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### A Discipleship Workshop for Trinity Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek, California

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

A DISCIPLESHIP WORKSHOP FOR TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WALNUT CREEK,

CALIFORNIA

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT SUBMITTED TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY STUDIES  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY BY  
DAVID R. MOORE

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

14 February 2013

A DISCIPLESHIP WORKSHOP FOR TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH WALNUT CREEK,  
CALIFORNIA

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February 14, 2013

Concordia Seminary  
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Words cannot express my gratitude to my wife, Jennifer, and my two children Timothy and Jessica, who have faithfully supported and served with me in ministry from Liberia, West Africa to California. To my parents who faithfully brought me to the baptismal font and instructed me in the Christian faith, your influence in my life is eternal. Finally to faithful pastors, teachers, professors, and friends who have had such a formative influence on my life, thank you!

“Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. It remains an abstract idea, a myth . . .”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*



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## ABBREVIATIONS

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS

The California-Nevada-Hawaii District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod CNH

Director of Christian Education DCE

CRU (New name for what was known as Campus Crusade for Christ)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Joel Biermann and Dr. David Peter for their guidance and insight through the course of this project. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Eugene Bunkowske and Dr. Robert Newton whose mentoring helped shape my missionary and pastoral attitudes.

## PREFACE

Christian formation takes place in many ways and through many people. I recall my father telling me, my brother, and sister, Bible stories as we waited for mom to finish her Saturday night grocery shopping. These stories and time spent with dad, helped shape my life of discipleship. The Campus Crusade for Christ weekly Bible Study that I participated in for the four years of my university experience further helped form how I would live my Christian life. And, through the years, the bedrock of Christian formation for me has been worship centered on the preaching of God's Word, the celebration of The Lord's Supper, and Baptism. The forming of Christian disciples takes place within the context of relationships: both the relationships within the church and the relationships Christians nurture with the wider culture.

As has been the experience of the church through the ages, culture and society change around the church. Sometimes these changes are in support of the church and sometimes not in support of the church. For many years the Christian church in America has enjoyed a relatively strong amount of support from American culture. The church has been considered as having something to say to cultural issues and political decisions. In America this support has been eroding for some time, even to the point of magazine writers and news commentators hailing the decline of "Christian America."

The Gospel and Christ's Church have always faced opposition from the surrounding culture to one degree or the other. In the San Francisco Bay Area this opposition, along with the prevailing cultural opinion that the church is now irrelevant (and even dangerous), has reached levels that neither I nor the members of Trinity Lutheran Church have experienced in our lifetimes. Because of this change members of Trinity have been struggling with what it means to be Christian disciples in this time and place. How do we as Lutherans in this context live faithfully as Christians, loving our neighbors and continuing to tell them about our Lord? What are things that need to change, and more importantly, what are things that need to stay the same in order for members of Trinity to live as disciples today?

It is my conviction that Lutheran theology is deep and wide enough in its scope to speak to the challenges the members of Trinity face. The doctrines of the two kinds of righteousness, the priesthood of the baptized, and the two realms form a solid foundation on which the members of Trinity can confidently live their lives as Christian disciples in an often indifferent and hostile culture. In the final analysis, this project is an experiment and test to understand how these doctrines help the members of Trinity (and myself) understand how to be a disciple of Christ in "our world."

## **ABSTRACT**

Moore, David R. "A Discipleship Workshop for Trinity Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek, California." D.Min diss., Concordia Seminary—St. Louis, 2013, 150 pp.

Trinity Lutheran Church was established as a congregation of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) on November 19, 1946 in Walnut Creek, California, and is located in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay. Over the last thirty years the culture in this area has been changing from a culture that was relatively sympathetic to the church's values and message to a culture that is indifferent or hostile to the church. The activities that once attracted people to the church no longer work. The focus of this project is to design a training workshop for Christian discipleship so that members of Trinity can continue to live as faithful disciples in the face of such change.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE PROJECT INTRODUCED**

A retired Air Force officer once commented to me, his pastor, that at age sixty five he was just beginning to understand that he had a ministry to do as a Christian. He explained that all his life he thought as long as he went to church after confirmation and took communion that's all that was required of him until he died or Jesus returned. It wasn't until retirement that he began to understand the joy of the "works of service" that were mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:12. Prior to coming to this understanding, he firmly believed that the professional clergy and Christian teachers were "hired" by the congregation to do the entire work of ministry. It seems that many Christians today have a similar view about ministry. In addition, market driven church ministries of the late twentieth century have only confused the matter more by implying that Christianity is another commodity which one may seek for personal fulfillment and self-realization. In this setting, the pastor is a dispenser of spiritual services not unlike a tribal shaman, personal trainer, life coach or witchdoctor.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, where this project takes place, social and religious liberalism abounds. In numerous instances it is difficult to find what is distinctively Christian about many of the churches in this area, as well as those who attend them, no matter where they may lie on the so-called liberal/conservative spectrum. It is in this context that Trinity Lutheran Church has conducted ministry for over sixty years. This project has the advantage of building on the foundation that was laid by The Rev. Dr. Paul Meyer, a former pastor of Trinity, who completed a similar study in 1983 in fulfillment of his Doctor of Ministry degree. Trinity stood

at a crossroads then in its history, albeit a different set of circumstances. As Trinity now stands yet again at a crossroads in its congregational life, what does it need to do to continue to minister effectively? Can it continue to exist as it maintains ministry in a model of twenty or thirty years ago when attitudes toward Christianity and the institutional church were more favorable in the surrounding culture? Or is God calling Trinity to something else whereby the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be communicated in ways that those outside the church in this very secular culture can hear it? The answers to these questions are the motivation behind this project.

### **The Problem of the Project**

Intentionally living the Christian life has been a challenge for Christians since Jesus walked upon this earth. The Apostle Paul outlines this dilemma in Romans 7:21-25 as he describes the battle between the old and new natures of the Christian. James outlines this challenge as well as he commands his audience to be “doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 1:22ff). Jesus defined living the Christian life succinctly as loving God and loving one’s neighbor (Mark 12:28-34). Luther’s Small Catechism defines love as the summary of God’s Law and teaches that the Law is the basis for living a *Christian life* which is manifest in works of service for others.<sup>1</sup> The problem that this project seeks to address is the lack of servant ministry, as defined by loving one’s neighbor, to the non-churched within the communities around Trinity<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>An Explanation of Luther’s Small Catechism, in *Luther’s Small Catechism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 97.

<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of this project the non-churched are defined as those who do not confess Christ as Savior as well as those who may claim to be Christian but have yet to be connected with a local congregation of believers.



Trinity Lutheran Church was established as a congregation of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) on November 19, 1946 in Walnut Creek, California, and is located in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay. It has routinely supported missionaries throughout the world. It has established daughter churches in its history and served as the main supporter and champion of a Lutheran Day School in the region. Its members have actively supported both Synod and district with many of them serving on boards and committees of both. Many of the members of Trinity have developed friendships with others in the congregation which have lasted forty to fifty years. Trinity, in the past, was a congregation that thrived in a churched culture<sup>3</sup> as its ministries attracted people to the congregation.

Like many churches in the LCMS, the 1974 doctrinal controversies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, had a negative impact on Trinity. By the mid 1980s the congregation had experienced a split due to these controversies from which it is only barely starting to recover. By 1996, declining enrollment in the day school caused its closure. Also in 1996, the retirement of Trinity's pastor of twenty-eight years left the congregation looking to the future with doubt. As Trinity called another pastor, and reopened its preschool, it began to focus inward on survival.

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<sup>3</sup>Dr. Robert Newton, President of the California/Nevada and Hawaii District of the LCMS, outlined this concept in his opening address to the 2009 CNH District Convention, May 15, 2009, as follows: "In the pre-churched society, the un-churched are the insiders and the missionaries are the outsiders. The missionaries' job is to communicate the gospel to the insiders. In the churched society, the churched are the insiders and the un-churched are the outsiders. Pastors are insiders and they have credibility in the community. Church is desirable, and non-Christians come to the church to hear the Good News. In the post-church society, the community around the church is increasingly un-churched, but the church continues to operate as if it were in a churched society. The insider becomes harder to identify. We are living in this post-church society, and we need to sharpen our focus. One way to do this is to increase localization of our mission outreach."

Membership continued to decline over the years and now Trinity has a core group of forty to fifty people with an average worship attendance of one hundred and ten. Roughly one-half of Trinity's members are over sixty-five years of age and one-third of the members are below fifty. Conspicuously absent are those in the fifty to sixty five age ranges with about five in that age bracket. As Trinity focused on survival, the culture in the Bay Area was turning decisively into a post-church culture.

In June of 2008, Trinity began to explore the "revitalization process" through the encouragement of The California, Nevada, and Hawaii District (CNH). This process is related to the Transforming Churches Movement within the LCMS.<sup>4</sup> In the initial consultation (consult) weekend, the district team reported on Trinity's strengths and concerns. It then presented five prescriptions to the congregation which the consult team, through their review of the congregation's self-study and their interviews with Trinity members and staff, determined to be essential to begin to revitalize Trinity to do ministry in its changed context. These prescriptions targeted key changes that would need to take place in order for the members of Trinity to not only talk the language of mission but to have real interaction with people who are not churched. One prescription in particular was to develop an ongoing discipleship program which would prepare members of Trinity to grow in their faith, equip members for works of service, and which would focus their efforts on servant ministry to the non-churched in the community.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Transforming Churches Network," <http://portal.transformingchurchesnetwork.com>.(23 July 2010).

<sup>5</sup>A major component of this discipleship program is the development of *relationships* with those who are non-churched i.e. with a neighbor, through service in community groups or volunteering. The idea behind this thought is to build a bridge for Gospel communication to the surrounding culture through the common human

Footnote continued on next page.

## **The Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this Major Applied Project (MAP) is to develop and conduct a workshop, in response to the need as seen by the revitalization team and expressed by the members of Trinity, that will *begin* to train and encourage congregational members to live intentionally as disciples of Christ in a post-churched culture from a uniquely Lutheran perspective.

## **The Process**

The design of this project is centered on developing and conducting a workshop totaling nine hours and held on three Saturday mornings in succession. Each workshop component is designed to engage participants in considering how Lutheran doctrine forms them to live as disciples in a post-churched culture, thus helping them in changing attitudes toward self, culture, and how they proclaim the Gospel. Specifically, this effort focuses on the understanding and the practical implications of the two kinds of righteousness found in Lutheran doctrine. Part one deals with the doctrine of passive and active righteousness and the reality of the new creation that God has made of believers in Christ. Part two focuses on what this doctrine practically means to each participant as they strive to love their neighbor through works of service. In this session the connection is made between active righteousness and the Christian's vocation as a priest in the Universal Priesthood. This session leads the participants to ask the questions not only of, "*Who is my neighbor?*" but more importantly, "*What kind of neighbor am I to be?*" Part three of the workshop focuses on applying these doctrines to the congregation's specific context as Trinity learns to relate in new ways to the community around it. Contemporary, local

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concerns that Christians share with others.

issues are used throughout the process to stimulate the thinking of the participants as they considered how disciples are to live in this post-churched culture.

### **Project Parameters**

As mentioned in the introduction, this project is designed to help members of Trinity begin to develop a sustained discipleship emphasis which will ideally permeate all ministries of the congregation through changed mental concepts of ministry, changed attitudes concerning who “does ministry”, and changed actions. Through this project a foundation is being laid on which to build for the future ministry at Trinity. It was determined that this foundation might best be laid through a series of workshops which not only address previously mentioned doctrinal foundations, but also would help each participant apply these doctrines to real life situations.

Step one begins with a four week sermon series on discipleship started on the First Sunday after Epiphany. Each sermon encourages people to consider their call to be a disciple. Sermon one is titled, “Born Again”, and reviews what God has done for us in baptism. Sermon two entitled, “Follow Me”, focuses on what it means to be a Christ-follower and partner in God’s mission. Sermon three entitled, “Transformed into His Image”, deals with the growth process of the disciple through God’s Word. Finally, sermon four entitled, “Called to Serve,” focuses on the disciple’s call to be a priest in this world. Each sermon incorporates some aspect of the doctrine of passive and active righteousness. At the beginning of the sermon series a survey of the congregation is conducted using a Likert scale that seeks to ascertain the respondents’ understanding of, and attitudes toward, discipleship from a Lutheran perspective. This information is used to fine-tune the workshop training sessions. At the end of the sermon series,

members of the congregation are encouraged to attend the scheduled workshops in order to help Trinity work toward and continue in the revitalization process.

Step two is to conduct a three-part workshop on Saturday mornings beginning in mid February 2011. These workshops are held every week in succession. Each workshop is three hours long, held from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Each workshop is divided into a teaching session and an application session. The teaching session outlines the individual doctrines as discussed above. The application section is designed to help participants work through how they, on a personal basis and as a congregation, can put these particular doctrines into practice. The application session uses case studies drawn from situations found in our community to help participants better visualize how Christian disciples show the love of Christ to the post-churched culture in which we live.

The specific research instruments which are utilized in this project focus on using two Likert scale questionnaires. The first is given to those in worship the Sunday prior to the beginning of the sermon series on discipleship to evaluate worshipers' current understandings and attitudes toward Christian Discipleship as well as their current willingness to be involved in servant ministry.<sup>6</sup> The second survey is given to the workshop attendees at the close of the final workshop to evaluate the same concerns. Finally, individual and group interviews are conducted with workshop participants approximately three to four weeks after the workshops to explore

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<sup>6</sup>Trinity is a small congregation that consistently has 100 to 110 worshippers on any given Sunday. These worshippers *are* Trinity congregation. Those who attended the workshop were also in worship on the Sunday of the survey.

what impact the three events had on their attitudes and willingness to be involved in servant ministry.

### Presuppositions

There are six basic underlying presuppositions driving this project. The first presupposition is that Trinity exists in a post-churched culture where the institutional church no longer is a cultural "insider" and needs to adjust its practice to this reality<sup>7</sup>. The second presupposition is that Lutheran Christians stand on solid biblical and doctrinal ground and are uniquely positioned to proclaim Christ and speak in this post-churched context. The third presupposition is that many church members have not made the mental, attitudinal, or volitional shifts effectively to proclaim the Gospel through their words and works of service in this post-churched context. The fourth presupposition is that Lutheran doctrine supports Christian discipleship that is centered squarely on the doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness. The fifth presupposition is that congregational members, in order for Trinity to be effective in its ministry, will need to begin to understand the cultural changes that are taking place around them. The sixth presupposition is that the necessary attitudinal shifts toward a sustained servant ministry as defined by loving one's neighbor will begin to take place as members of Trinity study God's

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<sup>7</sup>A primary concern that both the revitalization team had and that members of Trinity expressed was that most of the members of Trinity have known each other for forty to fifty years and have built a tight knit community that is hard to penetrate by visitors and those new to the congregation. Thus a focus on others, especially the non-churched, through love, care, and concern was seen as a starting point for the congregation to begin effectively communicating the Gospel in its community. Rather than expecting the surrounding culture to support and value Christian community, worship, and faith as it did in the past it was apparent that church members would need to live as Christians "among the non-churched" and develop genuine relationships with them as a beginning point for a conversation about faith in Christ and the subsequent connection to a worshipping community.

Word and the doctrines drawn from it. Then Trinity can begin to move into the future with a sense of hope as they begin to be others-focused.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PROJECT IN BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Christian discipleship is nothing more and nothing less than living as those who live by faith in God's promise in Christ. It is living in the freedom that Christ gives his people to live as servants of God.<sup>8</sup> A disciple of Christ is one that abides in him—as the branches are in relation to the vine—and who bear fruit.<sup>9</sup> Therefore they are adherents and imitators of the Teacher.<sup>10</sup> Those who follow Christ are invited to “make disciples of all nations,” by baptizing and teaching all that Jesus taught *as they go* into the world.<sup>11</sup> The concept of Christian discipleship is first grounded in the basic teachings of Scripture that assures the believer of forgiveness and new life in Christ apart from works of the Law. At the same time it also builds on the commands of Scripture that call the believer to live as God's faithful child in the world by bearing fruit. This fruit is the good work the Christian does for the sake of another which is motivated by love. These good works are the works that Paul claims God himself has created for his children to do *in Christ*.<sup>12</sup> The following discussion examines the Biblical foundations of the three doctrines which form the core of this project.

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<sup>8</sup>1 Peter 2:16

<sup>9</sup>John 15:5

<sup>10</sup> W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, Jr, eds., *Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, One- Volume Edition (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1985) , 171

<sup>11</sup>Matthew 28:18 ff

<sup>12</sup>Ephesians 2:10



## Passive and Active Righteousness

Scripture teaches that Christians possess two kinds of righteousness. The first kind of righteousness taught in Scripture is that of passive righteousness. This teaching answers the question of how sinful humans are made right before God and centers squarely on the grace of God shown in the substitutionary death of Christ. This righteousness is given to man from outside himself by God as a gift which is received through faith. The second kind of righteousness is known as active righteousness. This righteousness specifically refers to how the redeemed children of God are to live in relationship with God and in their relationships with other human beings and the rest of creation. This project asserts that the understanding of these two kinds of righteousness forms the foundation for Christian discipleship.

The key to understanding Christian discipleship begins with the understanding of *how* one becomes a Christian and experiences the blessings of God. This understanding is not limited to New Testament teaching, rather it is the golden thread that runs through all of Scripture beginning with Genesis.

In Genesis, Moses describes God as the God who acts on behalf of his fallen children. Immediately after the fall, *God comes* searching for Adam and Eve in the garden and asks the question, “Where are you?”<sup>13</sup> This question is not unlike a parent who turns around in a busy department store expecting her child to be by her side only to find that the child has disappeared. The initial desperate question of the loving parent is “Where are you?” The child is not where he

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<sup>13</sup> Genesis 3:9

is supposed to be—in the presence of the parent. The loving, responsible parent will, figuratively speaking, move heaven and hell to find the lost child. God begins the redemption of his lost children as *he comes* to find them in the garden.

As God finds his lost children, he makes an unconditional promise to remedy the problem of sin which they have brought into the world. Because of sin, God must initiate the consequences of disobedience according to his holiness. Yet, within the delineation of curses brought on by sin, God’s promise to remedy the consequences of sin rings crystal clear: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”<sup>14</sup> Here begins the long journey through Scripture of God fulfilling this promise which culminates in his Son, Jesus Christ, coming to earth to be *the one* sacrifice for sin that reconciles humanity to God.<sup>15</sup> Out of love for his lost children, *God moves* to save them totally apart from what they deserve or *their own* attempts at reconciliation with him.

Passive righteousness, then, is the Scriptural teaching that God has acted and has reconciled the world to himself because of his grace in Christ apart from *any works* humans can generate.<sup>16</sup> Luther called this righteousness “alien righteousness”<sup>17</sup> as it concerns humanity because it is God’s own righteousness. It is “alien” because it is *given* to mankind freely, and

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<sup>14</sup>Genesis 3:15

<sup>15</sup>2 Corinthians 5:18-19

<sup>16</sup>2 Corinthians 5:18-21

<sup>17</sup>Martin Luther, "The Two Kinds of Righteousness," in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989) , 155.

Footnote continued on next page.

appropriated in one's life through trust in Christ's substitutionary death for sin. The Apostle Paul describes this alien righteousness as God giving to all who believe, "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places . . ." <sup>18</sup> Among these blessings are included the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the mind of Christ, and a new nature.

Paul knew well what it meant to live under the Law as a Pharisee. He knew what it was to try to live a humanly righteous life before God. After his conversion, as recorded in Acts chapter nine, he also knew well of his unworthiness before God and the tremendous grace that made him righteous before God. <sup>19</sup>

In his letter to the Romans, Paul describes this passive righteousness clearly. He states that it is a "righteousness from God, apart from the Law" which only comes through faith. <sup>20</sup> As a former Pharisee, he found in the patriarch Abraham convincing proof of this alien righteousness. Paul contends that Abraham himself was justified before God, not by works of the Law but through trust in God's promise. Thus this righteousness, as he states, was "credited" to him and not something he earned through his own efforts. <sup>21</sup>

Passive righteousness has to do with *who God has made believers in Christ, by his own will and action*. On the other hand, active righteousness deals with *how Christians live because of who God has made them in Christ*. Active righteousness prompts the believer to ask, "*What*

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<sup>18</sup>Ephesians 1:3ff

<sup>19</sup>In his journey to Damascus to gather up Christians for persecution Paul was certainly not engaged in seeking the truths of the Christian faith—it was the opposite. However it was precisely on that road, where Paul was engaged in crimes against Christians, that Jesus in his grace grabbed a hold of Paul. From this standpoint Paul's conversion is a prime example of God's grace and passive righteousness. Also see 1 Timothy 1:12-17

*kind of neighbor am I to be in this world?"* Luther called this active righteousness "our proper righteousness, not because we alone work it, but because we work with that first and alien righteousness."<sup>22</sup> Paul also speaks of this second kind of righteousness in his Epistles. In Galatians he reminds believers that this active righteousness is a crucifying of one's sinful nature and keeping "in step" with the Spirit of God by producing the fruits of the Spirit.<sup>23</sup> He also describes it as believers being conformed to the image of Christ,<sup>24</sup> of being "transformed by the renewing of your minds" so that believers "may present themselves as living sacrifices"<sup>25</sup> and those who "reflect the Lord's glory" and who are "being transformed into the image of Christ."<sup>26</sup> According to Paul, Christians can live in obedience to God's will in the world because of what God has done for them in Christ. This active righteousness turns the Christian from himself towards others and their needs.

The Apostle James describes this active righteousness as not only *listening* to what the Word of God says, but *doing* what it says.<sup>27</sup> James is so bold to claim that faith "by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead."<sup>28</sup> As Paul finds proof of passive righteousness in Father Abraham, so James finds proof of *active righteousness* in Abraham. Some may see James at odds with Paul as to how Abraham was justified, as James writes, "Was not Abraham our father

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<sup>20</sup>Romans 3:21

<sup>21</sup>Romans 4:3, see also Philippians 3:7-9

<sup>22</sup>Luther, 157

<sup>23</sup>Galatians 5:22ff

<sup>24</sup>Romans 8:29

<sup>25</sup>Romans 12:1ff

<sup>26</sup>2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>27</sup>James 1:22

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 2:17

justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?”<sup>29</sup> However in further explanation, James is quick to note that, in his sacrifice of Isaac, the faith of Abraham was working together with his actions. In other words, because Abraham believed the promises of God, he acted. So then, James can say that Abraham’s faith was *made complete* through his actions.<sup>30</sup> According to James, faith has no choice but to be about God’s work in the world.<sup>31</sup>

Thus far New Testament texts have been used to illustrate passive and active righteousness. It is often a popular notion that The Old Testament is “Law” and that The New Testament is “Gospel.” This notion assumes that nothing, or at best little, of passive righteousness could be found in the Old Testament, and conversely, the New Testament is only concerned with God’s grace and forgiveness as it is given to mankind in passive righteousness. However, the Old Testament does indeed contain both teachings of passive and active righteousness. The Old Testament texts illustrate these two kinds of righteousness primarily in God’s interaction with his people, Israel, and individuals such as King David.

While passive righteousness appears in many instances throughout the Old Testament the Psalms provide abundant illustrations of God’s grace toward sinners. Most notable is Psalm 51. As the prescript indicates, this is a psalm of David written after the prophet Nathan rebuked him for his adultery with Bathsheba. Throughout Psalm 51 David acknowledges his sin, acknowledges God’s right to judge him, and then seeks God’s mercy. David recognizes that God

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 2:21(ESV)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 2:22

<sup>31</sup> For a complete and concise discussion on this topic of the relationship between faith and works see: David Scaer, *James the Apostle of Faith* (St. Louis: CPH, 1983) , 87ff.

alone can remove sin and make him new again apart from what he has done. As a result of being put right with God by God himself, David would then be able to teach sinners and proclaim God's praise.

In Psalm 130, the psalmist speaks of God's compassion and mercy in forgiving the sinner. He writes, "If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness therefore you are feared" (verse 3-4). Here, the grace of God is known regardless of a person's sins. This psalm teaches that it is God himself who acts to forgive and to restore his relationship with mankind apart from what humans deserve. Throughout this short psalm, there is an implicit call for the reader to trust God to act according to his kindness and not his wrath.

Active righteousness is also illustrated in other Old Testament texts as well. In the Law of Moses, the Sabbath Laws concerning the land are good examples. Moses prescribes that for six years land can be worked, but in the seventh year it is to lie fallow *so that the poor can eat from it and also the wild animals*.<sup>32</sup> In Leviticus, Moses also commands that, when in the vineyard, the owner is not to go over it twice or to pick the grapes from the ground that have fallen, rather they are to be left for the poor and the stranger.<sup>33</sup> Moses gives a similar command for the wheat fields as the farmer is to leave the grain stalks at the edge of the fields so that the poor and the alien in the land may glean from the edges what they need.<sup>34</sup> Jesus himself made

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<sup>32</sup>Exodus 23:11

<sup>33</sup>Leviticus 19:10

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 23:22

use of this provision in his ministry (and used this as a teaching moment) and thus incurred the wrath of the Pharisees for so-called harvesting on the Sabbath.<sup>35</sup> In these commands God makes care for the poor and creation obligatory on his people. This is active righteousness.

The preaching of the Old Testament Prophets, as they address Israel and other nations, stand out as prime examples of the doctrine of active righteousness. God, through the prophet Hosea, declares that rather than Israel's empty worship, he desires his people to live with mercy toward others and knowledge of him rather than all their sacrifice.<sup>36</sup> Micah proclaims to God's people how God expects them to live; with justice, mercy, and humility toward others.<sup>37</sup>

Amos is considered by some the quintessential prophet to an extravagant society, the Northern Kingdom of Israel. J.A. Motyer writes,

Affluence, exploitation and profit motive were the most notable features of the society which Amos observed and in which he worked. The rich were affluent enough to have to have several houses apiece (3:15), to go in for rather ostentatiously expensive furniture (6:4) and not do deny themselves any bodily satisfaction (3:12;4:1;6:6). On the other hand the poor were really poor and shamelessly exploited . . . . When the poor could not contribute to the rich they were simply ignored and left to be broken (6:6).<sup>38</sup>

Amos begins his prophecy with those nations around Israel. One might almost imagine the citizens of the Northern Kingdom, upon hearing the words of Amos, thinking "Now those Gentiles will get theirs!" However their brief satisfaction is short-lived as Amos turns his sights on the Northern Kingdom and its self-absorption in chapter two. Israel has failed to do what God

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<sup>35</sup>Matthew 12:1ff

<sup>36</sup>Hosea 6:6

<sup>37</sup>Micah 6:8

<sup>38</sup>J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Amos*, The Bible Speaks Today, J.A. Motyer and J.R. Stott eds. (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1974) , 15.

had commanded and thus failed in their response to God's goodness to them. God reminds Israel of his election (something wrought by God's grace alone) and his deliverance out of Egypt (Amos 2:10, 3:1-2). Yet, the people have not obeyed God; they have not loved their neighbor or the alien in the land, but have used and mistreated them. As Amos proclaimed, "The lion has roared" (Amos 3:8) God's judgment upon Israel and its self-serving religion has come. The judgment on Israel is pronounced because they failed to obey God (active righteousness). God had given them grace, had chosen them, had given them his commands and instructed them in how to worship him rightly. God had sent signs and pestilence and they stubbornly refused to return to God and live for him.

Amos is a stark prophecy concerning a people who had been given grace upon grace and then turned to self-fulfillment rather than the love of their neighbor. Amos calls Israel to repentance with words similar to Micah, "Seek good, not evil that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts." (Amos 5:14-15) Far from being a theologian merely advocating political liberation and social justice, Amos calls the people of God back to living in proper relationship with God and others.

