7.

⁴⁰ Luke 14:25-33.

The issue of drifting from a faith community centers around two specific groups of people, evangelical/non-denominational leaders and those who have gone astray from their faith community. The biblical texts examined below (Matthew 18, Philemon and I Thessalonians 2), will offer a theological foundation to biblical community, the ramifications of those who may drift from a faith community and the response of those leaders who shepherd the community.

Textual Discussions

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP: MATTHEW 18

The parable of the Lost Sheep, uniquely placed in Matthew 18 and Luke 15, provides compelling insight into how the gospel transforms one's worldview and their understanding of a biblical community. The Lukan account centers more around the lostness of a sheep whereas the Matthean account focuses upon the sheep wandering from the fold.⁴¹ Klyne R. Snodgrass agrees and suggests that Matthew's parable was "originally about God's acceptance of sinners to a church context to instruct church leaders about God's care for insignificant or weak believers."⁴²

A literary chiasmus of Matthew 18:10-14, shown in Appendix A, offers several critical points to consider regarding those who drift. First, who are the "little ones" Jesus speaks of in vs 10 and vs 14? Context of the parable gives the reader several clues. Matthew 18:1-5 speaks of a "child" while in Matthew 18:15 (NRSV) Jesus uses a "member" as an example. Matthew 19:20-22 mentions a "young man" and in Matthew 17:24-27 Jesus speaks of "children." Yet the most compelling is found in Matthew 10:42 (NRSV) where Jesus sends out the twelve and says, "whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward." The context suggests the "little ones" are not physically young children but those who are young in the faith; "not merely children but the weaker brother or sister who did not understand the implication of their faith."⁴³

Another critical point to observe is the word "astray" in vs 12-13. The concept of people wandering from God and his people is spoken by the prophets. Consider Isaiah when he writes, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned-every one-to his own way."⁴⁴ Or Jeremiah when speaking

⁴¹ E F F. (Eric Francis Fox) Bishop, "Parable of the Lost or Wandering Sheep," *Anglican Theological Review* 44, no. 1 (January 1962): 44.

⁴² Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*, Second Edition, 10th Anniversary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2018), 103.

⁴³ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Leicester, England: Eerdmans, 1992), 462.

⁴⁴ Isaiah 53:6.

for the LORD, "They have loved to wander; thus, they have not restrained their feet."⁴⁵ Jesus' parable highlights the human condition that is so easily swayed by using the aorist passive voice when using *planao*, meaning to be led astray. Just like sheep, humanity is easily distracted and can be wooed by perceived greener pastures from the safety and comfort of their shepherd and flock.

The final observation centers around the one leaving the ninety-nine. The one who went astray was a part of the fold; they made up the hundred sheep the shepherd was shepherding. The one who went astray was a part of the community and belonged with the other ninety-nine. They were offered protection and provisions, yet they chose to abandon intimate fellowship with their community.⁴⁶ Matthew's parable offers insight to a timeless struggle of people straying from a community which offered a place of unconditional belonging.

A GOSPEL PLEA: PHILEMON

Philemon exemplifies how the gospel transforms relationships while it offers a prescription for reconciliation, forgiveness and church diplomacy. Mary Hinkle Shore writes, "The letter of Philemon could be used as a way into conversation about how frightening it is to 'come toward' a brother or sister in Christ whose values are deeply at odds with one's own."⁴⁷ Paul begins the conversation with Philemon from a place of humility by acknowledging he is at the bottom of the social pyramid as a prisoner⁴⁸ and Philemon is at the top being the head of a Greco-Roman household.⁴⁹ Paul, being encouraged by the gospel work being done, commends Philemon "because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed."⁵⁰

Paul continues to move towards Philemon as he appeals to "love's sake" in vs 9-10. Although Paul is a prisoner, he is also an apostle of Christ.⁵¹ Instead of commanding Philemon to accept Onesimus as a brother in Christ, Paul appeals to love and how it has manifested itself in Philemon and the

⁴⁵ Jeremiah 14:10.

⁴⁶ Psalm 23.

⁴⁷ Mary Hinkle Shore, "The Freedom of Three Christians: Paul's Letter to Philemon and the Beginning of a New Age," *Word & World* 38, no. 4 (2018): 397.

⁴⁸ Paul opens the letter by identifying himself as a prisoner in vs 1. Four other times in the letter Paul refers to his incarceration (vs. 9, 10, 13, and 23).

⁴⁹ Shore, 394.

⁵⁰ Philemon 7.

⁵¹ See Romans 1:1; I Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1 and Ephesians 1:1.

church that meets in his house. Paul's approach to guiding Philemon in restoring a relationship is motivated by love and the gospel and not through obligation or guilt.

Finally, Paul moves towards Philemon in acknowledging Onesimus' shortcomings and new identity. There is much speculation of why Onesimus departed from Philemon's care as a slave. Some scholars suggest Onesimus stole from Philemon and became a fugitive, while others insist Paul was sought out to intercede a dispute between Philemon and Onesimus.⁵² Regardless of the speculation Onesimus was at one time useless and is now useful because of the transformative gospel. Onesimus is no longer a bondservant but a beloved brother in Christ.⁵³

Jeremiah Sipp writes, "Paul models a leadership of discipleship that rejoices in the spiritual growth of others."⁵⁴ Paul's approach in guiding reconciliation between two people was gospel centered and motivated by love. Reconciliation was imperative for the sake of Philemon, Onesimus and the church as it was part of the young church's spiritual formation. The wayward Onesimus came home and Philemon, with the faith community, had a choice in which to respond.

POSTURE OF A LEADER: I THESSALONIANS 2

I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are the hallmark texts used by non-denominational faith communities to depict spiritual leadership. Although both passages prescribe characteristics in a spiritual leader as one who should be above reproach, sober-minded, self-controlled, not a lover of money and is able to teach, I Thessalonians 2 describes the posture in which a spiritual leader lives out the gospel in community. According to Paul a spiritual leader suffers hardship (vs 2), their motive is pure (vs 3), and their approval is from God, not mortals (vs 4). They lead with humility, integrity and honesty while not being diverted by greed or power (vs 5). They are hard workers as they labor and toil to not be a burden as they live holy, righteous and blameless lives (vs 9-10).

Yet the most compelling description is the parent motif defined in verses 7-8 and 11-12. Paul writes, "But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children."⁵⁵ A spiritual leader is one who is gentle and compassionate towards the faith community. They are willing to patiently walk along the path of those who are needing to be nurtured in the faith. This type of nourishing leadership is balanced with discipline and expectation when Paul writes, "For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged

⁵² J. Albert Harrill, *Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions* (Fortress Press, 2009), 7.

⁵³ Philemon 16.

⁵⁴ Jeremiah E Shipp, "The Book of Philemon: A Critical Analysis of the Intersectionality of Leadership, Love, and Life," *Journal of Biblical Theology* 3, no. 2 (April 2020): 128.

⁵⁵ I Thessalonians 2:7.

you to walk in a manner worthy of God.”⁵⁶ King David wrote about such an experience when he writes in Psalm 23:4, “your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” The nourishment and discipline of a mother and father are essential characteristics of a spiritual leader as they faithfully lead their community, especially when shepherding those who might drift from the faith community.

The greatest reward for any spiritual leader is seeing their faith community thriving and living the gospel out in every aspect of their lives. Transformed lives, strayed souls found and restored relationships, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is what motivates spiritual leaders to lead well. As Paul would proclaim at the end of I Thessalonians 2, “For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.”⁵⁷

Synthesis of Themes, Values, and Commitments

Jesus’ parable of the lost sheep in Matthew 18 and Paul’s response to both Philemon and the church in Thessalonica offer several insights for leaders of evangelical/non-denominational faith communities who need to address those who were once connected yet have drifted from their faith community. First, all three passages highlight the need for and the messiness of living in community. There is not an alternative lifestyle or exception for Christ followers to be alone in their faith and living fruitful lives. Second, there always have been and there will always be, until the Lord returns, those who drift from the faith community. The Fall in Genesis 3 continues to splinter our relationship between God, creation and humanity. Pride, based in a need for acceptance, will be humanity’s nemesis as we seek to please ourselves and pursue those things which will bring instant pleasure, power, possession or popularity. Next, spiritual leadership that is grounded and obedient to the Lordship of Christ is essential to faithfully lead a biblical community. Paul’s description of spiritual leadership in I Thessalonians 2 makes every leader pause, reflect and examine their heart before accepting such a responsibility in the church. The posture of the leader is equal to if not more than the biblical knowledge they possess. They lead from the overflow, or scarcity, of their relationship with God as they teach, serve and admonish those who are in their care. Finally, as Jesus taught and Paul exemplified, spiritual leaders lead with love when shepherding. Not only do they lead with love in addressing those who have drifted, but also lead with love when addressing those who have been faithful to their community. In addressing both parties there is a pathway for spiritual growth that benefits the whole community while being a beacon of light for outsiders to see reconciliation and biblical community.

The above biblical insights bring hope and challenges to spiritual leaders addressing those who have drifted from the faith community. They bring hope because there are multiple biblical

⁵⁶ I Thessalonians 2:12.

⁵⁷ I Thessalonians 2:19-20.

examples of people drifting from their community for a variety of reasons; drifting is not a new phenomenon. They bring hope as they offer biblical characteristics for spiritual leadership in guiding and providing care for the entire body; those who are faithful and those who drift. The challenge is to adequately equip spiritual leaders to lead the whole community with humility and confidence. The challenge is for the spiritual leadership to cultivate a community where people desire to belong and welcome those who have gone astray.

Section 2: Topic History, Ministry or Vocational Context, and Key Voices

A Brief History of Belonging and the Church

EKKLESIA AND BELONGING

In Wilbert R. Shenk's article, *New Wineskins for New Wine: Toward a Post-Christendom Ecclesiology* he asserts, "Although the nature and purpose of the church may seem to be quite straightforward, history shows that it has been understood and interpreted in different ways according to the historical period and particular social, political, and cultural circumstances."⁵⁸ Understanding the genesis of the church and its progression over history will enlighten the ageless issue of people drifting from the church for various reasons. The brief history will highlight the origin of the church and several key historical, social, political and cultural circumstances that have shaped the Western church.

The church, a means to gather peculiar people to belong, believe and behave in a particular way, emerges at Pentecost, yet has its roots in the book of Genesis. The historical evidence of humanity's desire to be in community began in the garden of Eden when Adam did not find a suitable helper. Once Adam was in community with Eve, the intimacy of belonging was abruptly tainted by sin. The invitation for the people of God to be in community is embedded in the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 12:1-3. The Abrahamic covenant has been called the original Great Commission as "it becomes clear that God's strategy for redeeming the world is to call out a people that will be the means by which the nations will learn to know and worship God."⁵⁹ The Hebrew Scripture uses two common words, *edhah* and *qahal*, to depict such a gathered people. The root meaning of *edhah* is "appointed" and that of *qahal* means "call;" the people of Israel were regarded as a people being appointed or called by God. In the New Testament the Apostle Paul used the word *ekklesia* to refer to a gathering of Christians or the place where they met, such as a house. *Ekklesia*, instead of

⁵⁸ Wilbert R Shenk, "New Wineskins for New Wine: Toward a Post-Christendom Ecclesiology," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 29, no. 2 (April 2005): 73.

⁵⁹ Shenk, 73.

sunagoge, was used because the Hellenistic Christians found it to be more inclusive; meaning more than a single locality but for believers everywhere. *Ekklesia*, in the view of the Jews, was a continuation of the historical understanding of being called out to be God's own people but also paved the way for Gentiles to be grafted into the new community. This was a watershed moment for the church as "one of the theological breakthroughs in the early *ekklesia* was that God's people were not based on any kind of inherited social or cultural distinction."⁶⁰ The boundaries of age, class, gender and ethnicity have been reimagined into one community where there is not "Greek, and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all."⁶¹ The faithful gatherings in Acts 2, 11 and 15 displayed this new found freedom as "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."⁶²

THE PATRISTIC ERA AND BELONGING

The Patristic Era offers minimal understanding of what Christian worship was like, however what is known is that "the vast majority of Christians during the first three centuries belonged to the lower echelons of society, or at least did not fit well in the higher ranks."⁶³ The early church was a community for the marginalized who needed each other for emotional, spiritual and physical support while battling the Roman Empire and persecution. Their gatherings were not centered around repentance or preaching but "to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the promises of which that resurrection was the seal."⁶⁴ The Eucharist was at the heart of the gatherings as it unified all believers from every social, economic and ethnic background.

To become a member of the local faith community was a long and strenuous process on the part of the inquirer and their sponsor. Scott McCullar explains:

To begin the process, the person would be presented for membership into the community of faith by a church member. Everyone desiring entrance had to have a sponsor. The initial examination would then begin...Usually the questions would not

⁶⁰ R Zolawma, "Development of Ecclesiology During the First Four Centuries AD," *Bangalore Theological Forum* 47, no. 1 (June 2015): 79.

⁶¹ Colossians 3:11.

⁶² Acts 2:42.

⁶³ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity, Vol. 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, 2nd edition (New York: HarperOne, 2010), 105.

⁶⁴ Gonzalez, 107.

*be presented to the one desiring membership. Rather, the interrogation would be of the church member who had brought and sponsored the inquirer.*⁶⁵

Although integrity and moral character of the individual was on display during the examination, motive was even more of a concern. Augustine too was concerned because he knew a desperate fear of God, a spiritual dream, a miracle witnessed or a rich landowner becoming a Christian was not solely the best reason for someone to join the church.⁶⁶ Once the examination of the inquirer and the sponsor was completed the inquirer became a catechumen and spent three to four years training known as the catechumenate, studying the Scriptures and the doctrines of faith. After the three years of training, during Lent, the catechumen would put their name in for baptism. On Easter Sunday they would be baptized and welcomed fully into the faith community. The commitment from the catechumen over the period of three to four years eliminated those who did not fully embrace what it meant to belong and minimized those who would drift from the community.

