A DISCIPLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC DESIGN FOR A MISSION-MINDED MINISTRY IN A POST-MODERN ERA

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A DISCIPLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC DESIGN FOR A MISSION-MINDED MINISTRY IN A POST-MODERN ERA

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and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

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A DISCIPLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC DESIGN FOR A MISSION-MINDED MINISTRY IN A POST-MODERN ERA

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BY

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ABSTRACT

A Disciple Development Strategic Design for a Mission-Minded Ministry in a Post-Modern Era
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2019

This project devises a strategy requiring leadership commitment, supported by an operating style that inspires trust, obedience, and hope to sustain a disciple development culture at Antioch Church of God in Christ Church in Peoria, Arizona. The theological foundation of the study was Jesus’ mandate (Mt 28:18-20) and the spiritual maturation process (Rom 12:1-2). An improvement opportunity was identified in aligning the ministry culture to the theological practice supporting disciple development. Challenges associated with the community’s perception of the Pentecostal reformation were examined contextually. An original grace-based conceptual model was used for a senior leader’s retreat in Flagstaff, Arizona to facilitate the transformation of Antioch’s missional culture. Feedback from the twelve participant leaders confirmed the need for a ministry culture designed to support the transition from volunteer to servant. The standard of spiritual growth Paul the Apostle described in Rom 12:1-2 provides a foundational guide for the developing disciples. The theological reflections emphasized the importance of biblically sound strategic and grace-based thinking models to conceptualize the spiritual formation process. This approach provided a practical means to guide, inform, focus, and renew missional efforts into a plan with intentionality. The functional basis of the plan is God’s promise, purpose, and plan of salvation. Ministry practices supporting the transformation culture included preparation, prioritization, and future projections to enhance sustainability. As an illustration, the disciple development model represents the system, whereas, hyperlinking the components or biblical concepts to individual lesson plans reflects practical learning applications. The project confirms the importance of a disciple development strategy that enhances spiritual development and a mission-minded culture. Further, active engagement among leaders in edifying and equipping new converts is a critical process element. On a larger scale, churches in the Pentecostal reformation would benefit from this systemic approach.

Content Reader: Randolph L. Rowland, DMin

Words: 291
To my mother, Earlene Hayes, and grandmother, Savannah Davis, who loved me unconditionally, while speaking words of hope that guided me into my destiny in Christ Jesus.
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Above all, I give glory to God and Christ my Lord and Savior for the opportunity and grace that enabled me to operate with exegetic precision. Special thanks to my wife, Christine Logan, and spiritual brother, Dr. Vernon Wooldridge, whose encouragement, patience, and support were a source of inspiration in completing this arduous journey. I am also grateful for the fervent prayers and love of the Antioch Church of God in Christ family and the grace they extended in my dependence upon God to fulfill the destiny he has for my life. Further, I owe my gratitude to Dr. Richard Peace for his insight on the role of an empowered discipling ministry in a post-modern society; to Dr. David Augsburger for imparting wisdom on the importance of encouraging and equipping wounded souls as a critical component in the disciple development process; to Dr. Wayne Grudem, a friend who exemplifies a spirit of humility while exhibiting the caliber of the biblical researcher I hope to become; and finally, to Dr. Kurt N. Fredrickson for accepting nothing less than scholarly articulation.
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PART ONE:

MINISTRY CONTEXT
INTRODUCTION

THE MINISTRY CHALLENGE

The Great Commission forms the biblical foundation for both evangelism and discipleship in the church today. In Mt 28:19, Jesus’ command to “make disciples” refers to the surrender of respondents to the gospel message.\(^1\) Contextually, the term *disciple* articulated by Jesus in the Great Commission represents the continuation of a relationship that began with the gift of eternal life (the fruit of evangelism). On the other hand, growing in God’s grace enables the regenerated individual to live a kingdom-focused life (the fruit of discipleship). Nonetheless, the socio-centric issues of culture, racial conflicts, alternative lifestyles, the influence of social media, and doctrinal inconsistencies among Christians are challenges that ambassadors for the lost face when extending and establishing the gospel.

The denial of moral absolutes advocated by post-modernist thinkers exaggerates the secular in an attempt to eradicate the spiritual. George Bernard Shaw once noted, “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world while the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”\(^2\) His words provide an accurate depiction of spiritually unregenerate perceptions that view the sanctification process as foolish (unreasonable). Peter emphasized four identifying traits: “… a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness

\(^1\) All Scripture quoted is from The Holy Bible: New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982) unless otherwise noted.

into his marvelous light” (1 Pt 2:9 [KJV]). In the New International Version, the term *peculiar* (Greek *peripoiesis*) is a noun; however, it denotes an action: preserving for oneself, saving, keeping, acquiring for oneself, obtaining, possessing for oneself, possession. Although perceptually unreasonable to the post-modern thinker, the church is the bride of Christ, and salvation was purchased with a price (the redemptive blood of Jesus). Nonetheless, for believers in the body of Christ, their identity comes with the expectation to “go and make disciples”

In response to this divine mandate, there are challenges for the local church in a contemporary, digital world, driven by self, money, and pleasure. At the same time, there are also improvement opportunities. Specifically, there is a need for a systemic approach to discipleship development as a critical element often overlooked in missiological circles that represent the local church. Historically, Western tactics used in support of global missional efforts were theory-based, emphasizing evangelism and acculturation. The theology of mission as a recognized course of study in seminaries and missional training institutions was non-existent until the early 1950s. This line of reasoning supports the assertion that practical implications extend beyond evangelizing and planting churches. Instead, the *missio Dei* (mission of God) process should also include a disciple development element and transformational strategy to guide the process. The expected outcome is a renewed missionary approach in the local church that supports the transition from sowing seeds and planting churches to growing spiritually mature servants (disciples).

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The Mission as a Mandate

In this post-modern era, successful ministries often confuse status with significance. The church of Laodicea provides a classic illustration of the delusional tendencies associated with human perceptions. Aside from identifying the Laodicean church as being lukewarm, five additional characteristics were noted that reflected neither success nor spiritual significance from God’s point of view (Rv 3:16). An ideal place, good programs, and a cadre of professionals may generate some level of perceived success; nonetheless, from God’s perspective, significance is the product of submission to his perfect will. Sadly, in today’s society, spiritually impoverished churches have begun to view the Great Commission as another church program rather than a culture that aligns with the promise, purpose, and plan of salvation. Pastor and author Ronnie McBrayer provided additional insight into the theology of discipleship:

This is clearly seen by the use of the word “Christian,” a name unbelievers gave to followers of Christ. Christian—a word used only three times in the New Testament—is not Jesus’ goal for his people. Jesus’ command to the church to build a community of committed followers or “disciples”—a word used nearly three hundred times in the New Testament—seems to be exactly the goal. The church must return to these roots. The church must become a way of life, an alternative lifestyle, a counter-community of Christ-followers. The church must once again become a people who are on “The Way” formed by the words and way of Jesus.  

The influence of this gospel mandate offers a legacy with eternal implications while being guided by godly principles and priorities. However, the use of spiritual power diminishes when ministry leaders attempt to accomplish God’s perfect will for the church in their strength, rather than through the power of the Holy Spirit (Ps 119:32). Many

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leaders today refuse to embrace the fact that they need God to give them a desire to obey the commands of Scripture. This passage tells leaders that when God has once enlarged his people’s hearts, there will be no lack of power because, along with proper affection, he will furnish ability, so that their feet will be ready to run. In short, the most significant legacy of the church is the message and movement of the Spirit in the people, not the monuments built around them.

There are instances in the Pentecostal church when the Great Commission is regarded as another program requiring contributions rather than a mandate from God that necessitates commitment. An opportunity exists to design a scripturally sound strategic model that supports the theology, principles, practices, and ministry culture supporting the transformational progression of discipleship. A discipling ministry begins with a renewal process that reflects an eternal perspective, designed to build the internal ecclesia. Support for this transformational practice requires an orientation and culture that support the essential transition from self-denial to denial of self. The heart of a disciple begins with surrender to the call of Christ as Lord and Savior, subjection to his commandments, and submission to God’s will. Given the critical role of the developmental process in support of the Great Commission, a systemic model would provide a foundation for a discipling ministry culture. Specifically, the model design should be grace-based and Christ-centered. As such, the strategic posture and ministry culture glorifies God by acknowledging and aligning with his promise, purpose, perspective, plan, principles, and priorities and his three distinct personalities. A ministry

committed to discipleship requires an ecclesiastical culture that supports the spiritual maturation process by aligning it with God’s perspective of significance. In short, the ideal strategic discipling model guides a culture built on three foundational principles: trust, obedience, and hope. These three principles provide a path to submission or denial of self: trust in Jesus leads to a willingness to obey Jesus, thereby giving rise to a positive expectation for the future, which is hope. They also facilitate an ideal attachment to Christ by moving a person from being an admirer, a beneficiary, a believer, and a follower to becoming a radical disciple.⁶

**Issues in Response to the Mandated Mission**

In the Pentecostal church community and, specifically, the Church of God in Christ denomination, traditional patterns of religious practices have become image-based versus impact-focused. Consequently, the Great Commission is not considered a discipling mandate; instead, it has become another church program competing for limited resources, which include time, talent, and treasure. This spiritually impoverished perspective adds credence to the need for a disciple development strategy designed to guide a mission-focused ministry culture in the post-modern era. This transformative approach would require the role of the local church as a discipling outpost to shift from mimicking impressions to making an impact. As an illustration, the Reverend Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King were prominent leaders in their religious reformation, yet one chose to perpetuate an image (impression). The other

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chose to make a difference by leading from a kingdom-focused perspective that aligned with God’s will (impact). Simply put, Christians are overcomers.

Figure 1. Contrasting visionaries: Rev. Ike: Perceptual image (impression); Dr. King: Perspective of influence (impact) Microsoft. Bing Images retrieved May 13, 2019 from www.bing.com/images.

An assessment of the achievements that changed lives with a message of hope suggests the visionary on the left (Rev. Ike) lived a life, while the visionary on the right (Dr. King) lived a legacy. This depiction of two prominent church leaders provides evidence in support of two distinct possibilities: secular perception versus a spiritual perspective. A personal observation derived from forty years of leadership experience in Protestant churches revealed that a growing number of African-American ministers have begun an inspirational or charismatic approach to disciple development. This alternative method has created a void in sound doctrine designed to meet the spiritual needs of their congregants living in a post-modern society. Often, dichotomies of this nature in the
church community exacerbate negative perceptions perpetuated by a secular culture devoid of moral absolutes.

In response to the missional reductionism of post-modernist ecclesiology, a grace-based, transformative, disciple development model (DDM) and ministry culture are critical requirements. The following chapters begin with an overview of the church context in which the DDM was designed. Chapter 1 also examines Antioch’s ministry challenges. Chapter 2 surveys the literature comparing strategic models. Chapter 3 explores the theological basis for Antioch’s discipling ministry culture. Chapter 4 outlines the Antioch ministry leaders’ retreat used to introduce the discipling strategy to Antioch’s senior ministry leaders as a foundational guide, an organizational culture, and mode of operation. Chapter 5 provides reflections, results, and a reevaluation of the process to identify lessons learned and future improvement opportunities. Finally, the ministry initiative concludes with a summary of the project and future implications for Antioch and the expanded Christian community. From a strategic perspective, the ministry culture represents the organizational system supporting the disciple development process. This project will serve to increase the current body of disciple development models that begin with grace and end with God’s glory.
CHAPTER 1:
COMMUNITY AND CHURCH CONTEXT

Twenty-three years ago, Antioch Church of God in Christ (COGIC) ministry began in Peoria, Arizona, approximately eight miles from Luke Air Force. In certain instances, the ministry demographics reflect the Peoria community. For example, median income, age, gender, and educational profiles among members mirror the average profiles for the City of Peoria. Nonetheless, the most recent ministry environmental scan revealed that only 10 percent of the spouses worked outside the home, compared with 65 percent of the spouses in the surrounding area.\(^1\) Further, it was also determined that a large portion of the population was either Mormon or Catholic. The ministry goal is not to mirror the community but instead, to become the community that provides a discipling outpost committed to developing missional servant leaders.

Antioch is constantly challenged to train new leaders, in response to the transient nature of key servants fulfilling their obligation to the United States Air Force. Consequently, in response to the absence of gifted, trained, full-time elders, the senior

pastor functions primarily in the ministries of counseling, instructing, motivating, and edifying members. Operating in a plethora of positions creates deficiencies in other critical areas in the ministry, which would include the time required to design and deploy (administer) a detailed disciple strategy from a functional perspective. A full-time, seminary-trained pastoral care provider would indeed be a blessing; however, budgetary constraints make this impossible. The lack of adequate full-time staffing also impedes the ministers’ ability to plan long-term.

Simply put, they are so busy doing ministry that they cannot seem to find the time to plan adequately for the ministry they intend to perform. Given the critical nature of this improvement opportunity, a strategic leadership development and mentoring initiative would be a prudent move with future benefits. A select number of younger ministers would be ordained and mentored to serve in key leadership positions. This proactive approach provides a foundation for the future, thereby supporting the growth of a multi-generational ministry. The present organizational structure of Antioch is composed of eight departments supported by over fifty auxiliaries (depicted in an excerpt from the Antioch New Members Orientation in Appendix A). The church is governed by a board of trustees and has nine ordained elders, two ministers, thirteen missionaries, and eight deacons.

Antioch (COGIC) Church began over two decades ago. From inception, the primary ministry mandate is support for a discipleship missio Dei. The discipling mandate has become the ministry identity, a reflection of intentionality, and a source of inspiration: Antioch COGIC is a ministry committed to discipleship. This divine mandate provides the purpose (the mission) and the reason the ministry exists (to develop genuine
disciples of Christ through unconditional love and biblical principles). The ministry focus aligns with God’s promise (the vision). That euphoric state envisioned for the future is an anointed ministry committed to reaching, preaching, and teaching humanity through the unconditional love of Christ and the Word of God. The Antioch COGIC local church believes that God’s will for this ministry aligns with the Great Commission Jesus shared with his disciples to go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus gives further instructions to teach these new disciples to obey all the commands he has given to his disciples (Mt 28:16-20). Even though obedience through submission is a foundational principle on which the ministry is built, there are challenges at the local church level that, if not resolved, can have a stifling effect on the developmental process. Particularly when church leaders are facilitating efforts in support of disciple development, a paradigm shift is required.