Finally, we must consider Jesus himself as the one who concluded and surpassed the line of prophets and established the New Covenant of his righteousness, and yet also carried out his own prophetic ministry. In exploring the teachings of Jesus, we cannot ignore the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus defining for his followers how they are to live. Some complain that the Sermon on the Mount is intended to be an ideal that Jesus



never expected his followers to obtain. Others have simply dismissed this part of Matthew claiming that no one could ever live this way. However, upon close examination, the Sermon on the Mount is God the Son commenting on, and giving examples of, the application of his divine Law so that his followers could understand what it means to live in obedience to God's will. The basis of the Sermon on the Mount is love. In some ways these passages form a written code of Christian conduct as they outline how Christians are to live in the world and love their fellow man.<sup>39</sup>

Another example of Jesus' teaching on active righteousness is found in Matthew 25:31-46, often referred to as *The Sheep and the Goats*. While this text is often misunderstood as referring to salvation by works, it is properly understood within the context of the teaching of active righteousness. Within the context of all Scripture and the analogy of faith, Jesus (as he did in the Sermon on the Mount) is teaching how he expects his followers to live until his second advent. His disciples are to live lives that are selfless and self-sacrificing. The Christian life is to be marked by care and works of love for others, even to those who are marginalized or forgotten by society. The separation described at the beginning of this text takes place based on faith, not on works.<sup>40</sup> The works mentioned in this passage are those works that flow from faith and the power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

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<sup>39</sup>John R W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount in The Bible Speaks today* (Downer Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1978), 19. Here Stott writes, "The Sermon on the Mount is the most complete delineation anywhere in the New Testament of the Christian counter-culture. Here is a Christian value-system, ethical standard, religious devotion, attitude to money, ambition, life-style and network of relationships—all of which are totally at variance with those of the non-Christian world."

<sup>40</sup>The analogy of faith would understand the comment in verse 37 that those who were on our Lord's right hand were already righteous apart from their works.

Active righteousness in Scripture, in the final analysis, is obedience to God's will. Because of sin, mankind can never obey God in a way that fully pleases him. Jesus, the obedient and faithful Son of God, lives the obedient life on behalf of sinful humans so that through his sacrificial death, the sins of mankind are forgiven. As the Holy Spirit regenerates and redeems individuals, he gives them a new will and power to be partners with God in his redeeming and creative work in the world.

### **The Priesthood of Believers**

The second major doctrine which informs this project is the biblical teaching of the royal priesthood, otherwise known as the priesthood of believers. Biblically, the teaching of a priesthood of believers begins in the Old Testament and is carried through the New Testament. This doctrine gives the Christian a proper understanding of who he is and his purpose in this world as he relates both to God and to his fellow man.

We first encounter the concept of the priesthood of believers in Exodus 19:6. In this passage, God has brought Israel to the foot of Mt. Sinai. The context of this passage is the Sinai Covenant. If the people were to obey God fully and keep his covenant with them, then they were to be his treasured possession and a kingdom of *priests and holy nation*. While God was yet to reveal the Levitical priesthood, the foundational priesthood in God's economy is the whole congregation of Israel as a set-apart-people who acknowledged God as their king. They were to work in his service to be a missionary people in the world whose purpose was *to bear witness to the one true God and his promises*.

Closely related to this is the consecration of the Israel at Sinai in Exodus 24:4-8. After Moses gives to the people all of God's commands and they respond that they will do all that the Lord has said, Moses constructs an altar surrounded by twelve pillars. After the building of the altar and pillars, young men from the twelve tribes of Israel offered, there, burnt offerings and young bulls as peace offerings to the LORD. As J.A. Motyer points out, the burnt offerings symbolized that nothing was being held back from God by the people; they would be wholly his. The peace offering of the bulls symbolized communion with God.<sup>41</sup> The shed blood of the peace offering is sprinkled on the altar to satisfy God's wrath toward the people and their sin. It is by the substitutionary death of the bulls that the people are accepted by God. Then, in an act of mercy, as the people responded to the reading of the covenant with the words "we will obey," part of the blood is then sprinkled on the people as a covering. This covering sets Israel apart, and is a pledge of God's continued mercy toward them in spite of the inevitable times that they stumble in their pledge to obey.

These events foreshadow what the priest would do on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:2-28, 25:9) as he sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy seat in the Tabernacle and Temple. The High Priest would sacrifice a sin offering for himself and then for the people. The blood of the sacrifice was rubbed on the horns of the altar and then sprinkled on the mercy seat above the Ark of the Covenant as a propitiation for sin. As the priest carried out his work, people would wait anxiously for the priest to emerge from The Holy of Holies and proclaim

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<sup>41</sup>J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Exodus*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downer Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005), 249.

them forgiven. It was through the means of the blood of bulls, goats, and rams that the people's sins were taken away (which was also symbolized by the "scapegoat" being led out into the desert). These sacrifices pointed forward to the great high priest, Jesus himself, who would present the sacrifice of himself to remove the sins of the world.<sup>42</sup> It is only by the once-for-all substitutionary sacrifice of the Christ that God's wrath is finally satisfied, thus bringing peace between God and the fallen human race. And, as Christians have heard for millennia at each celebration of the Lord's Supper, our Lord's blood is the blood of the new covenant that God makes with the world. The body and blood of Christ is the gift of God's mercy and forgiveness to all who believe in Christ as they now live for him.

Isaiah also writes of a lay priesthood in chapter 61:6. In his prophecy of the coming Messiah and his messianic rule, the people themselves will *be priests and ministers of the LORD*.<sup>43</sup> Again, in 66:19-21, Isaiah alludes to a people from every nation and every tongue that God will make for himself, and who will declare his glory and bring many others to Jerusalem—the holy city. These passages indicate that God has been and is gathering for himself a nation, a holy people, a nation of priests that will eventually include people from every part of the earth. Through this holy people, God's presence will be known in the world as this holy nation proclaims his glory.

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<sup>42</sup> Hebrews 7:26-28

<sup>43</sup> The beginning verses of Isaiah 61 are those same words which Jesus spoke in Luke 4:18-19 at the synagogue in Nazareth as he proclaims in him these words are fulfilled.

In the New Testament, the foundational text for the priesthood of believers is taken from 1 Peter 2:4-12. In this passage, Peter describes believers as a "royal priesthood." Very closely related with Peter's description of believers as priests is that of believers being a "holy nation," and a "people belonging to God." Peter further describes the purpose of this priesthood as "offering spiritual sacrifices." What are these spiritual sacrifices? He answers this question in verses 11-12. The spiritual sacrifices are the sacrifices of a good life marked by good deeds. Peter makes it clear that it is through the praise of God "declared" and the good deeds performed by this priesthood that God will be known and glorified. In very concrete terms Peter connects the doctrine of the priesthood of believers with the previously discussed doctrine of active righteousness.

As we finish our short biblical survey of the priesthood of believers, we find that the Apostle John, in Revelation 1:6, states that it is the risen Lord, Jesus Christ, who, "has made us [believers] to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father . . . ." In Revelation 5:10, as the vision of the throne room of heaven is revealed, the song of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders before the Lamb praise him for, among other things, purchasing men for God and making them "to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God . . . ." It is clear from the biblical record that a major component of God's purpose for his people on earth is that they serve in the world as priests and that through this priesthood his presence and glory would be made known.

## **The Two Realms**

The third major doctrine which informs this project is that commonly referred to as the "two realms." One of these realms has popularly come to be known as the kingdom of the left hand and the other the kingdom of the right hand. For the purposes of this project, the term "temporal realm" will be used for the kingdom of the left Hand and "spiritual realm" for the kingdom of the right hand. Disciples of Christ are members of both realms and have responsibilities in both realms. Christian disciples, as created, physical beings, live in the temporal realm and as such have God-given responsibilities toward other human beings and the rest of creation. As redeemed children of God through faith in Christ, they have been made new creations spiritually, according to Paul, and fall under the rule of Christ in the spiritual realm.<sup>44</sup> Therefore it is important for Christian disciples to discern the difference between these two realms that they may serve their Lord faithfully in both.

### The Temporal Realm

God's rule in the temporal realm begins at creation. As the opening chapters of Genesis indicate, God created all things out of nothing—simply by his word. In his creative acts, described in Genesis, he created order in the world from the very beginning. Creation follows an orderly progression. Adam is given the task of further establishing order in creation as he is to rule over creation, work the garden and care for it, as well as naming (sorting into categories) all the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Finally, as God creates Eve to be a helpmate for Adam, he creates order and authority for human beings based in the family structure. God

created the temporal world to function under certain conditions or natural laws, gravity being one of the obvious natural laws. Sexual relations are another obvious natural law as Moses reveals in Genesis that God made humans male and female for mutual help, enjoyment, and procreation. Unlike some heresies and false teachings that find the physical world undesirable or originally and inherently sinful, Scripture affirms that God has declared the temporal realm to be good and to be enjoyed by all living things. In the opening chapters of Genesis there was, it seems, little (if any) separation between the temporal realm and the spiritual realm as indicated by God walking in the garden in Genesis 3:8. In the beginning, there was perfect communion between God, humans, and all of creation. However, when sin entered the world through the fall, the temporal realm was thrown into turmoil. Humans, who were not intended to die, were subjected to death and expelled from the garden. Death not only came to humans but the entire created order was subjected to death and destruction.<sup>45</sup> Still, God in his mercy provided the way to deal with sin in his promise of a Savior. Also, because of his love and kindness, he established temporal authority in governing bodies through which he provides protection and a means for curbing evil in the world. It is in the temporal realm that all creation knows God's love and kindness as he daily protects and provides for all the necessities of life. According to Luther, this temporal authority as it is manifest in governments, teachers, and employers etc., flows out of the authority established by God in the family at creation.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>2 Corinthians 5:17

<sup>45</sup>Romans 8:18-25

<sup>46</sup>The Large Catechism I.141-150 in Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 405-407.

Footnote continued on next page.

In the First Article of the Apostles' Creed, Christians confess that God the Father made and sustains all things. In spite of sin entering into the world, God still holds the temporal realm together and cares for it. Therefore it is imperative that Christian disciples, as God's people in the world, fully engage in the temporal realm and not retreat from it. Christians are God's presence in this world. They are, in a sense, mediators and ambassadors of God's love in Christ in the temporal realm corrupted by sin.<sup>47</sup>

While there are many examples in Scripture of God's provisions in the temporal realm, the account of the prophet Jonah stands out as a clear example of God's grace and kindness to all creatures. In the book of Jonah, God sends his reluctant prophet to the sinful people of Nineveh. As the account unfolds, Jonah flees only to be brought to his senses by three days in the belly of a sea creature. Important for this project are chapters three and four. Having preached a message of Law to Nineveh, much to Jonah's chagrin, the people of Nineveh repent of their evil ways and God relents of his punishment. Jonah confesses that he knows God is gracious and *that* is why he fled! Jonah becomes so angry he wants to die. God's response betrays his compassion for all his creatures: "But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. *Should I not be concerned about that great city?*"<sup>48</sup> In this response, we see God's overarching concern for his creation and the salvation of all people. Jonah, rather than rejoicing with God's kindness, chooses to be angry that God would be gracious and care for one of Israel's enemies.

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<sup>47</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19



Among the many Biblical passages that highlight God's care and provision in the temporal realm, Psalm 104 presents a meditative celebration of God's good creation and how he sustains it. The heart of this Psalm is verses 10-18. These passages celebrate all that God does in the temporal realm: providing grass for the cattle, plants for man to cultivate, wine, nests for birds, and even rocky crags for the small coney. This psalm shows that there is something good about God, man, and creation being together and in communion with one another. It brings to the fore that there is work to be done in this world that is not focused exclusively on the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed. This work flows out of the ongoing creative and sustaining work of the Trinity itself.

As we move to examples in the New Testament, God's rule in the temporal realm finds its center in Jesus; first in the clear way that Jesus teaches his Father's care for this world, second in the teaching that it is Jesus himself who holds all things together. Rather than move followers of Jesus away from the world, the New Testament calls Christians to a new life *in* the world.

One of the most difficult passages for Christians as well as non-Christians is Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:43-47 concerning love of enemies. The point of these verses is to show believers the extent of Christian love. Not only are Christians to love each other or their families, they are to love even their enemies. In doing, so Jesus reminds his hearers that, after all, their Father in heaven loves even those who hate him because he causes his sun to shine on both the evil and the good and sends rain on the wicked and the righteous. From this passage, it is obvious that God continues his provision for all people including the wicked. Such is the great

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<sup>48</sup> Jonah 4:10

love of the Father for his creatures lost in sin. The implication of this passage for the hearer is that if God loves even the wicked and cares for them, his people can do no less.

Another teaching of Jesus that betrays the Father's care and provision in the temporal realm is found in Matthew 10:29-30. As Jesus prepares to send out his twelve disciples to drive out spirits and heal sickness, he assures them of his Father's care. In doing so he reminds them that since his Father *cares for the sparrows and knows when they fall to the ground*, he will much more care for them. This verse gives the reader a microscopic view into a wider understanding of God's rule and work in the temporal realm.

Jesus does not simply teach, however, about the Father's continued care and provision for all of creation. As we read in Paul's letter to the Colossians and in Hebrews, Jesus himself is the very one who holds all of creation together. Colossians 1:16-17 states that all things visible and invisible have been created by and for him. Paul writes that it is only in Jesus that all things are held together. In Hebrews 1:3, readers are told that it is Jesus who sustains all things by his "powerful word." God the Son *is the person* in whom all creation moves, breathes, and exists.

From the brief examples above, Christians know that God works in the temporal realm. It is where he properly rules and it is good although corrupted by sin. As baptized children of God, Paul states that Christians are new creations.<sup>49</sup> It is in Christ that God is creating a-new humanity and all of creation. Therefore, Christian disciples find their God-given purpose in their horizontal relationships with others as they display God's love through works of service to their fellow man and care for the whole of creation.

There remains yet another aspect of the temporal realm in which Christians can exercise their discipleship and build bridges for the Gospel communication—that is in the God-established temporal authority.

It is common that when God's rule in the temporal realm is taught it is almost exclusively spoken of in terms of temporal authority or government. From the above discussion the Biblical teaching concerning God's rule in the temporal realm reveals much more than that. However, Biblical teaching does make clear that government is a blessing of God provided after the fall for the main purpose of protection and the upholding of natural law. As such earthly government is part of the sphere of the temporal realm where Christians can exercise works of love and build a bridge for Gospel witness.

God has established temporal authority for law, order, and the curbing of evil in the world. Whether that authority takes the form of a tribal society, monarchy, or a representative form of government as in the United States, the mandate from God to the temporal authorities is that of law and order. In the Old Testament this is reflected in the account of Cain and Abel.<sup>50</sup> After Cain murders his brother, he is terrified of the punishment that God has pronounced on him because he is afraid that those who may find him and know his sin will kill him. God prevents this. The government, no matter how large or small, meets out justice to the wrong-doer.

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<sup>49</sup>See foot note 39

<sup>50</sup>Genesis 4:14-14

Throughout Scripture God uses judges, kings, and nations to protect his people and to bring about justice. Furthermore, God does so through Christians *or* non-Christians.<sup>51</sup>

In The New Testament we find that Jesus himself often reinforces the importance of temporal authority, most notably in his support for paying taxes. Out of respect for authority and so not to give offense, Jesus does not refuse to pay the temple tax.<sup>52</sup> As to Rome, Jesus also does not incite a tax rebellion when the Pharisees try to trap him with a question about paying taxes to Caesar, rather he answers simply, “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”<sup>53</sup> Here, in a nutshell, we have a picture of the believer’s responsibilities in both realms. Christians owe to the temporal rulers taxes as due, respect, honor, moral support and service since God places these temporal rulers in these positions. Christians are to work quietly in the temporal realm knowing that God is their Father and will provide for and protect them.

Another foundational passage which grounds the Christian doctrine on temporal authority is Romans 13:1-7. Paul states in no uncertain terms that Christians are to submit to governing authorities because these authorities are established by God himself. He goes on to state that those who rebel against these authorities are in fact *rebellious against God*. Scripture is clear: governing authority is established by God (with no particular form favored by God) and is established for the express purpose of punishing the wrongdoer and lifting up those who do right. Furthermore, Paul commands Christians to submit to governing authorities not only out of fear

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<sup>51</sup>Cyrus is one such ruler that God used to the benefit of his people. See Ezra 1:1-4

<sup>52</sup>Matthew 17:24-27

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 22:15-22

of judgment but for “conscience’ sake.” Why for “conscience’ sake”? He writes, “for they are *God’s servants* who give their full time to governing.” Theologically speaking, governing authorities are included in God’s Fourth Commandment directive to honor fathers and mothers.<sup>54</sup> The same blessings of well being and long life associated with honor of parents in the Fourth Commandment are extended to those who honor the office of temporal authority.

Another example of Paul’s teaching on temporal authority can be found in his first letter to Timothy. Here, Paul instructs Timothy to pray for “kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”<sup>55</sup> Paul commands Christians to do this not only that they may live in peace, but because (reading this verse in its context) God is concerned for all people and as Paul writes in verse two, wants all men to be saved—even those in authority. Here, the calling of the Christian disciple to be a priest is made evident as he makes intercession on behalf of “everyone.” It is in the prayer of God’s people for others that the temporal and the spiritual realm find common ground and indeed meet.<sup>56</sup>

Another Apostle, Peter, also commands Christians to honor those who are in temporal authority. Peter writes, “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men whether to the king, as supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to

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<sup>54</sup>See footnote 41

<sup>55</sup>1 Timothy 2:1-2

<sup>56</sup>I have rarely had anyone regardless of their spiritual beliefs or situations refuse my request to pray for them. Prayer is one of those very important bridges that connect the needs of our neighbor in the temporal realm with the spiritual realm.

punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.”<sup>57</sup> As with Paul, Peter teaches the importance of those in authority and obedience to them as pleasing to God.

In summary, Scripture teaches that the temporal realm is part of God’s gracious and loving rule. It is where God provides for his creation and takes care of both the righteous and the wicked. The temporal realm as created by God is good, although now corrupted by sin. Therefore Scripture teaches also, as a provision in a post-fall world, that God has provided temporal authority in the form of governments to protect his creation from the sin introduced by Adam and Eve and inherited by their offspring. Since God rules in the temporal realm and establishes governments for the benefit of his creation, it is incumbent on God’s people, as his presence in the world, to engage the temporal realm and not retreat from it. The temporal realm *is the realm* of a Christian’s works of service and discipleship.<sup>58</sup>

### The Spiritual Realm

Jesus says before Pilate that his kingdom is “not of this world,” and that it is from “another place.”<sup>59</sup> From this statement, Jesus teaches that there is another realm distinct from the temporal realm which is as real as the temporal realm, and he rules that realm. This is the spiritual realm. Paul speaks of this realm as he advises Christians to put on the full armor of God

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<sup>57</sup>1 Peter 2:13-14

<sup>58</sup>William W. Shumacher, “Civic Participation by Churches and Pastor” An Essay on Two Kinds of Righteousness,” *Concordia Journal* 30, no. 3 (2004) : 165. William Schumacher connects living the Christian life and the good works produced by faith to the “ordinary duties of human life in the world . . .” This article helps the reader understand that the temporal realm or “secular life” is where God “expects” us to live the new creation given to the believer in Christ.

<sup>59</sup>John 18:36

because the Christian's struggle is against, "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."<sup>60</sup> The spiritual realm is where God rules alone by his word. As we gaze into the heavenly vision of John in Revelation, we get a mere glimpse of what this realm may be like.<sup>61</sup> The spiritual realm is where the temporal sacrifice of God the Son brings about the reality of salvation and brings the believer under God's rule in that realm.<sup>62</sup> John Bright writes, "In the person and work of Jesus the Kingdom of God has intruded the world."<sup>63</sup> In other words, the reign of God in the spiritual realm has broken into the temporal realm through the incarnation. To fall under God's rule in the spiritual realm means that one is *called* by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel to faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>64</sup> To be sure, each of the above thoughts are worthy of their own thesis which is beyond the scope of this project. However, of importance to this project is the understanding that Christians fall under God's rule in both the temporal and spiritual realms. Because Christians fall under God's rule in the spiritual realm, Paul says that they are ambassadors of Christ and his Gospel in the temporal realm.<sup>65</sup>

The rule of God in the temporal realm is to be kept distinct from the rule of God in the spiritual realm. In the temporal realm God's rule is evidenced in rulers, governments, and natural law. To temporal authorities God gives the responsibility to provide for order, protection and the upholding of natural law. On the other hand, the rule of God in the spiritual realm in

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<sup>60</sup>Ephesians 6:12

<sup>61</sup>Revelation 4

<sup>62</sup>Colossians 1:9-14

<sup>63</sup> John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), 216

<sup>64</sup>John 6:44; John 14:6

<sup>65</sup>2 Corinthians 5:19

Christ has everything to do with bringing sinful people into a right relationship with God through the Gospel of Christ.



### CHAPTER 3

#### THE PROJECT IN DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVE

Although Lutheran theology lends itself to a proper understanding of Christian discipleship, in America it has mainly been left for the Evangelical wing of the Church to define discipleship. Many para-church organizations such as CRU (Campus Crusade for Christ) have shaped the meaning of discipleship and thus defined over the past fifty years what a disciple of Christ is and does. This "evangelical" definition of discipleship outlines certain "disciplines" that one *must* practice to grow as a disciple and prove one's love and dedication to God. Such disciplines are outlined in Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*,<sup>66</sup> or CRU's *Transferable Concepts*.<sup>67</sup> However, rather than discipleship beginning with disciplines to be practiced, Lutheran theology finds discipleship beginning with God and what he has done for mankind in Christ. Not only does discipleship begin with God, it is sustained by God in the believer's life through the gifts of God's Word. The Lutheran understanding of discipleship finds God at the center of living a Christian life.

Three Biblical teachings help to frame an understanding for this study of what it means to be a disciple of Christ. These are: Luther's concept of the two kinds of righteousness otherwise known as passive and active righteousness, God's declaration that all believers are members of his "royal priesthood" (often called the priesthood of believers), and the concept of what has

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<sup>66</sup>Richard Foster. *Celebration of Discipline: Path to Spiritual Maturity*, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition (San Francisco: Harperone, 1998)

<sup>67</sup>Bill Bright, CRU--Campus Crusade for Christ, *Transferable Concepts*  
Footnote continued on next page.

been called “the kingdom of the left hand and the kingdom of the right hand,” (or the two realms concept). The concept of passive and active righteousness frames the believer’s life in the freedom from self-justification before God so that the Christian can now turn to love others as God commands. The doctrine of the priesthood of believers gives Christians a proper understanding of who they are and their vocation in this world. Finally, the doctrine of the two realms reminds believers that God rules and works his will in both the spiritual realm and the temporal realm of this world. Therefore believers, rather than withdrawing from the world, are to live as God’s ambassadors in the temporal realm, being his priests who proclaim what God has done for the world in Christ. We now turn to a consideration of the concept of discipleship as it is contained in the Book of Concord and by Dr. Martin Luther himself.

### **The Two Kinds of Righteousness**

As mentioned earlier, Dr. Martin Luther, as well as other reformers, understood that there are two kinds of righteousness taught in Scripture. It must be noted for our discussion that the word disciple or discipleship is not used in the *Book of Concord* when describing the *life* of a Christian. Rather, the Confessions describe how Christians live in terms of the teaching of the two kinds of righteousness. Luther writes in the *Smalcald Articles 13:1* “. . . that ‘through faith’ (as St. Peter says) we receive a different, new, clean heart and that, for the sake of Christ our mediator, God will and does regard us as completely righteous and holy.”<sup>68</sup> In *The Epitome, Article III: Righteousness*, the reformers affirm clearly the doctrine of passive righteousness:

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<http://www.cru.org/training-and-growth/classics/transferable-concepts> (15 March, 2013)

. . . our righteousness before God consists in this, that God forgives us our sins by sheer grace, without any works, merit or worthiness of our own, in the past, at present, or in the future, that he gives us and reckons to us the righteousness of Christ's obedience and that, because of this righteousness, we are accepted by God into grace and regarded as righteous.<sup>69</sup>

The reformers, here, have drawn from St. Paul's own formula of righteousness found in Romans 3:21ff and 4:3. This righteousness is known by the Lutheran fathers as the righteousness of faith.

The connection between this passive righteousness and the Christian life is made in the *Solid Declaration, Article III: Righteousness*. For the proper understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Christ in the Lutheran sense, the concern of the present project, this connection is crucial. The Solid Declaration states, "It is correct to say that in this life believers who have become righteous through faith in Christ have first of all the righteousness of faith that is reckoned to them and then thereafter the righteousness of new obedience of good works that are begun in them."<sup>70</sup> The writers of the Solid Declaration are quick to emphasize that these two kinds of righteousness "dare not be mixed with each other or simultaneously introduced in to the article of justification by faith before God."<sup>71</sup> The formulators wanted to make crystal clear that acceptance before God was not based on human merit but rather God's gracious credit to the sinner of the righteousness of Christ. They also wanted to make clear that after a person has come to faith in Christ, his life is changed and the Holy Spirit now creates in him the good works

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<sup>68</sup>SA XIII.1 in Kolb and Wengert, 325.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 495.4

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 567.32

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

that God has planned for him and that these good works by no means contribute in any way to salvation.

The description of how passive and active righteousness work in a believer's life is also clearly detailed at other places in the *Solid Declaration*.

For good works do not precede faith, nor does sanctification precede justification. Instead, first of all, in conversion, the Holy Spirit kindles faith in us through the hearing of the Gospel. This faith lays hold of God's grace in Christ, and through it a person is justified. Thereafter, once people are justified, the Holy Spirit also renews and sanctifies them. From this renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works follow.<sup>72</sup>

In the treatment of free will, *The Epitome, Article II*, the reformers reiterate their teaching on the passive nature of man's will in conversion and affirm the cooperative nature of man's will *after* conversion in the good works that follow,

For when the Holy Spirit has effected and accomplished new birth and conversion and has altered and renewed the human will solely through his divine power and activity, then the new human will is an instrument and tool of God the Holy Spirit, in that the will not only accepts grace but also cooperates with the Holy Spirit in the works that proceed from it.<sup>73</sup>

From the above, we may now begin to paint the picture of Christian discipleship based on sound Lutheran theology. Christian discipleship is not based on man's own ability to justify himself before God. Drawing from Scripture, the Lutheran reformers clearly understood that salvation, or one's acceptance before God, is purely a gift of God given by his grace and based on the righteous life of Christ lived on behalf of sinful humans. As those who are converted, Christians then have a new life, new will, and new mind. This new life, now in the power of the

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 569.41

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 495.18

Holy Spirit and in cooperation with the Spirit, produces good works which benefit, and show God's love to others whether family, friends, strangers, or fellow Christians. Thus Christ's own definition of his disciples is shown to be true, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."<sup>74</sup> In Christ the believer is free, not only from the slavery and punishment that sin brings, but free from his endless attempts to justify himself before God. Now, having the gift of Christ's righteousness, the believer turns his thoughts from himself and his selfish attempts to please God to the needs of his neighbor and how best to serve him in love.