CONSTANTINIANISM AND BELONGING

The rise of Constantinianism in the fourth century radically changed the religious landscape of the Roman Empire and what it meant to belong to a Christ following community. Emperor Constantine, looking favorably upon Christians, halted persecution and ultimately recognized Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire in 380. Scholars and historians debated if this was a positive development for the church and its mission. Regardless, the church was no longer for the weak and marginalized but for all citizens and was the "institution responsible for the pastoral care of the citizenry and one of the pillars of society...as an official part of the establishment the church played an essential role in the affairs of the state."⁶⁷ Constantine considered himself "bishop of external affairs of the Church" and modeled the organizational structure of the church after that of the Roman Empire.⁶⁸ The effects and long-term consequences of the church becoming institutionalized lead to a hierarchical construct and ultimately politics and corruption permeated the church by the sixteenth century. Belonging to the church was expected and was deemed necessary to be in good standing with society and those who were in power. Boundaries were formed by the hierarchy which led to defined doctrinal statements and expectations of what a faithful church member believed and how one should live. The boundary markers set by the church decided "who is in and who is out--from the use of political positions to specific theological

⁶⁵ Scott McCullar, "The Path of Membership in the Early Church," *Faith and Mission* 19, no. 3 (2002): 20.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Shenk, 74.

⁶⁸ Zolawma, 94.

doctrines to tell quickly if someone is really part of the church.”⁶⁹ Unlike the early church where belonging meant one was deeply rooted and committed to the particular lifestyle set by Christ through the Eucharist, the catholic church or universal church became an institution more concerned about keeping “people out than an expression of God’s truth for God’s people.”⁷⁰

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION AND BELONGING

The Protestant Reformation was a response to the catholic church, its decrees and hierarchical construct, paving the way for new faith communities to organize locally in an attempt to revitalize the early church’s intent of a community devoting themselves to fellowship, prayer, teaching and the breaking of bread. Out of the Reformation, the Restoration Movement was birthed in the early 1800’s by Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone after the American Revolution to bridge the gap of denominations and usher in a new liberating Christianity.⁷¹ The mantra of the Restoration Movement, “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, love” was an effort to create space for people to grow and learn the essentials of the Christian faith but not be legalistic with non salvific issues that tend to rise within the church. Although the intent was motivated by love and acceptance it has not served the Restoration churches well as the terms are too ambiguous and have been misunderstood and misused; as Jack Cottrell writes, “it has the devastating result of watering down and undermining the very concept of truth; in effect it destroys the Biblical concept of sound doctrine.”⁷² The autonomy of the Christian church has been celebrated but it comes with a cost of not having a viable commitment to membership and a sense of belonging to a great body of believers of the invisible church. The lack of rootedness and individualism opens the pathway for people to drift if not anchored faithfully or properly to the gospel and the church that is grounded in the tenets of the faith and her mission.

Key Voices

Inviting different voices to address those who have drifted from their faith community allows for a greater depth and appreciation of those who have tread in the waters of discovery as well as give particular insight to the different nuances that should be considered in order to adequately offer life-giving solutions. Having a biblical and historical foundation, these voices are instrumental in

⁶⁹ Daryl R Climenhaga, “A Missiological Exploration of Church Membership,” *Brethren in Christ History & Life* 38, no. 2 (August 2015): 287.

⁷⁰ Climenhaga, 290.

⁷¹ Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, First Printing edition (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1992), 151.

⁷² Jack Cottrell, “In Matters of Faith,” n.d., 1, <http://thecra.org/files/1%20-%20Cottrell,%20Jack%20-%20In%20Matters%20Of%20Faith.pdf>.

continuing to understand the breadth and depth as spiritual leaders address this problem. The voices of Dr. Jim Wilder, Dr. Daryl R. Climenhaga and Dr. Peter L. Steinke offer such insight to how faith communities function as relationship systems, disciple half-brained Christians and the church's response to an unmoored, skeptical and transitory culture.

DR. JIM WILDER

Dr. Jim Wilder, a neurotheologian, holds a B.A. in Psychology at Bemidji State University, an M.A. in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the Fuller Graduate School of Psychology. Wilder's life work has centered on merging theology, spiritual formation and brain science to develop a unique model of spiritual and psychological maturation by understanding how the brain functions.⁷³ In his recent book, *The Other Half of Church*, co-authored by Michel Hendricks, Wilder explains the roles of the brain's left and right sides and how engaging them both are critical to spiritual maturity and transformation within a person and their faith community. Wilder offers a unique perspective to those who might have drifted as the church has successfully ministered to half-brained Christians while neglecting the other half that desires joy and attachment.

The human brain operates on two processors, one on the right side of the brain and the other on the left side of the brain, which operate together yet have different functions and responsibilities to help make sense of the world one lives in. The right side starts processing information and surroundings before the left side is aware and develops conscious awareness. Wilder explains, "The right hemisphere process that creates our working identity integrates our reality six times per second. The brain brings together current experience and emotionally important personal memories to create an active sense of who we are in our relationships at that moment."⁷⁴ The right side is the fast track and is a more powerful processor that addresses relational attachments, assesses surroundings (good, bad, scary), emotional attunement to others, group identity and individual identity. Therefore, the right brain "governs the whole range of relational life: who we love, our emotional reactions to our surroundings, our ability to calm ourselves, and our identity, both as individuals and as a community."⁷⁵ Wilder continues, "The right side manages our strongest relational connections (both to people and God) and our experience of emotional connectedness to others. And character formation."⁷⁶ The left brain addresses conscious thought, speech,

⁷³ "Get to Know Dr. Jim Wilder - Life Model Works," accessed March 20, 2021, <https://lifemodelworks.org/get-to-know-dr-jim-wilder/>.

⁷⁴ Jim Wilder and Michel Hendricks, *The Other Half of Church: Christian Community, Brain Science, and Overcoming Spiritual Stagnation*, Illustrated edition (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020), 21.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 22.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

strategies, problem solving, logic and stories. Words are put to emotions, feelings and experiences, problem-solving is executed, arguments are formed and stories are told; meaning the left brain, the slow track, runs at the speed of words.⁷⁷

Although the left brain is designed to comprehend Christian beliefs and doctrines that are taught from the pulpit or in the classroom, its understanding is derived from the right brain and the relational experience of a loving and faithful God. Unfortunately, many churches have served the left brain well but have neglected the right brain in its discipleship strategy. Wilder again explains, "Left-brained discipleship emphasizes beliefs, doctrine, willpower, and strategies but neglects right-brain loving attachments, joy, emotional development, and identity. Ignoring right-brain relational development creates Christians who believe in God's love but have difficulty experiencing it in daily life, especially during distress."⁷⁸ A discipleship strategy that does not encompass both sides of the brain falls short of creating an environment for people to become rooted in a community that is relationally committed and offers spiritual transformation. A discipleship strategy that utilizes both the right brain and left brain, working in synchronization, tills the soil for people to believe and belong while being transformed into the likeness of Christ and the church. Instead of growing and developing half-brained Christians who are intellectually connected to a personal God but are emotionally detached from the community, church leaders are called upon to fully embrace and be intentional in harvesting a full-brained Christian where the use of the left and right brain is balanced.

The church leaning left-brained in their discipleship approach has been caused by two movements in history; the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. The Enlightenment, an intellectual movement during the seventeenth century and eighteenth century, celebrated reason and the human mind "was elevated to be the most important part of humanity."⁷⁹ Church leaders succumbed to the pressure and Christianity focused their energy towards right thinking and right doctrine, leaving the teaching of love God, love others to be tossed to the side. Denominations flourished and the church splintered into sects that believed their beliefs were correct and held they owned the Truth. The Industrial Revolution catapulted America into the twentieth century and beyond but left behind the family unit shattered as the relational bonds were broken and "produced a society that is less relationally connected."⁸⁰ Families no longer work together, they live long distances from other family members, young children are educated by daycares and screens have replaced face-to-face interactions with children, coworkers and faith communities. The right-brain dominant relational skills have been ignored by culture and the church has followed

⁷⁷ Ibid, 24.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 25.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 45.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 46.

its path. Understanding the right brain and its function are essential to comprehending why some individuals may drift as the lack of connectedness to others and God were missing from their faith community because of the leadership's misunderstanding of brain science.

DR. DARYL R. CLIMENHAGA

Discussion of this Dr. Daryl R. Climenhaga, professor of global studies at Providence Theological Seminary, uses missiology to address radical individualism embedded in the Western culture by answering the question, "How can we develop a new framework for church membership relevant to our increasingly unmoored, skeptical and transitory culture?"⁸¹ Climenhaga's question is a critical and timely question to raise for it has significant implications and insight for leaders to why people drift from their faith communities. To answer the question Climenhaga uses Paul Hiebert's work in the essay, *The Category "Christian" in the Mission Task*, where he introduces the concepts of bounded sets and centered sets as a model for church membership.

Bounded sets are designed to help the mind categorize those things that share common characteristics. First, the category defines those things that are essential characteristics that an object must possess to be included in the set. Next, the category must have a clear and distinct boundary; differentiating what the object is and what it is not. Third, the object in the category is uniform and holds true to the basic essential characteristics. Finally, the bounded set is static; circumstances might change the look, taste, size or smell but the core of the object never changes.⁸² A church considered to be a bounded set would be defined by their essential characteristics of doctrine and behavior; these attributes would be upheld to be a member of the community. Orthodoxy and orthopraxy would draw distinct boundaries and would ultimately decide who was in and who was out, who is welcomed and who belongs based on specific beliefs and behaviors.

Centered sets are extrinsic in nature and can be defined by the following characteristics: created by defining a centre, the focus is not on the boundary but the movement towards or away from the centre, sets reflect variation within a category and are dynamic by moving inside and outside of the set.⁸³ A church considered to be a centered set would be defined by the relationship that is at the centre, the triune God. Members of this community's allegiance and devotion is not to the doctrine or behavior but to the relationship of the centre. The distinct difference between the centred set

⁸¹ Climenhaga, 286.

⁸² Paul G Hiebert, "The Category 'Christian' in the Mission Task," *International Review of Mission* 72, no. 287 (July 1983): 422. Hiebert uses the category of apples as an illustration of a bounded set. Apples are a kind of fruit that is round, red, yellow or green, edible and are produced by a rosaceous tree. Their boundary is clear as an apple will never become a pear, orange or banana and are uniform as they may come in different sizes but are still apples.

⁸³ Hiebert, 423.

and the bounded set is that less stress is "placed on maintaining the boundary and more on reaffirming the centre in order to preserve the category."⁸⁴

These two approaches create avenues and roadblocks when attracting, engaging and developing a committed and fruitful community. A bounded set, a Western culture practice, has well defined boundaries that can be checked off and leaves little doubt if one is accepted or not into the community. The centered set approach, a Hebraic practice, focuses on the obedience and worship of God which is harder to quantify the commitment of a person because of the range of maturity in a person. The bounded set highlights the characteristics of the individual itself while losing sight of the relationship in the centre. For this reason Hiebert warns against bounded set churches by writing, "The church, then, is in danger of becoming a group of people who look to their corporate body rather than to a transcendent God, and who replaces worship with fellowship."⁸⁵

If individualism is at the core of who we are as a society, then any bounded set community will be at best secondary and will dilute the intrinsic characteristics for people to participate and membership will dwindle. Climenhaga argues, "People around us long for community, but they are not willing to make the kind of commitment to the group that our forebears took for granted. We must deal with this reality in the way that we conceive of church membership."⁸⁶ The centered set, based on relationship, is a pathway to bridge the gap of individualism to belong; not to a belief system or doctrine but to an organic system thriving in relationship as many have a sense of belonging before believing.

The church has been entrenched in bounded set practices that have alienated many because doctrine has trumped the relationship centre, "Jesus Christ is Lord."⁸⁷ Bounded set practices have created shallow communities solely based on right belief systems and right behavior that create chasms when not adhered to, compromised or challenged. Bounded set churches are well manicured in their boundaries but limits the messiness of an individual to doubt and wrestle with their faith which contributes to their lack of truly belonging to a community, especially those indoctrinated by individualism. With an increasingly unmoored, skeptical and transitory culture that is steeped in individualism the bounded set church is ill equipped and indifferent to address those who drift from their faith community.

⁸⁴ Hiebert, 424.

⁸⁵ Hiebert, 427.

⁸⁶ Climenhaga, 294.

⁸⁷ Philippians 2:11.

DR. PETER L. STEINKE

Dr. Peter L. Steinke, a congregational systems thinker, teacher and pastor has done extensive research and study on how the church family works. He notes, "The church is not a family. Families are more committed and intense...Nonetheless, the church is an emotional unit."⁸⁸ Leaders who understand that church as an emotional unit will adequately shepherd the faith community well. The church is an emotional unit made up of relationship systems that are either complementary (opposites attract), contrary (intimate enemies) or similar (birds of a feather flock together).⁸⁹ What distinguishes relationship systems from all other systems is the emotional processes that are governed by two forces: to be separate but close.⁹⁰

Murray Bowen, an American psychiatrist from Georgetown University introduced the term self-differentiation to balance these two forces at work; to be separate but close. Self-differentiation is defined as:

*Defining yourself and staying in touch with others, being responsible for yourself and responsive to others, maintaining your integrity and well-being without intruding on that of others, allowing the enhancement of the other's integrity and well-being without feeling abandoned, inferior, or less of a self and having an "I" and entering a relationship with another "I" without losing your self or diminishing the self of the other.*⁹¹

Self-differentiation within the relationship system is motivated by either acute or chronic anxiety. Anxiety is good in itself as it provokes, pushes and pulls individuals to manage change; yet if the anxiety intensifies it can be debilitating and shut the body down. Acute anxiety is situational and lasts for a moment during a crisis event whereas chronic anxiety is habitual and becomes a part of the fabric of a person's life. The chronically anxious people in a church family are those who impose their own wills and demand a yes/no answer or resort to black/white thinking. "Their ultimate threat is to run away from home--transferring or terminating their membership if an action is not rescinded, a person is not removed, or a demand is not satisfied."⁹² Leaders who grasp self-

⁸⁸ Peter L. Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), xvi.

⁸⁹ Steinke, 10.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Steinke, 12.