In a church consisting of approximately 500 men, women, and children who are predominately Afro-American, often, the congregants fail to see the value in sound doctrinal teaching. For example, the average attendance at Sunday school and Wednesday night Bible study is less than 20 percent. The lack of commitment to growth in this area has decreased the rate of spiritual maturation and fellowship. Consequently, additional pastoral care issues occur when spiritually immature recipients avoid listening, learning, and applying (living) relevant scriptural principles. Teaching sound doctrine is a critical component in a ministry culture that supports the transformation process. As an illustration, Jesus not only modeled the Word, he also taught his disciples using practical principles (depicted in Figure 2) identified in Lk 11:1-13.
Luke provides an excellent example of Jesus’ facilitating instruction on effective prayer methods as a developmental tool for his disciples. The relevance of this text is the fact that prayer was greatly emphasized in Jesus’ ministry and life, coupled with praying within the will of the Father. In any event, Jesus took the time to let his disciples know that if they intended to be successful in the work of the kingdom, they needed a better understanding of the role of prayer in their lives and ministries. Jesus began by teaching his disciples how to prepare to pray by developing a reverent, intimate attitude toward God (Lk 11:2a). The initial words establish a familial connection with God (“our Father”) and a correlative boundary of holiness and reverence (“in heaven”). The three expressions that follow serve as a prelude to the requests that ensue (vv. 3–4) by first establishing the posture of the disciple before God. It should also be noted that “Jesus spoke Aramaic, which means that many of the places where ‘Father’ appears as the

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Greek Pater, it may reflect the Aramaic Abba”³ (cf. 14:36). Jesus used language to reflect his intimacy with his Father. Relational terminology of this nature was not the case in the old dispensation; however, “Jesus uses it often and pervasively. It is a major revelation of our new relationship with God through Christ. Heaven is a family experience.”⁴

Jesus also informed his disciples that before they petitioned God for anything, they needed to praise him for what he had already done. Theologian Wayne Grudem once noted, The model prayer Jesus left taught his disciples began with a word of praise: ‘Hallowed be your name’ (Mt 6:9).”⁵ In contrast, in Matthew’s account of the model prayer, praise was at the end: “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

The prayer transitions into asking for God’s provision: “Give us today our daily bread” (Mt 6:11; Lk 11:3). The prayer presupposes that human beings cannot in their own strength and power provide for their daily necessities without divine intervention. They experience real needs and desires that God asks to share with Him. There are times believers are tempted to stockpile prayer requests to avoid daily prayer. However, believers’ reliance on God noticeably suffers when they have abundance. They would like God to supply them with some of the benefits of living in a land of plenty rather than having to ask him for help with such basics as bread. This false sense of security leads to

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⁴ Ibid.

the perception one’s daily bread comes from the sweat of one’s brow rather than from the hand of the Father.⁶

Finally, the prayer closes with Jesus directing the disciples to ask God the Father to protect them from temptation. God is not charged with enticing anyone to sin—the devil’s endeavor (cf. Jas 1:12-14). Instead, it petitions God not to place the disciple(s) in the context of temptation or testing (where the devil could potentially gain an advantage) and asks for the corresponding benefit of deliverance from the devil—a disciple’s fallen, angelic adversary.⁷

Then, a strange thing happens: Jesus gives an unsolicited parable that stresses the importance of persistence in prayer (Lk 11:5-13). Noted theologian Charles Hodge writes, “Persistence in prayer is so important that on three different occasions our Lord impressed its necessity upon his disciples: His encounter with the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mt 15:22), the parable of the Unjust Judge (Lk 18:1-8), and finally in Lk 11:5-13, where friendship could not cause the man to meet his friend’s request, but his importunity could.”⁸

In the ideal systemic discipleship development model, persistent prayer is the undergirding power that drives all aspects of the transformative process, particularly when disciples face persecution, trials, and tribulations. Jesus spoke quite succinctly in


John 15:5: “Apart from me you can do nothing” [NIV]. Further, the prophet Jeremiah warns, “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength” (Jer 17:5 [NIV]). Ken Heer shows insight in noting the focus and intent of a grace-based approach in a spirit of trust and humility: “Prayer is a statement about our belief in God and our view of him. And what we pray for is a statement about us and our view of what we consider most valuable.” ⁹ Antioch Church of God in Christ considers expanding the kingdom of God through the missio Dei as most valuable because of this method’s ability to enhance believers’ eternal significance through submission to God’s perfect will.

**Antioch Church of God in Christ As a Missional Outpost**

As project author, Antioch COGIC visionary, founder, and senior pastor, the ultimate goal is not to build a mega-church. Instead, the promise is to provide an environment and resources to facilitate the transformation process, with the hope of building spiritually mature servants. In short, the objective in response to the discipling mandate is to build the spiritual church in the believer. The process will yield faithful stewards of time, talent, and treasure while supporting global and local missionary efforts. On a personal note, I sometimes find developing disciples while functioning in the capacity of a Phoenix Seminary facilitator and lecturer to be frustrating. Specifically, some long-term members in the Antioch Church continue to resist making the transition from believers to disciples. Other challenges include leaders in the Antioch Church who are unwilling to evolve from a mentality of a volunteer to that of a servant.

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Nonetheless, for a recipient of God’s grace, the appropriate response is fervent prayer, in the hope of identifying improvement opportunities that will inspire and inform the late and non-adopters. This approach models two critical standards that support and reflect a discipling ministry culture: the unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. As such, the transformational leader respects the believers’ free will while loving them in their present spiritual state and, at the same time, encouraging them to avoid spiritual dyslexia or stagnation.

Spiritual enrichment courses to facilitate the transition from believer to disciple are provided at the local church and during visits to countries supported by Antioch Global mission ministry. In the year 2010, grace was a developmental theme offered by the Antioch Christian Education Department. The distinction between eternal security and eternal significance was the topic of several grace-based workshops. Dr. Fred Chay, president and founder of the Grace Line organization was the keynote speaker at a GraceLine conference held on May 11, 2017, in Phoenix, Arizona. He provided a practical discourse demonstrating the relationships between grace, justification, and sanctification. The participants also gained a clear understanding of the difference between God’s saving and enabling grace. The doctrinally-sound biblical teaching was a source of preparation for future spiritual growth. Finally, the participants were equipped to overcome the deception of false doctrine, particularly the notion that salvation is a product of one’s good deeds.

The Worldview and Missional Challenges

Major concerns perpetuated by the media include the threat of war with either Iran or North Korea, global warming, institutionalized racism, police brutality, opioid
addiction, discrimination against people practicing an alternative lifestyle, and affordable healthcare. The carnal Christian’s response is fear, whereas the spiritually mature believer’s response is fervent prayer, the result of a renewed mind and Paul’s instructions in Phil 4:6. Another major missional challenge is that many spiritually immature Christians refuse to operate in the capacity of a disciple; their desire is going to heaven, excluding any interest in the with the exclusion of eternal significance of being a spiritually mature ambassador for Christ here in this fallen world. Commenting on this spiritually immature mindset, Eddie Gibbs writes, “Clearly, the gospel is not restricted to a message giving an individual assurance about eternal destiny. It is minimally that, but it is much more, being concerned as much with life before death as with life after death.”

As such, in the post-modern era, the emphasis is being placed on the event (justification/standing), while failing to give prominence to the evidence (sanctification/state), or simply put, an eternal standing with little or no eternal significance. In response to the spiritually dyslexic approach to the discipling mandate, biblically sound approaches that support the transformative process leading to eternal significance have become critical. As a case in point, the Barna Group, while commissioned by the Navigators and NavPress, conducted a research study by surveying Christian adults, church leaders, model discipleship ministries, and Christian educators:

Christian adults believe their churches are doing well when it comes to discipleship: 52 percent of those who have attended church in the past six months say their church “definitely does a good job helping people grow spiritually” and another 40 percent say it “probably” does so. Additionally, two-thirds of Christians who have attended church in the past six months and consider spiritual

10 Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 54.
growth important say their church places “a lot” of emphasis on spiritual growth (67%); another 27 percent say their church gives “some” emphasis. Church leaders, conversely, tend to believe the opposite is true. Only 1 percent say “today’s churches are doing very well at discipling new and young believers.” A sizable majority—six in 10—feels that churches are discipling “not too well” (60%). Looking at their own church, only 8 percent say they are doing “very well” and 56 percent “somewhat well at discipling new and young believers.” Thus, pastors give their own church higher marks than churches overall, but few believe churches—their own or in general—are excelling in discipleship. Not surprisingly, emphasis on discipleship is correlated with higher faith engagement. Three-quarters of practicing Christians, who have attended church in the past month and consider their faith very important, say their church places “a lot” of emphasis on spiritual growth (73%), while only 40 percent of non-practicing Christians say the same.¹¹

Interestingly, the study revealed a positive correlation between the level of spiritual maturity and the participants’ perception of effective discipleship. Hence, the results of the Barna Group survey add credence to the assertion that disciple development is a transformative process and ministry culture rather than a church program.

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PART TWO:

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

A Strategic Model Designed to Support Spiritual Growth

The project intent was to devise a strategy to guide a mission-minded ministry culture committed to the transformative process Paul the Apostle describes in Rom 12:1-2. Further, as a leader and pastor in the Protestant tradition, my goal is to dispel the mentality within the denomination that perceives the Great Commission as being another church program. Instead, support for the church’s mandated mission requires an organizational culture that understands and accepts the reason for its existence (mission or purpose), while enabled by God’s grace. The vision of the institution is a relational component guided by trust in the promise of salvation. That state of euphoria is not a product of ability and ambitions; grace is provided based on humility and submission to God’s perfect will. Unlike secular organizations that rely on their perception, potential, prestige, and projections, the spiritually astute church relies on the promise of God that cannot be broken and never fails. Unfortunately, typical responses to church improvement opportunities are limited to revised strategic plans, new techniques, and
renovation programs. Hence, spiritually mature church leaders in Christ are committed to a disciple development ministry culture that distinguishes between temporal success and eternal significance. In this instance, discernment precedes directing by joining what God is doing to prepare the neighboring communities.

In a disciple-developing culture, the ideal strategic model advocates a posture of intentionality and direction that is biblically sound and practical to overcome misconceptions that lead to deployment (administration/functional) issues. Therefore, hermeneutical interpretations and inquiries are required to identify the proposed theory (discipleship development is a process designed to be the church inside the believer), the methodologies (the actual model), and biblical principles (a covering, stones, pillars, and a solid foundation). Equally important, exegetical precision is required to provide a critical interpretation to extract meaning (grammar, terminology, referent identification, and literary criticism) from biblical guidance used within the context of the desired ministry culture. However, many in the Protestant tradition find it somewhat redundant to use the term formation as a substitute for the process of transformation in Rom 12:2. From a Protestant perspective, Paul is referring to sanctification, which represents the process of being conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). Historically, sanctification denotes “that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by

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2 Ibid.

which he delivers the justified sinner from the pollution of sin, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works.”⁴ Porter explains that all forms of spiritual formation equate to sanctification or growth in holiness:

Partly due to distorted treatments of sanctification, alternative terms such as “spiritual formation,” “spiritual theology,” and “Christian spirituality” have become common within evangelical circles. While these terms and the plethora of viewpoints which accompany them often sound much different than typical evangelical presentations of sanctification, this should not distract us from the realization that what is being discussed under the heading of “spiritual formation” (at least within evangelical Protestantism) is none other than views regarding the nature and dynamics of growth in Christian holiness.⁵

As members in the body of Christ, spiritually mature church leaders are scripturally astute, spiritually aware, and above all, relationally submissive to God’s will for the ministry. In short, discipling leaders study to prove themselves worthy, apply sound biblical principles, and pray fervently with trust, obedience, and hope.

**Spiritual Formation Begins with a Relationship**

In *The Shepherd of Hermas*, an early Christian book held in high esteem by the early church fathers, Hermas has a vision of a woman claiming God is angry with him for failing to confront his children’s spiritual rebellion. Hermas is to confront them in the hope of their repentance and inclusion “with the saints in the books of Life” (Herm. Vis. 1999:1.3.1-2).⁶ The woman—an allegory for the church⁷—reflects the priority of mission

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for children and family as the center of spiritual formation in Rome in the late first century. To teach children the Word in their daily lives, parents would need to absorb it in church and solitary meditation.8

This method of spiritual development is the starting point for the transformation process but requires supplementation with the children witnessing God moving in supernatural ways to solidify the family’s existence. In all believers’ lives, there are those moments when God does something supernatural to demonstrate to them their need for His omnipotence. It could be a matter of God controlling the timing of a particular situation that allowed something to work out in the believers' favor, or it could be God providing peace in the midst of a crisis or healing someone of a fatal disease. Believers are beings that live in two worlds: the natural and the supernatural. However, the natural world is so preoccupied with its noise, busyness, and demands that they scarcely notice the other reality unless they make it a priority to notice.9

Christianity in America is suffering because most church leaders do not emphasize God’s expectation that every believer experience a spiritual metamorphosis and live a transformed life. Experiencing God’s transformational power add credence to the believer’s testimony. One of the early traditions of the Church of God in Christ was a testimony service during the devotional part of the worship experience. It was a time when the members could tell what the Lord had done for them or on their behalf. This

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service is seldom held today because the emphasis is no longer on what the Lord has
done for us, but on what we have done for ourselves.

**Relational Character in Union with Others**

Spiritually mature discipling leaders accept the reality that believers and disciples
are potentially wounded souls trusting God for total deliverance from the influence of
negative past experiences. As a pastor, and what Capps (2001) refers to as “an agent of
hope,” I have seen that rejection and shame are among the most devastating emotional
traumas congregants in the Antioch Church of God in Christ ministry face in this post-
modern era. In fact, “shame is very often an almost immediate and deeply felt reaction to
the failure of our hopes to materialize.”

Relationships are built on a foundation of hope; thus, participants become “oblivious to the possibility that matters would not turn out as anticipated.” Often, believers attempt to resolve issues of shame by resorting to a
reclusive lifestyle and self-constraints, thereby minimizing hope as “a grim and
calculating business.” Agents of hope, through discernment and critical listening skills,
distinguish between guilt and shame. Specifically, “…guilt is generated whenever a
boundary is touched or transgressed, whereas shame occurs when a goal is not being
reached.” As an illustration, when speaking words of hope in relationships, the pastor
should discern the defensive strategies against shame: “striving for power or

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11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., 124.
13 Ibid.
perfection.”\textsuperscript{14} Such coping mechanisms exacerbate relational issues by masking the symptoms rather than addressing the problem. Further, a theological view in negating attitudes of shame acknowledges that Jesus took our shame and in return offers believers a share of his glory (Heb 12:2). Jesus also endured rejection and offers acceptance in God’s family (Mt 27:46). The ultimate destiny for believers afflicted with attitudes or wounds of rejection and shame is an identity of promise that assures them that “anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” (2 Cor 5:17).

The new and abundant life promised to believers is not free of trials and tribulations; in fact, Jesus issued a warning to that effect (Jn 16:33). Mature ministry leaders understand the challenges associated with the relational component that supports and sustains a disciple-development culture. In a post-modern society, the self is given the highest priority, in direct opposition to the second greatest commandment (Mk 12:31). The church has always been challenged by being in the world but not living by the world’s principles. If the church ignores the world system, it risks becoming irrelevant; if the church accommodates the world system, it risks syncretism and spiritual adultery.\textsuperscript{15} The post-modern mentality not only adversely affects moral behavior, but through relativism and deconstruction, it attempts to undermine the criteria for moral decisions.\textsuperscript{16} Gene Getz stresses that most church and parachurch leaders do not have a

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\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 129.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., 18.
\end{flushright}
clear understanding of what the Bible teaches about the church. He validates this assertion by stating that many church leaders do not have a clear understanding of the differences between functions and forms, principles and patterns, absolutes and non-absolutes, and that which should be supracultural and that which is strictly cultural. Devoid of this knowledge, many Christian leaders evaluate success based on personal and corporate experience rather than on biblical theology.\textsuperscript{17}

Getz recognizes the need for scripturally sound strategic models to assist ministry leaders in facilitating renewal in support of the transformational process (Ti 3:5). Further, renewal is an active word, which describes the conversion experience as well as the process of spiritually maturing in Christ. Therefore, it is evident that Getz uses biblical renewal, sanctification, transformation, and spiritual formation interchangeably.\textsuperscript{18} In Getz’s biblical renewal model, using standards from Rom 12:1-2, he stresses how personal, marriage, family, and church renewal are interrelated and interdependent. From a relational point of view, it is impossible to renew the church without renewing the families, couples, and individuals who make up the church.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{17} Gene Getz, \textit{Sharpening the Focus of the Church} (Richardson: TX, Center for Church Renewal, 2000), 24.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 25.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 27.
Figure 3. The biblical renewal model.

As it would appear, units of society are interrelated, and such being the case, Christian leaders must understand what God is saying to each unit and how the relational couples and groups must interface with each other if authentic, comprehensive renewal is to occur. Simply put, Christianity is a community-based faith, with common unity supported by a spirit of unconditional love and humility (Eph 4:4-6). Given the facts that believers are not perfect, and the church is a hospital of hope, these critical principles must be modeled and taught by spiritually mature ministry leaders.