#### Martin Luther's Explanation of the Two Kind of Righteousness

Martin Luther was no stranger to attempts of self-justification before God. Before his conversion, his conscience was tortured because he knew his works were not enough to satisfy God's wrath. After his conversion, he wrote a clear and simple treatise on the subject simply titled, "The Two Kinds of Righteousness." Luther explains that the first kind of righteousness is an "alien righteousness that is the righteousness of another, instilled from without. This is the righteousness of Christ by which he justifies through faith . . ."<sup>75</sup> He then goes on to describe the second kind of righteousness as,

. . . our proper righteousness, not because we alone work it, but because we work with that first and alien righteousness. This is the manner of life spent profitably in good works, in the first place, in slaying the flesh and crucifying the desires with respect to self

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<sup>74</sup>John 13:34-35

<sup>75</sup> Martin Luther "The Two Kinds of Righteousness," in *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, ed. Timothy F. Lull Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989, 155

. . . . In the second place, this righteousness consists in love to one's neighbor, and in the third place, in meekness and fear toward God.<sup>76</sup>

Luther further explains that this second kind of righteousness is actually the *fruit and consequence of the first kind*. He writes that it actually *completes* the first kind of righteousness (a thought closely aligned with the thoughts contained in James' epistle) and that, "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."<sup>77</sup>

As to the foundation on which this second kind of righteousness is built, Luther plainly says, "This righteousness follows the example of Christ . . . and is transformed into his likeness (II Cor. 3:18)."<sup>78</sup> Luther understood that since the believer no longer needs to seek his own righteousness, because of the first kind of righteousness, he can now seek the welfare of others.<sup>79</sup>

In his *Lectures on Galatians, 1535*, Luther defines the proper relationship between the righteousness of faith and good works. He writes,

Because you have taken hold of Christ by faith, through whom you are righteous, you should now go and love God and your neighbor. Call upon God, give thanks to Him, preach Him, praise Him, confess Him. Do good to your neighbor and serve him; do your duty. These are truly good works, which flow from this faith and joy conceived in the heart because we have the forgiveness of sins freely through Christ.<sup>80</sup>

Luther understood that the Christian life was to be lived in the context of one's temporal vocation. This means daily praising him, confessing him, and thanking him in all that one does.

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 157

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians 1535, Chapters 1-4", in vol. 26 of *Luther's Works*, American Footnote continued on next page.

In one's horizontal relationships it means loving the neighbor and fulfilling those earthly duties and offices to which a Christian has been called.

### **The Priesthood of Believers**

One of the gifts of Lutheran Theology is a proper understanding of what the prophets and apostles have called the priesthood of believers. Luther, through his spiritual struggles, came to a clear understanding of the priesthood of believers. In his treatise, *The Right and the Power of a Christian Congregation or Community* he writes,

For no one can deny that every Christian possesses the word of God and is taught and anointed by God to be priest, as Christ says, John 6 [:45], "They shall all be taught by God," and Psalm 45[:7], "God has anointed you with the oil of gladness on account of your fellows." These fellows are the Christians, Christ's brethren, who with him are consecrated priests, as Peter says too, 1 Peter 2[:9], "You are a royal priesthood so that you may declare the virtue of him who called you into his marvelous light."<sup>81</sup>

Luther goes on to state that it is not only in every Christian's power to proclaim the Gospel, but that it is his right and duty to do so because not to do so would bring God's disfavor as well as jeopardize salvation<sup>82</sup>.

In the same text, Luther illustrates the above point by the introduction of two hypothetical situations; one where there is no Christian community and one where there is Christian community. In the former situation, Luther would say that the Christian needs no formal call to preach and teach the Gospel. He states that, "In such a case a Christian looks with brotherly love at the need of the poor and perishing souls and does not wait until he is given a command or

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Edition. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963) , 133.

<sup>81</sup>Volker Stolle, *The Church Comes From All Nations: Luther Texts on Mission*, trans. Klaus Detlev Schulz (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003) , 21

letter from a prince or a bishop. For need breaks all laws and has none. Thus it is the duty of love to help if there is no one else who could or should help."<sup>83</sup> As to the latter, Luther taught that when there is a Christian community one should not promote himself to preach but rather *be chosen*.

Aside from Luther's insistence that all Christians have the right to proclaim the Gospel and to show love to others, he goes to the heart of how this priesthood of believers carries on its ministry in the world in his *Lectures on Galatians, 1519*. Here he describes the attitude of a priest in the priesthood of believers as he comments on Galatians 6:3,

Furthermore, if there is anything in us, it is not our own; it is a gift of God. But if it is, then it is entirely a debt one owes to love, that is, to the law of Christ. And if it is a debt owed to love, then I must serve others with it, not myself. Thus learning is not my own; it belongs to the unlearned and is the debt I owe to them. My chastity is not my own; it belongs to those who commit sins of the flesh, and I am obligated to serve them through it by offering it to God for them, by sustaining and excusing them, and thus, with my respectability, veiling their shame before God and men . . . . Thus my wisdom belongs to the foolish, my power to the oppressed. Thus my wealth belongs to the poor, my righteousness to the sinners. For these are the forms of God of which we must empty ourselves, in order that forms of a servant may be in us (Phil. 2:6), because it is with all these qualities that we must stand before God and intervene on behalf of those who do not have them, . . . . But even before men we must, with the same love, render them service against their detractors and those who are violent toward them. . . . By this badge . . . we Christians are distinguished from all nations, in order that we may be God's private property, a priestly race, and a royal priesthood.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., 22

<sup>84</sup>Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians 1519, Chapters 1-6", in vol. 27 of *Luther's Works*, American Edition. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen; (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964) , 393-394.



This is the description of the life of one who walks in the footsteps of Christ and follows his example and offers himself as a spiritual and living sacrifice to God. In this commentary, Luther ties the priesthood of believers to active righteousness.

One of Luther's great contributions to the Church is the restoration of the priesthood of believers.<sup>85</sup> It follows that the various Lutheran confessional documents contained in the *Book of Concord* also support the doctrine of the priesthood of believers. *The Solid Declaration*,<sup>86</sup> *The Augsburg Confession XXVII*,<sup>87</sup> *The Smalcald Articles*,<sup>88</sup> and *The Treatise on the Power and the Primacy of the Pope*<sup>89</sup> all confess that normal, everyday Christians have the power, right and duty to proclaim the Gospel, forgive sins and, in the name of Christ, show love and care to their neighbors. The confessional writings also advocate that one's vocation<sup>90</sup> in life serves as the platform where a Christian is to minister to her neighbor and show love and charity as well as teach and preach the Gospel of Christ.<sup>91</sup>

### **The Two Realms Concept**

The two realms concept is clearly discussed in *The Book of Concord*. The importance of

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<sup>85</sup>David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1991), 241-243. Bosch outlines five distinct contributions that Luther made to the area of Christian mission one being the return of the priesthood of believers to the Church.

<sup>86</sup>Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans., Charles Arand, Eric Gritsch, Robert Kolb, William Russell, James Schaaf, Jane Strohl, Timothy Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000) , 637:10

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.,89:49

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., 325:[13] How a Person Is Justified and Concerning Good Works

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., 341:69

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 283:36-38

<sup>91</sup>James Scherer, *Gospel, Church and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987) , 65. Missiologist James Scherer finds in his studies that for  
Footnote continued on next page.

this doctrine for the disciple is that the Christian can exercise his priestly duties within his daily vocations rather than wrongly thinking that the only people who are able to serve God are those whose call is to the Office of the Public Ministry, or those who would cloister themselves away from the world. Family, work, volunteer work in the community, political office, and all the earthly duties to which one is called are spheres within the temporal realm of this world where the Christian is called to exercise his priestly duties of self-sacrifice and works of love. This is in marked contrast to others who may believe and teach that the *only* way to serve Christ is to become a pastor, teacher, or missionary. The doctrine of the two realms properly entrusts works of service to the whole church scattered in the world. The Christian need not shun, as some have throughout history, his vocation in the world. Rather, the two realms concept affirms that God is working in the temporal realm to care for creation and to bring souls to his Son. Some who promote discipleship teach that to work in the world in a vocation is not what God desires; rather full time work in ministry is what a Christian should consider if he truly wants to serve God.<sup>92</sup> On the other hand, Lutheran doctrine, as outlined in the *Book of Concord*, lifts up the calling of every Christian. It teaches that in Christ not only is a person redeemed and made new, but that everything about that person is redeemed and made acceptable to God. Therefore a

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Luther, lay men and women were to be in the forefront of Gospel proclamation.

<sup>92</sup> As a staff person with Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU), and as a student prior to that who was involved with the group both at the high school level and at the college level, I was routinely taught that God desired people to work in full time ministry. Work in a secular profession was discouraged. If a person desired to work in a secular job, it was taught that he needed to be very sure and that it was a special call of God to work at a secular profession. This kind of teaching parallels what was commonly thought about monks, priests and the cloister in Luther's day (see *the Apology, Article XXVII: Monastic Vows*). In reality, Lutheran teaching is the opposite, if we understand Augsburg XVI properly.

<sup>92</sup>Augsburg XVI Concerning Civic Affairs in *The Book of Concord*, Kolb and Wengert ed. 49 and 51.

farmer can bring glory to God by living her faith in the daily task of farming, exhibiting Christian virtues toward, and doing good works for those she comes in contact with in the normal course of her daily work and life. Her vocation becomes her pulpit and altar.

*Augsburg XVI Concerning Civic Affairs* upholds what Paul writes in Romans 13 concerning temporal authority. It places civil authority and laws as God pleasing works and affirms that Christians are free to exercise these offices. Of particular interest to this project is the statement translated from the Latin text,

Because the gospel [sic] transmits an eternal righteousness of the heart, they also condemn those who locate evangelical perfection not in the fear of God and in faith but in abandoning civil responsibilities. In the meantime the gospel does not undermine government or family but completely requires both their preservation as ordinances of gospel and the exercise of love in these ordinances.<sup>93</sup>

Accordingly, civil responsibilities, government, and taking care of one's family are all good works, born out of love, to which God has called his people. It is through these that Christians engage the temporal realm in a positive way, serving the needs of the neighbor. Because of this teaching, Christians are free to partner with non-Christians in the public arena in civil causes that work for the common good of both community and creation.

### **Doctrinal Perspective Summary**

To summarize the Lutheran theological perspective on which this project is based, we find doctrinally that the concept of Christian discipleship is grounded in three basic teachings: the two kinds of righteousness, the priesthood of believers, and the two realms. The two kinds of

righteousness liberates the believer from self-justification before God so that he may turn away from himself to serve his neighbor. The priesthood of believers shows the Christian who he is in this world and the nature of his interaction with non-believers. The two realms paradigm reminds the Christian that living the Christian life is not done in a vacuum, within the walls of a monastery or within a modern day Christian bubble. Rather, God has chosen his people to be the intersection between the spiritual realm and the temporal realm as they carry the Good News of Christ to the world.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE PROJECT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A major focus of Lutheranism is the application of Christian teaching to one's daily life. As the Reformation took root, the question of Christian purpose (*telos*), and how one is formed for that purpose, became a major component of its reforms. We now turn to the development of the concept of Christian discipleship as it developed in Lutheranism, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and its implications for Trinity Lutheran Church as it looks to future ministry.

#### **Lutheran Worship**

The foundation of Christian formation for Lutherans has historically been worship. Lutheran worship is formative, because it emphasizes the gifts of God to his people in the means of grace. These means are God's Word and the Sacraments of Baptism and The Lord's Supper. It is through these means, that God comes to his people and forgives them, speaks to them, and strengthens them for their daily worship of living and service in his name. Timothy Maschke states clearly that for Lutherans,

. . . the concept of worship goes beyond an hour's activity on Sunday (or any other day of the week, for that matter). Lutherans understand worship as something more than what occurs on Sunday. It is a matter of God's gracious gift of faith, and the resulting activities that flow from that gift. Such faith-based activity is most evident in Sunday services as we gather as God's guests to receive from Him and to express our thanks and praise to Him.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Timothy H. Maschke, *A Guide to Lutheran Worship in the Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003) , 19.

All the elements of Lutheran worship are formative elements, because it is the doctrine expressed through these elements that shape and mold Christian character, much like a map guides and shapes the journey of the traveler. It is in worship, both gathered and scattered, that Christians find their foundation for discipleship.

### **Luther's Catechisms**

In both the Large and Small Catechisms, Luther outlined the Christian faith in such a way that common people could understand and apply it to their lives. In addition, in his Small Catechism, Luther placed the teaching of the faith, and faith formation for children, where Scripture<sup>95</sup> places it—in the home.<sup>96</sup> In the Large Catechism, Luther provided pastors with a valuable tool for their continued learning and teaching of Christian doctrine and its implications for the life of the believer. The question that Luther asks in the Small Catechism, “What does this mean?” challenges the believer to consider and apply what Christ taught in his own life situation. Since the time of Luther, countless numbers of people have been trained and taught to live the Christian life through the catechisms. These instructional books have been the bedrocks of teaching, preaching, and Christian living for generations. Today, the Small Catechism is the foundation for the instruction of the church's youth, as they prepare to confess, at their confirmation, the faith into which they were baptized. Appropriate parts of the Small Catechism are also used by many pastors to emphasize doctrine in the worship service on various Sundays of the Church Year, such as baptism on the Sunday that the church celebrates the Baptism of

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<sup>95</sup>Deuteronomy 6:4-8

<sup>96</sup>Luther admonishes parents to be the primary teachers of faith in the Small Catechism.

Jesus. Missionaries have found copies of Luther's Small Catechism in remote, jungle villages, often brought there by a person who worked in a far-off city and attended a Lutheran mission or church while there<sup>97</sup>. The Small Catechism, as a tool for Christian formation, has been, and continues to be, an invaluable tool for Christian discipleship. It is through Luther's catechisms that the way of life lived under the cross, by the grace of God, has been understood by generations of Lutherans. Luther himself confessed that he needed to come to the Catechism daily, much like a child, and recite the various parts over and over again. And yet, he confessed, he still did not master it.<sup>98</sup>

### **Pietism**

At the end of the thirty years war, much of Germany was laid waste. Major villages and towns were decimated. Morals declined.<sup>99</sup> In the aftermath, there were movements that effected Protestantism in general and Lutheranism specifically. These movements sought to remedy this moral decline, respond to an increasing formalization of worship, counter negative influence in the church by corrupt rulers and state officials, and counter an increasingly intellectual concept of "pure doctrine" in the church.

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<sup>97</sup>This was my experience in Liberia as the first missionary among the Loma people. An instance that remains burned in my mind was a town elder that showed me a tattered and torn tract copy of Luther's Small Catechism that he had acquired as he worked in the capitol city. He looked at me and said, "I have had this for thirty years and have read it and believe it. I have prayed these thirty years for someone to come and explain it to my people. Reverend you are an answer to my prayers."

<sup>98</sup>Martin Luther, *Luther's Large Catechism: A Contemporary Translation with Study questions*, F. Samuel Janzow, trans. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978), 5-7.

<sup>99</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity, Volume II: Reformation to the Present* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1975), 894.

According to David Lotz, the most significant movement that arose during this time was Pietism.<sup>100</sup> Pietism's major figure was the young pastor, Philip Jacob Spener. Spener, in his monograph, *Pia Desideria* (Pious Longings), had a lasting impact, not only for the conceptualization of Christian discipleship among Lutherans and many Protestants, but also for the church's missionary work around the globe.

There were two formational influences in Spener's life, mainly found in the books of his father's library, the first being the book, *True Christianity* by John Arndt (1555-1621). The second, books by English Puritans such as Daniel Dykes' *Self-Deceit* (1614), and Richard Baxter's, *The Necessary Teaching of the Denial of Self* (ca 1650)<sup>101</sup>. These books generally promoted and encouraged pastors, seminary students, and laity to live a sincere Christian life that bore the fruits of faith. They were critical of the institutional church and promoted a "rigorous religious and moral life over against a dogmatic intellectualism."<sup>102</sup> In addition, Arndt's book promoted a mysticism borrowed from the middle ages. The content of these and other writings combined to shape Spener's later attempts at church reform.

To correct corrupt conditions, as Spener perceived them in the church, he proposed six reforms. His first proposal was "a more extensive use of the Word of God . . . ."<sup>103</sup> In this reform, he advocated family readings of the Bible, as well as personal devotional reading. In

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<sup>100</sup>David W. Lotz, "Continental Pietism," in *The Study of Spirituality*, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) , 449.

<sup>101</sup>Theodore G. Tappert, introduction to *Pia Desideria* by Philip Jacob Spener, Theodore G. Tappert trans. and ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964) , 8-9.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

<sup>103</sup>Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*. Theodore G. Tappert, , ed. and trans (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964) , 87-92.



addition, he encouraged members of congregations to gather together, in groups outside of the weekly worship service, to discuss the sermon, pray, and study the Bible. These gatherings became known as conventicals.

His second reform centered on, “the diligent use and exercise of the spiritual priesthood.”<sup>104</sup> In part, this was to counter a perceived monopoly by professional clergy in ministry, and along with it, the inappropriate prestige that clergy were acquiring during this time. Spener suggested that there was too much work for one pastor to do and that laity should be used to do ministry as well. Spener’s perception was that the church had fallen into the fallacy that clergy were the sole providers of spiritual service and that laity had no responsibility in that matter.<sup>105</sup>

Third, Spener proposed that, “it is by no means enough to have knowledge of the Christian faith, for Christianity consists rather of practice.”<sup>106</sup> Here Spener promoted a genuine love of the brethren, as well as those outside the church. He introduced the concept of a father confessor, an older, experienced person in the faith, who could help guide the individual Christian in his walk of faith and hold him accountable.

His fourth reform was that Christians should be aware of, “. . . how we conduct ourselves in religious controversies with unbelievers and heretics.”<sup>107</sup> Spener was concerned with how his fellow-Lutheran pastors and teachers were perceived by unbelievers and the erring. He sought a

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., 92-95.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 93

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 95-97

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., 97-102

genuine love between Christians as well as genuine love for the erring shown in civility, prayer, and consideration.<sup>108</sup> His vision for the church was the eventual union of all Christian confessions based upon a true *reborn Christian experience*.

Fifth, Spener proposed the reform of schools and universities.<sup>109</sup> Spener placed the responsibility for this reform on the theological professors who, according to Spener, were to be shining examples of holy living. He promoted that professors should honor holy living in students above academic achievement. He encouraged the reading of certain books that would lead students to a more holy life, as well as an evaluation of students to determine the best course of study for them. He also encouraged professors to meet in small groups with those students who showed particular promise and yearnings for a more holy life, so as to mentor them and advise them.

Finally, Spener's sixth suggested reform was that sermons be preached to edify the hearer rather than being merely cast as academic papers or lectures.<sup>110</sup> Spener was concerned that many preachers were more concerned about form, and showing that they were learned men, rather than preaching for the encouragement and growth of the person sitting in the pews.

For this project it is important to understand Pietism. Its influence is still felt today. Over the last twenty five years, in many Lutheran parishes, it has been commonly thought (though much debated) that the elements of any discipleship program must include small groups (cell groups), accountability, an emphasis on the priesthood of believers, and daily living the Christian

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<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., 103-115

faith. Additionally, when a congregation calls a seminary student as a pastor, many times there are concerns over his spirituality and winsomeness in ministry. In the field, when a pastor is extended a call, often members of the calling congregation travel to the candidates current congregation (often without his knowledge) to hear and evaluate his sermon, as to its relevance, his style, and his personality. With the advance of social media, *YouTube*, and church web sites, this kind of inquiry is often simplified due to more pastors placing sermons, Bible studies, and pod casts of worship services online.

While Spener had valid concerns and remedies that pastors and seminary professors may consider implementing, such as cell groups and encouraging the congregation to live the faith they confess, the major flaw of Pietism was the emphasis on a born again *experience*. This moved away from the forensic justification of man by God to the human, often emotional experience, of spiritual rebirth. The emphasis on rebirth, as a criterion for separating true Christians from false Christians, set up yet another spiritual class, something Spener was trying to escape. Pietism, in the final analysis, promoted a spiritual narcissism which, rather than trusting in the grace of God given to man in the righteousness of faith, promoted a faith based on self-justification before God (and man) according to external works and inner feelings. According to the biblical teaching of the two kinds of righteousness, Pietism could not produce a God-pleasing love of one's fellowman, shown in good works, because it could not turn a person away from his own self-justification before God. Bo Giertz points this out in his book *Hammer of God*. As on character in the novel, Pastor Fridfeldt, struggles with his own shortcomings as a

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<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 115-122

pastor and his self-justification before God, he comes to the realization that faith is not a believer's gift to God, but God's gift to the believer. "Being made righteous by faith does not imply that faith is some kind of payment that will serve as well as our almsgiving and good works," says Fridfeldt, "Faith is, then, a poverty of spirit, a hunger and thirst, a poor, empty heart opening toward God so that He can put His grace into it. When God bestows His grace upon us, we are born anew and become partakers of the new life."<sup>111</sup>

### **The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod**

As events came together in America to form The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States (later to become the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) education became one of the chief cornerstones of the Synod. The establishment of a seminary was among the rationale for the formation of the LCMS, as outlined in the revised Synodical Constitution of 1854.<sup>112</sup> In the same document, one of the conditions through which a church could join and have fellowship with the Synod was the provision for the Christian education of children. This took the form of the Lutheran parochial school. Often the school was the main mission to the community, as it gathered children within its walls with the hope of reaching the whole family. The majority of LCMS members were German immigrants and the school served a vital role in teaching Lutheran doctrine as well as German language and culture.<sup>113</sup> As mentioned above, the Lutheran school was a ministry to the entire family and included much

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<sup>111</sup>Bo Gertz, *The Hammer of God* revised edition (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 2005), 184.

<sup>112</sup>Carl S. Meyer ed., *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: CPH, 1964), 149.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, 227

more than academics. As German-Lutheran immigrants settled into America, the Lutheran school became a place where young men and women would be formed for responsible vocations, not only in church, but also in community and state.<sup>114</sup>

To supply the growing number of schools with teachers who conform to orthodox teaching the establishment of teachers' colleges became necessary<sup>115</sup>. The educational system of the Missouri Synod, starting with the day school, became a major vehicle through which generations of Lutherans learned the Christian faith and what it meant to live a responsible Christian life in society. Lutheran schools at all levels formed (and still form) Christian disciples.<sup>116</sup>

Not only was a formal education a priority in the LCMS, but soon educational opportunities outside of the parochial school system began to grow in importance. With the growth of the Sunday School Movement, Sunday school materials had their own editor<sup>117</sup> at the synodical level. The need for LCMS districts to provide staff for advising and guiding congregations concerning what materials were available, and how to best make use of them in parish adult-education programs, became a necessity. Discipleship in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was, and still is to a large extent, tied to its strong educational ethos, which even at the elementary level of eighth grade, mid-week confirmation class, provides for a more

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 230

<sup>116</sup>Consider the following mission statement as to the nature of the Lutheran School and discipleship from Emmanuel-St. Michael Lutheran School, Fort Wayne, Indiana, "To nurture children in Christian faith within the context of sound academic instruction and to reflect Christ in all relationships." <http://www.esmeagles.com/about-us.aspx> (22, March 2012)

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., Carl S. Meyer, 393

complete understanding of Scripture, doctrine, and Christian living, than many other church bodies.

### **Trinity Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek, California**

As mentioned in chapter one, Trinity was founded in 1946. Events of the prior three years led to its first public worship service. Walnut Creek had no Lutheran Church at this time. Due to the gasoline rationing of World War II and rural roads, travel to other towns ten or fifteen miles away for Lutheran services was financially and physically impossible for many. However, to better serve its members and promote Lutheran causes, the Ladies Aid Circle of First Lutheran Church in Concord, California, (some 12 miles away from Walnut Creek) would meet in homes of Lutherans around the Diablo Valley and organize fund raisers. In Walnut Creek, they met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sammy on Buena Vista Avenue, just blocks from where the current campus of Trinity is located. In 1944 one of the women from Walnut Creek, who met in the Sammys' home, asked if the First Lutheran ladies would organize a children's Sunday school in Walnut Creek. Mrs. Sammy, who loved children and was childless herself, volunteered her home. Thus, Mrs. Sammy's "Lutheran Bible Story Hour" was the unofficial start of Trinity Lutheran Church in Walnut Creek, as she gathered the children of the surrounding neighborhoods together each Sunday. From this beginning, eleven members of First Lutheran began to hold Sunday evening meetings at the Sammys' residence to plan for and organize a new mission start. Being encouraged by a 1945 church census survey, conducted by the Missionary Society of Concordia College—Oakland, which indicated that there were sixty two families living in Walnut Creek who identified themselves as Lutheran, this small group quietly began to

gather people for Bible study. That Bible Study grew over the next year. On March 3, 1946, Trinity held its first worship service at 7:00 pm in the Women's Club of Walnut Creek.<sup>118</sup>

Teaching children, Bible study, Worship, Word and Sacraments, and serving one's neighbor—the typical ways of Lutheran discipleship and spiritual growth—were at the heart of Trinity's beginning.

Trinity grew under faithful pastors such as Pastor Al Rubin, whose missionary zeal is still remembered and discussed today by older members of Trinity. Pastor Rubin was able to gather people together and teach them the Word of God in a way they could understand. Pastor A. Paul Meyer followed Pastor Rubin and did work in the area of encouraging the members of Trinity to be disciples of Christ in their daily vocations<sup>119</sup>.

Trinity maintained a Lutheran parochial school until 1996. Today, while the school is no longer in existence, Trinity still maintains a thriving pre-school ministry, which is a major intersection that the people of Trinity have with the community around it.

As we have taken a brief historical survey of how discipleship has been understood within Lutheranism, the LCMS, and at Trinity, it becomes apparent that Lutherans have done relatively well in a church culture. As Germans immigrated to America, much of the energy of the Missouri Synod was spent gathering the faithful together to maintain Lutheran doctrine and German culture. A letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Schreiber, dated November 2, 1859, sent from

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<sup>118</sup>Trinity maintains a large, historical archive of pictures and articles concerning its past. The story of Mrs. Sammy and the beginnings of Trinity are contained in its self-published 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book titled, *"The Love of Christ Proclaimed": A 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History & Memory Book*.

<sup>119</sup>A. Paul Meyer, "Keeping Monday's Ministers Salty" (Doctor of Ministry thesis., Pacific Lutheran  
Footnote continued on next page.

San Francisco, appealed to the Synod to send missionaries to California.<sup>120</sup> It attests to the common belief, held at the time that the mission and ministry of the individual church bodies were to gather immigrants from Europe in churches lest they lose their way. Even as the twentieth century began, with an ever increasing movement of people around the country, it was relatively easy to begin a church, such as Trinity, by gathering together people of like mind, i.e., Lutherans.

Today Trinity faces a different challenge, found in a post-churched culture. Rather than gathering together those who already believe, or at least have some nominal acquaintance with the church, Trinity's context has changed to a surrounding culture that is indifferent to Christianity at best, and actively hostile to it at worst. Models of the past, such as developing programs that meet felt-needs, simply do not work any longer. The church campus, Sunday worship services, Sunday school, and youth programs are not the attraction to the wider community that they were in the past, when the community more or less supported the efforts of the local Christian churches<sup>121</sup>. The emphases on Christians living an authentic Christian-life, marked by love of one's neighbor and actively participating in the civic life of one's community, are things that speak to those who live in Trinity's current cultural context. Yet, with so many members in this aging congregation who were schooled in the LCMS education system, and who

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Theological Seminary, Berkeley California, 1983) .

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., Carl S. Meyer ed., 198

<sup>121</sup>Trinity's Pre-School director reports that she receives more and more comments by prospective parents when they tour that Pre-School that they do not want a religious emphasis for their children. Others have asked if Trinity still teaches the traditional view of marriage and many times do not choose the pre-school because it does.



have very few friends or relationships outside the church, how does Trinity begin to change its paradigm of ministry?

### **Historical Perspective Summary**

From an historical standpoint, Lutherans have good reason to be confident in a post-churched culture, such as the San Francisco Bay area. From the beginnings of the Reformation to the formation of Trinity Lutheran Church, Lutherans have focused on the worship of God both through trusting in the efficacious, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the activities produced by faith. Lutheran doctrine has been deep and wide enough to address each generation and their challenges. Lutherans understand that the center of discipleship formation is Jesus, and being formed into his way of life, which is confessed in the creeds, confessions, and the doctrines of the church. Cultural change is nothing new to Lutherans considered from a historical perspective. Christian disciples have learned in each generation how to communicate the love of God in Christ so that God's Kingdom would come to those who are lost.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### **The Literature Review**

In the last twenty five years, beginning with what is commonly called, “The Church Growth Movement,” there has been an abundance of literature written on the topic of Christian discipleship. The following discussion will be limited to those resources that have been helpful in developing this project with two criteria in mind. The first goal of this project is to help the members of Trinity understand the cultural change that has taken place around them over the last twenty-five years, and to identify those resources that help members learn how to do servant ministry in this new context. The second goal is to identify those resources that help maintain the integrity of sound Lutheran doctrine and practice in the congregation’s discipleship efforts.