⁹² Steinke, 25

differentiation can "define self to others, stay in touch with them, and, even though there is tension between the two positions, manage, whatever anxiety arises."⁹³

Triangulation is a common way to identify and address chronic anxiety within a relationship system is through an emotional process of triangling. Triangling is when person A has a conflict with person B and the person with chronic anxiety drags in person C. Person C is called the "burden bearer" or "scapegoat" who often tends to be the lay leader or pastor because they are in the responsible position. Triangling shifts the blame because pain and suffering is not pleasant, therefore the burden is relocated away from the person with anxiety and placed upon a third person or party. The leaders of the church are tasked with bringing stability and helping those who are experiencing pain by redefining the problem. Steinke concludes, "As long as triangles exist, there is little chance for restoring balance. Triangles transmit anxiety; triangles relocate anxiety...they indicate that people are not managing their anxiety; people are stuck together in their anxiety; change is inhibited."⁹⁴

Leaders serving and engaging the relationship systems that make up the local church come with unique challenges. The challenge for leaders, in particular to the dynamics of relationship systems, is focusing on the symptoms and not the system. Leaders use their time and talents addressing symptoms and not adequately identifying the system that has led to the conflict. Steinke writes, "When we focus on a symptom, we are preoccupied with its cause and relief. At the same time we are not attentive to the system--the structure, patterns, and processes--behind the symptom."⁹⁵ Focusing on the relationship system is having the capacity to differentiate; being clear about boundaries, responsibilities and goals while being aware of one's self and the other self at the same time. Focusing on the relationship system brings stability by redefining the problem by guiding anxious people to define themselves to one another and remove the emotional process of triangling. The forces of being separate and close is in the DNA of every individual and is magnified by anxiety and marred by sin. Such relationship systems are living, strained, complex and are in need of faithful leaders to compassionately walk beside individuals and families in discovering their need for a healthy balance and a community who longs to be present and engage in their spiritual formation.

⁹³ Steinke, 33.

⁹⁴ Steinke, 85-86.

⁹⁵ Steinke, 130.

Section 3: Synthesis and Conclusion

AREAS OF AGREEMENT/CONSENSUS

The biblical and historical literature, along with key scholarly voices, offer several congruent thoughts in response to leadership and those who drift from their faith community. First, the church is a complex living organism that is made up of relationship systems who are created to know and be known. Humanity is designed to belong and engage with something greater than themselves, and because of the Fall in Genesis 3, humanity will constantly be in pursuit of a sacred space where the full range of human emotions and intellect are welcomed and cherished. Drifting from a faith community is as old as the need to belong since sin marred humanity's relationship with God, ourselves, creation and others. Next, Constantianism, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution slowly shaped an individualistic culture away from a community based society. Although these movements brought new opportunities, technology and reason to help advance society and its way of life, it diluted the need for community and the peculiarity of being a part of a faith community that is centered on the person of Christ. The Western church, with its different traditions, has propped up right doctrine, right theology and right belief as the chief cornerstone to which people must adhere to in order to belong, creating a boundary to keep certain people in and certain people out. Finally, the historical movements within society have radically influenced the church and its attempts to be relevant. The church reacted to the Age of Enlightenment and seized on the intellectual movement, as reason and the human mind was now the center of what it means to be human, and excluded the emotional and experiential aspects of the human experience. The church has forgotten that people are complex relationship systems that are in need of spiritual leaders that can attend to the intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of the individual and the faith community at large. There is a great need for leaders to acknowledge and embrace a holistic approach to discipleship that is formational in belonging and believing, engages the left and right side of the brain and is centered on the Eucharist as an act of solidarity.

TENSIONS, DISAGREEMENTS AND PRESSURE POINTS

The research literature also highlights several points of tension in responding to why people tend to drift from their faith community. There is tension in the Western church between individualism and collectivism and how best to navigate and acknowledge the uniqueness of the individual while celebrating and committing to the commonality one has in a faith community.

Although people are shaped by what neuroscientists call attachment and the shared identity within a community, even though it is not until the age of twelve there is a shift in a person's brain that it is able to balance between group identity and individual identity, the culture expects personal and private independence as the Western culture is saturated in individualism. This type of acceptable behavior constructs a relationship that is transactional, performance and consumer based which opens the pathway for people to drift when their personal and private needs are unmet. Leaders in faith communities are divided on how to best honor the individual and their uniqueness while nurturing the community as one collective whole. Another area of tension the literature brings to light is the approach by which the faith community welcomes others to be a part of their community.

A bounded set church, with well defined boundaries, creates clear expectations of right doctrine that must be adhered to to be fully embraced by the community. The clarity of beliefs is inherently good but tends to spiral into legalism and judgmentalism. The centered set church is centre focused but does not adequately guard from heresy that might penetrate and contaminate the faith community. The church, historically, has ebbed and flowed in their approach and is again at a watershed moment, given the current cultural climate, in how to be inclusive while being rooted in the gospel that calls for life transformation. Church leadership navigating the faith community through this tension will dramatically affect the value of church membership, strategies for discipleship and what it means to belong to a faith community.

GAPS, MISSTEPS SCHOLARSHIP PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS

Although the literature acknowledges those who participate and engage in the faith community are complex relationship systems in need of attentiveness and that drifting from a community is as old as the genesis of humanity, there were several gaps or limitations that need to be addressed. Within the literature there was a lack of understanding regarding attributes that define a healthy community. There are various kinds of communities vying for time, talents and treasures; promising a better future just as the church proclaims. These communities with their benefits, liturgy, dues, service opportunities and required commitments are competing and often replacing church communities. Understanding the dynamics of a community and the attributes that people desire and want to be committed to can enhance the research and give voice to church leaders as they discover, design and implement a life-giving solution to help people stay engaged in their faith community. Another limitation to the literature was there were no signposts offered for leaders to be aware of regarding those who find themselves on the fringe of the community. Having warning signs that alert leaders to potential issues within a relationship that causes separation from the faith community can guide leaders to be proactive rather reactive when pastoring the church.

CONCLUSION

The biblical foundation, historical context and unique voices give valuable insight to the question, "What psychological, ecclesiological and anthropological tendencies affect people's desire to be fully invested in a faith community?" Although the literature was able to clarify and at times verify several assumptions of why people drift, the literature's limitations were insufficient in understanding the dynamics of a healthy community. Throughout the research more questions were identified to help leaders of evangelical/non-denominational faith communities address the needs of those who were once connected yet have drifted from their faith community.

Appendix

Chiasmus of Matthew 18:10-14

A *one of the little ones (vs 10a)*

B *my Father who is in heaven (vs 10b)*

C *has gone astray (vs 12b)*

D *the ninety-nine (vs 12c)*

E *the one that went astray (vs 12c)*

D *the ninety-nine (vs 13b)*

C *went astray (vs 13b)*

B *your (or my) Father who is in heaven (vs 14)*

A *one of these little ones (vs 14)*

Appendix C—Milestone 3 Design Workshop Report

NPO Statement

Leaders of non-denominational churches who desire to be spiritual leaders can faithfully shepherd their people through nurturing covenantal relationships rooted in intimacy and authenticity.

NPO Scope and Constraints

The scope of the NPO will center on a vibrant, expanded and rich ecclesiological approach in developing people who desire to be spiritual leaders to effectively shepherd and nurture God's people through covenantal relationships. The NPO will focus on the leadership of the church and their spiritual growth as they create a culture for people to know and be known within their local context and faith community. Deepening relationships within the community will naturally highlight who might be drifting and create a natural pathway to shepherd those who need encouragement, direction and next steps along their spiritual journey. Although costs are unknown, there will be relational and spiritual equity that must be invested from both the leadership and those who participate in their faith community.

NPO Context

My NPO ministry context includes the non-denominational churches that are tied to the Restoration Movement and their leadership teams. These evangelical communities and their leadership teams are a part of the greater Houston area that are primarily suburban. The suburban culture is well defined; it is family oriented and educationally driven. Many of the leadership teams consist of pastors, elders, deacons and ministry team leaders. Although many of these communities are mid-sized churches of around 200 or less there are a few independent churches that have 1,000 or more who attend weekend services. Typically, these faith communities are white and can range from lower to upper middle-class individuals that are from their early 20s to late 80s. The NPO will focus on pastors, elders, deacons and lay leaders of mid-sized churches.

Root Causes

The workshops and one on one interviews revealed several root causes that might contribute to spiritual leaders not adequately shepherding and nurturing the people of God within non-denominational churches. One possible root cause is that leaders are not adequately equipped to pastor well because they have not been trained or have worldly or low expectations of ecclesiological leadership. Another possible root cause is the lack of relational reciprocity between spiritual leaders and those they shepherd. Not knowing the stories, joys, pains, hopes and dreams of people one cares for make it difficult to effectively lead and pastor. A third probable root cause is having a truncated ecclesiological view. Both the individual and the leadership have a narrow scope of the purpose and function of a local church that can offer a transformational environment for those who desire to belong to a holistic and fruitful faith community.

Definition of 'Done'

Leaders decide to be spiritual leaders by engaging in personal spiritual formation that equips them to faithfully cultivate healthy and kingdom minded relationships.

Three Big Ideas

The three big ideas to consider prototyping are spiritual mentorship, formulating questions for leaders and developing the art of storytelling for leaders and their faith community.

3 Concept Pitches

Concept Pitch #1: Spiritual Mentorship

AUDIENCE

The intended audience consists of leaders and spiritual leaders of non-denominational churches.

NPO

NPO is addressing the need to train and equip leaders to become spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people.

BENEFIT

Leaders who become spiritual leaders are equipped to be spiritually formed to love God and love others more deeply.

APPROACH

The approach is a mentorship program to develop spiritual and relational skills for leaders to shepherd well. Spiritual mentors will be paired with mentees for a designated period of time to foster the relationship.

RISKS

There is a failure of buy-in, time commitment and a lack of desire to invest in oneself and others.

ASSUMPTIONS/HYPOTHESES TO TEST

Leaders within non-denominational churches are not adequately trained or equipped to spiritually lead their people well.

BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

Indicators of success would include the number of mentors engaged in the mentorship ministry program, mentees being paired with mentors and number of covenantal relationships being formed and nurtured.

OTHER APPROACHES

Others are addressing the NPO with classes, board meetings, ignoring the issue or simply do not think it is a need/problem/opportunity. This approach invites leaders (pastors, elders, deacons and ministry leaders) to grow and invest relationally; it is formational at its core.

Concept Pitch #2: Asking Good Questions

AUDIENCE

The intended audience consists of leaders and spiritual leaders of non-denominational churches.

NPO

Leaders of non-denominational churches need relevant, thought provoking and spirit-led questions to nurture and care for the relationships within the church.

BENEFIT

Leaders are given the resources to be proactive in asking good questions and listening well to learn and guide those they are shepherding.

APPROACH

The approach is developing a list of questions that are proven to spur healthy, challenging and formational conversations. This approach will also require leaders to master listening skills. There is a desperate need to understand before one is understood.

RISKS

Questions are not asked or properly asked at an appropriate time or tone. The responses to the questions might not be received well from the leaders.

ASSUMPTIONS/HYPOTHESES TO TEST

Relevant, thought provoking and spirit-led questions can adequately create a pathway for deeper and more meaningful relationship.

BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

Indicators for success would include an agreeable list of questions, proven listening resources/skills and leaders who are constantly asking questions of their people to learn and guide them on their spiritual journey.

OTHER APPROACHES

Others are addressing the NPO with classes, board meetings, ignoring the issue or simply do not think it is a need/problem/opportunity. What sets this approach apart is the intentionality of the questions and preparing leaders to understand before they are understood.

Concept Pitch #3: Storytelling

AUDIENCE

The intended audience consists of leaders and spiritual leaders of non-denominational churches.

NPO

Leaders do not know the stories of their people. If spiritual leaders are to serve and lead their people, they need to know who they are shepherding.

BENEFIT

Leaders learn how to share their story, teach others how to share their story and learn ways in which to serve and lead their people. Knowing you are known keeps one connected to the large body of believers.

APPROACH

Making storytelling a part of a new member class or a spiritual practice that is often used in corporate worship or in a small group will allow the spiritual leaders to know the stories and be more effective in shepherding their people.

RISKS

People or leaders of the church are not willing to be vulnerable and share their story in a particular setting or time.

ASSUMPTIONS/HYPOTHESES TO TEST

To be in a covenantal relationship requires intentionality on the part of spiritual leaders and those who are attending and engaging with the faith community. Storytelling is an avenue to deepen and widen such relationships.

BENCHMARKS OF SUCCESS

Indicators for success would include the number of leaders and church members who share their story and the number of new people willing to engage in the spiritual practice.

OTHER APPROACHES

Others are addressing the NPO with classes, board meetings, ignoring the issue or simply do not think it is a need/problem/opportunity. What sets this approach apart is the vulnerability it requires of the spiritual leader and the church to be willing to share their story with others for the benefit of the church body.

Design Workshop Stakeholders

Stakeholders consisted of four men and three women; a youth pastor, a children's pastor, an elder, a person who returned to the church, a new believer, lay leader and a person who left the church.

One-on-One Interviews

The one-on-one interviewees included a lay leader that is a CEO/founder of a financial lending institution, an executive pastor of ministry development and a female senior pastor.

Annotated Bibliography

Hagberg, Janet O., and Robert A. Guelich. *The Critical Journey, Stages in the Life of Faith, Second Edition*. 2nd edition. Salem, Wisconsin: Sheffield Publishing Company, 2004.

The Critical Journey provides six stages of faith that addresses the following issues: the struggle to find meaning and wholeness, the crisis of values and identity at mid-life, the quest for self-actualization, the healing of early religious experiences and questions about the spiritual journey. Authors, Hagberg and Guelich, have collectively written many books covering theology, leadership and the spiritual life that are often used in academic settings. The intended audience are those who are on a "spiritual quest for a greater realization of God in their lives" (5). This resource highlights the different stages of faith that many spiritual leaders in the church need to understand for themselves as well as understand to better nurture and guide their people to be spiritually formed. Although it is practical in nature this resource challenges the view of one's spiritual journey and the need for a safe place to encounter God on a deeper level.

Jr, M. Robert Mulholland, and Ruth Haley Barton. *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Revised and Expanded edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016.

Robert Mulholland's *Invitation to a Journey* debunks the view that the spiritual life is a static possession. Rather the spiritual life is a "dynamic and ever-developing growth towards wholeness in the image of Christ" (16). Mulholland defines spiritual formation as a "process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others." (19). Emphasizing that one's formation is not simply for the individual but for the community at large; noting there is a corporate and social dimension

to one's spiritual formation. Mulholland also explores the importance of personality types in the formation process. The author chooses to view Carl Jung's model of human personality for holistic spirituality. The book is written for those seeking a model for spiritual formation and a greater understanding of Christian discipleship. Mulholland's work could be beneficial in helping develop a robust but sustainable road map for leaders who desire to become spiritual leaders in the church.

Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. 10th edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

Big Question Worthy Dreams by Parks is a comprehensive study regarding meaning-making or faithing during the emerging adult years. There is great care in describing the potential and vulnerability of emerging adults as they try to make sense of their world in the present and how they perceive the world should be or can be in the future. Parks not only provides a historical and psychological understanding of emerging adults and their realities being transformed through faithing but also offers a charitable response in ways to journey with emerging adults; particularly as a mentoring community as they seek to belong and imagine a world with purpose and direction. Holding senior positions at Whidbey Institute and Harvard Divinity School, Parks is a leading voice in emerging adulthood. The intended audience are leaders who are wanting to learn how to reach and shepherd the emerging adult. Spiritual leaders of churches, if wanting to mentor and lead emerging adults well in their faith communities, will need to understand who the emerging adult is and how to effectively pastor them. This work will be essential to the research as the emerging adult is a large demographic that is being ignored in the evangelical non-denominational churches today.

Shinohara, Akira. "Spiritual Formation and Mentoring: An Approach from the Christian Tradition of Spiritual Direction." *Christian Education Journal* 6, no. 2 (2002): 105-18.

Shinohara explores the implications of spiritual formation in the evangelical church today by reviewing the characteristics of evangelicalism and its spirituality, giving an account of spiritual direction throughout Christian history, summarizing spiritual mentoring from key voices and exploring implications of mentoring for spiritual formation in the evangelical church today. Shinohara who lectures at Covenant Theological Seminary in Tokyo utilizes a wide range of voices like Rievaulx, Crabb, Foster, Merton, Saint Benedict and McGrath to support the need for spiritual mentorship in the evangelical church. The intended audience are pastors and lay leaders who are reconsidering how to faithfully shepherd their flock academically and spiritually through mentorship. This work illuminates the research by providing key observations of how to reimagine the practice of spiritual direction and mentorship among evangelical Christians. Shinohara's work also includes a strong bibliography to be used for further research.

Appendix: Documentation

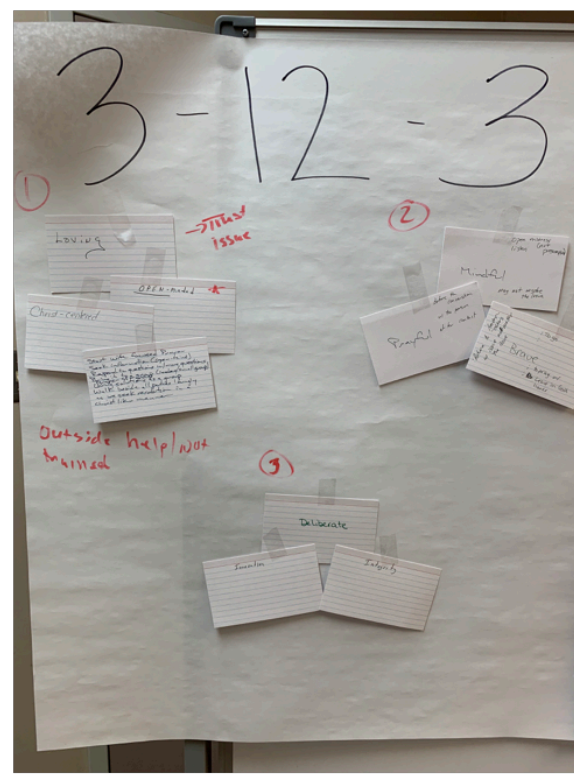
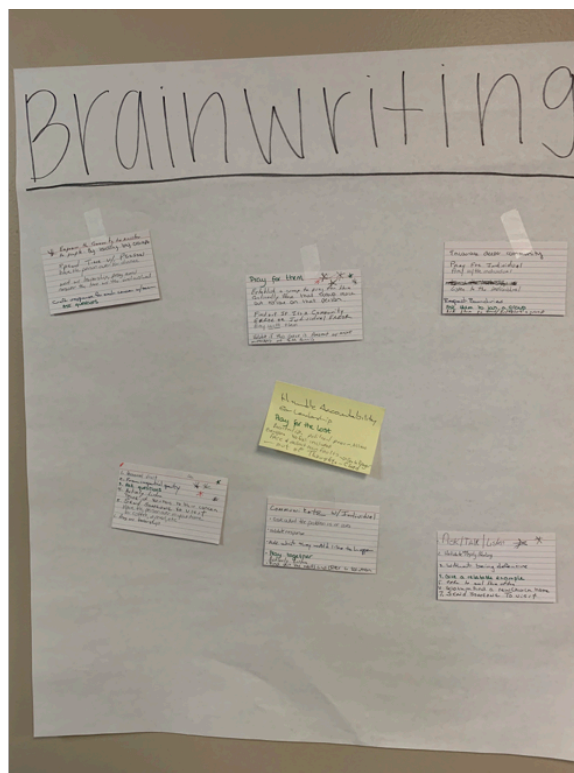
DESIGN WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

My design workshop was held on Saturday, October 16, 2021 at Crossbridge Christian Church, from 9am to 3:00pm. The following stakeholders participated in the workshop:

- Youth Pastor
- Children's Pastor
- An Elder
- A new believer to the Christian faith
- Person returning to the faith community
- A lay leader
- Person who has left the faith community

The workshop followed the script given in our *Design Workshop Guide*. The six activities used in the workshop were: *Pain-Gain Map*, *Brainwriting*, *The Blind Side*, *3-12-3 Brainstorm*, *\$100 Test* and *Concept Pitch*. The activities addressed the following NPO statement, "Leaders of evangelical/non-denominational faith communities need to address those who were once connected yet have drifted or left their faith community." Each activity lasted thirty to forty-five minutes with time for reflection and conversation as the stakeholders collaborated; drawing from their own context and past experiences.

All seven stakeholders were able to attend in person, participate in all activities and offer clarity and insight to the current NPO. Overall, I felt the workshop was a 3 on a Likert scale. There was engagement and passion from the stakeholders which made the activities fun and the conversation robust. Revisiting the NPO was helpful as it was clear there were two different sets of people that need to be attended to: those who are connected or engaged in the faith community and those who are drifting for various reasons. The question was raised, "Who is the audience we are seeking to serve in the NPO?" This question, along with the three interviews, solidified the need to target leaders within the church to become spiritual leaders that can nurture and care well for the church community; those who are engaged and those who may be drifting. I ranked the workshop a 3 because the designs were not as compelling or "out of the box" as I thought they would or should be. Upon reflection I believe the lack of creativity for the designs were, in part, because of the time spent debating in the workshop if we are designing for leaders to address those people who are drifting or those who might potentially drift. Yet, after working through the workshop, having my one-on-one interviews and reflecting on several discussions with my peers the design was not to focus on those who drift or might drift. Rather the designs need to be on leaders of the church and their spiritual formation so they can be better equipped to nurture the faith community whether they are engaged or drifting. The current designs reflect the ongoing struggle in clearly defining the NPO and the need for continued work.



\$100 TEST

Design	\$	WHY?
① Lay / open initial Lived Center	10 0	Required for Success
② no mental, Physical, Sexual	10 0	Same as 1
③ Deliberate Transition Integrity	10 0	Same as 1
④ Pray 15	50 30	God 1st
⑤ Personal visit 10	25 15	Personal Connection
⑥ Equip the Suits 10	15 15	Understanding we can't do this alone
⑦ Question 35	20 15	All above questions are important
⑧ Resources Outside	10	

Leaders of evangelical / non-denominational faith
Communities ? Should ? pastor those who
need to ? should
were once ? yet have drifted/Left
from their faith community.

Responsibility ?
1. ? ?
2. ? ?

10 →
P →
Q →

Concept Pitch Worksheet #1

Questions

Use this template to solidify an idea. Gain clarity on how to execute and pitch your idea. A good idea can be communicated simply, often on the back of a napkin.

Create a concept pitch for each concept you propose to address the NPO.

Need observation

WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

Asking Good Thoughtful Questions

WHO IS IT FOR?

heades

WHAT IS THE NPO?

Spide & hader of rom-om
Quere why they leftness to the
Sera. This path comman-
ion both relingnd, then
why are disnted pldhander
have disnted or left their

HOW DOES THE USER BENEFIT?

learn how to ask good
thoughtful questions to
learn their great those
who are obfcting

benefit

ILLUSTRATE OR DESCRIBE HOW IT WORKS

WHAT MIGHT IT FAIL?

- Failure to ask
- Failure to implement
- Plan is not solid
- Not able to sticking

WHAT SPECIFICALLY ARE WE TESTING?

Good question
h: them

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

- Good Questions
- Recounting
- Agree to the questions
- A great understanding

WHAT MAKES THIS STAND OUT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

- we don't ask good question
- we don't listen well
- make leaders proactive

Adapted from Luma Institute's Concept Poster
Empowering the People | Activity Templates | Concept Poster

Learn more: www.lumainstitute.com

Concept Pitch Worksheet #1

Questions

Q → C → R → A → Q

Resolution
Reconciliation

Plan
Buy
Ask
Act

Having isolated individuals enter
community through having interact
and questions

my ? + your ? = our Understanding

Questions will give the basic perspective.
It will encourage openness. It will
show others a willingness to learn
and make changes.

1st → you have to search
will
- you queries, flows, relationships

2nd → seek council / privacy / loss
Good - go prepared

3rd → go to the person and
ask, ask, reply to ? w?

4th → come back and ask
peers more questions

5th → look for common themes
in the answers

Questions
- Define an Issue
- Challenge assumptions
- Uncover biases
- Create Curiosity

Solutions
are based on
the answers

Plans form

Concept Pitch Worksheet # 3

Relationship
Visit
People

Use this template to solidify an idea. Gain clarity on how to execute and pitch your idea. A good idea can be communicated simply, often on the back of a napkin.

Create a concept pitch for each concept you propose to address the NPO.

WHAT IS THE BIG IDEA?

Personal Visit

WHO IS IT FOR?

heads

WHAT IS THE NPO?

Spiritual leaders of communities
Christians have written to the
stories of their faith events
can help them they also do
direct and change

HOW DOES THE USER BENEFIT?

Personal touch and willingness
to care to those who
are dying

ILLUSTRATE OR DESCRIBE HOW IT WORKS

WHY MIGHT IT FAIL?

- Not ready
- No good question
- make

WHAT SPECIFICALLY ARE WE TESTING?

The method in which
we connect with the
individual

HOW MIGHT WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

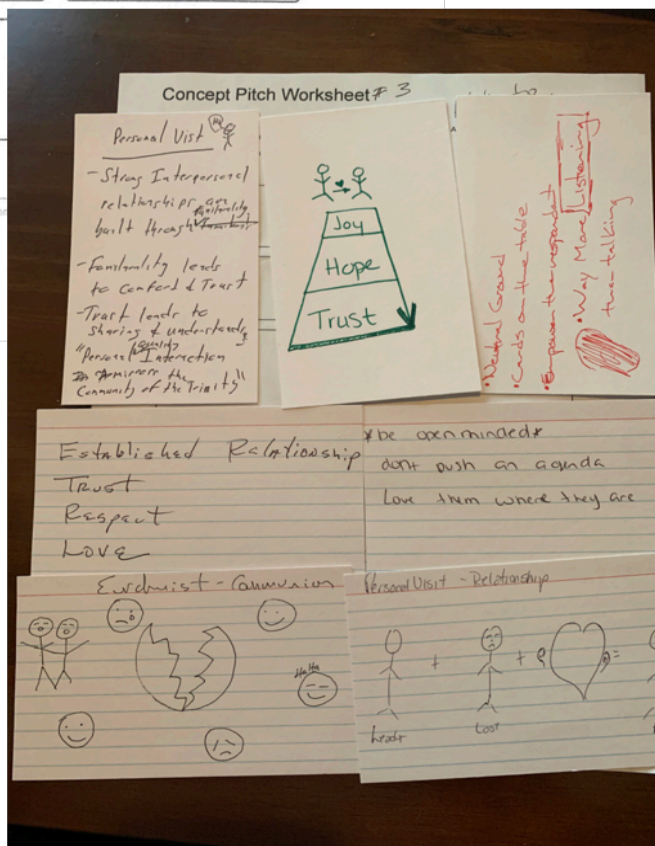
- Community is restored
- Pathway for reconciliation
- Back in community

WHAT MAKES THIS STAND OUT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

Personal touch
- Respect
- Love
- Humility

Adapted from Luma Institute's Concept Poster
Innovating for People | Activity Templates | Concept Poster

Learn more: www.luma-institute.com



ONE-PAGE POST-WORKSHOP MESSAGE TO STAKEHOLDERS

Thank you again for spending time with me on a Saturday as you offered invaluable insights to a specific issue many churches deal with today. Your insights and perspectives will guide me through the next phase of my doctorate as I work on several designs we discussed at the workshop. If you have any more feedback or epiphanies please don't hesitate to send me a text or an email. As I mentioned on Saturday, I will be working on the NPO for the next 18 months. There is plenty of time and space for more conversations. Below are some highlights I took away from our time together. Please look over them and provide any feedback or clarification.

NPO:

I am still wordsmithing the NPO based on our conversation. The current NPO is: *Spiritual leaders of non-denominational churches who fully know the stories of their faith communities can better shepherd those who are drifting or left the church.*

Workshop Findings:

1. Spiritual leaders of the church are responsible for creating an environment for the faith community to be trained, equipped and nurtured.
2. The reason(s) why people leave the church are deep, wide and complex that cannot be solved by a "to do list."
3. Leaders of the church must find a way to nurture their relationships with the community that allows space "to know and be known."
4. Good questions with a humble tone can serve the leader well in learning and guiding those who have drifted.