To understand what God is saying to units of the community, spiritual leaders must begin by knowing and receiving what he has said to the church.  

\[ \text{Romans 12:1-2} \]

\[ ^{20} \text{Ibid., 26.} \]

\[ ^{21} \text{Ibid., 27.} \]
purpose of biblical renewal is the evangelization of the world through the love relationship exhibited within these societal units (Jn 17:23). Getz espouses the idea that to develop a biblical philosophy of ministry, one must look at life through three lenses: the lens of Scripture (timeless truths), the lens of history (past lessons), and the lens of culture (present implications). This philosophy enables church leaders to develop forms and structures that are both biblically accurate and culturally relevant.\(^\text{22}\) Getz’s discipleship model is relational by design while supporting the belief that the church exists to make disciples (evangelism) and to facilitate the ongoing learning of biblical doctrine within a relational Christian context (edification).\(^\text{23}\) This approach is biblical; however, it tends to truncate the disciple development process by concentrating on the relational aspects of the ministry culture. Although incomplete, Getz’s premise is sound, suggesting that people are saved by grace through faith and grow in fellowship with other believers. Nonetheless, a discipling culture is also a ministry environment that equips and empowers believers in addition to exalting God.

**Religion Influenced by Culture**

During the first half of the nineteenth century, a significant shift took place in political, economic, and social views in American society. Cultural theorists postulate that Westernized Christianity either compromised or made accommodations in support of secular transitions.\(^\text{24}\) Paul warns believers not to conform to the way of the world system

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\(^{22}\) Ibid., 34-35.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 106.

simply because it directly opposes God’s perspective and will for the body of Christ. This spiritually dyslexic response to the secular worldview provided a strong justification for the emergent church, specifically, the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. Sociologist of religion Phyllis Tickle notes that the sixties were a part of a semi-millennial shift in the Christian church: “About every five hundred years the empowered structures of institutionalized Christianity, whatever they may be at that time, become an intolerable carapace that must be shattered in order that renewal and growth may occur.”

A cultural shift in ministry begins with spiritually mature leaders committing themselves to the transformation process of becoming disciples of Christ. Further, they must accomplish their discipling mandate in a ministry environment that models two critical standards: the unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. A trusting relationship with Christ as Lord becomes the source of inspiration. Spiritually mature leaders understand that inspiration without information combined with intentionality leads to a relationship devoid of obedience and hope in the promise. Knowing the promise of God’s Word provides insight such as exhibited by the sons of Issachar—those who understood the times (1 Chr 12:32). The post-modern era is more than a point in time: it has become a secular mentality and a society devoid of absolute truth. In response to this worldview, spiritually astute ministry leaders recognize that this

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
point in time from God’s point of view is the Dispensation of Grace and that it thereby exhibits a renewed grace-based mentality.

**Discipleship Development Model Exegesis and Hermeneutical Analogy**

There are several existing conceptual models designed to guide the spiritual maturation process. The common themes include stages or phases coupled with milestones to identify points of reference. Ideally, a conceptual model design that emphasizes and aligns with the Great Commission would support the transformative process for disciples as a ministry culture rather than a church program. As an illustration, Warren’s model of maturity depicted in Figure 4 and the five circles of commitment in Figure 5 provide a macro perspective with emphasis on the stages

![Warren's Model of Maturity](image)

Figure 4. Warren’s model of maturity.\(^{27}\)

associated with the process. Tangeman’s Model of Maturity as shown in Figure 6 also identifies four stages of development, while using different labels.

The Warren and Tangeman maturation models emphasize being a part of the body of Christ and being a blessing to others through fellowship and service, as essential

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28 Ibid.

components in the growth process. In short, grace supports both models; however, Tangeman’s model extends beyond stages of commitment: it identifies the corresponding function. Mature servant leaders practice unconditional love and humility as the two most important standards in response to the transformative process supported by a discipling ministry culture. Simply put, giving all the glory to God for his saving and enabling grace reflects a spirit of humility, as opposed to resting on one’s laurels while reading press clippings of past achievements. Finally, Warren’s five circles of commitment model identifies levels of commitment from the community (the unchurched) to the ministers at the core of the church. In this instance, stages and reference points are recognized to determine levels of dedication as they relate to the community and the church. This model could be used in conjunction with a more comprehensive disciple development model as an icebreaker when facilitating servant leader seminars and workshops.

When facilitating the transformative process in support of a discipling ministry culture, the ideal model provides strategic significance that guides spiritual development. Specifically, the process is designed to build the church in the believer, which begins with sound structural principles, providing support for the practices and process. Other critical elements include sacred paradigms or patterns of operation, and finally, the internal building requires the perfect covering. A pictorial representation of the model’s principles, practices, process, patterns, promise, and position would provide a practical means of guiding and facilitating the developmental process.

Each stone and pillar included in the project design Antioch discipleship development model (DDM) provides strategic significance as support for the spiritual formation process. Therefore, hermeneutical interpretations and inquiries are required to
identify the proposed *theory* (discipleship development is a process designed to be the church inside the believer), the *methodologies* (the actual model), and biblical *principles* (the pillars of the model). Further, an exegetical or etymological approach is required to provide a critical interpretation to extract meaning (grammar, terminology, referent identification, and literary criticism) from biblical texts used within the context of the proposed DDM. This information is essential and will be used to identify the relationship between hermeneutics and exegesis. Specifically, from a hermeneutical perspective, the role of church doctrine and theology associated with interpretation will be examined. The primary focus of the exegesis is to establish the connection between sound biblical principles and grace-based practices used in the ideal discipling model that will elucidate the what (the promise), why (the purpose), and how (the process) of the disciple development model.
CHAPTER 3:
THEOLOGY OF A DISCIPLING MINISTRY CULTURE

Recognizing the Times with a Discipling Perspective

Generation X spirituality was formed by a triad of suffering, healing, and play. Each element of the triad needs the others in this generation’s spiritual formation into the image of Christ. Generation X spirituality formation begins with suffering and pain. It is imperative that American Christians understand the purpose of winter or suffering in relation to the fruitfulness of spring and summer. Mahedy and Bernardi (1994) argue that Xers have been shaped in spiritual desolation so that they will later bear more fruit. The argument suggests that the spiritual triad shape used to shape Xers is supported by Jesus’ declaration about the purpose of pruning (Jn 15:1-3). Alan J. Fadling, executive director of the Leadership Institute in Orange, California, trains Christian leaders to integrate spiritual formation and leadership development. He uses this passage to

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1 Jensen, Subversive Spirituality, 223.


3 Alan Fadling, “The Critical Journey: Spirituality and Discipleship in College and Young Adult Settings” (CF554 class presentation, Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Theology, Pasadena, CA, November 15, 2001).
popularize the six stages of faith model of spiritual formation developed by the late New Testament theologian Robert H. Guelich and social worker Jane O. Hagberg in their book *The Critical Journey*.\(^4\) Fadling equates pruning with the spiritual desolation and abandonment in stages four and five of the stages of faith model in which the believer faces a crisis of faith which facilitates a deep inward look into the soul for answers or a new way of expressing his or her faith and intimately connecting with Jesus Christ.\(^5\) This view is similar to the ideas expressed in “The Cloud of Unknowing” (written by an unknown fourteenth-century writer to an unspecified twenty-four-year-old who desired to learn about contemplative prayer)\(^6\) and “Dark Night of the Soul” (a poem by the sixteenth-century Spanish mystic St. John of the Cross).\(^7\) St. John of the Cross propagated the idea that the veiling of God’s presence is a means through which his grace is applied to aid humanity in fully reflecting the image of Christ.\(^8\)

The second element in Generation X spiritually triad relates to healing. Xers are experiencing this healing through a form of prayer that involves supernatural intervention by the Holy Spirit, bringing the presence of Jesus into the painful memories of past wounds.\(^9\) Several other theologians believe that bringing the presence of Jesus into past


\(^{8}\) Ibid.

\(^{9}\) Jensen, *Subversive Spirituality*, 225.
experiences of abuse, sin, and trauma is what facilitates healing. Healing these wounds removes demonic strongholds of emotional, physical, and spiritual bondage.\(^{10}\) Another factor in the healing process is one's willingness to walk in an attitude of forgiveness to release the people who have hurt one from their debts. The power of prayer has helped students to understand the need for forgiveness in overcoming sin. The willingness to forgive is a key factor in being healed from the pain of the past.\(^{11}\)

The final aspect of Generation X spirituality offers formation through play. Play provides people with a means of recovering their lost youthfulness. It also alters Generation Xers’ perception of time.\(^{12}\) For instance, when games are played, the outside world has, for the duration of the game, ceased to exist, and by implication, all the other laws of that world also cease to exist.\(^{13}\) Another argument for the importance of play states that because the cultural opposite of play is work and the theological opposite of work is faith, an analogy between faith and play must exist.\(^{14}\) Generation Xers, now in their twenties and thirties suggest the spring season of life, in short, they play with passion.

As appealing as this model for spiritual formation may appear, it falls short of the biblical mandate for spiritual transformation (Rom 12:1-2). The problem is not with the

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model but with the premise of spiritual formation, which stresses a process rather than life-changing encounters with the Lord of glory. The disciples experienced a transformation because of their continual encounters with Jesus. It is imperative that believers learn how to walk with Jesus in their daily life experiences. Spending time with Jesus is a vital component in transforming believers into his image (Acts 4:13). Luke records that when the high priest and the Sanhedrin court saw that the disciples were ordinary, unschooled men, they were astonished and noticed that these men had been with Jesus. In other words, they realized that the power of the Risen Savior had transformed these men.

There are other limitations associated with this model; for example, there is little evidence of means or expectations of its adherents operating in the supernatural power of God that Jesus promised (Mk 16:17-18; Acts 1:8). Salvation is not a reclamation project but a life-changing encounter with the Omnipotent One, that begins the transformative process. The manner in which believers represent a loving God in a fallen world provides evidence of his transformational powers. In other words, for ambassadors for Christ, the mode of operation is to love, learn, and live the Christian life because it is impossible for believers to lead others to a place they have not been (Mt 15:14). The author of Hebrews understood this dynamic when he stated that “God confirmed the message (of salvation) by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost whenever he chose” (Heb 2:4 [NLT]).

This doctoral project examines the need for a strategic approach to the disciple development process supported by a mission-minded ministry culture. From a biblical point of view, the ideal model design captured the essence of two critical standards: the
unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. These standards govern attitudes and abilities during the transformational process. This strategic, faith-based outlook emphasizes that the process is made possible by God’s grace, for his glory, with eternal significance. From a practical perspective, disciple development is a transformational process with the goal of sanctification, which also reflects simply growing in God’s grace. In short, a ministry committed to discipleship will embrace a culture that builds believers from the inside out. Specifically, from a hermeneutical perspective, the role of church doctrine and theology associated with interpretation will be examined. The primary focus of the exegesis is to establish the connection between sound biblical principles and grace-based practices used in the ideal discipling model. The strategic nature would elucidate the what (the promise), why (the purpose), and how (the process) that support a transformational culture. As a solution to the need to develop disciples in the post-modern climate of anxiety, the Antioch COGIC has introduced initiatives to support a mission-minded culture. The project produced a strategic model requiring leadership commitment and supported by an operating style that inspires trust, obedience, and hope to sustain a mission-minded, disciple development culture

Overview

The Proposed Discipleship Development Model (DDM)

A conceptual model used to build and sustain a culture to support the discipling process differs from the secular approach to strategic planning that relies primarily on the efforts (work-based) of the individuals involved. The project Antioch DDM is a faith-based initiative enabled by God’s grace with a foundation of trust in Jesus, Lord and
Savior, as a cornerstone. The theoretical framework supports the assertion that discipleship development is a spiritual transformation designed to build an internal church (in the believer) with eternal significance. As such, a structure built to withstand the test of time and external forces should begin with a solid foundation to support the pillars. In this instance, the foundation and cornerstone represent the believers’ trust in Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior. Trust (pistis in Greek) also denotes faith, belief, and confidence in God. Support practices are used to fortify the strategic pillars while enhancing structural integrity. It is important to note that the five strategic pillars reflect the actual process, which begins with grace; then, the believer is equipped for growth so that God can receive glory. Finally, a structural dwelling requires a covering positioned with promise. The project Antioch DDM suggests the use of sacred patterns with an intentional focus on the promise of the high priest: Christ Jesus. The strength of the foundation determines the structural integrity of a building. As Jesus noted, obedience to his commands reflects a wise man who builds his house upon a rock (Mt 7:24).

**Foundational (Structural) Principles**

**Trust**

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Prv 3:5 [NIV]). Trust is reliance on and confidence in a person. Scripture affirms the total trustworthiness of God, particularly as it relates to His promises to his people. Christian faith is essentially trusting in the person and character of God.  

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importance of trusting in the Lord rather than relying upon one’s natural ability to resolve the challenges of life. Trust is not an innate human trait; instead, trust builds through a growing knowledge of God’s promise and nature. As believers develop an intimate relationship with God, the more likely they are to put their trust in Him. Jesus implies this when he commands his disciples not to let their hearts be troubled and admonishes them to trust in God and also in him (Jn 14:1). David advises the people to trust in God at all times, pouring out their hearts to him, for “God is our refuge” (Ps 62:8). The prophet Jeremiah warns the people of Israel by reminding them what the Lord has said: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD” (Jer 17:5).

**Obedience**

But Samuel replies: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams” (1 Sm 15:22). It is incongruent to say that one trusts in God and not obey his commandments. In other words, to trust in God means that one is relying upon God for one’s existence; therefore, obedience is a natural response to trust. The key to the biblical concept of obedience (as noted in 1 Sm 15:22 and frequently in the Old Testament) is the Hebrew word šāmā. which means both “listen to” and “act upon, obey.” True “hearing,” or obedience, involves the physical hearing that inspires the hearer and a belief or trust that, in turn, motivates the hearer to act following the speaker’s desires.¹⁶ This process is lived out when Paul writes of Jesus, “being found in

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appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (Phil 2:8).

Hope

“For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently” (Rom 8:24-25). Hope is the expectation of the future attainment of a desired object or outcome. It is often associated with trust, whether in God or others. Although the noun hope (Greek elpis) is not found at all in the Gospels and the verb to hope (Greek elpízein) is found only five times, the idea of hope as confidence in God, “whose goodness and mercy are to be relied on and whose promises cannot fail,” is everywhere presupposed in the New Testament. In a world that is becoming more hopeless each day, it is imperative that believers in Christ be motivated to fight the good fight not only for their eternal reward but also for ministry fruitfulness and blessing in this lifetime. As an illustration, Jesus endured the cross because of the joy that was set before him (Heb 12:2). Job was so motivated by his hope in the Lord that he cried out, “Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him” (Jb 13:15). The prophet Isaiah shows the enduring qualities of hope in God when he writes, “Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint” (Is 40:30-

17 Aaron Fenlason, “Hope,” in Lexham Theological Wordbook, ed. Douglas Mangum et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press),

Finally, one can surmise, hope is simply Having Obedience and Positive Expectations while standing on God’s promises for the future.

Three foundational principles—trust, obedience, and hope—will form the bedrock of the Antioch COGIC operating style in support of a mission-minded, discipling ministry culture. These principles are important because the structure one builds can only be as strong as the foundation on which it is built. Therefore, the goal is to ensure that all members have their faith rooted in Christ and his grace, rather than their own wisdom, strength, and abilities. As Antioch COGIC embraces the ministry mandate of global mission and disciple development, a foundation built on trust, obedience, and hope in Christ Jesus is the key to success. Spiritually mature leaders accept the assertion that suggests it is difficult, if not impossible, to guide congregants to a level of transformation they have yet to embrace. Jesus articulates this in Mt 15:14 when he states, “If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”

In the COGIC Arizona Jurisdiction, fewer than 2 percent of the clergy have a seminary education. Therefore, it is crucial that discipleship methods be grounded in the Scriptures. It is important to note that in East Africa, where a large percentage of Antioch’s global mission’s resources are designated, African pastors and their staffs have even less formal theological training than ministry leaders in the Arizona COGIC Jurisdiction. In response to these developmental deficiencies, the Antioch improvement project initiative used a strategic approach to prepare disciples with the foundational principles of the Christian faith that they might be able to use to instruct others. The developmental initiative began with a two-day project Antioch Transformational Leaders’ Retreat where an original grace-based disciple development model was used to
facilitate the transformation of Antioch’s missional culture. Given their past level of commitment, one can surmise that East African ministry leaders would be devoted to the systemic discipline strategy presented in this project.