#### Cultural Change

Rapid change and a trend toward an anti-religion, and specifically anti-Christian, culture in the San Francisco Bay Area, is one of the motivations of this project. In recent years, there have been a series of articles written in the United States and abroad that outline the changes that are taking place in Western culture concerning Christianity and the movement away from what has been previously defined as “churched culture.” From the standpoint of Trinity’s revitalization efforts, and discipleship efforts, these articles describe what the members of Trinity experience on a daily basis and further help support the current project. A consideration of the significant contributors follows.

*The End of Christian America, by Jon Meacham*<sup>122</sup>

As a former editor of Newsweek Magazine Jon Meacham shook the American religious world with an article provocatively titled, *The End of Christian America*. Based on the 2009 American Religious Identification Survey, and citing R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Meacham lends credibility to the current conversation in America, that there is now a new narrative—a post-Christian narrative. He maintains that God is not dead in America, but rather that religion is diminished in its influence. The article points the reader to the history of America’s founding, that it was not founded as a Christian nation, but one that afforded religious liberty based on the dictates of one’s conscience. Meacham writes, “As crucial as religion has been to the life of the nation, America’s unifying force has never been a specific faith, but a commitment to freedom—not least freedom of conscience.” However, he sees this as good for Christianity, as this gives Christians an opportunity to *rediscover their own religious virtues and truly live their faith*. Finally, he challenges Christians with a quote from the prophet, Amos 5:21, “I hate the sound of your solemn assemblies,” writing, “Religion is not only about worshipping your God but about doing godly things, and a central message of the Gospels is the duty of the Christian to transform, as best one can, reality through works of love.”

Meacham makes those who have known only a “churched culture” model uncomfortable. Yet, in his own way, he presents a challenge to all Christians who sincerely desire to participate in God’s Mission, to reconsider their purpose and how they live their lives of faith.

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<sup>122</sup>Jon Meacham, “The End of Christian America,” 3 April 2009, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2009/04/03/the-end-of-christian-america.html> (17 December 2012).

*Spirited Away: Why The End is nigh for Religion, by Carol Midgley*<sup>123</sup>

In this 2004 article in the London Times, Midgley outlines the trend for longtime church-members seeking other forms of spirituality. She discusses the disenchantment with traditional worship services and church activities because of the apparent inability of such things to offer any real help to people in their personal lives. Her claim is that, in seeking a new form of spirituality, many in the U.K are rediscovering mysticism. In this cobbled-together form of mysticism Midgley cites that many who still attend church see no conflict between Christianity and other forms of non-Christian spirituality. This is yet another example which speaks to the current cultural climate that surrounds Trinity, as members often hear the phrase, “I’m spiritual but not religious,” from friends and relatives. They have a difficult time understanding why some of their children see no conflict between Christianity and other religions, such as Buddhism. They are confused because many of their children were raised in a strong Lutheran environment, yet today, these adult children no longer identify with Christianity.

*Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell*<sup>124</sup>

Rob Bell was the founding pastor of Mars Hill in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His book, *Velvet Elvis*, inspired by the velvet painting of Elvis Presley hanging in his house, expresses the desire to continue to explore and learn what it means to live an authentic Christian life in a post-churched or post-Christian culture. For many Christians, comfortable in a churched culture, Bell’s book can be unsettling. Bell explores Christian doctrine in new ways and language that

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<sup>123</sup>Carol Midgley, “Spirited Away: Why The End is nigh for Religion,” November 4, 2004, <http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles4/MidgleyReligion.php> (27 December 2012) reprint from the Times UK

will challenge the reader. Bell deserves a hearing in the church today *and* needs to be challenged and questioned as well. *Velvet Elvis* challenges those serious about faithful Gospel ministry to examine their own presuppositions and dares them to explore new ways Christian doctrine can be communicated.

The value of *Velvet Elvis* for the present project is that it challenges Christians to live their Christian faith and doctrine boldly yet humbly. In the opening chapters Bell makes it clear that he is simply trying to live the way Jesus taught to live, “As a Christian, I am simply trying to orient myself around living a particular way, the kind of way that Jesus taught is possible. And I think that the way of Jesus is the best possible way to live.”<sup>125</sup> Bell lists a number of virtues that he is convinced is a better way to live. The benefit of Bell’s approach is that he talks about what Christians are *for* and not about what Christians are *against*. This is something, in the Bay Area, that communicates to people rather well.

Bell’s approach is one that puts Christians on a level playing field with those of different beliefs or even those who are antagonistic toward the church. Rather than a condescending, dismissive attitude, he attempts to approach others on the same level and is open to listening to, and even conceding, the truth that is found in another’s values or beliefs. He reminds us that in a post-church culture, just like a pre-church culture, the church needs to be a learner and listener, in order to communicate the Gospel for understanding. Bell attempts to put doctrine into terms that an eclectic, post-church culture may relate to and understand.

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<sup>124</sup>Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005)

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*, 20

On the other hand, there is a danger in Bell's approach of becoming to "folksy." For instance in his discussion of a wedding he had planned<sup>126</sup> with a couple who, "didn't want any of that God stuff" involved he discusses their connection to nature and how, whether they knew it or not, that they were resonating with Jesus. From a Lutheran standpoint, a sympathetic reading might categorize this as general revelation. But, the way that Bell communicates his thoughts could also be taken that this couple had experienced salvation simply by communing with nature. Also, in describing Jesus as "the life force"<sup>127</sup> which makes creation possible, Bell comes close to putting our Lord into just another impersonal, religious-metaphysical-belief-system, along with all the other great thinkers of history. Words do mean things and the words we use to confess the faith need to be clear. There is a danger in trying so hard to relate to people that the truth will be watered down and slowly eroded. The challenge today, as it has been in each generation, is to communicate the teaching of scripture faithfully and in a way that hearers can understand. While Bell's efforts underscore the importance of communicating scripture to the present culture, many conservative Lutherans are similarly attempting to communicate to the current generation and they are doing so with a more expansive understanding of what must *not be compromised* as the church proclaims the Gospel.

*Unchristian* by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons<sup>128</sup>

*Unchristian* is a book by two men of a new generation of believers. It comes out of the Barna Research Group, and much like *Marketing the Church* some twenty five years ago, the

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<sup>126</sup>Ibid., 92

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

authors try to describe the current generation and their perception of Christians and the church. The authors come to the conclusion that unless the church begins to understand the tumultuous cultural changes that are taking place, and why current generations are uncomfortable with Christians and Christianity, the church will not communicate the Gospel in ways that people understand. The book suggests that Christians have been too political, judgmental, hypocritical, and homophobic; at least that is how many in the current generation sees them. At the same time, the book suggests that the culture-at-large doesn't think that Christians live consistently with what Jesus taught. The claim of the authors is that Christians have spent too much time in the Christian sub-culture and not concerned about this world and its issues. To enable Christians to speak to this current generation, the authors present several suggestions ranging from being able to listen to criticism of the Christian faith and church practice to living a life of compassion and servanthood. However, one point clearly speaks to the project at hand, that of developing meaningful relationships with those outside the church. The authors claim, based on their research, that nearly all of the negative perceptions people have toward Christians and Christianity disappear when they develop friendships with non-Christians based on mutual respect and common human concerns.

*They Like Jesus but Not the Church* by Dan Kimball<sup>129</sup>

Dan Kimball's book, *They like Jesus but Not the Church*, has helped motivate this project more than any other. Dan Kimball is a pastor in Santa Cruz, California. Santa Cruz is located

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<sup>128</sup>David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007)

<sup>129</sup>Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus But Not the Church: Insights From Emerging Generations*, (Grand Footnote continued on next page.

south of San Francisco and supports the stereo-typical surfer-beach-community-life that California is known for. It shares a common culture with the Bay area. Through a number of interviews and personal encounters, Kimball begins to reveal what many of the new non-churched think about Christians and Christianity. As did the authors of *Unchristian*, Kimball finds that the non-churched are somewhat familiar with the teachings of Christ and appreciate Jesus as a good person, one who promoted love of fellow man, respected women and exhibited compassion. On the other hand, when it came to views of Christians, he found that they were seen in a very negative light—closed-minded, arrogant, lacking love and compassion—just the opposite of what they understood about Jesus. As did the authors of *Unchristian*, Kimball found that Christians were insulating themselves from those they considered outside the church by submersing themselves in a Christian sub-culture (something Kimball calls “the Christian bubble”). Kimball writes, “Christians are now the foreigners in a post-Christian culture, and we have got to wake up to this reality if we haven’t.”<sup>130</sup> This is missionary language, and Kimball advocates that Christians now view themselves as missionaries in this post-Christian culture. Kimball does not suggest that Christians water-down doctrine to accommodate the non-churched of this generation. Rather, he advocates a different way of approaching people—becoming a learner—much like missionaries need to do when they enter a new culture.

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Rapids: Zondervan, 2007)

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., 30



*Just Walk Across the Room, by Bill Hybels*<sup>131</sup>

The book *Just Walk across the Room*, alerts the reader to the changing culture that Christians find themselves in and gives them simple steps to convey the faith to others. While this book is about evangelism, it gives insight in to the process of developing relationships with those outside the church. The opening example that Hybels uses is powerful. It is the story of an African-American-Muslim who was Christian. He left Christianity because he felt that the churches in his area were prejudiced toward both blacks and whites. He found himself attracted to Islam. In the story that Hybels relates this man came back to Christianity because a Christian man took the time to listen to him describe his Islamic faith. He did so with respect, appreciation, and a non-confrontational, non-judgmental attitude. In the discussions and friendship that followed, this man heard again the Gospel and why his friend followed Jesus. The importance of this book to the project is its practical insights into relationship-building with those outside the church.

*Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church by Reggie McNeal*<sup>132</sup>

As Trinity has involved itself in the revitalization process, *Missional Renaissance* is a book that has been helpful to the leadership of Trinity in conceptualizing practical changes in ministry, so that members can become more oriented to serving the community and the neighbors. McNeal expresses the challenge that Trinity currently faces, as he writes about a new

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<sup>131</sup>Bill Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006)

<sup>132</sup> Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009)

spirit of altruism in America's culture, "This increased spirit of altruism is calling the church out to play. It beckons the church to move from being the recipient of a charitable culture . . . to actually being generous to the culture. It challenges the church to move beyond its own programs and self-preoccupation."<sup>133</sup> McNeal's book outlines three shifts that he thinks are vital for a congregation to become more outreach and servant-oriented. The first shift is that from being internally focused to externally focused. McNeal asserts that, rather than a church-centric approach to ministry (bringing people to church), mission-minded churches take the church to the people of the world. This he calls, "A kingdom-oriented approach [which] seeks to leverage the Gospel into people's lives right where they live, work, and play."<sup>134</sup> For a congregation which has limited energy because of the concerns of aging and small numbers, this has helped the members of Trinity define how the congregation might move forward in ministry by viewing each member as a missionary to his or her particular neighbors.

Shift number two is a shift from program development to people development.<sup>135</sup> In this section, McNeal advocates intentional development and formation of people through life-coaching and through their service to others.<sup>136</sup> As to Trinity's context, this is helpful, because rather than the pressure of trying to compete with other churches by developing programs that would meet the needs of a much younger and sophisticated population, Trinity is encouraged to

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<sup>133</sup>Ibid., 5

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., 45

<sup>135</sup>Ibid., 89

<sup>136</sup>Ibid., 101

do what *it can do* as a congregation to help unbelievers learn the joy of God’s salvation and truth for their lives.

Finally, the third shift described by McNeal, is from a church-based to a kingdom-based leadership model<sup>137</sup>. This final point has proven to be extremely helpful, in the context of this study, in that it helped Trinity redefine its idea of success. Rather than focusing on traditional statistical measurements such as new members, people in the pews on Sunday mornings, and communion attendance, Trinity was encouraged to start focusing on more qualitative measurements, such as volunteer time outside the congregation, the amount of fellowship and “play time” together as a congregation, and relationships developed in the community. This helped Trinity redefine the goal of discipleship-efforts from “getting people to church” to loving and caring for those who are the neighbors.

*Resident Aliens by Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon*<sup>138</sup>

Hauerwas and Willimon provide a foundation and framework for the current project concerning discipleship. They speak to what many Christians know or feel to be true, that something has changed in America, as to the role of the Christian Church. Of particular interest is the authors’ commentary on the Sermon on the Mount in chapter four. In this chapter, Christians are exposed to the radical nature of the Christian life. The authors claim that Christian living is intricately connected to the tradition that Jesus set for them. This tradition is continued

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<sup>137</sup>Ibid., 129

<sup>138</sup>Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: A provocative Christian assessment of culture and ministry for people who know that something is wrong* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989)

through the community of the church.<sup>139</sup> The authors' write that, "The Sermon [on the Mount] implies that it is as isolated individuals that we lack the ethical and theological resources to be faithful disciples . . . . The question is, "What sort of community would be required to support an ethic of nonviolence, marital fidelity, forgiveness, and hope such as the one sketched by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount?"<sup>140</sup> For the purposes of the present project, the authors speak clearly to the changing culture of America, and help Christians to understand the importance of the Christian community in being disciples *together*. Further, the emphasis that the authors place on the importance for intentional moral and ethical training on the part of faith communities cannot be overstated. As to learning to be Christian disciples, the authors write, ". . . Christian ethics is, in the Aristotelian sense, an aristocratic ethic. It is not something that comes naturally. It can only be learned. We are claiming, then that a primary way of learning to be disciples is by being in contact with others who are disciples."<sup>141</sup> The point that Hauerwas and Willimon make is that when the congregation is simply the church and worships together, discipleship takes place in significant ways.

### Lutheran Voices

One of the main objectives of this project is to develop a discipleship workshop based on sound Lutheran theology. The following sections surveys Lutheran thought on living the Christian life.

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<sup>139</sup>Ibid., 78

<sup>140</sup> ibid., 80

*Luther on Vocation by Karlfried Froehlich*<sup>142</sup>

Froehlich unites the Christian's calling in life to his priesthood in the priesthood of all believers. In commenting on Luther's views on the Roman Catholic distinction between spiritual estates and temporal estates, Froehlich writes, "But note well: In tearing down this wall [the above distinction], Luther did not eliminate priest or do away with the priesthood. Instead he eliminated the laity! All are holy, all are spiritual and have a special call from God to faith and witness, the call to do whatever they do in church and society as priests of the Most High. . . ." <sup>143</sup> According to Froehlich, each Christian has his calling, his vocation. And as such, all are God's priests or, taken together, they are, as Peter wrote, a "holy nation."

*Martin Luther's Reformation of Spirituality by Scott Hendrix*<sup>144</sup>

This essay outlined Reformation Spirituality as not retracting from the world, but rather engaging the world. In reference to Luther and his work Hendrix writes,

This reformation is marked by the fact that Luther was more of a historian than a mystic. For him the spiritual life focuses more on the ongoing life of the believer in the Spirit than of the Spirit in believers. The connectedness to Christ is not so much a state of mystical union as it is an actual journey taken with Christ. Spiritual life in the kingdom

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<sup>141</sup>Ibid., 102

<sup>142</sup> Karlfried Froehlich, "Luther on Vocation," in *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004)

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., 121-133

<sup>144</sup> Scott Hedrix, "Martin Luther's Reformation Spirituality," in *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 240-260

of Christ does not mean to transcend the world in ecstasy or to deny it in withdrawal, but instead to live in the world bravely, yet provisionally. In Luther's reformation of spirituality, the Christian lives in the world neither as a mystic nor as a monk, but as a guest.<sup>145</sup>

Hendrix understands Luther as putting the Christian and his work solidly in the temporal realm, as the Christian lives his life through the various stations he has been given.

*The Ministry of the Church in Light of Two Kinds of Righteousness* by Charles Arand<sup>146</sup>

In this article, Arand addresses several themes of this project. As the title indicates, Arand discusses the Lutheran doctrine of the two kinds of righteousness. He relates this doctrine to the ministry of the local congregation, both in connection to the priesthood of believers and as to the public ministry of the congregation through the pastor. Of special interest is Arand's connection of the priesthood of the Baptized (referred to in this project as the priesthood of believers) to their sharing the Word in their "mission assignments of their vocations."<sup>147</sup> Arand connects both the common priesthood and the special priesthood (the pastoral office) to the ministry of the Word—one private and in the world and the other public. Arand shows that the activities of Christians in the temporal realm, as they share the Word and uphold their responsibilities there, are connected to their calling to be priests in the common priesthood.

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 241

<sup>146</sup> Charles P. Arand, "The Ministry of the Church in Light of the Two Kinds of Righteousness," *Concordia Journal* 33, no.4 (October 2007)

## Robert Kolb

Dr Kolb has written extensively on a variety of topics, including the Christian life, witness, and doctrine. Several articles, essays and books have been helpful in formulating the teaching aspect of this project.

*Christian conversations with Non-Christian Neighbors: A Workshop*,<sup>148</sup> provides tools for helping Christians witness to Christ with their actions and words. Based on the six concepts of “Lingering, Lurking, Laughing, Listening, Looking, Loving,” Kolb describes what Christian witness is and how things—doctrine, worship, biblical and personal-narrative—allow Christians to develop relationships with the neighbor (a key concept of the current project and Trinity’s revitalization efforts). Also, the use of case studies in Dr. Kolb’s workshop helped to aid the design of Trinity’s discipleship workshop described in the introduction of this project.

Two articles by Kolb which appeared in *Missio Apostolica* serve well to reinforce the doctrinal foundations of this project, the first being the editorial, *Christian Witness and Service*. In this short editorial, Kolb succinctly addresses two of the doctrinal legs that support this project—the doctrine of the two realms and the responsibility of Christians to serve their fellow man in the temporal realm through their daily callings.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 350

<sup>148</sup> Robert Kolb, *Christian conversations with Non-Christian Neighbors: A Workshop* (St. Louis: Institute for Mission Studies-Concordia Seminary, 1997)

<sup>149</sup>Robert Kolb, “Christian Witness and Service,” *Missio Apostolica* 11, no. 2 (2003) : 76-77.

In *Confessing the Creator to Those Who Do Not Believe There Is One*,<sup>150</sup> Kolb addresses the issues of cultural change, from a society in which there was an assumption of the existence of God to the present post-modern era that holds the opposite view. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Kolb asserts, the view of a many people is that all thoughts and views, especially concerning religion and God, are valid, along with belief systems that exclude God. He describes the cultural context in which Trinity exists, by acknowledging that, “Christian witness [in the twenty-first century] to our Creator must begin by recognizing, respecting, and perhaps even sympathizing with the situation of the conversation partner who is outside the Christian faith.”<sup>151</sup> In other words Christian witness must start, as mentioned previously, with coming to another person and her belief system without condescension or a dismissive attitude. For Christians who grew up believing that apologetics, polemics, and debate would show Christianity as superior to other religions, the transition to a more subtle and winsome approach may seem uncomfortable. Kolb reminds the reader that our present culture, in Western Europe and America, a fundamental problem lies in the present view of man in relationship with God. Kolb writes, “Man does not see himself falling short of God’s expectation for him. Rather, he sees God falling short of man’s expectation for him. . . . I do not have and receive what I want and expect—and I want to know the reason why! . . . Our contemporaries view God as a modern

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<sup>150</sup> Robert Kolb, “Confessing The Creator To Those Who Do Not Believe There Is One,” *Missio Apostolica* 10, no.1 (2002)

<sup>151</sup>*Ibid.*, 24



parent, neglectful, absent, too little concerned to be of much use. . . . Modern people complain because God does not produce what they demand as their rights from Him.”<sup>152</sup>

In his article, *Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness*, Kolb expresses what this project seeks to accomplish as he concludes his essay,

In the midst of societies around the world, in which new technologies, new economic forces, new political constellations, and new social structures join with the age-old sinfulness of individuals to unsettle life and deprive human beings of their humanity, Lutheran churches need to witness to Christ using the distinction of identity and performance, the distinction of passive and active righteousness. This insight into humanity enriches our ability to make the gospel [sic] of Jesus Christ meet individual human needs as we draw those outside the faith into the company of Christ’s people.<sup>153</sup>

Change is inevitable and has been tumultuous for Christians in the Bay Area. Lutheran discipleship is based on a way of life, whereby individuals are made God’s children through faith (Christian identity) and then express that identity as Christ did, by giving of themselves to others through the works they do on behalf of the neighbor in the temporal realm (active righteousness).

In *The Genius of Luther’s Theology* by Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, the authors present a strong argument that Lutheran Theology does speak to a post-modern, post-churched culture. In Part One, Kolb and Arand deal with the one of the foundational doctrines of this project—the two kinds of righteousness. In this discussion, the authors affirm and describe the change in relationships that passive and active righteousness affect. In a clear and refreshing way, the vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationship with fellow mankind and

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<sup>152</sup>Ibid., 34

<sup>153</sup>Robert Kolb, “Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness,” in *Harvesting Martin Luther’s Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans  
Footnote continued on next page.

the rest of creation are outlined. As Trinity continues in its revitalization efforts, Kolb and Arand are encouraging, in that they bring Luther's teachings to the twenty-first century, with the age-old doctrine of human vocation and God's call for his people to a life of service and activity on behalf of our neighbor.<sup>154</sup>

In Part Two of this book, Kolb and Arand discuss the functions of God's Word through Christ (the en-fleshed Word), the Sacraments (forms of God's Word), and the proclamation of God's Word through his people. The authors remind the church of the centrality of God's Word to all it does in mission and ministry. For the present project, Kolb and Arand give encouragement to the church, asserting that Lutheran doctrine speaks to the rapidly changing culture around them and that the future can be faced with confidence.

*Living by Faith by Oswald Bayer*<sup>155</sup>

Oswald Bayer further clarifies passive and active righteousness as it relates to Christian living. Bayer's basic premise is that sinful humans are trapped in a never ending cycle of trying to justify their existence, much like coming before a judge in the courtroom,

To be recognized and justified; to cause ourselves to be justified or to justify ourselves in attitude, thought, word, and actions; to need to justify our being; or simply to be allowed to exist without needing to justify our being—all this makes for our happiness or unhappiness and is an essential part of our humanity.<sup>156</sup>

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Publishing Company, 2004) , 55

<sup>154</sup>Robert Kolb and Charles P. Arand, *The Genius Of Luther's Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008) , 56

<sup>155</sup>Oswald Bayer, *Living by Faith: Justification and Sanctification* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003)

Bayer shows that all attempts to justify oneself lead people to try to find “paradise” on their own. It is only through the passive-righteousness of faith that God, in spite of all one’s attempts at self-justification, has opened the door to paradise to us in Christ. And, now that Christians have this righteousness of faith, Bayer tells the Christian, he has a new relationship to all of creation and a new perception of time and space.<sup>157</sup> In these new relationships the Christian brings the light of God to a world (the entire creation) that God has redeemed in Christ. Bayer explains this as he writes, “We do not leave the world, when we return to paradise and are born anew and created afresh. We are still in the world. And we enter into a new worldliness. The ‘new creation’ is a return to the world, not a retreat from it.”<sup>158</sup>

*The Paradoxical Vision by Robert Benne*<sup>159</sup>

At the center of Benne’s *Paradoxical Vision*, is one of the doctrinal legs of this current project, the doctrine of the “two fold rule of God.”<sup>160</sup> Benne asserts that this doctrine is, “the Lutheran difference” that makes for a cogent public theology as Christians seek to live the new life of faith in the world. He argues that, this doctrine keeps the proper distinction between God’s left-hand rule in the world through laws and government and God’s right-hand rule through the Gospel and his grace. While the two ways that God works in the world must be kept distinct, Benne recognizes the paradox that they are not totally separate. He argues that there are

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<sup>156</sup>Ibid., 2

<sup>157</sup>Ibid., 27

<sup>158</sup>Ibid., 28

<sup>159</sup>Robert Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-first Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995)

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., 78

three ways that the two-fold rule of God comes together creatively in the world.<sup>161</sup>

The first and foremost way God's two-fold rule comes together in the world "is in the calling of each Christian person."<sup>162</sup> Benne explains that when the Spirit does his work in the lives of believers, they will practice Christian virtues within and through their worldly callings. It is through Christian vocation that God's love enters the world.<sup>163</sup>

Second, Benne sees *the church* as a place where both aspects of the two-fold rule of God are linked together. While the church's proper work is to proclaim the Gospel, it is also the church's work to address, the world according to God's Law. It is called to proclaim the whole Word of God—both Gospel and Law. Benne points out that the church only claims the power of the Word, and not the power of the sword. In other words, the church's power is in the realm of persuasion and not coercion.

The third and final place the two-fold rule of God is conjoined, as described by Benne, is in the action of God himself. Benne writes, "The actions of God the Creator and Redeemer cannot finally be separate. According to the eyes of faith, those actions come from the same loving God and will be fully unified in the eschaton . . . ."<sup>164</sup>

Benne's book has been helpful in the formation of the thoughts of this researcher as to the ultimate goal of this project. He has helped clarify the doctrine of God's two-fold rule in the world, especially in the concepts of where the two-fold rule comes together in the life of

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<sup>161</sup>Ibid., 87

<sup>162</sup>Ibid.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid.

<sup>164</sup>Ibid., 88

individual Christians and the church. Toward the end of the book, in the chapter titled “Indirect Connections”<sup>165</sup> Benne describes what the church does best: it shapes the hearts of its people through the preaching and teaching of God’s Word. Benne notes this *is* potentially the most effective way the church affects the public order. He asserts the importance of the Christian’s calling in life and that living the new life in Christ affects life around the Christian.<sup>166</sup>

*Retrieving the Natural Law: A Return to Moral First Things* by J. Daryl Charles<sup>167</sup>

Since the current project seeks to address Christian discipleship in a post-churched culture, the question of how Christians show the love of God to others in meaningful ways is a crucial one. Charles argues that the beginning of this interaction between Christians and non-Christians, especially in the present context of moral ambiguity, is found in the natural law. As to those Christians who would think that natural law is not centered on Christ, and that law undermines the Gospel of grace, he responds, “In no sense is natural law a substitute for divine revelation and salvific grace; to the contrary, it is part of divine revelation and points in the direction of grace, since natural-law philosophy, rightly construed, exposes the devices of the human heart through which we suppress the truth.”<sup>168</sup> He uses the example of Paul and his witness in Athens (Acts 17:16-34) as a prime example of how Christians, beginning with natural law, can bear witness to Christ with non-believers.<sup>169</sup> While this book is mainly concerned with

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<sup>165</sup>Ibid., 184

<sup>166</sup>Ibid.

<sup>167</sup>J. Charles Daryl, *Retrieving the Natural Law: A Return to Moral First Things* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2008)

<sup>168</sup>Ibid., 44

<sup>169</sup>Ibid., 45

Christian contributions to the discussion of bio-ethics, Charles gives further support to the effort at Trinity to begin to relate in new ways to people who have no church or religious background.

*A Lutheran Affirmation of Natural Law by Carl Braaten*<sup>170</sup>

In this short essay, Braaten argues that any consideration of Christian ethics must include the acknowledgement of natural law. He argues as that natural law is where Christians and non-Christians find common ground in the temporal realm. Natural law is manifest through the various orders of creation, where humans share common experiences of God's works and rule, although hidden<sup>171</sup>. Because of this common ground in the temporal realm through the natural law, Christians can speak to current moral issues. For the current project, Braaten provides a starting point for the members of Trinity, as they look to establish relationships with those outside the church, and find bridges to begin to share God's truth.

### **Survey of Relevant Doctoral Theses**

In the design of this project it was determined that similar training programs in discipleship needed to be considered. The following is a survey of relevant Doctoral theses which specifically addressed discipleship training and formation.