Three Basic Designs:

1. **Questions:** Good questions with the intent to listen well will lead to a greater understanding. The leaders need to know the stories of their people. Questions provide a gateway to bridging the gap of isolation and allows space to uncover the issue(s) that can be addressed. Developing questions for leaders can be a tool to better serve the community.
2. **Equipping the Saints:** Leadership cannot serve in isolation. There is strength in numbers. Community breeds community. Developing a mentorship/training program that provides biblical training on how to shepherd and love the community will enhance our ability to shepherd the whole flock. In fact, it might persuade the 99 to go after the 1.
3. **Personal Visit:** To establish trust the spiritual leaders need to be available to visit those who are drifting and or left the church. To do so we need to be open minded and love them where they are. Establishing a relationship leads to joy and hope that ultimately finds its way to trust. One of the ways to do this is to visit and have a higher view of the Eucharist (Communion).

Definition of "Done:"

Spiritual leaders are able to listen, walk with and lead others to a better relationship with God and others through reconciliation and restoration.

Design Success:

1. If one or a combination of the above designs work then the following would happen:
2. Reconciliation and restoration of a relationship with others and God.
3. A stronger faith community who are equipped to nurture and love well.
4. A strategy to nurture those who are devoted and those who are drifting.
5. A person or family who are connected with another faith community.

Thanks again for your investment into this process. If you have any feedback on the above information and especially the NPO please let me know.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS DOCUMENTATION

Interviewer A ~ Lay Leader and CEO

- The leadership of a church must be willing to ask questions like, "Can we become uncomfortable? Are we creating safe places for people to ask questions? Why do we exist as a church?"
- Everything is an avenue to grow in relationship and discipleship. Don't be afraid to ask the hard questions.
- Leadership has issues with fear...we are motivated by fear. Fear should not dictate how we serve those around us.
- The leadership of a church must focus on those who are sticky. Ask those who stick around, "Why are you here? What are you looking for in a faith community?"
- It is not easy to leave when I am connected to someone. When we are connected we have a responsibility to one another.
- Once I tell you all my junk and you still love me...I want to stay.
- Avoid religious and church words.
- Do not spend a lot of time with those who are leaving. They have already left. They have made their choice. Be ready to receive but not to go and do a search and rescue. You have many that you need to take care of that are already "in the boat."
- When mentorship is viable then they want to stay and help out and be a part of the mission.

Interviewer B ~ Executive Pastor of Ministry Development

- There might be bias from those who were a part of the workshop.
- If you are going to target the “drifter” then you have to ask yourself, “How do you define drifter?” Especially in the post-Covid area.
- Do drifters want to be contacted? Would they call themselves drifters?
- Those who drift or become isolated in church can be rooted in two things. 1) They have been emotionally scared or have some kind of trauma or they have a sin problem.
- If you stay with drifting then the design has to be so good that people do not want to drift
- Stay away from fuzzy language!! You need to be more concrete in your deliverables. Are they compelling?
- Success needs to be qualified in some way.
- If you go the route of spiritual formation you will need it to be so compelling that elders, deacons and leaders are wanting to be a part of it and do the work that is necessary. This line of thinking gets us out of our “spiritual oughts” and leads us to desire to “want to.”
- Make the design actual and useful. We are broken people so it needs to be functional to meet our needs.

Interviewer ~ Female Senior Pastor

- Listening is key. Faith Formation is going to create space to ask questions.
- Storytelling is huge. Some are not willing to share their story. Private, personal and maybe they don’t think they have a good story to tell. Maybe grief or harm and don’t want to share their story. Set the example by the leaders telling their stories first.
- Boomers sharing their story to speak to the younger generation. Generational perspectives need to be done.
- Incorporating space for healing. Holding something private is also good to take care of Self.
- We have to be vulnerable ourselves.
- Those who are done with church see the church as no longer their spiritual home. We must create space for them to reclaim their spiritual home.
- There is something there when the Easter/Christmas people come. Something spiritual is going on or that they are seeking.
- There is a huge shift. The church is not the authority anymore...the individual person is.
- There is a spiritual hunger and there always will be.

Appendix D—Milestone 4 Design Research Report

Background Research Essay on the Emerging Solution

Leaders of non-denominational churches need to be trained and equipped to become spiritually formed well leaders to better nurture God's people. A potential design to encourage and inspire leaders to invest in their spiritual formation is a two-day retreat while committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. The feedback received from the different variations of the prototype exposed several areas of research that should be addressed to ensure a viable and life-giving solution to the NPO. Those specific research areas are curriculum development and mentorship relationships.

Curriculum Development

The National Research Council in 2000 presented a comprehensive overview of psychology research on learning. The research concluded "meaningful learning results from teaching that centers on broad concepts and principles that promote deep understanding of important dates, rather than on narrow facts; emphasizes application of understanding, rather than drill or rote memorization; and promotes students to authentically perform complex skills to show they know when, how, and why to use skills in new contexts."⁹⁶ Developing a curriculum that the content produces meaningful learning yet is practical and user-friendly will be essential to the success of the mentorship program. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) asserts, "The importance of lesson planning cannot be overstated...It is imperative to give time and thought about what will be delivered, to whom it will be delivered, how it will be delivered, and how student[s]...will be evaluated."⁹⁷ Not only should one give careful consideration of what, who and how the material will be delivered but the curriculum should be self-sufficient in terms that any of the three persons within the mentorship group should be able to facilitate a robust and fruitful gathering. Therefore, curriculum models should be considered and evaluated to determine which method serves best a self-guided mentoring community through the material that offers a pathway to the desired outcomes and ultimately becoming spiritually formed.

Lesson planning and curriculum models such as the *5E Instructional Model*, the *Herbartian Model* or the *Socratic Circle Method* are based on learning theories and are connected to educational philosophies.⁹⁸ For example, the *Socratic Circle Method* is based on Socrates' theory which states

⁹⁶ Hilary Dack and Clare Merlin-Knoblich, "Improving Classroom Guidance Curriculum with Understanding by Design," *Professional Counselor* 9, no. 2 (April 2019): 80.

⁹⁷ Hilary Dack and Clare Merlin-Knoblich, "Improving Classroom Guidance Curriculum With Understanding by Design," *Professional Counselor* 9, no. 2 (April 2019): 81, <https://doi.org/10.15241/hd.9.2.80>.

⁹⁸ "Lesson Planning Models," MTDS, accessed March 26, 2022, <https://www.motds.net/lesson-planning-models.html>.

it is important to foster students' ability to think for themselves. This method "is an approach to understand and examine a text through questions and answers founded on the belief all thinking comes from asking questions, and that asking one question should lead to asking further questions."⁹⁹ Although the *Socratic Circle Method* offers a potential robust conversational environment, it would require a skilled facilitator to guide a meaningful and productive conversation. After assessing a variety of different curriculum methods, the *Understanding by Design Model* lends itself to be a method that any facilitator could use as the desired results are identified, evidence of learned behaviors are quantified and instruction and experiences are developed with the desired results in mind.

Understanding by Design (UbD) was developed and written by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe with the basic goal of teaching for understanding. The purpose in developing a different method was to combat two major issues within the American educational system. First many teachers were designing lessons, units or courses with activities and instruction as their primary focus rather than having the main outcomes in mind. Teachers focused their attention on teaching and not learning. "This perspective can lead to the misconception that learning is the activity when, in fact, learning is derived from a careful consideration of the meaning of the activity."¹⁰⁰ Teachers creating activities that are "hands-on without being minds-on" are fun but "do not lead anywhere intellectually."¹⁰¹ Second, *UbD* was designed to help teachers move from a 'crowded' or content heavy curriculum to a "student coming to own an idea by deeply grasping how and why something works. Those who teach for understanding give students opportunities to make meaning of content through 'big ideas' and transfer understanding of these ideas to new situations."¹⁰² It is for these reasons *UbD* was selected to be the method of choice to use in writing the curriculum for the mentoring community aspect of the project.

UbD "advocates that the most effective curriculum is planned in reverse of the common course coverage or activity-oriented approach and is hence termed 'backward design.'"¹⁰³ *UbD* contains three stages: 1) Identifying desired results, 2) Determine acceptable evidence and 3) Plan learning experiences and instruction. Central to the process of this method is to consider the learning goals

⁹⁹ "Socratic Circles/Seminars," *SELspace* (blog), accessed March 26, 2022, <https://selspace.ca/socratic-seminars/>.

¹⁰⁰ Ryan S. Bowen, "Understanding by Design," Vanderbilt University, accessed March 26, 2022, <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/understanding-by-design/>.

¹⁰¹ Dack and Merlin-Knoblich, "Improving Classroom Guidance Curriculum with Understanding by Design," 81.

¹⁰² Dack and Merlin-Knoblich, 81.

¹⁰³ Nicole Mangelsdorf, "UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN," *Teacher Learning Network Newsletter* 20, no. 1 (March 2013): 39.

and outcomes of the lesson, unit or course. In this first stage Wiggins and McTighe suggest the instructor ask the following three questions to help them focus on the most valuable content: "What should participants hear, read, view, explore or otherwise encounter? What knowledge and skills should participants master? What are big ideas and important understandings participants should retain?"¹⁰⁴ Reflecting on the three questions presented in this first stage will guide the instructor in determining what the participants need to be familiar with, what is important to know or do, and what materials should be retained or have an enduring understanding regarding the specific course, unit or lesson.

Now that the desired results have been identified, the second stage moves the instructor to "consider assessments and performance tasks students will complete in order to demonstrate evidence of understanding and learning."¹⁰⁵ This stage allows the students to explain in their own words how they have synthesized the teachings and understandings. This stage also gives space for the students to reflect on how one will apply what they have learned in real-world situations. The assessments can come in many forms: papers, quizzes, projects, homework and labs just to name a few. Yet in determining which assessments to use, the instructor needs to consider the following two questions: "How will I know if students have achieved the desired results? What will I accept as evidence of student understanding and proficiency?"¹⁰⁶ Although there might not be graded quizzes or papers within the mentorship program there are assessments that can be given within the curriculum for the participants to keep each other accountable of the material they are learning and in what ways they are applying the material to their spiritual formation.

With the desired outcomes clearly identified and the assessments implemented to provide evidence of student learnings, the final stage of "backward design" can be developed. Dack and Merlin-Knoblich writes, "The learning plan created in Stage 3 includes the key learning activities students will complete in each lesson and the ongoing assessment embedded in those activities to monitor progress and provide students with feedback."¹⁰⁷ Simply put, the instructor begins to consider how they will teach. Based on the outcomes and assessments then the instructor can determine the best strategies that would be engaging and effective. Once again, the below questions must be considered while completing this stage as an instructor: "What enabling knowledge and skills will students need in order to perform effectively and achieve desired results? What activities will equip students with the needed knowledge and skills? What will need to be

¹⁰⁴ Ryan S. Bowen, "Understanding by Design."

¹⁰⁵ Ryan S. Bowen.

¹⁰⁶ Ryan S. Bowen.

¹⁰⁷ Dack and Merlin-Knoblich, "Improving Classroom Guidance Curriculum with Understanding by Design," 85.

taught and coached, and how should it best be taught, in light of performance goals? What materials and resources are best suited to accomplish these goals?"¹⁰⁸

In short, *UbD* has been selected as the preferred method because it provides a "sequenced structure designed to prompt deep thinking about powerful long-and short-term learning outcomes; how to elicit the best evidence of how well learners have achieved those outcomes; and which learning experiences will best lead to the desired outcomes."¹⁰⁹ Adhering to this method in developing the material for the retreat and the mentorship program will provide clear desired outcomes, deep and transformative conversations, accountability and learned experiences that can be applied to daily practices. *UbD* is user-friendly which allows all those participating in the mentoring community to lead several sessions throughout the program.

Mentoring Relationships

Much has been researched and much has been written about mentorship and the value it brings to a variety of familial, communal and corporate settings. Mentorship is an ancient practice that can be described as "an intentional and appropriately reciprocal relationship between two individuals, a younger adult and an older, wiser figure who assists the younger person in learning the way of life."¹¹⁰ Ancient Greek literature describes this kind of relational mentorship in Homer's epic Greek poem *Odyssey*. Before King Odysseus journeys off to the Trojan War, he charged his trusted household manager and servant, Mentor, with educating and guiding his young son Telemachus.¹¹¹ Telemachus' education would not have been one dimensional but rather it would have encompassed every facet of his life: intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual and social. In the article, *Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring*, Anderson and Shannon says this kind of mentor modeling from an ancient myth would suggest mentoring is an intentional, nurturing, insightful, supportive and protective process.¹¹²

Mentoring over the centuries have taken on different forms. In the Middle Ages a craftsman, such as a blacksmith or carpenter, trained apprentices by passing off skills through demonstration and supervision. In modern times businesses have internships and medical doctors have residency programs to ensure the protégés have the skills and knowledge to perform the tasks their respective trade requires of them with confidence and excellence. The role of mentor has also

¹⁰⁸ Ryan S. Bowen, "Understanding by Design."

¹⁰⁹ Dack and Merlin-Knoblich, "Improving Classroom Guidance Curriculum with Understanding by Design," 85.

¹¹⁰ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 165.

¹¹¹ Wilson, "Principled Mentoring: Identifying Core Values for the Practice of Mentoring," 1.

¹¹² Anderson and Shannon, "Toward a Conceptualization of Mentoring."

shifted and expanded over the years as mentors are often seen as teachers, trainers, sponsors and positive role models.¹¹³ As the roles of mentor and mentorship have ebbed and flow throughout the centuries, so it has too and its function in the church.

Within the church context the word “coaching” and “mentor” have become buzz words over the past two decades as many pastors are looking to sharpen their leadership skills as the role of pastor is synonymous with CEO in many of the churches’ leadership constructs. D. Michael Crow in his article, *Multiplying Jesus Mentors*, attempts to define the difference between discipling, mentoring and coaching. Crow describes discipling as “a more mature believer helps a new believer grow in following Jesus,” mentoring as “a mature leader helps an emerging leader both clarify and implement God’s call,” and coaching as “a coach helps discover his/her own solutions and strategies.”¹¹⁴ In short, the differences between the three is the desired relationship and their outcomes. “Mentoring becomes a focused relationship around sharing life together through one person helping another person discover and live into one’s unique calling of guiding people to God’s kingdom work.”¹¹⁵ For this reason, mentoring relationships are desperately needed to be a companion to the left brained content-driven way of training leaders within the church. Mentoring relationships provide a sacred space for questions, silence, listening, discovery, doubts and soul searching that many seminars, lectures and conferences don’t allow. A mentoring relationship is not goal oriented but rather centered around “a person maturing into a particular person who develops personal goals and helps others achieve their goals.”¹¹⁶ To cultivate such an environment for growth, accountability and mutual submission there are several elements a mentorship community must adhere to.