**Support Practices**

**Frequent Study**

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tm 2:15 [KJV]). Discerning the word of truth begins with an understanding of the context and meaning of the Scriptures, coupled with application, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul stresses the importance of the believers diligently applying themselves as a means of ensuring that they are approved by God when their works are judged. A workman approved (Greek *dokimon*) is a workman who has been put to the test, and meeting the specifications, has won the approval of the one who has subjected him to the test.¹⁹

The idea of diligently seeking the Lord through the study of the Word is stressed throughout the Scriptures. For example, in Jo 1:8, the Lord exhorts Joshua to meditate on the Word “day and night so that you may be careful to do everything that is in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” Diligent study of the Word of God benefits the believer because hearing its message generates faith (Rom 10:17): it “is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tm 3:16-17). The Scriptures also note

that the study of the Word makes one wiser than one’s enemies (Ps 119:98). Finally, studying God’s Word catalyzes spiritual growth and enables Christians to be guided by the Lord in their decision making (1 Pt 2:2; Ps 119:105).

Fellowship

“That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” (1 Jn 1:3 [ESV]). The concept of being in fellowship with God and humanity is directly related to the believer’s level of spiritual maturity and commitment. The Apostle John in 1 Jn 1:3-7 went to great lengths to communicate the necessity of this communion with God when he asserted that “if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another.” The Apostle Paul in Eph 4:11-14 emphasizes the importance of the five-fold ministry gifts in creating this common core of experience. This fellowship (Gk. koinōnia - defined as the communion or common faith, experiences, and expressions that believers share, which is the foundation of their intimate relationship with God and other human beings20), was the cornerstone of Adam and Eve’s relationship with God in the Garden of Eden. However, when human beings chose to assert their autonomy rather than depend on the grace of God, the fellowship with the Creator was broken. Emotions of guilt and shame were evident when Adam and Eve attempted to hide from the presence of God.21 Fellowship empowers believers

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through common knowledge and experiences with God that enable Christians to be living examples of fellowship to the unbelieving world. The characteristics exhibited by the original disciples of Christ were spiritually empowered and distinct from the secular culture. As a case in point, they were devoted to fellowship, teaching, prayer, meeting the needs of others, and praising God (Acts 2:42-47). Fellowship in this instance was not a product of socio-economic status or ethnicity. Christian fellowship facilitated the unnatural “associations between aristocrats and slaves, Roman citizens and provincials, Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, and men and women who mixed without distinction and on equal terms.”\(^{22}\) In this regard, *koinōnia* is more powerful than *agapē* in that it is *agapē* in action bringing the community together.

**Faithful Stewardship**

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pt 4:10 [NKJV]). The word *steward* is literally “one who governs a household.” It speaks of the responsibility of the proper use and disposition of something entrusted to one’s care.\(^{23}\) The use of the plural suggests that all Christians are stewards of God’s grace to assist other believers in accomplishing the will of God for their lives. Spiritually mature Believers are faithful stewards of their time, talent, and treasure as a form of worship. Spiritually mature Believers are faithful stewards of their time, talent, and treasure as a form of worship.


\(^{23}\) Ibid. (*cf.* 1 Pt. 4:10).
In 1 Cor 4:2, Paul stresses the fact that stewards are required by their masters to be faithful. Further, stewards are primarily required to be faithful to their masters and not their fellow workers. The implication is that believers should focus on pleasing the Lord and not people (Eph 6:6-8). Jesus highlights the fact that stewardship over natural things is an indicator of the quality of stewardship over spiritual things (Lk 16:10). Furthermore, Jesus states that one’s stewardship of what God has given determines how much the Lord will entrust to one’s care upon the earth (Lk 16:11-12).

Many believers live as though they own the time, talent, and treasure that the Lord has entrusted to their care (Ps 24:1). Therefore, they never consider that they must give an account to God for how they have utilized the grace received (Lk 12:48). In Antioch’s ministry context, many believers focus on their needs to the point that they find no value or joy in meeting the needs of others. Most importantly, they fail to take advantage of an opportunity to glorify God in their present state with an attitude of gratitude.

Fervent Prayer

“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas 5:16b [NKJV]). Prayer by definition is simply communication with God, but fervent prayer is born out of the heart of a Christian who has learned to depend upon God to meet all his or her needs. Many people in the church believe that only the leaders of the church can pray powerful and effective prayers. This verse highlights two features of effective prayer. First, prayer must come from righteous people. A person must have a living faith shown by an obedient life. Second, effective prayer must have energy or persistence. Effective
prayer comes from the heart of a believer whose passion is to see the will of God worked out in life.²⁴

James seems to imply that getting involved in the struggles of other Christians, through the confession of sins, is also a catalyst for the development of an impactful prayer life. Watching God answer the prayers of others is a powerful method for learning that the Lord will answer according to his perfect will. James uses Elijah as an example of how God can use a righteous man’s prayers to accomplish much. Elijah was struggling with self-doubt or possibly depression during the time mentioned in James 5. However, Elijah did not allow his weakness to undermine his ability to wait upon the Lord to answer his prayer. Like Elijah, believers today do not pray in a vacuum where everything is perfect. When they pray, there are many personal challenges that Satan uses in an attempt to undermine their faith that God will answer their prayers. However, if they persevere and do not give up in their prayers, God will answer them when they call upon him (Lk 18:1).

Paul writes, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Phil 4:6). Paul is letting the church of Philippi know that God can be trusted to answer their prayers no matter how improbable it might seem. When a believer has prayed earnestly to the Lord for a long time, an intimacy with the Lord develops that enables the believer to gain insight into the will of God in a particular situation. Elijah, because of his intimacy with God, was able to discern the timing of God for the end of the drought that had lasted for three and a half

years. It is imperative that all Christians develop an intimacy with the Lord that would help them discern the will of God in every situation in their lives.

The support practices are important because they provide the means or impetus for accomplishing the strategic pillars of the DDM. For instance, without frequent study of the Word of God, Christians will be ignorant of God’s spiritual laws and promises embedded in the Scriptures (Jn 4:24). Equally important, when they pray, they must be able to pray according to the will of God if they are to receive an answer from the Lord (1 Jn 5:14-15). Prayer not only provides the believer the opportunity to align with God’s will; it also assists in developing the mind of Christ (Lk 22:42; Phil 2:5).

It is essential that all believers understand they should not attempt to govern themselves but act in submission to Christ as Lord of their lives. The old nature was crucified with Christ; therefore, believers are to live for Christ and the advancement of his kingdom (Mt 6:33; Gal 2:20). Realizing that they are stewards of God’s grace helps the believers to realize that they have no innate spiritual ability to help them live the life Christ has called them to live (Jn 15:5; 1 Cor 2:14). Finally, if believers are to do the will of God both individually and corporately, they must have a consistent prayer life (Lk 18:1). It is impressive how the effectiveness and centrality of Jesus’ prayer life motivated his disciples to request that Jesus teach them how to pray (Lk 11:1). The challenge for the leaders of the Antioch church is following Jesus’ example and making prayer so powerful a weapon that their fellow believers would choose to pray more readily.
Strategic Pillars

The strategic pillars of the DDM are designed to provide the leaders with consistent means of discipling the members entrusted to their care in the church. Paul stated that he struggled and toiled with all the might God had given to him so that he might present to God every believer mature in Christ (Col 1:28). The proposed strategic pillars (see Figure 7) will assist the local church in supporting the spiritual maturation process. The desired outcome, the development of disciple makers around the world who are mature in Christ (Eph 4:12-13).

Evangelism Pillar

Evangelism is designed to help the unsaved develop a saving relationship with Jesus Christ that will enable them to become new creatures in Christ with new identities. In many instances, the church’s focus is almost completely on the unsaved becoming born again, while giving limited attention to assisting new converts in becoming more Christ-like. It is important that both accepting Christ as Savior and being transformed into the image of Christ be equally pursued (Mt 28:19; Rom 12:2; Phil 2:5). Dr. Malcolm Hartnell stressed this point in his lecture on the dynamics of evangelism:

While it is crucial to keep the concepts of salvation and sanctification separate to avoid synergism, however, when this distinction is carried over into ministry, it fails to grasp the comprehensive nature of “making disciples” reflected in Scripture. The result is often a truncated view of disciple-making, emphasizing either evangelism or discipleship and failing to understand their interconnectedness.25

Another key issue to consider when developing the evangelism pillar is the belief that only the clergy are qualified to do the work of an evangelist. It is surprising how many Christians have yet to lead a single person to Christ, nor do they feel qualified to disciple a new believer. One way to resolve this problem is the adoption of a holistic approach to evangelism that consists of intentionally meeting the physical, spiritual, psychosocial, and economic needs of the unsaved as an expression of unconditional love to reflect Christ, the model. This approach not only provides a source of encouragement, but it also makes it easier for all believers in the church to be involved in the evangelism effort.

**Edification Pillar**

Edification is designed to help new converts to grow and mature as Christians as a result of their ability to develop a love relationship with Jesus and the saints. Edification (Greek *oikodome*) is a construction word that denotes the act of building or building up. Metaphorically, it can mean to strengthen, to encourage, or to build up. It is the act of one who promotes another’s growth in Christian wisdom, piety, or holiness. The process of edification is important because many in the church skip this step in Christian discipleship and end up doing ministry without knowing who they are in Christ. Jesus said, “If you love me you will keep my commandments” (Jn 14:15). The implication is that it is the love relationship that motivates the believer to obey the Lord’s commands. Gene Getz brings clarity to this issue when he writes, “The church is to become a mature organism through the process of edification, and this maturity is reflected, first of all by

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the degree of love that exists in the body of Christ, and second, by the degree of corporate faith and hope that is manifested.” In a discipling ministry, believers receive strength by God’s grace to build up one another.

The church receives edification through God’s Word, the Holy Spirit, use of spiritual gifts in a spirit of humility, the church’s appointed ministries, coupled with mutual love, support, and encouragement of its members. Therefore, the process of godly leadership must begin with the leaders spending quiet and focused time with the Lord. Given the hectic pace of the modern world, devotional and quiet time with God is often neglected. Nonetheless, it is essential to the disciple development process. Discipling leaders must set aside time to spend with God and other believers. They are also aware of the difference between solitude and seclusion. Christians do not grow in isolation; instead, growth is a product of a loving community. Therefore, it is imperative that church leaders not omit the process of edification when discipling Christian converts. Edification is the special responsibility of the various church leaders (Eph 4:11-12) and is the legitimate context for the exercise of their authority (2 Cor 10:8; 13:10). The work of building up is, however, the work of all Christians (1 Thes 5:11). Spiritual gifts from God are to be used as a source of the edification for the church.

27 Gene Getz, *Sharpening the Focus of the Church*, 93.

28 Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes*.


Equipping Pillar

Equipping is helping believers identify and learn to operate in the area of gifting with which the Holy Spirit has endowed them. According to Paul, the Holy Spirit has given every believer a spiritual gift for the edification of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:7). The problem in most churches is that many do not know what their spiritual gift is or do not have the faith to operate their spiritual gifting. This problem is directly related to a lack of relationship with the Lord and other more mature believers. In other words, minimizing the edification process, which is designed to help new believers to develop a love relationship with the Lord and other Christians, means that new Christians are not equipped to exercise their gifts. When edification is lacking, the new believers do not trust or, in many cases, understand the leading or prompting of the Spirit who is attempting to reveal their spiritual gifting. Consequently, the new believers do not develop a love relationship with a church leader and, as a result, refuse to trust the spiritual insight that the leader shares concerning their spiritual gifting.

Another issue that the church faces in this area is the fact that many leaders do not believe that spiritual gifts are operational. Frequently, new converts struggle to identify their spiritual gifts because of exposure to reading materials, sermons, or teachings that suggests spiritual gifting is not a viable option in the modern-day church. In response, they begin to doubt that the Holy Spirit has endowed them with a spiritual gift. The increase of flawed doctrines has caused many churches to attempt to grow the church through natural means rather than through the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8; Eph 4:10). However, they fail to trust the providential nature of God. He always provides all the necessary facilities to achieve His perfect will. The Scripture suggests that God does not
provide tasks for believers without also providing gifts to equip them for those tasks.\textsuperscript{31}

By the same token, there are church leaders who believe the spiritual gifts are operational today but are not utilizing the gifts of the Spirit in a balanced and orderly manner.

Consequently, inappropriate use and pride cause the gifts to lose credibility with new converts and immature believers. As an illustration, many churches attempt to operate in the gifts of the Spirit without providing any training on how to identify individual giftings and operate them in a church setting. The Apostle Paul devoted 1 Corinthians chapters 12 through 14 to instructing the Corinthian church on protocol supporting operation of spiritual gifts. Paul also taught on spiritual gifts in Rom 12:2-8 and Eph 4:1-16. The emphasis Paul placed on the orderly operation of spiritual gifts reflects the level of their importance. Given the severity of the confusion concerning gifts, project Antioch COGIC places great emphasis on identifying and properly operating spiritual gifts.

Empowerment Pillar

Empowerment is designed to give believers meaningful opportunities to utilize their giftedness in both a church setting and the mission field. Empowerment by definition denotes giving authority or power to, authorizing, or giving strength and confidence.\textsuperscript{32} Spiritual empowerment is an important element in the disciple development process. Empowerment limits the potential of leaders focusing exclusively on instructing

\textsuperscript{31} Manser, \textit{Dictionary of Bible Themes}.

the critical principles without providing opportunities for practical application. Jesus’ disciple development methods included a teaching component, but he also gave his disciples opportunities to practice the ministry they were taught (Lk 10:1-12). However, if the church is to emulate Jesus’ discipleship methodology, it must have a clear understanding of how God empowers the believer to do the will of God. The prophet Zechariah writes, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty” (Zec 4:6). The Lord was communicating to Zerubbabel that he would be able to complete the Jewish temple not through his strength or his power, but through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament, Jesus says, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth “Acts 1:8 (KVJV). Paul in his writing to the Philippians asserted the infinite source of spiritual empowerment when he noted that believers can do all things through Christ as the source (Phil 4:13). The caveat to this word of promise is submission to God’s perfect will.

Once Christians understand that believers are spiritually empowered to do the will of God, they must be willing to appropriate the Lord’s power in their unique ministry situations. Many church leaders are unwilling to rely upon the Lord’s power to fulfill their ministry’s calling despite the many promises given in the Scriptures. Problematic situations occur when leaders are unwilling to rely upon God’s spiritual empowerment. In short, it becomes difficult to teach others the benefits of spiritual reliance they have yet to experience, thereby reflecting the scenario of the blind leading the blind (Mt 15:14). Jeremiah warned Israel against this when the Lord directed him to write, “Cursed is the
man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his strength whose heart departs from the Lord” (Jer 17:5). Spiritual empowerment becomes intentional when ministry leaders try less and trust the leading of the Holy Spirit more to accomplish God’s perfect will.

Believers in Christ are equipped by God to accomplish good works to advance his kingdom; ministry leaders are tasked to instruct and inspire them to operate in their divine empowerment. Committed ministry leaders must also put congregants in ministry situations that give them opportunities to use their God-given gift and talents to perfect the saints. As an illustration, Antioch COGIC provides ministry opportunities in the church, the local community, and in foreign countries. In response to a discipling mandate, Antioch COGIC provides missiology training that has transformed the ministry focus from expanding the church to expanding the kingdom of God (Mt 6:33; 28:18-20).

