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DEVELOPING A MENTOR-METHOD OF EVANGELISM
AT REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH, ROLLA, MISSOURI

A Major Applied Project
Presented to the Faculty of
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Practical Theology
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By
Rev. Nathan Alex Kuhlman
May 2018

Approved by _____
Rev. Dr. David Peter Advisor

Rev. Dr. William Utech Reader

Rev. Dr. Timothy Saleska Reader

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This is dedicated to the many spiritual giants upon whose shoulders I stand today: Luke Biggs, William Utech, David Peter, Diann Hinds, Dean Nadasdy, Jay Kettinger, and the beautiful saints of Redeemer. The Jesus in you profoundly shaped the Jesus in me. Most importantly, this is dedicated to my children, Jess, Ella, and Seth, for their sacrifice of time while Dad completed this project. You are the reason this project was undertaken. To God be the glory!

How shall the world believe Unless my people go
And tell the love Jesus To all the world below?
Tell them of Jesus' pardon Bought by His precious blood;
Tell them of grace and mercy Bought by the Son of God!

How shall the world believe Unless my people say
That God has raised a Savior Against that glorious day?
When all men shall be beckoned To meet their God on high,
Oh, may they take His pardon And meet Him in the sky!

How shall the world believe And live for Him alone
Unless my people share Him, Share Him, God's only Son?
Share Him with every creature—Share Him whose love divine
Has drawn you to Himself, Assuring, "Thou art Mine."

Go then and tell the story To those who need it still;
Go then and give a witness—This is your Father's will.
Go and may God go with you And give you power divine,
That He may say to others, "Son, daughter, thou art Mine."

"How Shall the World Believe" Text: Paul Foust,
Tune: "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus." Paul Foust,
*Reborn to Multiply: Tested Techniques for Personal
Evangelism* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1973), 56.

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The trail of this journey has been a path filled with many faces cheering and encouraging the project toward completion. To begin, my loudest cheerleaders have been my family; Jess, Ella, and Seth, with their unending patience on countless occasions, were that voice in my ear to “just get it done!” They faithfully stood in the gap through selfless sacrifices of time and energy as I worked to complete this degree program. While I holed myself up at the Giddy Goat Coffeehouse slurping down copious amounts of coffee, slinging words to a page, life continued at home. The completion of this MAP is a testament to them, because without them in my corner, this project would not have come to fruition. Words cannot express my deepest gratitude for those who stood by my side, allowing me the time and space necessary to complete this project.

I have been blessed to serve in congregations that both encouraged and nurtured my passion for missions and outreach: Faith (Vista, CA), St. Andrew (Cape Girardeau, MO), Prince of Peace (Carrollton, TX), Redeemer (Rolla, MO), and my home congregation, Cross View (Edina, MN). I cannot thank the leadership and laity of these churches enough for allowing me the time, budget resources, and space to dream and experiment, praying me through times of joy

and growth. A special thanks to the sweet souls of Redeemer, whose heart, wisdom, and sheer grit make up the basis for and shape of this project.

I sat and learned at the feet of two humble, faithful, and gracious men of God—Dr. William Utech and Dr. David Peter—their words continue to challenge and encourage. Our conversations always brought productive focus to not just this project, but life as well. It is an honor to call them friend.

Sue Bontrager was my consummate editor-in-chief from the very beginning of my journey in the doctoral program. She has read every word both deleted and edited and is the one who “makes me sound good.” If she were paid per word for the time spent perusing my ramblings she would be a billionaire by now. Honestly, I have lost track how many bags of chocolate owed her for the tremendous work she has done. We may be near truck-load level at this point.

I am grateful for what has become my second office—The Giddy Goat Coffeehouse—which I affectionately refer to as my mission field. Through the years, it has become something so much more, a home away from home. Jen and Ben, you have graciously allowed me the space of countless hours to work on this project. Thank you for keeping me fueled, engaged, and on-point for the task at hand.

There is a host of others about whom countless pages could be written—pastors, colleagues, parishioners, friends, family—who selflessly poured into me their time, encouragement and giftedness. Their faces, presence, and encouragement are forever a part of my life story, holding a special place in my mind and heart. Seeds of mentorship were planted and watered, and they grew.

I am forever indebted to Dr. Luke Biggs upon whose study the following project is built. His fine work in the area of Mentorship evangelism as found in his Major Applied Project, “The

Mentor Method of Evangelism: A Study in the Use of Interrogatives”¹ is a prophetic word for today’s Church. Luke is an incredible pastor with a servant heart who desires to make Kingdom impact in all he does. He has been and continues to be a personal mentor through whom God has worked to shape me into the man I am today. He will never know the profound depth of impact he has had on my life.

While serving alongside Luke in ministry at Prince of Peace (Carrollton, TX), he unknowingly planted the seed and passion for this project in evangelism. This MAP expands and builds upon Luke’s project around Mentorship evangelism with his blessing and encouragement. As I look at the final piece of work, it is difficult to see where his work ends and mine begins as the lines have become blurred. We speak as one voice about the need for reaching the next generation for Christ. His original work was created nearly fifteen years ago and much has changed since that time. The American culture is increasingly antagonistic toward the Christian message, younger generations are leaving the Church and not returning, and the Church’s landscape of influence has dramatically shifted. The tension is real, but opportunity great! This MAP seeks to reflect a positive voice into the shifting sands as well as propose an evangelism method that is both Lutheran and proven to connect well with the next generation of those in the 18–30 age range.

The present landscape of Church and culture is in transition. The question is, what lies ahead? Into the question and worry swirling around many in today’s Church, Jesus has a gentle but crucial word for us to hear: “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matt. 6:34). Let us heed Jesus’

¹ Luke Biggs, “The Mentor Method of Evangelism: A Study in the Use of Interrogatives” (D.Min. MAP, Concordia Seminary, 2004).

words to remain faithful—regardless of what the new day brings—our tomorrow is in the capable and sure hands of the Triune God. Yet, as those living in the midst of the shifting landscape, it can become overwhelming as next steps are considered. Tim Downs shares the story of how Martin Luther was once asked, “If you knew for certain that Christ will return tomorrow, what would you do today?” He replied, “I would plant a tree.”²

Friend, it is time to plant not trees, but people! It is time to nurture a new generation of disciples through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit and His sacrificial Word of grace found in the Word of God. It is my heartfelt prayer that seeds of faith are planted through mentoring relationships—seeds that sprout through the husk-shattering, life-altering Gospel of Jesus Christ—growing all the way to heaven itself. May this project be a pleasing aroma to God, furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the next generation and beyond.

Let the planting begin! Grab a shovel, and let’s GO!

² Tim Downs, *Finding Common Ground: How to Communicate with those Outside the Christian Community . . . While We Still Can* (Moody Publishers: Chicago, 1999), 12.

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ABSTRACT

Kuhlman, Nathan, A. "Developing a Mentor-Method of Evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri." D.Min. MAP, Concordia Seminary, 2018. 196pp.

Past models of evangelism are not as effective as they once were. To meet a changing, post-Christian culture, a model of evangelism that better speaks in today's context is necessary. To address this need, this project was born. The purpose of this project was to develop and launch a mentor-method approach to evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri. This was accomplished through the launch of a pilot group of 12 test subjects from Redeemer who worked through a 10-week evangelism curriculum called Mentorship Training. The intensive training encompassed a theological and biblical framework, practical tools, personal accountability, and encouragement necessary for participants to grow stronger in perceived knowledge and willingness for engaging others in evangelism. For the research portion, before- and after-training perceptions of test subjects were gained through the use of two mixed-method surveys and exit interviews as a way to gain data indicating whether the project accomplished its intended goal: perception of growth in knowledge and willingness toward evangelism. Project data indicates such growth occurred. This research, along with an exploration of the present cultural landscape, exegetical study, and literature review, informed a set of recommendations for future evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Problem Identified

Growing up, Sunday was church day. My family lived a predictable and patterned schedule: Wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, go to church, attend Bible class, repeat. Each week, through the singing of hymns, engaging God’s Word, celebrating the gifts the Lord offered at His Holy Table, and enjoying the mutual fellowship of the Body, the Holy Spirit worked to stretch and grow my faith in Him. Throughout life, I have sat at the feet of faithful men and women who shared with me the Jesus who knew and loved them, as they poured their lives through the lens of God’s Word, reflecting its grace and truth into the man I would one day become. It is like a flame that passes from one generation to the next. As iron sharpens iron, followers of Christ speak into one another the life-giving words of Christ (Prov. 27:17). Within the context of relationships, countless examples of spiritual giants invested in the Body and the life of the Church. The baton of faith passed from one to the next: Some planted, others watered, God brought the growth (1 Cor. 3:6).

We stand on the shoulders of grandparents, moms, dads, pastors, friends, coworkers, and a host of others who took the time to bear witness to the Good News of Jesus’ transforming cross and empty tomb. Faith came alive by the Holy Spirit’s power working among these saints in and through the Word of God. The Great Commission to “make disciples” has been a rallying cry for generations of disciples. For the Christian, at some point this rallying cry came to us personally as the Lord rescued us from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God (Col.

1:13; Rom. 12:1–2). Old to new. Sinner to saint. Death to life. God works through the feeble hands and feet of broken vessels His glorious plan of salvation to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:18), to be seed planters of the Gospel (Mark 4). The question is, how is the Church faring at planting and nurturing seeds, passing the baton of faith on to future generations? For many, the baton has been dropped.

On any given Sunday as I gaze across the faithful faces sitting amongst the pews, change is apparent. A sense of weariness is written across their faces. A once vibrant church made up of predominantly two families, the Haas and Meschke clans, now holds only a smattering of this rich family history. Redeemer has prided itself on being a family church, but such is no longer the case. Pressing in upon its leaders are the weekly struggles to maintain membership, upkeep of an aging facility, and balance the teetering of finances, while many grow tired of doing more with less. It seems, the harder the congregation works to draw prospective sheep into the fold, the numbers in worship continue to decline. In discussion with pastors of my local circuit, similar laments arise from the flocks they serve around the present and future Church. Amid these discussions, questions are spoken, almost in a whisper: *Are our glory days behind us? What is the future of the Christian Church? How might a church leadership and pastor navigate through such transition? Will the local congregation survive?*

Through this cloudy haze of uncertainty, Redeemer seeks to reverse this trend. In a 2016 report, the Barna institute succinctly states the tension many feel:

The Christian Church has been a cornerstone of American life for centuries, but much has changed in the last 30 years. Americans are attending church less, and more people are experiencing and practicing their faith outside of its four walls. Millennials in particular are coming of age at a time of great skepticism and cynicism toward institutions—particularly the church. Add to this the broader secularizing trend in

American culture, and a growing antagonism toward faith claims, and these are uncertain times for the U.S. church.¹

Yes, the Church faces much uncertainty in regard to the future. Somewhere along the way, Christianity has lost its footing in the task of evangelism and faith transference from one generation to the next. Generations are drifting from regular connection to a local church body, choosing for themselves a path of their own making. Everything a church is and does rests upon the mission of God: To seek and save that which is lost (Luke 19:1–10). Seeing scripture in this light, Jesus’ purpose becomes the Church’s mission. How is the local church faring at navigating the mission in today’s challenging landscape? Within the context of Redeemer, not well.

A Discipleship Dilemma

At its heart, the problem facing Christianity is one of discipleship. Old models of faith transference are not as effective as they once were. Each generation must wrestle with how best to transfer the faith from one generation to the next in a way that speaks to the established cultural context in a way it can be heard. In other words, to live Paul’s words: “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. . . . I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings” (1 Cor. 9:19, 22–23). How might the average Christian become more like the post-modern in order to reach the post-modern with the Gospel? How might the believer engage their neighbors, coworkers, and those no longer sitting within the pews in a way that we “might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22)? How might the Body speak the life-giving Gospel in a way it can be heard with a brother, spouse, daughter, or

¹ Barna, “The State of the Church 2016,” September 15, 2016, accessed October 1, 2017, <https://www.barna.com/research/state-church-2016/>.

grandparent who has drifted from a once vibrant faith? The Christian is *in* the world, not *of* the world, but *for* the world (John 17:14–16; 1 John 2:15–17; Rom. 12:2).²

Discipleship is grounded in the Lord’s bidding as He spoke the words of the Great Commission to “make disciples.” Since then, Matthew 28 has long stood as the battle cry of the Church, expressing its missional posture and intent. In partnership with Seed Company, the Barna institute conducted an online survey of nearly 1,000 churchgoers to better grasp the Church’s understanding and practice of missions and spreading the gospel. One of the primary results indicated that people are largely unaware of the call to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). The survey asked if respondents had heard about the Great Commission, 51% responded unfamiliarity with the term. They also provided respondents with a multiple choice of five verse options—one being Matthew 28:18–20—only 37% selected the correct answer from among the list of verse choices, ranking it the most common selection. Following at close second, 33% opted for: “Not sure if any of these passages are the Great Commission.”³ Keep in mind, these test subjects claimed regular church attendance. And one wonders why churches wrestle with evangelism. Curious, I asked my children who are ten and twelve years old the same Barna survey questions and they fared no better. Convicting indeed!

With this backdrop, how might a Christian speak into the lives as one who seeks to understand and mutually grow with the person he or she desires to engage in a conversation about spiritual matters (1 Cor. 9:19–23)? There is a myth about younger generations sowing their

² Paul R. Raabe, “Christ and American Culture: Some Biblical Reflections,” in *Christ and Culture: The Church in a Post-Christian (?) America*, Concordia Seminary Monograph Series Symposium Papers, no. 4 (St. Louis, 1994): 29–55.

³ Other Bible passage selections included as options, along with percentage ranking included: Matt. 22:37–40 (16%), John 14:6 (8%), Mark 8:34 (5%), and Mark 12:17 (2%). See Barna, “51% of Churchgoers Don’t Know of the Great Commission” (A Barna Report Produced in Partnership with Seed Company, 2018), accessed March 28, 2018, <https://www.barna.com/research/half-churchgoers-not-heard-great-commission/#.Wrqkh2mx51c.facebook>.

wild oats, that once married and having children of their own, settle down and return to church.⁴ If such were the case, there would be a steady flow of new cycles of young families reengaging church and increases in Baptisms and Confirmations.⁵ Reality shows a different story describing a steady decline of Baptized and Communicant membership within the LCMS. Will Schumacher states the tension thus: “Religion is no longer an inherited trait. . . . The assumption that people will remain in the religious tradition into which they are born cannot form the core of our thinking about how to bring the Gospel to unbelievers.”⁶ The Church faces a new reality requiring a new approach. Assumptions about younger generations returning to the local church at some future time are no longer the norm, but the exception. Declining trends are felt across the board in Protestant and Catholic churches alike with as many as 59% of young adults dropping out of church annually, most not returning to the fold.⁷ Add to that, political and racial currents, tensions are high. For many outside the Church, Christianity is viewed as the problem rather than solution: Perceived as irrelevant and extreme, completely out of step with the times.⁸ In a 2018

⁴ Since 1983, The National Centre for Research has held a study among adults in Britain asking: “Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion? If yes, which?” In 1983, 31% claim no religious affiliation. Fast forward to its latest findings in 2016, of the nearly 3,000 respondents, 53% describe themselves as having no religion. Among those 18 to 24 years of age, the percentage sharply rose to 71% claiming no religion. Shockingly, more than half of Britain claims no religious affiliation. It is an important word for American Christianity to heed its warning. See Steve Jordahl, “Growth of ‘No Religion’ Among Brits Ominous for U.S.,” *OneNewsNow*, September 6, 2017, accessed September 29, 2017, <https://www.onenewsnow.com/culture/2017/09/06/growth-of-no-religion-among-brits-ominous-for-us>.

⁵ Larry Vogel completed an in-depth study of changing demographic trends within the LCMS. Many factors impact current trends: birth rate, views of marriage, a significant, steady loss of Baptized members since 1977, Confirmed membership began to decline in 1992. See Larry Vogel, “Mission USA: America’s Changing Demographic Landscape,” *Journal of Lutheran Mission* 4, no. 1 (March 2017): 14–16.

⁶ Will Schumacher, “Demography and Missions in the LCMS,” *Lutheran Mission Matters* 25, no. 1, 50 (May 2017): 21.

⁷ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Good Faith: Being a Christian when Society Thinks You’re Irrelevant and Extreme* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 12.

⁸ See Appendix 10: “Giddy Goat Dialogues: An Exercise in Field Research.” Upon moving to Rolla, countless hours have been spent at a local coffee shop called the Giddy Goat Coffeehouse. The people and place quickly became my mission field. As such, I immersed myself into the lives of its patrons and staff as a way to better understand them as people and the broader cultural context. Through an independent study with Dr. William Utech at Concordia Seminary in January 2013, I held a series of conversations at the Giddy Goat to better

Barna study, in partnership with Impact 360, researchers are taking beginning steps toward wrapping their minds around the next generation, termed Generation Z. Hoping to see younger generations grow up to follow Jesus for a lifetime, the study researched experiences and priorities of 13- to 18-year-olds. What emerged was a snapshot of a tech-driven, post-Christian religious wanderers, a diverse, and identity-confused generation. Describing key findings of Generation Z, the study highlights:

More than half use screen media four hours or more on an average day (53%). Out of 69 million children and teens in Gen Z, just 4 percent have a biblical worldview. One-third of teens say gender is how a person feels inside, not their birth sex (33%). Many believe happiness is defined by financial success (43%). Two in five teens interact with people who are different from them (39%) compared to just one-quarter of Boomers. Half say parents are their primary role model (56%), but only one-third that family is core to their identity.⁹

Yes, recent demographic studies such as the one presented above highlight a challenging outlook for present and future ministry. At the end of the day, demographics are just numbers until we extrapolate them into our homes. In doing so, numbers take on life as one witnesses the drifting away of parents, children, and siblings from a once vibrant faith. One of the main reasons this project was undertaken was for my children and their future children, that they may hear and know the Good news of the risen Christ (Ps. 1; Prov. 22:6). As my parents and grandparents were living examples of Jesus to me, I pray the same for my children, hoping their faith in Christ will be the sustaining presence throughout this life unto eternity.

David Kinnaman, from the Barna Institute, has spent years documenting demographic and religious trends, suggesting the Church's need to create new methods of making disciples as

understand the mission field and cultural context of Redeemer. The coffeehouse discussions focused primarily around perceptions of Christianity, church, and matters of faith.

⁹ Barna, *Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs, and Motivations Shaping the Next Generation* (A Barna Report Produced in Partnership with Impact 360 Institute, 2018), 12–13.

current models are not connecting as they have in the past. At its heart, Kinnaman argues we have a discipleship problem in the way we are teaching faith to new generations:

Young Christians are living through a period of unprecedented social and technological change, compressed in an astounding manner, and the longer we take to acknowledge and respond to these changes, the more we allow the disconnection between generations to progress. Ask yourself how available you have been to younger Christians. The generation gap is growing, fueled in part by technology, so it takes extra effort to be on the same page. Frankly, deep relationship happens only by spending time, and big chunks of it, in shared experiences. I encourage you to be ready for a fresh move of God, buoyed by young adults. Are you open to ‘reverse’ mentoring, wherein you allow younger leaders to challenge your faith and renew the church?¹⁰

Kinnaman suggests what is needed is a form of discipleship steeped in relationship, connecting, and mutual growth. Younger generations need seasoned voices coming alongside them to help navigate life’s pitfalls, to validate them on their walk toward maturity, and to introduce them to the Jesus who seeks to abide in them. Scripture does not prescribe a particular discipleship model yet it repeatedly describes the importance of a growing, living faith (Col. 2:6–7; 2 Tim. 3:15–17; Deut. 6:4ff.). Discipleship and evangelism are intricately connected, each informing the other in a mutual relationship. The movement of how faith is passed from person to person is the task of evangelism, a Spirit-filled, divinely mysterious work of God alone. God uses His Body, the Church, to accomplish this vital task. We may not all have the spiritual gift of evangelism, yet all are called to do the work of an evangelist (Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5). Evangelism is at the heart of being Lutheran. In an article surveying a theology of mission within the LCMS, its synodical president, Matthew Harrison speaks to the fundamental task of evangelism: “Bearing witness to the saving good news of God for us in Jesus is the fundamental task of the church (Matt. 28:19).

¹⁰ David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church . . . and Rethinking Faith*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 205.

This leads to the making of disciples.”¹¹ Digging deeper into the stories of Scripture that “bear witness” to the good news one sees how evangelism and making disciples are less about a particular model and more about engaging the person God has placed before them with the Gospel of Christ. Within the context of life-on-life relationships, God works through His effective Word salvation for those who believe in Jesus as Savior. Faith comes as a free gift to the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8; Gal. 2:20).

Historically, evangelism has been a foundational teaching and emphasis in the LCMS.¹² Through the years various methods of evangelism have been used in the local church and communities. Since the launch of Dr. James Kennedy’s Evangelism Explosion in the 1960s several evangelism methods have developed and evolved as each generation sought to meet the needs of a particular era and cultural context: the Kennedy method, Dialogue Evangelism, Contagious Christianity, Friendship Evangelism, Servant Evangelism, and most recently, Everyone His Witness. To address a particular cultural language, evangelism styles were developed and adapted around a particular time, need, and place. All the while, the evangelistic biblical substance, that of presenting the Spirit-transforming Gospel of Christ, has remained constant.

Addressing the Present Need

We find ourselves in a changing world where past models of evangelism are less effective in reaching future generations with the Gospel. A method is needed that more effectively meets

¹¹ Matthew Harrison, “A Theological Statement for Mission for the 21st Century,” *Journal of Lutheran Mission* 3, no. 2 (September 2016): 64.

¹² The Commission on Theology and Church Relations expresses the LCMS’ strong commitment to evangelism from the synod’s humble beginnings as an American church: “Under God’s blessing and through the determined efforts of its first pastors and congregations, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod grew to be one of the largest Protestant church bodies in America by the first decades of this century.” CTCR, *Evangelism and Church Growth: With Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement* (September, 1987), 5.

the needs and language of today's cultural landscape. People are relationally hungry, independent, emotionally numb, tech savvy-dependent, highly skeptical, and creative, yet searching for meaning in life. Will Miller and Glen Sparks have aptly described the crux of the problem in what they term a loss of refrigerator rights relationships: "These relationships are the ones in which the people in our life can literally help themselves to the contents of our refrigerator without needing permission. These are the brothers, sisters, children, parents and others who know us without pretense. They see us in our bathrobe and hear us talk the way our kids hear us talk."¹³ Miller and Sparks argue that we are a people losing the skill and art of building and maintaining relationships. With research to substantiate their claims, the authors ascribe the loss of these relationships is due in part to three major social changes: Increased mobility, the supremacy of individualism, and emotionally numbing distractions such as social media, internet consumption, and television habits.¹⁴ They go on to describe a disconnected and relationally challenged nation shaped by a constant desire of moving, media habits, intensely focused on "me, myself, and I" as the author and driver of life. This lifestyle comes with a steep price tag attached. Played out, it has led to lives of isolation, loneliness, and loss of hope in a greater God-given purpose. Data indicates that in the U.S., we move every five or six years. Not only are we moving more, but we are moving farther away from familial roots.¹⁵ Consider the long-term impact of this: One in seven of us moves each year.¹⁶ Every year there is moving, the scattering of family, and people turning toward social media to meet unmet relational and spiritual needs. This, compounded with the diminishing of relational skills, stands a wide path

¹³ Will Miller and Glenn Sparks, *Refrigerator Rights: Creating Communities and Restoring Relationships* (White River Junction, VT: White River, 2007), 10.

¹⁴ Miller and Sparks, *Refrigerator Rights*, 20.

¹⁵ Miller and Sparks, *Refrigerator Rights*, 89.

¹⁶ Miller and Sparks, *Refrigerator Rights*, 87.

leading many toward surface level connections with others and self-destructive brokenness (Matt. 7:13–14).

As the Church, we have opportunity to speak into the present landscape and strive to build refrigerator rights with the lost around us by pointing them to God incarnate. Through the crucified and risen Christ, the door to life is open for those who would believe (John 10:9–16). This gentle invitation comes from a God of grace who urges: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28–30). Too many attempt to carry their own load, living life apart from their Creator. This project will show how Redeemer Lutheran Church (Rolla, MO), will use Mentorship Training as a method to provide its participants with the knowledge and willingness to foster relationships that lead those in their circles of influence toward conversations about God and faith.

Redeemer began as a mission plant in 1974 with a core group of fifty-nine faithful men and women who sought to have an evangelistic impact on a part of Rolla not yet reached with the Gospel. For the initial few years of existence, they met in the local Lion’s Den, setting up and tearing down on a weekly basis. Over its forty-plus years in existence, four pastors have faithfully served the flock, each averaging ten to thirteen years in tenure. The spirit of evangelism that birthed Redeemer still resides within many who call this church home. Through the years, the congregation has employed several models of evangelism: Kennedy Evangelism, Contagious Christianity, and Charles Arn’s, *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples*. These models served a purpose at their time of implementation, but Redeemer is looking for a method

that more effectively speaks to the culture and demographic in which it finds itself.¹⁷ With the church's rich background in outreach, they seek to once again take a bold step of sharing the Gospel in a way that is more in line with today's culture. After exploring various evangelism models as well as considering the demographic make-up of the local community in which Redeemer is located, the congregational leadership decided Mentorship Training is the best route to implement at this time in its history.

Purpose of the Project

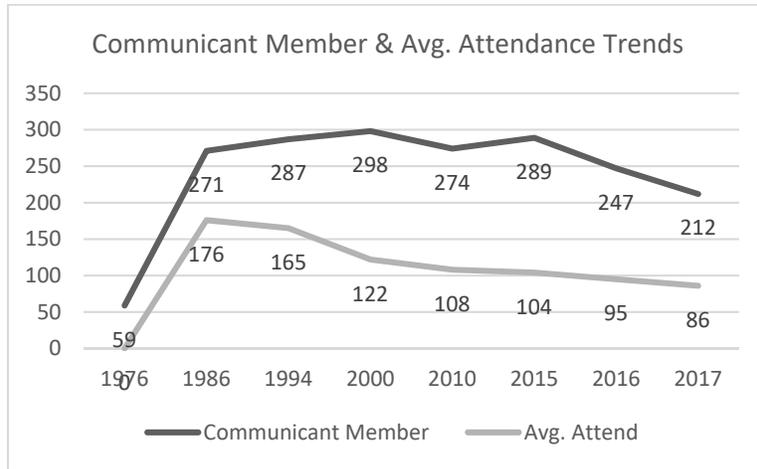
Evangelism is an area of growth for Redeemer.¹⁸ Table 1: "Communicant Member & Average Attendance Trends" visually shows a declining trend at Redeemer of both membership and average attendance through the years. If current Communicant membership and attendance trends continue progressing on this downward path, the viability of the church as an organization may be in question. To address this gaping ministry opportunity, this MAP focuses on launching a Mentorship Training pilot group for the purpose developing a mentor-method approach to evangelism at Redeemer. To accomplish this task, this researcher will seek to equip an initial

¹⁷ See Appendix 9: "Demographic Study: Key Influencers & Markers." The project comprising Appendix 9 was completed as part of an independent study with Dr. William Utech at Concordia Seminary in January 2013. Through observation and local city data, the study sought to gain a better understanding of the demographic and cultural context in which Redeemer is located. See also, Appendix 10: "Giddy Goat Dialogues: An Exercise in Field Research." This report was also part of the same independent study with Dr. Utech in January 2013. As a way to better understand the people of the local community and their impressions of church and Christianity, this researcher organized listening posts as a way to gain insight into the mind of the unchurched and de-churched. The stories they shared were heartbreakingly raw, but real expressions of the pain they felt by those in the Church. Right or wrong, these perceptions hugely impact their future involvement with Christianity.

¹⁸ See Table 1: "Communicant Member & Average Attendance Trends." With fifty-nine charter members, Redeemer exploded on the scene in 1976, bearing sustained growth for ten years following its birth. Based on Redeemer's Annual Report, trends show the church's Communicant Membership and Average Attendance plateauing in 1986. Based on a shift in data, a significant turning point occurred around 1985. Since then, Communicant membership has remained fairly steady while average Sunday worship attendance has been in slow, incremental decline. Of note, beginning in 2016, the Board of Elders has been working to clean up church membership, removing members where there is no contact information, have moved away, died, or have not attended worship, Bible class, or church activity in five years or more.

pilot group with the tools, theological framework, accountability, and encouragement necessary for participants to grow stronger in the perceived knowledge of a theology for evangelism and to gain greater willingness for engaging in such relationships.

Table 1. Communicant Member & Average Attendance Trends



This project will enable the Board of Missions and Elders to create an ongoing evangelism plan that will more effectively reach the Rolla community by building upon mentoring relationships. Evangelism often strikes fear into the hearts of believers. It is the prayer of this researcher that through Mentorship Training, fears would be cast aside and replaced with bold witness for Jesus. Ultimately, the goal is to launch an ongoing Mentorship Training process that will give the laity of Redeemer both the perceived knowledge and boldness necessary to step out and foster relationships with the lost through Mentorship evangelism.

The Mentorship Training pilot group will attend a 10-week intensive course of study on the theology and practice of evangelism employing a combination of methods: Lecture, role-play, discussion, visual media, journaling, social media interaction, and assigned readings. This project builds upon Dr. Luke Biggs’ material, “The Mentor Method of Evangelism”, concepts and readings from Doug Pollock’s *God Space*, David Kinnaman’s *You Lost Me*, and the use of social

media as a tool in the training process. Unlike Biggs' method, I plan to employ a more organic approach to both the training and mentoring relationships. It is anticipated that as a result of this study, pilot group participants will be challenged to both identify and take steps toward engaging an individual using this mentorship-style approach to evangelism.

Anticipated Outcomes

The anticipated project outcomes are:

1. To implement a Mentorship Training group as a pilot for designing an ongoing mentorship process at Redeemer.
2. To assess the perceived growth in knowledge and willingness toward a mentoring relationship among Mentorship Training pilot group participants prior to its launch and one month after completion of training.
3. To make recommendations for an ongoing mentorship process at Redeemer.
4. As a result of being in Mentorship Training, participants will deepen their perceived knowledge and willingness to share their faith with those outside the church within a mentoring relationship.

This project seeks to impact the overall vision of the membership at Redeemer in its perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism. As the number of laity trained in the mentor-method increases, God-willing, a greater sense of ownership in evangelism as the priesthood of believers will occur (1 Pet. 2:9–10). I look forward to partnering with the Board of Missions and Elders in challenging the church's leadership, members, and regular attenders of Redeemer to live out the mentor-method of evangelism in their everyday lives. It is a highly relational method that leads those who have gone through the training out into the community where greater care and incarnational ministry for those on the fringe can take place. No longer is

the mission field solely found in some third world country; it has come home into our own families and places of work, where we shop for food, get our coffee, go to exercise, and even the place we worship.

The Process

The process of this project follows a mixed-methods design to field research, leaning a bit more toward qualitative research with some quantitative methodology mixed in. The process involves six main steps:

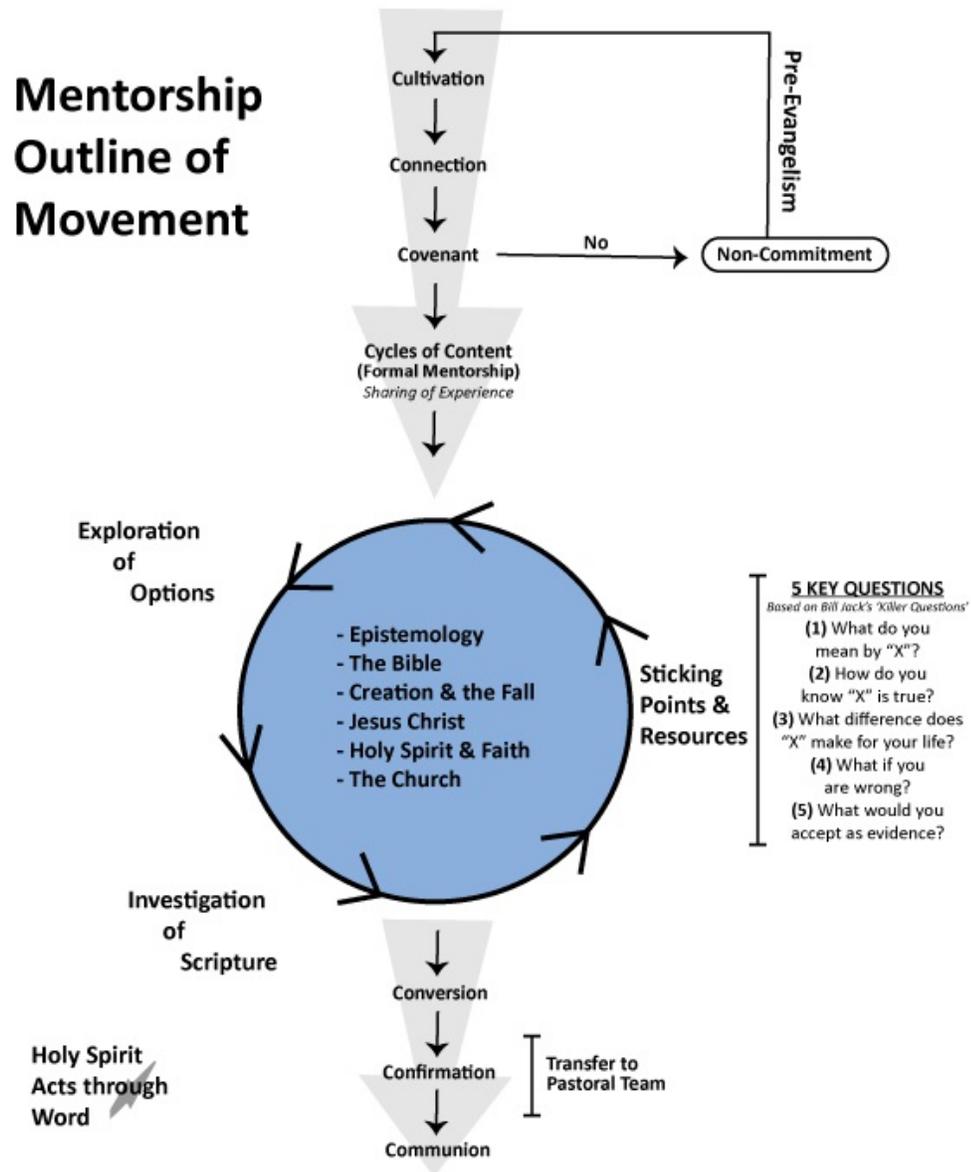
The first step involved establishing a pilot group which would complete an intensive 10-week Mentorship Training course. Through a series of individual conversations, special invitation letters and vision casting meals, I recruited 10 to 15 participants for the initial Mentorship Training pilot group. Participants were selected based upon interest, giftedness in evangelism, and their leadership impact within the church. Those selected for the initial pilot were core leaders of the church who would be instrumental in the official launch of Mentorship at a later date.

Step two incorporated a survey of the 10 to 15 participants of the Mentorship Training pilot group prior to launch using a set of open-ended questions as well as questions measurable to a Likert Scale. The purpose for this assessment was to obtain a baseline of perceived knowledge and willingness in regard to the theology and practice of evangelism. As Survey #1 and #2 were developed, I consulted and employed a mixed-methods approach as described in John Creswell's book, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*.¹⁹

¹⁹ John W. Creswell, *Research and Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994).

Step three involved leading pilot participants through the intensive 10-week Mentorship Training process. It was anticipated that within one month of the completion of this process, through God’s direction and timing, each participant will have identified and begun to engage a relationship that leads toward formal mentorship using the “Mentorship Outline of Movement” as portrayed in Figure 1 below. Mentorship evangelism is best viewed as a Spirit-led process with seven key movements designed to flow naturally into one another. Each component represents a process in and of itself that generally occurs over an extended period of time. The seven components of Mentorship are: Cultivation, Connection, Covenant, Cycles of Content, Conversion, Confirmation, and Communion. Figure 1 highlights the overall flow of the mentoring process as outlined in Mentorship evangelism. Formal mentorship is located during the Cycles of Content phase found in the inner circle seen in Figure 1. Much time, care, discussion, and prayer is spent in the initial phases of relationship cultivation so as to gain trust as well as an opportunity to explore the culture of the person one seeks to mentor. A more in-depth discussion on the steps of Mentorship evangelism will be explored in Chapter Four.