Most mentoring research has focused primarily on the traditional model: one mentor, one protégé. Yet recent findings from the Harvard Assessment Seminars have suggested students have the most positive learning experience when they are in a group setting.¹¹⁷ Mentoring communities can serve as a network of belonging for those who desire to explore spiritual formation, purpose and faith. To create a mentoring environment, one needs “a container, a community, and a conversation (content).”¹¹⁸ Having a community of three or more with content that spurs on a robust conversation is imperative but adding the third element of “a container” to the mentoring environment is

¹¹³ Hardcastle, “Spiritual Connections,” 202.

¹¹⁴ Crow, “Multiplying Jesus Mentors,” 90.

¹¹⁵ Russell, “Congregational Leadership Development through Mentorships: Preparing Each Generation for the Church’s Future through Family Systems Theory,” 118.

¹¹⁶ Russell, 119.

¹¹⁷ Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, 174.

¹¹⁸ Parks, 175.

essential to the personal formation of the individual and the group. A “container” is similar to what Ronald Heifetz in *Leadership Without Easy Answers* defines as a “holding environment” that creates space for people to do the hard adaptive learning and work for personal and communal transformation.

Along with the three elements in creating a mentoring environment (a container, a community, and a conversation) those who decide to participate should commit to: stability in community, fidelity in community and obedience to community found in *The Rule of St. Benedict*.¹¹⁹ These commitments push against the unhealthy paths of private spirituality, antinomian spirituality, and nomadic spirituality. Robinson writes why these three commitments are necessary, “The way of stability provides a safe home for those tired of nomadic spirituality. The way of fidelity in community cuts to the heart of private spirituality. The way of obedience keeps challenging antinomian spirituality.”¹²⁰ Mentoring communities who accept these commitments embrace their desire not to live in isolation but rather invite the support from others to grow in Christ, push against the false and temporal emotions of feel-good spirituality through embracing the authority of Christ through Scripture, and stop moving from church to church and intentionally plant roots so one can truly know and be known.

¹¹⁹ David G. Robinson, *Ancient Paths: Discover Christian Formation the Benedictine Way*, Reprint edition (Brewster, Mass: Paraclete Press, 2010), xvi.

¹²⁰ Robinson, *Ancient Paths*, xvii.

Prototype(s) Summary and Findings

PROTOTYPE DESCRIPTION

A two day retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation by committing to a twelve month mentoring community.

NPO STATEMENT

Leaders of non-denominational churches need to be trained and equipped to become spiritually formed well leaders to better nurture God's people.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What will encourage and inspire leaders to engage in a spiritual mentoring community?

ASSESSMENT BENCHMARKS

- 1) Leaders who attend the retreat are given tools to help them grow on their spiritual journey.
- 2) 30% of those who attend commit to a yearlong spiritual mentoring community.
- 3) Spiritual leaders are paired with mentees for encouragement and accountability.
- 4) 50% of those who commit to a mentoring community finish the year-long program.
- 5) The mentees become mentors for the next group of leaders.

PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTION

The participants represent six different Independent/Restoration Movement Christian churches, four lead pastors, two associate pastors and two lead elders.

LEARNING SUMMARY

The participants from six different churches I interviewed provided invaluable feedback on the potential prototype over several weeks. What worked for the majority of those who offered feedback was the structure of the prototype. The leaders were encouraged by the two-prong approach of having a retreat to educate and encourage leaders to become spiritually formed but also have the next step available for those who are willing to invest in their spiritual journey by committing to a mentoring community.

The participants offered several ways the prototype could be improved. First, some of the terminology used in the prototype was either not clearly defined or confusing. For example, what does it mean to be spiritually formed well? Or what does a "Rule of Life" mean? Next, they suggested to move away from a "mentoring experience" as it projected the group to be temporal.

Finally, there will need to be a follow up gathering during the twelve months to check in with participants and help guide participants to begin developing their rule of life.

What mattered to the participants was the lack of spiritual formation within their current leadership and a desire to see a process that was practical and life giving to meet such an important need. What also mattered were the outcomes after the twelve month mentoring community program was completed. Having tangible desired outcomes that included accountability, continued spiritual growth and being reproducible was significant to all participants.

MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY

Of the six churches represented, none of them had a viable process in identifying, developing and empowering spiritual leaders within their faith community. There was a desire for their leadership team, deacons, ministry leaders and the faith community to be spiritually formed but did not have the time or resources to implement a formational process.

Briefly outline each of the following items: (500 words per prototype)

- NPO Statement
- Research question
- Prototype description
- Assessment benchmark(s)
- Participant description. Include demographic information or other relevant factors to your research. Be sure to exclude personal identifying information.
- Summarize what you learned:
 - What worked?
 - What could be improved?
 - What matters to the participants?
- What was your important discovery?

Documentation: Include all documentation (copy of materials, pictures, etc.) in the appendix.

MVP (Most Viable Prototype)

The Design Workshop provided three different concepts to consider addressing the need for non-denominational churches to train and equip others to become spiritually formed well leaders to better nurture God's people. Two of the three concepts were good in theory but did not fully address the NPO. The other concept had promising merit and was worthy to prototype and receive feedback. The prototype was a two-day retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation by committing to a twelve-month mentoring community. Based on the feedback from eight different leaders representing six different churches it was clear this concept was resonating with the leaders and its potential to be life-giving to the local church. The two-prong approach of a retreat with making a twelve-month commitment to a mentoring community to develop and grow in their spiritual formation is my MVP. The additional research on curriculum development and mentoring communities will guide me in developing a working outline and timeline to produce the necessary material for the mentoring groups. Because of time

limitations the retreat material will need to be a detailed outline with working definitions and activities that will be presented at each session. The curriculum for the retreat and the mentoring communities will be outlined with objectives, activities, questions and resources per the *UbD* model. The design of a retreat to inspire leaders to invest in their spiritual formation while committing to a twelve-month mentoring community is my MVP and is attainable to be my final project.

Appendix

Guide Spiritual Mentorship Experience

Need/Problem/Opportunity is addressing the need to train and equip leaders to become spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people.

Leading Questions:

1. Do you need or desire more spiritual leaders in your faith community?
2. Are your current staff, elders, deacon and ministry leaders being spiritually formed well?
3. Do you have a viable process in identifying, developing and empowering spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people?

Leadership Retreat:

An invitation only ~~24~~ 36 hour retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation as they desire to become spiritual leaders.

Retreat Objectives:

- Define leadership and spiritual formation.
- Develop an awareness of our need to be spiritually formed well.
- Inspire participants to become spiritually formed leaders for their personal growth and for the faith community.
- Inspire participants to commit to a 8 to 12 month spiritual mentorship experience (Desired goal is 30% of those who attend the retreat).
- Spiritual mentorship groups of 3 to 4 are formed.
- Times and dates of when groups meet will be determined before they leave retreat.

Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- Mentorship groups meet 2x a month for an hour to an hour and a half.
- Mentorship groups will be guided by set material:

- Books and articles to read and discuss
- John Wesley questions
- Fellowship and service
- Develop a Rule of Life
- Communication (they listen! high connection)

Outcomes from Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- A working and life-giving Rule of Life.
- A spiritually formed leader who is equipped and empowered to love and serve well.
- Mentorship group identifies two to three others in faith community to go on the next retreat.
- Mentorship group develops a bond to continue to meet on their own after 8 to 12 months.
- Spiritual leader is confident and willing to facilitate a mentorship group.

pipeline lead at #3

① Trust Follow Jesus
② Conversion

Gender Specific

Mentors as well

What is a Rule of Life?

alone

Personal Community

2x

6 month night collaboration

How to be present/transparent

Any one find together

Red Cross

Spiritual Mentorship Experience

Need/Problem/Opportunity is addressing the need to train and equip leaders to become spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people.

Leading Questions:

1. Do you need or desire more spiritual leaders in your faith community?
2. Are your current staff, elders, deacon and ministry leaders being spiritually formed well?
3. Do you have a viable process in identifying, developing and empowering spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people?

"The single most obvious trait of those who profess Christ but do not grow into Christ-likeness is their refusal to take the reasonable and time-tested measures for spiritual growth."

Dallas Willard

Leadership Retreat:

An invitation only to a 36 hour retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation as they desire to become spiritual leaders.

Retreat Objectives:

- Define leadership.
- Define spiritual formation.
- Develop an awareness of the need to be spiritually formed well.
- Inspire participants to become spiritually formed leaders for their personal growth and for the faith community.
- Inspire participants to commit to a 12 month spiritual mentorship experience (Desired goal is 30% of those who attend the retreat).
- Spiritual mentorship groups of 3 are formed. Times and dates of when groups meet will be determined before they leave retreat.

Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- Mentorship groups meet 2x a month for an hour to an hour and a half.
- Mentorship groups will be guided by set material:
 - Books, articles and set questions will be given to help facilitate discussion.
 - John Wesley questions.
- Mentorship groups will meet as a whole after 6 months to check-in and learn how to develop and write a Rule of Life.
- Develop a Rule of Life with feedback and direction from mentorship group.

Outcomes from Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- A working and life-giving Rule of Life.
- A spiritually formed leader who is equipped and empowered to love and serve well.
- A leadership pipeline is created and cultivated for the faith community.
- Mentorship group identifies two others in faith community to go on the next retreat.
- Mentorship group continues to meet for accountability and spiritual friendship.
- Spiritual leader is confident and willing to facilitate a mentorship group.

Could be subjective

Need to work on this word

Open door process

Personal reflection outcomes

Sub questions to identify

Define and self diagnosis

What's in it for me. Lead pastor

Biblical theology

Maybe allow Andy Spirit

Maybe use JW for Sub Questions for #2

*An attitude shift
Title of who we are
Today's management*

Spiritual Mentorship Experience

Need/Problem/Opportunity is addressing the need to train and equip leaders to become spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people.

Leading Questions:

1. Do you need or desire more spiritual leaders in your faith community?
2. Are your current staff, elders, deacon and ministry leaders being spiritually formed well?
3. Do you have a viable process in identifying, developing and empowering spiritual leaders to better nurture God's people?

Leadership Retreat:

An invitation only ~~24~~ to 36 hour retreat designed for potential leaders to become aware and invest in their spiritual formation as they desire to become spiritual leaders.

Retreat Objectives:

- Define leadership and spiritual formation. *Separate these two*
- Develop an awareness of our need to be spiritually formed well.
- Inspire participants to become spiritually formed leaders for their personal growth and for the faith community.
- Inspire participants to commit to a ~~8~~ to 12 month spiritual mentorship experience (Desired goal is 30% of those who attend the retreat).
- Spiritual mentorship groups of 3 to 4 are formed.
- Times and dates of when groups meet will be determined before they leave retreat.

Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- Mentorship groups meet 2x a month for an hour to an hour and a half.
- Mentorship groups will be guided by set material:
 - Books and articles to read and discuss
 - John Wesley questions
 - Fellowship and service
 - Develop a Rule of Life

Outcomes from Spiritual Mentorship Experience

- A working and life-giving Rule of Life.
- A spiritually formed leader who is equipped and empowered to love and serve well.
- Mentorship group identifies two to three others in faith community to go on the next retreat.
- Mentorship group develops a bond to continue to meet on their own after 8 to 12 months.
- Spiritual leader is confident and willing to facilitate a mentorship group.

*Any don't
have to go
into leader
but spiritual
formation*

*Half way Retreat
for Rule of Life*

Spiritual Leadership

- Bible as Authority
- Point others to the Bible
- Encouragement to people

Dr. Jody Lowens.com
Spiritual Formation Summit

1st, 1st → Program into the months

"Live Together"
↓
what you do alone matters!

Sign of Grace / Kids

How is this program impacting the family?

↳ One day out of the 12 months for a gift.

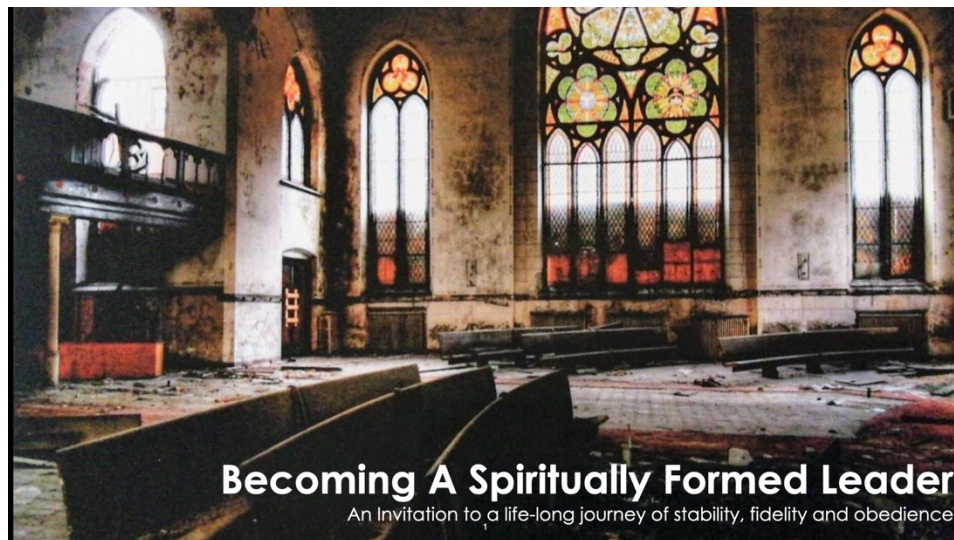
I do, you learn
C help
A you learn

What do you do after the 12 months?

↳ So what? What do you need as a leader?

★ Group rotates the
months

Appendix E—Project Appendix Documentation



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION ONE: BARRIERS



WE ALL HAVE ONE LIFE TO LIVE

HOW ARE WE GOING TO CHOOSE TO
LIVE IN THIS FINITE, LIMITED SPACE
CALLED LIFE; A GIFT GOD HAS GIVEN
US TO STEWARD AND LIVE OUT WELL?