In the local community, the church is feeding the homeless, caring for the fatherless, and training other church leaders in how to witness to Christ in their community. In all of these efforts, the ministry is careful to highlight the significance of supportive roles and ministry servants who interface directly with those in need. In the foreign mission effort, Antioch COGIC has developed longstanding relationships with pastors in Kenya, India, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. The church’s foreign mission strategy has been to explore, equip, and empower their overseas mission partners. During the exploration phase of the strategy, Antioch missionaries acquainted themselves with the culture and needs of their indigenous ministry partners.

With an empowered mindset, the missionaries identify foreign partners to develop a joint plan to equip them to do significant ministry independent of Antioch COGIC. The missional effort began by meeting the need, which included providing secure living
conditions for the church leaders to remove the instability caused by the inability to lease or rent. A tactical plan was developed to address ministry requirements. The purchase of land, designs for a church, and a five-year strategy was outlined to guide empowerment and expansion of discipling potential. Specifically, they worked together to create a plan as to what the indigenous pastors would do to help other pastors in their locale. Bi-annual training conferences for pastors, their wives, and church elders to standardize the dispersal of sound doctrine, were coupled with ethical practices governed by biblical leadership principles.

Antioch implemented this plan in the year 2002. Since then, Antioch has empowered four out of five of their foreign ministry partners. The church is in the process of building a church for the fifth ministry partner. It has provided disciple leadership training for over three thousand church leaders. The Antioch global mission effort is a testimony to what God can do if discipling leaders teach and trust while modeling spiritual empowerment. Biblical scholars support the notion that “God’s Spirit empowers God’s people to live righteously and minister to others. Scripture often portrays this empowerment in dramatic ways, such as prophecy or miracles. At other times, the Spirit empowers believers to live their daily lives in a new way that reflects a new identity in Christ, that honors God, for He gives grace for His glory.”33

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Exaltation Pillar

Exaltation is designed to ensure that as believers mature, they are willing to submit themselves to the Lord in a way that brings glory to his name. By definition, exaltation is “the lifting up or raising on high of a person, in words or actions. The exaltation of Jesus Christ, first on the cross and then in his resurrection, provides a model of how God exalts the humble and obedient. God also humbles those who exalt themselves. Believers are called upon to exalt God in their praise of him.”

Exaltation was prevalent in both the old and new covenants. In the Old Testament, frequently the Scriptures present God as exalted above all beings. He exhibits supreme power and authority over Israel and all the nations of the earth (1 Chr 29:11; Pss 46:10, 113:4). Thus, the response of the church, like Israel’s, must be to exalt him in worship and praise and give him honor above all others (Ex 15:2; 2 Sm 22:47; Neh 9:5-6; Ps 57:5; Is 25:1). Additionally, God’s powerful help leads people to praise him and to exalt his name, for he alone deserves the glory (Ps 148:13; Is 24:15; 25:1). Since the Lord is King, the psalmist calls on humankind to exalt him and worship at the sanctuary (Ps 99:5, 9).

Therefore, the ultimate goal of the human sojourn upon the earth is to glorify God in a way that makes his name known throughout the earth (Rom 9:17). As the church has attempted to glorify the Lord, the Lord has prospered its

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34 Manser, Dictionary of Bible Themes.


members both individually and corporately. The life of Christians is not without challenges. However, God has used those challenges as opportunities for spiritually mature Christians to trust the promise of God’s Word (Heb 10:35).

The strategic pillars provide illustrate a progressive transition from believer to follower. Grace-based discipleship building methods align with foundational principles and practices supported by biblically sound doctrine (1 Pt 1:10-11). The pillars represent the actual developmental process in support of the missio Dei. The strategic pillars also guide the spiritual maturation of believers to respond faithfully to God will for their lives. Pastor and author Gary Tangeman provides clarity to the discipling process by asserting that “Every church has members that are at varying levels of spiritual maturity. Therefore, it is important that every church develop a comprehensive approach for planned spiritual growth that will systematically build the believer’s faith.”

As demonstrated in the model below, the pillars are designed first to inform the new believer that he or she has been positioned by God to fulfill his or her divine purpose (Mt 11:28-30; Jn 6:44; 2 Cor 5:17). That divine purpose begins when the believer admits to being a sinner who cannot deliver him- or herself (surrender/give in to the will of God) and begins trusting the Lord for deliverance (submission to give up one’s will to pursue the will of God) (Rom 10:8-12). The evangelism pillar marked the beginning of the process when the sinner surrendered to the witness of the gospel.

Next, the believer must begin not only to surrender or give in to God but must also be willing to surrender or give in to the church leadership and church community to

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grow and mature as a believer: the process of edification (Eph 5:21; Heb 13:17).

Subjection to godly authority necessitates spiritual growth in the discipling process. It stands to reason: when believers are unwilling to surrender to the will of God and the church leadership, spiritual growth can become stifled. (1 Pt 5:6). During this phase, the believer first surrenders to the gospel of Jesus Christ (salvation) and then to the leaders of the church (discipleship). The willingness or the ability to surrender is a product of God’s grace and not the believer’s desire. Spiritual progression involves three levels: surrender, subjection, and submission. Spiritually mature believers are willing to submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit (denial of self) and the persons God gives authority to in order to guide them into all truth and subsequently into a greater level of commitment (Jn 16:13; 1 Pt 5:5)

Mature disciples are willing to live a life of submission (giving up selfish desires) to God and the persons God places over them. The word *subjection* (from the Greek verb *hupotasso*) is a term that suggests one is willing to be under the control of someone or something (cf., “wives be subject to your own husbands”; 1 Pt 3:1). *Submission* (Greek *hupotagēte*) is the willingness to give up voluntarily because of one’s trust in God (cf., “submit to God and resist the devil,” Jas 4:7). The variation in scriptural use of the words is evident in the tense of the verb (present tense which denotes continuous action versus the aorist tense which denotes a punctiliar or one-time action). The overarching idea in the support model depicted in Figure 7 shows the correlation between the process pillars and levels of obedience. The model of progression provides a pictorial representation designed to assist Christians in understanding that God has reached out to humanity to give each person an opportunity to fulfill his or her divine purpose. By God’s grace,
believers have the opportunity to gain eternal significance by aligning themselves with God’s will to expand his kingdom (Mt 6:33). The second benefit of the support model is to help believers see the big picture in a way that will help them to live not for the moment but live in light of eternity (Mk 8:36-38).

![Positioned Progression Purpose]

Matthew 11:28-30 Matthew 28:19
The Believers Response to God’s Will

Surrender → Subjection → Submission

Self-Denial → Denial of Self
Giving In → Guided → Giving Up

Figure 7. The strategic process pillars.

Another way to understand the significance of the strategic pillars is to view them from the perspective of each pillar’s focus (see Figure 8). The pillars represent the actual disciple development process with a distinguishable focus.

![Evangelism Edification Equipping Empowerment Exaltation]

Evangelism The Person Edification The People Equipping The Promise Empowerment The Power Exaltation The Praise

Figure 8. The perspective of the strategic pillars.

The focus during the evangelism phase is winning the soul (The Person) for Christ (Mk 16:15-16). After the rebirth, the focus shifts to helping the person become a
part of the Christian community (The People) through fellowship and discipleship (Acts 2:42). This process also helps the believers to commit their lives to Christ while gaining a deeper understanding of God’s Word (The Promise) (Acts 2:42a). Frequent study of the Word of God and prayer enables believers to access the Holy Spirit’s empowerment (The Power) (Acts 2:43). The model up until this point has focused the believer on God and all that God provides. Therefore, the spiritually mature response is to glorify God for all that he has done on the believer’s behalf (The Praise) (Acts 2:47). The additional supportive conceptual models were created to provide a practical perspective on the discipling process. As such, the Antioch project DDM uses a strategic approach to the missio Dei to generate hope, purpose, and significance.

**Sacred Paradigms**

The sacred paradigms are designed to govern patterns of behavior in which the members interact with each other and the world daily. Mature disciples committed to fulfilling their individual and corporate destiny in Christ embrace the sacred paradigms as a lifestyle and mode of operation. Strategic behaviors in the body of Christ are designed to reflect the attributes of a spiritually mature disciple. The standards of behavior provide a biblically accurate checklist for leaders and lay members to inspire trust, teamwork, and spiritual growth. An operating style guided by discipling characteristics will reduce the potential of envy and strife.

**Peace**

Peace (Hebrew šālôm; Greek eirêné) is a state of wholeness (“well-being” in Hebrew) and security, embracing both the physical and spiritual dimensions and relating
not only to the individual but also to entire community and relationships among persons.\(^{38}\) Paul commands the church of Ephesus to do everything possible to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Eph 4:3). Paul is emphasizing the importance of peace as a foundation for unity. Specifically, the absence of peace can lead to a divisive environment, thereby having a negative effect on the functionality and fellowship within the church or Body of Christ.

Unity

The Greek *henotēs* appears only twice in the New Testament—in Eph 4:3 and 4:13 where Paul speaks of the “unity” of the Spirit and the “unity” of the faith. According to Paul, the unity among believers is a result of sharing the same Spirit. In other words, “oneness” already exists. All born-again Christians are “one” in the Spirit. As an imperative, they must keep or observe that unity, recognize it as real, and act upon it.\(^{39}\)

The term unity from a biblical perspective suggests oneness; born-again believers have a oneness with Christ. Case in point, the Spirit of God that dwells in Christ also dwells in those accepting him as Lord and Savior.

Order

The Hebrew *ʿārakh* (“to arrange”) and the Greek *tássein* [*diatássein, táxis, táigma*] mean “order.”\(^{40}\) Paul exhorts the Corinthian church that everything should be done in a

\(^{38}\) Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 807.


fitting and orderly way (1 Cor 14:40). It is important to note that it is impossible to conduct the affairs of the church in an orderly fashion without first having peace (Jas 3:16-18). It is crucial for church leaders to understand that these three organizational paradigms build upon themselves to produce divine purpose and order. The primary focus of peace, unity, and order as sacred paradigms is ministerial excellence.

Love

Agape in Greek means “an undefeatable benevolence and unconquerable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of the other person, no matter how they act.” It is a self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return, and it does not consider the worth of its object. Agape describes the unconditional love God has for the world. It is important to note; God’s love is not based on performance. Instead, the believer’s submission to God’s perfect will is a response to His act of unconditional love; giving His only begotten son, Christ Jesus. Spiritually mature leaders strive to model unconditional love to reflect the mind of Christ.

Humility

Humility (Hebrew ‘ānāwāh; Greek tapeinophrosūnē) is the personal quality of being free from arrogance and pride and having an accurate estimate of one’s worth. Humility is an important virtue for believers to have because it allows them to see value in the opinions and giftedness of others. The absence of humility causes believers to value their thoughts, desires, and agendas. Consequently, humility is important for

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41 Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, s.v. “humility,” 792.
establishing an intimate relationship with God, with others, and with oneself (e.g., Prv 22:4; Jas 4:10). The act of bowing low to the ground expresses submissiveness and reflects the virtue of humility.\footnote{G. S. Gleaves, “Humility,” in \textit{The Lexham Theological Wordbook}.}

\textbf{Truth}

Truth (Hebrew \textit{emeth}; Greek \textit{alētheia}) means “conformity to fact or actuality; faithfulness to an original or a standard.”\footnote{G. S. Gleaves, “Truth”,” in \textit{The Lexham Theological Wordbook}.} In the Old and New Testaments, the inspired Word of God is truth that is absolute. Truth is also a fundamental moral and personal quality of God. God proclaimed that he is “merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth” (Ex 34:6). He is a “God of truth . . . without injustice” (Dt 32:4).\footnote{Ronald Youngblood et al., eds. \textit{Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary} (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995).} The primary focus of these organizational paradigms of love, humility, and truth is relational excellence. A disciple development strategy is a grace-based endeavor which advocates loving individuals where they are yet never leaving them in the condition they were found (Mt 22:37-40).

\textbf{Praise}

Praise is to honor and ascribe worth to God (Hebrew \textit{piel ḫālal, hiphil yāḏā, piel zāmar, piel šāḥah}; Greek \textit{ainēō, doxázō, epainēō, exomologēō, hymnēō, psállō}). The Bible regards praise as the response worthy of God from all creation because of his majesty and saving actions; it is the dominant characteristic of true piety.\footnote{Myers, \textit{The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary}, 845.} Antioch,
being a Pentecostal church, has a rich tradition of praising the Lord. However, the unique problem that the church faces is helping the members balance praise with worship. A deeper issue that the church faces denominationally is the notion that praise is a cure-all for the tribulations of the people. A theological response from a development perspective would require a balanced approach that highlights the importance of living out the principles of God’s Word (Jo 1:8; Ps 37:4-6; 2 Pt 1:3-4).

Worship

The Hebrew verb ūḇāḏ and noun ūḇōḏā, the Greek proskynēō, and the Saxon weorthscipe (“worship”) refer to paying homage to or, literally, ascribing worth to some person or thing. Worship embraces the whole of the reverent life, including piety and liturgy. As stated previously, worship is not a virtue emphasized in modern Christian culture. Nonetheless, believers are to worship God with reverence in the preaching, teaching, and devotional church services and as a lifestyle (Jn 4:23). Submitting to God’s will, specifically, embracing a ministry committed to discipleship, would be considered a form of worship.

God’s Grace

Grace is the gracious or merciful behavior of a more powerful person toward another (Hebrew chesed meaning “grace, mercy, steadfast love, compassion”; chen meaning “grace, graciousness, and kindness”; Greek charis meaning “grace, favor, graciousness grace, goodwill”). The word is used to describe God or Christ in their

46 Ibid., 1067.
merciful character or actions toward humankind in the New Testament. In short, God extended saving grace to humanity as his gift of unmerited favor and eternal security. God’s grace is the enabling factor that guides the sacred paradigms as an integral element in the disciple development process. It is only through the grace-empowering act of God that discipling ministries embrace these organizational patterns of operation, hence, the primary focus of the lower six paradigms that makes it possible for ministries to function in a spirit of peace, unity, and order as a form of worship that authentically glorifies God.

Savior and Priest

The fall of humanity resulted in a loss of relationship with God, and only the blood of Jesus Christ could achieve redemption and relational restoration. Subsequently, Jesus gave his life in submission to the Father; in return he was ordained head of the church. “For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb 4:15 [KJV]), “…called of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 5:10 [KJV]).

This final section of the Antioch project disciple development structure represents the roof. The foundation for the internal building structure began with trust, obedience, and hope in Jesus. The roof or covering is the source of protection for the building’s content and structural integrity. In addition to the covering, Jesus, functioning as Savior, Lord, and High Priest, is the architect and builder of this internal church (Heb 12:2). Antioch project disciple development model reveals Christ’s position and the promise of

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justification as the event and sanctification as the process of being transformed into his image.

Savior

When compared to other religions, Christianity is unique in portraying salvation as a gift received completely by the grace of a savior for the remission of sin. Salvation comes exclusively and completely from God. Salvation is a gift from the Savior, made possible through faith in the Savior. There is scriptural evidence to support the assertion that salvation can only be received through faith in Jesus Christ (Is 43:11; Hos 13:4; Jn 4:42; Acts 4:12). Jesus is the Savior who provides eternal life (Mt 1:21; Jn 3:16; Rom 3:21-26; 5:1-11; 1 Jn 2:2; 4:14; 5:13).48 The Hebrew verb yasha’ and the Greek noun sōtēr convey the idea “to save,” “to deliver,” or “to rescue.”49 Salvation in the Old Testament often refers to deliverance or rescue from an intolerable situation or great danger from which the person is unable to save himself or herself. The one who rescues can be either human (1 Sm 11:3; Jb 26:2) or divine (Jgs 10:12-15; RSV “deliver”).50

In the New Testament, the word for savior describes both God the Father (1 Tm 1:1; Jude 25) and Jesus Christ the Son (Acts 5:31; Phil 3:20). The deity of Christ was acknowledged, and Christ was recognized by the apostles and the early church fathers as the “Savior of all men” (1 Tm 4:10). He was the Savior of Gentiles as well as Jews. As


50 Myers, The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary, 904.
Christians, believers are exhorted to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pt 3:18). Christ as Savior provides the promise of eternal security as an unearned gift. As believers grow in God’s grace, the mind is being renewed, and the soul is being transformed to reflect Christ the model.