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<sup>170</sup>Carl Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal* eds. Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011)

<sup>171</sup>Ibid., 9

*Keeping Monday's Ministers Salty, D. Min Thesis—Pacific Lutheran School of Theology by Rev. Dr. Paul Meyer*<sup>172</sup>

Pastor Meyer was one of the pastors of Trinity from 1968 to 1996, and currently Trinity's pastor emeritus. His thesis deals with three subjects: (1) the relationship between a person's work and the meaning of life, (2) the opportunity and duty of the Christian to be in ministry at work and through work, and (3) the role of the congregation in equipping and supporting the Christian in this ministry at work. The value of Pastor Meyer's thesis is that his project took place at Trinity in the years prior to 1983 with some of the same congregational members that participated in the present project. Of particular interest, is how Pastor Meyer attempted to train members of Trinity to be witnesses in their daily vocations by using a small group Bible study and an emphasis on Lutheran doctrine. While almost thirty years removed from the present project, Dr. Meyer's thesis gives historical perspective by detailing how Trinity has structured discipleship training in the past. It has also provided insight into what has been effective in the past for Trinity, and where discipleship training needs to change or be improved upon so that it will be more effective.

*Luther's Small Catechism as a Resource for Spiritual Formation in a Culture of Affluence, Doctor of the Science of Theology thesis, by Wayne L. Menking*<sup>173</sup>

In his thesis, Menking gives a convincing argument that reinforces the passive-active-righteousness leg of this project. He reinforces the concept of the catechisms being the main tool

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<sup>172</sup>Paul Meyer, "Keeping Monday's Ministers Salty" (Doctor of Ministry thesis., Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley California, 1983)

<sup>173</sup>Wayne L. Menking, "Luther's Small Catechism as a Resource for Spiritual Formation in a Culture of Affluence" ( Doctor of the Science of Theology thesis., San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Francisco, Footnote continued on next page.

of faith-formation in the Lutheran Church. Menking focuses on the Lutheran doctrine of justification, as explained in the Catechisms, and illustrates how justification results in the sinner being transformed from living a life which is self-focused, to one that is focused on God and love of neighbor. He shows that it is through faith that the Christian understands that God is in control of this life and has taken care of everything in Christ. Because of this, the Christian is set free for service to others.

*Small Groups: Growing in the Lutheran Church, Doctor of Ministry Thesis, by Alan H. Bachert*<sup>174</sup>

Bachert's thesis grows out of a time in the church when small group ministries (cell groups) were an important part of church life and spiritual growth. Today, they still are a crucial part of church life and growth in many large congregations. However, in the emerging post-churched culture, and in smaller churches such as Trinity, small groups are not as crucial. Small groups, in fact, may be detrimental, in that they encourage believers to spend time in the "Christian Bubble," as described by Dan Kimball earlier. Among churches actively ministering in a post-churched culture, such as Trinity, there is more of an emphasis on worship and service than on gathering together outside of the Sunday morning worship-time for group study and support. Why? First, in churches such as Trinity, where average worship is one-hundred-and-ten to one-hundred-and-twenty, members are in essence a large small group. The interpersonal and group-dynamics are that of an extended family. Second, in churches like Trinity, time spent outside of the regular, weekly worship is time spent with family, work, and community service.

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California, 1990)

<sup>174</sup>Alan H. Bachert, "Small Groups: Growing in the Lutheran Church" (Doctor of Ministry thesis., Footnote continued on next page.



The value of Bachert's thesis to this project is his emphasis on the Lutheran distinctive in disciple-making, and his attempt to address the subject from a Lutheran parish standpoint. Also, his emphasis on disciples making disciples, within the context of relationships, is helpful as this project seeks to encourage the members of Trinity to develop relationships with those outside the congregation specifically the non-churched.

*Virtue Ethics and the Place of Character Formation within Lutheran Theology, Ph.D. Dissertation, by Joel D. Biermann*<sup>175</sup>

For pastors and laity, who have a commitment to Lutheran doctrine and how it is lived and proclaimed in one's daily life, Dr. Biermann has added much to the discussion of the Lutheran church's need for the teaching of ethics and character formation. While giving the reader an introduction to virtue ethics and of Lutheran concerns with teaching ethics, Biermann asserts that Lutheran theology is quite supportive of character-formation through the intentional teaching of virtues and ethics.<sup>176</sup> Of interest to the present project is Biermann's proposal that ethics, within Lutheranism, be taught within "a creedal framework." He suggests that the creeds of the church are broad enough to address human purpose.<sup>177</sup> Biermann submits that through the framework of the Creed, mankind's purpose, both from the divine perspective and the human perspective, are bound together in one singular goal—"to become fully human." He further adds that, "To be fully human, as the Creed teaches, is to be righteous before God and before men,

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Concordia Seminary, 1990)

<sup>175</sup>Joel Biermann, "Virtue Ethics and the Place of Character Formation within Lutheran" (Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2002)

<sup>176</sup>Ibid., 205

<sup>177</sup>Ibid., 209

which is to be rightly related to God and man.”<sup>178</sup> Since this project asserts that growth in discipleship is the process of becoming fully human, Dr. Biermann’s theses has helped form and define many of the concepts from which Trinity may grow in discipleship.

### **Summary of Theoretical Perspective**

In the context of rapid change many members of Trinity have experienced anxiety because they are unsure of the future of their congregation and ministry. However, with the change of attitudes toward the lost, an understanding of the cultural shift away from supporting the values of the church, and confidence in Jesus Christ (who does not change) Trinity can begin to make positive shifts in its ministry which will look different than the past. The center of discipleship formation is Jesus, and being formed into his way of life, which is confessed in the creeds, confessions, and the doctrines of the church. Lutheran theology teaches that Christians have a responsibility to live righteous lives, in all their horizontal relationships, in this world. This is made possible by the passive righteousness given by God to the sinner through faith. Passive righteousness enables the Christian to turn from self and his need to justify himself before God and others, to love of neighbor through acts of service. Lutheran doctrine gives ample support and a way of approaching life by which Christians can confidently face the challenges of cultural change. Each generation and each cultural context requires the Christian apply doctrine and to ask, “What kind of neighbor am I to be where God has placed me?” It is to this question, in the context of developing a sustained model of discipleship at Trinity, that we now turn.

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<sup>178</sup>Ibid., 210

## CHAPTER 6

### THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

#### **The Design of the Study**

As the new pastor of Trinity Lutheran church in June 2007, a question was posed to me by one of the long-time members, “What programs can we develop to *attract* people to our church again?” This question grew out of a growing awareness that people in the surrounding community of Walnut Creek, and beyond, are not as interested in church as previous generations have been. Furthermore, with the exception of three large congregations in the area, most of the churches in the Mt. Diablo Circuit have an average worship attendance of sixty-five to seventy persons on a Sunday morning. As I interacted with my fellow pastors, I found that Trinity was not unique in its situation. They were struggling with the same concern over their inability to attract and hold members. The members of Trinity were searching for answers, as to their future direction, and fearful for their survival as a congregation.

#### Problem to be Addressed

As a result of discussions with the CNH District President, concerning Trinity’s situation, I was encouraged to lead Trinity through a process known in the district as “revitalization.” In June 2008, Trinity embarked on the journey of revitalization.

The process began with an initial meeting with one of the district mission staff to clarify what revitalization is and isn’t. After this meeting, the congregation decided to continue to the next step, known as the consult-weekend. During this weekend a team from the district visited the congregation from Friday afternoon through Sunday afternoon. This team consisted of the

mission revitalization staff person from the district, three pastors (one retired, two active with one of these being a district Vice President) and two female lay teachers (one retired). None of the members of the team were members of Trinity. Guided by information collected in a self-study that the congregation had completed before the consult-weekend and interviews with the staff, pastor, key congregational-leaders, and a general meeting with the congregation, the consult-team generated a report. This report was presented to the congregation after services on the Sunday of the consult-weekend. The report outlined (from the consult-team's perspective) the congregation's strengths, the areas of concern, and five prescriptions which the team considered important for Trinity to undertake in order to begin to position itself for ministry in the twenty-first century. It was recommended that the congregation take six weeks to pray through the report and then make the decision on whether or not to continue in the process. To continue in the process meant that Trinity had to accept all five of the prescriptions. In addition, both congregation and pastor were to be "coached" through the process by mission staff of the district during the following three years. The members of Trinity prayerfully committed to proceed with the three-year process.

One of the concerns of the consult-team, the pastor, and members of Trinity was that, although the members of Trinity enjoyed close relationships with each other (and for many, these relationships were long-time relationships, some lasting over forty years), it was hard for outsiders to break into the congregation.<sup>179</sup> As described by the consult-team, there was no room

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<sup>179</sup>See Appendix # 1

left for the members of Trinity to meaningfully interact or develop relationships with others outside their circles of friendship. Many of the members of Trinity were living in what Dan Kimball describes as the “Christian Bubble.”<sup>180</sup> As a consequence, there was an appearance of a general lack of openness for welcoming others outside of the congregation.

The problem addressed by this project grew out of the effort to carry out one of the prescriptions given by the consult-team. This prescription charged the pastor to develop “an on-going discipleship process” that would help the members of Trinity begin to focus outward in servant-ministry to the community around them. As another prescription outlined, this was to be done within the context of helping the congregation to begin developing relationships with others outside the congregation, especially the un-churched.<sup>181</sup>

### Operational Questions

There were several important questions that needed to be considered as the project was being developed. The first was the *size* of Trinity. At the time when Trinity began the revitalization process, average worship was around ninety souls. In the community of Walnut Creek, there are three large churches; one a non-LCMS Lutheran church, one a Presbyterian church, and one an Evangelical Free church with a day school. The Lutheran church has approximately one thousand members, the Evangelical Free church has approximately two thousand members, and the Presbyterian church has about eight hundred members. All of these congregations have programs which are attracting people to their congregations. The work of

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<sup>180</sup>Kimball, *They Like Jesus But Not the Church*, 40.

<sup>181</sup>See Appendix # 1

these congregations came up in many conversations as people spoke to me as pastor and as the church board considered how to attract people to Trinity. People were searching for answers as to how Trinity would survive and grow.

When the financial collapse of 2008 resulted in many people in Walnut Creek losing their jobs and, consequently, Trinity losing revenue through the loss of rental income (\$72,000/year), decline in pre-school income due to decreased enrollment, and a decline in member giving due to shrinking retirement accounts, Trinity was forced to lay off its Director of Christian Education (DCE) and several pre-school teachers. As these events unfolded many members voiced the fear that Trinity could “not do what it would take” to become a thriving growing congregation as they compared themselves to the larger churches in the community. Trinity, it was thought, was too small to attract the numbers of people that these other congregations were attracting with their programs. The challenge, then, was to design a discipleship workshop that would encourage and motivate members to do the work that God calls all Christians and Christian churches to do, regardless the size of the congregation, that is simply to love the neighbor. Limited by size and resources, it was not feasible that Trinity could develop highly polished programs and ministries that could compete with other churches or the world. However the people of Trinity could do what God expects them to do in relation to their neighbor—they could love them through works of service.

In Trinity’s case size was one important consideration. A second question that challenged this project and needed to be addressed was that of the *age of the members of the congregation*. At the time Trinity began its involvement in the revitalization process, 44 percent

of the congregation was over the age of sixty-five, 13 percent were between the ages of fifty and sixty-five, 12 percent between the ages of forty to forty-nine, and 31 percent below age forty.<sup>182</sup> One ninety-year-old member of Trinity came to my office one day and said, “Pastor, many of us have been working on church and district boards for a long time. We are supportive of these efforts (revitalization and discipleship). However, many of us have a number of health concerns, or have spouses with health concerns, and will not be able to do the work that is required. The work will have to fall on the younger members.” In a congregation with the age distribution described above, the pressing concerns were how to design discipleship training that would accommodate and take into consideration those advanced in years and their life situations.

The third question that was considered grew out of God’s command for Christians to love their neighbors. The question of, “What kind of neighbor am I to be?” became a major operational question. As a congregation (given Trinity’s size) and as individual Christians (given the age distribution of Trinity’s members) how would the members of Trinity serve God in the current context in which he had placed them?

The fourth question to consider was, “Why are we doing this?” At the beginning of the revitalization process, district staff was quick to clarify that the process of revitalization was not a “silver bullet” approach to church growth and ministry. They cautioned that because Trinity was embarking on this journey, it might actually lose members rather than see substantial growth in numbers. District staff clearly explained that the primary purpose of this process was not an increase in worship attendance, but a change in attitudes about ministry, growth in understanding

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<sup>182</sup>Over the course of the project the age distribution has not changed.

the present cultural context in which Trinity finds itself, and a new focus on the un-churched.

This researcher added to the above suggestions by district staff a focus on growth in faithfulness to God's call as well as trust in God provision for Trinity and its members in all circumstances that they may find themselves.

Finally, this researcher determined that the design of the workshop was to be built around solid Lutheran doctrine, not borrowing from other theologies, such as Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Life*, as has been done in the past at Trinity. A presupposition of this project is that Lutheran theology is sufficiently wide and deep to speak to current challenges that Christians face in living the Christian life. *The question of which aspects of Lutheran doctrine inform discipleship and the living of one's faith became a foundational one.* It was determined by this researcher in consultation with the Doctor of Ministry advisor that the unique emphasis of active and passive righteousness, the priesthood of believers, and the concepts of the distinction between God's left and right hands of activity in the world, which Luther restored to the church, would be the essential foundations on which to base the project because all three of these facets of theology speak of God's grace and his call to the works of love produced by faith in each Christian's life-situation.

### The Hypothesis of the Project

The working hypothesis for this project is that once the members of Trinity begin to understand the reality of the new post-churched culture in which they live, and once they are taught (or maybe re-taught) the doctrines mentioned above, God, the Holy Spirit, will begin to change attitudes toward ministry and toward those outside the church. One of the major goals of



the project is to help members of Trinity realize that they are missionaries in this culture and therefore need to reach out in love to their neighbors.

### Population and Parameters

Since this project has grown out of a partnership between Trinity and the California-Nevada-Hawaii District in the revitalization effort, naturally the population to be studied consists of the members of Trinity. It was determined, after consultation with the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program that, given the average worship attendance of Trinity, participation during the workshop of nineteen or twenty members of Trinity would give an adequate sampling of the congregation to determine valid outcomes.

### Research Instrumentation

There were two basic research instruments used in the collection of data and the evaluation of this project. The first instrument was the use of Likert scale questionnaires. The Likert scale has been a proven instrument in determining attitudes toward various subjects and attitudinal shifts.<sup>183</sup> The second instrument was the use of interviews, both individual and group. Two Likert scale questionnaires were utilized. One was given to the entire congregation to assess their attitudes toward the doctrines described above and their willingness to serve in ministry. This first survey helped in designing the workshop by providing a snapshot of the congregation's understanding of specific areas of doctrine as well as its attitude toward discipleship and ministry. The second survey was given to participants in the workshop on the final day to determine if participation in the workshop had had any effect on attitudes toward

discipleship and ministry. Finally, both individual interviews and a group interview were conducted to find out what specific or general concepts the participants had taken away from the workshop and further to assess how participation may have changed previously held attitudes, as mentioned above. These interviews also helped glean ideas and insight into an understanding of current perceptions within the congregation that could help provide direction for future servant-ministry in the community.

### Data Analysis

After consulting several books on the subject of quantitative and qualitative research, and speaking with a local college professor of business, familiar with surveys for business and class-evaluation purposes, it was determined that, in utilizing the data from the Likert surveys, a numerical value of one through five would be assigned to each response (strongly agree to strongly disagree) to determine the average response to the given statements. The number five would indicate the most positive attitudinal response and the number one the most negative attitudinal response. For the interviews, a simple four-question protocol was developed. The questions were open-ended and allowed the participants to describe what they had learned and give an evaluation of their experience in the workshop. The questions also allowed for use of follow-up questions to clarify participant's answers.

### **Research Tools and Methodology**

From the district's consult team report, it was clear, which attitudes needed to be addressed or encouraged in order to meet the new context of ministry. The Likert scale

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<sup>183</sup>Walter R. Borg and Meredith D. Gall., *Educational Research* (New York: Longman, 1989), 312

assumes that each statement has equal “attitudinal value” toward the issues in question. This assumption is also its main limitation because seldom do all statements on the Likert scale have equal “attitudinal value” for participants, due to a number of factors, such as knowledge of the subject in question, or simply how much one cares about the subject. The main value of the Likert scale is that it shows the *intensity* of one’s attitude toward a specific subject relative to another.<sup>184</sup> The statements for the two Likert scales used were designed by this researcher in order to evaluate if any attitudinal changes had taken place as a result of the workshop.<sup>185</sup> The Likert surveys provided the project with the quantitative data necessary to determine relative attitudes and understanding of the congregation toward discipleship and ministry.

The second research tool utilized during the project was the interview. Through interviews, trends can be identified as participant responses are analyzed to find patterns in responses. Questions used in the interview allowed for and encouraged rich descriptions of a participant’s experience. The interview protocol for this project was simple and open-ended and allowed for clarifying, follow-up questions.

One final research tool that was found helpful in the present project, particularly after the workshop, was ethnographic research, otherwise known as Ethnography. This line of social-research places the researcher as the research-tool itself.<sup>186</sup> Ethnography is most often employed

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<sup>184</sup> For a more complete guide to the use of attitudinal scales see *Research Methodology* (second edition): A Step by Step Guide for Beginners by Ranjit Kumar, published by SAGE Publications, 2005.

<sup>185</sup> see appendix # 6

<sup>186</sup> Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (London and New York: Routledge reprint 1991, 1983) , 14-26.

by anthropologists and missionaries, as they try to understand a culture and form theories about the culture or strategies (in the case of missionaries) to communicate the Gospel. This type of research relies on the researcher's observations and interpretations of what people say and do in the culture around him. From these, the researcher is able to triangulate other forms of data, such as survey results and interviews, to form a more accurate picture as to the outcome of a research project. In other words, this line of research tries to take into account the fact that participants in a study may respond to a survey or interview questions in the way that they think the researcher wants them to respond or how they think they should respond. However, their actions as observed by the researcher may reveal an attitude different from what was indicated or said on a survey or in an interview. As to the present project, where the pastor of a congregation is the researcher and the congregation is the population, this is a valid method of research, since the pastor knows his sample, that is his congregation, well and is interested in determining how best to serve his congregation in training them for works motivated by love.

### **Implementation of the Project**

Epiphany is that season in the church year when Christians traditionally focus on mission and outreach as guided by the lectionary readings. It was decided that the project would be introduced to the congregation on the First Sunday after Epiphany, 2011, with a four-part sermon series centered on the Biblical teaching of discipleship, found in the weekly Gospel readings. Prior to this, Sunday articles in Trinity's weekly newsletter and one in the January 2011, monthly newsletter, outlined the sermon series and the planned, future workshop. These articles encouraged the members of Trinity to attend services and to concentrate on the subject of

discipleship for the following four weeks. During the four-week sermon series, members were reminded that growth in discipleship was a part of the revitalization process, as outlined in the prescriptions given by the district consult-team. They were encouraged to attend the workshop so that, as a congregation, they could begin to explore ways in which the love of Christ could be shared with the community around them. During the first service of the sermon series, a survey was taken by all those in worship that Sunday. The purpose of this survey was to gain insight for the researcher, as to the congregation's attitudes toward, and understanding of, discipleship and ministry, to aid in the development of the workshop. Trinity has approximately one hundred and thirty five regular worshipers plus visitors. There were one hundred and thirty-eight worshipers who responded to the survey. From the above information it was determined that one hundred percent of Trinity's regular worshipers responded to the survey, either that day or the following week.

As mentioned above, the sermon series extended over four weeks, beginning January 9, 2011. Each sermon encouraged people to consider their call to discipleship within their specific life situation. Sermon one, titled "Born Again," based on Matthew 3:13-17, reviewed what God has done for Christians in baptism and sought to remind the congregation that discipleship begins at baptism. Sermon two, titled "Come," focused on what it means to be a Christ-follower and partner in God's mission. This sermon explored Christ's invitation to Andrew and Simon to "come and see." Sermon three, entitled "Transformed: Becoming Fishers of Men," based on Matthew 4:12-13, dealt with the growth process of the disciple through the transforming power of God's Word. Finally, sermon four, titled "Called to Serve," focused on the disciple's call to

be a priest in this world. Each sermon incorporated some aspect of the foundational doctrines of this project. At the end of the sermon series, members of the congregation were encouraged to attend the scheduled workshops in order to help Trinity work toward, and continue in, the revitalization process.<sup>187</sup>

Beginning the Saturday following the sermon series, February 5, 2011, the discipleship workshops were conducted for three Saturdays in succession, from 9 am until noon. The title of the workshop series was “Following Christ in the Real World.” Each workshop incorporated worship, music (both traditional hymns and contemporary Christian music by Trinity’s praise team), an introductory video from Dan Kimball’s *They like Jesus but not the Church* video series, a teaching time during which one of the three foundational doctrines of the project was introduced, discussions (both large group and small group), and responses and discussion centered on case studies.<sup>188</sup>

Dan Kimball’s video series provided fertile content for discussion, as it contained interviews with residents and college students in the Santa Cruz area expressing their views of Christians and Jesus. These interviews gave insight into the changing culture in the Bay Area. They also provided an introduction to the specific doctrinal content of the workshop. The case studies were researcher-developed from actual ministry situations and were used in the application section of the workshop. Each workshop focused on one of the three doctrinal legs of the project; active and passive righteousness, the priesthood of believers, and the distinction

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<sup>187</sup>See appendix # 3 for sermon outlines.

<sup>188</sup>See appendix # 4 for workshop outlines.

between God's left and right hands of activity in the world.

At the end of the final workshop, a survey was given to the twenty eight participants, designed to ascertain if there had been changes in attitude toward discipleship and ministry due to participation in the workshop. Since all of the participants had also completed the initial survey, meaningful comparisons could be made. It should also be noted that the above survey sought to ascertain the same information as the first survey, but by asking the questions in a different way.<sup>189</sup>

Finally, each participant was given a copy of the interview protocol. They were informed that within the next month, an appointment would be scheduled, at their convenience, to talk about their responses to the workshop. Some interviews would, of necessity, need to be conducted over the phone, due to either health considerations or schedule conflicts. Following the interviews, the participants met, as a group, with the researcher to discuss the implications of the workshop and to suggest ways of moving forward at Trinity utilizing what had been learned. Perhaps the most rewarding result of this project was to hear the stories of change in participants' attitudes and actions as they shared in the group discussion. As the group wrestled with applying what they had learned to Trinity, there was a sense of excitement as people began to ask the simple question, "How can we show love to others?" They began to realize that discipleship is not an extensive program that requires great expenditures of money, but that it is living faithfully in their every-day callings.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE PROJECT EVALUATED

#### **Findings of the Study**

Two Likert-scale surveys were conducted as part of this project. One survey was conducted at the beginning of the introductory sermon series and the other at the end of the discipleship workshop. Both surveys included ten statements. In the second survey, eight of the ten statements found in the initial survey were written in a slightly different manner to see if responses would change or stay the same. Following recommendations received from inquiries made regarding research methodology, as well as conversations with a local business professor familiar with surveys,<sup>190</sup> numerical values were given to each response and then tabulated and averaged to gain a *relative* attitudinal rating of those surveyed. In both surveys, the most favorable attitudinal response had a value of five (5) and the least favorable attitudinal response had a value of one (1).

#### Discipleship Survey (Survey Number One)

The following are the attitudinal response-ratings from the initial survey, which included responses from 100 percent of regular worshippers at Trinity, or one hundred thirty-eight respondents:

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<sup>189</sup>See appendix # 6 for sample of surveys.

<sup>190</sup>Dr. John Primus, Professor of Business (Retired), California State University--Hayward.



- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 1. I consider myself a disciple of Jesus Christ.   | 4.5 |
| 2. I feel that it is not my responsibility to show care and concern for my neighbors. <sup>191</sup>                             | 4.4 |
| 3. Attending worship services and participation in the Lord's Supper are my only responsibilities as a Christian. <sup>192</sup> | 4.5 |
| 4. The Ten Commandments show me how to love others.  | 4   |
| 5. Christians have a responsibility toward those outside their local congregation.   | 4.6 |
| 6. I regularly pray for non-Christians.  | 4.1 |
| 7. I make a point to get to know my neighbors and co-workers regardless of their religious background.                           | 4.4 |
| 8. God commands that Christians are to show his love for others by doing good works for their neighbors and communities.         | 4.7 |
| 9. I feel that speaking to others about my faith in Christ is important.   | 4.3 |
| 10. I feel that God wants me to be his representative wherever I go.   | 4.7 |

The overall average of the attitudinal values for the first survey is 4.4.

The second survey, given only to workshop participants at the end of the workshop, yielded similar results:

Post-Workshop Survey (Survey Number 2)

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. I consider myself a disciple of Jesus Christ.                  | 4.7 |
| 2. The workshop helped me understand my call to love my neighbor. | 4.6 |

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<sup>191</sup>This statement was a negative statement and so a "Strongly Disagree" would be given a value of 5 for the attitudinal response since for this statement a "Strongly Disagree" would be a positive response.

<sup>192</sup> See footnote 191

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 3. I have a better understanding of worship and its relation to my responsibilities to others as a Christian.                                   | 4.3 |
| 4. I have come to understand that the Ten Commandments show me how to love others.  | 4.2 |
| 5. The material presented encouraged me to step out and share God’s love with others.   | 4.4 |
| 6. As a Royal Priest one of my ministries is to pray for others and seek their good.  | 4.7 |
| 7. The Kimball video clips helped me to understand the culture around me.   | 4.5 |
| 8. The workshop has challenged me to intersect with people and creation in a positive Gospel centered way.                                      | 4.3 |
| 9. I feel that speaking to others about my faith and living my faith in Christ is a higher priority for me now than it was before the workshop. | 4.8 |
| 10. The Praise Band reinforced and helped me understand the material at a different level. <sup>193</sup>                                       | 3.7 |

The overall attitudinal rating for the second survey was 4.4, the same as for the first survey.

To help further understand the impact of the workshop, as to Trinity’s revitalization efforts, especially in the area of discipleship and servant-ministry, individual post-workshop interviews were conducted with fifteen of the twenty participants. Also, a group discussion was conducted with all of the participants a month after the workshop. The following summary statements reflect the participant responses.

*Post Workshop Interview Questions-Summary*

***1. What was the most beneficial aspect of the workshop for you?***

“The workshop reaffirmed for me that we need to get out of the bubble.”

“The idea of the bubble, I never thought of that.”

“Also, getting a chance to just talk with other Christians about this, and people from other churches.”

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<sup>193</sup>This question in the second survey was asked to help plan future workshops as to the benefit of having Trinity’s praise team involved with music that reflected the theme. This question had a neutral relative response.

“The small group interaction was great.”

“I felt that the video segments were really insightful into perspectives widely held in the Bay Area regarding, both what Christians are like, and just what true Christianity is. Watching the video raised my awareness of how powerfully the attitudes and actions of those who are believers can impact people who do not yet know Christ as Lord and Savior. In such a real way we are His ambassadors and it was startling, but very believable, to see how negative our witness can impact others. Rather than a winsome message that makes them want to know this Savior, Whom we worship, too often we unwittingly put up walls and barriers that drive them away, rather than draw them in. It was interesting to me that many of the negative impression came from the media and the handing out of tracts, rather than from intimate friendship with Christians.”

“I understand [now] how the church can build walls especially with much of the negative attitudes. The workshop has encouraged me to look for opportunities to be a disciple.”

“Having reaffirmed that we need to get out of the bubble and listening to what others had to say.”

“Understanding how little I spend outside the “Christian bubble”. Most of my friends are church. In retirement we have diminished energy to develop new relationships; however the sharing of Christ is mainly with family and friends.”

“Understanding the importance of listening to others.”

“I liked the whole thing! The energy, fellowship, music and teaching were great.”

“The Kimball video, especially of the Santa Cruz coffee shop and the idea of finding common ground to share the faith with those who are different or have different beliefs”.

“The video was very beneficial, and the comments on how we can begin to change the negative perceptions of the church.”