Figure 1. Mentorship Outline of Movement



Step four in the process surveyed pilot group participants one month following the completion of Mentorship Training to assess their perceived knowledge and willingness toward the practice of evangelism. Using a mixed-methods approach for assessment, a modified version of the original survey used in Step 2 was used in Step 4 to assess a potential shift in perceived knowledge of evangelism as well as willingness to share the Gospel. In essence, this researcher

considered before-training and after-training attitudes of pilot group participants. The survey explored how thinking about evangelism changed through Mentorship Training. For future study, it would be fascinating to explore how mentors actually engaged people in mentoring relationships as well as how many individuals being mentored were baptized or became an active part of a church through the mentor-method. Due to the length of time it would take to accomplish such a study, these aspects are not the scope of this MAP.

Step five in the process involved interviewing each member of the Mentorship Training pilot group following the second assessment from Step 4. These exit interviews allowed the researcher to probe further into participant insights regarding perceived growth of knowledge and willingness toward outreach during their actual experience of employing the “Mentorship Outline of Movement.” The exit interviews also gave opportunity to follow up and debrief on survey findings from Step 2 and Step 4.

Lastly, recommendations will be made to the Board of Missions and Elders to consider an official launch of Mentorship Training as a larger scale method of evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Parameters of the Project

This project is intended to strengthen and encourage evangelism knowledge and willingness at Redeemer through a Mentorship Training model. The desired outcome is to foster perceived growth within the study’s pilot group as they engage in mentor-method relationships that lead toward dialogue about God, matters of faith, and discussions of eternal life through the power of the Gospel. The presuppositions for this project include:

1. Individuals and families are not adequately equipped with the tools needed for evangelism.

2. Besides Mentorship, there are a host of other evangelism methods: Kennedy Evangelism, Friendship Evangelism, Relational Evangelism, Servant Evangelism, and Everyone His Witness. This project focuses solely on mentor-method evangelism.
3. Traditional methods of evangelism and outreach at Redeemer are decreasing in effectiveness in their capacity to form disciples who regularly study the Bible, care for one another, and share God's Word.
4. Relationships are an effective way of introducing people to Jesus.
5. Within Redeemer's context, Mentorship Training is the best method to employ.
6. The Elders and Board of Missions are responsible for coming alongside the pastor to provide for proper education and application for sharing the Gospel to those outside the church.
7. The goal in mentorship-style evangelism is not necessarily to lead toward membership at Redeemer, but toward a saving faith through God's grace, into the larger Body of Christ.
8. People drift away from a particular faith community when they feel their spiritual needs are not being met or they are not connected to others in a significant way.

Content of Upcoming Chapters

In the following pages, this project explores mentorship as a form of evangelism, its theology, practice, and implementation at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri. The next chapter, Chapter Two, discusses a theology of evangelism and mission from a Lutheran perspective. Having a better understanding of the *why* and *what* of evangelism better frames and informs the *how* one lives it. The chapter opens with an exploration of the two kinds of righteousness as it relates to the role and function of evangelism. A proper understanding of this tension is vital to keep a practice of mentorship in line with a theology of evangelism that is both

biblically and doctrinally in line with a Lutheran understanding. Next, to flesh out the connection between evangelism and mentorship, the chapter walks through a selection of vignettes from Jesus' ministry demonstrating various mentoring traits that can be beneficial for a formal mentorship.

Chapter Three looks at the originality of the project in how this MAP builds upon and differs from Luke Biggs' original work. Today's cultural landscape is vastly different from the one in which Biggs' original project was completed and could be described as a religious, pluralistic, cultural soup. This chapter explores how Mentorship evangelism is a proven method for speaking into the shifting context of today's Church. Lastly, this chapter explores key opportunities in the present landscape and how the mentor-method of evangelism can meet those needs.

Chapter Four explains the overall design of the project with a step-by-step guide to its completion. The chapter also looks at the various research tools and methodology employed in this project. In the final section of this chapter, significant implementation steps of this project are highlighted.

Chapter Five unpacks the project surveys and interviews by presenting my findings. An analysis of these findings was undertaken in consultation with Dr. Reginald Brigham, professor of mathematics and statistics, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Rolla, Missouri. His expertise proved beneficial to the project research, overall conclusions, and final recommendations of this project.

The closing chapter, Chapter Six, summarizes how the Doctor of Ministry Program enabled me to grow personally and professionally as I saw a felt ministry need in my ministry context and undertook a project to meet that need from dream to implementation and to completion. In

this chapter, the researcher summarizes the project outcomes and draws conclusions regarding its implications for ministry. Lastly, this chapter will explore how the project contributed to the ministry at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, MO, as well as to this researcher's personal and professional growth. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future consideration of Mentorship Training at Redeemer.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

As children of God, but particularly the Church, we have a certain responsibility and duty toward evangelism. While all agree the Church has been given a mission to accomplish, there is disagreement over how that mission is to be carried out. How far does this responsibility go? What is the responsibility of the Church and individual Christian? What is an effective evangelism method? As these questions are explored, a tension quickly arises. On the one hand, it could be said evangelism has nothing to do with our relationship with God. It could also be said evangelism has everything to do with our relationship with God. How can both statements be true? A particularly helpful article discussing this tension is written by Joel Biermann entitled “Stewardship: A Theological Perspective,” which discusses a two-dimensional framework for the Christian life.¹ Although evangelism is not mentioned in Biermann’s article, nor is it a prescriptive approach, its concepts are easily transferable and important to this discussion.

To understand God’s will for the Church as a mouthpiece for the Gospel, the initial section of this chapter will explore the two-dimensional basis of the Christian identity through the two kinds of righteousness. This identity is the foundation upon which evangelism finds meaning and expression in the Christian life. The Missouri Synod has a rich tapestry of thought on the topic of evangelism upon which to build. This chapter also explores some of the particular weavings of

¹ For a helpful discussion on a balanced framework and understanding of the theology and practice of evangelism, two articles are essential reading. First, David Peter’s “Identifying Authorities in Theological Practice: Evangelism and Congregational Outreach,” *Concordia Journal* 30, no. 3 (July 2004): 203–16. Second, Robert Kolb’s “Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness: Reflections on His Two-Dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of His Theology,” *Lutheran Quarterly* 13 (1999): 449–66.

this tapestry by exploring a selection of key markers for a theology of mission from a Lutheran understanding. With this backdrop, the chapter closes with an exploration of three vignette within Jesus’ ministry that demonstrate His use of various mentoring traits. While not mentorship as defined in this project, the examples highlight skills that can benefit a formal mentorship.

Two Kinds of Righteousness and Evangelism

As we begin to paint a picture of sorts, we start by setting up the easel and preparing the base upon which the canvas will be set. We start with the parameters of evangelism by exploring with broad strokes, the framework through which a Lutheran understanding of evangelism takes place. It begins with God. When it comes to living as a Christian, there are two dimensions in how one relates to God—an active and passive element—described as two kinds of righteousness. The two dimensions are the righteousness of the Gospel (the justified life) and the righteousness of the Law (the sanctified life), both grounded upon the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.² One dimension comes freely through the blood of Jesus’ atonement as a gift of God’s merciful grace. The other dimension is our response to God’s gracious gift of redemption on the cross, alive in the Christian through the bearing of fruit in one’s life for the benefit of others.

In a 1519 treatise, “Two Kinds of Righteousness”, Martin Luther speaks of the relationship between justification and sanctification in the Christian life.³ This righteousness of God,

² In *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, J.I. Packer describes two kinds of righteousness in a three-part relationship: God’s sovereignty, man’s responsibility, and the religious duty of the Christian. He goes on to define and discuss our responsibility toward and the relationship of an evangelism born out of a relationship with a sovereign God and His Word. In light of the Gospels and Paul’s ministry, Packer offers a helpful section in chapter 3 outlining key markers for a balanced definition, message, motive, and means of evangelism. See J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008).

³ Based on Philippians 2:5–6, Martin Luther preached a Palm Sunday sermon (1519), affirming two kinds of righteousness. It is a sermon early in his career, already showing the formation of thought around the topic as he

bestowed as a gift through the righteousness of Christ, is at work within the sinful Christian to kill the old Adam (1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9). It is a righteousness which comes to the Christian through Christ as a free gift, which then reflects through the Christian to others. Luther powerfully speaks to the relationship of the two forms, as grounded in Christ and His atoning work, through the following:

Therefore it hates itself and loves its neighbor; it does not seek its own good, but that of another, and in this its whole way of living consists. For in that it hates itself and does not seek its own, it crucifies the flesh. Because it seeks the good of another, it works love. Thus in each sphere it does God's will, living soberly with self, justly with neighbor, devoutly toward God.

This righteousness follows the example of Christ in this respect (1 Pet. 2:21) and is transformed into his likeness (2 Cor. 3:18). It is precisely this that Christ requires. Just as he himself did all things for us, not seeking his own good but ours only—and in this he was most obedient to God the Father—so he desires that we also should set the same example for our neighbors.⁴

The above treatise was formed early in Luther's career. It was a topic he would often return to as a core piece of Lutheran theology. He frequently spoke on the topic of righteousness, knowing his views countered established teaching and practice of the time.⁵ He makes the strong argument of referring to righteousness as "our theology" in the introductory remarks for his commentary to the Galatians [1535]. Luther goes on to speak plainly and clearly about the presence and relationship of two kinds of righteousness:

This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and

applies evangelism to the life of the everyday Christian. See Martin Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness", *Luther's Works: Career of the Reformer I*, American Edition, vol. 31, ed. Harold J. Grimm (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1957), 293–306.

⁴ Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness," 300.

⁵ Robert Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness: Reflections on His Two-Dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of His Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 13 (1999): 461.

grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits.⁶

While both kinds of righteousness are necessary, Lutherans have tended to lean heavily upon the first kind of righteousness while giving a mere nod toward the latter. The Christian is saved by grace through faith in Christ's redemptive act on the cross and empty tomb (Eph. 2:8–9). That is not the end of the believer's story. God in Christ seeks to work in the Christian for the sake of the world. For those who believe, life does not end in the moment of conversion but finds new beginning. The Christian grows and matures through a lifetime of taking up the cross and following Jesus through the power of His Word. In this journey both active and passive parts of righteousness are at work, in forming the relationship of life *through the cross* and life *on the cross* with Jesus.

Martin Luther's understanding of righteousness rests upon viewing it through the lens of relationships—with God and with others. In describing Luther's distinction between the active and passive elements of the two kinds of righteousness, Robert Kolb argues: "Human life consists of two kinds of relationship, one with the author and creator of life, the other with all other creatures (Matt. 22:37–39)."⁷ What is it to be righteous? Simply put, to be righteous is to be the creature God created it to be. There is both a vertical and horizontal element to the Christian's rightness before their Creator. In the vertical, God sent His one and only Son to make right the relationship broken by sin (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12–18). In the horizontal, we steward the creation God placed within our grasp out of a response to the love He has first shown us. The vertical element is *passive*, it comes to the Christian as a free gift through Jesus while the horizontal element is *active*, it flows through the believer to those God places in their life. The

⁶ Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 449.

⁷ Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 452.

passive and active dimensions of righteousness are connected, inseparable, yet in relationship with Christ at its crux.⁸ Kolb continues:

Human life is cruciform—eyes lifted to focus on God, feet firmly planted on his earth, arms stretched out in mutual support of those God has placed around us. Having the focus of our lives directed toward Christ inevitably extends our arms to our neighbors. Human beings are truly human, that is, right or functioning properly (according to the design for human righteousness that God made) when their identity does express itself in the activities that flow from that identity.⁹

As the Christian lives their new grace-given life in Christ, it informs the very fabric of their daily existence.¹⁰ Life lived at the crux of these two dimensions forms our identity and shapes our performance.¹¹ At heart, one could describe the two dimensions as: How the Christian relates to God and how they live out that faith in the context of human relationships. The Law and the Gospel take an active part in the life of the Christian. By faith the evangelistic task stands before the Christian as they actively perform the task of sharing faith, handing out Gospel-tracts, building of relational trust, or performing acts of kindness to those needing God’s transforming Gospel. At the same time, the Christian passively lives under the crossbeams of God’s incarnational work of grace, whereby the Lord Himself speaks and brings a declarative word of salvation and forgiveness into the follower of Christ (Rom. 3:21–26; 5:1–11).

Evangelism is not optional. If one claims to be *in Christ* and confesses the truths of the Christian faith as found in scripture, he cannot hide behind the camouflage of the Gospel.¹² True,

⁸ Timothy Saleska, “The Two Kinds of Righteousness!: What’s a Preacher to Do?” *Concordia Journal* 33, no. 2 (April 2007): 141.

⁹ Kolb, “Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness,” 455–56.

¹⁰ Charles Arand would describe their relationship as a balance: “An overemphasis on one dimension of the church at the expense of the other not only results in a confusion of the two kinds of righteousness but more often than not it also results in conflict and controversy within the church.” Charles Arand, “A Two-Dimensional Understanding of the Church for the Twenty-First Century,” *Concordia Journal* 33, no. 2 (2007): 157.

¹¹ Kolb, “Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness,” 464.

¹² Joel Biermann, “Stewardship: A Theological Perspective,” vol. 1, 2nd ed. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, *Congregational Stewardship Handbook*, 2012, 13.

the Christian lives *by* grace, *under* grace, and *through* grace a living Word of Gospel. In this life, the Christian strives not to only take up the cross, but to carry it and follow as the Lord leads (Matt. 16:24). For many, however, the cross becomes a destination rather than the launching point for a new life. After all, which is easier, taking up a cross or following? Too often, people choose comfort over faithfulness, routine over obedience, immediacy over abiding, and fear over trust. Being in Christ means one takes seriously the Father's business of making disciples, knowing that lives are at stake. With such a life, the Jesus inside the believer cannot help but reflect from their words, actions, and faith. The Light of the Lord's love is no longer hidden or camouflaged as personal fears are abandoned and replaced with zeal for sharing and living the Gospel.

As previously discussed, the Christian has a certain responsibility for evangelism. It is a responsibility flowing from the authority given by Jesus to the Church as expressed in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18–20). Good theology leads to a life of evangelism. One informs the other as Joel Biermann states: “God gives a man Christ’s forgiveness, and then immediately compels that man to return to the world and his responsibilities within the world. . . . Redemption in Christ does not negate, but reaffirms the pursuit of mundane creaturely existence.”¹³ The Christian is saved for a purpose (Gen. 12:2). Our responsibility is to “make disciples” as expressed in the Great Commission given by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ Himself. Luther beautifully illustrates a similar point in his introductory comments on Galatians: “When I have this righteousness within me, I descend from heaven like the rain that makes the earth fertile. That is, I come forth into another kingdom, and I perform good works whenever the opportunity

¹³ Biermann, “Stewardship: A Theological Perspective,” 5.

arises.”¹⁴ Let the Church rain upon the parched world His grace, truth, and love, serving and meeting the needs of the people in our communities, churches, and homes so as to point them to the Jesus working in and through the Christian.¹⁵ Our Lutheran theology and Confessions call for evangelism. May I be so bold as to suggest that it demands it. Along these lines, in an essay on stewardship, Joel Biermann speaks words that could also be applied to evangelism. Thus, I ask the reader to replace each reference of “stewardship” with “evangelism” from his essay’s closing remarks in light of evangelism: “The gospel does not negate or displace stewardship; it restores the creature to a life of responsible stewardship. Good theology yields good stewardship; more than that, good theology demands good stewardship.”¹⁶

A Theology of Evangelism

Gregory Seltz urges: “To be more effective witnesses to the gospel in the modern, multicultural context, the Lutheran church must take its theology *more* seriously, not less.”¹⁷ As a confessional church, it is time to make confession of the faith among the nations. Our theology and responsibility for evangelism is shaped by God’s Word and our confessional understanding. Evangelism is our calling as the Church today, but where does this calling originate? How might the Church faithfully make disciples in accordance to Lutheran understanding and practice?

¹⁴ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works, Lectures on Galatians (1535), Chapters 1–4*, American Edition, vol. 26, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Concordia, 1963), 12.

¹⁵ The hymn, “Salvation Unto Us Has Come” by Paul Speratus (1484-1531) beautifully illustrates two kinds of righteousness: “Faith clings to Jesus’ cross alone And rests in Him unceasing; And by its fruits true faith is known, with love and hope increasing. For faith alone can justify; Works serve our neighbor and supply The proof that faith is living.” Paul Speratus, “Salvation Unto Us Has Come,” in *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006), 555, v.9.

¹⁶ Please note, for effect, this author replaced Biermann’s original word *stewardship* with *evangelism*. See Biermann, “Stewardship: A Theological Perspective,” 13.

¹⁷ Gregory Seltz, “Empowering Confident Confessor-Servant Evangelists Twenty-First-Century Multicultural Mission Work,” *Concordia Journal* 40, no. 3 (2014): 206.

Evangelism is not a mere suggestion from our confessional teachings but a God-given impulse and heartbeat to the Body of believers, finding its grounding in the Lord Himself. This section will explore some of the foundational teachings from our Confessional heritage that have shaped a theology of mission as well as grounding a practice of evangelism and outreach in the Missouri Synod.

The Lutheran church has long prided itself on being a confessional Body. What does it mean to be confessional? Creeds themselves are an evangelical act, that when spoken, thought, or read are an act of confession that give voice to certain belief. Confessing faith is part of being Christian, faith leads to confession. Robert Kolb rightly states: “Lutherans see themselves as ‘confessional’ and thus ‘confessing.’”¹⁸ Thus, this section begins with a look at a selection of voices who have confessed the faith through the centuries. In particular, we shall explore evangelism from a broad vantage point, illuminating the path we are on concerning Mentorship evangelism. To note, the Confessions were not written as an evangelism tract or treatise for outreach. There is, however, a clear foundation for evangelism woven within the fabric of their teaching as the Confessions provide the lens and foundation for our Christian witness.

Evangelism Foundations

Without question, evangelism has a long, rich history of thought and practice within the LCMS. Various evangelism methods have been practiced through the years: Dialogue Evangelism, the Ablaze Movement, and most recently, Everyone His Witness.¹⁹ There have also been moments of tension and great debate around particular methods and terminology such as

¹⁸ Robert Kolb, *Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church, 1530–1580* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1991), 9.

¹⁹ See Dean Nadasdy’s article, “Our Destination in Outreach” for a helpful discussion on recent programmatic shifts in evangelism practice within the LCMS. See Dean Nadasdy, “Our Destination in Outreach,” *The Lutheran Layman* 84, no. 3 (May–June 2013): 1, 3–5.

the Church Growth Movement (1980s and 90s) and the Emerging Church movement (2000s).²⁰ Lutheran theology and synodical practice have traditionally allowed congregations the freedom to choose the evangelism method that work best within its particular context. While the *style* of the message can be adapted to fit a particular time or place, the Lutheran *substance* must never be compromised. The tension lies in selecting a program that meets the proper balance of style and substance while remaining true to our confessional identity as Lutherans. In the past, some programs placed too much emphasis upon man to create conversion or programs that were little more than a stepped-out sales pitch. While the LCMS has not prescribed to a particular method of evangelism, it is understood that methods will vary depending upon the cultural and historical context.²¹ Evangelism is more art than science. Thus, we begin by turning to one of the Church fathers of the LCMS, Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the first synodical president, who provides some of the most succinct and profound words on the importance and priority of evangelism:

You see, dear brothers, . . . we are assembled here not for our own sake. We are in the faith, and by this faith we hope to be saved! But there are still many millions who have no faith! This is why we are here . . . so that we might bring salvation to as many people as we possibly can, so that the sad situation in Christendom and the corruption of the poor, blind heathen might be remedied. . . . Only for this reason does our gracious God allow Christians to live on earth, that they might bring others to the saving faith. Otherwise God would immediately take a Christian to heaven as soon as he is converted.²²

Along the same lines, at an address given to the first Iowa District Convention, Walther again underscores the importance and priority of evangelism for the Church:

²⁰ A helpful document highlighting the theological distinctions of evangelism and the Church Growth Movement debate is the report produced by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Evangelism and Church Growth: With Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement*. September, 1987.

²¹ The CTCR provides helpful guidance on principles to use when selecting a method of evangelism: “The Lutheran church has always maintained that specific strategies for missions are neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture. The church is at liberty, therefore, to determine how it will organize its mission program.” CTCR, *Evangelism and Church Growth*, 23–24.

²² C.F.W. Walther, *Essays for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), 2:60–62.

This is worth noting that Luther was so deeply moved, when he considered how disappointing it is, when God produces a congregation through the seed of His Word, and then this congregation insists on being barren, refusing to become a spiritual mother so that others can be added to the Church. He says, “God will demand an accounting for the souls of all our descendants whom we failed to serve and save.”²³

Walther’s passion for evangelism is clear. Martin Luther shared this same passion for evangelism, writing: “The greatest work that follows from faith is this: that with my mouth I should confess Christ . . . so that others also may be brought to believe.”²⁴ Evangelism has been a priority and emphasis of the LCMS from its humble beginnings.

The Centrality of God’s Word for Evangelism

For Lutherans, God’s Word is central to evangelism.²⁵ Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that the Bible²⁶ is the source and norm of doctrine: “They are the normative source for the Gospel which is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Rom. 1:16).”²⁷ In its basic form, evangelism is telling the good news about Jesus Christ. Erwin Kolb provides a succinct definition of evangelism: “Telling the Good News about Jesus Christ, His life, suffering, death, and resurrection is the basic meaning of the word evangelism.”²⁸ He goes on to say that the Bible is the source of this Good News. Evangelism is the act of sharing the message of Jesus’ life and death for a creation broken with and in bondage to sin.²⁹ Through the blood of Jesus’

²³ C.F.W. Walther, “Duties of an Evangelical Synod” (Iowa District Convention, 1879) quoted in Committee on Theology and Church Relations, “Toward a Theological Basis, Understanding and Use of Church Growth Principles in the LCMS” (St. Louis, 1991), 10.

²⁴ Martin Luther, *The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude: Preached and Explained* (Apollo, PA: Ichthus, 2016), 43.

²⁵ SA III, VIII, 10.

²⁶ FC SD Rule and Norm, 3, 9; VII, 45.

²⁷ Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. *Evangelism and Church Growth with Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement* (September 1987), Part 1, 1.2.

²⁸ Erwin Kolb, “A Statement for Discussion in the Church on Evangelism and Witness,” *Concordia Journal* 12, no. 1 (Jan 1996): 17.

²⁹ FC SD 1, 5.

atoning sacrifice He offers forgiveness for sins to those who would believe. While all are called to be about the task of evangelism, not all have the gift. Due to individual giftedness and personality, some have greater effectiveness at evangelism than others (Eph. 4:11–12; 2 Tim. 4:5). This, however, does not negate the Christian from sharing their faith as there are many ways to witness. Some ways are spoken while others may be through how the Christian lives their everyday life.³⁰ The goal of evangelism is to make disciples (Matt. 28:18–20). Luke Biggs equates the making of disciples in evangelism with the mission of God: “Witnessing and evangelism are essential to this end. These are the primary tasks through which God involves individuals in His church to bring those who are lost to Himself. Witness and evangelism form the heart and core of God’s mission work.”³¹

As Luther penned the Smalcald Articles, he paints a clear picture concerning the message and function of evangelism. He argues that one’s salvation fully leans upon the life, death and resurrection of Christ as the only means by which we are made right with God: “Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification. He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and God has laid upon Him the iniquities of us all.”³² We are all born sinful, due to the disobedience and Fall of Adam in the Garden, corrupting all of creation (Gen. 3).³³ The Christian stands guilty before God, incapable of removing that sin themselves, deserving punishment and death for the sin they have committed. Yet by God’s merciful grace, He sends Jesus to take the punishment for man’s sin, and gives complete

³⁰ As Erwin Kolb points out, “Believers also witness by their lives.” While true, there comes a point when words must be put to faith: “The message of reconciliation through Jesus Christ must be communicated in words.” Faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Erwin Kolb, “A Statement for Discussion in the Church on Evangelism and Witness,” 18.

³¹ Biggs, “Mentor Method of Evangelism,” 27.

³² SA II, I, 1–2.

³³ SA III, I, 2–4.

forgiveness and restoration through the redemption of Christ on the cross (Rom. 3:21–26; 4:5).

Luther speaks a similar, yet more succinct message in his explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith, just as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.³⁴

This is the message of the Gospel expressed in evangelism, a message built solely upon the Means of Grace: The Word of God and His Sacraments.³⁵ It is a message built upon the promises of Christ as proclaimed in His Word, given as a gift from God to the believer through the Holy Spirit. Through such faith in Christ, His righteousness becomes our righteousness.³⁶ By His wounds we are healed as the Christian is rescued from the dominion of darkness to the dominion of light (Isa. 52:13–53:12; Col. 1:13).

Evangelism is led and empowered by the Holy Spirit through His Word, not driven by man, but led by God's grace (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). What God speaks in His Word, He does

³⁴ Martin Luther, *Luther's Small Catechism: With Explanation* (St. Louis, Concordia, 2017), 17. In discussing the establishment of the Church as God's chosen tool for Kingdom growth solely through the power of the Gospel, Edward Koehler writes: "The Church is not built and preserved by the Law, nor by human measures and methods, nor by political force or ecclesiastical organization, but solely by the means of the Gospel. We make men disciples of Christ by teaching them to observe what Christ commanded. . . . Mission work is the chief business of the Church (Isa. 40:9)." Edward W.A. Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine: A Popular Presentation of the Teachings of the Bible; King James Edition* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1952), 242.

³⁵ AC IV, V, 1–3: "People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins." A Lutheran understanding of evangelism teaches that Word and Sacrament are essential: "We must constantly maintain this point: God does not want to deal with us in any other way than through the spoken Word and the Sacraments. Whatever is praised as from the Spirit—without the Word and Sacrament—is the devil himself." SA III viii 10. See also SA III, XIII; FC Ep III; FC SD XI 75–79.

³⁶ FCIII, 13: Faith justifies because it "lays hold of and accepts Christ's merit in the promise of the Holy Gospel." In the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, Philip Melancthon describes the relationship of faith and Gospel thus: Faith in Christ comes to the Christian as free gift, making right the broken relationship marred by sin. He continues: "The Gospel convicts all people that they are under sin, that they are subject to eternal wrath and death. It offers, for Christ's sake, forgiveness of sin and justification, which is received through faith." Ap IV (II) 62.

(Isa. 55:11). Evangelism is God’s will; He desires all men to be saved. In speaking of this desire, Francis Pieper writes:

God’s gracious will in Christ is not some sort of *laissez-faire attitude*, which does not go beyond a half-hearted, idle wish (*otiose complacentia, nuda velleitas*), but God has set His heart on the conversion of all men and puts His full power into the means of grace to effect His purpose.³⁷

The central teaching of the Lutheran faith is justification. Oswald Bayer argues justification is the “starting point for all theology and it affects every other topic.”³⁸ Too often, Christians trivialize or overlook the importance of justification. Yet, it is the all-encompassing core of Lutheran theology, its finger on the pulse of everything the Church says and does. According to a report by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations: “Faith is a gift of God, that is, it is worked in a sinner by God alone through the means of grace without any cooperation, effort, work, inclination, will, decision, movement, activity or merit of man.”³⁹ Luke Biggs argues evangelism happens not out of some obligation to obeying God’s command, but as a product of the Holy Spirit. Evangelism “is a natural outcome of faith.” He goes on to say: “Because it is a product of faith, no church must ask the question of whether or not to do evangelism. No! Where there is faith, evangelism will follow.”⁴⁰

The Holy Spirit is alive and active in confession, since it is the Spirit who gives birth to faith inside the Christian (1 Cor. 12:3). Faith is a working of the Holy Spirit who enlivens, sustains, and gives voice to the Spirit’s work within the Christian (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Thess. 2:14).⁴¹

³⁷ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1951), 2:28.

³⁸ Oswald Bayer, “Justification as the Basis and Boundary of Theology,” *Justification is for Preaching*, ed. Virgil Thompson (Eugene: Pickwick, 2012), 32.

³⁹ Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, *Theses on Justification* (May 1983), 16.

⁴⁰ Biggs, “Mentor Method of Evangelism,” 33–34.

⁴¹ For a helpful explanation of the Holy Spirit’s work in beginning and sustaining faith, and ultimately a confession of faith, of particular importance are Luther’s explanations in the Small Catechism: “The Holy Spirit

Concerning the connection of confession and faith, Kolb rightly says: “Confession is literally ‘from faith and for faith’ whenever the dynamic power of God’s Good News is restated in human words (Rom. 1:16–17).”⁴² Along these lines, while commenting on the Gospel of John, Martin Luther speaks of the transformation of faith that occurs within the Christian through the working of the Holy Spirit:

When a Christian begins to know Christ as his Lord and Savior, who has redeemed him from death, and is brought into His dominion and heritage, his heart is thoroughly permeated by God; then he would like to help everybody attain this blessedness . . . so he begins to teach and exhort others, confess and commend his blessedness before everybody, and sighs and prays that they, too, may come to this grace.⁴³

As faith deepens and grows within the Christian through the working of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is at work within the individual Christian and the Church to grow evangelism. Evangelism is not a product of man, but wrought of God alone.

brought me to Jesus by bringing the promise of the Gospel to me and by giving me faith in Christ through that Gospel. . . . Apart from the Holy Spirit, I am spiritually blind and dead and thus cannot trust in Christ. . . . Apart from the Holy Spirit, I actively resist the Gospel’s call to faith in Christ. . . . Through the Gospel, the Spirit both invites and enables me to believe by promising me a new life on the basis of Christ’s death and resurrection.” Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism*, 196–97.

In a lecture on Galatians 3:19, Martin Luther speaks of the purpose of the Law as leading the Christian to realize their proper place before God and His creation. God works through the Law to bring death to the old Adam of sin at work within the Christian so as to bring about a resurrection through Jesus Christ. For there to be a resurrection, death must occur. Luther illustrates how God uses the Law to point the Christian toward the Gospel as a “minister and a preparation for grace.” Luther continues: “For God is the God of the humble, the miserable, the afflicted, the oppressed, the desperate, and of those who have been brought down to nothing at all. And it is the nature of God to exalt the humble, to feed the hungry, to enlighten the blind, to comfort the miserable and afflicted, to justify sinners, to give life to the dead, and to save those who are desperate and damned. For He is the almighty Creator, who makes everything out of nothing.” *LW* 26: 314.

⁴² Kolb, *Confessing the Faith*, 17.

⁴³ Martin Luther, “Commentary on St. John,” quoted in Committee on Theology and Church Relations, *Toward a Theological Basis, Understanding and Use of Church Growth Principles in the LCMS* (St. Louis: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1991), 9.

The Relationship of Evangelism, Missions, and Sending

In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther describes the mission of the Church thus: “To confess and proclaim the forgiveness of sins for Jesus’ sake (1) by providing the Word, administering the Sacraments, sending missionaries, and establishing new congregations and (2) by the daily witness of the baptized children of God, His royal priesthood.”⁴⁴ What does carrying out this mission look like for the Christian? What is the relationship of mission, evangelism, and being sent by God with the Great Commission? At various times through the years, there has been confusion around the relationship of evangelism and missions. Evangelism seeks to put feet and words to God’s mission, it *enfleshes* the Word made flesh. Thus, to speak of evangelism is to speak of mission as God’s overarching vision for the lost. Evangelism and mission are distinct yet inseparable, different yet closely related. In a collection of essays on evangelism, Paul Chilcote and Lacey Warner describe a broad and narrow sense to evangelism and mission. They argue that mission pertains to the broad scope of God’s desire for all to be saved while evangelism puts feet to the ground for that mission.⁴⁵ Evangelism is the core, heart, and center of mission: “In short, evangelism emerges as a complex set of formational practices at the heart of God’s mission for the Church in the world.”⁴⁶ God’s mission broadly described in the Great Commission as “making disciples”, narrows focus as evangelism takes this mission into the lives of people, putting flesh and bone around a ministry of baptizing and teaching all He has commanded (Matt. 28:18–20).

⁴⁴ Luther, *Small Catechism*, 215–16.

⁴⁵ Bosch describes evangelism as the “proclamation of salvation in Christ to nonbelievers, in announcing forgiveness of sins, in calling people to repentance and faith in Christ, in inviting them to become living members of Christ’s earthly community and to begin a life in the power of the Holy Spirit.” David Bosch, “Evangelism: Theological Currents and Cross-Currents Today”, Paul Chilcote and Lacey Warner, eds., *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 9.

⁴⁶ Chilcote and Warner, *Study of Evangelism*, 3.

Evangelism finds its origin in an incarnational, sending God. Scripture is filled with prophets *sent* with messages to give, ordinary men and women *sent* with divinely mandated tasks to perform, disciples *sent* with ministry to perform, and even God’s own Son is *sent* with a purpose to complete. Sending is at the heart of what the Lord does. Thus, it is a mark of the Christian church. Several words are used in the New Testament for the *sending* task of evangelism. It would be fascinating to do a complete word study on the word “evangelism” in its many forms through the New Testament, but due to the time and space required for such an endeavor, we focus our attention on three primary Greek words used for evangelism.⁴⁷ The first is *euangelizo* meaning “to tell the good news” (Rom. 1:16–17). The word is used 118 times in the New Testament, eighty-two within the context of proclamation.⁴⁸ Another word for evangelism is *kerruso*, meaning “to proclaim, preach.” The word is used fifty-nine times. Lastly, is *martureo* meaning “to witness, tell it how it is.” Interestingly, all three of the above primary words used for evangelism indicate an approach involving the proclamation of words. To tell, to proclaim, to preach, to witness; all describe a speaking action, regardless of conversion or method. Thus, the main task of evangelism regardless of culture, time, or place, is telling the good news of the eternal hope the Christian has in and through Christ, leaving the conversion up to God (Ps. 36:9; Col. 1:5–8). Words as seeds of the Gospel are planted as God seeks to nurture growth that leads to heaven itself.

⁴⁷ Michael Green has a helpful and more complete discussion of the primary Greek words most often used in reference to “evangelism.” Other words used for evangelism in the New Testament include: “suzetein” (“to debate, to patiently compare”); “dialegethai” (“to argue persuasively”); and “didaskelien” (“to teach”). See Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 76–115.

⁴⁸ Carl Madearis, *Speaking of Jesus: The Art of Not-Evangelism* (Colorado Springs: David Cook, 2011), 125.

Evangelism is Grounded in Words

Life is grounded in words. Jacob Preus beautifully illustrates this point: “When spoken or read, words make something happen. Communication through words is an event. This is true of any communication, but it is especially true of communication with the Gospel because the Gospel is the Word of God.”⁴⁹ We are created by a God who loves to use words to communicate His love for His beloved. He spoke in creation: “Let there be light.” And it was so. God spoke and life came into being. Nations have risen and fallen, all with a word. Christ is the *Word* made flesh who “made his dwelling among us.”⁵⁰ God reveals Himself to us through His Word as a Triune God—Father, Son, Spirit—working together to bring about a new creation. This Word comes to dwell with His creation in order to save it. More than letters inked to page, the Word is alive and active as it cuts, lays bare, heals, forgives (Heb. 4:12–13). We hear words from a cross. “Father forgive them” (Luke 23:34). “I am thirsty” (John 19:28). “It is finished” (John 19:30). Words have meaning, power, and hope. God’s Word does what it says and says what it does.⁵¹ We are surrounded by *the Word*.

Evangelism is grounded in words. This Word of God “comes to us through words, and not apart from them”⁵² as it seeks to speak to us and through us an eternal word of life. The apostle Paul also saw the power of words as he writes how “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17). God has given the Church a message to tell among a broken, sinful world: “Their sins are forgiven; they are declared innocent because of the work of

⁴⁹ Jacob A.O. Preus, *Just Words: Understanding the Fullness of the Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000), 17–18.

⁵⁰ John 1:14, New International Version.

⁵¹ Preus, *Just Words*, 18.

⁵² Preus, *Just Words*, 213.

Jesus Christ God's own Son, on their behalf. The Gospel is Good News."⁵³ It is a wonderful, living word to proclaim.