The Antioch project discipleship development model is designed to assist believers in understanding justification is an event and sanctification is a process. The model gives a pictorial representation of Jesus’ role as author and finisher in the development process. As Savior, Jesus is the source of deliverance from the effects of the human condition that resist, reject, and rebel against the unconditional love of God (provided justification, deliverance from the penalty of sin; 2 Tm 1:9; Ti 3:4-5), is saving humanity (providing sanctification, deliverance from the power of sin; 1 Cor 1:18; 2 Cor 2:15) and will save humanity (bringing about glorification, deliverance from the presence of sin; Rom 5:9-10). In other words, Jesus is indeed the author and the finisher of our faith (Heb 12:2).

Priest

The Hebrew word kōhēn reflects a common West Semitic word designating priests of any religion. It may have been derived originally from the verb kāhan “stand,” so that it refers to someone who stands before a deity in a serving capacity (cf. Dt 10:8). The Greek word hiereus means one concerned with the holy. By definition, priests were

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a group of men charged with the responsibility of mediating between God and his people, ensuring proper worship, and maintaining the spiritual health of the people of God.\textsuperscript{53} They performed a variety of duties and responsibilities; however, the primary role of a priest was that of a mediator representing God before (humanity) and (humanity) before God. Representing God before (humanity), the priest instructed the people in God’s laws concerning conduct and worship (Dt 33:11; cf. 2 Chr 17:7-9).\textsuperscript{54}

The doctrine of Christ’s priesthood asserts that Christ fulfilled the role of a perfect high priest and a sacrificial victim who brought to a close the Old Testament priesthood and sacrifice (e.g., Heb 8:1-6), reflecting the writings in Psalm 110:4. Further, Christ is identified as a priest after the order of Melchizedek, thus superseding the order of Aaron (Heb 7:11-19). Elsewhere, believers themselves are said to constitute “a spiritual house … a holy priesthood” (1 Pt 2:5, 9; Rv 1:6; 5:10; 20:6), the typological fulfillment of the Old Testament people of God (Ex 19:6).\textsuperscript{55} Christ’s ministry as our high priest made it possible for all true believers to become members of the royal priesthood. “As priests, they have free access into the holiest of all, and offer up the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and the sacrifices of grateful service from day to day.”\textsuperscript{56}

It is important to note that Christ is the one who is representing every believer before God the Father. For this reason, Christ is at the top of the disciple development

\textsuperscript{53} Manser, \textit{Dictionary of Bible Themes}.

\textsuperscript{54} Myers, \textit{The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary}, 849.

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 850.

model superintending the actions of the body of believers. In other words, the relationship between God and humanity cannot be successful without following Christ’s commands. Furthermore, as Christ is the head and covering for the body of believers, he is also the head of this model. Jesus through the Holy Spirit is gently guiding and nurturing the body of Christ into a more intimate relationship with God the Father while functioning as Lord and Savior.

The Promise

Believers are to look for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of their great God and Savior, Christ Jesus. That hope represents a positive expectation of the internal church depicted in Figure 9. It is important to note that in the Hebrew language, there is no translation for the word promise. The Hebrew words dāḇār, “speaking,” “speech,” and dāḥar, “to speak,” and ’āmar, “to say,” and once in Ps 77:8, ’ōmer, “speech” and the Greek epaggelía, and the verb epaggéllomai are used for binding offers or commitments on the part of one person or people to another. The value of such promises depends upon the reliability and trustworthiness of the person who makes the promises. Therefore, to validate the veracity of God’s promises, Scripture stresses the total reliability of God.57 The infallible, immutable nature of God reveals His ability and desire to fulfill His promises:

[For instance,] divine promises in Scripture assure their recipients of many spiritual and temporal benefits, including sonship (2 Cor. 6:16–7:1), forgiveness of sin (1 Jn. 1:9), answer to prayer (Lk. 11:9), deliverance from temptations (1 Cor. 10:13), sustaining grace for difficult times (2 Cor. 12:9), provision for all

57 Manser, Dictionary of Bible Themes.
needs (Phil 4:19), reward for obedience (Jas 1:12), and eternal life (Lk 18:29-30; Jn. 3:16; Rom 6:22-23).\textsuperscript{58}

The correlation between the New and Old Testament “promises was validated by the New Testament writers who chose not to view the Old Testament promises as separate and isolated assertions but rather as portions of a unitary promise that is ultimately fulfilled in Christ” (Lk 1:54-55, 69-73; Acts 13:23, 32-33; 26:6-7; 2 Cor 1:20).\textsuperscript{59} Jesus is the promise that the prophets wrote about in the Old Testament.\textsuperscript{60}

The mature disciple is confident in God’s promise through trust in his immutable nature.\textsuperscript{61} Furthermore, “what God has decreed he will accomplish because he cannot fail. His foreknowledge and omnipotence allow him to determine the destiny of humanity” (1 Kgs 8:15, 24; Is 41:4, 26; 43:12, 19, etc.; Rom 4:21; cf. Pascal, \textit{Pensées}, 693).\textsuperscript{62} While time has proven God’s promises to be true, believers still must act in faith as well as be faithful if they are to benefit fully from what God has promised.

The proposed Antioch discipleship development model is designed to provide believers with an objective, practical methodology for fulfilling the ultimate promise of God, the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth (Mt 4:17; 6:33; 1 Cor

\textsuperscript{58} Elwell and Comfort, \textit{Tyndale Bible Dictionary}, 1080.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{61} Manser, \textit{Dictionary of Bible Themes}.


In the post-modern world there are the biblically illiterate and secularized individuals in need of a comprehensive, systematic process to assist in conceptualizing the impact of God’s promises for the believer (2 Pt 1:2-4). Not only does this model help the unsaved to envision the impact of God’s plan of salvation, but it also provides a strategic guide for spiritual maturity.

The Antioch project discipling model design serves as a developmental guide for church leaders committed to a ministry culture and operating style the inspires trust, obedience, and hope in Christ Jesus as author and finisher of what he began. The model also provides a strategic focus for instruction, development, and practical application. When pastors gain additional insight into the disciple development process, it enhances the efficacy of the church to fulfill missio Dei. The majority of the pastors and church leaders in the Church of God in Christ denomination do not have a detailed, comprehensive understanding of the discipling mandate. As a result, many church leaders are focusing on one particular aspect of missio Dei without understanding the theological perspective. The decrease in the church's influence and missional impact has created concern about future endeavors and emphasis on the developmental process. The misappropriation and underutilization of gifted servants—people God has placed in their ministries—exacerbates the lack of commitment to missio Dei.

The Antioch project disciple model (depicted in Figure 9) is a strategic system designed to support a ministry culture. Structural principles (trust, obedience, hope) provide a solid foundation that is subject to the leading of the Spirit of God (Zec 4:6), which also enhances spiritual growth. Although secular strategic models are designed to provide direction and development, they are exclusively work-based, whereas the
Antioch project model is grace-based. Success is not a product of the wisdom, ability, and strength of the participants. Instead, success is contingent upon submission to God’s will for the ministry and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. While the Holy Spirit’s influence is not directly referred to in the model, the principles, practices, pillars, or paradigms cannot be demonstrated or achieved without the empowering of the Holy Spirit. The necessity of the Spirit’s influence is discussed and emphasized in the empowerment pillar section.

Figure 9. The project Antioch disciple development model: Scriptural significance of the DDM supporting the theology of the mission.

Positioned with Purpose

The Hebrew derivative for the word *purpose* denotes “to give counsel, deliberate, or to determine (Heb. יָדָעַ; Gk. boulē). [Further, there are] . . . a number of passages
where the noun appears, some refer to God’s overall purpose, while others express God’s plan for humanity” (Prv 19:21; 20:5; Is 46:10–11; Jer 29:11; Eph; 2:10). God’s will is eternal (Ps 33:11); his desire will be fulfilled (Is 46:10). In the New Testament, “Paul explains that God works out everything—brings all things under Christ—in conformity with the purpose of his will. The providence of God aligns with His purpose” (Eph 1:9-11). Jesus as our high priest has given us purpose as sons and daughters of the Most High God. Paul in his writings to the Ephesians has noted that God has “made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, [and] his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time” (Eph 1:9–10). A systematic approach to disciple formation prepares believers to embrace their destiny in Christ with intentionality.

In Romans 8:28, Paul shares that God directs the affairs of life in such a way that, for those who love him, the outcome is always beneficial. The “good” of which Paul speaks is not necessarily what we think is best, but as the following verse implies, the good is conformity to the likeness of Christ. With this in mind, it is easier to see how our difficulties are part of God’s total plan for changing us from what we are by nature to what he intends us to be. Moral advance utilizes hardship more often than not. Additionally, the verb (“works”) and the participial phrase (“those who love him”) are in


64 Ibid.

the present tense, signifying that not only is God continually at work, but those for whom he works are steadfast in their love for him.\textsuperscript{66} It is encouraging for leaders in the church to know that God is using the negatives as well as the positives to transform believers to the image of Christ (Rom 8:28-30).

The Antioch project discipling model was created in response to the Great Commission, which is God’s purpose for the church that functions as a hospital of hope. As an observation from the perspective of senior pastor suggests discipling leaders faced challenges when attempting to replicate levels of first-generation commitment to missio Dei with the second generation. Antioch’s senior leadership concluded that the absence of a systematic and comprehensive developmental model was a major contributing factor. Preparation for the mission field begins with a ministry culture committed to the process of developing spiritually mature disciples for Christ. Deficiencies in teaching, development, and preparation can result in another case of the blind attempting to lead the blind (Mt 15:14). The Antioch project DDM will serve as a guide for pastors, and discipling leaders challenged the area missional commitment and disciple development. The point is not to advocate model duplication, but to address improvement opportunities from a biblically sound, strategic perspective to develop indigenous models that align with the church’s mission ministry context.

Disciples in the body of Christ are commissioned by Jesus, who serves as the high priest. Positioned with promise, he superintends the internal affairs of the church in a manner that leads to kingdom expansion and the opportunity for every believer to attain

eternal significance (Mt 28:18-20; 1 Cor 15:20-28). Submission to the transformational process requires the believer to trust in God, operate in obedience to his Word, grounded in the hope that Christ will return to establish his kingdom on earth. Believers receive the benefit of Christ’s benevolence when they submit to the perfect will of God in a spirit of unconditional love and humility. They also remember that Jesus sacrificed his life on Calvary’s cross so that those who believe in him can benefit from his promise of salvation and his purpose as a spiritual model.

The transformational characteristics of the proposed model serve as a strategic guide to inform, direct, develop, and focus missional effort and disciple development from a theological perspective. Given its multifaceted nature, the model will assist in the teaching of biblical principles while facilitating Christian practice, thereby enhancing the spiritual maturation process described in Romans 12:1-2. Specifically, Paul makes a passionate appeal in the first verse for a specific act in which we offer ourselves to God. In the second verse, he notes activities to avoid and practices to embrace the lifestyle of a living sacrifice:

Believers are no longer to conform themselves to the present age (cf. 1 Pt 1:14). As citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20) we are to “set [our] minds on things above, not on earthly things” (Col 3:2). Paul reminded the Galatians that the present age is evil (Gal 1:4). It cannot, and must not, serve as a model for Christian living. Its values and goals are antithetical to growth in holiness. The internal church should stand out from the world as a demonstration of God’s intention for the human race. To be culturally identified with the world is to place both the internal and external church at risk. Believers are to be salt and light (Mt 5:13-14), purifying and enlightening contemporary culture.\footnote{Ibid., 232.}
Further, Martin Luther provides an additional perspective as he captures the essence of denial of self:

He does not say: “I command you!” for he is preaching to those who are already Christians and godly through the faith in the new man, who are not to be forced with commands but to be admonished to do willingly what is to be done in regard to the sinful old man. For he who does it not willingly, solely as a result of admonition, he is no Christian, and he who compels it from the unwilling with laws, he already is no Christian preacher or ruler but a worldly clubwielder.68

A renewed mind governs the sacrificial nature of a spiritually mature disciple. The spiritually mature disciple operates with an eternal mindset, by casting care, crisis, conflicts, and confusions on Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior to avoid unnecessary stress and anxiety (1 Pt 5:7). They read the Word of God before the secular reading so that the world news is viewed in the light of Scripture. By nature, our thoughts tend to dwell on the ephemeral, but it is important to remember, that which passes quickly is normally inconsequential.

Jesus modeled the ultimate sacrifice while exhibiting total submission to the Father, in a spirit of humility. As products of the redemptive process, submitting one’s body as a living sacrifice would be considered a reasonable (logikos) response; when compared to the sacrifice Christ made by paying the penalty for sins he did not commit. Such being the case, denial of self in a spirit of gratitude and humility for the grace received, is far from being considered unreasonable. Another interesting thought is that the noun charis in the Greek denotes grace and gratitude as being synonymous.

68 R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936), 746.
Historically, worship was always accompanied by sacrifice, but the form of sacrifice has changed under the new covenant: in the old covenant, worshippers offered dead sacrifices (required to make a sacrifice). However, in the new covenant, worshippers offer living sacrifices (required to “be” a sacrifice). The Today’s English Version (TEV) accurately brings out the contrast between the two verbs that Paul uses: “conform outwardly” (sunschēmatizō) and “transform … inwardly” (metamorphoomai). Some commentators take the position that Paul did not use these two verbs in such a way as to make this distinction, but most commentators assume that Paul did maintain this difference in meaning. The TEV correctly takes the passive voice of the second of these two verbs as a reference to God’s action: “let God transform you inwardly.” This inward transformation prepares the transition from believer to disciple in submission to God’s will.

“To know the will of God” may be rendered “to know what God wants” or “to know what God desires.” The final phrases “what is good, and is pleasing to him, and is perfect” are explanations of what God wants. Perfect may be rendered “just as it should be” or “what could not be better.” In short, practices, principles, and biblical concepts introduced in the Antioch project disciple development model would be considered good, acceptable, and pleasing to God. The expected outcome is a missiological approach, with a theological perspective, that aligns with the mandate of God.

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PART THREE:

MINISTRY STRATEGY
CHAPTER 4:  
MINISTRY OUTCOMES 

The Antioch Church of God in Christ has been in existence for over two decades, and the ministry mandate has endured the test of time. Specifically, Antioch COGIC has a ministry committed to discipleship. Although the mandate remains, the times and ministry demographic have changed, thereby creating an opportunity for improvement in the process used to develop disciples. The Antioch project discipling model was created to build a missional ministry culture. Leadership commitment, supported by an operating style, that inspires trust, obedience, and hope to sustain a disciple development process is the expected outcome. In essence, this strategic approach would serve as a guide for a discipling culture that would support building disciples from the inside out. Senior ministry leaders will be the first trained in the strategic model, as preparation to serve in the capacity of process instructors. This cascading effect would reduce the level of stress, anxiety, and fear of change among the members of the church.