“Idea of the Christian bubble really impressed me.”

## ***2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?***

“I thought this was geared more toward the younger generations. Perhaps more on what could be done in the retirement community around us or, how these fundamentals apply to all generations.”

“I would like to have seen something on “what do we do next.” Maybe if we unite with other churches we could get more done.”

“While the content of the workshop really helped me it left me with the begging question, what next.”

“What are the next steps? It would be nice to see what other Lutheran churches are doing. Although we seem as Lutherans not to be doing well in attracting a younger generation. I like the way Trinity is involved in reaching out in social ministry.”

“I feel that our worship service (first service traditional) does a good job of addressing sin in the confession and absolution, but do we also celebrate the joy we have in Christ? We could be more positive as Lutherans [in all the things we do].”

**3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?**

“I have personally been encouraged to intentionally begin to build relationships with non-Christians. As we rent property maybe we should try to look to see how we could adjust the rent to help those in the community who need help.”

“For me the workshop encouraged me to make God a part of my everyday thought processes and the way I act. People at work know that I am a Christian, but now I need to set an example for myself and them.”

“I personally feel in a real way to intentionally share my faith and way of life with those who do not know Christ, especially my friends and relatives.”

“No matter who it is, if I’m talking with someone and they tell me about something going on in their life, I make a point to tell them I will pray for them . . . and I do.”

“None.”

“Nothing”

“Maybe getting more involved with the women’s mission project.”

**4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?**

“Yes, because the workshop exposes us to our tunnel vision as Christians especially through the Christian Bubble concept. I have been through many evangelism workshops and the results have been little. I liked this one because it emphasized the real need for personal relationship building. In my career this has proved the most effective way to get things done . . . . Through personal relationships.”

“Yes, it challenges us to “think outside the bubble!”

“Definitely, we have been commissioned to make disciples of all nations, and we need to figure out how to get our faith out of the sanctuary and into the community.”

“I would definitely recommend this workshop to friends. I think it would be valuable, for both believers and non-believers, as the videos convey an authentic view of Christian hearts longing to share the good news, not because of any self-serving, but because of the joy of knowing Christ and the desire to have others know that joy as well.”

“Yes, I think it was great because it focused on getting us out of the “bubble.”

“Yes, it helped all of us I think to get out of the “bubble” and start thinking about those around us.”

“Yes it helped me look at the un-churched in a new way.”

“Yes, it gave us an opportunity to discuss with each other how to better relate to the community.”

### Post Workshop Group Discussion

The post workshop discussion held one month after the workshop yielded similar results as the interviews. Those who participated expressed again appreciation for the idea of the "Christian Bubble" and what a revelation that was for them. A major part of the discussion centered on the pressing question brought out in interviews, "What do we do next?" Since all of the participants were congregational leaders, this was a time for them to debrief with me (the pastor) about how to move forward. Some very good ideas were generated.

Two major themes came out of the discussion. The first was to explore doing more with other congregations in the Mt. Diablo circuit. These ideas included joint youth activities since circuit congregations have relatively small numbers in their youth groups (average of ten), a number of joint worship services, joint Vacation Bible School each summer, and joint fellowship activities. The second theme was the exploration of merging a number of congregations.

### **Data Analysis**

The questions on the survey were designed to ascertain the attitude towards the doctrinal foundations of this project. Specifically, they were designed to see if there was acknowledgement that members of Trinity have a calling to fulfill servant-ministry in the community around them, by the exercise of their priesthood through works of love. The responses indicate that the members of Trinity generally show a positive attitude toward, and acknowledgement of, the ideas of serving others in love outside the congregation. This is reflected in the current ministries of the congregation, such as the local homeless shelter ministry, the preschool ministry, the seniors' ministry, and support of the local food bank. As a

congregation, Trinity, corporately, is doing what it can with the energy-level and limited resources that it has. The aforementioned consult-team, however, in their report concluded that Trinity “talks-the-talk” of mission but does not “walk-the-walk” when it comes to *personal relationships with the un-churched neighbor*. This assessment was based on a pre-consultation self-study, and group discussions with congregational leaders and members during the consult weekend. In these discussions the predominant strength of Trinity expressed by members was the quality of the relationships built at Trinity with each other. The main concern expressed was a perceived inability to attract and hold new and younger visitors to the congregation. Growth statistics for Trinity reported in the congregational self study showed virtually no growth for the past ten years.

It had been assumed by consult team members that lack of growth indicated that Trinity was lacking something in its ministry. As this project proceeded, however, this researcher’s pastoral assessment concluded that this was not the case. Through the congregation’s ministry, the Holy Spirit was indeed at work among the members of Trinity, but in ways that neither the district team, members of Trinity, or this researcher expected. This was especially apparent in the area of human care. During the course of this project, the revitalization process at Trinity, with district support, adjusted to account for the Spirit’s work in and through the baptized that would not necessarily translate into numerical growth in the congregation. What became increasingly important for the discipleship process at Trinity was not a focus on new ministry models or elements, but an emphasis on individual members living faithfully as God’s people within the contexts that he had placed them.

The second survey was designed to assess any change in attitude from the first survey, since the entire workshop participants also responded to the first survey. This survey reflected a generally positive attitude toward the ideas of serving one's neighbor in love and reaching out to the un-churched. This was already reflected in the first survey. This survey did little to evaluate the workshop.

### Anomalies

There are two interesting anomalies found between the two surveys. One occurs in connection to survey statement number four (in both surveys), concerning the relationship between the Ten Commandments and love. Relative to all other questions, the attitudinal response-rating to statement number four, in both surveys, was low. Those surveyed did not respond as positively to this statement as to others. The bar graphs on the next page show this clearly.

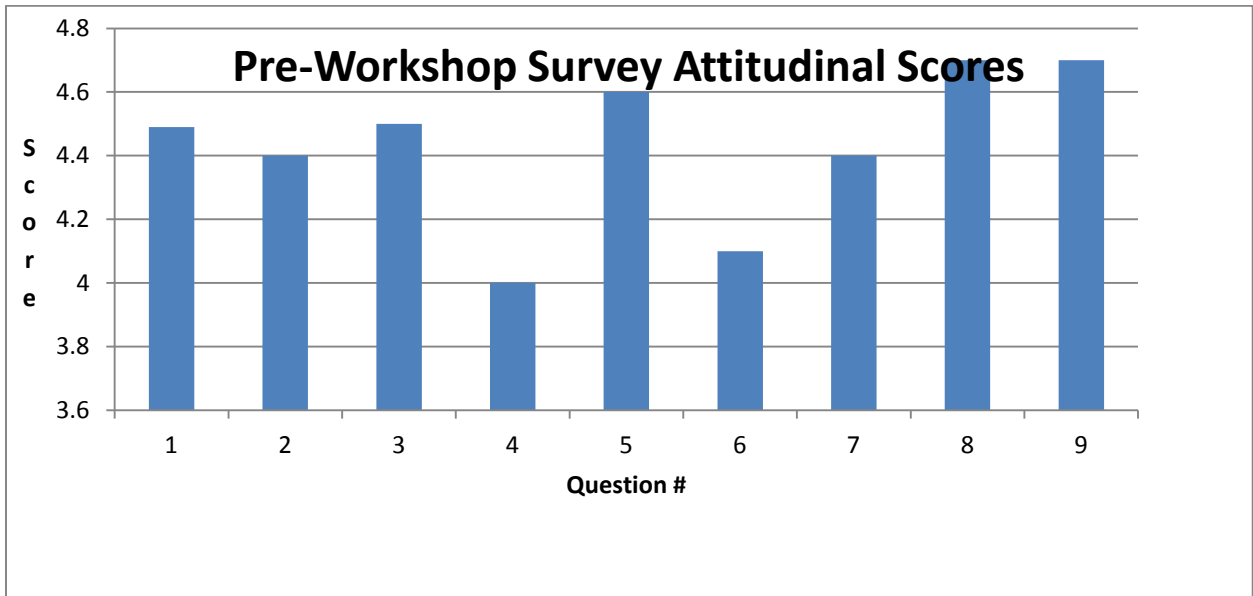


Figure 1

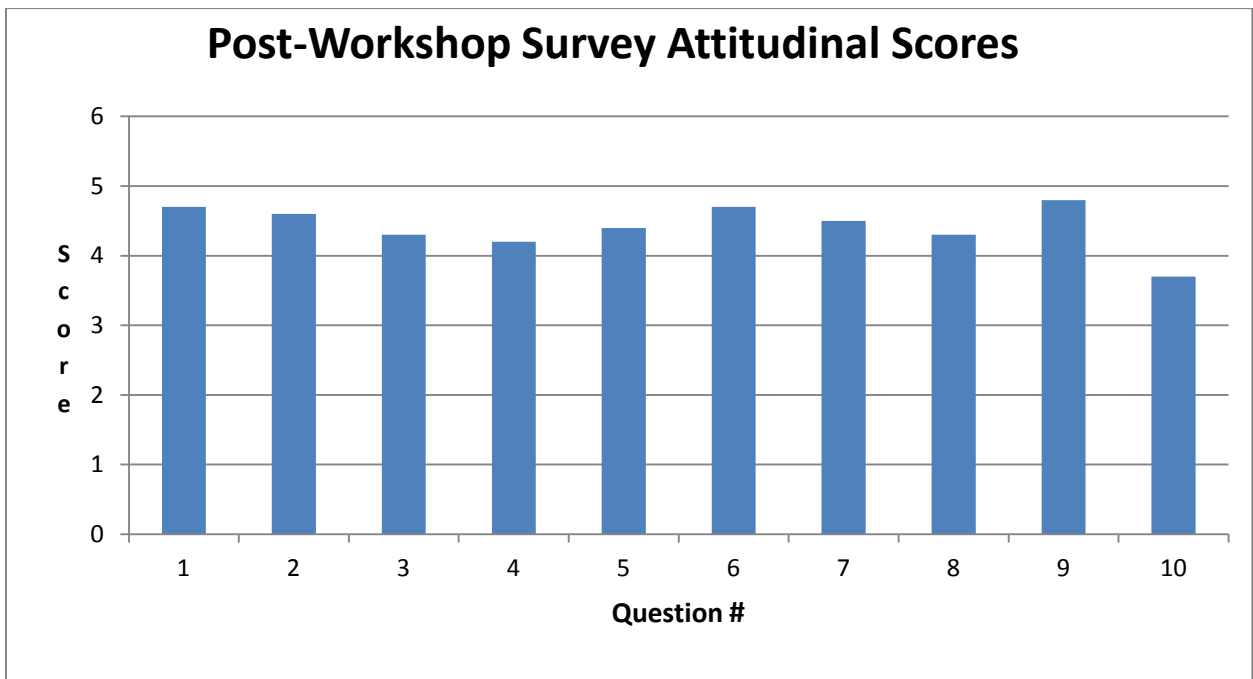


Figure 2



This project, in part, was designed to help the members of Trinity reach out to their neighbors in servant-ministry, motivated by love. In the Explanation section of Luther's Small Catechism, the summary of the Law is taught as love: love of God and love of neighbor.<sup>194</sup> The *relatively* low response to these statements reveals that the members of Trinity may struggle with connecting the Ten Commandments (Law) with the positive love of neighbor. Rather, members of Trinity have personally told me, as their pastor, that the Law is something they fear. Some have gone so far as to tell me that they dismiss the majority of the Old Testament because it contains so much Law.

On the other hand, the responses to similar statements, such as number eight in survey one, and number six in survey two, reveal that when the statement simply talked about showing love to the neighbor by doing good works or seeking the neighbor's good, the responses were relatively higher. Doing good works based in love is nothing more than doing what God expects Christians to do (active righteousness). This shows, in a small way, that in a post-churched culture (even for long time Christians) the language of the two kinds of righteousness communicates more effectively to the culture than the language of Law/Gospel.

The second anomaly concerns statement number six in the first survey and statement number eight in the second survey. When congregational members responded to whether or not they pray for non-Christians on a regular basis in the first survey, the relative response was low. In the post-workshop survey, the relative response was high. This could be due to

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<sup>194</sup> An Explanation Of the Small Catechism in *Luther's Small Catechism*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 55.

two factors. First, those who participated in the workshop were all congregational leaders. Praying for others may be a natural part of their own discipleship. The second factor noticed, in retrospect, was that, while the two questions were similar, there was one distinction: the statement in the first survey specifically referred to prayers for non-Christians. The statement in the second survey referred to prayers and doing good *for others*. While this researcher naturally considered prayers for others to include non-Christians, this may not be the case for the entire congregation. To some, “others” may mean family and close friends. Is this significant? I’m not sure. However, it may lend some credibility to the conclusion of the consult-team, that members of Trinity, while talking about the importance of missions and outreach, may not have the un-churched as a priority. Who and what one prays for reveal what is important in the heart and how one views his calling in the world.

#### Post-Workshop Survey and Discussion

The most valuable data collected in this field project was gleaned from the post-workshop interviews and group discussion. From the interviews and discussion, it was evident that Dan Kimball’s “Christian Bubble” concept had an impact on the participants. Participants began to realize how much time they were spending with their Christian friends and family and, in effect, insulating themselves from their un-churched neighbor. There were some very significant statements made which would indicate that, as a result of the video segments, there was an “aha moment” for some of the participants.

These comments focused on change in culture and one's own intention to develop relationships with the un-churched and to not be dismissive of their views. This impact, expressed by participants of the workshop, was what was hoped for at the outset of the project.

In addition valuable insights were gained, both during the post-workshop discussion session and in personal conversations concerning the workshop, as to individual responses to the workshop material. A number of participants expressed that, in a way, they *liked* the “Christian Bubble” that they lived within. Though they now recognized the need to intentionally get out of the “bubble” in order to share the Gospel with the un-churched, they shared how vital to their lives their close friendships at Trinity had been, and continue to be. They described how they find comfort and encouragement in their Christian walk through these relationships. These comments reflect St. Peter's admonition to Christians to show love to each other,<sup>195</sup> and the admonition in Hebrews to not forsake the gathering together with one another.<sup>196</sup> It also illustrates the importance of congregational fellowship as a faith-strengthening haven to turn to for refreshment and encouragement for carrying out missionary work in the un-churched culture in which Trinity now exists. The tension that always exists is in finding balance between what the congregation does in their fellowship and worship together and the outreach efforts of the congregation, both corporately and individually.

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<sup>195</sup>1 Peter 1:22

<sup>196</sup>Hebrews 10:25

These comments helped me as pastor (and then also the Board of Trustees of Trinity) to form a more balanced approach to ministry; that is, one that both nurtures and disciplines the congregation in its personal spiritual growth, as well as equips them to be missionaries in the un-churched culture in which they exist.

Responses to question number two of the interview protocol (What would you liked to have covered that wasn't?) indicated that the participants still had questions, as to the “next steps” in Trinity’s ministry. One of the sessions of the workshop focused on the priesthood of believers and the exercise of this priesthood through *one’s daily calling in life*. However, much of the interview and post workshop group discussions, concerning what such an exercising of the priesthood would look like, centered around program-based solutions, as to what Trinity could do to attract more (and younger) people. Fear of a failure to be effective, because of Trinity’s small size and limited resources, was mentioned by several participants. It was also clear that there was a desire to connect with fellow Lutheran congregations in the area to “get more done.”

These comments further illustrate the difficulty that the members of Trinity are experiencing with change. It is clear from current literature, advice from the district, and experience in Trinity’s past, that program approaches to ministry are not very effective at Trinity. The evidence supports that the most effective way to minister to others, especially the un-churched in Trinity’s sphere of influence, is through personal relationships. Trinity has done many things that one might think would attract people to the congregation, including conducting one of the largest Vacation Bible Schools in the area, wine tasting events, and ministry to the

community through the congregation and preschool. However, little, if any of these activities has translated to increased attendance on Sunday morning. The old church-growth model of “meet the needs of the community and they will come,” is not working well in the Bay Area. A former circuit counselor commented on the attitudes found in the culture around Trinity, “Younger people in this area view the church as a semi-religious/social organization that offers assistance to the poor and provides moral teaching.”<sup>197</sup> In other words, the church can develop programs to meet needs, such as our VBS and Preschool programs, but with the current cultural mindset, many are content to consume the product or service that is offered and then move on to something else. This may be prevented with a focus by Christians on the intentional development of personal relationships with the un-churched, as one goes about his daily life.

Responses to question number three, "What ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?" were mixed. As a result of participation in the workshop, some felt that they were inspired to do more personal ministry and others were not motivated or encouraged to initiate new ministries. These responses were generally drawn along generational lines. As detailed above, many of the older members expressed that they had diminished energy and health problems that prevented them from doing more. However, some older members did go on to involve themselves in new forms of servant ministry, as their health allowed, following participation in the workshop. For some, this workshop encouraged more intentionality in their daily faith-walk. An example of this is a

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<sup>197</sup>These comments were made to me as the new pastor to Trinity, by the then Diablo Mt. Circuit counselor, Rev. Tom Norris, when I first arrived in Walnut, Creek.

man who attended the workshop. He realized (maybe for the first time or maybe at a deeper level) that because God loved him in Christ *he could* love others. As we talked, following a worship service shortly after the workshop, he expressed that as a result of this knowledge he was convicted of his lack of love for others. He also formulated a number of concrete ideas as to how he was going to begin to show God's love to his business clients. According to this man, the revelation that we can love because God first loved us was, "a big deal."

Finally, the response to question four (Would you recommend this workshop to our friends or you congregation? Why or why not?) was positive by all respondents. In general, the responses indicated that the participants felt a need for more training so as to overcome the issues of narrow mindedness by Christians, and to gain an understanding about the non-churched around them. Reading between the lines there was an admission that Christians were living in the "Christian Bubble" and did need to look beyond their walls to the lost.

### Pastoral Analysis

Since the pastor and the researcher for this project are one-and-the-same, it seems appropriate to analyze the above data from a pastoral perspective. What follows are pastoral observations and evaluations of the research data.

### Likert Surveys

One of the inherent disadvantages of Likert surveys (and surveys in general) is that people may answer in a way that they believe is expected, or how they feel they should answer. The above surveys were conducted during church worship services and after an official church workshop, with the pastor conducting the survey. Undoubtedly, there were some who answered

in the way that they thought they were *supposed* to answer. On the other hand, the general personality of Trinity, as a congregation, is one of openness to missions and outreach to the community, as mentioned in the introduction to this project. The members of Trinity are very faithful in worship. Trinity, along with other congregations in the area, is struggling with change: change, both in cultural context and in aging. The surveys reflect a genuine attitude and desire to follow Christ.

As I consider the two surveys, I would conclude that they did not validate the workshop. The results of the two surveys were virtually identical. Upon reflection this is not surprising to me as Trinity's pastor. Trinity is a congregation that is steeped in church culture as was mentioned in chapter one. Among its members are retired pastors, retired Lutheran school teachers and DCEs. Many members attended Lutheran schools and colleges. Many of its members, in times past, have served on district and Synodical boards. It is fair to say that most of the members of Trinity know Christian doctrine and know church language. The main struggle at Trinity, as in many churches, is living faithfully—especially in a culture hostile to Christianity. In our context a typical way churches have dealt with this change is to focus inward and not outward. The second survey shed little light on whether the workshop was effective. Rather, the interviews and the group discussion did show that the workshop made a positive impact on the lives of participants. This was evidenced not only by individual interviews and group discussion, but more importantly the anecdotal evidence that came in the months and even a year following the workshop. Members began to share what the Holy Spirit had been working in their lives as they began to look beyond themselves to their neighbors with the intention to

love them and serve them. Two stories told to me by members of Trinity exemplify this.

A woman at Trinity who is seventy years old shared that she had been listening to all the things taught about discipleship in the sermons and the workshop. She relayed the following story as to how these impacted her life.

“I go to the YMCA for water aerobics. When we are done some of us go to the hot-tub. I noticed after being there several days that a young Asian couple was in the hot-tub the same time I was every day. I thought to myself that we need to reach out and develop relationships with those outside the church . . . so here it goes. So pastor, I just began to talk with them. They couldn’t speak English very well, and I think they were speaking Japanese which I can’t speak at all. But, I just thought, ‘I’ll just be their friend’. After a while we seemed to communicate at some level. I hope one day I can share the Gospel with them.”

Another story is that of one of Trinity’s eighty year old members. She took the initiative to develop a friendship with her younger neighbor which resulted in the neighbor coming to worship at Trinity. She reported, “I noticed her next door working in the yard several times and I thought to myself, ‘She needs God in her life.’ So I decided to take a step of faith and reach out and say “hi” and invite her over for coffee. While I don’t know all of her story, I decided one day to invite her to church, and she said yes! So we will see where this goes, I’ll let you know what’s going on pastor!”

For the next year and a half, this younger woman came to church one to two times a month with this lady. As the pastor I could tell the Spirit was stirring in her heart and that something was going on, mostly by the tears in her eyes after confession and absolution, and



particularly after one sermon in which we focused on forgiveness. She even became involved in the congregation's outreach to the poor. Recently her job required her to move to Southern California. While we don't know what God is doing in her life currently, at least we know that through one of Trinity's members and her friendship she moved closer to our Lord and began a walk with him.

The above examples are two of an ever-growing number of stories that members have been sharing with me (and each other) as to how God the Spirit is working in their lives and how they are beginning to adjust to the rapid cultural change in the San Francisco Bay area. With limited financial resources Trinity is doing what it can do in the community. With these efforts the congregation hasn't grown in worship attendance, neither has it decreased. The new reality of our time may be that Trinity remains static, as to worship attendance, while at the same time her members faithfully continue to do what Christians have done since Christ established his Church: worship, celebrate the sacraments, love their neighbors, feed on his word, and live faithfully in the life situations that God has placed them. Whether the congregation grows in numbers or not is a matter best left to the Holy Spirit.

#### Post Workshop Interviews

The Dan Kimball video clips were one of the highlights of the workshop and an effective way to introduce the workshop topics. I believe they were so effective because they gave an authentic picture of what the emerging post-churched culture is like in the Bay Area. Many members remember when Trinity had an evangelism committee and used to make a home visit to every visitor and bring them cookies and loaves of bread. Today, few visitors give contact

information unless they've been attending for at least six months. Many members remember when Trinity's Sunday school boasted two hundred children, made possible because Sunday school attendance was something the culture affirmed to be important. Today, those who have no connection to a church or faith (and many who do) do not want their children taught "religion" and find soccer games an acceptable alternative to Sunday in church. The Kimball video clips helped those who participated in the workshop to have that "aha moment," as to realizing the change that has taken place in the surrounding culture and answering the question of why people today are not interested in what the church is doing.

As to answering the question of what to do next, an issue some felt to be lacking in the workshop, the fact is that this workshop was not designed to answer that question. While certainly a valid question, the problem of what to do next is a question that members have to answer for themselves, as the Holy Spirit moves in their lives and as the Board of Trustees (the main board that is tasked with this aspect of congregational leadership) pray, plan, and lead the congregation in its activities together. The thrust of the workshop was to encourage participants, as individual believers, to notice their neighbor, whoever that might be, and turn to him in works of service motivated by love. The answer to the larger question of direction and vision for the congregation will evolve as the members and leaders pray and struggle with the context God has placed them in and seek His guidance as to what kind of neighbors the members of Trinity are to be in their specific places in life.

As to the new ministries that participants were encouraged to start, or try, as a result of the workshop, I am encouraged, as their pastor, by the fact that there seems to be a new

awareness of the importance of personal relationships built with non-Christians. As some of the current literature has indicated, the negative views that many have of Christians tend to fade as Christians develop friendships with those outside the church. These friendships often provide an opportunity for a natural sharing of the love of Christ in works of love and evangelism.

Finally, the positive view of the workshop and the willingness of the participants to recommend it to others indicate to me as the pastor that there is hunger for intentional teaching of scripture, regarding works of service, to which Christians have been called. The positive responses from the workshop, along with anecdotal testimonies of how some members have begun to reach out to their neighbors, validate that believers, no matter what their age, can understand and share God's love in the Gospel with their neighbor. I am confident that Lutheran theology has the depth needed to address the challenges of Trinity's cultural context and circumstance, with its foundation of the authority of Scripture for the faith and life of the believer. As members have expressed, "This gives us hope."

## CHAPTER 8

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### **Contributions to Ministry**

The purpose of this Major Applied Project has been two-fold. First, to further form the saints of God at Trinity in their Christian discipleship as they face many challenges in ministry. The second purpose has been to further my own understanding of how Christians live in the new reality in ministry that San Francisco presents so that I may grow as a pastor. It is fair to say that these two purposes have been realized and will continue to shape ministry at Trinity moving forward.

#### Specific Context of Ministry

Since personal discipleship has become an emphasis at Trinity, there have been several ways that this project has impacted ministry. First, there is an increased awareness that congregational ministry and individual service, moving forward, will of necessity change. In the past, in a culture that supported values of Christianity and church involvement, Trinity was able to serve the community by offering programs at its campus in which members of the community benefitted. These included a vigorous Sunday school, a day school, pre-preschool, and vacation Bible school. With the change in cultural values to a post-churched culture many people in the community around Trinity seldom venture onto the church campus except for voting or for community groups that utilize the facilities such as Alcoholics Anonymous. Members of Trinity are beginning to understand that to advertise that Trinity has Sunday services and that all are

welcome simply does not work anymore. The locus of ministry to the community is no longer the church campus, but rather the community itself. As McNeal reminds us, the church is being called out to play by the culture around it.<sup>198</sup> As evidenced in the post-workshop interviews, members of Trinity are beginning to understand their personal responsibilities to engage people around them with the Gospel by listening, by caring, and by works of service motivated by love. As a result of this emerging understanding, Trinity has changed its governance structure from the parish council, boards, and committee model, to what is called the Accountable Leadership Model.<sup>199</sup> This model, it is thought by the leadership of Trinity, will increase servant ministry among Trinity's members. This is a policy based model of governance which has a Board of Trustees that, along with the pastor, sets policy and vision according to Trinity's mission statement. The pastor then is tasked with making sure "servant ministry happens" under the guidelines of the mission statement and vision statements of the congregation. All servant ministries of the congregation are developed around three criteria: community needs, personal initiative, and congregational needs. For example the San Francisco area is known for its earthquake activity. Since the completion of this project Trinity has applied for and has been accepted to be a temporary shelter with the Red Cross in case of a disaster. This means that Trinity provides a team of individuals to the Red Cross for shelter management training. This

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<sup>198</sup>McNeal, *Missional Renaissance*, 5. What this may mean has yet to be determined. It seems, at least in Trinity's context, that the church is viewed by the culture around it, at best, as a semi-social/spiritual institution that provides help to people in the form of food, clothing, money for electrical bills or assistance in other times of need. It seems the culture is more interested in getting the needed resources from the church in terms of money and volunteers. It is all too ready to use the church in these ways, but will ignore the church's message.

<sup>199</sup>John Edmund Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 119, 131ff. The CNH District recommended to Trinity the basic organization scheme found in this book.

puts Trinity in a giving position to the community through the use of its facilities to meet real human need in the case of a disaster. As members of Trinity undergo training they are trained alongside others from different churches, different religions, and even those who claim no religious preference. This does two things. First it exposes members of Trinity to those outside their own sphere of influence and engages them in the temporal realm, and it exposes members of the community with Christians who care about the world around them. Hopefully, as Kimball, Kinamann, and Lyons have written, this will cause those who have questions or fears of Christians to see Christians living their faith and exhibiting love for the neighbor. In fact some members have reported that their neighbors will say that, since they have gotten to know them better, that they don't seem to be like other Christians; that they seem to be "human."

In addition to servant ministry based around community need, the new structure of governance allows for individual members of the congregation to take initiative in ministry. For instance, one of the leaders of Trinity was concerned about the funding for Trinity's ministry to the homeless through its "shelter ministry." Through this ministry members of Trinity prepare and serve a home-cooked meal to the residents of a local homeless shelter once a month and many times on holidays such as Christmas. The average number of persons served is sixty. This member decided to take a step of faith and ask her local book club members if they would be willing to contribute financially to this ministry. Her book club was not church or faith related. Many members of the club claimed no religious affiliation. However, because of her efforts, not only were funds raised for this ministry, but more importantly, some of the women of her book club asked if they could volunteer to serve as well when it was Trinity's next time to do so.