ISAIAH 6:1

“IN THE YEAR THAT KING UZZIAH DIED, I SAW THE LORD SITTING UPON A THRONE, HIGH AND LIFTED UP AND THE TRAIN OF HIS ROBE FILLED THE TEMPLE.”

II CHRONICLES 26:1-15

II CHRONICLES 26:1-15

- Uzziah was made king at sixteen years old (1-2)
- Rebuilt the city of Eloth, a port city (2)
- Uzziah reigned for fifty-two years (3)
- Did what was right in the eyes of the LORD (4)
- Uzziah sought the LORD by being taught to fear God (5)
- God made Uzziah prosper (5)
- Uzziah made war against God's enemies (6-7)
- Uzziah's fame spread to the border of Egypt (8)
- Uzziah became strong (8)
- Uzziah built towers (9)
- Uzziah cut out cisterns (10)
- Uzziah had large herds (10)
- Uzziah had farmers (10)
- Uzziah had vinedressers (10)
- Uzziah had fertile lands (10)
- Uzziah had a mighty arm (11-12)
- 2,600 men of valor (12)
- 307,500 in his army (13)
- Uzziah had shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows and stones for slinging (14)
- Uzziah made machines for mass destruction (15)

II CHRONICLES 26:15B

“AND HIS FAME SPREAD FAR, FOR HE WAS MARVELOUSLY HELPED, TILL HE WAS STRONG.”

II CHRONICLES 26:16-23

- Uzziah became proud (16)
- Pride destroyed Uzziah (16)
- Uzziah was unfaithful to the LORD (16)
- Uzziah performed a job he wasn't supposed to do in the temple (16)
- Eighty priests tried to stop him from going (17)
- Uzziah dishonored God (18)
- Anger overtook Uzziah (19)
- The LORD struck Uzziah with leprosy and lived with thousands of others that had to proclaim, “Unclean, unclean, unclean” (20-21)
- Uzziah was excluded from the house of the LORD (21)
- The last thing recorded about Uzziah was, “He is a leper.” (23)

LESSONS OF PRIDE FROM UZZIAH

- ❖ Pride is the root of all destruction.
- ❖ Pride is the strongest idol we face.
- ❖ Pride is standing on the timeline of life, having no respect for the past and is irresponsible toward the future.

PRIDE MANIFESTS ITSELF IN THREE WAYS:

- ❖ Passion = Fleshly desires; self-centered
- ❖ Possession = Visual cravings
- ❖ Position = Social position/power and influence

ISAIAH 6

ISAIAH 6:1-7

- It was the year King Uzziah died...who was once powerful and now has leprosy (1)
- Isaiah had a vision of seeing the Lord sitting on his throne, high and lifted up (1)
- The train of God's robe filled the temple (1)
- Seraphim, holy creatures with wings, hovered around God (2)
- Seraphim were calling to one another a song, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (3)
- Foundations shook and the house was filled with smoke (4)
- Isaiah's response was first personal, "Woe is me; for I am lost." (5)
- Isaiah's second response was communal, "I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." (5)
- Isaiah proclaims his eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts (5)
- Isaiah's confession leads to the seraphim bringing a burning coal and touching his lips (6)

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

King Uzziah

Earthly
Small
Low and weak
Full of pride
Unclean
Dead

King, "the LORD of hosts"

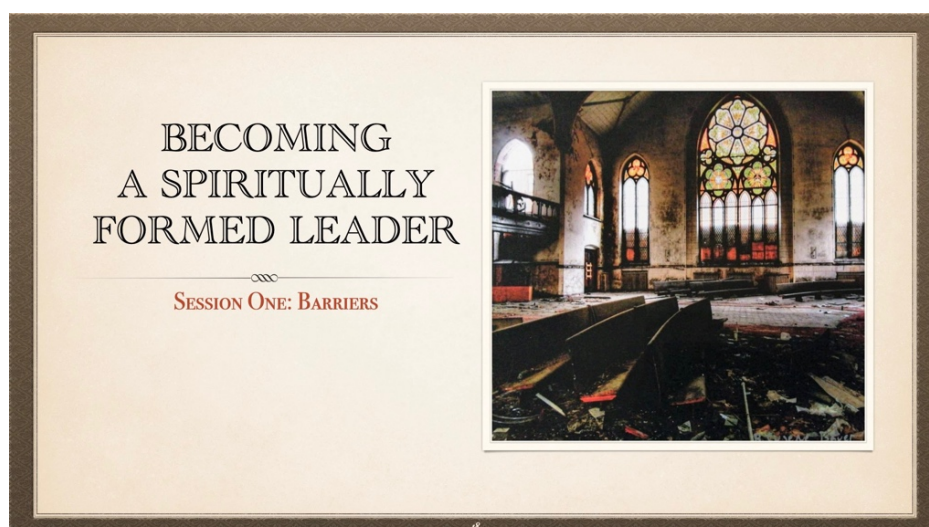
Divine
Majestic
High and strong
Full of glory
Holy
Alive

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ❖ What word or words would you want written on your tombstone that would describe you?
- ❖ Pride manifests itself in passion, possession and position. In what particular way(s) do you struggle with pride? Why?
- ❖ Based on what we learned, how can we deal with your pride?
- ❖ How are we going to choose to live in this finite, limited space called life, a gift God has given us to steward and live out well?

TAKEAWAYS:

- ❖ Pride breaks down our ability to steward well the one life God has given us to live.
- ❖ Humility grounded in gratitude is the foundation to combat pride.
- ❖ We have a choice in how we live out our dash. When we invite Christ into our dash, the dash becomes significant, no matter how short or long the dash is.
- ❖ Engaging in this class will place you on a trajectory to live out your dash well as you become a spiritually formed leader.



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION TWO: EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP



19

WE ALL HAVE ONE LIFE TO LIVE

HOW ARE WE GOING TO CHOOSE TO
LIVE IN THIS FINITE, LIMITED SPACE
CALLED LIFE; A GIFT GOD HAS GIVEN
US TO STEWARD AND LIVE OUT WELL?



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WHO IS A GOOD LEADER?

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LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY

- ❖ Define Leadership
- ❖ Provide three to five functions of a leader
- ❖ Provide a symbol that reflects your working definition and its functions

J.C. Rost in *Leadership for the Twenty-first Century* analyzed materials from 1900 to 1990 found there were over 200 different definitions for leadership.

EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP

- ❖ 1900 - 1929 - Emphasis on control and centralization of power with a common theme of domination.
- ❖ 1930s - Traits became the focus of defining leadership, with an emerging view of leadership as influence rather than domination.
- ❖ 1960s - Made the shift to leadership as behavior that influences people toward shared goals.
- ❖ 1970s - "Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers." J. M. Burns, *Leadership*.

EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP

- ❖ 1980s - Scholarly works exploded over the concept of leadership with the following themes: 1) Do as the leader wishes 2) Influence 3) Traits 4) Transformation.
- ❖ 1990s - Much debate regarding leadership and management. Some leadership approaches emerged like servant leadership and adaptive leadership.
- ❖ 2000s - An emergence of moral approaches such as authentic leadership, ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, discursive leadership, humble leadership and inclusive leadership.

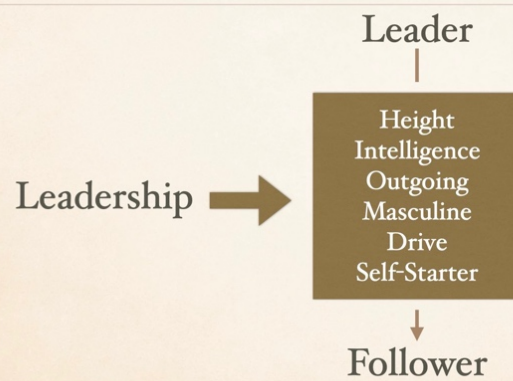
COMPONENTS OF LEADERSHIP

- ❖ Leadership is a process
- ❖ Leadership involves influence
- ❖ Leadership occurs in groups
- ❖ Leadership involves common goals

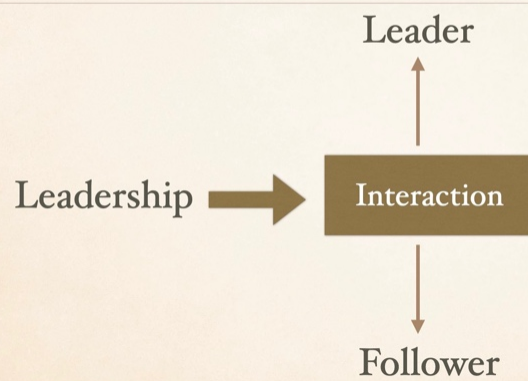
LEADERSHIP IS A PROCESS
WHEREBY AN INDIVIDUAL
INFLUENCES A GROUP OF
INDIVIDUALS TO ACHIEVE A
COMMON GOAL.

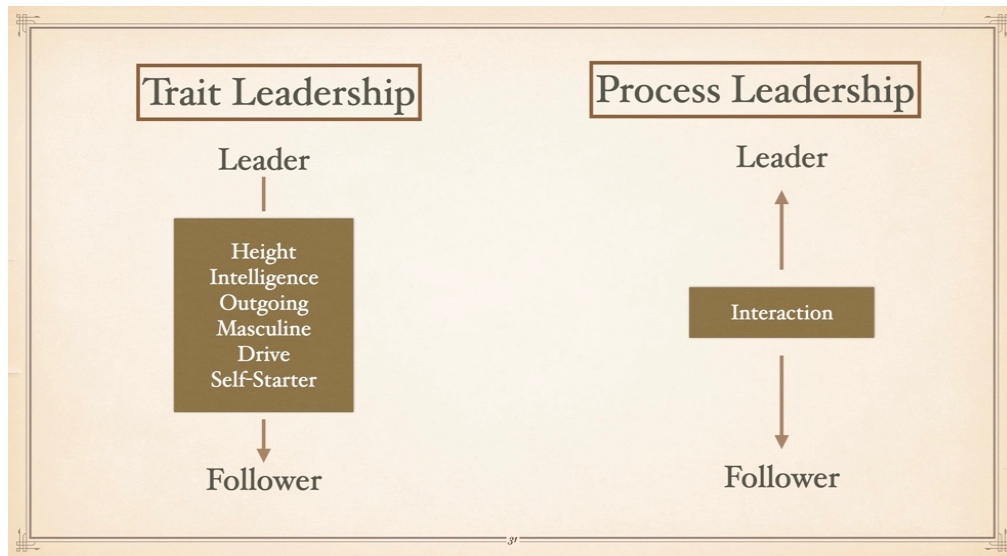
TRAIT VS PROCESS

TRAIT DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP



PROCESS DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP





NEUTRAL VS MORAL

HITLER'S RULE IN GERMANY
COULD BE CONSIDERED A GOOD
EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ❖ Who in your life has shaped you as a leader? In what ways has he/she shaped you? Why did you follow that leader? What attributes were you attracted to?
- ❖ Do you see yourself as a leader? If not, why not? After what we have learned, do you now see yourself as a leader? Where might you be a leader?
- ❖ What kind of leader do you desire to be?
- ❖ Since leadership is a process, what might it require of you to become a better leader?

Philippians 2:6-11

emptied		Jesus Christ is Lord
servant	To the	tongue confess
being born	glory of	knee shall bow
likeness of men	God the	above every name
	Father	
humbled		bestowed
death		exalted
	cross	

TAKEAWAYS:

- ❖ Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.
- ❖ Leadership is learned.
- ❖ Leadership is moral.
- ❖ You are a leader.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION TWO: EVOLUTION OF LEADERSHIP



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP



LEADERSHIP ACTIVITY REVIEW

- ❖ Define Leadership
- ❖ Provide three to five functions of a leader
- ❖ Provide a symbol that reflects your working definition and its functions

LEADERSHIP GROUP # 1

Define Leadership: willingness to serve, work hard, provide a vision, and create followers through love.

Functions: Create culture, lead by example, serve, influence others

Symbol: infinite symbol

LEADERSHIP GROUP # 2

Define Leadership: define goals and responsibilities; successfully complete goals using other's strengths.

Functions: Accountability, guidance and responsible

Symbol: Ants going in the same direction

LEADERSHIP GROUP # 3

Define Leadership: Not prone to fail, knows where to go, lead people to a goal.

Functions: Charisma, confident, accomplished and passionate

Symbol: People pulling a cart with the leader among the followers

LEADERSHIP IS A PROCESS
WHEREBY AN INDIVIDUAL
INFLUENCES A GROUP OF
INDIVIDUALS TO ACHIEVE A
COMMON GOAL.

BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

PENTATEUCH: GENESIS - DEUTERONOMY

- ❖ Leadership comes by divine appointment
(*Noah, Abram, Jacob, Joseph, Moses*)
- ❖ Leadership moves from one to many
(*Moses and Jethro*)
- ❖ Leadership requires accountability
(*Jacob, Issac, Joseph*)



HISTORY BOOKS: JOSHUA, JUDGES, ESTHER, I & II KINGS



- ❖ Leadership requires a time of preparation
(*Joshua and Esther*)
- ❖ Leadership requires a sensitive heart to spiritual things
(*Joshua*)
- ❖ Leadership demands unique skills
(*David, Saul, Deborah, Ruth, Esther*)

POETS AND PROPHETS: ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, DANIEL

- ❖ Leadership requires deep conviction of God's will for leaders and followers
(*Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego*)
- ❖ Leadership requires clear theological perspective
(*Isaiah*)
- ❖ Leadership requires an awareness of contemporary surroundings
(*Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea*)



GOSPELS AND ACTS: JESUS, LYDIA, PRISCILLA, STEPHEN



- ❖ Leadership is servanthood
(*Jesus, Stephen*)
- ❖ Leadership is stewardship
(*Jesus, James*)
- ❖ Leadership is shared power
(*Jesus, Lydia, Priscilla, Barnabus*)

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EPISTLES AND REVELATION: PAUL, PETER, JOHN

- ❖ Leadership is ministry
(*Philippians*)
- ❖ Leadership is modeling behavior
(*Philemon*)
- ❖ Leadership is mentoring
(*I and II Timothy, Titus*)
- ❖ Leadership is membership in the body
(*Ephesians, I Corinthians*)



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“Biblical leadership takes place when divinely appointed men and women accept responsibility for obedience to God’s call. They recognize the importance of preparation time, allowing the Holy Spirit to develop tenderness of heart and skill of hands. They carry out their leadership roles with deep conviction of God’s will, clear theological perspective from God’s Word, and an acute awareness of the contemporary issues which they and their followers face. Above all, they exercise leadership as servants and stewards, sharing authority with their followers and affirming that leadership is primarily ministry to others, modeling for others and mutual relationship with others in Christ’s body.”