The Church has been given a word to speak. Alvin Reid is correct in his assessment: "The world has changed, the Gospel has not."⁵⁴ This is not a time for the Church to be silent. Evangelism is not about fancy programs, but opening the Lion's cage to let the Word speak for Himself. One can take comfort in the Spirit's presence in evangelism as He alone is the bringer of conversion. As Robert Kolb comforts: "The Holy Spirit will take our frail estimations and our frail words and do His work not because of us but even, when He must, in spite of us."⁵⁵

We return to the place we first began: Being a confessional church means we are a confessing church. The question is, what is that witness? How effective are present methods? Are lives being transformed by the renewing of the Gospel? As Kolb challenges: "The fact is, believers do not have the choice of witnessing or not. They only choose whether to witness better or less effectively."⁵⁶ Believers are great at complicating evangelism and making it more difficult than it needs to be. Evangelism is not about employing a particular formula or packaged program. At its core, evangelism is loving people, caring for them, and meeting their needs while pointing them toward the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. It is about sharing the good news of the Word made flesh in a developing relationship grounded upon a word. Not just any word, but Jesus Christ Himself. After all,

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" (Rom. 10:14–15).

⁵³ Robert Kolb, *Speaking the Gospel Today* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1995), 15.

⁵⁴ Alvin Reid, *Evangelism Handbook: Biblical, Spiritual, Intentional, Missional* (Nashville: B&H, 2009), 2.

⁵⁵ Kolb, *Speaking the Gospel*, 264.

⁵⁶ Kolb, *Speaking the Gospel*, 14.

Scripture is clear concerning God's intent for evangelism: For all people to be "saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). This rescue mission has been occurring since creation and the Fall of Adam and Eve and continues through Revelation as the Lord is preparing a new heaven and new earth for those who believe (Gen. 3:15; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rev. 21). It is a mission that finds a home in Jesus. He is the greatest evangelist. After all, He authored it. There is much the Church can learn from Jesus concerning evangelism. We now turn our attention to that Word made flesh, as we seek to gain insight into a mentoring style of evangelism from the Lord Himself.

Traits of Mentorship in the Gospels

The heart and goal for Mentorship Training is that people would be led through the Spirit's transforming power toward a saving relationship in Jesus Christ. God's call to reach the lost is the foundation for Mentorship evangelism. Thus, to better understand the importance of and our responsibility toward evangelism it is vital to look at the source of this appeal as found in God's Word, allowing His Word made flesh to speak for Himself. There are several texts scattered throughout Scripture that paint the picture of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—on a mission to gather and restore a sinful and broken creation unto Himself. These passages show all three persons of the Trinity actively working to expand the Lord's Kingdom to the next generation and beyond. As the Bride of Christ, the Church has a special role in this task where Jesus' purpose becomes our mission (John 19:10). In the Kingdom work He began, we carry forth through the Spirit's power into present and future generations. The scope of this final section is not intended to be a comprehensive exploration of God's missional activity but a focused look at a selection of examples from the Gospels that show Jesus' passion to gather, restore, and bring about salvation in the lost through elements of mentoring.

Mentorship is not a new phenomenon.⁵⁷ To be clear, nowhere in scripture is a process of mentorship explicitly presented, yet one can see a pattern of mentoring relationships from beginning to end. Rick Lewis highlights this trend: “Just as Moses was helped by Jethro to be his best, he in turn helped Joshua to rise up in leadership. Paul, having been helped by Barnabas, reached out to assist Timothy’s leadership development.”⁵⁸ Similarly, in their book entitled *With*, Alvin Reid and George Robinson speak of the mentoring relationship Jesus had with His disciples: “Jesus spoke to multitudes. He fed thousands. He taught many. He sent out seventy to witness, as recorded in Luke 10. Yet His plan to change the world began with only twelve (Matthew 10). Perhaps most striking is that Jesus poured Himself especially into three: Peter, James, and John.”⁵⁹ Jesus took people with Him wherever He went through the ordinary moments of life, modeling a faith and life shaped by the cross. Within the context of relationships, Jesus brings a message of hope, forgiveness, and light to places of darkness (John 8:12; Eph. 5:8). While not prescriptive of a particular approach, Jesus demonstrates a variety of mentoring traits and methods in His ministry as He seeks to connect people to the heavenly Father in a living way.⁶⁰ Jesus taught, served, encouraged, performed miracles, ate with sinners,

⁵⁷ The first modern use of the term “mentor” is attributed to Francois Fenelon in his book, *The Adventures of Telemachus* (1699). Fenelon was responsible for guiding the formation of a future king of France, the grandson of Louis XIV. In his book, he points to Homer’s *Odyssey*. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus goes off to battle in the Trojan War and ends up traveling an epic journey. While away, Odysseus charges his young son, Telemachus, to an old friend named Mentor for care, protection, and guidance. Rick Lewis states: “Through careful advice, encouragement, and example, Mentor prepared Telemachus for his destiny with a light touch.” Mentor was a father-figure for Telamachus, who raised him from a boy into a young man while Odysseus was away for twenty years. The character, Mentor, becomes a picture of what happens in mentorship today. Rick Lewis, *Mentoring Matters: Building Strong Christian Leaders, Avoiding Burnout, Reaching the Finish Line* (Grand Rapids: Monarch, 2009), 40–41.

⁵⁸ Lewis, *Mentoring Matters*, 11.

⁵⁹ Alvin Reid and George Robinson. *With: A Practical Guide to Informal Mentoring and Intentional Disciple Making* (Lexington: Rainer, 2016), 15–16.

⁶⁰ All scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, and bringing life to dead places. Besides the above selection of verses demonstrating components of mentorship evangelism, here are a few others for consideration: Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5–6; Eccles. 4:9–11; Matt. 5:13–15; 22:37–40; Luke 14:23; John 3:16–17; 4:14; 10:10; 20:21; Rom. 14:9; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 2:1–10; 4:13; 2 Cor. 5:11, 20; Col. 4:2–6; 1 Pet. 2:9–10; 3:15; 1 Thess.

engaged the outcast, cared for people's hurts, and loved the broken, all with a deeper purpose: "To seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

In this section we shall look to our Lord, Jesus Christ Himself, as He portrays several traits of mentoring through the following texts: The woman at the well (John 4:5–26), Jesus' confrontation with a group of Scribes and Pharisees over a woman caught in adultery (John 8:1–11), and a lesson with a rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16–30). While not mentorship as defined in this project, these vignettes from Jesus' ministry exhibit the types of conversation, attitudes, approaches, and particular qualities encouraged in the mentoring process. The mentoring as highlighted in this project takes time and intentional relational investment through the fostering of an ongoing relationship grounded upon God's Word. While the Bible is filled with numerous examples of mentoring qualities, there are a handful of examples of formal mentorship: Paul and Barnabas (Acts 9:26–31; 11:19–26; 14:1–3), Paul and Timothy (Acts 16:1–5; 1 Tim. 4:6–16; 2 Tim. 2:2), and Jesus and His disciples (Matt. 4:19; Mark 3:14; Luke 6:40; John 13:34–35; 20:21; 21:15–19). One of the clearest scriptural examples of mentorship is between Jesus and His disciples. As Jesus spends three years of life and ministry with the disciples, the twelve witness Jesus perform miracles, hear His teaching, see Him engage in dialogue with critics, all the while observing His gracious humility and grace during the span of His time with them. These are faith formational years for the disciples. Over time, these events, experiences, and teachings shape the attitudes and behavior of the disciples around the mission and ministry they themselves would one day perform. They had "been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13) and this made all the difference.

1:10; 2:1–8; 1 Tim. 1:15; Titus 3:4–5. Jesus' ongoing relationship with the disciples themselves are a lesson in mentorship (Matt. 4:18–22; 9:35–38; 10:1–25; 15:21–28; 26:17–25; 28:18–20). What is revealed through Scripture is a God who values relationships, seeking the lost, healing the lame, healing the wound sin caused. He mirrors the love of God in every relationship, after all, He was God.

It must be stressed, the following texts we shall explore from Jesus' ministry are not examples of the mentorship process as highlighted in this project, but rather, are descriptive of traits or methods that can benefit a mentoring relationship. They are valuable for the lessons they provide on traits or methods used within Mentorship evangelism. To this end, we turn our attention to the first vignette: The Woman at the Well.

The Woman at the Well (John 4:5–26)

Jesus and his disciples are traveling through Samaria on their way to Galilee. There are three routes a Jew could travel so as to avoid Samaria. There was a deep-seeded cultural and religious tension between Jews and Samaritans going back many generations.⁶¹ The route taken by Jesus and His disciples is the most practical route as it takes the shortest amount of time. Upon arrival in Sychar Jesus is exhausted and filled with thirst, so He sits by a well as the disciples go to another town for supplies. The time is around noon, the peak of the day, an odd time to be collecting water. A Samaritan woman approaches the well and Jesus makes a request of her: “Give me a drink” (John 4:7). This is a significant moment for several reasons: She knew her place as a Samaritan and woman within society, she was deeply aware of her failure in marriage and sexual sin. She was keenly aware of her social outcast and despised racial status. Yet Jesus looks beyond the barriers, approaching her with grace and respect (John 4:9). He looks past these seeming barriers and addresses her as a social equal.⁶² On the astonishing move Jesus makes to engage in conversation with this woman, Jerram Barrs says: “Jesus set aside the usual

⁶¹ The tension between Jews and Samaritans is longstanding and deep. Samaritans are viewed by Jews as defiled and spiritually corrupt through intermarriage outside Judaism. For a Jew to come in contact with a Gentile is unheard of, breaking all social and cultural norms of the time, causing defilement. Samaritans are descendants of Israel left behind after Samaria's destruction (722 BC). Assyrian foreigners came in, which over time, they began marrying.

⁶² Jerram Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2009), 41.

barriers that would have kept him apart from the woman at the well. He ignores social custom, even Jewish law, in order to reach out to her.”⁶³ This is the Jesus who stands before the Samaritan woman, casting aside normal customs and laws to have a conversation about a living water that leads to eternal life. Yet throughout the account, the woman does not fully grasp the words Jesus is saying. She thinks He is talking about literal, fresh water, water that is not stagnant. Jerram Barrs describes this moment of meeting and discourse in a powerful way:

Who is the one who goes out of his way to meet this person of mixed race, heretical beliefs, wrong gender, and immorality? It is, of course, Jesus, who in this one passage is described as: The Gift of God, The One Who Gives Living Water, A Prophet, One Greater than the Patriarch Jacob, The Messiah, The One Who Will Explain Everything to Us, ‘I Am He’, The One Who Can Tell Us Everything We Ever Did, The Savior of the World.⁶⁴

Jesus is clearly saying *who* He is and *what* He has come to accomplish yet the Samaritan woman has trouble discerning the truth of Jesus. The account illustrates how Jesus’ message of life, hope, and forgiveness extends beyond “the lost sheep of Israel”, and to Gentiles as well (John 10:16; Col. 3:11). He offers the Samaritan living water, that whoever drinks, will never thirst again. In speaking of the gift Jesus offers, Jacob Preuss writes: “If a person drinks the water Jesus gives—if a person believes in Jesus—he or she will never thirst again (John 4:13–14). In fact, He gives to the recipient an internal spring of water for eternity—water that is fully and eternally satisfying.”⁶⁵ Interestingly, the thing that captures the woman’s attention was not the living water discussion nor the promised Messiah standing before her, but that “He told me everything I did” (John 19:16–19, 42). She went to others in town to relate what had happened

⁶³ Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*, 41–42.

⁶⁴ Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*, 40.

⁶⁵ Preus, *Just Words*, 73.

and they in turn came back to see this Jesus who “knows the things we do.” As the crowds return, they receive so much more, the Savior of the world.

The story ends in a dramatic way as the town comes out to meet Jesus and He ends up staying with them two days. The account of what transpired during those days is not recorded in Scripture, but the end result is seen: “We have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). One interesting connection to mentorship occurs in the dramatic ending of the text. Picture the crowd of people coming to meet Jesus. John uses the word *erchonto* (“were coming”) to describe the movement of the people. The Greek used is an imperfect verb showing movement, meaning they were “on the way” toward Jesus.⁶⁶ William Weinrich points out: “They were ‘on the way’ to becoming disciples of Jesus. As will become evident when they hear Jesus himself, they will confess him to be ‘the Savior of the world’ (John 4:42).”⁶⁷ This is mentorship! Walking, living, breathing, thinking, questioning, and being “on the way” toward Jesus. The Christian has not arrived at his final destination yet. Being in the middle of a both “now” and “not yet” existence, the Church drinks from the well of living water now as it patiently awaits the day she will drink from the waters of eternal life in the presence of Lamb seated upon His throne (Rev. 5; 7:17). What a glorious day of victory that will be!

The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman demonstrates several components of mentorship.⁶⁸ First, Jesus shows respectful discussion filled with gentleness and grace (Col. 4:6; 1 Pet. 3:15). Jesus sees the sinful path this woman is on and gently applies the first use of the Law. He presses boundaries, yet does so in a way that shows respect for the Samaritan woman.

⁶⁶ William Weinrich, *John 1:1–7:1*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2015), 506.

⁶⁷ Weinrich, *John*, 506.

⁶⁸ For a beautiful exposition of this scripture, William Weinrich does a superb job of exegetically mining out this text in a thoughtful way in his commentary, *John 1:1–7:1*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2015).

He challenges her views of sin, worship, and faith. Randy Newman notes: “Without his challenging comments, it is doubtful she ever would have arrived at the point of saving faith.”⁶⁹ Conversations in Mentorship evangelism must be bathed with similar gentleness and respect as truth is spoken in love. Jesus shows the woman her sin with words of truth and healing. As Jesus shows us, there are times in evangelism when words of biblical truth are required with boldness and love (Eph. 4:15).

A second mentoring component modeled by Jesus is the way in which He taught along the pathway of life. He demonstrates a ministry of presence. Entering the text, Jesus is exhausted from ministry and travel as He sits down before the well, thirsty for a drink. While resting, the Samaritan woman approaches. He could have easily ignored her but instead takes the time and uses this mundane chore to teach the Samaritan woman an important lesson about the Kingdom. She came for water but He offers so much more. A brief conversation leads to a two-day stay: He lives, eats, teaches, resides, and pours into this woman and town the waters of life. In the end, the town believes as they proclaim with one voice: “We have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). The Christian too, at every moment has opportunity to witness the faith God is working in them. Just as Jesus rearranged His ministry and travel plans to stay in Sychar for two extra days, so too our mentorship must be ready to meet people in the sinfulness of life, investing in them by sharing a cool drink of living water. The Christian must be ready to engage the women, men, children, coworkers, family, and friends at the wells of life, helping them navigate toward the healing balm of the cross. The challenge for the Christian is, as always, looking beyond the plethora of First Commandment excuses. As

⁶⁹ Randy Newman, *Questioning Evangelism: Engaging People’s Hearts the Way Jesus Did* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 33.

Luther reminds the Christian in his explanation to the First Commandment: “We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.”⁷⁰ Instead of fearing an evangelism conversation—fearing what someone may say, ask, or respond—trust that God is leading the way (Matt. 10:19–20). Everywhere the Body walks is a mission field ripe for the harvest. Take time to slow down and notice people, engaging them in conversation, speaking a word of encouragement, giving a hug, and pointing others to Jesus. Life is short. We are but a vapor in the wind, here today, and gone tomorrow (James 4:14). So take advantage of today (Matt. 6:34).

A Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1–11)⁷¹

Jesus had come to the Jerusalem Temple to teach and engage in ministry. While there, a group of Scribes and Pharisees approach Him, bringing a woman caught in the act of adultery, and place her before Him. She stands before Jesus and crowd utterly humiliated and alone. Where is the man? He is nowhere to be found. Clearly, the religious leaders’ concern was more on trapping Jesus than caring for the woman. For them, she is a means to an end. The text reads she was caught in the act, which points to this being a set-up by the religious leaders to trap Jesus in the response He gives to a question they pose. They bait the hook for Jesus: “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say” (John 8:4–5)? Jesus is placed in quite a quandary as to a response. John’s text says the religious leaders did this as a way to bring charges against Him (John 8:6). If He says, “Stone her,” He goes against Roman Law, but if He says, “Do not stone her,” He goes against the Law of Moses. In Jesus’ typical fashion, He responds in a way only He

⁷⁰ Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism*, 13.

⁷¹ Of note, there is some disagreement among scholars whether this account is original to John’s Gospel since it is not included in early manuscripts. The text starts showing up around the fifth century. It is less a question about whether the incident took place but whether John wrote the text. See Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to John*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 778–79.

can, with grace, truth, and love. Jesus says to the group: “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7). Stones are dropped as the accusers walk away, from oldest to youngest, and the woman is left standing alone (John 8:9). The Greek used is *katelefthe* (a strong word for “abandoned”), used as Levi abandoned his tax position to follow Christ (Luke 5:28), and in the Law of Moses about what happens after a man’s death, leaving a surviving spouse (Mark 12:19). About this moment, William Weinrich writes: “When the full force of Jesus’ words struck home they were no longer interested in her sin, but in their own.”⁷² Jesus uses the sin of this woman as a mirror into our own lives. In a sermon on this text, Martin Luther says: “Therefore, dear fellows, let the stones lie. I will not pick up any either. Let them lie, and do not throw at one another. Drop the stones, and say: ‘Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors’ (Matt. 6:12).”⁷³ The woman walks away by the grace of God. Jesus too, does not condemn her, but encourages her to “from now on, sin no more” (John 8:11).

Learning from Jesus, there are several lessons for mentorship within this story. First, Jesus does not step into the woman’s life proclaiming condemnation, but seeks to extend truth with grace (John 3:16–17). He addresses the unique belief and question and the person before Him. As mentors stepping into people’s abandonment and loneliness, there is no private sin. The Christian must seek ways to gently and boldly and with patience and tact, address the sin running rampant within the person through proper application of Law and Gospel by means of the Word of God. As difficult as it may be, following Christ at times means going to undesirable, broken places. The mentor must seek ways to take the initiative with those around them; to be a living word of hope and grace to those we seek to impact with the Gospel. As scripture reminds us,

⁷² Weinrich, *John*, 785.

⁷³ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works: Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 6–8*, American Edition, vol. 23, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), 314.

make the most of every opportunity, being prepared in and out of season to give answer to the faith within (Col. 4:5; 1 Pet. 3:15).

Second, this account leads the Christian to see their own sin. Every person carries particular stones in their grasp; places we judge others. The account is a mirror into our own sin, guilt, and shame. As fellow sinners transformed by the cross and tomb, we approach others not with superiority, but with the love and grace the Lord has shown us. All have sinned and need a Savior (John 3:16–17; Rom. 3:23–25). Jesus speaks good news into such places, the Christian no longer stands condemned as their sin is laid at the foot of the cross. Every piece of it covered by the blood of the Lamb! Yet the Christian still bears scars from old wounds, living with the guilt of memories or consequences from past decisions. In mentorship, before casting a stone, the Christian must first consider the places of judgment in one's hand. We walk together under the same cross, same blood, same sacrifice. Realizing this helps the believer respond to people's needs and live with greater clarity and humility the Great Commission as they seek to bring a freeing word of Gospel hope to the places weighing down hearts and souls. No sin is too big for God to handle, the cross covers a multitude of sin (1 Pet. 4:8).

Finally, the woman caught in adultery is committing flagrant sin for the world to see. There is no hiding or sugarcoating the awkward reality. Jesus does not shy away from the situation but deals appropriately with the hidden sin. He engages the hurt, broken, and ungrateful (Luke 6:40). Will the Christian welcome the cohabitating, gender transitioning, gossiping people into their homes or places of worship? Jesus models a life of humble service, sacrificially pouring Himself out for the lives of sinners (John 15:13, 15). The Apostle Paul is clear: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). He also urges: "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Within these relationships the Christian

strives to live this same sacrificial love, applying both Law and Gospel in appropriate ways with grace, tact, and love. After all, Jesus came for the sick, not the healthy (Mark 2:17).

The Rich Young Ruler (Matt. 19:16–30)

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem when a young man approaches Him with a question: “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life” (Matt. 19:16)? Not a lot is known about this man other than he is wealthy (Mark 10:22; Luke 18:23). The Jewish thought saw wealth as something God blessed a person with as a result of good and faithful service.⁷⁴ Jesus’ manner of response to this man’s wealth would certainly have shocked the young man and disciples as well. With the cultural view of wealth seen as a divinely-given gift, one can imagine the young man feeling secure in himself. Yet, Jesus saw the inner workings of the rich man, how wealth had become an idol in his heart, a stumbling block to faith. As the man poses questions to Jesus, he seeks an answer to something money cannot buy: He desires to obtain eternal life on his own terms. Speaking about the interplay between the young man and Jesus, Jeff Gibbs writes: “Not once but twice, Jesus administers a hammer blow against the young man’s way of thinking, seeking to show him what he needs is not information or teaching or insight. Rather, what he needs for eternal life and to be saved is standing in front of him, Jesus himself.”⁷⁵ The hammer blow of Jesus’ words fell, but with little to no effect. It is clear that deeper issues are at play within the young man, preventing him from internalizing Jesus’ words: Namely himself.

The text itself is broken into two sets of questions the young man asks Jesus (Matt. 19:16, 20). In a sermon on this account, Martin Luther writes that the young man did not come “to study

⁷⁴ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 728.

⁷⁵ Jeff Gibbs, *Matthew 11:2–20:34*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 2010), 968.

or to learn something, for according to his own thinking he had already far surpassed all knowledge and ability, but he was looking for someone to stroke his pride.”⁷⁶ He goes on to say the young man would likely fare better with the Pharisees than with Jesus.⁷⁷ Luther is clear, this man sees Jesus as a teacher, separating God from the man: “For the Lord Christ’s way and method is to draw us through Himself to the Father [John 6:44; 12:32].”⁷⁸ He is more than simply a good teacher, which is why Jesus deals so pointedly with the young man. In both sequence of questioning, at heart the man is asking a similar question: *What must I do?* Seeing this, Jesus gives the man what he asks for, something to do: “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me” (Matt. 19:21). The conversation ends on a somber note as the young man leaves realizing he is not able to do what Jesus asks of him. He is not able to see beyond his wealth and remains unchanged by Jesus’ words. Sadly, for the young man, Jesus remains a teacher and not a Savior.

The text of the rich young man illustrates several components of mentoring. First, evangelism takes invested time (1 Cor. 3:6). As the young man approached Jesus with a question, He took the time and patience necessary to answer the immediate questions of this man. Jesus spoke words needing to be said, not words the man wanted to hear, as He sought to bring awareness of a blind spot within the man’s faith. The young man comes seeking one thing—how to obtain heaven—while Jesus has a completely different plan. One must be flexible in mentoring conversation. It is too easy to fall into the common trap of not being present with people. Instead of approaching with a preconceived agenda or thinking about what to say next,

⁷⁶ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works: Sermons on the Gospel of St. Matthew Chapters 19–24*, American Edition, vol. 68, ed. Benjamin T.G. Mays (St. Louis: Concordia, 2014), 35.

⁷⁷ LW 68: 35.

⁷⁸ LW 68: 36–37.

engage the person on a deeper relational level. It takes time to build trust and earn the right to engage in deeper conversation. This is one of the roles of a mentor, to allow the space and time necessary for a mentoring relationship to seed, blossom, and grow. Deeper, harder change does not typically happen overnight but is a process that occurs over a lifetime of discipleship.

Finally, Jesus works to stretch and challenge unhealthy places within the young man's faith. The young man himself acknowledges his imperfection in asking Jesus, "What do I still lack?" (Matt. 19:20)? Yet he seeks answers from the wrong vantage point: Himself. To dig beneath the surface of the young man's worldview, Jesus asks tough questions as a way to explore his heart, to reveal the place he was spiritually stuck. The young man had an inner idol preventing him from believing. Jesus illustrates the power of good questions. Questions have a way of putting people at ease as they are a softer approach of getting at tougher sin issues. Good questions "help people in the process of self-discovery and God-discovery," and have a way of building connection, uncovering truths, and placing increased value upon a relationship.⁷⁹ Randy Newman, in his book *Questioning Evangelism*, goes so far as to argue for an evangelism that is less about providing ready answers and more about asking good questions.⁸⁰ In mentorship, questions are one of the most powerful tools the Christian has in their mentoring tool box. Rather than clobbering a person over the head with truth, questions are like a velvet crowbar that have a way of slowly and gently peeling away at a person until the real, deeper issues are addressed.

⁷⁹ Mary Schaller and John Crilly, *The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations: Walking Alongside People Who Believe Differently* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2016), 111.

⁸⁰ Randy Newman highlights several reasons why questions are a helpful tool for evangelism. First, questions have a way of bringing to the surface a person's worldview and assumptions. Questions take pressure off the Christian, one does not need to have all the answers, putting the focus on the one being asked. Questions shift the burden of response, allowing for the speaking of a hard truth a person might not otherwise be receptive toward hearing. Lastly, questions take the edge off a conversation, making things more palatable. See Newman, *Questioning Evangelism*, 29–30. For a helpful list of ninety-nine thought-provoking, open-ended questions to use within mentoring, see Doug Pollock's *God Space: Where Spiritual Conversations Happen Naturally* (Loveland: Group, 2009), 108–14.

Through the texts explored above—the woman at the well, a woman caught in adultery, the rich young ruler—Jesus portrays a variety of components of life-on-life mentoring. Within the context of a mentoring relationship, the Gospel seeks to leap from one heart to the soul beside it by faith in the One true God: “This is exactly what Jesus did with his apprentices. Notice what he does right after he called his first followers together. ‘After this, Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where he spent some time with them’ (John 3:22).”⁸¹ What is the first thing Jesus does with His disciples? He spends time with them! The word in Greek used for “spend time” is *diatribe*, a compound word made up of *dia* (“against”) and *tribo* (“to rub”). Put together, it reads: “they spent time rubbing off each other.” This is mentorship! Life on life, people rubbing off on each other, as iron sharpens iron (Prov. 27:17). Jesus spends time with His disciples as He builds them into a faith community grounded upon the Word.

Through a selection of brief relational encounters with Jesus, we are provided a glimpse into the Triune God’s heart and passion for evangelism using a variety of mentoring traits helpful for a formal mentorship. Whether through conversation, asking good questions, addressing sin, speaking the truth in love, or embodying a ministry of presence, Jesus sought to meet people where they were with a message they desperately needed. While not prescriptive for ministry, they show a Savior intentionally engaging people for the purpose of conversations about faith and eternal life. Jesus loved sinners, forgave sins, ministered to needs, and touched the untouchable. He purposefully broke through social molds, gender roles, and self-made idols to address the real sin issues people faced. Within this relational context, He brings a message

⁸¹ Alan Hirsch and Dave Fergusson, *On the Verge: A Journey into the Apostolic Future of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 78.

bathed in grace as the Lord Himself expresses the following mentoring challenge: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt. 16:24).

Conclusion

The Church has a certain responsibility toward evangelism. Through the Great Commission, God has given the Christian a Spirit-led purpose, that of making disciples through baptizing and teaching others the good news of Jesus’ death and resurrection (Matt. 28:18–20; Rom. 10:14–17). While all agree on the importance of evangelism, there has been disagreement in methodology. This chapter sought to bring clarity to this tension by unpacking some of the defining markers that form a Lutheran understanding of evangelism. We began with an exploration how the two kinds of righteousness are a vital framework upon which to build an understanding of evangelism that is biblical, practical, and doctrinally in line with the Lutheran Confessions. Once a Lutheran framework for evangelism was explored, the attention then turned to establishing a theology of evangelism that is confessional, grounded in God’s Word, and steeped in relationships bathed in Christ’s merciful grace. Finally, the chapter concluded with a focused look at Jesus’ use of various mentoring skills within the context of ministry. By viewing the accounts of the woman at the well, a woman caught in adultery, and the rich young ruler, valuable insights were gleaned on mentoring traits demonstrated by Jesus which can prove useful within Mentorship evangelism. We now turn to the next chapter, Chapter Three, for an exploration of the present ministry context and its impact on the Church, discipleship, and evangelism.

CHAPTER THREE

RECENT RESEARCH

His name is Hemant Mehta. He is best known as the “eBay Atheist” who posted his soul on eBay for sale to the highest bidder, saying he was open to Christianity. Mehta said he would visit an hour of church for every \$10 bid. In a short period of time several bids came trickling in, but the winning one came in at \$504 from Jim Henderson, leader of Off the Map Ministries¹ and former pastor and author of *Evangelism Without Additives*. Mehta’s search for God and faith began as a teenager. Although not growing up strictly Christian, he was raised in a devoutly religious home with a variety of religious influence. Reminiscing on the beginning of his full embrace of atheism and departure from God, Mehta describes how one night during his freshman year in high school as he went to bed, he simply stopped praying. He recalls his feelings that fateful night: “The next morning I woke up and checked myself in the mirror, looking for scars or other telltale marks that would show God was angry with me. But they weren’t there. Nothing had changed other than my thoughts.”² He woke up still alive and for Mehta; this was a seminal moment, spreading the seed of atheism even deeper throughout his worldview.

After a meeting with Henderson, the winning bidder, it was determined that rather than visiting just one church, he would visit several. He began visiting many churches, ranging from

¹ Off the Map is a parachurch organization seeking to reframe evangelism and the Church in ways today’s culture can understand. Their slogan explains its mission: “Helping Christians Be Normal.” See www.off-the-map.org.

² Hemant Mehta, *I Sold My Soul on Ebay: Viewing Faith through an Atheist’s Eyes* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2007), 37.

rural to the mega-church. He walked away from this experiment with a variety of impressions.

Mehta's observations about Christianity and Church are insightful:

Before, I thought church was a boring place everyone was forced to go to on a Sunday morning and that there was absolutely no thinking involved. I was wrong on those points. The churches I saw knew how to bring people in and keep them there, and several times, I heard sermons that raised ideas I had hardly thought about. Of course, there were also sermons that put me to sleep, but not as often as I thought they would. The people in the church chose to be there, and so did many of their children.³

Mehta's impressions of Christianity and church are real, honest, and at times blunt. Following the experiment, he remained an atheist. Yet through his journey he expresses being profoundly challenged and raises interesting thoughts when it comes to having a dialogue with people searching for faith and God.

Her name is Helen Mildenhall. She is a married stay-at-home mom living in the Chicago area. She is in her late forties raising two teens, seventeen and fifteen years of age. She writes a blog about life, matters of faith and spirituality, her health journey with Crohn's Disease, or whatever else is on her mind. She enjoys all aspects of the arts: from listening to and playing classical music, from sculpture to painting. In her blog, Mildenhall is open about her journey from Christianity to atheism, a journey spurred on by her perception that the Church did not handle her questions in a helpful manner. Over time, much like Mehta, she slowly ebbed away from the Christian faith toward life as an atheist. One day she received an invitation to attend an information class at a nearby Lutheran church, seeking answers to some of the deeper questions of life from a biblical perspective. Curious and intrigued that a Christian church wanted to enter

³ In an interview for Churchleaders, Heather Johnson interviewed Hemant Mehta about his experience as the Ebay Atheist, covering lessons learned from visiting several churches across the United States. The interview may be found in Kelly Shattuck's article, "The Atheist Who Went to Church," *Churchleaders*, April 6, 2012, accessed December 8, 2017, <https://churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/138864-the-atheist-who-went-to-church-a-conversation-with-the-ebay-atheist.html/3>.

a dialogue on questions she struggled with, she wanted to hear more. Mildenhall wrestled with whether to attend, wondering if the Church was ready for her and her list of questions:

So, this church recently sent out a mass-mailing brochure for their upcoming 15-week evening class series. They offered the same series last fall; I was tempted to sign up then but decided against it in part because I didn't want my participation—including questions for the instructor—to detract from the experience of others attending. I have to also admit that I was scared that someone would try to convert me—a conversation I really did not want to enter.

(The course is free, with refreshments provided and with childcare offered free at the church upon request. That suggests to me that the church feels it is important to have this course be accessible to people who otherwise might have practical and financial barriers to attending, but presumably also people who are more likely than I to become members.)

The outside of the brochure says: “Adult Information Class. A free 15-week course on basic Christian teachings provided by (*Name Removed*) Lutheran Church as a service to our community.”

On first opening the brochure, this comes into view:

Do you ever wonder...

“Is there a God?”

“Why is Jesus Christ so important to me?”

“Does God care about me?”

“Why is the world so full of problems?”

“What is the purpose of life, my life?”

“Why are there so many kinds of Christian churches?”

This is your opportunity to find answers.

Well, other than the second one, these are questions I wonder about, especially the first and last. I'd be interested in hearing what the instructor has to say, though also leery about anyone claiming to offer ready “answers” to most of these questions.⁴

⁴ Helen Mildenhall, “An Atheist in Religious Education Class?” *Conversations on the Edge*, September 7, 2006, accessed August 12, 2011, <http://www.conversationattheedge.com/2006/09/07/an-atheist-in-religious-education-class/>.

As Mildenhall struggles in whether to attend, her inner tension of how to proceed was apparent. After much consideration she signed up for the class. The pastor contacted her saying that the class was intended as evangelism and was more teaching and lecture than dialogue, not leaving a lot of room for those who are searching to really delve into and interact with matters of faith. This pastor and church were ill-equipped to handle the tremendous opportunity standing before them. The topics and questions discussed in the class are great subject matter. However, the process left little room for growth and meeting people where they are in their faith journey. If one listens closely to Mildenhall's words, here is a woman searching and wanting to join in dialogue over deeper matters of life, faith, and God. Was this church ready? No. She did not want answers dumped into her from a talking head, but rather, she sought someone who could come alongside her in a mutual experience of learning and growth.

Like it or not, there are Hemant Mehtas and Helen Mildenhalls everywhere in society today: Two very different people expressing a similar heart of criticism against Christianity. Is the Church willing to listen? Rather than being the exception, they are the norm. The trouble is, too many Christians have put their heads in the sand pretending these people do not exist instead of seeking ways to engage the mission field called life. The stories of Mehta and Mildenhall are not a unique description of today's culture, but one that has been spreading and growing through the years. Tough questions arise: Does the way our church makes disciples reflect a process that honors questions and the journeys people are on today? Or do we have a stepped-out process whose goal is to stamp out new members? We have entered a new world of thought, but have our methods changed to meet the need? How might the local church equip the laity with the knowledge and encouragement necessary to share their faith with the Mehtas and Mildenhalls of the world? To that end, through the fine work of Dr. Luke Biggs, Mentorship was born.

Originality of the Project

Little has been written on mentorship as an evangelism method, particularly from a Missouri Synod perspective. As an exception, one training method is the model upon which this project is built, a Major Applied Project submitted by Luke Biggs entitled, “The Mentor Method of Evangelism: A Study in the Use of Interrogatives.”⁵ Since the completion of Biggs’ project in 2004, much has changed in the cultural landscape of today’s Church.

There are several areas of strength put forth within the model of Mentorship Training by Biggs. One of its greatest strengths is its firm grounding in scripture and Lutheran theology. I felt it a bit lacking, however, in application within today’s post-Christian cultural context. Another strength of the mentorship model is its highly relational approach, steeped in the use of interrogative questions. Rather than being a “go and tell” model, its focus is more “go and ask” which resonates well with those outside the Christian faith. Questions have a way of gently prying beneath the surface of a person like a crowbar, gently prying without putting a person on the offense. It is likely why Jesus often used questions in ministry as a primary tool for teaching and addressing conflict, particularly among those antagonistic toward His message and mission (Matt. 7:3; 16:15; 17:17).⁶

My overall criticism of Biggs’ Mentorship Training has less to do with substance than it does with style. There are several opportunities upon which I plan to build. The original training model spanned a fifteen-week period of time which for many in today’s time-conscious culture,

⁵ Biggs, “Mentor Method of Evangelism.”

⁶ According to Martin Copenhaver, Jesus asks 307 questions in His ministry. Conversely, He is asked 183 questions, of which He only answers between three to eight (depending upon one’s interpretation of the dialogue found in Scripture). He provides a helpful list of Jesus’ questions, linked with its scriptural location (see pgs. 131–41). Jesus is brilliant at the art of asking good questions as they have the power to lead us to see, wonder, and think about God in ways we might not have previously considered. See Martin Copenhaver, *Jesus Is the Question: The 307 Questions Jesus Asked and the 3 He Answered* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2014).

is a challenging commitment to keep. Half the time is spent exploring a theology of evangelism and the other half looks at how to take this theology and live it out in everyday life. One of the great strengths of Biggs' Mentorship Training is its academic focus, but like any strength emphasized too heavily, it can become an opportunity for growth. The training is highly analytical in nature, relying heavily on classroom presentation, and fill-in-the-blank style syllabi. For those attending the training, the outcome of such an approach is evangelism that is more academic in nature rather than practical. In further exploration of Biggs' training materials, I felt there was room for bringing a greater amount of application to the training through the addition of more role-play, video, and class discussion.