Anticipated Benefits of a Strategic Approach

A strategic approach will produce a developmental system in support of the spiritual maturation process that can be replicated by present and future servant leaders.
The Antioch project’s discipling model design is a scripturally sound, grace-based strategy that identifies essential principles for instruction while conceptualizing the application for facilitation of practice. Most important, by accentuating the importance of exaltation, God’s grace as the source of enabling power is acknowledged. As Paul the Apostle noted, God gives both the desire and the ability to do according to his good pleasure (Phil 2:13). Leadership commitment and an operating style in a spirit of humility and unconditional love are critical elements when transforming the ministry culture.

Further, a strategic, grace-based model used to guide the developmental process provides a doctrinally sound means of identifying instructional goals, learning expectations, and desired outcomes by conceptualizing the critical principles from a practical perspective.

A scripturally sound, yet practical, strategic approach would also give flexibility in contemporizing the terms without distorting the context or meaning. Conceptual modeling captures the attention of new converts with minds deluded by the deceptive nature of post-modern thinking. In short, facilitators would be able to use multiple disciplines as developmental tools for relational and spiritual growth. For example, the frequent study of the Scriptures, fellowship, faithful stewardship, and fervent prayer are among the most prevalent supportive disciplines; neglecting these disciplines stifles spiritual growth. The Antioch project discipling model is built on three critical foundational principles: trust, obedience, and faith facilitated in a culture of unconditional love and humility. The quintessential practice of humility implies being guided by the Holy Spirit and obedient to the instructions while being dependent upon God for the results.
A strategic approach to the spiritual maturation process in support of a discipling ministry culture will assist Pentecostal pastors, instructional leaders, and curriculum designers in achieving a balance between inspiration, information, and intentionality. The strategic grace-based model has the potential to be beneficial not only to the Antioch COGIC ministry but to the international church as well. Finally, the scripturally astute attributes of this initiative for disciple development will provide a doctrinally sound means of developing disciples with a kingdom-focused mindset.

Theologians subscribe to the belief that “many Christians remain in bondage to fears and anxieties simply because they do not avail themselves of the discipline of study.”\(^1\) Hence, designing a systematic regimen to help congregants internalize the Scriptures to enhance the mind-renewal process (Rom 12:1-2) represents an opportunity to improve the disciple development process. This approach would allow immature believers to function like newborn babies, craving the pure spiritual milk so they can mature in their salvation (1 Pt 2:2).

The level of distribution for this grace-based conceptual teaching will be maximized to transform the ministry culture in support of the disciple development process. The church leadership has identified several modalities to accommodate both instruction and facilitation of divine principles and practice which would include interactive online discussions and small group sessions to reinforce the believer’s identity in Christ. Further, individual exercises will be used to structure prayer as a lifestyle, as the first and last line of defense when faced with temptation, trials, and tribulations and as

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\(^1\) Richard Neuhaus, *Freedom for Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 27.
a grace-based principle aligned with practical divine insight. The Word of God, supported by hagiographic essays, articles, lectures, and workshops will be used to instruct and to facilitate the spiritual maturation process. The disciple development model will be used to guide the transition of ministerial leaders from the mindset of volunteers to that of servants to fully embrace their identity in Christ. This spiritual formation training initiative will use a grace-based transformational model to support the transition from believer to follower (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Transitional application model.

The model depicted in Figure 10 is used to identify five continuous essential practices believers emulate to reflect the nature of Christ, for they “have been crucified with Christ” so that Christ lives in them. Therefore, they love God and neighbor (Mt 22:37-40), rely on God for protection and help (Ps 121:1-3), learn from Christ (Mt 11:28-30), and listen to his Word (Jas 1:19). These transformational process elements require an
understanding and practice of the foundational principles of the Christian faith to make the transition from learner to practitioner/teacher (Heb 5:11-14, 6:1-3).

**Instructional Philosophy**

When designing successful strategies to develop disciples, the instructor/facilitator assumes the role of a nurturer. Instructional scholars have noted that spiritual formation “teachers stand in relationship to their learners just as the Holy Spirit does to us: they comfort, encourage, counsel, and assist learners in growth and development.”² The learning experience in effective spiritual formation programs supporting discipleship becomes a holistic approach to maturing learners in Christ. Teachers must possess the unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. Effective facilitators extend God’s love, by his grace, a form of worship for his glory. Therefore, they are aware that “disciples are the catalyst for, but not the cause of, spiritual transformation. Spiritual change comes from God alone, who is pleased to work through the nurturing structures he designed for his church.”³ The emphasis is on God’s grace while emulating the greatest teacher of all, Jesus Christ, who went beyond imparting facts to facilitating the faith.⁴ The Antioch COGIC spiritual formation program for discipleship will adhere to an instructional philosophy that supports learning as a relational process, which provides a means of receiving God’s transforming grace. Teachers are not only recipients but also must be dispensers of the grace they have received.

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³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, 19.
Transforming the Antioch COGIC’s Leaders

The immediate focus in transitioning the ministry culture in support of the discipling process is the leaders God has planted in the Antioch COGIC body of Christ. Pastors and ministry leaders must recognize that Christ is the head of the church, and as believers grow in God’s grace, they embrace their identity as disciples. Spiritually mature leaders have an awareness of the duality associated with human nature and the oppositional influences depicted in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Understanding the duality of human nature.

The spiritual transformation process requires the believer to embrace his or her new identity in Christ (Gal 2:20), with an awareness of the duality associated with the human condition and the sin nature that influences the unregenerate soul. Spiritually mature leaders discern the deceptive forces of the enemy and the flesh while understanding the need to keep the flesh under subjection. Jesus warned believers to “watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but
the flesh is weak” (Mt 26:41). This foundational truth validates the need for an intimate relational connection with the Holy Spirit, as the soul is being regenerated using two divine standards: the unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. During the early stages of the Antioch disciple development process, the participants will gain insight into their identity in Christ and the triune nature of God. The three distinct personalities of God as Father and creator, the Son as Savior and Lord, and the Holy Spirit as a guide, comforter, and counselor are conceptualized in Figure 12 as a practical model to enhance understanding.

Figure 12. The personalities of God.

The discipling process begins with a practical understanding by using conceptual models to enhance the believers’ understanding of their relationship with God. This sequential strategy will involve disseminating divine information and acknowledging the promise from the Father, the purpose he has for their lives, and his plan of salvation. The power of prayer emphasized during this phase is a critical element in the spiritual transformation process. Specifically, the believer should pray fervently for discernment
when entering the spiritual dimension, while being aware of the spirits of error, deception, and lies used by the enemy as a distraction.

John the Apostle cautions the believer to try the spirits to confirm they are from God. The insight gained by the leading of the Holy Spirit (the helper) provides protection and direction to discern the cunning devices of the enemy, who also works in the spiritual realm. That measure of faith allows the believer to embrace the spiritual dimension to fellowship with God while being led by his Spirit. The Antioch disciple development model uses faith in Jesus Christ as the foundation, which supports the process of spiritual formation; without faith, it is impossible to enter a dimension beyond sight. Further, the Word of God is used to renew the carnal mind, and submission to the Holy Spirit enables the believer's transformational transition from perception (carnal) to a divine perspective (spiritual).

**Transformational Teaching for Discipleship**

It is by grace through faith that the providence of God manifests in support of his perfect will. The process begins with revelation from God to provide direction and divine insight, for faith begins where revelation ends. The absence of divine information can have a devastating effect on the maturation of the believer, as illustrated in Hosea: “My people perish from a lack of knowledge” (Hos 4:6). Transformational teaching for disciple development is designed to assist the believer in making the transition from volunteer to servant, and ultimately, believer to disciple. Thematic teachings solidify the divine principles that support the spiritual formation process for the disciple development ministry to renew the mind, thereby changing the perspective from carnal to spiritual. For
example, “Solidifying Your Christian Foundation” is the theme for 2019 for Antioch’s
disciple development program.

The transition of Antioch’s missional ministry culture in support of a strategic
approach to the disciple development process began with an Antioch COGIC
transformation leader’s retreat. This two-day event began on Friday morning and ended
the following Saturday evening. The location was a campsite in the Arizona mountains,
surrounded by nature and free of the distractions associated with the inner city. A
peaceful, quiet environment assisted participants in hearing God’s voice as part of the
transformational process. The goal of the retreat was to familiarize the initial target group
(Antioch’s senior ministry leaders) with the critical components that comprise the
Antioch project disciple development model. This dual-purpose approach was used to
builds disciples from the inside out, while also laying the foundation for a transformative
ministry culture.

The first objective of Antioch senior leaders’ retreat was to create an atmosphere
of followership in a spiritual setting where thoughts of fear and shame are negated while
hindrances to spiritual development were acknowledged in a spirit of confession. The
retreat was also designed to assist participants and leaders in understanding the
importance of growing in God’s grace as an essential element in the disciple-
development process. The retreat offered the believing participants an opportunity to
exercise that measure of faith using the five essential descriptive components: a
foundation, action, belief in the impossible, trust, and confidence in the hope of glory.
The transformation process began with understanding the importance of trust, obedience,
and hope. As the believers transition to becoming followers of Christ, the spiritual
maturation process supports a relational response to God and other participant leaders. Specifically, the desired outcome is a ministry leader transformed with a heart of submission, while operating in a spirit of unconditional love and humility.

The anticipated results of the Antioch Transformational Leaders’ Retreat are future development instructors equipped with the necessary tools to practice and facilitate the transformational process to develop mature disciples, beginning with the Antioch Church of God in Christ community. In short, there is that promise that God’s will shall be done, although the church is composed of Christians who are often carnal, immature, and biblically illiterate. Nonetheless, “the church is a community of hope, and hope can, by definition, only be vindicated by the future.”5 Ultimately, the most significant expectation of all is that the Antioch project disciple development initiative will not be viewed as a program. Instead, we are trusting God that it will become a missional ministry culture that will last for generations to come.

CHAPTER 5:
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND EVALUATION

This chapter details phase one: the orientation and initiation of the Antioch disciple development strategy in the form of the Antioch Transformational Leaders’ Retreat. The goal of the phase one retreat was to use an active, collaborative, practical approach to facilitate commitment among leaders chosen to attend. Further, expectations also included leaders gaining a deeper understanding of the purpose, potential, and promise associated with the development of disciples. Finally, the intent of the retreat is to emphasize the duality of the Antioch project disciple development strategy. The model also serves as a guide for the spiritual maturation process.

**Antioch COGIC Transformational Leaders’ Retreat**

A transformational leaders’ retreat took place at Fort Tuthill campground in Flagstaff, Arizona, part of the world’s largest ponderosa pine forest at the base of the San Francisco Peaks. The retreat began on Friday, January 18, 2019, at 8:00 a.m. and concluded Saturday, January 19, 2019, at 8:00 p.m. (see Appendix B for details and Appendix C for the registration form). The Antioch Transformational Leaders’ Retreat workshops were facilitated by the Senior Pastor (Jonathan Logan). The particular facility
was chosen as the site for the retreat because the cost was reasonable ($50.00 per person per day) and all the essential support equipment was available. This location also offered a peaceful environment to accommodate the twelve participant leaders. This quiet, peaceful area was surrounded by nature, which allowed participants an opportunity to reflect, study, and pray in an atmosphere free of distractions.

**Participants**

The phase one retreat was composed of Antioch’s eight department heads and four executive elders. The intent was to promote buy-in from the top down in support Antioch’s original discipling strategy. The criteria used for selection were the leader’s current position, the potential for success as a future facilitator, and his or her perceived level of spiritual maturity. Equally important was the leader’s ability to identify improvement opportunities from the perspective of a participant leader, future instructor, and process expert. Finally, twelve attendees were chosen for phase one of the Antioch transformational leaders’ retreat to maximize participation and time management.

**Practicalities and Funding**

The phase one retreat offered an opportunity to introduce, inform, and inspire chosen leaders on the importance of a strategic approach to disciple development in a post-modern era. Given the future implications of this project initiative, available funding was not a deciding factor. Nonetheless, faithful stewardship is a discipling support practice; as such, the total expenses to the Antioch ministry for food, support equipment, and the meeting facility was about a thousand dollars. The projected expenses budget was about two thousand dollars. However, by utilizing faithful stewardship, the unused funds
were reallocated. As an example of commitment, participant leaders opted to fund their own lodging and transportation. The retreat location was slightly less than a two-hour drive from the Antioch church.

**Role of Facilitator**

The Antioch senior pastor (Jonathon Logan) functioned in the capacity of retreat workshop facilitator, which proved to be a prudent decision for several reasons. Aside from being the project author and strategic model designer, facilitating the retreat workshop sessions afforded additional benefits, mainly feedback and doctoral project defense preparation. The facilitator used a variety of conceptual models designed to assists in instructing discipling principles while facilitating practical applications with transformative relevance. Additional benefits associated with conceptual models included the pictorial representation of information used to capture the essence of the concept or principle to enhance levels of understanding and comprehension.

**Resources**

The workshop site accommodations included a conference room for general gatherings of the entire team of participant leaders. There were also three breakout rooms for small group exercises and peer teaching opportunities. A projector and screen were made available for media presentations and were used by both the facilitator and the groups when necessary. Laptops and iPads were encouraged; however, cell phones were not allowed in the meeting areas. For emergency incoming calls, participants were given a service desk number as an emergency contact. The Post-It notes, pens, pencils, notepads, Bibles, and additional suggested reading were sourced by the Antioch ministry.
Retreat Objective

The purpose of the leaders’ retreat was to familiarize the participants with the five levels of Antioch’s project disciple development model. The model will also serve as a guide for the transformative process of growing in God’s grace. The need for a mindset and desire to transition from a volunteer to a servant leader were also a point of interest. The transformational servant leaders’ retreat was designed to facilitate a strategy that will promote a leadership commitment to the process. Finally, the desired outcome was a cadre of servant leaders dedicated to an operating style that inspires trust, obedience, and hope to sustain a disciple development culture.

Retreat Overview

The Antioch Project Transformational leaders’ two-day retreat was designed to foster unity among ministry leaders from a spiritual perspective. The Antioch Project disciple development model was a facilitation guide to inform with intentionality a leadership commitment and operating style that inspires trust, obedience, and hope. During the two-day retreat, the model was divided into five levels: Level-One was the Structural Principles; Level-Two the Support Practices; Level-Three the Strategic Pillars; Level-Four the Sacred Paradigms; Level-Five the Promise and Position with Purpose. The retreat concludes with a self-evaluation to identify inhibiting factors associated with becoming a transformation servant leader. The goal is to enhance spiritual growth as an essential component in the transformation process using the Antioch Project disciple development model as a guide.
Retreat Agenda

Day One: Trust as the Cornerstone

Approach and rationale: The instructional phase of the retreat was designed to equip the participants with divine foundational principles as a means of preparing the mind for renewal to reflect the image of Christ. The importance of community was discussed, noting that spiritual maturity is not achieved while functioning in isolation. Rather, Richard Peace asserts that an interdependent community, known as the body of Christ, supports the Christian way. Solomon posited that iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another (Prv 27:17). All sessions were facilitated using the DRIP approach: Holy Spirit-directed while participants were reminded of their identity in Christ. The participant leaders were informed using relevant Scripture and persuaded to participate actively. Further, sessions were conducted in a spirit of peace, unity, order, and excellence, as hearts were being transformed with love and humility, thereby reflecting Christ, the model to the glory of God.

The first day of the retreat was designed to set the atmosphere, introduce the DDM model, and to provide instruction and guided discussion on the principles and process practical application examined in the second phase of the retreat on Day Two. The retreat began promptly at 8:00 a.m. with a two-hour session entitled “Prayer, Welcome, Introductions, Overview of Purpose, Ground Rules, and Group Covenant.” The opening session began with a prayer of grace: “Heavenly Father, cover me with your

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anointing, hide me behind your grace so that you alone will receive glory during the hour. Amen.”