Again, this brought the members of Trinity and the un-churched in the community together in a common task centered on shared human need. It was yet another opportunity for the members of the community to see Christian love in action and for the members of Trinity to further develop relationships with others outside their Christian family at Trinity.

Finally, ministry is conducted differently as to congregational needs. In the past through the Parish Council, and board system, when a need arose in the congregation the usual way the need was met was to bring it to the board for approval and then to the council. Now, Trinity members are set free to take initiative and to move ahead with meeting needs as long as it is within the budget. A recent example is the “sprucing up” of Trinity’s fellowship hall. Members of Trinity were becoming concerned with the state of general unkempt look of the fellowship hall. They came to me as pastor and asked, “Can we gather a team together to re-wax and repaint the fellowship hall and get rid of all the ‘junk’ that has been collecting in it over the last few years.” To that I simply said, “Go for it! As long as you have secured all of the funding either from the budget, Trinity’s endowment fund, from additional contributions, or all three you are fine.” The project was completed in six weeks. The members of this team met for the express purpose of getting the fellowship hall “spruced up”, gathered estimates for the work to be done, decided on paint colors, and coordinated the floor contractor and painters. After their task was completed there was no more reason to meet. Rather than a lengthy process of approval and discussion, the project was determined to fall under Trinity’s mission and vision statement guidelines and members were set free to do what needed to be done. Funding was gained through Trinity’s endowment. Trinity’s members were involved from beginning to end with

little direction from the trustees or pastor. This is true for other projects around the church campus. When there is a need, the need is made known and members employ their specific gifts or talents to meet that need.

This project has impacted Trinity in a major way in that it has placed servant ministry based in love into the hands of members of the congregation. When Trinity was in consultation with the district concerning developing new by-laws which would outline the new governance structure, the members were reminded by district staff that “While the pastor is tasked with making sure ministry happens, he cannot make you do what you don’t want to do. This model leans heavily on ministry being developed from the ground up. All are accountable for ministry.” It is fair to say that the discipleship workshop helped facilitate how Trinity views ministry and individual responsibility for servant ministry in a major way, hopefully for years to come. It has begun to change attitudes about how members of Trinity live their faith in the “public square.” However, as stated in the introduction, this project has been simply the building of a foundation that will carry Trinity into the future.

#### Implications for the Broader Context of Ministry

As voiced by one of the participants in the post-workshop interview, “Rather than a winsome message that makes them want to know this Savior, Whom we worship, too often we unwittingly put up walls and barriers that drive them away, rather than draw them in.” As the circuit counselor of the Mount Diablo Circuit in the CNH, I hear an ever-growing concern from circuit pastors, and members of their congregations, concerning two things: the aging of congregations and concerns over visitors not returning after their initial visit. Possible solutions



to these concerns may not be easy for aging congregations. If these solutions have to do with changing attitudes toward the non-churched and accepting the new reality that Christianity is no longer viewed as authoritative by the surrounding culture. Without a shift in our attitudes Christians will tend to focus inward for survival rather than take steps of faith to learn ways of effective Gospel communication to the non-churched. Christian churches, especially those who claim to be conservative, traditional, or who confess a high view of the Bible as God's Word, as does the LCMS, must understand that the way they communicate, in both words and actions, is vital. Any sense of condescension, un-acceptance, or a dismissive attitude will cause people to think twice about coming back to a congregation. It also means that Christians have to intentionally keep in mind the things of God as they go about their daily vocations. New Testament writers advise Christians to become all things to all men,<sup>200</sup> to be at peace with others,<sup>201</sup> to be quick to listen and slow to speak.<sup>202</sup> These admonishments, given in a time when the Christian church did not command respect in the surrounding culture, are very apropos to the churches of the CNH—and the churches of the LCMS. The foundational doctrines of the two kinds of righteousness, the priesthood of believers, and the temporal and spiritual realms have helped Trinity's members to begin to live their faith in a different way—breaking down the walls that may keep them from others. The Gospel teaches that, with the assurance of God's acceptance in Jesus, one can turn to his neighbor in love. In turning to one's neighbor in love, the believer can now exercise his priestly duty in the world through prayer for his neighbor, and

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<sup>200</sup>1 Corinthians 9:22

<sup>201</sup>Hebrews 12:14

proclaiming to him the things of God. Now believers can begin to meaningfully view their callings in the world, not as burdensome (although from a human standpoint they may still be hard work), but as an avenue to meet common human need and share God's love.

In practical terms, this project has influenced churches in the Mount Diablo Circuit and in the CNH through further shared workshops on discipleship with members and pastors of other congregations in the circuit, and through testimonials given at district conventions concerning the experiment in ministry that Trinity has undertaken. Trinity was one of the first congregations to enter the revitalization process with the district and to focus this effort on discipleship in building personal relationships with, and servant ministry to, neighbors of our members. Trinity's experiment and struggles have helped refine the process for other congregations as it has shared its experience.

#### Implications for the Existing Body of Knowledge

As to the implications for revising the existing body of knowledge, while books by McNeal, Kimball, Kinnaman, and Lyons have been helpful, this project has shown, in a small way, that Lutheran doctrine is sufficiently deep and wide to address the contemporary issues which Lutheran congregations (and the wider church) face. With the emphasis on God's grace that flows through all of Lutheran theology, Lutherans are well situated to view the world as it is (with all its sin) and then address sin the only way it can be addressed, through the cross. Lutheran doctrine speaks to human need and gives clear, practical, and common-sense guidance as Christians seek to faithfully live as followers of Christ in an increasingly secular culture. The

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<sup>202</sup>James 1:19

implication is that there is a need for Lutherans to write and share what they believe, teach, and confess with the wider church in a more popular way rather than a strictly academic way. There is a need for Lutherans to study and struggle with how to apply doctrine to current challenges. Dr. Robert Kolb's work has been a great encouragement to this project. However, simply put, there needs to be more—more research and writing as to how congregations address their rapidly changing context. As voiced in the post-workshop interviews, the participants appreciated the workshop enough to recommend it to others even non-Lutherans. Why? Because, I believe, Lutheran doctrine is grounded in God's Word and because the doctrines which formed the foundation of this project communicate to the struggles that many congregations and individuals are currently facing.

In relation to previously published studies, this project followed the work of the Rev. Dr. A. Paul Meyer at Trinity by thirty years.<sup>203</sup> While different in length and focus, both find that the ongoing need of each generation of believers is to struggle and to learn what it means to live the faith and show God's love to the neighbor. Both studies emphasize the need for training and equipping of the priesthood of believers for works of service. In the same vein, in relation to Dr. Joel Biermann's study,<sup>204</sup> it shows the need for *continued, intentional teaching* of how God desires us to live and what God expects Christians to do under active righteousness. It also shows that the teaching of passive and active righteousness (at least in Trinity's context)

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<sup>203</sup>Meyer, 141-142

<sup>204</sup>Biermann, 255, 257, 261

communicate more clearly in terms of Christian behavior and life-style over against the common Lutheran distinction of Law and Gospel.

### **Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth**

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, personal growth was one of the purposes of undertaking this project. Through this project I have grown personally and professionally. I believe my understanding of the application of God's Word has expanding greatly both in my personal life and my life as a pastor.

#### Personal Growth

I come from a spiritually diverse background. My mother joined the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, while pregnant with me, at the urging of a Lutheran relative. My father was a non-practicing Southern Baptist who had dabbled in Pentecostalism. In my early childhood memories, church is all but absent. Finally, my father relented and joined the LCMS for the sake of getting me into a confirmation program and getting me confirmed. In my early years, television evangelists, such as Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, were my only touchstone to religious experience in place of local congregational involvement. That changed as we joined a local LCMS mission congregation and my father and mother became strong members.

After confirmation, my spiritual journey took me to involvement with Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU). It was with CRU, as I remember, that I experienced other Christians who were serious about living their faith. This was much different, I thought at the time, than my local

Lutheran congregation where we fought over whether the *Chicago Folk Service* was appropriate, and where I was told, by a well-meaning Director of Christian Education, that my desire to learn how to share my faith was a passing phase.

When it was apparent to me that God was calling me into ministry in my college years I had a stark choice—staff with Campus Crusade for Christ, or becoming a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod pastor. At this point CRU was no longer able to answer my theological and spiritual questions. I was longing to go deeper into God’s Word and theological education. Before making my decision, I borrowed a copy of the *Book of Concord* from my home-church pastor and read it through cover to cover. After this, I was convinced that Lutheran theology was deep enough and wide enough to speak the Gospel to each and every generation and in each and every context. This has been proved in my experience throughout my ministry from Liberia, West Africa, to Nebraska and Indiana. However, California, specifically the San Francisco area, initially caused me some doubt in this area—Africa was far easier! As I struggled to find ways to speak and live my faith as a pastor as well as lead the congregation to do the same, I have discovered that even in what some call the most liberal area of America, Lutheran theology still speaks. It still addresses the fundamental human condition of sin and presents the Savior. But, unlike other church traditions or theologies, doctrines such as the priesthood of believers and the distinction between the temporal and spiritual realm teach the follower of Christ to have compassion on and serve the neighbor for no other reason than that God has commanded him to do so because God’s love has been poured out to him. Through this project I have found that doing good works, showing love to the neighbor and trusting Christ for the day’s challenges

rather than my own strength have become deeper in my life. This project has encouraged me and my congregation to become involved in local community projects and organizations—something that other congregations I have served did not see as a priority. And, through these community groups I have had abundant opportunity, more than in any other congregation or area to date, to share personally the love of Christ in word and deed. I have been able to baptize families that one would never think of entering a church; I have had opportunity to dialogue with Muslims, Sikhs, agnostics, gays, lesbians, and atheists about the teachings of Christ and his Gospel. And I have personally learned through experience that which I taught in the workshop: that a non-judgmental, non-superior, non-dismissive attitude that listens to the other person, and seeks relationship, builds bridges for Gospel communication.

### Professional Growth

As a pastor I have been humbled by what I have learned about the unique call that God has given to his shepherds to teach and model the way of Christ. Trinity is a small congregation in which deep pastoral relationships with the members are built. Rather than being the functional “CEO” of a congregation I have sensed, at a deeper level, through this project that through the pastoral office in which I serve, people really are touched by the Good Shepherd.

I have also learned that there is no age limit on discipleship. Trinity is an aging congregation to which, it would seem, few younger people are attracted. However, we have seen a small, consistent increase in regular worshipers who, surprisingly, are younger (age forty and below). This has come, in part, as older adults begin to develop friendship with younger adults. I increasingly hear from the “younger folks” how much they appreciate the “older folks” and vice

versa. When I first came to Trinity there were fears that we would not survive five years (a great comfort to a newly installed pastor). We made it through five years and while we have increased slightly in worship attendance, I have seen a tremendous amount of servant ministry take place regardless of age. Trinity is a congregation that continues to be fed on God's Word and the sacraments, and it is through these gifts that God sustains his people at Trinity. Not only does God sustain his people at Trinity through these gifts of grace, he prepares and strengthens his people to live the new life in Christ daily. This is much different than depending on programs (which admittedly are necessary in the temporal realm), or some author's ideas on how to grow a healthy congregation. It is God's Word which provides the road map for the Christian life—and the proclamation of the Gospel.

As a pastor of twenty seven years I have worked through several congregational strategic planning programs—some in the same congregation. Through my studies and particularly through this study I have been able to return to what some may call the basics. God's Word works in the lives of his people. Too often we as pastors and congregations try to minimize God's Word and its power in our lives, in lieu of worldly wisdom and logic, which has limitations. I have rediscovered the beauty and the simplicity of the Holy Spirit's work through the Word.

Finally through this project my appreciation for the gift of worship has increased greatly. In my struggles to find appropriate ways to minister in Trinity's context I thought of my home congregation in Nebraska. That congregation was started in 1870. It has experienced many things its existence: multiple wars and conflicts, economic depression and recessions, the

closing of its school, pastoral infidelity, financial shortages and abundance, internal fights and times of peace. I asked a simple question, “What has enabled it, and other congregations like it, through their years to continue as a faithful congregation?” The one answer that became blatantly obvious was worship around Word and Sacraments. Through the rhythm of the liturgy, the Word preached and received in the body and blood of Christ, in the prayers of the church and the praise and teaching sung in the hymns, disciples are formed and shaped each week for worship the rest of the week as living sacrifices. I have been one in the past who fully embraced many of the so-called church growth concepts. While many of these were of practical help and in their time may have helped the church grow in numbers, now I question their validity—specifically as to whose kingdom I was building. In the San Francisco area, church growth principles are, frankly, things of the past. This, I have learned, is a good thing because it gives me, as a pastor, the time to focus on those gifts of God that do form Christian disciples and encourage them in servant ministry—these being the gifts of God’s Word and the gifts of grace given in baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

### **Recommendations**

As a result of this project, it has become apparent to me as pastor that constant teaching and modeling as to the Christian life needs to take place. During this project there was a small Bible study designed and conducted for leaders of the congregation. This took place over a two year period. During this time the main themes of the Old and New Testaments were covered. As a pastor it was evident to me when I came to Trinity that, while many of our members had been churching for most of their lives, basic knowledge of the Bible was lacking. As a consequence



there was a lack of understanding about living the Christians life. This was particularly true of many of the younger leaders. Furthermore, if Christ and his mission are at the center of Scripture, and the work of the church, I thought it essential that members of Trinity begin to see the divine thread that runs through all of Scripture. Finally we, as Lutherans, place God's Word at the center of all we do. We confess that it is through God's Word that the Holy Spirit works to transform us into the image of Christ.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, any discipleship has to find its foundation in God's Word.

In selecting materials I used *The Divine Drama* from Crossways International for the Old Testament portion of the study<sup>206</sup>. For the New Testament portion of the study, we examined several chapters each week (or sections according to the Concordia Study Bible outline of the book). I developed a simple straight-forward process by which we would ask four questions every week of the text: 1. what is the context? 2. What do you observe happening in the text? 3. What is being taught? 4. How do we apply this text to our daily lives? This process allowed for the application of doctrine and, maybe more importantly, the participants to struggle with the text and its meaning for them. One instance that stands out in my mind is the discussions that took place (and the struggle) over Jesus' command to love our enemies in light of a recent, local, discovery by the authorities of a girl who had been kidnapped and held for ten years. Participants asked the question, "Does God love even this person who committed such a crime?" The follow-up question was then, "How can we love such a person?" This discussion delved

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<sup>205</sup>2 Corinthians 3:17-18

<sup>206</sup>Wendt, Harry, *The Divine Drama* (Minneapolis: Crossways International, 2004), 1-132.

into the all three of the doctrinal legs of this project. Trinity's leaders struggled with the distinction between God's rule in the temporal realm through law, and the spiritual realm through the Gospel. Questions were asked such as, "What really does justify a person before God?," and "Can God really forgive this person who committed the crime?" Finally, the question, "What ought to be my response to people like this?," helped the Bible study participants explore the priesthood of the baptized.

From all indications, this study was beneficial to our leaders and helped me to develop closer relationships with them. There have been requests for another study like this and consequently at the current time we have begun another study that is examining certain doctrines rather than a broad sweep of Scripture. Through these studies leaders of the congregation struggled with the work of the congregation and what it means to be the people of God in this place. The congregation plans on conducting a yearly discipleship workshop, not only for Trinity, but also to include any of the circuit congregations that may like to attend. Also there are requests from the CNH District staff that this workshop be included in some of the district revitalization gatherings.

As to further research, I would recommend that if similar research is conducted, it would be more beneficial to conduct a longitudinal, descriptive study. It is the opinion of this researcher that participant-observation over an extended period of time would yield better data as to the life change that takes place in individuals and in the life and ministry of a congregation as intentional training in discipleship occurs. A descriptive study would, as the name implies, describe the work of the Holy Spirit as he works in his people, through the Word of God. I

found that, because of the make-up of Trinity's members, the two Likert surveys were for all intents and purposes useless in determining change in attitudes. The members of Trinity have great attitudes toward Christian doctrines. However, living the Christian life has been a struggle. I would suggest a descriptive study over the course of a year or maybe two.

Another area of suggested research, on which I have found little written, may be on ministry and discipleship among the vast number of people who are now retiring; retiring at a younger age and still in good health. The current role of so-called "seniors in the work place" is now becoming a national conversation. With the aging of America, pastors, teachers, and church leaders may now need to look at the many opportunities, challenges, and different priorities of ministry among this growing population.

### Concluding Thoughts

As a pastor I continue to learn from many people, including the members of Trinity and my parents. My mother, who is in the same age bracket as the majority of Trinity members, recently told me that she and my father are not as active in the local congregation as they used to be. By this she meant that they still attend worship and attend a seniors' group at the church but are not involved in the many programs and committees that they once were. However, as they describe to me their daily and weekly activities, they are far from inactive. They visit church members and friends who now reside in nursing homes. They visit shut-ins, those in the hospital, and keep involved in the lives of their children and grandchildren. Through these activities they show God's love. Many of the members of Trinity do the same. When they think of their involvement in the local congregation and community, it is not in terms of programs, it is

in terms of relationships and worship. This reinforces to me that discipleship, living faithfully the new life that God has given us in Christ, takes place over the life-time of a believer primarily in the relationships that God has given him in this world. This means that a believer never stops being a disciple regardless of age. God always places his children in relationships through which his love can be shown and communicated until life in this temporal realm is over. It is, then, through worship, centered on his Word and the gifts of baptism and the Lord's Supper, that God strengthens and forms the followers of Christ for their life of discipleship at every stage of life.

## APPENDIX ONE

### CALIFORNIA, NEVADA AND HAWAII DISTRICT-LCMS REVITALIZATION

#### REPORT

**Transforming for Mission Consultation  
Trinity Lutheran Church - Walnut Creek, CA  
June 6-8, 2008**

The consultation team wishes to thank the staff and members of Trinity Lutheran Church for their cooperation in the preparation of the self-study materials and their openness in the interviews and group meetings. We present this report in the hope that the Spirit of God has been present in its drafting and will be present as it is considered and implemented.

#### **Strengths:**

**1) Servant Hearts:** Members of Trinity have demonstrated hearts of God's servants in a number of areas. There are a core group of individuals who have remained loyal to and active in the congregation for 40 plus years. They express a real commitment to serving God in worship using historic and current music styles. A number of instances were expressed of the congregation responding to specific needs with great generosity.

**2) Resources:** Trinity has been blessed with facilities that seem to be very functional and generally well kept. The worship center has a classic beauty that allows for a variety of worship opportunities. The purchase of the adjacent houses in 2000 was an investment in future ministry options. The use of the facilities by many groups such as STARS makes good use of facilities and provides an income stream as well. There seems to be financial potential at Trinity which could be available for use in expanding ministries. The pre-school for the past few years is fully enrolled and self-funded.

**3) Servant Outreach Activities:** Many examples were shared of the congregation's varied servant activities. This includes ongoing support of the Concord Homeless Shelter, a recent tradition of providing full Christmas day dinners at that facility, and giving generous gift bags. They are active in the local food bank. Congregational members have initiated the giving of Back-to-school Backpacks and the fledgling MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) program.

**4) Gifted People:** Trinity is blessed with a gifted professional and volunteer staff. Many of the professional staff have come on board more recently and each staff member has made significant contributions. Pastor Dave Moore is seen as an effective communicator, worship leader, and equipper. DCE intern, \_\_\_\_\_ has worked hard at developing children's and youth ministries to such a degree that the congregation has called her as a fulltime DCE. \_\_\_\_\_ has

provided solid management of the Pre-school to bring it to a point of strength. \_\_\_\_\_ seems to have brought real administrative competence as office manager. Lois Nelson has served in the music ministry for a number of productive years. Volunteer staff overwhelmed us with their commitment, positive attitudes, and productivity. Lay leaders exhibit a variety of gifts as well as a positive view of future ministries.

**5) Care within the congregation:** The team heard numerous expressions of the strong long term relationships within the congregation that have been active for decades. There is a real sense of care that connects the long term members of Trinity.

### **Concerns:**

**1) Aging of the Congregation:** Trinity has experienced the aging of its long term members. The consequence has been some diminishing of energy and time available as well as a lessening of the numbers due to relocation and death. This has produced a smaller pool of leaders and workers so that some are experiencing fatigue and potential burnout as they are called to do more and more. There has been a lack of generational bridging to such a degree that the 20-40 year old population is very small which also creates a small number of children that would normally be part of their families.

**2) Lack of Unified Vision:** Trinity has difficulty articulating a unified vision. Motivating people on an ongoing basis is a challenge. There are many activities but there doesn't seem to be a unifying theme or goal. This has created a lack of momentum, since people aren't sure where they are headed. There is nothing to be passionate about in the big picture. Although the congregation values worship, there is confusion on worship times, and strategies

**3) Limited effectiveness of systems:** In June, 2004, the congregation voted to put its by-laws, in reference to the jobs of the Church Council, in abeyance until May 31, 2005. There is no indication that the structure issues that generated this action have been addressed in any positive ways. There seems to be confusion on how to get things done. A number of people expressed frustration on the lack of communication between groups and within the congregation in general.

**4) Inability to attract and hold new families:** Many people at Trinity seem to have a number of established long-term relationships. This is good, but limits the number of new relationships that could be established. (Their "Legos" are full.) New people attending the church can find it difficult to find a real friend who has time for them. This has created an invisible membrane that limits the connection of new people. Some families have attended for many months, but seem to fall away easily because they have no deep relationships within the congregation. Without long-term relationships, the burning question is, "Is this a place to invite your friends?"

**5) Lack of meaningful connections with un-churched people:** Trinity speaks the language of mission but has limited real interaction with people who are not churched. The servant events are

definite ministry but don't allow for the development of long term relationships. Even the relationship with the pre-school seems to be distant so that there isn't much contact with un-churched parents. There is a lack of community identity with confusion between Trinity and the "church on Trinity Street." There is no identifiable "brand" within the community. The location is secluded and difficult to find even though it is close to 680. Signage is limited.

**Prescriptions:**

**1) Season of Prayer and Envisioning:** Under the leadership of Pastor Dave, and with the assistance of district staff, Trinity will engage in a "Season of Prayer and Envisioning." The time will begin with a prayer process that includes repenting for past self-centeredness and failure to reach into the lives of unbelievers with the Gospel, asking for God's guidance in discerning a vision for an outward focused ministry in this community, and celebrating the ministry that God has done through Trinity over the years. The season will conclude with an envisioning process that includes a written vision statement. This process will begin by September 1, 2008 and conclude by November 15, 2008.

**2) Partnership in children's ministry:** Pastor Dave, Callie, and Stephanie, in consultation with district staff will lead a process, with input from church staff, pre-school staff, congregational members and pre-school families that develops an assessment of current family needs in this community. They will then develop and implement an ongoing plan for addressing those needs with positive impact. The assessment process will be completed by January 1, 2009 and the plan implemented by June 1, 2009.

**3) Developing personal relationships with un-churched people:** Under the leadership of Pastor Dave, the congregation will begin to inspire and equip members of Trinity to develop relationships with un-churched people in their lives in order to model and express the Gospel. This will include ongoing prayer; and 2 workshops a year to develop relational skills and provide personal encouragement. The prayer process will begin September 1, 2008 and the first workshop will be held by November 15, 2008.

**4) Structure consultation:** Under the leadership of the Council and Pastor Dave, Trinity will identify and contract with an appropriate consultant to review the current governance structure; develop a proposed structure that addresses current organizational needs, with consideration of the "Accountable leader Model;" and present the proposal to the congregation for approval.

This process will begin by October 1, 2008 with the proposed amended structure presented to the voters for approval by June 15, 2009.

**5) Discipling and Equipping members for ministry and leadership:** In consultation with staff and lay leaders, Pastor Dave will develop and institute an ongoing discipleship process that prepares members of Trinity to grow in their faith; equips them to participate in ministry/leadership roles; and focuses them on servant ministry to all people, both outside and inside the fellowship. The plan will be presented to the congregation on Reformation Sunday October 26, 2008, and be implemented by January 1, 2009.

**Conclusion:** We want to thank you for the opportunity to consult with you. It was a great honor to be the recipients of your personal sharing, and we trust that the Lord will bless your future ministry. Our prayers are with you as you consider these prescriptions, and we hope to be working with you as you touch the people of Walnut Creek with God's love.



## APPENDIX TWO

### SERMON SERIES AND WORKSHOP NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

January 2011

It is the New Year! It is time, if we haven't already, to look to this New Year and see what God wants us to do both in our personal lives and as a congregation.

This year we will be focusing our efforts here at Trinity on our personal and intentional discipleship. In other words we will explore how each of us, and together collectively, we can better serve our Lord through serving our neighbors and community. On January 9<sup>th</sup> I will begin a four Sunday sermon series on Christian discipleship. Epiphany is a great time for us to focus on this because of the tremendous mission emphasis that this season of the church year presents. The following will be the sermon topics and corresponding Bible texts so you can read ahead and be prepared:

January 9 <sup>th</sup>	Born Again: What God does in Baptism	Matthew 3:13-17
January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Follow Me: Jesus' Invitation	John 1:29-42
January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Transformed: Becoming Fishers of Men	Matthew 4:12-23
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	Called to Serve: Living in the Kingdom	Matthew 5:1-12

After this sermon series I will conduct a three part workshop on discipleship entitled "Living the Life in the Real World." This workshop will take place on the following Saturdays: February 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The focus of each workshop will be as follows, "The Reality of Our New Creation," "What Kind of Neighbor am I to be: How to show God's Love" and "Applications: Learning to Relate in New Ways to Our Neighbor and the Environment." Each workshop will be from 9 am to 12:00 noon.

As you may recall, one of the prescriptions that we have been working on over the last three years in our Transformation for Mission Process is in the area of discipleship. Each year we have had something to offer to help us be transformed into disciples of Christ. This year I am hoping that this will spur our thinking and further form our attitudes as how we can practically serve as lights of Christ in this world. Also in the interest of full disclosure, discipleship has been a passion of mine since a high school student and I have focused on

this topic in my seminary training. I am currently completing my Doctor of Ministry degree through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and this will be part of my final project. My goal is to finish this year. I would like to see as many of you attend the workshop as possible. I have had interest in this workshop as well from other pastors in the circuit and hope that they will send some of their members also. As other pastors and I have talked about this, this may be what is needed to bring those congregations together in our circuit that have a desire to work together. Let's see what God has in store! Again I hope as many of you as can will set aside the time to study and to attend the workshop!

Have a happy and blessed New Year!  
Pastor Dave

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

February 2011

2011 is moving right along! As we enter February I would again like to remind you of our Discipleship Workshop that will take place on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Each session is a standalone session but all three will make a complete unit. By attending all three sessions you (and Trinity) will gain the most. However knowing our hectic lives and understanding that some may not be able to attend all session I encourage you to attend any that you can. Each workshop will be from 9:00 am to 12:00pm in Founder's Hall.

I have asked Jon Lewis and the Praise Team to lead us in music as we gather together for each session. Each workshop will consist of a time in the Word as we focus on discipleship and then a practical application time. The sessions will be as follows:

- Maximum Impact: Living by Faith
- A Blessing to the World: Living as a Priest
- Hitting the Streets: Living in the World

Now, as we begin to ask the next question at Trinity as we come to the end of our three year Transforming for Mission process this summer: "What next?" It is my prayer that this workshop will help each of us navigate those changes in our own lives, no matter what stage we may be in, and that we at Trinity may begin to take the next steps on the path that God guides us to be faithful in seeking the lost and making disciples.

The workshop will be held in Founder's Hall. I hope to see all of you there as together we learn what it means to live as disciples in this post-churched culture that surrounds us!