In regard to training materials, I sought to revise the lesson components by encompassing multiple learning styles through the combination of video, greater dialogue, and use of current scholarship as assigned readings for discussion. There is also inclusion of a Social Media group for mentors as a tool for ongoing learning beyond the church walls. Doug Pollock's, *God Space*, is a wonderful tool that helped cast a vision for Mentorship evangelism as a weekly discussion.⁷ Overall, through the efforts listed above, I sought to create a training method and language for evangelism that better addresses the needs of today's culture and Church. My goal was to create an environment of mutual learning and encouragement: As class participants learn to be mentors, the class mentors each other.

⁷ Pollock's book is an engaging read on the art of asking good questions within the context of relationships. Through the use of stories grounded in scripture, Pollock highlights that no relationship is beyond God's redeeming power to save. See Doug Pollock, *God Space: Where Spiritual Conversations Happen Naturally* (Loveland: Group, 2009).

Mentorship Evangelism Defined⁸

What is Mentorship evangelism? Biggs describes Christian mentorship as “an evangelism method in which an individual who is making inquiry into Christianity is intentionally paired with an experienced and trained Christian who agrees to serve as a spiritual guide throughout the inquiry process.”⁹ Mentorship is a process immersed with asking questions that, God-willing, lead into a formal mentoring relationship that explores the Christian faith and ends with the Gospel’s invitation to conversion. Bathed within the context of relationship, a trained mentor seeks to intentionally cultivate a relationship through which they ask key questions, share applicable scripture, and engage in personal life experience, all with the goal of leading the explorer toward faith by the life-transforming power of the Gospel. As relationships are cultivated toward a formal mentorship, a trained mentor comes alongside these individuals to point them to scripture, God’s life-giving Word of hope and promise written to a people walking in darkness (Isa. 9:1–7). Mentors are trained to not directly answer questions, but rather, to point those they are mentoring toward the transforming power of God’s Word. In this place, the Spirit is at work to bring about salvation to all who believe.

Overall, Mentorship Training consists of a Block-1 and a Block-2. Block-1 explores the theology, doctrine and historical understanding of evangelism from a Lutheran perspective. Block-2 looks at the practical side of evangelism in daily life. Mentorship evangelism pairs a mature Christian with an explorer for the purpose of cultivating a relationship that leads to

⁸ It must be noted, the term mentorship as defined in this project is not the technical definition used within professional contexts involving specialized training and licensing. Mentorship employed in this project is the more general and popular term used in society today.

⁹ Biggs, “Mentor Method of Evangelism,” 116.

intentional mentorship through the art of question and dialogue that aims toward Gospel proclamation and conversion.

The formal mentorship process is outlined in the diagram: Mentorship Outline of Movement (explored in Block-2). The mentorship process is sequenced into seven movements: Cultivation, Connection, Covenant, Cycles of Content (the formal mentorship), Conversion, Confirmation, and Communion.¹⁰ What is considered the actual formal mentorship, occurs in the Cycles of Content movement. At this point a mentor and explorer look at key scriptures and discuss pointed questions around basic tenets of the Christian faith. Prior to Cycles of Content, Mentorship is best considered pre-evangelism, as the Christian's primary focus is relationship cultivation. Following completion of formal mentorship, depending upon the readiness of those being mentored, appropriate steps may be taken toward introducing the individual into a local church Body through Baptism, confirmation, and Communion. Since Mentorship is grounded upon relationships and that people are sinful, mentors step into the sinfulness of people's lives. Thus the mentor method is less about mechanical steps and more about relational and spiritual movement centered upon Christ and His Word. The key word that permeates this method is *movement*, a movement that seeks to foster a relationship toward formal mentorship. God-willing, the journey is one that leads to Gospel proclamation and entry into the Kingdom of God. Thus, the second unit of training (Block-2) looks specifically at each of the above "7 C's of

¹⁰ See Appendix 8: "Mentorship Outline of Movement." The diagram provides a visual representation of the mentorship process from the cultivating of relationships (pre-evangelism) toward faith conversion, confirmation, and communion as its conclusion. Think broad movement rather than detailed steps, as this entire evangelism method is grounded upon the Holy Spirit's working in the lives of His people, not upon a particular method one employs.

Movement” and connection pieces that may help a mentor, by the Holy Spirit’s power, facilitate a mentoring relationship deeper into the Mentorship Outline of Movement.¹¹

Mentorship is not as difficult as it seems. In its most basic form it gives people a few questions that have the power to penetrate a person’s inner shell of their soul. By using exploratory questions, a person we seek to mentor may realize over time that they do not know as much as they thought they knew, and hence, begin a journey that leads toward faith and trust of the One, True God. To be clear, Mentorship evangelism is not another method of steps one walks through or anything we do as the one mentoring. It is better looked at as a process of movement. It is a holy movement, solely dependent upon the power and work of the Holy Spirit through the Means of Grace in a person’s life to kill the old Adam, replacing the old with the new (Rom. 5:12–18).¹² Grounded upon the theology of the cross, conversion is wrought by God alone through the power and work of the Holy Spirit, not driven by men (Rom. 10:14–15). J.I. Packer observes: “We must never forget that it is God who saves. . . . The power that saves is not in the instrument: It is in the hand of the One who uses the instrument.”¹³ Through Mentorship, the Christian points others to Jesus as the way, truth, and life (John 14:6–7). God alone is the one who brings about conversion, the Christian is merely His vessel. As such, Mentorship should not be viewed as a list of “how-to” steps to conversion but more of a lens for increasing both a mentor’s perceived knowledge and confidence toward evangelizing those outside the Church.

¹¹ See Appendix 8: “Mentorship Outline of Movement,” for a visual of the overall desired movement that can occur in Mentorship evangelism.

¹² The Augsburg Confession Article V (1530) in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959), 31.

¹³ J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008) 32. See Chapter 2 earlier in this paper for the discussion of two kinds of righteousness in relation to a proper understanding of evangelism. For a helpful discussion on a proper framework and understanding for the practice of evangelism see David Peter’s article “Identifying Authorities in Theological Practice: Evangelism and Congregational Outreach,” *Concordia Journal* 30, no. 3 (July 2004): 203–16.

The Project's Context Defined

The landscape for ministry within the community I serve is diverse and abundantly rich with challenge and opportunity for evangelism. I have seen laity and leaders lament the rise of regular attenders drifting from a once vibrant faith for one reason or another. There is a growing urgency around the need to do something to attract younger generations as well as the unchurched and de-churched back into the Body of Christ. There has been no focused evangelism effort or training at Redeemer for many years. This project on Mentorship evangelism speaks to a growing need. The project will build upon Biggs' Mentorship model to include enhancements such as the implementation of a more organic approach to the training, greater emphasis on group interaction, discussion, mutual learning, and inclusion of Social Media as a tool in the Mentorship Training process. The project is also unique in that it targets the context of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Rolla, MO, a church established on the outskirts of town in a rural, college community. Within this context a blank canvas stands, upon which an evangelism process that both strengthens knowledge and encourages willingness to engage in mentoring relationships will be built.

Understanding the Present Landscape

Much has been written within the last decade on the major shift in the Church's loss of community influence and the drifting away of generations—both young and old—from the institutional church. One does not need a lot of research to see that the Church and society are changing. Be that as it may, as this gap continues to widen its scope with the passage of time, it is imperative that the Church seeks ways to (re)connect the timeless Gospel in a manner today's culture can comprehend. In this section a selection of recent scholarship discussing the present cultural landscape provides a better understanding of today's culture and will help us connect

with those we seek to reach with the unchanging Gospel of Christ. Cultural needs, opportunities, and trends presented through the lens of Mentorship evangelism will also be explored.

Understanding culture is a difficult task! Culture is like a constantly moving river: As one perceives to have a footing, the current is ever changing, churning, ebbing, flowing. Now we step into the river and its changing currents with various authors as we search for a better understanding of those we seek to reach with the Gospel. Ahead there lies a bend in the cultural waters. Where it leads, how fast it turns and when the rapids will end is unknown: We leave this journey in God’s capable hands. There are many who have given voice to this river, speaking on its currents and its twists and turns. Our first fellow traveler leading us in this journey is Will McRaney.

McRaney is one who has stepped into the waters to describe the currents of this new twist in the stream and some ways to engage its waters in his book, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*. He argues a new era is upon us that is still taking shape, transitioning from what once was into what it one day will become.¹⁴ McRaney’s point—we are in an in-between time, with a new day upon us. What that new day is, however, is uncertain. Some have called this new era *postmodernism*, which J.I. Packer calls a “throwaway word that means everything and nothing.”¹⁵ Whatever one names this time of transition we are presently in, no one disputes that a shift from modernism into something new is currently taking place. Postmodern is a difficult

¹⁴ Phyllis Tickle has gone so far as to argue a pattern of historical change spanning from Christ’s death until the present day. Tickle articulates a theory that every 500 years Christianity goes through an emergence of significant shift: The death of Christ is ground zero, Rome fell 500 years after Jesus’ death, the Great Schism of 1054 dividing Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Church, the Protestant Reformation in 1517, leading up to the present day. We are currently in a “hinge” moment of transition. See Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008).

¹⁵ J.I. Packer in Will McRaney Jr., *The Art of Personal Evangelism: Sharing Jesus in a Changing Culture* (Nashville: B&H, 2003), 118.

word to define,¹⁶ but it is generally described as an era highlighting experience, secularization,¹⁷ deconstructionism, subjective knowledge, lack of absolute truth, narcissism, and individual expression.¹⁸

As a pastor I have the privilege of serving a faithful community of men and women at a church on the outskirts of Rolla, MO. These are salt-of-the-earth people who would give the shirt off their back if they thought someone needed it, no questions asked. In our life together as the Body of Christ, we have shared in times of both joy and struggle. Whenever I meet with members at the hospital, church, home, for lunch or a cup of coffee I hear their stories that are oftentimes raw and unfiltered. Some of the most painful stories are those of children and other family members who have drifted from the Church. When I look into the hard, wrinkled faces, and weathered hands of those standing before me, there is clear pain and guilt lying under the surface. One can hear the deeper, unspoken questions: “What went wrong? I brought my child to church every week. I just can’t understand why they don’t go to church. Where did I go wrong as a parent? Will I see them in heaven someday?” These are tough questions!

Rise of the Nones and Generation Z

David Kinnaman has heard such stories and wrestled with similar questions himself. In his book, *You Lost Me*, he puts forth a penetrating look at why younger generations are leaving the

¹⁶ I Appreciate McRaney’s helpful comparison of the modern and postmodern mindset through the following story: “Three umpires are sitting around before a game talking about their job. The first umpire (thoroughly modern) said, ‘There are balls and there are strikes and I call them.’ The second umpire (a bit of both) said, ‘There are balls and there are strikes and I call them as I see them.’ The last umpire (thoroughly postmodern) said, ‘There are balls and there are strikes, and they aren’t anything until I call them.’” McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 119.

¹⁷ Barna research paints a helpful picture on the rise of secularism in America. Data indicates that more than one-third of adults are secular in belief and practice: “Examined over time, the research shows that the proportion of highly secularized individuals is growing slowly but steadily.” Barna Group, *Churchless: Understanding Today’s Unchurched and How to Connect with Them*, ed. George Barna and David Kinnaman (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2014), 16. For a more in-depth discussion on the topic, see Barna Group, *Churchless*, 14–18.

¹⁸ McRaney, *The Art of Personal Evangelism*, 118.

Church. With solid research on current trends in the Church and an established method of research due to his association with the Barna Institute, the statistics are often penetrating and brutally honest. One of the main findings Kinnaman discovers about those leaving the Church is rather unexpected: Younger generations are not necessarily leaving because they are mad at the Church, they simply do not see its relevance. They love Jesus, just not the Church.¹⁹ *You Lost Me* could be summarized in one word, Discipleship. “The dropout problem is, at its core, a faith-development problem; to use religious language, it’s a disciple-making problem.”²⁰ His findings make clear that young people are not wrestling so much with their Christian faith as they are with their experience of Church.

One of the reasons I appreciate Kinnaman’s approach was his positive outlook at the present landscape. Yes, there is much to lament. Too often writers of current Church trends sound the alarm, focusing solely on the negative and crassly proclaiming Christianity is dying. Funeral dirges can be heard chiming songs of lament in the distance about what lies in the horizon, the coffin of Christianity rapidly closing shut. The last I checked, however, there are still parishioners in worship on weekends, gathering around an altar to receive God’s precious gifts of Body and Blood. The Church is very much alive; it is in transition. What people lament is the awkward, painful process of change. They lament what once was, having a hard time grasping the new normal. Rather than looking at the dropout problem of younger generations, Kinnaman explores the reasons those who remain have stayed the course to forge a new path of faith. We can learn much from those who are bucking recent trends and remaining faithful

¹⁹ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 19–35. The author highlights different kinds of dropouts—Nomads, Prodigals, and Exiles—each with particular reasons for saying “no” to the institutional Church (See p.25ff.). Through penetrating research, Kinnaman encourages the Church to seek more effective ways at passing on the faith to future generations.

²⁰ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 21.

members of the local church. He highlights three gaps in our thinking around discipleship that need addressing if the Church hopes to engage younger generations in the faith. First, it must rethink its disciple-making gaps around relationships, vocation, and wisdom.²¹ The Church has been blessed with a deep and rich theology of vocation and *koinonia* as a powerful setting for the growth of biblical wisdom. According to Kinnaman, younger generations value deeper relationships over casual connections, vocation over job, and wisdom over information. The Church may have sound theology and wonderful church practices, but if they are not understood or accessible at a broader level, the Church must consider taking steps to present its message in a more palatable way.

Addressing the same issue as Kinnaman are Thom and Sam Rainer, a father and son team, who waded into the current of the changing river of culture to provide a different vantage point of today's Church in their book, *Essential Church*. Their hope is to provide a tool churches can use to help the laity reclaim those who have drifted and reconnect them with Church as an essential part of life. The focal point of the book's research wrestles with young people exiting the Church in droves. In their research, they found that more than 2/3 (70%) of those between the ages of 18–22 drop out of the Church.²² One of the most startling discoveries was “the gravity of how many exit the church and the pace at which this exodus is occurring. Each generation that passes loses more than the previous generation.”²³ The situation is not improving with time, only accelerating. In many ways, *Essential Church* is fairly similar in scope and theme to David Kinnaman's, *You Lost Me*. Both Kinnaman and Rainer would affirm and underscore the great

²¹ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 28–31.

²² Sam S. Rainer III and Thom S. Rainer, *Essential Church?: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts*, (Nashville: B&H, 2008), 2–3.

²³ Rainer and Rainer, *Essential Church?*, 14.

need for the Church to recast its net around discipleship and evangelism, seeking ways to facilitate access to the Gospel in ways the unchurched can hear and understand.

There is an even more disturbing trend taking shape in recent years that James White has termed, the rise of the *nones*. In its basic form, a *none* is someone claiming no religious affiliation. Based upon data collected from the Pew Institute since the 1940s, it indicates an incremental rise of those in America claiming no religious affiliation.²⁴ In fact, as of 2012, *nones* comprise the third largest religious segment in America. Further data indicates *nones* comprise 23% of the U.S. population. That is a staggering thought, nearly one out of every four claim no religious affiliation!²⁵ Of the *nones* surveyed, 88% claim they are content in their views, with no desire to search for faith or religion.²⁶ They are content in their nothingness.²⁷ Data projections show no sign of improvement. Add to that, Pew research done in 2012, showing a generational correlation between the age of a person and whether or not they are a *none*. For example, of those claiming no religious affiliation, 34% were Millennials and only 5% were of the WWII Generation.²⁸ This is not surprising. Younger generations are being raised in households without past family connections and interaction with a local church. Attending church has become for many a foreign land, language, culture, and people: A distant island among a sea of choices. For *nones*, faith and religion is a non-issue. A common question cited by this group is: “So what?”

²⁴ The percentage of Americans claiming no religious affiliation is startling. Pew research quoted in White’s, *Rise of the Nones*: 1940s–5%, 1990s–8.1%, 2008–15%, 2012–19.3%. See James E. White, *The Rise of the Nones: Understanding and Reaching the Religiously Unaffiliated* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 17–21.

²⁵ James White, *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 23.

²⁶ White, *Rise of the Nones*, 26.

²⁷ White describes the typical *none* as “male, young, white, not very religious, not necessarily an atheist, in favor of abortion and same-gender marriage being legal, liberal or moderate, not necessarily hostile toward religious institutions, most likely a westerner.” White, *Rise of the Nones*, 21–23.

²⁸ White, *Rise of the Nones*, 45.

Add to this, Americans are a lonely, transient, throwaway nation. Studies show the average American will move 11.4 times²⁹ and have 10 to 15 careers³⁰ in their lifetime. Not only are generations claiming no religious affiliation, but the rise of individualism at the expense of everything else has great impact on modern America. Hate language and crimes are on the rise. We are a divided nation, people, and Church. With tools like social media and mobile phones, we have never been so connected with people across the world. We live, work, and learn in close proximity to others yet most claim to have few close friends. Sociologists describe America as the loneliest nation on earth.³¹ True, connections are being made, but are they meaningful? Younger generations are a diverse, talented, smart, vibrant, and vulnerable age group. Born into a particular time and place, they crave and yearn for happiness, avoiding pressure situations. Halpern and Company surveyed high school students asking them what they wanted to do with their life beyond high school. Through a selection of multiple choice options, their responses are rather telling: 9.5% chose chief of a major company, 9.8% chose Navy Seal, 13.6% chose U.S. Senator, and 43.4% chose personal assistant to a famous celebrity.³² Ponder what these youth are saying. A majority of respondents say they are happy to help others achieve their dreams but would rather not live with the pressure of living toward the goal themselves. As the Church, we have an opportunity to help younger generations navigate their present reality to learn the skills and gain the confidence necessary for maturing into adulthood. America, let alone Christianity,

²⁹ Mona Chalibi, "How Many Times Does the Average Person Move?" *FiveThirtyEight*, January 29, 2015, accessed November 11, 2017, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-many-times-the-average-person-moves>.

³⁰ Alison Doyle, "How Often Do People Change Jobs?" *The Balance*, May 1, 2017, accessed November 11, 2017, <https://www.thebalance.com/how-often-do-people-change-jobs-2060467>.

³¹ George Barna, *Evangelism that Works: How to Reach Changing Generations with the Unchanging Gospel* (Ventura: Regal, 1995), 149.

³² Tim Elmore, *Marching Off the Map: Inspire Students to Navigate a Brand New World* (Atlanta, Poet Gardener, 2017), 12.

has not felt the full impact of the rise of the *nones* as of yet. One may ask: Where have the *nones* gone? White argues they have gone nowhere: “That’s the point. There is no shift from Christianity to another religious brand. Instead, there is simply the abandonment of a defined religion altogether. Those who used to be simply ‘unchurched’ are now dropping out completely.”³³

America is no longer a Christian nation. Secularism has given rise to people crafting a religion of their own making that seeks to numb the void left from an absence of God. How might the Church reach the *nones*³⁴ and the unchurched with the Gospel? The landscape is ripe with opportunity! The Church cannot keep doing the same things and expect different results. That is the classic definition of insanity. Rainer is absolutely correct, “Stagnation equates to dying. Your church may look the same week in and week out, but if you are not winning the next generation for Christ, then you are losing the battle.”³⁵ Reggie McNeal sounds the call for the Church to change its scorecard when it comes to making disciples. Discipleship and evangelism models of the past are not working as they have in past generations. The focus should not be on building a better church, but building healthier people of faith grounded solely upon the Word of

³³ White, *Meet Generation Z*, 24–25.

³⁴ One must be cautious about making too quick of a generalization about generational stereotypes as they can be rather limiting. However, they can be helpful in seeking to broadly understand a particular missional context. A new generation is beginning to rise up beyond Millennials, referred to as Generation Z, whom we are still learning much about. In a plenary session at the 2017 Missouri District Professional Church Worker’s Conference, Rev. Dr. Patrick Ferry, spoke on the Reformation’s historical impact within today’s American context. As the current President of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor, Ferry sees first-hand the shifting makeup and cultural context of incoming student classes. Change is in the air. Ferry describes Generation Z as a generation very interested in spirituality yet institutionally leery, biblically illiterate (not knowing basic biblical characters such as Moses, Noah, and Jonah are foreign vocabulary), and belief in “moralistic therapeutic deism” (a belief in God, and if one lives a good life, there is really no need for organized religion). Patrick Ferry, “Preaching, Teaching, and Reaching People: Assessing the Impact of the Reformation” (plenary session, MO District Professional Church Worker’s Conference, November 16, 2017).

³⁵ Rainer and Rainer, *Essential Church?*, 16.

God.³⁶ There are no quick fixes to the task that lies ahead, but we can take comfort that our God, the Creator of the universe and Lord of the Church, is leading the way.

The Impact of Nihilism and Lack of Absolute Truth

We have stepped into the shifting waters of culture to explore some of the defining trends of today's changing currents. Doing so has provided a better understanding of the people whom God has placed in our present mission field; at times disturbing but not beyond hope. To better understand where the path is headed on any journey, it is helpful to have an awareness of the rocks in the stream so as to appropriately deal with them along the way. As we have seen, the present landscape is vast, diverse, conflicted, and unsettled. No longer can the Church assume a Christian worldview or take for granted the belief in the existence of God. A more helpful question is: "Which god?" In the face of the supreme Hindu god Brahman and its many avatars, the Muslim god Allah, and Mormonism's striving toward becoming a god of one's own planet, it quickly becomes apparent our cultures do not worship one god, but many. A Christian understanding and ordering of the world has become a foreign way of life and belief. In fact, the world is becoming increasingly antagonistic and hostile to those who profess Christian truths.

Many scholars through the years have cited reasons for the above transitions and decline of the Church much more eloquently and thorough than this author. That, however, is not the scope of this paper, yet it would be remiss to not highlight two of the larger boulders that have found their way into the present stream, changing its current and direction. One such boulder is *nihilism*, a word deriving from the Latin root *nihili* meaning "nothing" and is a way of looking at the world where the "why" questions people struggle with have no answer. Nihilism is a form of

³⁶ Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 19–21.

deconstructionist thinking and living so prevalent today, a turning away from established thought and practice to create a worldview of one's own making. In their book, *Good Faith*, David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons speak about being Christian in a world that is tearing apart as it deconstructs the established patterns of life and religious systems. The impact of nihilism is clear: "Many of our social structures—the institutions and rhythms that keep us whole and healthy as a society and as individuals—are unwinding."³⁷ As the unwinding continues, the Church must find new ways to equip the laity with the knowledge and encouragement necessary to face such a world. It is a call not to greater relevance but to renewed faithfulness.

Alongside nihilism is an even greater threat that has slowly woven its way into the erosion of the present landscape of faith: The loss of absolute truth. In a collection of essays, *Whatever Happened to Truth*, Andreas Kostenberger defines and discusses the impact of the loss of absolute truth from the perspective of various fields of study in the Church. In his introductory essay he writes:

Truth is no longer "the" truth, in Jesus' terms who claimed to be "the truth" (John 14:6). Rather, it is conceived of as "your" truth or "my" truth—that is, differing yet equally legitimate ways of perceiving reality. Hence truth is simply one's preferred, culturally conditioned, socially constructed version of reality.³⁸

The loss of absolute truth has removed the foundation upon which generations have viewed and related to the world. Not only is absolute truth rejected, "but those who claim to possess such truth are scorned."³⁹ One does not have to look far to see how the loss of absolute truth has affected all areas of life, drifting creation further away from the Truth, Jesus Christ made flesh. It

³⁷ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Good Faith: Being Christian when Society Thinks You're Irrelevant and Extreme* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), 19.

³⁸ Andreas Kostenberger, ed., *Whatever Happened to Truth* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2005), 9.

³⁹ Don Matzat, "Evangelism in a Postmodern Age", *Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Convention Essays* (60th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, July 15, 1998), 3.

is heartbreaking to ponder the many that have fallen sway to this lie. If one says something long enough or loud enough, pretty soon one begins to believe its truth. At every moment our minds filter through hundreds, if not thousands of facts that bombard us to create an order and meaning of life. As Lutheran Christians, we wear a particular set of lenses through which life is interpreted and lived. But for most in today's world, they wear a lens of their own making, constructing worldviews and religions to suit their worldly desires. Stephen Colbert has coined a term for this phenomenon: *truthiness*. In a monologue, he explains how truthiness happens:

And that brings us to tonight's word: truthiness.

Now, I'm sure some of the Word Police, the "wordanistas" over at Webster's, are gonna say, "Hey, that's not a word." Well, anybody who knows me knows that I'm no fan of dictionaries or reference books. They are elitist. Constantly telling us what is or isn't true, or what did or didn't happen. Who's Britannica to tell me the Panama Canal was finished in 1914? If I wanna say it happened in 1941, that's my right. I don't trust books. They're all fact, not heart.⁴⁰

With a loss of absolute truth and belief in God combined with nihilism, this is a perfect storm of feeling and emotion trumping biblical truth. Interestingly, America became so enamored with the word *truthiness* that Oxford American Dictionary named it word of the year.⁴¹ It is a moment reflecting the nation's religiously secular ethic.

Not only is the loss of absolute truth impacting those outside the Church, but also those inside the Church. In his book, *Tell the Truth*, Will Metzger claims: "A major shift continues to undermine absolute truth. Our culture has influenced Christians to look to their inner self and find their identity through self-actualization."⁴² Metzger goes on to discuss how Christians are

⁴⁰ From the broadcast premier of *The Colbert Report* on Comedy Central on Comedy Network, October 17, 2005, <http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/24039/october-17-2005/the-word--truthiness>. Found in White, *Rise of the Nones*, 57–58.

⁴¹ White, *Rise of the Nones*, 58.

⁴² Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel Wholly by Grace Communicated Truthfully & Lovingly* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2012), 20.

quickly losing the ability to discern biblical truth, basic stories such as Moses, Noah, and even Jesus are questioned. To underscore culture's impact on the Church, Metzger cites a 2009 survey claiming 50% of evangelicals believe people who follow other religions would end up in heaven, atheists included.⁴³ Culture has become increasingly hostile to truth; experience and feelings trump theology and biblical authority.

This is precisely the tension found on the present landscape. People are creating their own truth based upon a combination of emotion and experience. Christianity leads us to live a very different life. Our identity is found in Christ (John 1:12; 2 Cor. 5:17). Life under the cross crashes through the glass houses people create for themselves, leveling the playing field between the Christian and others, but more importantly, between the Christian and God. We have the privilege and joy—through the Spirit's guidance and power through Mentorship—to lead people toward a place of humility and grace before the cross. Immersing the mentoring relationship in His Word, the Spirit enters in to convict, cut, forgive, and heal. Ultimately, a life in Christ means becoming dead to our sin, and in the wake of its ashes a Cross springs forth to bring new life into the broken, sinful places (Rom. 6:8–11; 2 Cor. 5:17).

When one does away with reason, absolute truth, and an omnipotent God, one does away with the hope of the world. As such, the world becomes a fearful place to live! People have attempted to numb themselves to such a reality by diving blindly into a plethora of world religions, beliefs, and practices contrary to the Word of God. This is the context the Church finds itself today. Past models of discipleship are not as effective as they once were at reaching people with the Gospel. Yes, the challenges are many but opportunities abound! We need only open our eyes long enough to see them! We are not without hope. People are still searching for meaning

⁴³ Metzger, *Tell the Truth*, 20.

and truth to live by. Questions are being asked and answers sought. As followers of the One true and living God, we possess within our grasp “the” Truth, a priceless treasure to share. We have been given a hope and peace this world longs to possess. The mission of the Church, our mission, is to make disciples (Matt. 28:19–20). All this leads to one critical question: What kind of process best speaks to the hearts of the people living in today’s world? I would argue Mentorship evangelism is a tool that can effectively meet the needs of the present cultural landscape.

The Importance of Relationships as Context for Evangelism

In studying the writings of McRaney, Kinnaman, Rainer, Barna, and White, all contain a single thread woven through them that ties their works together. The needs expressed in the present landscape are great, yet each author points toward the need of deeper, engaging relationships of a mentoring nature as a solution to today’s discipleship problem. Such a model is Mentorship evangelism upon which this project is built. Mentorship comes alongside people in a mutual mentoring way, intentionally leading toward conversations of faith, God, and Gospel transformation. Based upon the above research, Mentorship evangelism has the potential to work well in today’s cultural context. Pointing toward the need of such a model, Kinnaman writes, “Within the stories of young people wrestling with faith, the church as a whole can find fresh and revitalizing answers. Let’s call it ‘reverse mentoring,’ because we, the established Christian generation, have a lot to learn from the emerging generation.”⁴⁴ Along similar lines, Kinnaman later writes, “I believe we need to change from an industrialized, mass-production, public-education approach and embrace the messy adventure of relationship. We need a new set of ideas

⁴⁴ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 12.

and practices based on apprenticeship.”⁴⁵ Listen to the choice of Kinnaman’s words used to describe the need of today’s discipleship: story, emerging generation, embrace the mess, reverse mentoring, relationship, and apprenticeship. All punctuate an evangelism heavy on relationships, care, and maturity. Mentorship evangelism is a model that has the potential of speaking well into the lives of the unchurched in today’s culture.

Meeting a Need

As we have seen, Mentorship evangelism meets a need for discipleship in the present cultural context. The needs are certainly great but our God is greater! We stand at a crossroads. The time is not to retreat behind our cloistered walls of safety but to live God’s mission of making disciples, boldly professing the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ to a world desperately needing its message. On the tension of living “in, of, and for” the world, Gregory Seltz reminds us: “To be the church of the incarnate Christ is to willingly, continuously live in the tension of cultural relevance and faithful confession . . . being Christ’s church in and for the community.”⁴⁶ But how might the task of evangelism be carried out in a way that honors our Lutheran identity yet remains biblically grounded? How might we speak the unchanging message of Jesus in a way this culture can hear and comprehend? There is no secret formula to address the *nones* and the post-Christian world of today. No magic bullets exist that will fix our present condition. If it were so, they would have been employed long ago.

As stated earlier, we have a discipleship problem. To address this, Kinnaman rightly urges Christians to mentor young adults in a reverse mentoring pattern where growth and learning

⁴⁵ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 126.

⁴⁶ Seltz, “Empowering Confident Confessor-Servant Evangelists,” 209.

happen in a mutual way. Within this context, both learn and grow together through life's path.⁴⁷ Younger generations crave older, seasoned adults to come alongside them to lovingly speak truth and to gently guide them toward adulthood. Whether realized or not, every living thing yearns for connection with others in a significant way. In his powerful book, *Father Fiction*, Donald Miller explores the open wounds left by a fatherless generation. He repeatedly sounds the alarm for mentorship as a powerful resource into the maturity dilemma prevalent today. Part memoir and part challenge, Miller speaks candidly into the lives of today's young men (and women) with a message to help them grow up. Each brief chapter is a life-lesson a father would speak into his son or daughter's life as a mirrored reflection of how our heavenly Father is intent on fathering us toward maturity. *Father Fiction* is a powerful book that stresses the need of mentoring relationships in the maturing process. On the importance of mentoring relationships, Miller says they have the power to "unlock certain parts of who we are supposed to be."⁴⁸ Whether positively or negatively, "We become like the people we hang out with."⁴⁹ Today's generation needs guidance and wisdom on learning how to grow up, compounded by the absence of the father figure in many homes, the lack of a fathering presence has left generations floundering toward maturity. To be sure, we have all met the 40-, 50-, or even 60-year-olds who still have not grown up yet.

Miller's book beautifully illustrates how a mature man or woman of faith is able to call the little boy or girl out of a person. Every living being needs to hear that they have value, that they are good, that the Heavenly Father loves them and has a plan for their life. The mentorship

⁴⁷ Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 205.

⁴⁸ Donald Miller, *Father Fiction: Chapters for a Fatherless Generation* (New York: Howard Books, 2010), 56.

⁴⁹ Miller, *Father Fiction*, 114.

process has the ability to speak these transforming words into a person’s life: “You are a loved and forgiven child of the Heavenly Father, born with a purpose and higher calling.”

The power of mentoring is clear. Mentoring, coaching, and apprenticing are some of the most effective tools for reaching millennials, the *nones*, and the unchurched.⁵⁰ Opportunities within Mentorship as an evangelism tool are limitless! The greatest need all generations crave can be expressed in a single word: *Relationship*. Relationship with others. Relationship to self. Relationship with God. James White urges that relationships, regardless of cultural context or historical setting, continue to be a primary vehicle for evangelism and faith as they have the power to “cut through the noise of their lives.”⁵¹ The good news is that the unchurched are still open to personal invitation by a friend to attend church. Based on recent research from the Barna Institute, of *nones* asked to attend a worship service by a friend, half expressed willingness to attend while one-fifth expressed strong interest.⁵² In the end, it comes back to cultivating relationships.

Jesus knows and demonstrates the power of relationships. He is, after all, an incarnational God who took on human flesh and became one of us in order to redeem us, a people incapable of saving themselves. He spoke, and life came into being. He asked questions and gave the searching a purpose. He touched the hurting and filled them with hope. He entered a room and washed some feet. He hung on a cross and breathed His last breath. By His wounds we are healed (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:8). This incarnational, take-on-flesh God—Father, Son, Spirit—did this out of a great love for His created, His beloved Bride. It was a sacrificial act only He could

⁵⁰ Ted and Chelsey Doering, *Myth of the Millennial: Connecting Generations in the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 52.

⁵¹ White, *Meet Generation Z*, 124.

⁵² White, *Meet Generation Z*, 124.

do, a sacrifice given freely, humbly, gracefully to a people incapable of saving itself. Through Mentorship, we model the sacrificial love God has for us, reflecting it into those with whom we are in relationship with: “We love because He has first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

Dorothy’s famous phrase from the *The Wizard of Oz* has never rung so true, “Toto, I have a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.”⁵³ Our world today is dramatically different than it was ten to twenty years ago (let alone last week). As we stand in the midst of nihilism, loss of absolute truth, and massive deconstructionism, the Church has a tremendous window of opportunity to make an eternal difference in people’s lives. It is evident that people are seeking meaningful connection with others, but more importantly, they are searching for an experience with something wholly other, with God Himself. We must remember whose Church it is we have the privilege of being a part. The Lord is not finished with His glorious plan of seeking and saving that which is lost. As the Lord of the Church, He will do as He sees fit to build, grow, and strengthen His Body from this kingdom to the next. Maybe it is time for the Church to get out of the way and open our grip long enough for the Lord to accomplish what He seeks to do in us and through us.

I believe Mentorship evangelism is an answer to the Land of Oz nestled on the present landscape. Mentoring relationships are about a journey where we seek to come alongside the *nones*, the unchurched, and the Mehtas and Mildenhalls of this world in a “truth in love” way (Eph. 4:15). Mentors wonder with them, serve with them, and engage with them about the Jesus who seeks to make a dwelling in the heart of those who would believe (John 15:1–10; James 4:8). Heeding the words of Paul: “To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some” (1 Cor. 9:22).

⁵³ Fleming, Victor, et al. *The Wizard of Oz*. Burbank, CA: Turner Entertainment Co., 2013.

Conclusion

If Hemant Mehta or Helen Mildenhall were standing before us, how might we speak to them of Jesus? What questions would be asked? How might the Christian respond? Where does one begin a conversation? One of the first things any foreign missionary does upon entry into another country is seek to understand the culture. Knowing the culture influences their method of witness. Thus, in this chapter we sought to understand our present ministry context and its impact on the Church, discipleship, and evangelism, so as to create a framework for Mentorship evangelism. Through several experts in the field—Will McRaney, David Kinnaman, James White, and Donald Miller—we saw how Mentorship evangelism meets a relationship and spiritual need prevalent in today’s culture and Church. With the rise of secularism, nihilism, and lack of absolute truth, a perfect storm is brewing. The winds may be blowing, but our God is in the whirlwind, leading the Church toward a new glorious day (Job 38:1). Mentorship evangelism meets a need for discipleship in the present cultural context. In the following chapter, Chapter Four, we build upon the thoughts explored in this and previous chapters to craft a style of evangelism that better speaks today’s language in a way it can be heard. To meet this need, the chapter explores the design, development, and launch of the project and its research methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

When I first arrived at Redeemer in 2010 to serve as their next pastor, the church took great pride in being a family church. Verbiage about family was spoken everywhere. At first glance this sounds wonderful, particularly for those who are part of the church. However, underneath the family rhetoric a subtle, unspoken message was being sent to guests and visitors: “You do not belong here.” This was not intentional, yet for those outside the family it was a challenge to break the established ranks regardless of how welcoming the church tried to be. What does it say about a church when someone is still considered new after seven plus years of membership? It quickly became apparent that one of my initial roles was to help Redeemer reengage the community in which it was placed by recapturing God’s mission for the Church. The church had largely become inwardly focused on their own needs, programs, events, and projects, with little thought to those outside its four walls.

