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From the Co-Editor

Joshua D. Henson, Ph.D.
Regent University
School of Business & Leadership

On behalf of Regent University's School of Business and Leadership and the editorial board of the Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership, I thank you for supporting the journal.

This issue continues our mission of exploring, engaging, and extending the field of knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of leadership as found within the contexts of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. The latest issue is an extension of the previous issue theme, catalyzed by the growing conversation on emotional intelligence as central to effective leadership.

We would like to welcome JBPL's two new co-editors, Paul Palma and Alex Wright. Both are seasoned leadership and biblical studies scholars, bringing years of publishing and editorial experience to the team.

As of this issue, I will officially transition out of my role as editor of JBPL. I have been blessed to serve on the editorial team for the journal since 2017; however, the priorities of my schedule and responsibilities now require fresh vision and leadership for JBPL. I am excited to see the vision and excellence with which Drs. Palma and Wright will lead this journal. I am grateful for the leadership and engagement of Dr. Doris Gomez and Dr. Bruce Winston. It was because of their support that I was able to resurrect JBPL and work with so many amazing scholars and practitioners. Thank you for the honor to serve.

Grace and peace in the name of Jesus Christ.

Joshua D. Henson

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NURTURING INTEGRITY IN MODERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: TEACHING, MENTORSHIP, AND THE PRINCIPLES OF TITUS 2

Emaneli Barresi

This manuscript examines the vital role of teaching and mentorship in fostering integrity within modern leadership development, drawing on an exegetical analysis of Titus 2. By exploring Paul's instructions to Titus, the study highlights how leaders can apply sound doctrine, moral character, and relational mentorship principles to contemporary contexts, thereby nurturing ethically grounded and transformational leaders. The comprehensive approach to leadership development in Titus 2 includes teaching, mentorship, ethical behavior, and growth, emphasizing the importance of these elements in cultivating integrity.

INTRODUCTION

Christian leaders must root their development in integrity, which evolves through teaching, mentorship, behavior, and personal growth. This manuscript examines the critical role of teaching and mentorship in nurturing integrity within modern leadership development, drawing on an exegetical analysis of Titus 2. By exploring Paul's instructions in his letter to Titus, this study highlights how leaders can apply the principles of sound doctrine, moral character, and the transformative power of relational mentorship to contemporary leadership development contexts. With its far-reaching implications for organizations, the comprehensive approach in Titus 2 underscores the importance of ethical conduct and clear behavior expectations in developing integrity and fostering transformational leaders.

Leaders must teach and nurture others with integrity, requiring them to exhibit, demonstrate, and apply sound doctrines and values. Learning opportunities and experiences are important and crucial to leadership development (Allio, 2005) and engage leaders in active learning. Leadership mentoring, a collaborative process that

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results in growth for both parties involved in the relationship (Rao et al., 2023), is a critical factor for executive success (Coers et al., 2021). Christian leaders seeking to develop competencies must regard integrity as central to this process.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Christian leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the organizational culture by demonstrating integrity. Integrity in leadership embodies good character and consistency in honest behaviors that influence others. Leaders must align their actions with their beliefs to set an example of uprightness for their followers. They should view development as a continuous process with the potential for authentic relationships and effective communication with their followers (Anderson & Adams, 2016, p. 78; Sosik & Jung, 2018). To fully embody all dimensions of leadership, leaders must be able to mentor and foster growth in others (Anderson & Adams, 2016). This practice contributes to the development of both leaders and followers and empowers them to shape the organizational culture through teaching and direct mentorship.

Individuals should aspire to cultivate moral character, with integrity as a central development focus (Leigh, 2009). Practicing virtuous efforts requires sound teaching with probity (Newstead et al., 2020). Given that the effectiveness of teachers significantly influences learner and student moral development (Clark & Bocarnea, 2023), the importance of leadership character becomes even more apparent. Personal accountability is crucial in developing integrity as a strategic leader and is one of the most critical factors in perceptions of leadership integrity (Quick & Goolsby, 2013). Therefore, Christian leaders should prioritize personal growth and instill these characteristics in their followers, inspiring them to do the same.

Leader integrity reflects individual characteristics (Fard & Zarghamifard, 2020). The entire leadership system should have ethical standards to develop character (Reimer & Slade, 2023). By acting with integrity, leaders enhance trust (Sabatier, 2014) and foster sound behavior in their roles as mentors and teachers, thereby maximizing their efficacy. Developing this capacity is a strategic asset (Petrick & Quinn, 2001). Through modeling moral behaviors, Christian leaders fulfill their role as mentors, setting and reinforcing behavioral expectations (Hall, 2020). This emphasis on trust in leadership should make followers feel secure and confident in their roles.