—Kenneth O. Gangel

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“Leadership is **more physical** than mental, **more relational** than getting things done, **more in Christ** than about Christ.”

“Leadership is a relationship process in Christ and with the Spirit for God’s intended transformational purposes.”

– Dr. MaryKate Morse

VS

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ❖ In what ways does our working definition change through the lens of biblical leadership?
- ❖ How would you write your new definition of leadership? Would it change?
- ❖ What specific area(s) of leadership do you need to grow in to lead others well?
- ❖ What leadership qualities do you see in each other?

I THESSALONIANS 2

I THESSALONIANS 2:1-16

- ❖ Suffers hardship (vs 2)
- ❖ Motive is pure (vs 3)
- ❖ Approval is from God, not man (vs 4)
- ❖ They lead with humility and integrity (vs 5)
- ❖ Are not diverted by greed or power (vs 5)
- ❖ Gentle like a nursing mother (vs 7)
- ❖ Willing to share their lives (vs 8)
- ❖ Are hard workers as they labor and toil to not be a burden (vs 9-10)
- ❖ Conduct is righteous and blameless (vs 10)
- ❖ Exhort and encourage like a father (vs 11-12)

I THESSALONIANS 2:17-19

“But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.”

I THESSALONIANS 2:17-19

“But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. **For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy.**”

TAKEAWAYS:

- ❖ Leadership is a life-long process.
- ❖ Leadership is more physical than mental, more relational than getting things done, more in Christ than about Christ.
- ❖ Leadership is about a shared transformation; in you and in others.
- ❖ To lead well we must be spiritually formed.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION THREE: BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION



POP QUIZ



SPIRITUAL FORMATION IS NOT...

- ❖ A static possession one manages by perfecting correct techniques, methods or memorizing a list.
- ❖ An add on to your personality to deal with the spiritual aspect of yourself.
- ❖ A one size fits all.
- ❖ Private or individualistic in nature.

FOUR COMPONENTS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- ❖ Process
- ❖ Being Formed
- ❖ Image of Christ
- ❖ Sake of Others

SPIRITUAL FORMATION IS A PROCESS OF
BEING FORMED IN THE IMAGE OF
CHRIST FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.

PROCESS

- ❖ We are all being spiritually formed. Every thought, decision, action, emotion, behavior, reaction, relationship, etc. shapes us.
- ❖ We are being shaped into the likeness and wholeness of Christ or a destructive caricature of that image.
- ❖ Spiritual formation is not an option.



Thoughts
(orthodoxy)

Behaviors
(orthopraxy)

Emotions
(orthopathy)

BEING FORMED



- ❖ We do not form ourselves. If we form ourselves it becomes more about “control” than “surrender,” “doing” than “being.”
- ❖ Yielding ourselves to the work of God’s transforming grace.
- ❖ Intentionally present (Luke 10:38-42).

“Our doing flows out of our being. In spiritual formation the problem with being formed is that we have a strong tendency to think that if only we do the right things we will be the right kind of Christian, as though our doing would bring about our being.”

— Robert Mulholland Jr.

IMAGE OF CHRIST

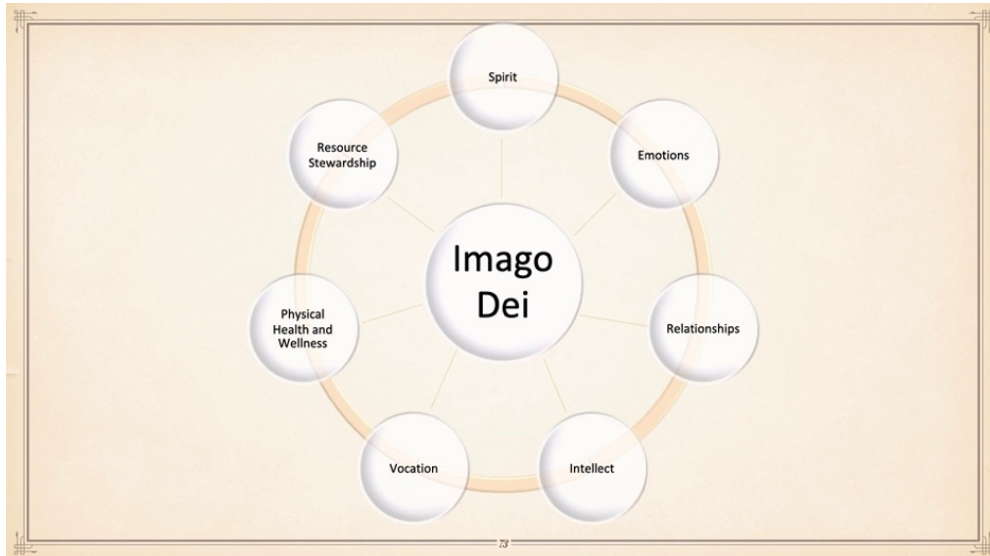
- ❖ The formation we desire is to be image bearers of Christ. Sons and daughters of the King (Eph. 1:3-6).
- ❖ Christ is working in us in the places that are yet to be formed in his image.
- ❖ To take up our cross daily is to die to self in order to be raised by God into wholeness of life (Luke 9:23-27).



SAKE OF OTHERS



- ❖ If spiritual formation stops at becoming more like Christ, it becomes a self-help guide to self-centeredness.
- ❖ We are created to live in community; in relationship with creation, God and others (1 Thessalonians 2).
- ❖ Relationships are a testing ground and places of growth towards wholeness in Christ.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ❖ Keeping in mind the Imago Dei diagram, what has shaped you spiritually? Good or bad?
- ❖ To take up the cross is to die to self and allow Christ to work in places that are not formed yet in his image. Where does Christ need to work in you?
- ❖ Why is your spiritual formation not private nor individualistic?

SPIRITUAL GROWTH TEST

- ❖ Are you more Christ-like today than you were this time last year? Are you more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled?
- ❖ How would your spouse, kids, boss or a co-worker answer the above question?
- ❖ Share in your groups briefly where you are on your faith journey.

TAKEAWAYS:

- ❖ Spiritual formation is a life-long process.
- ❖ We are all being spiritually formed, either in the likeness of Christ or in a distorted caricature of Christ.
- ❖ Spiritual formation is something that is done in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ Spiritual formation is communal.

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FOUR: SPIRITUAL FORMATION



BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL





SPIRITUAL FORMATION IS A PROCESS OF
BEING FORMED IN THE IMAGE OF
CHRIST FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.

“SPIRITUAL FORMATION IS OUR CONTINUING
RESPONSE TO THE REALITY OF GOD’S GRACE
SHAPING US INTO THE LIKENESS OF JESUS
CHRIST, THROUGH THE WORK OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT, IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH, FOR THE
GLORY OF GOD AND THE SAKE OF THE WORLD.”

GREENMAN & MORSE

“SPIRITUAL FORMATION IS OUR CONTINUING
RESPONSE TO THE REALITY OF GOD’S GRACE
SHAPING US INTO THE LIKENESS OF JESUS
CHRIST, THROUGH THE WORK OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT, **IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH**, FOR THE
GLORY OF GOD AND THE SAKE OF THE WORLD.”

GREENMAN & MORSE

MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS



RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CHURCH



- ❖ Discipling
- ❖ Coaching
- ❖ Mentoring

"Mentoring becomes a focused relationship around sharing life together through one person helping another person discover and live into one's unique calling of guiding people to God's kingdom work."

ELEMENTS TO A MENTORING COMMUNITY

- ❖ Container
- ❖ Community
- ❖ Conversation (content)



COMMITMENT TO A MENTORING COMMUNITY



- ❖ Stability
- ❖ Fidelity
- ❖ Obedience

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ❖ Who has mentored you? In what ways did they mentor you? What did you appreciate or cherish about the relationship?
- ❖ What are some obstacles do you see that might keep you from participating in a mentoring community?
- ❖ Why do you think community is essential to your spiritual formation?

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LUKE 5:1-11

89

LUKE 5:1-11

- | | |
|---|--|
| ❖ Crowd pressing on Jesus (vs 1) | ❖ Peter's first response was, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing." (vs 5) |
| ❖ Jesus was standing on the shoreline of Lake Gennesaret (vs 1) | ❖ Peter's second response was, "But at your word I will let down the nets." (vs 5) |
| ❖ Two boats on the shoreline (vs 2) | ❖ Caught such a large amount the nets were breaking (vs 6) |
| ❖ Fishermen gone to wash their nets (vs 2) | ❖ Peter's third response, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (vs 8) |
| ❖ Jesus gets into Simon's boat to teach the crowd (vs 3) | ❖ Jesus commissions Peter (vs 10) |
| ❖ Jesus asks Simon to put the boat into the deep and lay down his nets (vs 4) | |

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“BUT AT
YOUR
WORD...”

TAKEAWAYS:

- ❖ Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and the sake of the world.
- ❖ Mentoring communities thrive when there is stability, fidelity and obedience.
- ❖ To lead well we must be spiritually formed well.
- ❖ Christ has chosen your boat; what is your response?

CROSSBRIDGE MENTORING COMMUNITIES “BRIDGE GROUPS”

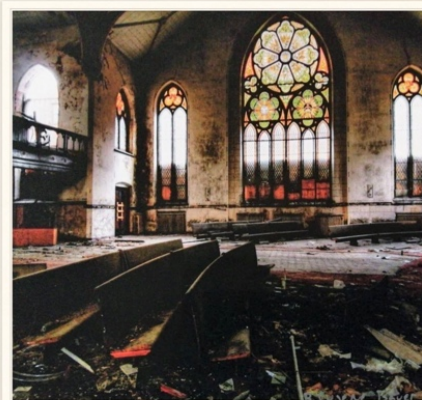
- ❖ Group of 3 to 4 people make up a mentoring community or Bridge group.
- ❖ Meet twice a month for at least an hour.
- ❖ Content will be given to read, reflect and discuss at each gathering.
- ❖ We will meet at least twice as a whole for fellowship, accountability and continued teaching.
- ❖ By the end of the 12 month commitment each participant will have a working and sustainable “rule of life.”
- ❖ Bridge groups will begin in January.



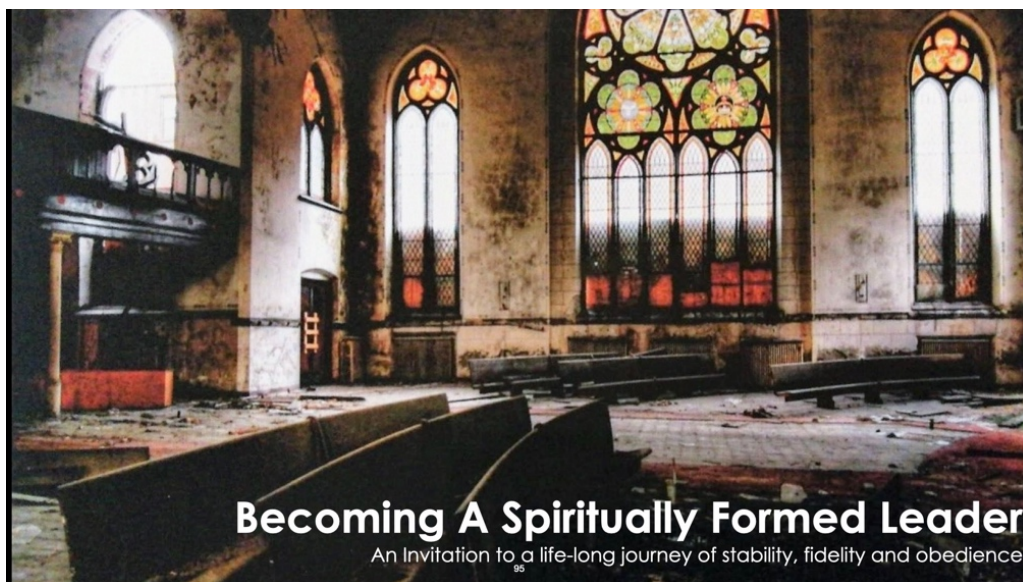
CROSSBRIDGE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER

SESSION FIVE: A COMMUNITY AND A CALL



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Becoming A Spiritually Formed Leader

An Invitation to a life-long journey of stability, fidelity and obedience

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Appendix F—Milestone 6 Project Launch Plan Documentation

Surveys

BECOMING A SPIRITUALLY FORMED LEADER SURVEY

Please answer the questions below. The feedback from the survey will be used to enhance future classes and mentoring communities.

Class Questions:

1. What was most challenging?
2. What was most confusing?
3. Where could we have spent more time: Leadership or Spiritual Formation?
4. What was your main takeaway from the class?
5. How do you define spiritual formation?
6. How would you describe this class to a friend? Would you recommend they take this class?
7. Did you accept the invitation to commit to a mentoring community? Why or why not?

Mentoring Community Questions:

1. What was challenging about committing to a mentoring community?
2. How accessible and readable was the mentoring guide?
3. What was confusing about the mentoring guide that needs to be clarified?
4. What needs to be included in the mentoring guide?
5. What needs to be taken out of the mentoring guide?
6. How would you rate your mentoring community experience (10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest)? What could have made it better?
7. How has writing your rule of life prepared you for the next season of life?

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Answer the questions below. Feedback from this survey will be used to assess your spiritual growth as well as your mentoring community experience.

Questions Before Class:

1. Are you more Christ-like today than you were this time last year?
2. Are you more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled?
3. How would your spouse, kids, boss or a co-worker answer the above question?
4. In what ways are you becoming spiritually formed?

Questions After Completion of Mentoring Community Journey:

1. Are you more Christ-like today than you were this time last year?
2. Are you more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled? In what specific ways?
3. How would your spouse, kids, boss or a co-worker answer the above question?
4. In what ways are you becoming spiritually formed?
5. How has the rule of life been an instrument of grace in forming you into the person God has called you to be?
6. How have you been able to nurture others because of the work of the Holy Spirit has done in your life?

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