Thus, I set to work creating an evangelism project that would open Redeemer’s eyes to see the broader family God sought to create through them. There is a question I often asked the leadership of the church to help them begin thinking more about God’s mission: “If Redeemer were blown off the map today would the community notice we were gone tomorrow?” As I listened to their heartfelt responses, I was often convicted. What I learned was people wanted to reach out with the Gospel, they just did not know how or have the necessary tools. Many had expressed trying unsuccessfully, some turning family members off to Christianity at an even deeper level. They lacked the knowledge and confidence necessary to step out in witness, fearful

of what they may be asked or the repercussions of such a conversation. I was humbled to see charter and long-time members in their 70s and 80s weep over family they were uncertain about and where their eternal rest would be found following death; in heaven or hell. The depth of sadness over loved ones who drifted from the local church was gripping, honest, and real. As their pastor I felt both conviction and a sense of responsibility to help the flock entrusted to my care to better understand and engage the mission of making disciples (Matt. 28:18–20). Through the swirling clouds of their fears, lack of knowledge and zeal around God’s mission, a plan was born.

There had been no real sense of purpose and intentionality around evangelism for some time. To meet this need a primary focus of this MAP was to help Redeemer increase their perceived level of evangelism knowledge and confidence to witness through the introduction of a mentor-method evangelism. This MAP was also used to help the researcher better understand the mission of the congregation and its ministry context through the casting of a broader vision for outreach at Redeemer. Eventually, as more people go through this training, a broader vision for the lost and God’s mission for the Church will be cast.

By completing this project, I hope the heart of evangelism lives on beyond the life span of the original pilot group. I pray that God uses this method as a tool to expand His Kingdom to the next generation and beyond. Collected survey data and analysis as well as observations during Mentorship Training with the pilot group will provide invaluable knowledge and insight as Redeemer envisions a more comprehensive outreach strategy.

Design of the Study

The project began by recruiting a pilot group of 10 to 15 participants who would go through a 10-week Mentorship Training course on evangelism. Test subjects for the pilot group

were selected by the researcher through a series of letters, individual conversations, and vision casting meals. The criteria for selection were based largely upon interest, giftedness in evangelism, and leadership within the church. From a list of 26 potential test subjects, a total of 14 participants were initially recruited for the pilot group, 2 opted out after the initial training week due to life circumstance beyond their control. That left 12 pilot participants in the study. All participants were coded for survey and interview anonymity and integrity of the research.

After participants were recruited and coded I finalized a “Consent to Research”¹ and “Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training)”² to be completed by pilot participants prior to the initial training session. The consent and survey were mailed along with a cover letter³ a few weeks prior to training launch. Participants were asked to complete the survey to the best of their ability and bring completed forms to the initial training session. Through a mixed-methods approach to research, Survey #1 was intended to establish a baseline of perceived evangelism knowledge and willingness. This was accomplished through an assortment of open-ended questions and questions measurable to a Likert Scale. All participants completed the original survey, including the 2 who opted out of the study. Survey #2 was developed about the same time, utilizing many of the same questions from the original survey. This information would be used to compare before- and after-training perceptions toward evangelism knowledge and growth.

Having obtained all 12 pilot participant Consent to Research forms, the Mentorship Training pilot group launched September 18, 2013. The group met weekly for the intensive 10-week course of training. A variety of teaching methods were employed during the 90-minute

¹ See Appendix 4: “Consent to Research.”

² See Appendix 1: “Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training).”

³ See Appendix 5: “Cover Letter for Consent to Research and Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training).”

sessions: discussion, lecture, video, role-play, group activities, social media, and assigned readings. The following schedule was used:

1. Pre-Gathering Snacks and Fellowship (Prior to the official start time)
2. Welcome, Announcements and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)
3. Discussion Time for Reading Assignments (25 minutes)
4. Large Group Teaching Time (55 minutes)
5. Assignments when applicable (3 minutes)
6. Closing Prayer (2 minutes)

Mentorship Training Subject Matter

The subject matter of Mentorship Training consists of two 5-session units; Block-1 and Block-2. Block-1 explains the Lutheran understanding and theology of evangelism with questions: *What is evangelism? Are evangelism and witnessing the same thing? How does evangelism relate to the mission of the Church? Does the Bible establish a specific method for sharing faith with others? Are all Christians called to evangelize? What effect does culture have on how one shares their faith?* Block-2 explores the practical side of Mentorship. This unit of training involves more role-play and application of the material learned in Block-1

Each Block session begins with discussion around assigned articles from recent scholarship and chapters in Doug Pollock's book, *God Space*. Listed below are the general topics explored in Block-1 of Mentorship Training:

Session 1: Introduction to Mentorship evangelism. How are missions and evangelism related? A theology of mission: Flowing from God to Church and the individual. The Centrality of evangelism to the mission of the Church.

Session 2: Exploring today's culture climate for evangelism and the effect culture has on how one shares their faith. As missionaries, knowing the language, culture, and people is paramount. A comparison of fortress and missional outpost mentality. The bulk of the session explores evangelism fundamentals of the Lutheran approach to evangelism.

Session 3: The shift from modernism to post-modernism and how this transition impacts our witness. The lesson explores the implications of this shift and discusses suggestions for outreach today.

Session 4: Principles and practices from the Apostolic era that might translate well in today's postmodern culture. Comparing and contrasting similarities between Ancient Rome and Postmodern America and ways evangelism meets a need within today's landscape.

Session 5: Interaction with various New Testament Greek words for "evangelism" and how each gives a slightly different vantage to the task of Mentorship evangelism.

Listed below are the general topics explored in Block-2 of Mentorship Training:

Session 1: Unpacking the Mentorship Outline of Movement and walks through, at a broad level, the "7 C's of the Mentorship Outline of Movement."

Session 2: Introduction of the importance of asking questions as a form of evangelism. Time is taken to introduce and practice the use of "God-Sized Questions" (GSQs). God-Sized Questions provide a way of entering into spiritual conversation without appearing odd, fanatical, or manipulative.

Session 3: Considering signs that might indicate it is time to invite a potential explorer into formal mentorship. We also practice the use of "Connecting Questions." Connecting questions function as invitations into formal mentorship.

Session 4: The importance of covenanting within Mentorship and a general framework for how a mentor might accomplish this. The session also explores practical boundaries to consider when entering a formal mentorship so as to avoid common mentoring pitfalls.

Session 5: The Mentorship Journal, a tool the mentor may choose to use in formal Mentorship during the “Cycles of Content” movement. The various sections of the journal are explored as well as how to use the tool within Mentorship.

Due to the length of this MAP, the *Mentorship Training Leader and Participant Manual* and *Mentorship Journal* are not included in the appendices but are available upon request from the author.

Upon completion of Block-1 and Block-2, a second survey was distributed to the 12 participants. Of the 12 pilot participants, 10 completed and returned this survey. These surveys were designed to capture before and after training perceptions regarding perceived evangelism knowledge and willingness. Survey #2 utilizes many of the same questions from the original survey taken before training.⁴

Individual exit interviews were organized about this same time. For research purposes, these sessions were recorded by permission of each test subject. Interviews were held at Redeemer or in participant homes, whichever was most convenient and comfortable for each test subject. A list of four questions was developed for exit interviews,⁵ and made available to participants prior to their selected interview time. Of the 12 pilot participants, 7 completed an exit interview. The recordings were transcribed for future analysis.⁶

⁴ See Appendix 2: “Evangelism Survey #2 (Post-Training).”

⁵ See Appendix 6: “Exit interview Questions.”

⁶ See Appendix 7: “Interview Transcriptions.”

Research Tools and Methodology

This project comprised a study of 12 members of Redeemer Lutheran Church (Rolla, MO) to assess perceived growth in evangelism knowledge and willingness. From an initial recruiting pool of 26 potential test subjects, my goal was 10 to 15 pilot participants. In choosing the people for the pilot group, I opted for a mixture of men and women of varying ages, focusing primarily upon those who tended to be more influential in the congregation as well as open to the concept and practice of evangelism. The overall composition of the pilot group was a good representation of the congregation's demographic. The selection process honored ethical standards, giving people an easy out at any time during the study.

After pilot selection I requested permission to study them. Test subjects were identified and coded by number to protect their anonymity and integrity of the research process. A series of two evaluation instruments were developed to assess before and after attitudes pertaining to evangelism knowledge and willingness. An initial survey was given prior to the course's launch to gain a baseline of data. A second survey was given upon completion of the course, utilizing many of the same questions from the initial survey. As a way to further document a change in perceived evangelism growth, individual exit interviews were held following completion of Mentorship Training. An established list of four questions was developed using open-ended, qualitative design. The interviews were no more than thirty minutes in length. They were recorded and transcribed for data analysis.

When all surveys and exit interviews were complete I compiled the raw data and began working through the information to assess perceived growth in evangelism knowledge and willingness. To help ensure that the evaluation methods met the standards of a mixed-methods research design, consultation was sought from an expert in the field of research and design. I consulted with Dr. Reginald Brigham, professor of mathematics and statistics, Missouri

University of Science and Technology.⁷ His wealth of expertise in the field of mathematics and data analysis proved an invaluable resource of insight to this project.

Project Implementation

This project on Mentorship evangelism engaged the following implementation steps leading toward project completion:

1. **2012** – I spoke with Dr. Luke Biggs for permission and blessing to build upon his MAP. He graciously expressed his wholehearted support and has been a strong encourager, advocate, and source of information throughout this project.
2. **June 12, 2013** – After a week of residency on campus for the purpose of working on my MAP, I submitted candidacy paperwork and an initial project proposal to Dr. David Peter, the DMin Committee Chair, for approval.
3. **Summer 2013** – This was a season of transition. With Dr. William Utech taking a Call to serve in the Minnesota South District Office, I worked with the Advanced Studies Committee to request he remain my faculty advisor. The committee graciously accepted the request. Also at this time, the leadership of the DMin Program transitioned from Dr. David Peter to Dr. Wally Becker. In the midst of these changes, I worked closely with both Dr. Peter and Dr. Becker as they encouraged me to proceed with my MAP project. Several project items were completed in Summer 2013. With my goal of the Mentorship Training pilot group launch on September 18, 2013, the summer months were a time filled with much prep work in regard to curriculum development, securing proper academic approvals, and recruitment of test subjects for the pilot group.

⁷ See Appendix 12: “Dr. Reginald Brigham Vitae.”

4. **June 2013** – I began compiling and praying over a list of 25 potential pilot group participants.
5. **July 2013** – Once the “Initial Recruitment Letter to Pilot Participants”⁸ was drafted, it was mailed to a list of 25 possible participants. Follow-up conversations were held by phone or in person.
6. **August 2013 (early)** – To help with the development of “Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training)”⁹ I consulted with Dr. Luke Biggs, my faculty advisor Dr. William Utech, and Dr. Paul Burger, an expert in data analysis, who provided helpful feedback on the survey. Dr. Burger is a professor in the Department of Sociology, Geography, and Earth Sciences at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.
7. **August 2013 (late)** – The “Consent to Research”¹⁰ was developed and mailed to Pilot Group participants, along with a cover letter¹¹ and “Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training).” Participants were asked to be completed both forms prior to our initial Mentorship Training session on September 18, 2013.
8. **September 18, 2013** – Mentorship Training begins.
9. **November 20, 2013** – Mentorship Training concludes.
10. **November 2013** – “Evangelism Survey #2 (Post-Training)”¹² is developed. Following completion of training, the survey was distributed to pilot participants for completion.

⁸ See Appendix 3: “Initial Recruitment Letter to Pilot Participants.”

⁹ See Appendix 1: “Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training).”

¹⁰ See Appendix 4: “Consent to Research.”

¹¹ See Appendix 5: “Cover Letter for Consent to Research and Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training).”

¹² See Appendix 2: “Evangelism Survey #2 (Post-Training).”

11. **November 14, 2013** – An email was received from Dr. Wally Becker, the new DMin Committee Chair, expressing a desire for minor revisions to the proposed MAP.
12. **December 8, 2013** – Participants in the Pilot Group are commissioned as trained mentors during Sunday morning worship.¹³ A cake and punch reception took place between Sunday morning worship services.
13. **January 21, 2014** – After meeting in-person with Dr. William Utech over requested revisions, a revised MAP proposal was submitted to Dr. Wally Becker for consideration.
14. **January 22, 2014** – The MAP proposal was approved by the Advanced Studies Committee.
15. **January 2014** – Registration for the MAP (DM966).
16. **February 2014** – The development of post-training exit interview questions.¹⁴
17. **March/April 2014** – Post-training recorded exit interviews are completed.
18. **May 2014** – Audio files of post-training exit interviews are sent to Sue Bontrager for transcription. Transcription is complete June 26, 2014.¹⁵
19. **September 18, 2014** – A meeting was held with Dr. Wally Becker to consider next steps with the MAP in light of personal matters needing immediate and focused attention. Following this meeting, much time was spent in prayer considering next steps.
20. **February 2015** – For a number of reasons, it became necessary for me to step away from my MAP and give clear and focused attention to personal matters. Thus, on February 9, 2015, I sent an email to Dr. Wally Becker, formally requesting withdrawal from the DMin program. This decision came after much discussion with Wally Becker, William

¹³ See Appendix 11: “A Liturgy for the Commissioning of Mentors.”

¹⁴ See Appendix 6: “Exit Interview Questions.”

¹⁵ See Appendix 7: “Interview Transcriptions.”

Utech, Luke Biggs, family, and other trusted pastors and colleagues. At the time of my departure, in an email note I expressed a strong desire to someday return to the program to complete my MAP and course of study, especially since I was so close to project completion.

21. **August 2016** – While on a family vacation in Minnesota, I met with Dr. William Utech exploring the possibility of resuming work on my MAP. After much prayer and consideration, in Fall 2016, I began taking steps to reengage my MAP with the goal of project completion. Project completion is within sight!
22. **July 2016** – An email was sent to Dr. Wally Becker seeking to determine the current Advanced Studies Chair as well as determining appropriate next steps toward readmission into the program. I was connected with Dr. Gerhard Bode and set up a phone meeting for September 22, 2016, to begin a discussion around readmission back into the DMin program.
23. **September 22, 2016** – I had a phone conversation with Dr. Gerhard Bode, Advanced Studies Chair, concerning DMin readmission with the goal of program completion.
24. **October 19, 2016** – An email was sent to Dr. David Peter requesting an appointment to see if he would be willing to be my new Academic Advisor. That same day, he graciously accepted my request. We scheduled a dinner meeting later that month to bring him up to speed and consider next steps regarding my MAP.
25. **November 12, 2016** – I spoke with President Lee Hagan at an E2 Workshop (Encourage and Equip) in Springfield, alerting him of my desire for seeking readmission to complete the DMin program. He strongly encouraged me to move forward, filling out a letter of reference.

26. **November 2016** – Paperwork for readmission is mailed to Dr. Gerhard Bode.
27. **May 1, 2017** – I received a letter of acceptance for readmission into the DMin program.
28. **February 19, 2018** – A draft of the completed MAP is given to Sue Bontrager for proofreading. Comments and suggested were received and reflected in the project.
29. **March 5, 2018** – An initial draft of the MAP is submitted to Dr. David Peter for preliminary review.
30. **March 8, 2018** – An initial message was sent to Dr. Reginald Brigham, requesting his consultation on the data analysis portion of my MAP. An email confirmation of his agreement to help was received that same day.
31. **March 11, 2018** – A draft of Chapter 5, along with the project’s raw data, was sent to Dr. Reginald Brigham for feedback on the research and analysis contained in the project.
32. **March 20, 2018** – Comments are received from Dr. Peter on my MAP draft. I also met with Dr. Brigham in person for consultation on the research section of my project. His keen insight and expertise are reflected in Chapters 5 and 6.
33. **March 27, 2018** – Primary and Secondary Readers for the project are secured: Dr. William Utech (primary) and Dr. Timothy Saleska (secondary).
34. **April 5, 2018** – A Semi-final Draft of the MAP is submitted to Dr. David Peter.
35. **April 19, 2018** – Comments for revision were received from the Dissertation Secretary.
36. **April 23, 2018** – Upon revision of suggested edits, a revised Semi-final draft was submitted to the Dissertation Secretary for approval.
37. **April 30, 2018** – Approval is given from the Dissertation Secretary’s office to proceed with the Oral Examination.

38. **May 10, 2018** – A Final Draft, with the inclusion of Oral Examination revisions, is submitted to Dr. David Peter for final review, approval, and matriculation into the library system.

Conclusion

Culture is changing, and people need Jesus now, as ever. Previous methods of evangelism are not as effective in meeting the present landscape. As previously discussed, Redeemer is not immune to present cultural trends as demonstrated through current membership and attendance trends which present an undesirable nor sustainable outlook for future viability as an organization.¹⁶ Thus, church leadership sought a new method to address its present context. To meet this need, Mentorship evangelism was introduced. It must be noted, the focus of mentorship is not church, but Kingdom growth. Through prayer, planning, and much conversation, a training method was developed to give believers the necessary theological grounding as well as confidence necessary for the practice of evangelism. In this chapter, we explored the genesis, design, and development of the project and its steps toward implementation and completion. The chapter also highlighted the research process, survey tools, training schedule logistics, and topics explored in Mentorship Training. In the end, through the use of multiple training methods to accommodate a range of learning styles, the project sought to change perception growth in theology and confidence for the practice of evangelism. We now turn to the next chapter, Chapter Five, which discusses the measurement of such perception growth through the project's analysis of the collected data and surveys employed in this study.

¹⁶ See Table 1: "Communicant Member & Average Attendance Trends," Table 7: "Snapshot of Redeemer by Age Category (as of January 1, 2013)," and Appendix 9: "Demographic Study: Key Influencers & Markers."

CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION

The purpose of this MAP was to develop a mentor-method of evangelism at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rolla, Missouri. This was accomplished through the launch of a pilot group which worked through a 10-week evangelism curriculum called Mentorship Training. This intensive training encompassed a theological and biblical framework, practical tools, personal accountability, and encouragement necessary for participants to grow stronger in perceived knowledge and willingness for engaging people in relationships. Before and after training perceptions of test subjects were gained through the use of two surveys and exit interviews as a way for this researcher to gain data indicating whether the project accomplished its intended goals. The goal was to increase participants' perceived knowledge and willingness in the theology and practice of evangelism. This chapter will explore the research methodology used, key analysis findings of the pre- and post-training surveys implemented, as well as exit interviews of the test subjects at project completion.

Initial research included a set of two surveys developed to assess perceived growth in evangelism knowledge and willingness of test subjects in the Mentorship Training pilot group. While crafting Survey #1 and Survey #2, I consulted with Dr. Paul Burger, an expert in the field who has a strong research background related to formulating survey instruments and interview questions, particularly regarding to data analysis. Dr. Burger holds an Ed.D. in geography from Oklahoma State University and currently teaches at University of Nebraska at Kearny, where he sat as the Department Chair of Sociology, Geography, and Earth Sciences from 2007–2011. He

holds an extensive background in research and design. Upon completion of data collection and having its findings analyzed, Dr. Reginald Brigham was consulted to lend his expertise in providing insight as to the data findings and research integrity of this project. Dr. Brigham is professor of mathematics and statistics at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, MO.¹ He provided an insightfully keen eye to the project research, bringing with him many years of education and expertise in research and design. Through my interaction with Dr. Brigham, his heart and passion for ministry and Kingdom impact is clear. I am grateful for his friendship and voice into this project.

Findings and Analysis of the Surveys

To measure growth in perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism, an initial assessment was given prior to the start of training to establish a baseline. One month following completion of the 10-week training course a modified version of the original survey was given to the pilot group test subjects to assess perceived growth in evangelism knowledge and willingness to outreach. A sample of the surveys used with pre- and post-training pilot participants, along with letters of invitation and permission to research can be found in the appendices. Ultimately, the data collected for this project was intended to help Redeemer more effectively engage those not yet reached within the Rolla community and beyond with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The entire set of findings will be shared with the Board of Missions and the Board of Elders. Recommendations will be formulated for a congregation-wide launch of Mentorship Training based upon the research and analysis carried out in this project.

¹ See Appendix 12: “Dr. Reginald Brigham Vitae.”

Prior to exploring the research data and findings, a basic description of the pilot group will prove beneficial in its interpretation. At the time of the pilot's launch, the subject group consisted of 9 female and 5 male participants. Breaking the demographic down further, 13 were married and 1 widowed. The mean age was 58.5 years old with the average length as practicing Christians being 48.0 years. Many claimed being Christian their whole life. The educational background of the group is primarily college level with 12 participants citing some form of college education with the remaining 2 graduating high school. This is a well-established, educated, mature group of Lutheran Christians.

Using questions measured to a Likert Scale, the survey instrument developed for this project employed a mixed-methods approach, designed to collect data comparing pre- and post-training perceptions concerning knowledge and willingness toward evangelism. To acquire comparative data, both surveys asked the following question: "On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident / knowledgeable are you in sharing your faith?" Participant responses from Survey #1 established a baseline of data. Comparing initial responses from Survey #1 (pre-training) to those from Survey #2 (post-training) reveal a rise in both perceived evangelism knowledge and confidence growth. Employing a Likert scale range of 1 to 5, data results from both surveys are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 below. There is a clear shift in growth of participant perceptions from Survey #1 which was administered pre-training compared to Survey #2 given about one month following training completion. Survey #2 shows clear growth with 100% of test subjects plotting 3 or higher on the Likert Scale in both perceived evangelism knowledge and confidence.

Table 2. Evangelism Survey #1 (Pre-Training)

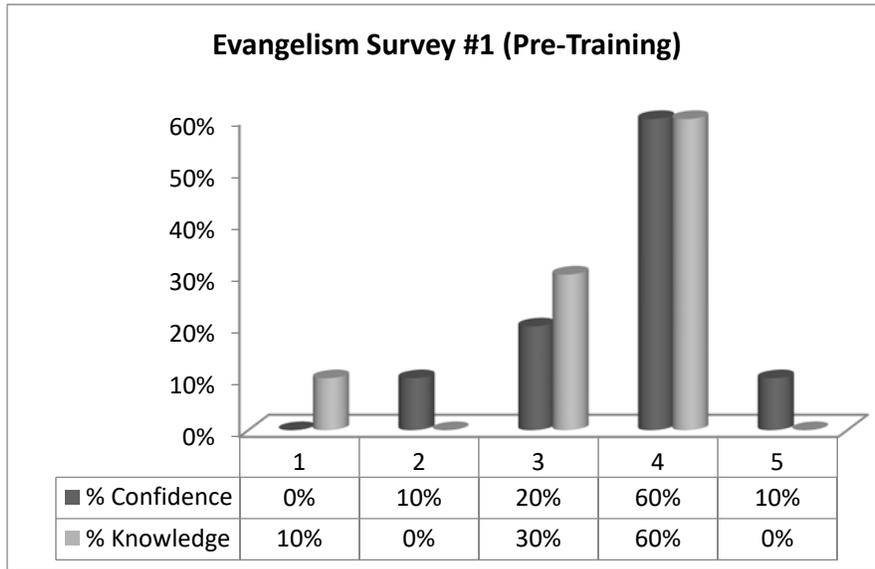
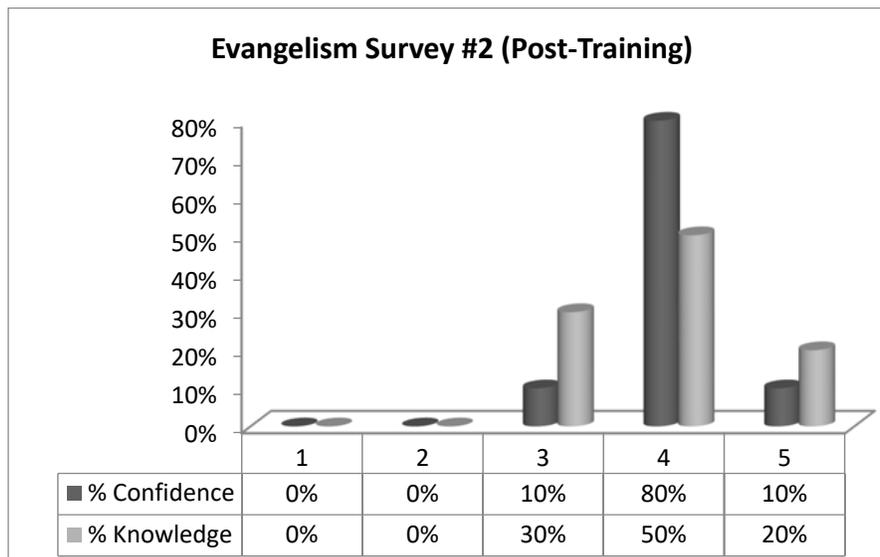


Table 3. Evangelism Survey #2 (Post-Training)



Using the same data as above, Table 4 and Table 5 combines both sets of pre- and post-training data around perceived knowledge (Table 4) and confidence (Table 5) into respective charts.

Seeing data findings in this format indicates perception growth around evangelism in a more visual way. Data indicates growth in perceived evangelism knowledge and confidence among pilot test subjects.

Table 4. Pre-/Post-Knowledge Comparison

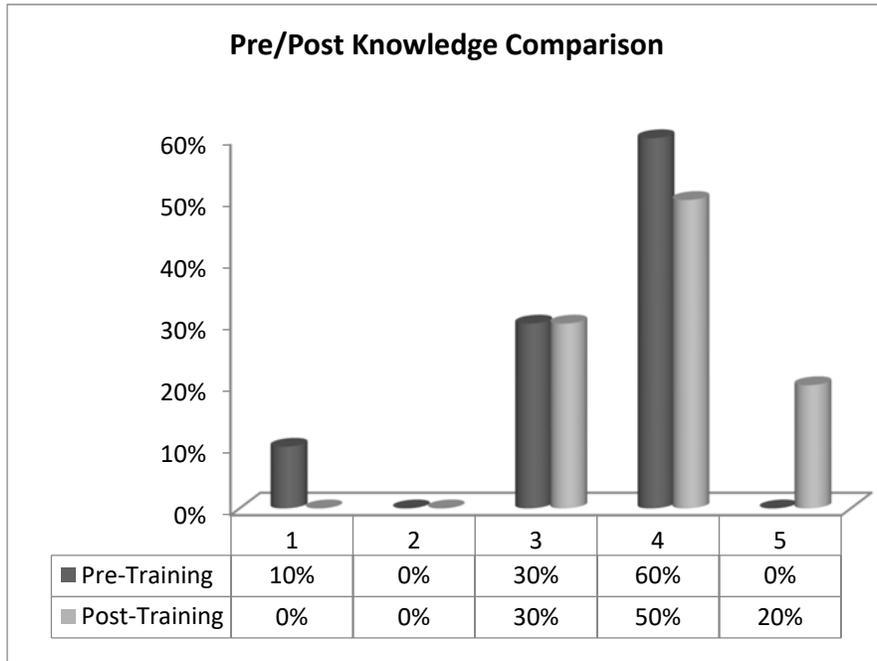
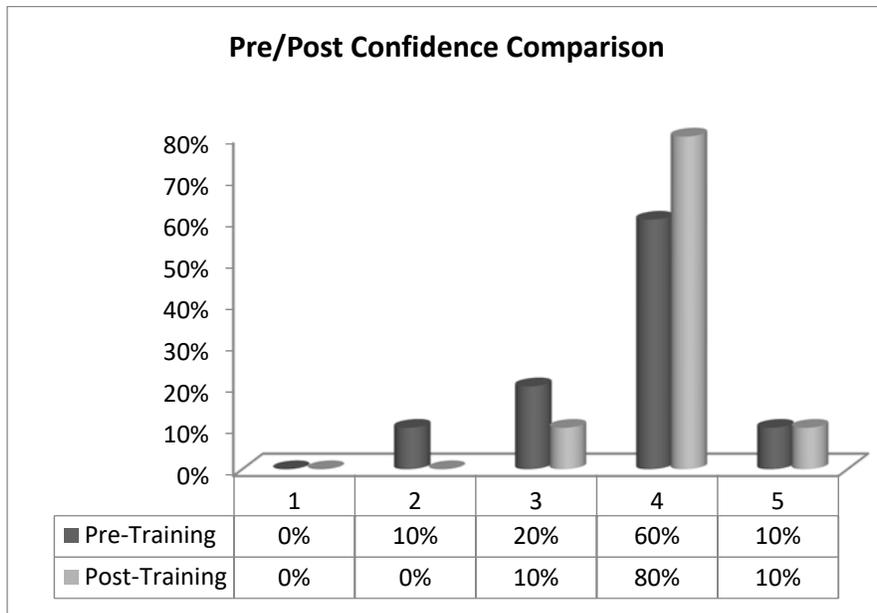


Table 5. Pre-/Post-Confidence Comparison

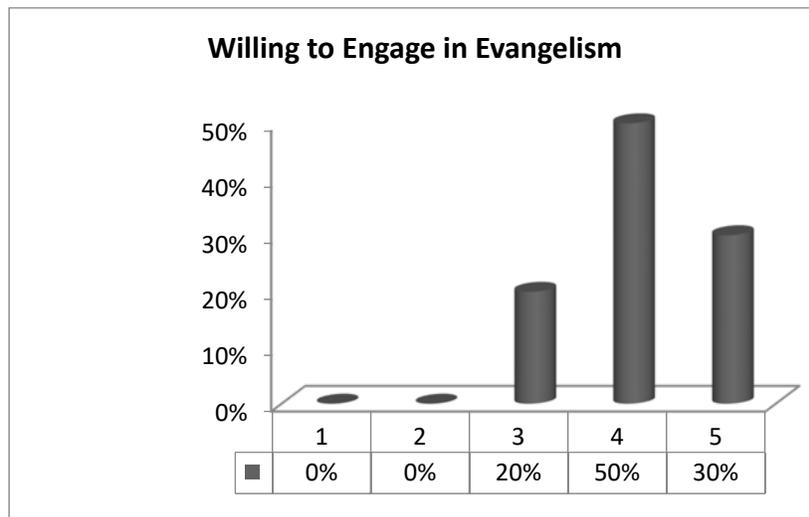


One of the most encouraging pieces of data from this study comes from Survey #2 concerning the likelihood of participants engaging in evangelism following training. Employing a question measurable to the Likert Scale range of 1 to 5, 1 being unwilling and 5 being willing

to engage in evangelism, 80% of test subjects positively ranked their willingness to engage with evangelism as either 4 or 5. See Table 6 below: “Willingness to Engage in Evangelism.”

Employing a Likert scale of 1 to 5, no participant ranked below 3, describing an unwillingness toward evangelism. Survey data indicates test subjects are open to engaging others in evangelism.

Table 6. Willing to Engage in Evangelism



Overall, both surveys employed a mixed-methods approach to research. The instrument asked open-ended questions thus allowing for comments. When test subjects were asked to describe Redeemer’s approach to evangelism, there was a common theme woven throughout the responses. Many described the church’s approach with words such as: minimal, non-existent, evolving, nothing earth shattering, nor aggressive. One test subject laments: “I must be honest about this although I know my comment is very negative. I believe our church’s approach to evangelism is very weak. . . . Very few members will participate. It is very discouraging to me.” For many, evangelism is linked to fellowship events, giving money to foreign mission agencies,

and the church's food pantry. The general consensus of the congregation as one test subject quipped: "It is someone else's job!"

When test subjects were asked if their view and understanding changed as a result of Mentorship Training, one participant summed up the experience best:

I personally thought evangelism was knocking on doors telling people about Jesus or handing out tracts. Now I see evangelism as a process involving building of relationships in order to develop trust between parties so that the Gospel can be shared when the recipient is ready. The Holy Spirit is responsible for the conversion of the person. The goal is to bring the lost to Christ.

I am more interested in what others think regarding spiritual matters. I am less judgmental. I am less inclined to correct people / tell my opinions / shove my views down their throat. I am more concerned about other people's salvation. Yes, He has provided opportunities for me to interact with a coworker about his experiences. I am asking questions without giving answers / my opinions at present.

Below is a selection of responses from other participants reacting to their overall experience with Mentorship Training:

God has used the class...to remind me to share my joy in his love and relationship with others. He is showing me that people are hurting, and getting my relationships with others to different deeper levels and not so shallow.

I really enjoyed this class and look forward to our quarterly meetings. This class has opened my eyes to the state of culture today. "Young" people and the necessity of seeing things through their eyes. I also have had to humble myself and admit "I'm not cool" and realize young people can teach me very much!

I definitely see people more compassionately, which is not my nature. There is a guy I've chatted with a couple of times recently and *he asked me* if we could go out for lunch so he could ask more questions. That's a first!

At some point Christians need to come to terms with reality. Many can answer the "why is the Church here?" question, but few actually live like it's true. Maybe we should focus on reaching out more and less on facility. . . . We must LIVE the mission first or the rest doesn't matter.

The above responses, along with survey data collected pre- and post-training indicate growth in perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism.

Findings and Analysis of Exit Interviews

Following pre- and post-training assessments, test subjects were invited to participate in an exit interview as a way for this researcher to gain further insight as to perceived individual growth of knowledge and willingness toward the practice of evangelism. Success was measured by whether Mentorship Training participants increased in perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism. Seven of the twelve participants completed an exit interview. Five interviews were held at church, with the exception of two completed in-home as a matter of convenience for the test subject. An established list of four subjective, open-ended questions were provided to interview participants prior to the interview. Interviews were recorded using an iPhone for transcription, allowing for future study. The research process for interviews included note-taking, participant consent to be recorded and the recording and transcription of conversations in order to capture insight gained from the interviews for later study. Exit interview transcriptions as well as the list of four interview questions can be found in the appendices.²

For many, prior to Mentorship Training, evangelism was as one test subject described it, “A scary word and we need to take the fear out of that word.”³ In introductory comments from the initial Mentorship Training session, the lesson highlights how the curriculum seeks to change the way participants live and view relationships that fill their life. Mentorship evangelism is not about having all the answers, but is a method grounded upon God and His Word. Thus, at the start of training participants were warned they were likely going to have moments they felt disturbed, disoriented, or disgusted, but they were encouraged to stick with it to the end as pilot participants sought to mutually grow through training. By the end of training, it is the hope they

² See Appendix 4: “Consent to Research”, Appendix 6: “Exit interview Questions”, and Appendix 7: “Interview Transcripts.”

³ Subject 114.

felt empowered, accomplished, and energized in the evangelism task. Overall, exit interview transcripts show growth in perceived knowledge and willingness toward outreach.

One test subject's response highlights the typical feeling of growth experienced among the group in perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism:

Before Mentorship Training I thought evangelism was a function of only a select few, super-mature Christians who went out door to door giving information out and inviting people to church where the rest of the work of conversion would be done. Now I see it as a responsibility of all Christians. It involves relationship building and information sharing as a person seeks it. As they desire to know more, I would be the information giver and the conversion would be done through the Holy Spirit.

Both my knowledge and my willingness, I think, have just exploded because—I know Jesus said to go and make disciples, so that command applied to every Christian, but I didn't do anything about it. It was probably fear or lack of knowledge. I feel much more willing and my heart is much more concerned about the lost people now. I guess I didn't really pay much attention to the whole subject before. I think a lot of people whom I think I know are Christians and they're probably not. Just because I am, I assume everybody is. Now I have a different view, more of a window maybe, into other ideas and being open more to people's opinions and thoughts.⁴

A common theme woven through a majority of comments focused on a personal change or affirmation of perception toward evangelism pre- and post-training. One subject describes how the knowledge gained was not necessarily anything new, but the experience broadened their outlook toward evangelism: "As far as knowledge, I think my knowledge of evangelism was broadened. I had a pretty narrow view of what evangelism was."⁵ This broadening of knowledge allowed for increased confidence, as seen in Table 2 and Table 3 above.