Ground Rules: The essential retreat guidelines and expectation were covered to begin the first session. Participants agreed that in the absence of an unforeseen misfortune, they would be available for both days of the retreat. They would exhibit support and compassion for other attendees. Confidentiality would be maintained with regard to personal information shared during disclosure exercises. Honesty was an expectation, and participants were required to be transparent while allowing others to be open in an appropriate way. Members were also required to practice respect for the input and ideas of others. Finally, the most important requirement was always to give God one’s best effort.

The opening session included an ice breaker, in which participants were asked to share their thoughts about a transformational experience, to pick one area of their lives (e.g., behavior, thoughts, relationships, lifestyle, feelings, ministry) for immediate transformation, and to share this aspect and why they chose it. They were given the option choose an experience to describe from the following types of transformation: a conversion experience, a charismatic experience, moral transformation, career transformation, a mystical experience, a prayer experience, or transformation in a relationship.

The sharing exercise was followed by small group breakouts to discuss results guided by a focus question: How does change usually take place in your life? The last session before the break emphasized the importance of developing a discipling ministry culture, immediately following the break, there was an overview, and Antioch project
disciple development model was presented to the participants. The stage was set for the afternoon session which began with the model’s foundation: Structural Principles that Provide the Foundation of an Effective Disciple Development Model (Trust, Obedience, and Hope)” and “Transformative Support Practices: Frequent Study, Fellowship, Faithful Stewardship, and Fervent Prayer.” The day ended with reflective summations, reviews, and practical assessments and then closing prayer and fellowship.

Day Two: Christ: Positioned with Purpose and Promise

Approach and rationale: This phase of the retreat involved conceptualizing the principles emphasized during the instructional stage to facilitate practical application. During the second day of the retreat, exercises were used to illustrate the practical application in building the internal ecclesia or the spiritual development process. The day began with fellowship, an opening prayer, and a contemplative Scripture reading (1 Jn 5:14-15). An ice breaker followed with the theme of releasing the baggage. The participants (young men) were asked to list struggles, strongholds, and potential distractions they faced on a Post-It note. After emphasizing the importance of confidentiality, the participants were asked to count off by twos to establish prayer partners. The random selection was used to remove the leaders from their comfort zones. They were required to share their most significant struggle, stronghold, or potential distraction with their partners while meditating on these passages from the Gospel of Matthew:

Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. Again, I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be
done for them by my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in my name, I am there in their midst. (Mt 18:18-20)

They were required to pray together with the assigned partner to rebuke, bind, and cast out the developmental inhibitors they shared while praying in accordance with the promise of God’s perfect will.

After this sharing, they were asked to respond to the following critical question:
Which of the following descriptive phrases best defines how the Bible connects with the believer on an intimate level? Participant leaders received nine potential responses options: 1) It is a mirror in which I see myself. 2) It resonates with my story. 3) It is my standard to follow. 4) It confirms me. 5) It models for me how to think, act, and feel. 6) It challenges me. 7) It defines me 8) It confronts me. 9) It clarifies my decisions. The participant leaders were also asked to identify scriptural passages that align with the Biblical connection as a source of information and inspiration. The rest of the day was devoted to three sessions, and after each exercise or session, reflections and critical questions were shared in small groups to enhance understanding from a practical perspective.

To begin the next segment, the facilitator conducted an overview of the five strategic pillars that guide the disciple development process. The strategic pillars represent a process, that begins with God’s grace and end with his glory, which would include evangelism, edification, equipping, empowerment, and exaltation. Spiritual references were provided to validate the importance of transformational progression. The participants were asked to consider the critical question: Where are you in the Spiritual formation process continuum? The goal was to emphasize a renewed mindset that would
support the transition from a volunteer to a servant. Further, facilitation of the strategic process pillars was guided by the assertion that a positive correlation exists between one’s belief and behavior.

Jesus modeled the behaviors of a transformational leader, such being the case, the next topic introduced was the importance of sacred paradigms in the transformative process: praise, grace, and worship; love, humility and truth; peace, unity, and order. The discussion concluded by asking the participants to reflect on another critical question and point to ponder. The participant leaders were given an opportunity to review the sacred paradigm section of the Antioch Project Disciple Development model and respond to two critical questions: In what sacred pattern of behavior are you most deficient? How can deficiencies in this area be a hinderance in becoming a transformational servant leader in Christ Jesus?

To provide additional insight on the attributes of the ultimate transformational servant leader, after dinner, the topic was “Christ: The Promise of a Savior, Positioned with Purpose as Lord and High Priest.” Jesus modeled the list of sacred paradigms through his sacrifice and total submission to God the Father. Further, Jesus demonstrated the two most important standards of a servant leader; unconditional love and humility. The retreat ended with reflections, improvement opportunities and final critical questions: Is a discipling ministry church being constructed in you? What are your expectations in becoming a transformational servant leader? (Note: for additional specifics of the program, see Appendix D).
Anticipated Outcomes

The anticipated outcomes of Day One were that participants experience and have a better understanding of God’s presence and voice. The ultimate desire of the facilitator was that they would begin to see a move of God through the eyes of the Holy Spirit and that they would believe with a heart graced through faith. As they became aware of the importance of a solid foundation, they would begin to look beyond what is seen while growing by grace. Given the subjective nature of the desired outcomes, formative assessments were designed to evaluate the participants’ understanding of the support Scriptures, combined with brief written reflective compositions as practitioners of the disciple development process.

The anticipated outcomes of Day Two were that participants would understand the practice of growing in God’s Word as a lifestyle and have a better understanding of the discipling process while being able to identify patterns of behavior that are pleasing to God. The participant should be able to distinguish the difference between worship, adoration, and praise and have an understanding of the importance of trust in Christ as Lord and Savior as a foundational element in the transformation process. On the final day of the retreat, assessments were conducted using both written and oral presentation.

Assessing the Success of the Transformational Leaders’ Retreat

Assessment is important for the continuous improvement of the discipling ministry culture. A collaborative approach was used to identify opportunities for improving the overall experience and expected outcomes. As an illustration, a survey was administrated at the end of the retreat to guide critical adjustments for future development.
events (see Appendix E). The feedback gathered from the initial servant leaders retreat was useful in developing a list of lessons learned, future challenges, non-value-added steps in the process and areas that warrant replication. This approach promotes commitment from senior leaders as they perceive themselves as being a part of the strategic developmental process in the infancy stage.

Formative assessments were used to assess instructional effectiveness and levels of comprehension; specifically, facilitator-administered pre- and post-knowledge evaluations at the beginning and the end of each session that were aligned with and supported the pedagogical approach. It is important to note that in familiarizing a cadre of servant leaders with contents that compose the strategic spiritual maturation model, pedagogy is not a reflection of the participants’ ages; instead, it became a product of the preferred mindset: one free of preconceived notions, open, creative, and critical.

The five levels of the strategic model and the process were facilitated using both reflective and collaborative approaches. The reflective style of facilitation offered participants an opportunity to evaluate their learning experiences to identify opportunities to improve. Further, for facilitators, a self-examination and feedback from the participant leaders identified potential enhancements to instructional practices and possible alternative methods or, in some instances, modalities. As a case in point, it was suggested that in the future, the Antioch disciple development strategy be shared as part of the outreach ministry for the incarnated using the theme “Preserved to Serve While Embracing Your Identity in Christ.” Further, a collaborative approach was used to support collective learning strategies, which included learning groups and peer teaching to assist participant leaders in working toward the common goal of spiritual growth. This
approach enhanced interaction while encouraging the participants to function interdependently through active engagement. The desired outcome was encouraging and achieved by creating a learning environment to support spiritual growth that was active, reflective, and collaborative.
A transformational approach to the church’s mandated mission is critical in today’s post-modernist digital society to overcome negative perceptions. Historically, some of the more popular misconceptions about global mission include Western imperialism, colonialism, acculturation, and in some instances, violent behavior and hostile takeovers. More recently, some have viewed the Great Commission as nothing more than humanitarian efforts used as a form of manipulation or simply as a vacation to a foreign land. Local churches have begun to view the mission and disciple development as programs rather than mandates. This mindset or ministry response to the Great Commission has stifled the influence of the local church on the secular community. In this ministry project, an improvement opportunity was identified from a strategic theological perspective that would provide direction and relevance to the missional efforts.

The theology of the church’s mission provides the framework that supports disciple development as a critical element aligning the missiology, ecclesiology, ecumenicism, and practice in response to God’s mandate to build disciples in all nations. The two most important standards in a strategic approach to missional efforts are the unconditional love of the Father and the humility of the Son. This posture is reflective of the Antioch Project Disciple’s Prayer: Heavenly Father reveal your perfect will for this hour of my life (1 Jn 5:14). With a spirit of humility, prepare my heart to receive the grace to operate in it (Jas 4:6). With a supernatural move, cover me with your anointing (Php 2:13). So that you alone will receive glory (Eph 3:20). The five points identified in this grace-based prayer enable the discipling church to embrace the missional mandate.
Transformational servant leaders are guided by the Holy Spirit in obedience to instructions while trusting God for the results, particularly in this post-modern era where excessive dependence on technology has reduced the average adult attention span to less than twelve seconds.\(^1\) Thus, scripturally sound teachings must be presented using practical modern illustrations relevant to the challenges associated with living in a post-modern society. The ultimate goal for the saints is to accomplish by faith congruence between the way the Lord views them and how they live out their faith. Eugene Peterson noted that “… Christian life is the lifelong practice of attending to the details of congruence—congruence between ends and means, congruence between what we do and the way we do it.”\(^2\) It is through our understanding of our position in Christ that we have the assurance of salvation, and subsequently, peace in our hearts and mind. Indeed, as believers in Christ, there is an assurance of eternal life; for a spiritually mature disciple of Christ, there is an eternal significance.

Hence, justification is an event, whereas, sanctification is a process that provides manifestations of spiritual growth to reflect Christ Jesus, the model. This transformative process represents a critical element in the Antioch COGIC disciple development mandate. In response to the Great Commission, this ministry project produced an original model that will serve as a guide for the ministry culture (a ministry committed to discipleship). The model also provides direction for collaborative efforts, participant leaders, spiritual growth, as well as practical applications for the discipling process.

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Several conceptual models supporting instructions were also used during the project initiative. One of the more significant outcomes during the Antioch Transformational leaders’ retreat was a reset of the mindset. Specifically, the mission and vision were recognized as being God’s promise and purpose for Antioch COGIC as a hospital of hope, in support of the five stages of disciple development.

The church’s response to a post-modern indecorous society requires a strategic approach to the discipling process. Given the critical role of transformational servant leaders supporting the missional imperative, a systemic model provides a foundation and guide for the discipling ministry culture. The ideal model design should be grace-based and Christ-centered, by acknowledging and aligning with God’s promise, purpose, plan, perspective, principles, and priorities. Further, the missional reductionism of post-modernist ecclesiology represents a transitional interference when servant leaders are committed to a grace-based, transformative, strategic approach. The Antioch project disciple development model offers spiritual leaders a viable alternative to non-value added, image-based practices. Instead, the model serves as a strategic guide, designed to shift the ministry paradigm from mimicking impressions to making an impact. Further, a theologically sound disciple development model supports the transition from a spiritually impoverished mindset to an operating style that inspires trust, obedience, and hope. Finally, the Antioch project disciple development strategy is designed to guide a mission-focused ministry culture in response to the challenges associated with the post-modern era.
APPENDIX A

Antioch’s COGIC Current Organizational Structure
APPENDIX B

Transformation Leaders’ Retreat Information

Antioch Church of God in Christ

WHEN January 18-19, 2019 (Friday-Saturday)

WHERE Fort Tuthill
2446 Fort Tuthill Loop
Flagstaff, Arizona

ARRIVAL Check-in between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. Thursday evening
Meeting room opens for registration and fellowship at 8:30 p.m.

FACILITATOR Pastor Jonathan Logan
Professor, Phoenix Seminary

THEME Growing in Christ from the Inside Out

COST $100.00 per person both days

LODGING Cabins, rooms, or trailers are available with accommodates for two, four, or six occupants.

GUESTS It is strongly recommended that you consider not bringing guest and family members. Antioch’s leaders deserve the opportunity to maximize participation in this spiritually enriching, strategic two-day event.

WHAT TO BRING Bible, comfortable clothes, and personal items.

Registration/Cancellation: cut-off is January 4, 2019

The total amount must be paid in full no later than January 11, 2019, to the Antioch COGIC Business Administrator. If you are unable to make full payment by this date, please call (623) 486-9007. Payment Options: Check, Cash, Credit Card (See Business Administrator for Credit Card Payments)
## APPENDIX C

Transformational Leaders’ Retreat Registration

### Antioch Church of God in Christ

**Leaders’ Retreat Registration Log**

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APPENDIX D

Transformational Leaders’ Retreat Agenda

Antioch Transformational Leaders’ Retreat

Day One Agenda

Topic: Trust as the Cornerstone

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.  Prayer, welcome, introductions, an overview of the purpose, and ground rules.

10:00 – 10:30 a.m.  Discussion topic: The importance of developing a discipling ministry culture.

10:20 – 10:30 a.m.  Break

10:30 – noon  Discussion topic: Introduce and provide an overview of the Antioch disciple development model.

Noon – 1:00 p.m.  Lunch. To maximize the time, small group discussion topics will be assigned during lunch breaks. All meals will be catered by Sam’s Barbeque Grill.

1:00 – 2:15 p.m.  Discussion topic: The foundation: Structural principles that provide the foundation for an effective disciple development model (trust, obedience, and hope).

2:15 – 2:30 p.m.  Break

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.  Discussion topic: Transformative support practices: Frequent study, fellowship, faithful stewardship, and fervent prayer.

4:00 – 4:15 p.m.  Break

4:15 – 5:00 p.m.  Reflective summations, reviews, and practical assessments

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.  Closing prayer and fellowship.

Day Two Agenda

Christ: Positioned with Purpose and Promise

Approach and rationale: This phase of the retreat involves conceptualizing the principles emphasized during the instructional stage to facilitate practical application.
8:00 – 8:45 a.m.   Fellowship, opening prayer, and a contemplative scriptural reading (1 Jn 5:14-15).

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  The strategic pillars that guide the disciple development process.

10:30 – 11:45 a.m. Discussion topic: The strategic pillars: A process that begins with God’s grace and ends with his glory: evangelism, edification, equipping, empowerment, and exaltation.

Noon – 1:00 p.m.   Lunch break and a time of fellowship

1:00 – 2:45 p.m.   Critical question and assessment: Where are you in the transformative process continuum?

3:00 – 4:45 p.m.   The importance of sacred paradigms in the transformative process: Peace, unity, and order; love, humility, and truth; praise, worship, and grace.

4:45 – 5:30 p.m.   Critical question and reflection: In what sacred pattern are you most deficient?

5:30 – 6:00 p.m.   Dinner break

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.   Christ: The promise of a savior, positioned with purpose as Lord and High Priest.

7:45 – 8:00 p.m.   Final critical question: Is a discipling ministry being constructed in you?
APPENDIX E

Leaders’ Retreat Survey

We request your assistance in our continuous improvement efforts to achieve excellence. We appreciate your comments and recommendations for improving future retreats.

Please circle the number that best reflects your opinion regarding the effectiveness of the retreat in support of the disciple development process: 1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree somewhat; 3-Neither agree/disagree; 4-Agree somewhat; 5-Strongly agree.

1. The activities were relevant
Explain:

2. The areas covered were insightful
Explain:

3. A strong foundation was provided in support of the spiritual formation process.
Explain:

4. Information was presented in an interesting manner.
Explain:

5. The time allotted for group breakout sessions was sufficient
Explain:

6. What aspect of the orientation did you find most beneficial?

7. Given the opportunity, what changes would you make to the Antioch Transformational Leadership Retreat?
For a status your recommendations and improvement opportunities, please provide the information requested below.

Name_____________________________________________ Phone _______________

We sincerely appreciate your participation.


Thompson, Colin. “*St. John of the Cross*.” In Wakefield, 232.