Pastor Dave

## APPENDIX THREE

### SERMON SERIES OUTLINES

#### A Baptized Child of God Matthew 3:13-17

##### Introduction:

- Ivy Smith . . .baptized at age 101
- Trinity member, Ralph Upton, called home to heaven last year, baptized at age 86
- It is never too late, you can never be too old

Transition: Baptism has been minimized, misunderstood and misused throughout the history of the Church and sometimes we are tempted to say that it was “just a cultural thing back then” and dismiss its importance. Baptism is important! If we are to begin to understand what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ, if we are going to be intentional about our discipleship we must begin where discipleship begins . . . Baptism. And there is no better place to start than with Jesus himself and his own Baptism.

##### I. Jesus stood in our place at the Jordan River

- A. Often the prophets of the Old Testament would confess the sins of the people and repent on their behalf.
  - a. Daniel as he confessed the sins of the people Dan. 9:4-5
  - b. As comes to John to be baptized he performs the repentance that we need and were unable to do
- B. Here the sinless Son of God begins his ministry for us which leads him to Good Friday

##### II. Because Jesus stood in our place at the Jordan River; we are now able to be adopted children of the Father

- A. As Jesus goes up out of the water we have the witness of the Spirit and the loving words of the Father
- B. As we are baptized the Father sees us through the Son and the same words become ours.
  - a. Remember the words of the Baptism Liturgy as the congregation welcomes that newly baptized child? “We welcome you into the Lord’s family. We receive you as a fellow member of the body of Christ a child of the same heavenly Father, to work with us in his kingdom.” (LW204)
  - b. Baptism is that place where the Father makes us his child and puts his name on us. Baptism is that public place where God says, “You are mine”

III. Baptism is God's call to each of us to live as his child . . .to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

A. Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus final command for us is that we make disciples by: 1. Baptizing and 2. Teaching each generation the truths of the faith and how to live those truths daily

a. as a baptized child of God it is our purpose to give glory and honor to our Father through loving him and loving others in the name of Jesus.

B. In Baptism the Spirit of God comes to dwell with us, the same Spirit that manifested itself as a dove, the very same Spirit of Christ, comes to conform us to the image of Christ that we may experience the blessings of forgiveness and do the work of our Lord.

Conclusion: Ivy Smith was excited about her Baptism, Ralph was excited about his Baptism . . . with good reason . . .Baptism is that place where God says to each of us this is my beloved child with whom I am well pleased . . . and as such, just like our older brother Jesus, we not live wholly for our Heavenly Father.

Come: Jesus' Invitation  
John 1:29-42

Introduction: Path to church statistics

Transition: This morning the experience of Andrew and Peter shows us the essence of our discipleship. We follow Jesus, that's what Christian disciples do, and we bring others to him!

I. John the Baptist's purpose was to reveal the Messiah to others.

- A. John knew his purpose
- B. John was not shy about it
- C. He knew it was not about him, but Jesus

II. As John pointed to Jesus as the Messiah, a decision had to be made . . .to follow or not to follow.

- A. Faith enables a disciple to follow the master
- B. The first thing Andrew did was to go get his brother . . . Simon
- C. Following Jesus brings a new identity Peter

III. Putting it into practice

- A. A follower of Jesus needs to live by faith
  - a. John, did not know
  - b. "come and you will see"

B. Disciples point to Jesus

C. You and I have been given a new identity----child of God----called to bless the world.

Would you live the life you are now living if you were doomed to live it over and over again for eternity?

If not, then why are you living it now.

Transformed: Becoming Fishers of Men  
Matthew 4:12-23

I. The Kingdom is at hand

- A. Jesus brings the kingdom of God because he is the King
  - a. wherever the king reigns there is the Kingdom

- B. Entering the Kingdom entails a changing of our life—repentance

II. Once in the Kingdom we are called to follow Jesus

- A. A disciple learns from and imitates the master

- B. Jesus ministry consisted of two basic things . . . preaching/teaching and acts mercy specifically in the healing of people.

III. Our discipleship consists of the same priorities

- A. Talking and Walking

- B. As we grow in our Christian faith we grow in
  - a. imitating Christ
  - b. having his attitudes and mind

Called to Serve  
Living in the Kingdom  
Matthew 5:1-12

I. Blessed Are . . .

- A. As those who trust Christ, we have been given a gift. That gift is the person of the Holy Spirit . . . . The third person of the God-head.
- B. He transforms us into the image of Christ, so that we may cooperate with what he is doing in the world. That showing God's love to fallen mankind.

II. The Sermon on the Mount, Beginning with the Beatitudes, is an outline and explanation of how Christ expects his redeemed children to live!

Lets review:

III. The Beatitudes Begin to show us Kingdom Living.

- A. Every one of the Beatitudes goes against what the world thinks is of importance and great.
- B. Yet, everyone reflects God's will for his people and are accompanied by a blessing.

Our challenge today as Christians in this culture is that the world has changed. What people around us need is Christians who live authentic lives of love that reflect God to the folks. We are continuing in our Transformation for Mission Journey. We have struggled with how we live faithful Christian lives in this culture. The answer in many ways is simple—and hard—we walk in the footsteps of Christ.



## APPENDIX FOUR

### WORKSHOP OUTLINES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Living the Life Now: Following Christ in the Real World  
A Blessing to the World: Living as a Priest  
Saturday February 5, 2011

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 9:00-9:30   | Gathering, Worship                          |
| 9:30-9:45   | Review and Refresh                          |
| 9:45-10:15  | Dan Kimball Video Clip and discussion       |
| 10:15-10:30 | Break                                       |
| 10:30-10:45 | Gathering, Song                             |
| 10:45-11:50 | A Blessing to the World: Living as a Priest |
| 11:50-12:00 | Closing Worship                             |

## Maximum Impact: *Living by Faith*

### What God has done for us.

- Romans 1:16-17
- Romans 3:19-26
- Habakkuk 2:4 is important as we understand Paul's emphasis on "saved by grace through faith." He quotes the same verse not only in Romans 1:17 but also Galatians 3:11. The writer of the Book of Hebrews also quotes this verse in chapter 10:38.
- Philippians 2:5-11

### Take-A-Ways

- God in Christ has dealt with our sin. At the cross we start over with the Father.
- We receive this wonderful gift of forgiveness, new relationship with the Father, and new life totally by trusting in God's Word that declares it is indeed ours.
- Nothing we do or think can bring us into this relationship with our Father. No "right" attitude can bring us any closer to this grace.
- Because of God's grace there is no longer any need for our self-justification before God, and neither will he accept it. God initiates it; he works it, and gives us this gift. As Romans chapter three points out, this righteousness that is given to us by God for Christ sake is totally passive on our part.

### How we are to live because of what God has done for us.

- Ephesians 2:8-10, Ephesians 4:11-13
- James 1:19-27
- Psalm 19:7
- Mark 12:28-34

### Take-A-Ways

- When we are brought to faith in Christ we are given a new life to *live*; our life is not our own to live as we please, but one that is given to us for God's purpose and mission.
- This new life is summarized by Jesus in the two greatest commandments of love
- Grace has everything to do with what God has done for us; love has everything to do with our actively living this new life so that those around us may know the love of God found in Christ
- This active living is made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit and is always lived with the trust in what God has done for us; this life in Jesus makes us truly human

Reflection Questions: Beyond the Christian Bubble.

1. Do you think that the responses of the college students who were interviewed are shared by the general population in the Bay Area? Why or why not?
2. Where are these perceptions right? Where are they wrong?
3. Do you think Kimball's analogy of the "Christian Bubble" is accurate?
4. It would be fair to say that many people in our Bay Area culture have a misconception of true Christianity and Christians in general. What are three things you can do in your own life to show people what true Christians believe and how they live?

Living the Life Now: Following Christ in the Real World  
A Blessing to the World: Living as a Priest  
Saturday February 12, 2011

- 9:00-9:30      Gathering Worship
- 9:30-9:45      Review and Refresh
- 9:45-10:15     Dan Kimball Video Clip and discussion
- 10:15-10:30    Break
- 10:30-10:45    Gathering Song
- 10:45-11:50    A Blessing to the World: Living as a Priest
- 11:50-12:00    Closing Worship

**A Blessing to the World: *Living as a Priest***

***Discipleship is nothing less than the fulfillment of God's calling to each believer in Baptism to be a Priest in the world.***

**The Calling of God's People to be Priests**

- Genesis 12:1-3
- The Old Testament-Exodus 19:6, Isaiah 61:6
- The New Testament-1Peter 2:4-10, Revelation 1:6, 5:10
- Our model for the Priesthood is Jesus himself who is a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, Genesis 14:8, Psalm 110:4.

**Take- A-Ways**

- Through faith in Christ and by virtue of the benefits that God gives us in Baptism, we have put on Christ (Galatians 3:27) and we are being transformed into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 8:29)
- This means that part of our being conformed to the image of Christ is that we are being conformed to his calling as priest.
- This priesthood that Jesus was called to was a lay priesthood apart from the Levitical Priesthood.

**How we are to live as priests in this world?**

- Romans 12:1-8
- 2 Peter 2:5
- Romans 15:15-16

**Take-A-Ways**

- Our life is not our own, it is to be placed on the altar of God as a living sacrifice. As Christ sacrificed himself, we too sacrifice ourselves so that people may come into contact with the living God through us.
- Each one of us is gifted for priestly service in the Mission of God so that those gifts we have are employed in sharing the Gospel.

## Case Studies

### Christians as Judgmental and Political? Reflection Questions

1. Christians often define themselves (and are defined by others) by what they are against rather than what they are for. Have you had any experiences like Dan's friend that have hindered you from church involvement or hanging around Christians?
2. Is it ever appropriate for Christians to express social or political opinions? If so in what spirit should it be done?
3. Respond to the comment by Dan's friend that at certain Christian events there might as well be separate water fountains. Are we really that bad?
4. Read Genesis 12: 1-3. In the context of what was heard in the video what does it mean that the descendants of Abram will be a blessing to the world? How might defining ourselves by what we are for rather than what we are against serve the purpose of the Gospel.

How Shall We Live As Priests?  
Real life stories to make us think.

Case #1

Members of the Education Team at a prominent church in town, that has a before and after school program for its pre-school and K-8 Christian Day School students, notice that public school children from the apartment complex next door walk right past the church every morning and afternoon to and from the bus. A thought has occurred to some members of the team that there could be a potential ministry opportunity to these children and their parents. As the team discusses the opportunity in their next two meetings a plan was presented to offer both the before school and after school program to the families in the apartment complex. These would pay the same amount for the program as the church/school families. Not a few members of the team objected expressing concerns over security and liability. However the argument that won the day was from the team leader who said, "I've seen those kids and I don't want those kids around my kids. I think that our programs should only serve the members of our congregation that have children in our parochial school." Discuss this case study in light of what you learned today. What do you think is right or wrong with this response?

Case #2

A survey was taken in a congregation which would attempt to ascertain the attitudes of the congregation toward the leadership of the congregation and the priorities of the congregational members. After all the data was analyzed by the research company among the many questions and responses the following responses were telling of the congregation's attitudes and ministry.

- 95% of the respondents thought the pastors provided excellent leadership and provided clear relevant Biblical teaching and preaching
- 95% of respondents appreciated the ministries and programs of the congregation because these programs "helped them" in some way.
- 90% of the respondents when asked what they appreciated about the congregation responded with the "the opportunity to receive the Lord's Supper"
- 85% of respondents appreciated the congregations music and variety of worship styles
- 15% of respondents said that reaching out beyond the congregation to the poor and needy in the community should be a priority of the congregation.
- 5% of respondents said that personal living of the faith and sharing of their faith was important.

What kind of picture do these survey results paint of the members of this congregation? According to what we learned today what is right or wrong with this picture?

Living the Life Now: Following Christ in the Real World  
Hitting the Streets: Living in the World  
Saturday February 19, 2011

- 9:00-9:20      Gathering Worship
- 9:20-9:30      Review and Refresh
- 9:30-10:00    Dan Kimball Video Clip and discussion
- 10:00-10:15   Break
- 10:15-10:30   Gathering Song
- 10:30-11:30   Hitting the Streets: Living in the World
- 11:30-11:45   Workshop Evaluation
- 11:45-12:00   Closing Worship and Sending



### **Hitting the Streets: *Living in the World***

***God works through and sustains this world because he loves his creation. It is here that the “tracks” of God are seen by all regardless of religious background.***

#### **The Two Realm Concept**

- The Realm of the visible, temporal kingdom of this world-Psalm 104, Romans 13:1-7, Matthew 5:44-45, Romans 1:18-23
- The Realm of the spiritual “Kingdom of God”-Mark 1:14-15, Matthew 28:16-20, Colossians 1:9-14, John 18:36.

#### **Take- A-Ways**

- God is at work in the temporal kingdom of this world to accomplish his will. This is the kingdom where “the sword” and natural law keep balance and order. God loves the world.
- The Kingdom of the God is where Christ reigns specifically through the Gospel. All the saints both on earth and in heaven are members of this kingdom. Christ came to establish his Kingdom in the temporal realm because it is enslaved by sin and the devil.
- On the last day Christ will bring all things both temporal (new heavens and new earth) and the Kingdom of God under his single reign.
- Both Kingdoms must maintain their distinctive nature even though both are ruled by God and do overlap (Christians live in the temporal world).

#### **“Leveraging” the truths of the temporal kingdom**

- The challenge for the disciple of Christ is to learn and listen so as to find the “track(s)” through which God’s love can be communicated.”
- Christians need not fear the temporal kingdom because God loves it and rules in it as well.
- Through our engagement in the temporal kingdom (going outside the Christian bubble) we show and prove God’s unconditional love in Christ.
- Our call is to be a good citizen in both kingdoms.

#### **Making it happen**

1. List three area where you personally can intersect and engage the world around you.
2. What service opportunities are there in the local community that your congregation can tap into.

Do Christians Think Everybody Else is Wrong?  
Reflection Questions

1. How has the religious landscape of America changed? What has this done to the authority of Christianity? What do Americans mean when they say, “spiritual but not religious?”

2. What is the main problem the owner of the coffee shop had with Christians? What did he say that impressed him about Kimball as they discussed religion? What does that teach us?

3. Read Acts 17:16-27. How did Paul witness for Christ in this very spiritual and religious city of Athens? What can we learn from his example that may help us with friends like Dugan?

## **APPENDIX FIVE**

### **POST-WORKSHOP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

#### Post Workshop Interview Questions

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?
2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?
3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?
4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

## APPENDIX SIX

Of the twenty members of Trinity that attended the workshop, thirteen responded to a request for an interview. Others declined primarily because of vacation time and health issues. The following are the transcribed "verbatim" to the interview questions. Each interviewee is simply referred to as "Participant 1," "Participant 2," etc. Three of the participants preferred to send their answers via email. However if a person preferred to send their responses by email, I made contact later to follow up and clarify. Two of the verbatim are from couples interviewed, participants 3-4 and 8-9.

### Participant 1

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

Having it reaffirmed that we must get out of our Christian "bubble." It seems we Christians tend to put up walls that exclude people. Also I liked the interaction that took place—listening to others and how they felt.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

Next steps. Where do we go from here? Cross fertilization of ideas that we can do as churches. We are all small congregations maybe if we presented more of united front we would get more ministry done. Ideas of joint things we can do.

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

I have been personally encouraged to build up relationships with non-Christians through my interactions outside church. When we look at the rental process we have in place at Trinity we need to look at rentals that are providing for needs of those who need help in our community.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Definitely recommend this workshop to all congregations as I think it will help all of us to thing outside the "bubble and how churches have changed over the last few years, and how we should be structure ourselves going forward. For friend, I think the workshop would have to be more tailored as it was mainly for Lutherans.

## **Participant 2**

1. What was most beneficial aspect of the workshop for you?

The workshop reaffirmed for me that we need to get out of the bubble.

The idea of the bubble, I never thought of that.

Also, getting a chance to just talk with other Christians about this, and people from other churches.

The small group interaction was great.

I understand how the church can build walls especially with much of the negative attitudes. The workshop has encouraged me look for opportunities to be a disciple.

Having reaffirmed that we need to get out of the bubble and listening to what others had to say.

Understanding how little I spend outside the "Christian bubble". Most of my friends are churched.

Understanding the importance of listening to others.

I liked the whole thing!, the energy, fellowship, music and teaching.

The Kimball video, especially of the Santa Cruz coffee shop and the idea of finding common ground to share the faith.

The video was very beneficial, and the comments on how we can begin to change the negative perceptions of the church.

Idea of the Christian bubble really impressed me.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

I thought this was geared more toward the younger generations. Perhaps more on what could be done in the retirement community around us.

I would liked to have seen something on "what do we do next." Maybe if we unite with other churches we could get more done.

While the content of the workshop really helped me it left me with the begging question, what next.

What are the next steps? It would be nice to see what other Lutheran churches are doing. Although we seem as Lutherans not to be doing well in attracting a younger generation. I like the way Trinity is involved in reaching out in social ministry.

I feel that our worship service (first service traditional) does a good job of addressing sin in the confession and absolution, but do we also celebrate the joy we have in Christ? We could be more positive as Lutherans.

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

I have personally been encouraged to intentionally begin to build relationships with non-Christians. As we rent property maybe we should try to look to see how we could adjust the rent to help those in the community who need help.

For me the workshop encouraged me to make God a part of my everyday thought processes and the way I act. People at work know that I am a Christian, but now I need to set an example for myself and them.

I personally feel in a real way to intentionally share my faith and way of life with those who do not know Christ, especially my friends and relatives.

No matter who it is, if I'm talking with someone and they tell me about something going on in their life, I make a point to tell them I will pray for them ... and I do.

None.

Nothing

Maybe getting more involved with the women's mission project.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Yes, because the workshop exposes us to our tunnel vision as Christians especially through the Christian Bubble concept. I have been through many evangelism workshops and the results have been little. I liked this one because it emphasized the real need for personal

relationship building. In my career this has proved the most effective way to get things done .... Through personal relationships.

Yes, it challenges us to "think outside the bubble!"

Definitely, we have been commissioned to make disciples of all nations, and we need to figure out how to get our faith out of the sanctuary and into the community.

I would definitely recommend this worship to friends. I think it would be valuable for both believers and non-believers, as the videos convey an authentic view of Christian hearts longing to share the good news, not because of any self-serving, but because of the joy of knowing Christ and the desire to have others know that joy as well.

Yes, I think it was great because it focused on getting us out of the "bubble."

Yes, it helped all of us I think to get out of the "bubble" and start thinking about those around us.

Yes it helped me look at the un-churched in a new way.

Yes, it gave us an opportunity to discuss with each other how to better relate to the community.

## Participant 3-4

### Post Workshop Interview Questions

#### 1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

Having it reaffirmed that we must get out of our "bubble". Also listening/hearing what the other participants felt.

The idea that the way to approach speaking to an "interested" person is to go slowly and find "common ground" was an excellent one. The small group and sharing of ideas. That was most helpful and interesting.

#### 2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

The next steps. Cross fertilization of ideas that we can do as churches - we're all small congregations with limited resources and personnel. Maybe as a united front we might be able to get more ministry done.

The Lutheran Church is not doing very well in the growth aspect. It might have been interesting to explore ideas that churches (especially Lutheran churches) have tried that did bring in new members ..... or how they kept members that have a tendency to slip out the back door. .... or found ways to inspire the members that they already have to be more active. All of these problems have been with us since the beginning of the church, probably! Which churches in our immediate Bay Area have grown or at least not lost membership? Why? We personally feel that Trinity is involved in many social ministries and is certainly trying to provide for the different interests of the members.

#### 3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

I have personally been encouraged to build up relationships with non-Christians



through my interactions outside of church.

As we look at the rental process and what we are charging, we should look at those rentals that are providing a need to those who need help within our community. I have been encouraged to try working with the homeless shelter ministry, and I would like to get more involved in giving our church grounds more "curb appeal." We believe visitors and potential members do notice the appearance of the place they are visiting.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Definitely recommend this workshop to all congregations as I think it will help all of us to think outside the "bubble" and how churches have changed over the last few years, and how we should be structuring ourselves going forward. For friends, I think the workshop would have to be more tailored as it was mainly for Lutherans.

## **Participant 5**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

I felt that the video segments were really insightful into perspectives widely held in the Bay area (and elsewhere) regarding both what Christians are like, and just what true Christianity is. Watching this video raised my awareness of how powerful the attitudes and actions of those who are believers can impact people who do not yet know Christ as Lord and Savior. In such a real way we are His ambassadors and it was startling, but very believable, to see how negative our witness can impact others. Rather than a winsome message that makes them want to know this Savior, Whom we worship, too often we unwittingly put up walls and barriers that drive them away, rather than draw them in. It was interesting to me that many of the negative impressions came from the media, and handed-out tracts, rather than from intimate friendship with Christians.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

I did not come away from the completion of the Saturday gatherings with a feeling of something missing. I thought they were very satisfying in their content, though I think they did beg the question of, "What's next?"

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

I personally felt a real nudge to share, in an intentional way, my personal faith beliefs with those of my friends and acquaintances who seem not to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

I would definitely recommend this workshop to friends. I think it would be valuable for both believers and non-believers, as the videos convey an authentic view of Christian hearts longing to share the good news, not because of any self-serving motive, but because of the joy of knowing Christ and the desire to have others know that joy as well.

## **Participant 6**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

The chance to talk with other believers about God, and think about what it means to be a disciple. I really enjoyed meeting people from other churches, also.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't? I thought it was all good. 3.

What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop? For me, it was making God more a part of my everyday thought process and the way I approach people. People at work know that I am a Christian. The next thing I need to do in my life is to set an example for others and live my faith more.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

I think it was great. It got us all thinking about the right things. I would recommend it because it did an excellent job of focusing on how to get outside the bubble, as the video put it, and connecting with non-Christians.

## **Participant 7**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

I don't see myself as being "inside the bubble", but I do understand that church can be more comfortable inside the building than out in the real world, especially when facing attitudes like the students who claimed to love Christ but hate Christians. The workshop has encouraged me to look for opportunities to be a disciple.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

Nothing

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

I am not quite ready to ask people how I can be a blessing in their life, but I try to make a conscious effort to set an example in dealings with others. And when people tell me about problems they are having in their lives, I tell them that I'll pray for them.

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Definitely. Since we have been commissioned to make disciples of all nations, we need to figure out how to get Christianity out of the church building and into the lives of those around us.

## Participant 8-9

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

I think realizing how little time we spend outside of our "Christian Bubble" interacting with others and sharing our faith. Also, the need to actually listen to people and hear what they are saying and their concerns when we interact with the community. At our age physical limitations, energy levels, and retirement limit what we can do as to new social contacts in sharing our faith. Our energies are directed mainly toward family and friends.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

**The material I thought was directed more toward younger folks. Maybe we can have something specifically directed toward older folks and the unique challenges we have in being disciples. The fundamentals apply to all generations.**

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

None

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Yes, my professional life has taught me the importance of building relationships with others. I have been in different evangelism programs that have, in my opinion, been less than productive or helpful. I think the emphasis on one-on-one relationships in the workshop was very helpful and is much needed.

## **Participant 10**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

The video segment of the Santa Cruz coffee shop with Dan Kimball. It encouraged me to find common ground with others especially those outside the church and begin a dialogue.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

Nothing I liked it all and learned a lot.

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

None

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Yes this for me updated my information and the way I looked at the church.

## **Participant 11**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

I loved the energy in the workshop, the fellowship with others here at Trinity and from First Lutheran in Concord. I thought the music added to the teaching . I loved the audio/video presentation by Dan Kimball. It helped me to understand what we have to do moving forward to minister to the un-churched. I was very much impressed by the discussion on the "Christian Bubble," and how others view Christians.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

Nothing

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

Maybe being more involved in mission opportunities like our "Pennies for Peace"

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Yes, I learned a lot, it gave me a different perspective and I loved the discussion and the interaction with others to know what they were thinking.

## **Participant 12**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

The videos were beneficial.

The participation of many in commenting on a variety of subject--in particular how can we change the perception of our church body being an inwardly focused church to outward focused.

2 What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

How can we change our worship? Every, Sunday we confess our sins early in the service, in my perception "Lutheran Guilt" But do we in the same in a formal way to express our joy in salvation? To me the opening of the service should be positive. Do we as members and visitors leave feeling guilt or praise?

I say this as one who has participated in formal service from birth

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

Small groups which could be formed which would be community oriented

4 Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation?

YES this was a good opportunity to discuss who we are as a church body and how we can better relate to the community which we serve.



## **Participant 13**

1. What was most beneficial to you from the workshop?

I liked the Kimball videos and the discussion after. We as a church put up wall, I think, that tend to keep people out rather than invite them in. The interviews that Kimball conducted were very insightful to me in learning what the non-churched think of Christians and how we can approach them.

2. What would you have liked to have covered that wasn't?

Maybe more material geared toward the situation of older adults and those who are retirement age.

3. What new ministries in the community have you been encouraged to start or try as a result of your participation in the workshop?

Maybe doing more in the community such as Thrivent build projects or getting invoiced with our shelter ministry

4. Would you recommend this workshop to your friends or your congregation? Why or why not?

Yes! I think we need more training all around. It seems our churches are dying because we are perceived as non-welcoming and "mean." I think we need to listen to others more rather than think we have all the answers.

## APPENDIX SEVEN

### LIKERT SURVEYS

#### Discipleship Survey

I am conducting the following survey as part of my field research for my Doctor of Ministry Degree through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. It will aid me in developing a discipleship workshop which I will conduct at Trinity, February 5<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Please take some time to fill out the survey and return it to an usher at the end of the service. Please DO NOT put your name on the survey. Thank you for taking the time to help me out. Please circle one response on each line. Pastor Dave.

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Uncertain, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

1. I consider myself a disciple of Jesus Christ.

SA    A    U    D    SD

2. I feel that it is not my responsibility to show care and concern for my neighbors.

SA    A    U    D    SD

3. Attending worship services and participation in the Lord's Supper are my only responsibilities as a Christian.

SA    A    U    D    SD

4. The Ten Commandments show me how to love others.

SA    A    U    D    SD

5. Christians have a responsibility toward those outside their local congregation.

SA    A    U    D    SD

6. I regularly pray for non-Christians.

SA    A    U    D    SD

7. I make a point to get to know my neighbors and co-workers regardless of

their religious background.

SA A U D SD

8. God commands that Christians are to show his love for others by doing good works for their neighbors and communities.

SA A U D SD

9. I feel that speaking to others about my faith in Christ is important.

SA A U D SD

10. I feel that God wants me to be his representative wherever I go.

SA A U D SD

Thank you for taking part in “*Living the Life Now Workshop!*” I hope that our time together over the last three Saturdays was beneficial for both you and your congregation. As I mentioned on our first day together this workshop grew out of Trinity’s on-going Transformation for Mission process in partnership with the district. It is also part of my Major Applied Project in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Ministry Degree through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. I would appreciate your thoughtful input as I strive to improve the workshop content. Blessings! Pastor Dave.

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Uncertain, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

1. I consider myself a disciple of Jesus Christ.

SA    A    U    D    SD

2. The workshop helped me understand my call to love my neighbor.

SA    A    U    D    SD

3. I have a better understanding of worship and its relation to my responsibilities to others as a Christian.

SA    A    U    D    SD

4. I have come to understand that the Ten Commandments show me how to love others. SA

A    U    D    SD

5. The material presented encouraged me to step out and share God’s love with others

SA    A    U    D    SD

6. As a Royal Priest one of my ministries is to pray for others and seek their good.

SA    A    U    D    SD

7. The Kimball video clips helped me to understand the culture around me.

SA    A    U    D    SD

8. The workshop has challenged me to intersect with people and creation in a positive Gospel centered way.

SA    A    U    D    SD

9. I feel that speaking to others about my faith and living my faith in Christ is a higher priority for me now than it was before the workshop.

SA    A    U    D    SD

10. The Praise Band reinforced and helped me understand the material at a different level.SA

A    U    D    SD

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