More than anything, Mentorship accomplished just that, broadening people's evangelism knowledge. Prior to Mentorship evangelism for many was viewed as something done overseas in Africa and handing out gospel tracts and knocking on doors. Words often attached with

⁴ Subject 101.

⁵ Subject 110.

evangelism in our church and culture are: pushy, aggressive, scary, cold, intimidating, and sales pitch. Mentorship seeks to reframe and broaden evangelism with new language and a relatable method better suited for today's culture. One test subject described the change, or really affirmation, in evangelism thus: "My opinion has not really changed so much as it has deepened into the importance of evangelism and how you can use your basic relationships to evangelize."⁶ Another describes evangelism as having "more to do with building relationships and creating opportunities to share the Gospel with them."⁷ The mentor-method, taught through this project, seeks to bring about a shift from a model and method no longer working in today's cultural context as Christians seek to build relationships and trust through evangelism conversation.

The importance of relationships in evangelism was a repeated theme among participants.

One participant describes a shift in their thinking from a "tell" to "ask" approach to sharing faith:

Evangelism is really a lot more listening than it is talking. It's learning where a person is coming from. . . . That is really hard, especially for Americans. We have the answers, we know how to do it. That's been part of our history. We go into other countries and say, 'We're going to make you Americans.' The biggest takeaway for me is that I need to listen more than I need to talk in my relationships with people so that the things that I say will have more impact.⁸

The Christian must strive to be in a relationship for a long-term duration as S111 notes: "It's an ongoing process of lives lived together and caring about somebody and listening to them and moving toward those issues that matter most."⁹ Along the same lines, S109 described the importance of listening in building relationships thus: "To listen to what they believe and what they understand and how they feel about Christians in general; how they feel about Christianity;

⁶ Subject 103.

⁷ Subject 110.

⁸ Subject 110.

⁹ Subject 111.

how God relates to their lives.”¹⁰ Later in the interview, the same test subject describes how Mentorship evangelism is not about knowing the answers to questions, but its focus is upon creating an environment for growth and pointing people to Jesus. They said: “We don’t have to know the answers, that we should just allow that *God Space*, that opportunity to present itself. It happens at unexpected moments.”¹¹ They describe such a conversational moment while running errands with an owner of a local dry cleaner, who happened to be Hindu. As they began a conversation with this man, the participant described a new awareness and confidence gained through Mentorship Training. In the past, they likely would not have said anything and moved on about their day, but not this time. They engaged in conversation and learned more about this man’s story and life, opening the door for future conversation. This encounter shows growth as a result of Mentorship Training.

Did Your Assumptions Come True?

I expected Mentorship Training pilot participants to be challenged by this experience concerning their knowledge growth. Data indicates such to be the case. Initially I imagined potential hesitancy toward evangelism on the part of participants in the pilot group. Again, surveys reveal a measured sense of perceived confidence growth. As Redeemer seeks to be more effective in evangelism, a church-wide Mentorship Training process is a crucial missing piece for the broader picture of outreach and health of the church.

Overall, I feel the project successfully achieved its intended goals. According to comparative survey data as well as post-training exit interviews, overwhelmingly, pilot participants grew in both perceived knowledge and willingness toward evangelism. Of those

¹⁰ Subject 109.

¹¹ Subject 109.

having completed training, most still gather for monthly Mentor Lab (Block-3) and stay engaged with the private Facebook group for mentors. Those not actively engaged in this group have either moved, are no longer part of Redeemer, are facing significant life issues or have passed away. Personally, I was hoping for a greater number of trained mentors actually taking ownership of practices learned through the training and by engaging people in formal mentorship. This, however, we leave in God's hands. The focus for many mentors at this point is cultivating relationships with an eye toward formal mentorship. Many are doing this well. It is my hope that pilot group participants continue to engage with the methods learned through the Mentorship Outline of Movement¹² and move beyond relationship cultivation toward an actual formal mentorship and ultimately, conversion. I pray that the group continues meeting and expands its ranks to include an even greater number of mentors seeking to make impact in our community with the Gospel.

What Would You Do Differently?

There were many lessons gained through the planning and execution of this project. The following represents a sampling of items I would have done differently:

1. Looking back, I would have followed up with exit interviews sooner. Though not bad, I feel my retention rate could have been better.
2. I would not wait so long to begin ongoing training beyond Mentorship Training. Training ended around December, but I waited until the following Fall to begin Block-3 (once per month sessions). I learned it is important to engage those who went through the training

¹² See Appendix 8: "Mentorship Outline of Movement."

while they are interested and want to learn more. Find ways earlier in the process to encourage trained mentors in an ongoing, regular way.

3. During the initial round of Mentorship Training, I used Earl Creps' book, *Reverse Mentoring*¹³ as supplemental class reading. Chapters would be assigned and discussed each week of class. Upon course completion, I chose a more effective book, Doug Pollock's, *God Space*.¹⁴ Pollock's book more closely aligns with the direction and focus of Mentorship evangelism, plus it is a more engaging read for a broad spectrum of laity.
4. I would seek ways to strengthen training materials with more practical ideas on Mentorship (i.e., role play, video, guest speakers, hands-on activities).
5. As part of Survey #2, I formulated a question measurable to a Likert Scale, asking: "On a scale of 1 to 5, as a result of Mentorship Training, are you less or more willing to engage in evangelism?" Results of that question are found in Table 6. Looking back, I regret not asking pilot participants in Survey #1 a similar question to measure perceived growth in pre- and post-training evangelism willingness.

Questions for Future Study

The following questions represent areas of exploration for future study not covered in the scope of this project:

1. What impact did Mentorship Training have on pilot participants long term?
2. Did those going through Mentorship Training engage someone in formal mentorship? If so, what impact has the training had for those on the receiving end of Mentorship? If not,

¹³ Earl Creps, *Reverse Mentoring: How Young Leaders Can Transform the Church and Why We Should Let Them* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass) 2008.

¹⁴ Doug Pollock, *God Space: Where Spiritual Conversations Happen Naturally* (Loveland: Group) 2009.

is there something that could be added to the training that might help mentors move from Point A to Point B? What and where are the sticking points preventing mentors from moving forward?

3. Is Mentorship meeting the needs of those it seeks to engage? Are the right questions being asked?
4. How and where does Baptism fit within Mentorship?
5. Following conversion and/or formal mentorship, how might the one being mentored transition into the life of a local congregation? What might appropriate “next steps” look like?
6. How might training be adapted to reflect and engage the needs of today’s changing culture?
7. It might prove helpful to consider a side-by-side comparative of data by using the surveys and findings from this study alongside a different study, such as Everyone His Witness or another recent model.

Lastly, for future research it might prove worthwhile considering the methodology of this project expanded to take into account a second or third study group using the same research processes employed with Survey #1, Survey #2, and exit interviews. A greater pool of data would only strengthen the conclusions found in this study. It must be noted that this researcher acknowledges data collected for the study may not be a fair representation of a true cross section of average laity at Redeemer since those selected had more exposure to and knowledge of evangelism going into the project. Because they were coming in at higher levels of perceived evangelism knowledge and willingness there was not as much room for perception growth. Yes, growth was observed in the data collected for this project, but the conclusions and findings were

not as dramatic as they might have been. Since launching the original pilot group, I have offered Mentorship Training four other times. I regret not having these latter groups fill out pre- and post-training surveys. Doing so may have given a broader and more accurate reading of how average participant perceptions around evangelism shifted through Mentorship Training.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to introduce a method of evangelism at Redeemer that better met the needs of the present cultural landscape. To measure the success of this project, this researcher developed tools to analyze perception growth of pilot group participating in a 10-week training. With the goal being perception growth in theology and willingness to practice evangelism, before and after training perceptions were analyzed. To measure growth, a mixed-methods research approach was utilized, assessing pre- and post-training survey data through questions based upon a Likert scale as well as of an open-ended nature. The training concluded with individual exit interviews as a way to follow-up on survey data provided by the pilot group. According to the research and analysis of this study, perception growth occurred on all accounts. We now turn to the final chapter of this project, Chapter Six, which provides concluding remarks to the study and with broad strokes, looks at how this project contributed to ministry, offers future recommendations for this project as well as personal and professional development.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Driving back from seminary following an intensive week of writing and finalizing this project, it was a bittersweet, reflective moment realizing not many pages were left to write on the closing chapter of this present journey. There I sat, pondering the years of study, the wonderful people I have met and been challenged by, the deep gratitude felt for church and family allowing this journey to take place, and all that has led to this point, wondering where the time has gone. Then it hit me, I have been in the doctoral program longer than having kids who are currently ten and twelve years old! Ouch! This journey has become like a child in the family (or pet, depending upon which day one asks). This child has now grown up and matured and it is time to move out of the house.

When I first began the Doctor of Ministry program in 2005, one of the areas I wanted to explore further was developing my skills to become a stronger and more effective leader. This lifelong goal has been accomplished in many ways throughout the completion of this MAP and program of study. Each step along the way has stretched my critical thinking, leadership skills, and more importantly, my faith in God. This journey has not always been easy. There have been several unexpected twists and turns along way that led me to retool and reshape the direction of this MAP—changing topics, shifting advisors, putting the project on hold, unforeseen life circumstances, reapplying into the program—yet I pressed on toward the goal. Twelve-plus years later, here I stand, stronger for the journey! Praise be to God! Candidly, there were several moments I considered hanging up my hat, but it was then I looked at my children and reminded

myself, they are the reason for this project. They were the constant voice in my ear, “Just get it done!”

This project fills two places of personal passion: I love Jesus’ Church and reaching the next generation for Christ. We live in unprecedented times. Church is aging, belief in Truth is wavering and culture is shifting; that leaves people anxiously awaiting what tomorrow will bring. Solomon reminds us, “There is nothing new under the sun” (Eccles. 1:9). Jesus would encourage the anxious to let tomorrow take care of itself, focus on today, finding rest in the faithful and sure hands of the Savior (Matt. 6:34; 11:28). Take a breath. If the Lord takes care of the sparrows and grass, surely He will provide for the present time (Matt. 6:26–27). Regardless of what may come, people need Jesus now, more than ever! I fervently pray for new generations of Christ followers to arise and take their place in the great cloud of witnesses both now and at the great wedding feast of the Lamb (Heb. 12:1; Rev. 19:6–9). A seat awaits them. Beyond the walls of Redeemer, in some small way, I pray this project helps other churches embrace evangelism in their local context. Yes, culture is changing, but the need for God remains.

Contributions to Ministry

The primary goal of this project was that ministry of Redeemer would benefit in some way, particularly around evangelism. Outreach was an area of growth for the church. Through this project, ministry at Redeemer has been positively impacted by the launch of Mentorship evangelism. Since the original pilot group in 2013, there has been a slow shift in thinking about evangelism; outreach is becoming more of an expectation rather than exception. There still is room to grow, but seeds of change have been planted and begun to take root. What remains is the hard work of weeding, watering, and nurturing the soil toward further growth. An identified core group of mentors meet on a monthly basis for study, encouragement, and fellowship. To assist

with ongoing encouragement and training, a private Facebook group has been established for mutual learning and support. Mentorship Training has brought greater substance and vision to a previously non-existent ministry, emboldening the Board of Missions and Elders in leading the task of evangelism.

Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth

If someone would have told me as I began this program of study how challenging it would be, how much time would be involved, how much energy it would entail for it to be brought to completion, I am unsure whether I would have undertaken the task. That being said, looking back on all that has been accomplished, I am eternally grateful for the journey. I find much truth in Theodore Roosevelt's words: "Nothing worth having comes easy." Nothing about this project and process has been easy. I have been stretched, prodded, questioned, encouraged, grown, and matured, yet kept Jesus my focus from beginning to end (Phil. 3:14). I pray this little project on evangelism advances the Kingdom to new generations of believers. I am filled with tremendous gratitude for the many who paved the way, allowing me to stand where I am today. As I have been mentored in the faith, I pray others will experience the same love, nurturing, accountability, and grace.

Personally, this project has been a source of tremendous personal and professional growth. I have not felt completely satisfied with models of evangelism in recent years, so this project presented an opportunity to sink my teeth into a new endeavor. As the project began, there was not a lot of scholarship on the topic of mentorship as a form of evangelism. There still is not. As I studied community and congregation demographic trends, the need for evangelism growth was

evidently clear.¹ Current models of evangelism are not effective as in the past. The church needed to find a new approach for engaging its context or its days would be numbered. Thus, I began crafting a plan to help change the DNA of Redeemer around evangelism, to reengage the Great Commission in a more intentional way. After much prayer and consultation with trusted pastors and my faculty advisor, a project was developed. I grew substantially through leading a process of change within a well-established, conservative, rural congregation, helping the church and its leaders see a need and develop a project to meet that need. Once a plan was crafted it was time to take that plan through the appropriate leadership steps in order to gain buy-in for the project within the appropriate boards to lead the plan toward reality. Through each step, my leadership skills developed and matured.

I can honestly say, I am the pastor I am today due largely to the readings, coursework, seminary faculty, and experiences gained through my Doctor of Ministry studies. The Nathan who applied to this program is a different person today. Words cannot express the gratitude I have for Concordia, its faculty, and the broader seminary community for the fine education and opportunity for growth provided these past years. I discovered new skills, reaffirmed old ones, and grew professionally and personally. I always looked forward to the times of residency at seminary as a source of refreshment and growth, walking away with more than lessons taught in a classroom. As I traveled to campus for another residency, I often wondered what new things I would learn or how I would be challenged and refreshed. Interestingly, every campus visit seemed to speak directly to something significant occurring within my ministry context. For example, during one residency I took part in an independent study with Dr. William Utech that stretched my comfort zone to new levels. One of the requirements for the class was that I

¹ See Table 1: “Communicant Member & Average Attendance Trends.”

perform a demographic study of Rolla, the town in which Redeemer is located.² To accomplish this I set up interviews at a local coffee shop with random people about broad topics such as: “If you were to describe God, what words would you use?” or “What has your experience of church been like in the past?” The forum began to take on a life of its own with participants becoming a kind of community over time. They did not want to stop meeting and talking theology! This exercise in field research fueled and inspired some of the initial steps to the project seen today.

There were a host of other classes, assignments, classmates, and professors that positively impacted my DMin experience, especially those during the Pastoral Leadership Institute (PLI) wrap-around portion. Overall, my skills in creativity were given opportunity to blossom and grow. With the many papers and projects that are part of the program, I also discovered a passion for writing I never knew I had. I hope to continue to build upon the lessons and skills nurtured during this course of study to become an even better steward of the gifts and abilities given by God. Completing the Doctor of Ministry program has instilled in me a greater sense of purpose, confidence, and vocation as a pastor and under shepherd of God’s flock. My ability as a critical thinker has grown, my writing skills have been stretched by leaps and bounds, and overall the program has nurtured to a greater degree my deep passion for evangelism and mentorship.

Recommendations

Since the original Mentorship pilot group completed training in November 2013, I have had the opportunity of presenting the materials four other times, gaining new insight each time. As such, I would recommend the following to the Board of Missions and Elders for future consideration:

² See Appendix 9: “*Demographic Study: Key Influencers and Markers*” and Appendix 10: “*Giddy Goat Dialogues: An Experience in Field Research.*”

1. Continue offering Mentorship Training once per year in the Fall. Recruit mentors lead individual sessions as a way to stretch their personal learning in evangelism as well as offer suggestions to better future training. For those leading, it is great review of evangelism concepts and recasts the vision around Mentorship. Offer training on a weekday since Sundays, with its limited time constraints, does not work as well. One hour is not adequate time for discussion and working through the training materials. Consider offering childcare, as necessary.
2. During a worship service recognize those who have completed Mentorship Training, commissioning them in their new role by utilizing the liturgy found in Appendix 11: “A Liturgy for the Commissioning of Mentors.” Celebrate with a cake and punch reception between services.
3. Offer Block-3 Training for those completing the initial course of study. Consider offering Block-3 as monthly, one-night, stand-alone sessions as a way for ongoing mutual education and encouragement in the mentorship task. Call it “Mentor Lab.”
4. During Mentor Lab (Block-3), do regular role-play exercises using real-life scenarios mentors may face in their mentoring relationships. Create one new scenario for each gathering and place it on a card template. Over time, these cards could be reused, collected, and packaged.
5. Create a designated shelf in the church’s library as a “Mentor’s Corner”, filled with resources a mentor could go to for assistance, support, information, reference, or encouragement. New material could be highlighted during Block-3 sessions and the Facebook Mentorship group.

6. Challenge the leadership and congregation to think and live intentional lives of engaging God’s mission through evangelism. To accomplish this, encourage Church Council and Elders to create one yearly goal around evangelism. Some examples of possible goals: Consider offering a yearly sermon series on the theme of evangelism, read Greg Finke’s book, *Joining Jesus on His Mission*,³ offer regular Bible classes on outreach, take Vacation Bible School “on the road” to provide a one-day version at a local park, have mentors share their stories in worship and other venues, and/or regularly use missional language on Sundays and New Member Classes. In cooperation with the Board of Missions and Elders, work to create an environment where evangelism is the norm rather than exception.
7. Create a regular “Mentor Minute” video encouragement to be utilized on the Facebook Mentorship group. The video piece could be as simple as a Bible passage, book quote, or thought about evangelism to recast the vision for evangelism at Redeemer. The big thing is to keep evangelism in front of them as constant reminder of God’s mission for the church.
8. Explore how technology may be further developed for both the training of mentors and as a tool for cultivating potential relationships for formal mentorship.
9. Consider ways of how training modules could be modified to better model the content it teaches. For example, could training be moved outside the walls of the church campus? What if training were held in homes rather than church to reflect mentoring and the

³ Greg Finke, *Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to Be an Everyday Missionary* (Elgin, IL: Tenth Power Publishing) 2014.

cultivation of relationships? What if those beginning Mentorship Training sign a Covenant?

10. Finally, to better reflect an ongoing progression of the Great Commission, revise the Mentorship Training model and Mentorship Outline of Movement⁴ to include the addition of an eighth “C” as the final discipleship movement: *Commissioning*. As people reach this final phase of mentorship, the goal would be that they would begin mentoring others, thus moving full circle and beginning the process again as a Mentee becomes a Mentor for someone else. To further emphasize the cyclical and ongoing nature of discipleship, revise the overall Mentorship Outline of Movement diagram to be circular rather than linear. A circular model better reflects the multiplication goal and movement of discipleship—disciples making disciples, who in turn are making disciples, and so forth. Having personally been mentored, a *Commissioned* Mentee then begins *Cultivating* relationships of their own for the purpose of evangelism. The goal being, those who walk through a mentorship may in time—by God’s guidance and grace—be equipped to mentor others.

Conclusion

As we turn the corner and face the final stretch of this journey, it has been a road filled with countless hours, months, and years of planning and work. I pray this project is not just another evangelism model that ends up in a binder on an office shelf but that through its pages lives are impacted for the greater Kingdom. I pray the breath of God breathes fresh wind through the lives of His beloved, Body of Christ. As we have seen, evangelism is not about a particular model or

⁴ See Appendix 8: “Mentorship Outline of Movement.”

words spoken, but is simply confessing the Jesus at work in us to those God places in our path. In fact, we have a certain responsibility as Christians to not only lift high the cross ourselves, but to pass it on to others that they too may share in its all-transforming strength, light, and life (Matt. 5:16). Evangelism is less about answers and more about Who we are journeying with. It is that simple, yet that profound as Randy Newman notes:

Rather than trying to learn all of the right words, have all of the right booklets, anticipate all of the right questions, and memorize all of the right intros and Scripture, we should approach evangelism with wisdom. This means we become people who incarnate the gospel and speak of it freely because our hearts and minds have been captivated by it.⁵

Charles Schultz was an incredible cartoonist. He is best known for his work on the Peanuts comic strip, loaded with many gems of life lessons and a cast of relatable characters. There was an episode where Lucy was speaking with Linus at the base of a large hill. Facing it, Lucy says, “Someday I’m going over that hill and find the answer to my dreams. On the other side of that hill I’m gonna find hope and fulfillment. All the answers to life lie on the other side.”

Linus removes his thumb from his mouth, and pointing toward the hill, says, “Perhaps there’s a kid on the other side saying the exact same thing.”

Lucy looks at Linus, turns toward the hill, and yells, “Forget it, kid!”⁶

It is true, we do not know what lies on the other side of the hill looming before us. One thing we know with some amount of certainty is that we live in a culture of constant change. No longer is the Church seen as a reliable source of authority. No longer do people flock through our doors just to hear and be encouraged by a message from God’s Word. No longer are Sunday mornings a sacred time only for worship and church activities. Just as the world is rapidly

⁵ Newman, *Questioning Evangelism*, 42.

⁶ Charles Schultz, *Peanuts*. Published May 28, 1968. Accessed January 6, 2018 (www.gocomics.com), <http://www.gocomics.com/peanuts/1968/05/26>.

changing, so is the makeup of those calling church home. Our congregations are predominantly filled with the more seasoned in life while younger generations are disappearing from the pews at an alarming rate.

Yes, the clouds swirling above seem a bit ominous, but there is much to be hopeful about. In the Lord's divine wisdom, He placed the Church at such a time as this, for a purpose: To seek and save that which is lost. May the Church do what it does best: Be the Church! True, it remains to be seen what lies on the other side of the hill. Solomon, the wisest man ever to live, reminds us to "trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Prov. 3:5–6). Paul says similar words, encouraging us to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). In other words, regardless of what is over that hill, continue to remain faithful! God is leading the Church toward a new and glorious day. The hill may seem large, it may seem ominous, but take courage in knowing our God is larger. In closing, may we find encouragement from the greatest evangelist this world has known, the Apostle Paul:

I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.⁷

+ Soli Deo Gloria +

⁷ Acts 20:20–21, 24.

6. How would you describe our church's approach to evangelism?

7. If there was "one thing" Redeemer could do to help you in the practice of evangelism, what might that "one thing" be?

8. Who from Redeemer is primarily responsible for engaging in evangelism?

- Pastor/Staff
- Board of Missions
- Elders
- All member and regular attenders
- Other (please list): _____

Explain:

9. Additional comments or observations:

10. Subject Background Information:

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Current Marital Status: _____
Educational Attainment (HS, Associates, BS, Professional Degree (lawyer, MBA, Masters, etc.), please list all that apply:

City and zip code in which you reside: _____

In-House Information:
Date Taken: _____ Survey: _____ Subject #: _____

APPENDIX TWO

EVANGELISM SURVEY #2 (POST-TRAINING)

MENTORSHIP TRAINING

Survey on Evangelism #2

1. Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?
2. How would you define “evangelism”?
3. Are you currently engaged in the “Mentorship Outline of Movement”? If so, with whom? At what place in Mentorship would you place the relationship? Please describe.

4. Describe the relationship you have with the one you are mentoring or seeking to mentor:

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you in sharing your faith?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Not Confident Confident

6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how knowledgeable do you feel about evangelism?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Not Knowledgeable Knowledgeable

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, as a result of Mentorship Training, are you less or more willing to engage in evangelism?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
Less Willing More Willing

8. Has Mentorship impacted your view of others on a daily basis? Has God provided opportunity for you to use your newly learned mentorship skills? If so, how?

9. If there was “one thing” Redeemer could do to help you in your knowledge or practice of evangelism, what might that “one thing” be?

10. Who from Redeemer is primarily responsible for engaging in evangelism?

- Pastor/Staff
- Board of Missions
- Elders
- All member and regular attenders
- Other (please list): _____

Explain:

11. Additional comments or observations (if needed, use the reverse side of this paper):

In-House Information:

Date Taken: _____ Survey: _____ Subject #: _____

APPENDIX THREE

INITIAL RECRUITMENT LETTER TO PILOT PARTICIPANTS



June 28, 2013

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior!

In a sermon based upon 1 Peter, Martin Luther writes, *“The greatest work that follows faith is that with my mouth I confess Christ . . . that others may likewise be brought to believe and then other works follow.”*

We all have people in our lives who don’t know the Lord. We want to be with them forever in heaven when that time comes, but how do we approach them? What do we say? What if we don’t have answers? What about the people that God blesses Redeemer with on Sunday mornings that have never been to church before? What if...???

What if you could learn a comfortable way to approach the topic of faith with your family and friends? What if you had access to quality resources designed to help people understand Christianity and faith? Wouldn’t it feel good to be more confident about leading others toward knowing the Jesus that you walk with each day?

To accomplish this goal, ***I would like to introduce something called “Mentorship.”***

Mentorship is a comfortable, friendly approach to the task of witnessing your faith in our culture today. This Fall I plan to lead a pilot group of Mentorship Training as part of a Major Applied Project (MAP) I am working on for my Doctor of Ministry degree. By being in this pilot group, you would be a part of my research project and helping me achieve this goal. This is not anything to be scared of, as everything is completely confidential and you can opt out at any time in the process. Overall, my project on Mentorship will look at the growth in knowledge and confidence in the practice of outreach for pilot group participants as they live the Mentorship process. If you have further questions about what this process looks like, do not hesitate to ask.

As I thought about who would be an ideal person for this pilot group, I immediately thought of you! Thus, ***I will follow-up with you sometime during the week of July 15***, to discuss this further or answer any questions you might have. Details are as follows:

Mentorship Training
Wednesday Evenings
Sept 18 - Nov 20, 2013 | 7-8:30pm
Conference Room

My hope is that you will prayerfully consider attending this training. ***Think of the impact a handful of trained Mentors could have for Redeemer!*** The potential is limitless. As you consider whether being a part of the Mentorship pilot group is something you are ready to commit to at this time, please know that I have already begun lifting you up in prayer. Would you join with me in prayer as well? I pray for the Lord's hand to bless this time of learning and growing that He be glorified as we seek to take up His cross and follow Him as we "Gather, Grow, and **GO**" in connecting others to Jesus.

Taking up the Cross (and following),

Pastor Nathan Kuhlman
www.RedeemerRolla.org

APPENDIX FOUR

CONSENT TO RESEARCH

CONSENT TO RESEARCH

September 1, 2013

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior!

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to investigate the launch of a Mentorship process in its potential for growth in knowledge and confidence in the practice of outreach for pilot group participants as they learn and take steps toward living the Mentorship process. The project is being conducted by Pastor Nathan Kuhlman.

In this research you will take part in a pilot group designed to teach you the Mentor-method of evangelism. In order to measure perceived growth in knowledge and attitude in this method, the following components will be used: An initial mixed-methods assessment, interactive class presentation time, general observations made by the researcher, a second assessment given one month after completion of the pilot group, and a recorded debriefing interview which will be destroyed once the research is analyzed.

Please be assured that any information you provide will be held in strict confidence. At no time will your name be reported along with your responses. Please understand that your participation in this research is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time during this study. With the signing of this form you are acknowledging that you have been informed of, and understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and freely consent to participate.

I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to participate in this research study on Mentorship. Please know that what you are about to begin is a game-changing moment for you and for Redeemer. Your bold step of faith will not only change how you look at and interact with those around you, but it could, God-willing, have limitless potential for Kingdom impact in connecting people to Jesus as we “gather, grow, and go” together in Christ.

Signed

Date

Name (printed)

APPENDIX FIVE

COVER LETTER FOR CONSENT TO RESEARCH AND EVANGELISM SURVEY #1 (PRE-TRAINING)



September 1, 2013

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

It has been an extreme joy having conversations with you and others about mentorship. The Mentor-method Pilot Group of which we spoke will be launching in just a few short weeks! As we move toward launch there are a couple of items I wanted to bring to your attention.

Take a moment to look at and fill out the following pages included with this letter. ***The initial sheet is a “Consent to Research” form***, which is nothing to be concerned about. For research projects such as this, it is commonplace for participants to state they are aware of the research element involved and that data will be collected through our time together. All aspects of this project will be done in a manner that honors your privacy. The consent form describes this in greater detail. If you have concern about this, we can speak privately and/or as a group at our initial training session.

The second sheet is a “Survey on Evangelism” which will give my research project a baseline of perceived knowledge and confidence prior to the pilot group’s launch. Again, it is nothing to be concerned about. Please be honest and candid with your answers! The responses you give are anonymous (each of you will be identified by a subject number).

Please bring both of the above completed forms with you to our initial training session on Wednesday, September 18 at 7pm. I will have treats the first night!

Mentorship Training
Wednesday Evenings (Conference Room)
Sept 18 - Nov 20, 2013 | 7-8:30pm

I cannot wait to see how God challenges us through our time together. ***I have been praying for you, my friend***, and will continue to do so as we immerse ourselves in the mentor-method. I close with a word of encouragement from Andy Stanley on my hope for Mentorship:

Like you, I don't want to build a church full of people who simply know the Bible. I want to build a church full of men and women of great faith, men and women who are confident that God is who he says he is and that he will do precisely what he has promised to do. I want to be surrounded by people whose lives, and responses to life, cause the community to look up and take notice. (Andy Stanley, *Deep and Wide*, 148–49)

I pray this vision for you and God's church at Redeemer! Friends, it is time to lead the way!

Taking up the Cross (and following),

Pastor Nathan Kuhlman
www.RedeemerRolla.org

APPENDIX SIX

EXIT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MENTORSHIP TRAINING *Post-Training Interview Questions*

1. Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?
2. How have you grown in your *knowledge* of and *willingness* toward evangelism? Please describe.
3. If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?
4. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training?

APPENDIX SEVEN

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Subject #101

Interviewer: Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S101: Yes, very much. Before Mentorship training I thought evangelism was a function of only a select few, super-mature Christians who went out door to door giving information out and inviting people to church where the rest of the work of conversion would be done. Now I see it as a responsibility of all Christians. It involves relationship building and information sharing as a person seeks it. As they desire to know more, I would be the information giver and the conversion would be done through the Holy Spirit.

Interviewer: How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S101: Both my knowledge and my willingness, I think, have just exploded because—I know Jesus said to go and make disciples, so that command applied to every Christian, but I didn't do anything about it. It was probably fear or lack of knowledge. I feel much more willing and my heart is much more concerned about the lost people now. I guess I didn't really pay much attention to the whole subject before. I think a lot of people whom I think I know are Christians and they're probably not. Just because I am, I assume everybody is. Now I have a

different, more of a window maybe, into other ideas and being open more to people's opinions and thoughts.

Interviewer: I think we make it a lot harder than it really needs to be. It's just conversations with people. I thought the book we're reading now with Block-3 has been helpful, God Space. A lot of good discussion. If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S101: Sure, I'd be seeking to mentor every single person; at the grocery store, I don't really know. I put on my questionnaire to maybe refer people to us that you come across. I am so sheltered, I guess, in my circle of people that maybe I do know unbelievers and I haven't really uncovered it. That's one thing, if you had a person that you could refer to us so we could use some of these things we've learned, if we can't find the people on our own. Just continuing groups and classes I think are very helpful. I'm glad we're continuing to meet.

Interviewer: Me too. It's been very encouraging for me already with Block-3. We've just had one session but just the questions you guys have and just the care and the desire to have an impact on people's lives, it's just been neat to see that. With your job you have a unique window into people's lives, especially with people hurting physically. What a powerful moment and witness you can be into these people's lives with some of these things we're learning in Mentorship.

S101: Yeah.

Interviewer: What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "aha" moment? You could have more than one.

S101: It was hard to come up with one. It all keeps coming back to relationships. The questions I ask people are more important than the answers that I have. Mainly to humble myself in my relationships and not think I'm "holier than thou." I don't know that I approached in that way before, but I think I was probably quick to say, "Well, the Bible says this" or "We should do this." I've learned not to do that. That's going to stop any chance of conversion right in its tracks. Like I said, it's more questions than answers, and kind of keep my opinion to myself until I'm asked.

Interviewer: That's the hardest part. Just having conversations with people is huge in this process and freeing in that we don't have to have all the answers.

S101: Yeah. It takes the pressure off, really. Because in my old view of it, I thought it was only the real, real mature Christians who could go out and evangelize because you have to have all the answers. I certainly don't have all the answers.

Interviewer: That's what I appreciate. Once the mentorship process actually begins, the formal mentorship is to let God's Word speak for itself - in a lot of scripture and wrestling with scripture and let the Holy Spirit do His best work through that.

S101: I really appreciate the things that I've learned and God's doing a lot of work in me.

Interviewer: I sense that. I have seen that growth taking place. It's neat to see that. In our entire group, it's been great to see the conversations and hear them as we've having them. Do you have any thoughts or closing words?

S101: No.

Interviewer: I appreciate your time and look forward to seeing the continued growth that will happen in the group as more and more people of Redeemer go through this process. The conversation will get bigger and hopefully deeper as well as more people are involved.

Subject #102

Interviewer: Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S102: I always had a view of evangelism.

Interviewer: Do you care to share what that view is.

S102: Well, I've been working on it for the last 10 years. I was once an introvert, shy and quiet and I am consciously working on talking to people more, meeting people more, and greeting people more.

Interviewer: If you had to define evangelism, what would that be?

S102: What is evangelism? Evangelism is simply sharing the Good News that you've experience in your whole life; about the saving grace of Jesus.

Interviewer: That's great. How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S102: I am more willing to greet strangers. Knowledge of evangelism has grown some. I'm trying new and different things, taking a risk. That is a big challenge, being willing to take more risks.

Interviewer: Yeah, that's not easy. If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S102: How would I react? That addresses the concern or fear of failure. I don't think I'd react much differently because I believe the Holy Spirit has a part in there too. To listen for an opportunity is my part and to let the Holy Spirit work on the inner action is His part. And how could you help me: I think Redeemer has already helped a lot. Redeemer is a very open church.

They seem to be very faithful. They are very sincere but they are not stodgy or legalistic. We have some rules but we don't let that get in the way of grace.

Interviewer: The congregation is filled with great people, salt of the earth. They would give you the shirt off their back.

S102: Very welcoming folks.

Interviewer: I really look forward to those mentorship times and the classes and the dialogues we had. As you said, it's great people. I look forward to the new groups as well and continuing this Mentorship Block-3 and the stand-alone sessions we'll have. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "ah-ha" moment? You could have more than one.

S102: The key takeaway, sometimes crazy things are good things.

Interviewer: I do appreciate your time and look forward to continuing the dialogue in the weeks to come.

Subject #103

Interviewer: Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S103: I think in some respects my opinion has not really changed so much as it has deepened into the importance of evangelism and how you can use your basic relationships to evangelize. I'm not as overt but I'm much more comfortable and quiet about it since we had the Mentorship Training. Everything I do should be evangelism instead of thinking of it as a particular activity that's something I do at a particular place, time or event. It is not an event; witnessing is something I should do as part of my day-to-day life.

Interviewer: That's one of the big things that opened up for me with Mentorship; seeing it as an all-of-life thing versus something you do once in a while. It's about relationships. We really talked a lot about that.

S103: Yes. It's all about relationships and how they treat people and how they view you. It's all about trust.

Interviewer: Yes. You have to build those relationships before you gain that trust in order to talk about the harder things. How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S103: My knowledge has increased a little bit but my willingness has definitely increased. It's all about relationships and building trust so that you can talk about the things that matter instead of everything being on such a shallow plane. After all, to evangelize and help somebody understand they need to have a relationship with Jesus is the most important thing—should be the most important thing in our lives as Christian. We don't hate people, so as we love them we should want them to be in heaven with us.

Interviewer: We get comfortable.

S103: I had a pastor who said he was here to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. It was one of his big sermons. I'll never forget that one.

Interviewer: If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S103: This is at the crux of the whole matter. As my understanding has grown with this class and as I have lived my life and grown in understanding of Jesus, I would have to say that I don't think I would react any differently than I do now because I have a better understanding. I

wish I could be assured that was true, that everything I said or did had eternal impact on somebody. As far as assisting, I think that the fact that we hold each other up in prayer and that we are in a faith relationship with each other and as a Body, I think that is the best thing that can be done to assist.

Interviewer: You have to have that support system. That's why I look forward to Block-3. Not just the training but the uplifting that is so needed. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "ah-ha" moment? You could have more than one.

S103: I think the biggest thing is the better relationships we grew with each other as a class. We got to know each other better and I don't think I would feel uncomfortable praying with anybody who was in the class, because we built a trust relationship with each other. (Name removed) and I tried to build relationships with people we didn't really know. We had dinner and discussions before class. If you needed to call somebody and need prayer right now, I could do that. I think the biggest thing about the Mentorship Training was the ability to build trust relationships with the people in the class and to know we could call anybody for prayer or if we needed someone.

Interviewer: I'm sure there will be those moments as we go through this Mentorship Training. It isn't always going to be easy.

S103: It's not easy at all. I have a friend at work who I have been trying to mentor. She and her bosses don't see eye-to-eye and she feels like she is being persecuted. She put in some EEO complaints and things got worse after the first complaint. She has anxiety about coming to work and I try to be there for her to give her someone she can be truthful with and not have to worry about it going anywhere. She tells me that I'm the only one she trusts there. That is really special to me. I've tried to get her to come to church with us but she has a church now. I don't care

where she goes to church, as long as she goes and she and her daughter can get spiritual guidance. I feel that is kind of a success. I told her she needs to focus on Jesus and not on the things that are happening to her. I'll be praying with her as time goes on.

Interviewer: You never know where these relationships are going to go.

S103: No, no you don't.

Interviewer: I thank you for your time and continuing to walk together on this journey.

Subject #109

Q. Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S109: Yes, I believe it has changed. It really opened my eyes to think of other people, other opportunities and the different generations of people who are younger than I and how they think of Christianity and Christians in general; how we would reach out to them because obviously their values and thinking are different in many cases than mine. It definitely opened my eyes. My opinion of evangelism has changed to the degree that I am going to have to take a different approach if I really want to reach those people or really understand them. I will need to be a better listener and be more receptive to their thinking and their questions.

Interviewer: When you say different approach, from what to what? Do you know what I mean?

S109: Right. I think that rather than to explain how I am and what I believe, to listen to what they believe and what they understand and how they feel about Christians in general; how they feel about Christianity; how God relates to their lives or if they don't think these relate to their lives. I would say that is the main thing. It turns my understanding of evangelism; it really opens my eyes about the different generations and their thinking patterns.

Interviewer: I appreciate that we don't have to know all the answers.

S109: Right, that too. We don't have to know the answers, that we should just allow that *God Space*, that opportunity to present itself. It happens at unexpected moments. I recently went to the cleaners to pick up a coat. It was close to closing time and, I think it was the owner/manager. He started talking and asked me about different things. He told me without me asking that he was Hindu. Then he mentioned that the Bible says this about people who are homeless and so forth. And I thought, here is somebody that actually knows something that is in the Bible and is not a Christian but is Hindu. In that brief time I had an opportunity to say, "I am a Christian and this is what we believe. We should reach out to people and help them in their time of need." That was kind of a *God Space* moment.

Interviewer: That's great. Those moments are everywhere. Seeing them is the hard part and taking the time to see them.

S109: He was the one who really opened the conversation when I was least expecting it. I thought he would just want to take my money and give me my coat and out the door since it was closing time. That was pretty cool.

Interviewer: How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S109: I think part of the knowledge relates back to question one because my thinking about evangelism, my knowledge of evangelism, was pretty much the old-fashion Kennedy approach.

Interviewer: It definitely served its purpose well for the time.

S109: Right. The knowledge of evangelism, I understood how relational evangelism is very, very important. But now, in terms of my knowledge, I learned that I need to reach out to other people who are not necessarily like me, that are not naturally my friends or my neighbors. I

need to step out of my comfort zone. I think when we were talking about the bars, the Beer Church, and we had the discussion here in our town about going to places like some of those places in our town and ‘stepping out of the box,’ going to people where they are, much like Jesus did. I think that opened my eyes to think about that. Especially the last book we read, *God Space* book, really focused and I learned a lot about that. In terms of my willingness toward evangelism, I think I am more willing than I probably was. I am probably more receptive to reaching out to other people, looking for that other person who I am going to mentor. I haven’t discovered them yet. They will no doubt come into my life at one time or another. I just have to pray about it. In terms of knowledge too, like you said, we don’t have to know all the answers, just let the Holy Spirit give us the words at the appropriate time and put the people in our paths. Just take it step by step and build that relationship and that trust.

Interviewer: If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S109: I would be really thrilled. I would be really happy. Of course I realize that this means eternity and salvation for them, and God wants everyone to be saved. I would be very excited and very happy. In fact, in the past when I have been able to bring someone to the point where they actually began to attend church and they were baptized, it was very thrilling – a kind of mountaintop experience. I am hoping that I have a lot more opportunities for that because it has been a long time since that has happened for me and I would like to see that happen more frequently. And to reach out into our community, there are so many people who are unchurched and don’t know about God. When you hear about people who are very ill or that pass on, I don’t want to be in the position where I think, “Why didn’t I say something?” or “Why didn’t I ask

what their faith was or their relationship to God or if they were believers?” Or if they had another faith in our community. There are so many different people now, like Hindu, Muslims, and people from other faiths. It’s a real melting pot.

Interviewer: We talked about that in Mentorship as well. Which god are we talking about when we talk about God?

S109: Exactly. And your next question: “Is there anything we could do to assist you with this?” I would like to see us have some servant activities like we learned about. Some of them were more interesting and seemed like they would be fun to do. I would like to see us do some servant activities in our community.

Interviewer: That’s a great idea. One thing we could do at one of our upcoming Mentorship Block-3 sessions—what if we did one as a group? We could plan something to do a week or two after that.

S109: I don’t care if it’s fry pancakes and have free pancakes.

Interviewer: The book suggested cleaning toilets. I’m not suggesting that.

S109: Yeah, that was the one activity I didn’t think was too exciting. I wouldn’t mind washing somebody’s car. I think we can come up with something meaningful.

Interviewer: What fits our group? I’m sure we’ll come up with a decision for something.

S109: I think that would be pretty cool if we would do that. I don’t recall us doing any servant activities, so I think that would be a really great step for our congregation.

Interviewer: The Board of Missions is talking about it and working toward it. Maybe if we could have a group like the mentors help encourage that we might get some momentum and movement.

S109: I think they just need some more man and woman power; they need more workers. I think we could be key players in that.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Great idea. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an “ah-ha” moment? You could have more than one.

S109: That is such a tough question. It is probably the most difficult question out of this whole thing. I think it was truly the information about the different generations and how people think and react. We talked about different things like how Christians behave after they get out of church and go to Walmart. We talk about how they perceive us if we wear the Christian jewelry.

Interviewer: Or if we go to Walmart after Ash Wednesday service with ashes on our foreheads.

S109: If someone asks me that I'd give them the handout that says, "What's the deal with the ashes?" That pretty well explains it. I think all those things. I really liked the *God Space* book. I thought that has so much good material in it and really was fantastic. I liked the different examples, and questions were really helpful. That was a wonderful resource. The other resources were great too, but that was my favorite and it's something that I can really relate to my day-to-day activities.

Interviewer: When I think evangelism at Redeemer, I think (name removed). And to hear you say you learned something, like wow!

S109: Well, that makes me feel good, thank you. I would like to do a lot more with evangelism. I keep listening and watching for opportunities with people and there have been different ones in my life. A lot of it has been relational, like my old boss and his whole family. That just started out with our kids going to a Lutheran school and we just talked about it gradually. But I am finding that, just in my daily walk, there are more and more Christians out

there that will say, “I’m blessed.” or “I’ll pray for you.” or “We’re praying for a person’s health.” There are a lot people out there that when they find you are a Christian, they really open up more. Not only do I think we should evangelize the people who are non-Christians, but part of evangelism, to me, is encouraging and supporting other Christians to remain strong in the faith.

Interviewer: Absolutely. Especially in today’s culture.

S109: Right. It’s easy to stray away. So, in my opinion, evangelism isn’t just for the people who are not yet saved, it’s also to keep the people who are in the faith active.

Interviewer: I appreciate your time.

Subject #110

Interviewer: Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S110: I guess the way it was changed is thinking of it more relationally rather than knock on the door and share the four spiritual laws. It has more to do with building relationships and creating opportunities to share the Gospel with them.

Interviewer: How would you define evangelism?

S110: Evangelism is sharing the Good News with people who don’t know it, particularly.

Interviewer: How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S101: As far as knowledge, I think my knowledge of evangelism was broadened. I had a pretty narrow view of what evangelism was. Learning more about it gave me a broader view of what it is. As far as willingness, I would say definitely because I don’t see myself as being an evangelist. It’s not my spiritual gift. I don’t have this aching need to go tell people. But the whole idea of it stemming out of a relationship that you build with someone and offering the

opportunity for those questions to come naturally out of relationship made me feel more willing to be involved in evangelism.

Interviewer: If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S110: If that were to be the case, what am I waiting for? To assist me, you could take all my other responsibilities away from me so I felt like I had time.

Interviewer: During the Block-3 sessions were there certain topics you felt would be helpful? One suggestion given is during the next Mentorship Training class, have the people who have gone through the training lead those sessions for the new people. I would still be there but they would learn the material in a different way.

S110: I think that would be good. One of the challenges to me is we are dealing with an entire generation in the church. I don't know if it's just our church or if it's the Church as a whole. Most people have not been mentored and trying to pass along the idea is brand new to them. Some of us have been mentored by our parents and other people so it's not quite as foreign to us—although it wasn't called mentoring. But I think that's one of the challenges. As parents, we see ourselves as a mentor, that's our primary role. We're certain that our kids will have a saving relation with Christ, but we see many, if not most Christian parents who don't seem to have that certainty. That makes me really sad. God gives us responsibility to do something—just keep taking us back to Scripture and He reminds us to train up a child in the way he should go and we will not depart from me. He promises us that if we do these things it will come to pass. We need to believe Him.

Interviewer: Hopefully over time with the Block-3 sessions and ongoing training we'll do with mentors, we can ideally mentor each other along the way in an ongoing process.

S110: Encourage mentors to do this with people even in the church. Don't assume that because someone is going to church it isn't going to be helpful for you to go through this process with somebody else. That process of growing and learning with each other will help us understand better how to help other people grow.

Interviewer: What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "ah-ha" moment? You could have more than one.

S110: I think this came out of the *God Space* book which is a good book and could be used as a cornerstone for the Mentoring Program. Evangelism is really a lot more listening than it is talking. It's learning where a person is coming from. That's something that we have discovered in conversations. If you're coming at an issue from a completely different worldview from somebody else, giving them your worldview is not going to change their minds. You need to start by seeking to understand where they are coming from. That is really hard, especially for Americans. We have the answer; we know how to do it. That's been part of our history. We go into other countries and say, "We're going to make you Americans." The biggest takeaway for me is that I need to listen more than I need to talk in my relationship with people so that the things that I say will have more impact.

Interviewer: I agree. That's so freeing once you get that because that means you don't have to know all the answers when you're meeting with people.

S110: I met with (name removed) this morning and I told her I felt so unqualified. I can't imagine sharing my faith with people who have grown up without faith because it's been my whole life. I really do not understand the worldview. This has been really helpful to realize that

in some ways this is better. It's not about me and what I have to say. What I have to offer is friendship and a listening ear. I will have to pray when she is telling me stories. It is really freeing to know we don't have to have all the right answers. We need to be willing to walk alongside a person while they're asking questions. We are willing to say, "I don't know."

Interviewer: That's a perfect picture of mentorship.

S110: If you think about it, it goes back to that footprint when God was carrying us. That's what He does with us. He walks alongside us and there are times when He carries us. I really admire people who go through prolonged periods of trial and persevere and still trust, knowing that God understands all of this; we don't see it while we're walking through it.

Interviewer: I thank you for your time.

Subject #111

Q. Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S111: I think the biggest thing is the whole sphere of evangelism, kind of the door-to-door, handing out tracts mentality. I was never good at that or pursued much of that. I think Mentorship brought a lot more of a relational approach. I tend to operate that way in life anyway. I think taking away that barrier that a lot of people feel in the whole process, being able to just chat with people and befriend them and care about them and not feel the need to move fast toward the close. It's an ongoing process of lives lived together and caring about somebody and listening to them and moving toward those issues that matter most.

Interviewer: So it seems like your opinion of evangelism has changed a little bit. How would you define evangelism?

S111: I love the phrase “facilitating access to the Gospel.” It’s whatever we can do to get people connected to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and it isn’t going to be preaching at them, most likely.

Interviewer: How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S111: I don’t know about the whole knowledge side. I’ve been to enough of these kinds of things. I don’t know that I really grew in knowledge so much as mindset about approaching people and interacting from a relational perspective rather than the sale idea. I think that’s been a negative in the church—trying to sell people the Gospel. I think that helps with the willingness. If you realize you’re not being measured by how many sales you make this week or this year or your lifetime, but just caring for and loving people and talking about important things.

Interviewer: If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S111: It’s like the question, “If you knew you couldn’t fail, would you do it?” It’s a great question. I ask it of other people all the time. I think just being willing to step out and not worry so much if it’s going to work or not. Just feeling free, and it’s not about some tricks. It’s sharing life with people and being bold to just talk to people. Can we assist you in this? I think we tend to be too busy in church work in maintaining things and programs. We don’t plan to be out there and with people. We have too many committees and we don’t have time to build relationships with nonbelievers. There are people we work with we could build relationships but that’s hard sometimes. But you should be able to have somebody over on a Tuesday night because there are no meetings that night.

Interviewer: Well, I hope that maybe the Block-3, those stand-alone sessions, might turn more into accountability groups so it's not so we just go through Mentorship and did the training but are actually living the training. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "ah-ha" moment? You could have more than one.

S111: The "cool" moment was the day we talked about the Beer Church. The thought occurred to me that we have this mindset in evangelism. We always call it the numbers game; we're trying to get people in the building. The goal is to get these new people in the building. They don't know Christ; we have to get them in the building. It has nothing to do with the building. It has to do with our relationship with Christ. One person felt the beer idea was going too far and it occurred to me that they may never come to our church but they may come into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. And that's more important. And then you think, "Aren't we trying to grow the church?" Well, what is the church? The church is not people in the building. Some people in the building might not even be part of the church. I thought that was very cool to think that way. We're not progressing people down to membership and then leadership although those are good things. That's not ultimately the goal.

Interviewer: That was a fun session seeing a lot of "ah-ha" moments. There were some people who started out thinking, "No, we could never do that." But the more they talked about it and thought about it, there was more openness.

S111: We came back to the idea of what were we willing to do to facilitate access to the Gospel. Are we willing to go out there and do different things? If there is a way or place where people connect with each other, that's the way to do it.

Interviewer: Well I thank you for your time, those are all of the questions.

S111: Thanks for having us. It was a fun class.

Subject #114

Interviewer: Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship Training? If so, how?

S114: Definitely yes. I'm a senior, I don't like that word, so "older youth" sounds a lot better. First of all, I found through Mentorship Training that it's not enough to tell people about Jesus. It's important to tell them the whole story of how God gave His Son for our salvation and the fact that God has a place for us in heaven and He wants all of His children to be there. In order for that to happen, we have to tell people about it and it's not going to be an easy job by any way or means. But through training, it helps to not only review what you have been taught; it also tells you how to do it, when to stop, and when you see a roadblock ahead, how to handle it. That's what I got from the Mentorship Program, the training.

Interviewer: What have you sensed changed since being a part of it?

S114: Yes. I'm more aware. Training gives you awareness and makes you see the opportunity when it's there.

Interviewer: You shared a story earlier; maybe you feel comfortable sharing it now. You were just handing out tracts, and there's a conversation you had?

S114: (Name removed) and I are in charge of the evangelism board at (Name removed) Lutheran at the lake. We're very active with tracts and things from Creative Communications that have prayers and stories. We had 100 Advent calendars and we asked Share the Harvest if we could give them out when people were picking up their food. She said we could, but we could not talk to them about God or anything like that. We couldn't preach to them. We gave out a hundred and everybody thanked us for it when we went through. Only one couple refused and she said that they don't do Christmas. Apparently they were either are Jehovah Witnesses or a religion that doesn't do Christmas. We noticed they have to wait and it was the perfect place to

hand out tracts because they have to sit and wait for their turn to get food so they were reading the calendar. Now, whether they did, I don't know, but it was planted in their minds. The calendars have sentences on them that lead to a Bible verse. (Name removed) and I felt very good and we're going to give crosses out with the story of Easter on the back. There are a lot of ways. I think the training opened my eyes to all the opportunities that I could use. A couple of weeks ago in church, you said to do something nice for somebody. (Name removed) and I were in the Dollar store and there was a lady with three children, one very small in the basket and two little ones. I was buying two balloons for my niece who is in a nursing a home rehabilitation. One child asked for a balloon and I heard the mother say, "No, we can't get one today." So I whispered to the woman who was checking me out to charge me for two balloons for those children. (Name removed) and I tried to get out of the store and just before we got out the door, the mother hollered, "Thank you!" It was good of you to remind us in your sermons and your talks that just doing little things tells them that we are good people and we are Christians and that we love them.

Interviewer: We make evangelism harder than it really is. It's sharing God's love in practical ways. It opens doors.

S114: And the books we had in Mentorship were eye-openers too. One was like the conspiracy of kindness; it didn't list things but gave stories of things.

Interviewer: God Space or Reverse Mentoring?

S114: *God Space*. That was a good book.

Interviewer: There are a lot of great resources in there. The list of questions in that book is invaluable. How have you grown in your knowledge of and willingness toward evangelism? Please describe.

S114: My knowledge came from not realizing that the space in my generation and the space in the young people of today and the married people with smaller children. I did not realize that technology was that important. I had to try to learn and try to turn around so that I could be a little knowledgeable in those terms. I think that with the technology they still have not enough money, children problems, and somehow the church has to open its arms to them. If a couple in our church needs help, we need to be there. I will tell you that many, many years ago, in fact our son is 57, he was just a little boy and I just had our (name removed). I had some problems after her birth; I guess it called post-something now. We didn't know what it was then. (Name removed) and I were living check to check; I didn't work and he didn't make much money. I needed to go into the hospital for a month or so. We didn't know how we were going to do that because it was a private hospital. We went to church at St. James; we lived outside Vienna at that time. A man from the church contacted Pastor or our pastor contacted him, I don't know how it happened. He loaned us \$200 to pay for those six weeks. Pastor, you have to know the members and you have to be able to come to us and tell us that somebody needs help. They don't have to know who we are; you just have to know who you can come to for help. That's what I mean by the church opening up its arms. They need to know that we love them and we want to help them.

Interviewer: Even if they're not members. That's the harder part; that's true grace.

S114: Yes. (Name removed) and I just did that with a pretty big amount of money and really and firmly did not believe we would ever get it back. Last Thursday there was a knock on the door, and there they were with the check. I took it to the bank and it cleared. We weren't just lucky; that's a God thing! Children in school or the backpack program and things like that - they need to see Redeemer. They need to see our love. We don't want pats on the back; we just want them to know we're here to help and love them when they come in the door.

Interviewer: That way, when crises do come up, if they remember Redeemer, maybe they turn to us for help or guidance.

S114: I hope so. I truly, truly hope they do. I truly hope that as Christians we always remember that our duty is to help and not to question whether they deserve it—no strings attached—just the love of Jesus. I thought of the sermon when Paul said he was content with what he had, that he could go without because what he had now was so much more important than those things—monetary and the life he had before he became Paul.

Interviewer: Did we get both the knowledge and the willingness?

S114: Yes. I think I always had the willingness. I think I'm ready to go whenever you call or anybody calls. Just let me know and I'll be there, and (name removed) too.

Interviewer: Like we talked about in Mentorship Training, it's just a different world today and I think better understanding these younger generations helps us in how we can reach them. I'm very impressed you joined Facebook.

S114: And my Facebook would be a lot better if I wasn't dial up. It takes me so long to get in! I called a company called Wave in Rolla and they could get it for me but I had to sign up for three years or pay \$300. That \$300 can go for a lot better things.

Interviewer: If you were certain that everyone you mentored would be led into a saving relationship with Christ, how would you react? Is there anything we could do to assist you in this?

S114: First of all, I can't believe that everyone I mentor will turn out that way without the help of the Holy Spirit. And if it did, I would praise God for it. But the help, I think that's what we learned in Mentorship when we hit the wall, we need to go back and look at what we've done and get leadership from you—ongoing training. We need that. I'm going to suggest because of

that, in the new Mentorship class you have some of us who have taken the Mentorship class. I'm sure we all have a favorite part of the lesson. Let us do the lesson with your guidance. I think it might be a little more personal.

Interviewer: It helps you own it.

S114: Yes, it does.

Interviewer: That's a great idea. You're teaching it so you have to know it.

S114: Even if I don't have all the answers, you're there to help and that would help start a conversation.

Interviewer: I like that idea a lot. Even if not all the mentors are ready to do that yet, I'm sure several of them could.

S114: I could think of four right off the top of my head that I'm sure are ready.

Interviewer: We'll probably offer the next class next Fall. Is there anything else you would like to add about that question?

S114: Yes. In our Mentorship book, Session Four, Block-1, there was a Reverse Mentorship Leadership Journal by Angie Ward. She listed some of the things you can do and I have looked at that several times. It really has some great ideas for a group. I also thought that bringing the Mentorship group together and just bouncing off each other where we think we're doing better or can we scale it down to what we feel more comfortable with in layman's terms.

Interviewer: The training or the current mentoring relationships you are working at, fostering.

S114: I don't know how many are doing it. I think we need this to get us started. We need to feel more confident in ourselves.

Interviewer: I hope we'll have discussions like this at our upcoming Block-3 where we do talk about where we're stuck or where our joys are. These relationships aren't going to start overnight. I know of one of the mentors is in a relationship. I think the other person is already a Christian but maybe isn't so engaged right now. She's working through the materials like a trial run, so she may have some words of wisdom for the group.

S114: Sharing not only where we are, but our fears—our fear of getting there and what we do when we get there. I am pretty self-confident, but there are things in the Mentorship program that I feel a little bit squeamish about.

Interviewer: I'm there with you. You're not the only one. I think if we look at it as just building relationships—we can't just be about building relationships. At some point a change needs to happen to lead toward more intentional mentorships. Maybe there are some lessons we can focus on that piece. That's what I hope these future training sessions can be about. As we have this dialogue time, maybe there are topics that arise in those times. I don't want to just give sessions that aren't where you are—like how to pray with your person. That's not really what you need now, but that will come through time.

S114: I think we're knowledgeable enough. I don't know, maybe I'm a tract person.

Interviewer: Tracts are good but they take the relationship out of evangelism. It's a quick fix. Look at Jesus, most of His ministry was one-on-one. He had big crowds, but a lot we see in scripture is one-on-one or smaller groups—His disciples. He didn't choose 20 people or more, he chose 12.

S114: He had people, but when He was going to do a miracle, he picked one person, like Nicodemus. Then His ministry was around that.

Interviewer: Even within the 12, He had His closer group within that 12. He was certainly doing His own style of mentoring. I hope to talk more about these types of things in future training with the group's guidance. What has been your biggest takeaway from Mentorship Training or an "ah-ha" moment? You could have more than one.

S114: I think the fact that I have to change. Probably everybody in the group found that out. If you have been in the church long, you really haven't had the training; it's something you've talked about. You were given literature. Training is so important. I think we have to have excitement and passion. The little book, *30 Ways*, I'm not sure that wouldn't be good for everyone and excitement. Evangelism is a scary word and we need to take the fear out of that word.

Interviewer: I think Mentorship helps take the fear out of that word.

S114: Right. It's always been kind of cut and dried. It was not for the layman, it was for the learned person. The layman gave money, made bread and sold it. And that hasn't changed much from my grandmother to my mother to me and to my children. Evangelism has to change. I see the Lutheran Witness. I see President Harrison opening a lot more doors in the church that to me have been closed to the laymen so long. I think as a pastor, you have to do the same thing and I think you're doing this. I know this is a project, but it is much more than a project.

Interviewer: To see us going through training and to see the light bulbs go off, not every session. What are the words we used: "This time is going to disturb and disorient." It certainly did at different times and some of you were ready to leave the room.

S114: You have such a difference in people. After the first visit I wondered how we were going to work together. You had such liberal and such conservative and a few in between. I

didn't know how it was possibly going to work. I'll just be truthful with you, but I just didn't know how it was going to work.

Interviewer: Weren't there 12 of us? Not that I'm saying we're the 12 disciples but I'm sure Jesus looked at His group and I'm sure there were moments when Jesus wondered the same thing.

S114: That's probably right. He picked them from all walks of life. But today's world and His world are so different. We're more educated.

Interviewer: Well, I'm excited to see as more and more people go through this method, the change that will happen at Redeemer. It's going to take people to look at other people differently for true change to start happening; like growth and discipleship change. That needs to happen. We're not here to just play church but to be the church.

S114: There's a new day coming. Some of the changes are very hard for us. They're very hard.

Interviewer: I don't like all of them either. I don't think we have a choice if we want to engage people today. I don't know if we're getting off topic, but with President Mirly yesterday who talked with our circuit, he asked what we thought the average age of the average church-goer in our synod is today. The youngest age he has heard is 55 but the higher end is 70. It's hard to know that. But if you look at what is the average age of the US citizen? It's in the mid-30s. There's a huge disconnect. There's not too many more years left for the church as we know it if we don't doing start something about that.

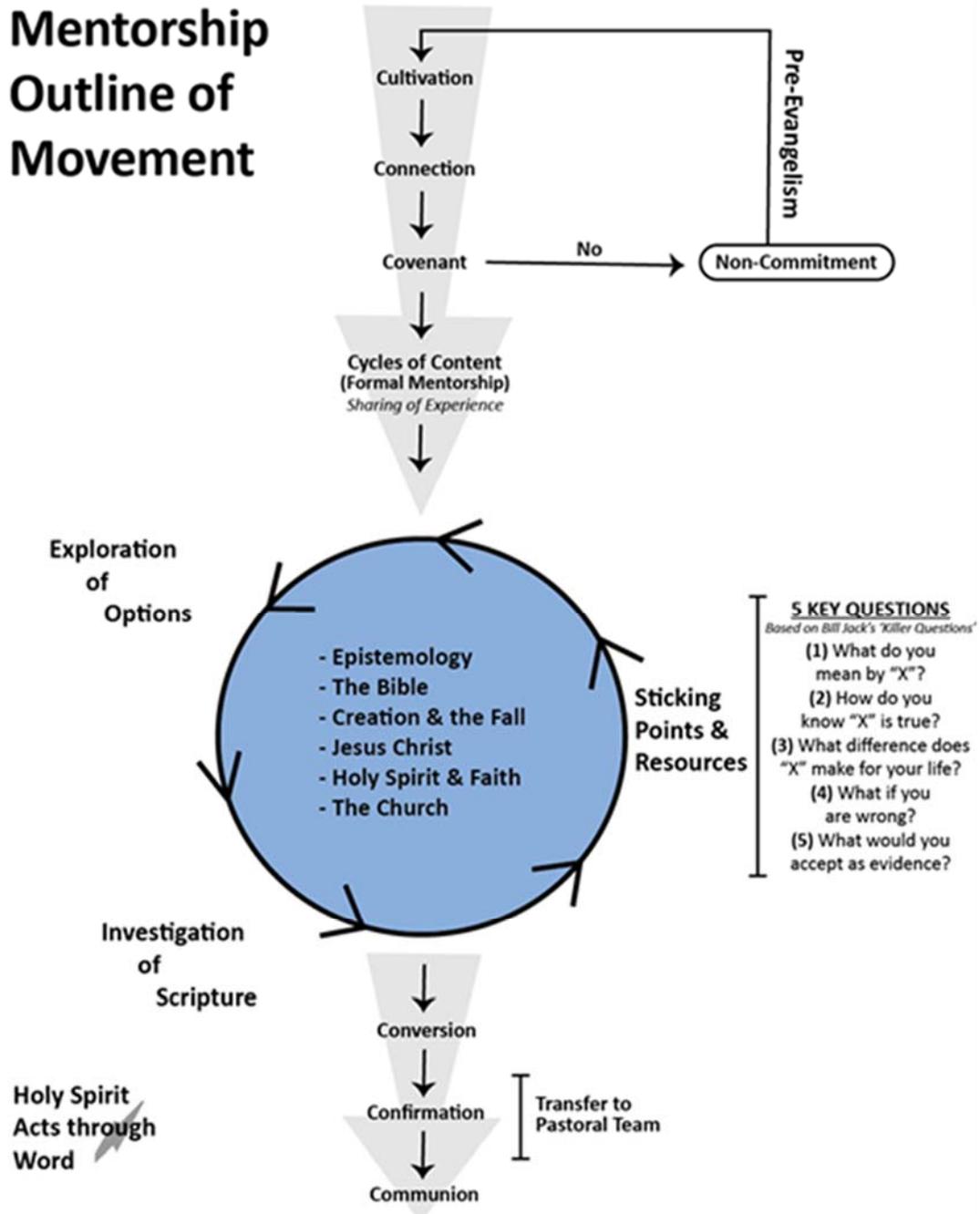
S114: I think the church has a big challenge ahead. I think churches are trying to keep up with the change.

Interviewer: Some are but not all churches. It's easier to keep doing what you're doing and not honestly looking at what's going on. That's why we have Mentorship, to meet a need in today's world for sharing Jesus. I can't thank you enough for your time. It has been a true joy to speak with you.

S114: No, thank you. It was my pleasure.

APPENDIX EIGHT

MENTORSHIP OUTLINE OF MOVEMENT



APPENDIX NINE

DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY: KEY INFLUENCERS & MARKERS

The following is a demographic study completed as part of an Independent Study course with Dr. William Utech in January, 2013.

Redeemer Lutheran Church is a rural congregation located on the outskirts of Rolla, Missouri. The church was established as a mission plant in 1974 by some pioneering men and women of faith who sought to reach a part of Rolla not yet impacted with the Gospel of Christ. Since that time the church has had various pastors, building projects, ministry efforts, and generations of people calling Redeemer home. The culture today is very different from when Redeemer launched close to forty years ago, and yet in many ways, the church still operates as though it were the 1970s. There is growing disconnect between the membership of Redeemer and the ministry context surrounding them, one that is rich with opportunity. Thus, through a broad study of the demographics of both Redeemer and its context, I hope to paint a picture of some of the struggles, threats, and opportunities present for the future viability of the church.

The research for this demographic study was based upon three main sources: Recent findings from the 2010 census, information gleaned from a website entitled www.city-data.com and congregational information from the Missouri District which I received when considering the Call to serve as pastor of Redeemer. The combining of these resources, as well as personal observation from my time in Rolla, have come together to provide a snapshot for the contextual framework for Redeemer. Again, the goal for this demographic overview is to paint a picture of the ministry context in which Redeemer is set, because by understanding both who we are and

who we are trying to reach better influences the ministry processes undertaken with healthier outcomes.

So, who are the people of Rolla? What are their interests and occupations? To begin, the primary ethnicity of Rolla is made-up of the following: Caucasian (84.8%), Asian (5.7%), Black (4%), and Hispanic (2.6%). A big part of Rolla is its industry. Rolla's main industries are educational services (18%), retail (15%), accommodation and food (11%), construction (9%), transportation and warehousing (7%), manufacturing (6%), and government agencies (6%). Among these industries, the town primarily employs in the areas of health care, teaching, service, professional, construction and farming. The two most common occupations in Rolla are post-secondary teachers (11%) and drivers/sales workers and truck drivers (5%). In 2010, unemployment in Rolla was recorded at 6.7% while in the state of Missouri it was slightly higher at 7.1%. Due to the constant flux of people from the various college communities and the nearby military base, there is a certain amount of stability built into the economy and job market unlike other parts of the country. For example, Rolla was not hit as hard as other parts of the nation during the recent economic recession. This constant flux of people also provides tremendous ministry opportunity. With the constant ebb and flow of new residents coming to town can mean potential prospects for Redeemer!

Overall, according the U.S. 2010 census, the general population of Rolla was 19,559, showing a population increase of 19.5% as compared to the 2000 census. Broken down a bit further, there is a larger male population (55%—10,755) than female (45%—8,804) with the average median resident age being 26.2 years while for the state of Missouri the median age is 42.8 years. The unequal gender ratio and the lower median age for Rolla is impacted by several factors, two of which being the college community in which Rolla is located (Missouri

University of Science and Technology [MS&T], Columbia College, Rolla Technical Institute, and Salem College of Hairstyling) as well as Fort Leonard Wood (a military base located near Rolla). Interestingly, the average age of Redeemer's Baptized membership is 39.9 years of age. What does it say that the average age of Redeemer's membership is pushing 40 years old while the average age in Rolla is 26? It says that the church has a lot of work to do in speaking the Gospel in an essential way into people's lives. Younger generations are voting with their feet, clearly visible in the breakdown of Redeemer's demographics. What becomes apparent is a growing disconnect between Redeemer and the community in which it is placed.

The situation in which Redeemer finds itself is not improving with time. Since little is being done as true outreach with the sole purpose of expanding the Kingdom of Christ, it is a matter of time before the church ages out and the doors are closed for good. Without an intentional discipleship process to bring in the next generation, those sitting in the pews will become grayer and grayer, eventually succumbing to an inevitable end. The statistical report for 1990 shows Redeemer's Baptized membership at 379, while in 2011 little has changed in this number, coming in at 380. These numbers are virtually the same and have been for several years. It quickly becomes apparent that Redeemer has been living in a state of plateau for over twenty years, having grown accustomed to "doing" church rather than being a church "in" the community and "for" the community.

In order to better understand who attends Redeemer, we turn our attention to the demographic of the Redeemer population. My research broke down the membership into four main age-group categories: 0–17, 18–30, 31–54, and 55 and up. Putting the pieces together, the Table shown below breaks down Redeemer's membership by age group, showing who the active and non-active members are that constitute the church:

Table 7. Snapshot of Redeemer by Age Category (as of January 1, 2013)

<u>Non-Attenders</u>	<u>Core Attenders</u>	<u>Combined Totals</u>	<u>Median Age</u>
0–17 ... 35 (20%)	0–17 ... 42 (21%)	0–17 ... 77 (20%)	0–17 ... 9.72 years
18–30 ... 44 (25%)	18–30 ... 24 (12%)	18–30 ... 68 (18%)	18–30 ... 23.9 years
31–54 ... 65 (36%)	31–54 ... 59 (29%)	31–54 ... 124 (33%)	31–54 ... 42.2 years
55–up ... 35 (20%)	55–up ... 76 (38%)	55–up ... 111 (29%)	55–up ... 67.7 years
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Total...179	Total...201	Total...380	Median Age...39.9

A few items from this research stand out as vitally important. The most glaring insight is visible when one compares the median age of Rolla to that of Redeemer. As previously mentioned, the median age of Rolla is 26.2 while the average age of Redeemer is 39.9. The figures dramatically show that Redeemer has not kept in-step with the community around them. The Rolla community has grown younger while the church grows older. Because of the educational and military setting, there is a constant source of a younger demographic Redeemer could target for outreach. Those in the younger generations (0–30 years-of-age) are becoming harder and harder to reach, yet there is a target-rich environment of a younger demographic at every turn. Is Redeemer willing to do whatever it takes to reach the next generation for Christ in a way this culture can understand? Time will tell.

The needed discipleship and evangelism process that stands before Redeemer will certainly stretch all involved: The laity, leaders, and staff. But to do nothing is not a viable option either. Doing nothing means a slow and painful decline to an inevitable outcome: complacency, decline, closure and death. On the downside, 47% of Redeemer are non-actives, which means they are members by name only. On the flip side, 53% of the people listed on its roles are active, core members of Redeemer, meaning that they have attended worship at least one time during the past year. It is absolutely crucial that whatever next steps are taken, the core group of “actives” must be on board with the process. Everyone is needed for the God-sized task standing before

Redeemer. A revitalization effort must occur around these folks to educate them as to what it means to be church as well as to challenge them to live a life of discipleship and missions. This core group must *become* the Spirit's breath—the hands and feet—to Christ's Body for the next generation and beyond. I am in constant prayer that a sense of urgency and passion for the lost returns to this mission plant!

The above Table snapshot vividly illustrates a large group of people claiming membership at Redeemer without actually attending worship within a one year span of time. A clear message is being sent if Redeemer chooses to hear it: The next generation is voting with their feet saying the church is not relevant. In essence, they are saying that Redeemer is not essential for their lives, not enough to lead them in being a vital part of the Body. Thus, to begin to bridge this gap it is mission-critical for Redeemer to better understand the next generation and the community it is placed in if it seeks to be a viable institution for future generations. Understanding the needs of families and college-age students will go a long way for Redeemer to wrap its arms around an unspoken challenge facing the church today.

Based upon the findings of this demographic, the threats and challenges for Redeemer are certainly abundant and clear. What has been described may seem rather gloomy and dark, but the truth is, in the midst of an uncertain tomorrow I have incredible hope for the future of Redeemer. God has placed the church at this time in history for a specific purpose. He has blessed the church and its leaders with the tools and resources necessary to accomplish that which He has called them to carry out. Yes, the threats are clear, but the potential for Redeemer is limitless! There are innumerable opportunities through which to share the Gospel, particularly among those in their 20s and 30s. I believe the launch of a mentorship-style of evangelism will speak

well to this generation and will give the members of Redeemer both the perceived knowledge and increased willingness to outreach.

This brief demographic study has shown that Redeemer Lutheran is located in a target-rich environment to serve and do ministry. The only thing limiting the church is their willingness to take a bold step of faith. Doing ministry as it has always been done simply will not work in today's world. New solutions and methods must be developed to share the unchangeable truth of God's saving Word to a thirsting world. By faith and much prayer, we lay this in God's capable hands. It is incredibly good news to think that the Father Almighty, as Lord of the Church, is at work amongst the people of Redeemer to blossom something unseen as of now. Through the seedlings of the freshly planted Gospel grows something beautiful and eternal, something well-worth the hardship and grace it will take to accomplish. The time for Redeemer to once again take up the cross and to follow Christ's leading has come. After all, the cross was never meant to be something buried, but to be carried into our lives to pass on to the next.

Lead on, O King eternal, the day of march has come!

APPENDIX TEN

GIDDY GOAT DIALOGUES: AN EXERCISE IN FIELD RESEARCH

The following is an exercise in field research completed as part of an Independent Study course with Dr. William Utech in January, 2013. Names have been changed to provide anonymity of the people involved. Sessions were recorded for future study with oral permission being given at the start of each field research dialogue.

In order to gain a better understanding of the community in which Redeemer Lutheran Church is located, a goal was established to hold fifteen interviews of people within the ages of 18-35 in order to gain insight into this target demographic. The setting of the field research was conducted at the Giddy Goat Coffeehouse, a local coffee shop in the Rolla area that caters largely to a nearby college campus. The Giddy Goat was established in 2005, and since then has been intentional about its concept of fresh-roasted coffee, hand-crafted drinks, all within a welcoming atmosphere. They are passionate about coffee but even more passionate about the relationships they have with their customers. The baristas make every effort to know people's names as well as their usual drink orders, and they even roast their own beans on a regular basis. They are a true local coffee shop.

This experience took on a life of its own. I never would have expected the outcomes God continues to work through these conversations. This process began during one of my initial conversations with a young woman named Myra, who quickly latched onto the idea of having regular conversations at the Giddy Goat. I would describe Myra as a conservative, gay Christian

from the deep South who grew up in highly Pentecostal church. She knows her Bible in-depth, and because of her engineering mind, can articulate her faith with great eloquence. She, however, has not stepped inside a church for years. In further reflection on her upbringing, one of the things Myra continues to wrestle with is how people can center their whole lives on God when much of the church's teachings are manmade ideologies based on fear.

When I first approached the owners of the coffee shop, Bob and Betty, about the idea for this field research they were thrilled to be a part of the conversation as well. They have a very eclectic background when it comes to their faith. Because of this, they are very open to and encouraging of all types of spiritual expression. With the help of Myra and her connections at the local college, I set-up a Facebook event, including her and the coffeehouse owners as event hosts, and we invited as many people as possible to join us for these regular conversations about faith and God. Listed below is the verbiage from the Facebook invitation:

Join a local pastor doing field research at the Giddy Goat for a class he is taking on people's experience with the church, God and religion, and being a Christian in today's world. Drop in for some thought-provoking discussion as we seek to open a dialogue on matters of faith and spirituality. Question? Contact Myra or Nathan Kuhlman (pastornathan@redeemer-rolla.org). Hope to see you there!

We ended up meeting five times for conversation, speaking on a wide array of topics, averaging a total of ten participants. Each week a different question was posed with the conversation lasting about an hour. Listed below are the original questions posed as the springboard for the gathering:

1. Do you believe in God? What is He like?
2. How would you describe your religious background?
3. Have you gone to church? If so, what was your experience?
4. What is church?
5. How could a church make positive impact on your life?

As I ventured into this exercise of field research, I entered with a few questions in my back pocket, but little did I know the extent to which I would be challenged as well as how God would work through these conversations to both encourage and uplift my thinking as a pastor. One of the things I had not anticipated was the depth of relationships I would build with people during this exercise. Through these conversations definite doors of opportunity for future conversation are wide open. A type of community is beginning to form. Not only that, but all who participated would like to see more of these conversations in the future. I am thinking about holding a once per month gathering where a question is thrown out for the group to wrestle with from their various vantage points. I do not know how long these conversations will last, but I plan to take advantage of the open door while it is still ajar. My hope is that as I continue to meet with these men and women, trust will continue to be established, and over time, possible mentoring opportunities may arise as well.

We now turn our attention to the general make-up of the group. All participants had some sort of connection with the local college (MS&T, Missouri University of Science and Technology), whether as a student or university worker. The conversations we had could be described as messy and raw. One fascinating note is all participants had some kind of Christian influence during their adolescence. A few simply left church while others had a defining moment that spurred their drifting away from the Body of Christ. One participant remains an active member in his church, but his faith could be described as rather eclectic.

Take Jessica, for example, one of the young ladies who attended a couple of the discussions. She is highly antagonistic to any church. As a young child, through her own initiative, she made the decision to attend a Vacation Bible School at the local Baptist church. She was told by her teacher that she asked too many questions and was asked not to come back.

This moment deeply hurt Jessica and hardened her to church. This church did huge amounts of damage to Jessica's faith and walk with God, basically saying, "You aren't good enough to be a part of who we are! You don't belong." She has never stepped foot in church ever again. Today she is proud to call herself a "pagan atheist" and actively practices this religion with great passion. In her own words, "God would never care about a little small spot like us." I was pleased she never shut me down or attempted to stop the conversations. This tells me there must be some glimmer of hope, albeit buried deeply, that may someday find its way to the surface to bring about a Gospel transformation in her life.

Meet Bob. Bob regularly attended the local church for years, searching for some kind of religious feeling he saw others having, but was turned off because this feeling never came to him in his life. He abruptly stopped attending and has not been back since. His wife, Betty, believes in all kinds of religious spirituality and ways to God.

One of the most powerful moments for me, however, was how Kyle joined the conversation. Kyle was off by himself at a table across the room, working on homework over an espresso. As Mike, Chelsea, Bob, and I were having an engaging conversation about God and what He is like, Kyle asked if he could join our conversation because he said it sounded interesting. He immediately jumped in! Kyle's inner beliefs quickly flowed to the surface. He is a highly intelligent individual who cares deeply about truth, saying things like, "If perception is reality, than what is reality." The search for one's own truth is paramount since, "We can't truly know if something is true or not, they are all mere approximations." He described himself as an atheist, skeptic, gay, introvert, philosopher who grew up in a highly conservative Christian home. I spoke with him afterward, and he is a really personable guy, in some ways, trying to think his way to a kind of truth about life. I look forward to continuing the conversation.

Below are observations made by various participants:

“We may not all agree with one another, but the key comes down to respect.” (This was an important observation repeatedly made during each conversation in some form or another. The key word being, “Respect!”)

“The problem with religion is that the people get in the way. People often use religion to further benefit themselves. For example, look at the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.” (Myra)

“Riding motorcycles is my church. It’s where I do my best thinking ... in nature ... seeing God in creation where there’s no people. I’m by myself with no distractions. You never see a bike parked outside a counselor’s office, do you?” (Myra)

Describing the need for people to slow down, “People are living in the constant buzz of life.” (Mike)

“Church is about movement, not recruitment.”

“The church is the community more than a religion. It is a gathering of like-minded people.”

Is Redeemer ready for the Myra, Jessica, Bob, Betty, and Kyle who will step through our church doors on any given Sunday? Would we welcome them and their hard questions with open arms? How would we respond to their deep hurts, struggles, and hard perceptions of the Church? As Redeemer begins to take seriously the call to make disciples, they will come. The key is to take each situation and each person, one at a time, simply loving on them. We are all people, after all, struggling to find our place in God’s greater design. Now is not the time for correction but bridge-building. Some of the best and long-lasting growth happens within a community as people share life-on-life, interacting with one another in a reverse-mentoring kind of way.

I look forward to the launch of Mentorship Training at Redeemer, which will be a powerful tool to use in bridging the current gap between our church and the community God has us placed. This project in field research was certainly filled with its share of surprises. At first I had apprehension, but as I continued to meet week after week with these incredible men and women,

I had the distinct privilege of knowing them as friends. God-willing, I hope to someday know them as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

APPENDIX ELEVEN

A LITURGY FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF MENTORS

Briefly describe Mentorship to the congregation: *“Mentorship is an evangelism method in which an individual who is making inquiry into Christianity is intentionally paired with an experienced and trained Christian who agrees to serve as a spiritual guide throughout the inquiry process.”*

PASTOR: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the men and women standing before you have successfully completed a 10-week intensive training on Mentorship-style evangelism to serve as trained mentors for Redeemer Lutheran Church and to the places God has placed them. In Matthew 28 we are all commanded to go and make disciples of all nations. This group, through the Holy Spirit’s power and guidance, seeks to intentionally own this calling by taking a bold step of faith this day as they become a missionary for the sake of the Gospel. I ask all of us here today, as the Body of Christ: Will you support and encourage them through your words and prayers? If so, answer: We will, with the help of God.

ALL: We will, with the help of God.

PASTOR: May the almighty and most merciful God strengthen and assist you always, accomplishing what we are unable to do. Mentors, are you ready and willing to assume this trust and responsibility?

MENTORS: I am, with the help of God.

PASTOR: I commission you as a mentor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, sent to “go” where you’ve been planted in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever (Heb 13).

ALL: Amen.

APPENDIX TWELVE

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- 2017 Ph.D., Mathematics, Missouri University of Science and Technology.
- 2006 M.S., Applied Mathematics, Missouri University of Science and Technology.
- 2004 B.S., University of Missouri. Majors: Applied Mathematics.

Academic Experience

- 2015-present Lecturer, Mathematics and Statistics, Missouri University of Science and Technology. Teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in Calculus, Differential Equations, and Combinatorics and Graph Theory.
- 2009-present Instructor, East Central College. Teaching undergraduate courses in Engineering, Business Statistics, Introductory Statistics, College Algebra, Contemporary Math, and Developmental Mathematics.
- 2006-2009 Adjunct instructor, Ozarks Technical College. Teaching undergraduate courses in College Algebra and Developmental Mathematics.
- 2004-2009 Graduate Teaching Assistant, Missouri University of Science and Technology. Teaching undergraduate courses in Trigonometry and Calculus.

Selected Publications

Brigham, Reginald Alfred II. "A Harmonic M-Factorial Function and Applications" (2017). Doctoral Dissertation, 2557, http://scholarsmine.mst.edu/doctoral_dissertations/2557.

Personal Blog, “Speaking Mathematically: An Introduction to the Art of Speaking and Thinking Mathematically”, www.speakingmathematically.com.

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

EVANGELISM SURVEY #1 (PRE-TRAINING): RAW DATA

1. *How long have you been a Christian?*

- Ever since I can remember. I always knew Jesus died for my sins. I really became a Jesus follower after my divorce in 1997.
- 40 years.
- Since the age of 19. Baptized in Methodist church Oct. 1977.
- 40 years.
- All of my life.
- 23 years and counting!!
- All my life.
- 62 years.
- My entire life (49 years). I was raised in a Christian home.
- 50 years.
- I was baptized in the Lutheran faith in 1967.
- All my life. My parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were Lutheran.
- In my mother's womb. She attended church regularly. I heard the Word from my beginning. Blessed with Baptism at age 5 weeks or so.
- Since a young youth. Went to Sunday School and church.

2. *How long have you been at Redeemer? What led you to join the congregation (Baptism, Confirmation, marriage, visited, friend invitation, etc.)?*

- Since 2004. I was Confirmed LCMS and wanted to stay in a Lutheran church. With only 2 options in Rolla, I chose Redeemer because the congregation was friendlier than at Immanuel.
- 1 ½ years. Congregation attributes.
- Since April 2012. The fact that Redeemer was seeking to set up an outreach to include a "contemporary" service. The Easter breakfast got us in the door.
- 2 years. Son, daughter in law and grandchildren.
- 3 years. Call.
- Around a year. The congregation was very inviting, sincere, and growing. We were looking for a church family that cultivated growth and support.
- My family has been a member at Redeemer for nearly 16 years. (Name removed) and I were living in St. Louis and, both being from rural communities, didn't want to raise our family there. We both found work in Rolla and began looking at Lutheran churches. We chose Redeemer because of the people and our connection with Pastor Wittmaier. We felt welcomed immediately.

- 34 years. We contacted the pastor immediately when we moved to Rolla (It was during Lent). Pastor Lieb visited us in our home. Also, Floyd and Alma Haas were a visitation team who came to our home. We immediately felt a connection with Pastor Lieb as well as Floy and Alma. They were very friendly and welcoming. The church was conveniently located. Other members were also friendly.
- We started attending in 2004. We intended to visit churches for a while, but people were friendly to us, and as lifelong Lutherans, we figured we'd get frustrated in a non-Lutheran church, so we stayed.
- 9 years. Friendly Lutheran church that talked about doing more for youth and reaching out to the community.
- We moved back to Rolla in Oct 1979 from Hannibal, MO. We transferred our membership because we had family members going to the church here at Redeemer.
- I've been here since 1979 when I moved back to Rolla. My mom and most of my relatives home church. The members are friendly and caring.
- About 25 years. We had attended Immanuel Lutheran in Rolla. With exception of IrmaJean Haas not once contacted regarding becoming a member for almost a year. We then visited Redeemer Lutheran. Everyone was so friendly and by 3:10pm the same afternoon Jack Haas was at our house to invite us to transfer and tell us about Redeemer.
- About 25 years. Didn't seem welcome at Immanuel so we visited Redeemer. How you are welcomed to church is very important. Ended up joining (transferring) to Redeemer.

3. *How would you define "evangelism"?*

- Telling people that Jesus Christ is God's Son sent to redeem the whole world for their sins, if we believe in Him and accept His gift of salvation won for us by His death on the cross and subsequent resurrection.
- Being neutral, "Tell everyone what he has done."
- Evangelism is activity of setting up and keeping relationships with non-believers to witness and minister to them while living life.
- Speaking and sharing God's love to others.
- Share God's love with others and "Good News." Be Jesus' hands / feet. Meet needs of others around me. Be who God created / equipped me to be.
- Sharing and communicating the love/gospel of Jesus Christ. Encourage and teaching others to reach out for a relationship with God.
- To me evangelism is openly sharing your faith. A result of this may be the addition of new believers, but that isn't always the case.
- Evangelism to me means sharing my faith with others so they too, may become Christians. Evangelism occurs most with friends, family, and others who are interested and receptive to hearing more about Christianity. The Bible verse comes to mind Go ye therefore and make disciples. . . . Also, by witnessing in our daily lives with our words and actions we are evangelists.
- Evangelism is showing our faith and the good news of what Jesus did for us with others.
- Providing the opportunity for people to hear the Gospel and become disciples of Jesus Christ.
- By reaching out and sharing the word that Jesus asked us to do.
- Telling others about my faith.

- It is a Christ commissioned duty to tell how much God loved the world that he gave his only Son to die for our sins. An opportunity to tell people why we are happy people, about our love for them, how much Christ loves them, and eternal life.
- Spreading the Word . . . Gospel to friends, visitors, community.

4. On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you in sharing your faith?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Not Confident Confident

- 1 -
- 2 - I
- 3 - II
- 4 - IIII I
- 5 - I

- I'm fairly confident, but not often comfortable.

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how knowledgeable do you feel about evangelism?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
 Not Knowledgeable Knowledgeable

- 1 - I
- 2 -
- 3 - III
- 4 - IIII I
- 5 -

- If you used my definition in #3, than I feel pretty good. However, if the goal is to recruit new believers, than I am not as knowledgeable.
- There's always more to learn.
- Due to loss of hearing I miss out on important teaching and learning.

6. How would you describe our church's approach to evangelism?

- Minimal but growing.
- ?
- Don't really know how Redeemer as a body approaches it. I do know that many individuals are actively "seeking the lost" through people God puts in our way.
- Evolving steadily.
- Nonexistent (food pantry).
- Nothing earth shattering nor aggressive outside the church. Our church takes a laid-back approach and does not put ourselves out of our comfortable norms. We do well with children evangelism.
- Honestly, I'm not sure. I know this is a hard program to develop. I think we all agree it is important, but we don't feel like it is something that we can do personally so it's hard to get people to help.
- I must be honest about this although I know my comment is very negative. I believe our church's approach to evangelism is very weak. I have tried over the years to lead the Board of Evangelism and to participate in Evangelism activities. Very few members will participate. It is very discouraging to me. I was disappointed when the Board of Evangelism combined with the Mission Board and spoke against it.

- I think the general feeling is that it is someone else's job! We plan events that non-members might attend.
- We encourage our members to invite the unchurched to attend events and services.
- There has been many changes in the way people approach evangelism. I feel we are in the learning process as to how to approach and share the message of Christ.
- The trend is toward evangelism but we don't feel comfortable / qualified.
- I really don't remember active Evangelism at Redeemer. Jean and Jack had the coins. Jesus Birthday Party, Fish Fry. . . . A money maker but an opportunity for people to see our church and family life center. Hack Haas was active in and outside church as Director of Discipleship, or something like that. I do not agree with the split of Evangelism and Missions. I do not believe the same work.
- We have not been that active at Redeemer for the past 10 years due to being at lake. Active Evangelism at Peace at lake though.

7. *If there was "one thing" Redeemer could do to help you in the practice of evangelism, what might that "one thing" be?*

- Provide training (such as this).
- ?
- Education for ministry, spiritual gifts, and being a good witness while living life.
- This class.
- Train me!
- Educate members on how to engage in conversations, relationships, etc. without causing others' to repel from the "Christian."
- Evangelism should be "sold" or "advertised" as something we can all do. You don't have to be trained or educated in this area. It's not someone else's job. It's all of ours. It would be easier to participate if the whole church was involved, not just the Board of Missions.
- I believe training in evangelism is very important. I'm always open to learning more about how to be a more effective witness.
- Team up with a person who needs to be evangelized—for me, it is the initial contact that is most difficult.
- Simplify the focus of our congregational activities so that instead of so many meetings and programs we focus our efforts on fewer things so we actually have time to reach out intentionally.
- I feel this project will teach us the new ways to spread the Word, thus building our confidence.
- Practice? But avoid sounding rehearsed.
- Enjoyed Conspiracy of Kindness! Active training . . . role playing. I think it is very odd that you can go into LCMS for almost anything except Evangelism articles. I do not remember except in the 1970–early 80's active Evangelism in the churches. They are now (Lutheran Hour) having classes. We took them.
- Things to read, pamphlets, training sessions at seminary with their literature.

8. *Who from Redeemer is primarily responsible for engaging in evangelism?*

II ___ Pastor/Staff

II ___ Board of Missions

II ___ Elders

III ___ IIIII ___ IIIII ___ All member and regular attenders

II ___ Other (please list): _____

Explain:

- *(Note: Two people marked all of the options, signaling it's everyone's responsibility)*
- Everyone will be able to share the gospel on a broader level than a few people.
- We as Lutherans believe in the "priesthood" of all believers, and as such we should be doing God's work.
- It is everyone's privilege to share God's Word with others.
- The church body as a whole should be responsible for engaging evangelism. The opportunities can be presented but the overall effort must come from the individual.
- The Board of Missions and direct larger congregational activities with the assistance of the pastor, but everyone has this responsibility. The Great Commission was directed to all, not just specific people.
- We are all Christians and therefore should be responsible for spreading the Good News and bringing others to Christ.
- The priesthood of all believers makes us all personally responsible for our relationship with the Lord and to share with others—Great Commission as well is directed to all.
- It's the mission of the Body of Christ in the world.
- It will take everyone in the church to take part in helping the church grow.
- We've been commissioned to teach God's Word throughout the world. All of us.
- Evangelism is a one-on-one expression of your faith to person or persons, as commissioned by Christ himself. Certainly, it can be group oriented but is a personal expression of love of the Trinity and God's people.
- It isn't one person's job, it's everybody's. Talking to visitors, giving out coins that lets them know you are Christian. Letting people know they are welcome.

9. Additional comments or observations:

- I'm afraid that in my inexperience with sharing the gospel with unbelievers that I might say the wrong thing and turn them off forever
- We should be taking advantage of more opportunities as a church to get the message and our name out. We have added (Happy Birthday Jesus Party) but also subtracted (Fall Fest). Other activities are barely supported (Lemonade Stand). There isn't "buy in" from the congregation.
- We need help with evangelism for our local congregation to grow and for more people to become Christians in our area and worldwide. 40% of Phelps County is unchurched. I find that statistic very sad and challenging, too. How can we reach out to this generation?
- I hope this program will be helpful to giving us the knowledge and increasing our ability to pass on the information in a way those we approach will want to hear more about Jesus and choose Redeemer as their new church home.
- It's easy for me if I am approached by someone with questions about my faith. I've tried to begin a conversation myself but soon became tongue tied.
- It is important for Evangelist in the church to show love and concern, sharing this love in conversation to members. This is "training" for sharing with strangers.

- Coins are a way of opening up conversation. Letting people know we care for them as well as ourselves.

10. Subject Background Information:

Ages

52, 58, 59, 68, 42, 30, 42, 62, 49, 50, 69, 66, 78, 82

Average Age: 57.6 **How long a Christian: 50.1**

Gender

F - IIIII IIII M - IIIII

Current Marital Status

Married - IIIII IIIII III

Widow - I

Educational Attainment (HS, Associates, BS, Professional Degree: Lawyer, MBA, Masters, etc.), please list all that apply:

I - Master of Science

II - HS

II - BS in Education

IIII - BS

III - Some college

I - Nursing degree

City and zip code in which you reside

I - Newburg, MO 65550

II - Dixon, MO 65459

III IIIII - Rolla, MO 65401

I - Belle, MO 65013

II - Vienna, MO 65582

Award for Public Service.

APPENDIX FOURTEEN

EVANGELISM SURVEY #2 (POST-TRAINING): RAW DATA

1. *Has your view/understanding/opinion of evangelism changed since being a part of Mentorship training? If so, how?*

- Yes, I personally thought evangelism was knocking on doors telling people about Jesus or handing out tracts. Now I see evangelism as a process involving building of relationships in order to develop trust between parties so that the Gospel can be shared when the recipient is ready. The Holy Spirit is responsible for the conversion of the person. The goal is to bring the lost to Christ.
- Yes, it is easier and more natural.
- No, evangelism is the mission of the Christian.
- Yes. It is much more involved than I originally thought. More listening, learning, hearing, seeing, praying for wisdom, humility and understanding.
- I don't think it changed, it just was redefined and affirmed. I always know it was relationship based and not just a job of the pastor/church staff.
- Yes, I used to think of evangelism as something the church did to reach out to unchurched.
- Yes, I have found the information regarding the differences in generations helpful and informative: How they communicate, how they view the church and Christians. I am more open to understanding and meeting people where they are in their lives. I have learned it is important to listen, than ask questions and create *God Space*. Also, I have learned the importance of patience and taking small steps as people are ready to have spiritual conversations.
- I don't think I have ever seen evangelism as the "pastor's" job. But I don't think I've given it a lot of specific thought, either. I really appreciated the perspective of mentorship as evangelism through relationship. I see one of my jobs as a parent as evangelism, and that is done from a relationship basis, so it makes sense.
- Yes, a bit. Understanding the need to be more relational, which may take more investment and be a lot less focused on getting new people to enter our church building.
- There is an old statement . . . "you are never too old to learn." It's hard to change the old ways . . . never a change. Well, the old ways don't all work into today's society. Many of us need to get with the program. It's a whole new world out there. Knocking on doors don't work. It's an invasion of privacy today. We need to be visible in love and acceptance. See no color. Be open to the movement. You may not get another chance to share the message and the love. However, some parts were hard for me to understand! *Deep!*

2. *How would you define "evangelism"?*

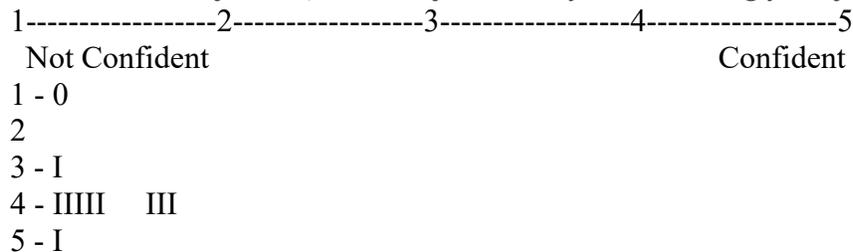
- Be yourself and let the good news out.

- Sharing the Gospel—that Jesus was born, walked the earth for a time, died and rose again as an atoning sacrifice for our sins, so that we may have eternal life with God.
 - Evangelism is the mission Christians were given at the Great Commission to go and make disciples. Evangelism is also the natural outreach of a Christian desire to share the joy that comes of a relation with Jesus Christ.
 - Sharing God’s Word with others. Billy Graham, Big Tent evangelism.
 - Sharing Jesus, helping others know that relationship.
 - Evangelism is the spreading of the Good News. It can be to those unchurched, formerly churched, or those who want to grow in their current faith.
 - Spreading the Good News of God’s plan of salvation to all people wherever they may be. Praying for the Holy Spirit to guide me as the opportunities present themselves.
 - Evangelism is the process of sharing the good news of what Christ has done for us with people who don’t yet know (or who know, but haven’t accepted it for themselves).
 - Facilitating access to the Gospel.
 - Telling the *good news* of Jesus Christ, His life, death, and the importance of his resurrection and his ascension into heaven where he has a place prepared for us. We are special people to believe and have faith and this eternal gift.
3. ***Are you currently engaged in the “Mentorship Outline of Movement”? If so, with whom? At what place in Mentorship would you place the relationship? Please describe.***
- Yes—my sister. We are in the Covenant state. She has agreed to go through “The Journey.” We are deciding on our meeting time and length of commitment. Kim—cultivation stage. She is a coworker. I am increasingly asking GSQs to allow for more spiritual conversations. Avoiding / discouraging complaining and gossip.
 - Who knows? I am being “more friendly.”
 - I don’t know if I’m on the graph yet, but am sharing and interacting with 2 believers who are not currently in fellowship with a body of believers. Kim is a lady at work in my office, and Valerie is also at work but in a different office. I served in Iraq with Valerie, who became a close friend. She took me under her wing for a while until I got fully used to the lifestyle of a warzone.
 - Yes / kinda. I have my mentee in mind and we engage in conversation. Cultivation and connection.
 - No. It seems no one has entered my life who I may mentor. But, I will keep praying for that special person to “cross my path.”
 - I can’t say that I am. In recent weeks, my relational energy has been directed toward family members (daughter, daughter-in-law) who have needed support and prayer and also toward friends I have who are Christians but just need a friend right now.
 - I am in an ongoing dialogue with my cousin, who left the church at about 30yrs of age. We would still be at the “Connection” point. He is still fairly defensive about his decision to leave Christianity, so I’m mostly listening and asking specific questions about the core issues that surface along the way.
 - NO-yes? Doing work in training members at Lake Church to do his work. Also at share the Harvest and community for Christ. Sharing God’s word with crosses, literature, love, understanding life is hard for them. Offering to pray for them if they share a problem. *Let your life shine before men that they may see your good works!*

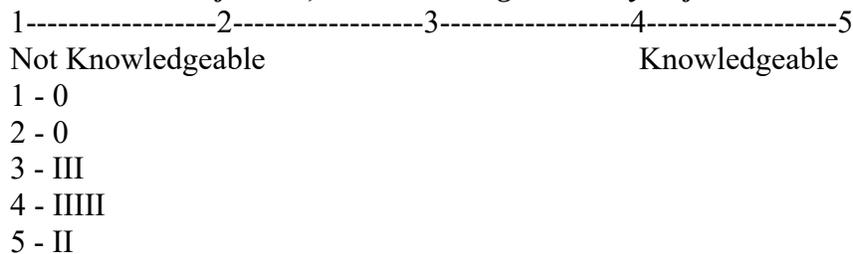
4. Describe the relationship you have with the one you are mentoring or seeking to mentor:

- Sister. We were both raised in the Lutheran church. She fell away for a while—mostly health related problems preventing her from going to church. She is back in church now but asks to know Jesus better—develop more consistent scripture reading patterns.
- Not applicable.
- Kim is a divorced mother of 2, whose son is now in college and on his own in St. Louis, whose daughter is in middle school. She works hard, but has a lot of anxiety because it all depends on her to keep everything afloat. I try to remind her that God is in control of her circumstances and that she has friends to help her.
- Coworker, talk about many things anyway, other than work, non-Christian grew up in a home where both parents worked and hung out in the bar often.
- I have a coworker that has drifted from the Christian church. I have initiated a couple conversations and have invited to our church, but haven't followed up.
- I have not identified anyone yet.
- My relationship with the person I might seek to mentor is very limited. I would call them an acquaintance with whom I have occasional contact.
- We get along well, so it is honest and open. He is feeling the need to vent by debunking Christianity and the idols of faith in general. He goes on and on while I listen. Then I pick one thing—something central to life's meaning, etc.—and ask more about that.

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you in sharing your faith?

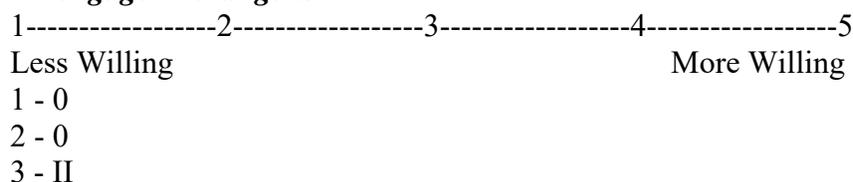


6. On a scale of 1 to 5, how knowledgeable do you feel about evangelism?



- There is always room to learn.

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, as a result of Mentorship Training, are you less or more willing to engage in evangelism?



4 - IIIII

5 - III

8. *Has Mentorship impacted your view of others on a daily basis? Has God provided opportunity for you to use your newly learned Mentorship skills? If so, how?*

- Yes, I am more interested in what others think regarding spiritual matters. I am less judgmental. I am less inclined to correct people / tell my opinion / share my views down their throat. I am more concerned about other people's salvation. Yes, He has provided opportunities for me to interact with a coworker about his spiritual experiences. I am asking questions without giving answers / my opinions at present.
- No, yes, I question better.
- God has used the class and several opportunities as mentioned show to remind me to share my joy in his love and relationship with others. He is showing me that people are hurting, and getting my relationships with others to different deeper levels and not so shallow.
- Yes. Somewhat. I think I am more aware of people's feelings that are different from mine. I think that I am less judgmental and more tolerant of things younger people seem to like (tattoos, Facebook, texting everyone instead of talking face-to-face). I would like to experience a reverse mentor and hope the situation or person will come into my life.
- I have always felt that actions speak louder than words, especially the way you treat others. I always consider pointed conversations with my potential mentee but feel it is still in very early phases. We openly discuss religious views. I am often hesitant to take a more direct approach.
- The opportunity was described in #4.
- Yes, not set.
- Probably the biggest impact on me has been the idea of reverse mentoring. Having 2 teenagers (young men) in my home has given me lots of opportunities to practice learning from those younger than myself.
- I definitely see people more compassionately, which is not my nature. There is a guy I've chatted with a couple of times recently and he asked me if we could go out for lunch so he could ask me more questions. That's a first!
- As an older adult member at the church / community, I had little or no understanding of the youth / young couples inside and outside of the church. I did not or try to understand their ways of loving Jesus and the church through internet, Facebook, and etc. which gives them the opportunity to engage conversation of friendship, and away of evangelism. I was given the opportunity to tell my fellow member why I loved my church. I could, through my words, tell them they must carry on the spreading of the gospel and keep the church where Jesus is open for the lost to come and see this love and faith.

9. *If there was "one thing" Redeemer could do to help you in your knowledge or practice of evangelism, what might that "one thing" be?*

- Assign a "seeker" to me to mentor (I'm having trouble finding a mentee (other than my sister).
- When many coals burn together they burn brighter and hotter.
- I think that "one thing" is to always preach God's truth in ways that stretch our knowledge and relationship with God and encourage our relationship with mankind (big picture) to apply and show God's love to individuals.

- More interest in missionaries and mission work.
- Continue to educate others and foster like-minded, missional servants.
- Evangelism is something the whole church should do. Not just this mentorship group or the Board of Missions/Evangelism.
- Plan servant events.
- Didn't think of one thing.
- Redeemer needs to become a congregation of believers that is so convinced of the reality that each person has an eternal destiny—Heaven or Hell—and that our mission on earth is to give people the opportunity to have a relationship with God or that destiny is Hell. Until we believe and live that as our central mission on earth, we're just a club maintaining a building, that kind of commitment would help me.
- An open evangelism class on Sundays taught by pastor with easy and acceptable ways of sharing the gospel . . . big ways, little ways. Teach them love and how to share it. A smile to a stranger goes a long way. Evangelism club who passes out food, etc. that has an evangelism note to them. Note from them personally. Need library of books that help.

10. Who from Redeemer is primarily responsible for engaging in evangelism?

III ___ Pastor/Staff

II ___ Board of Missions

II ___ Elders

III I IIII ___ All member and regular attenders

I ___ Other (please list): _____

- Everyone, but those gifted can help each find ways to use our gifts in the process. There are many aspects to evangelism besides sharing the words of the Gospel.

Explain:

- *(Two people marked all the options, saying it is everyone's responsibility to engage in evangelism)*
- All members and regular attenders can engage non-attenders in relationship building. We don't have to have all the answers. We can pray for the non-attenders / unbelievers and seek to engage people in conversations about beliefs.
- Are we not beggars sharing with other beggars where to find bread. Are we not beggars when we share the love and grace of God to the unlovely? He trained. They are passionate. They don't have anything else to do. Anyone other than me.
- I believe that the pastor's job and other hierarchical groups in the church are to equip us the laity to do the bulk of the evangelism in our daily lives outside the church.
- We are all called to go and make disciples of all nations.
- Wouldn't you rather talk to a "common/average" person who you already have a relationship with?
- The Bible clearly indicates we are all responsible – the Great Commission.
- It is the responsibility of ALL of us to share our faith with others.
- The Bible gives the commission of spreading the gospel to all people who study his word in preparation to this challenge. "How will they know unless they are told."

11. Additional comments or observations (if needed, use the reverse side of this paper):

- I really enjoyed this class and look forward to our quarterly meetings. This class has opened my eyes to the state of culture today. “Young” people and the necessity of seeing things through their eyes. I also have had to humble myself and admit “I’m not cool” and realize young people can teach me very much! The Reverse Mentoring book was difficult reading, but I gained some major ideas from the book (noted above). *God Space* is excellent for “question” ideas.
- I’m a little intimidated by some of the “how to’s” presented (context pointed timeline / steps, etc.) but value the actual process. It’s a great guideline. I just need to remember that I’m a tool and the Holy Spirit does the work.
- As we went through the training one of the things that struck me is that mentorship training may be premature in our congregation. The reason I say this is that I don’t see that Redeemer has been effectively discipling its members, so mentoring, we’re basically asking people who have never been disciple themselves to go out and disciple new believers. That probable seems pretty harsh and judgmental, but I’m afraid that’s how I see most of our members. Even speaking for myself, who I would not consider to be a “product” of Redeemer’s discipling. I feel I could have been more intentionally and effectively disciple by the church. I’m not sure that’s a helpful observation, it mostly seems critical. Not sure how to address this need in the congregation.
- At some point Christians need to come to terms with reality. Many can answer the “why is the Church here?” question, but few actually live like it’s true. Maybe we should focus on reaching out more and less on facility until we become about growing church that can more easily afford a remodel. We must LIVE the mission first or the rest doesn’t matter.

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