EXEGETICAL DISCUSSION/INSIGHTS

The text of Titus 2 provides a detailed framework for developing integrity within different demographics of the church at Crete. The epistle to Titus, written by the Apostle Paul, underscores an unbreakable link between faith, practice, beliefs, and behavior, which is essential for sound Christian leadership (Titus 2, NIV). In the historical context, false teachers posed significant challenges in Crete, leading Paul to leave Titus in charge to counter these influences and guide the church toward proper moral behavior.

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Paul's letter to Titus offers a portrait of ideal health in the church, emphasizing sound leadership and practical living principles. Titus, a leader mentored by Paul, is tasked with mentoring others, reflecting the continuity and importance of mentoring relationships in leadership development. This emphasis on mentorship is not just a passing mention but a call to action for Titus and others to invest in the future of the church at Crete. Paul outlines that there should be no separation between belief and behavior, advocating for integrity where the gospel serves as the foundation for ethical living (Lappenga, 2013). Titus was to mentor others in right living while looking to the future promises of Christ.

The pericope addresses various demographics, prescribing specific character behaviors and practical living principles for each group. For example, older men are encouraged to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, love, and steadfastness, while older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or too engrossed with wine (Titus 2:3, NIV). They are to teach what is good, train younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their husbands so that the word of God may not be reviled (Titus 2: 4-5, NIV). These instructions demonstrate the critical nature of teaching and mentorship of integrity as both character and behavioral expectations.

Paul's instructions are particularly significant against the backdrop of first-century social expectations. For women, behavior based on sound doctrine aimed to reduce offense and promote the gospel (Smithson, 2003). The term "train" in Greek means to instruct and wisely behave, and it is given by God's kindness and generosity, highlighting the divine source of ethical instruction (Crossway, 2011). God’s word provides us a solid foundation and a clear path to follow, even in the face of false teachings. Further, the issue of false teachers necessitated the development of specific character behaviors within the church. Paul draws similarities between Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Timothy 2:1-7, using inner-textual references to outline expectations for godly living inspired by Isaiah (Edwards, 2011). God's grace, described as a teacher and encourager, is pivotal in this process. Grace not only saves but also teaches, making ethical demands and promoting obedience, thereby forming a system of ethics based on truth and right living.

The mentorship dynamic is crucial, particularly the role of older women mentoring younger women, creating a cascade of development essential for discipleship. The influence of female mentorship on Christian leadership is profound, contributing significantly to the success of younger leaders and shaping moral outcomes for their future contributions (Dahlvig & Longman, 2014). Such developmental relationships strengthen female leadership identity and enhance their role as contributors to the kingdom (Longman et al., 2019). Teaching and mentorship create a foundation for individual growth for older and younger women.

Paul emphasized stability and integrity as a prerequisite for leadership. Paul advocates for self-control and sober-mindedness, where life is taken seriously and lived in proper order, sound in faith, love, and patience (Titus 2:11-14, NIV). Direct instruction

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is to be carried out with integrity, underscoring the importance of teaching that aligns with godly principles. Because grace, as taught by the Holy Spirit, remains central to this instructional process (Guzik, 2018), the followership role of Christian leaders comes before their role as mentors and leaders of others.

Furthermore, the gospel of Mark reinforces the imperative of mentorship for Christian leaders, illustrating the significance of teaching and guiding others in the path of righteousness across time and varied geographic locations (Thomas, 2018). Thus, Titus 2 is one of several comprehensive guides for mentoring and teaching integrity, essential for leadership development within the Christian context. This passage strongly supports integrating virtuousness as the foundation of fruitful leadership in line with other scriptural assertions about behavioral and leadership expectations.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION: TEACHING OTHERS WITH INTEGRITY

The analysis of Titus 2 provides a foundational understanding for developing leadership through the lens of integrity, emphasizing the importance of teaching others with authenticity and ethical behavior. Paul's guidance to Titus highlights the necessity of behavioral continuity with faith and belief in growth and development, ensuring that leaders and mentors embody the values they teach. This section explores the practical application of Titus 2's principles in contemporary leadership development, focusing on the role of integrity in teaching and mentorship.

Behavioral Integrity with Growth

Central to the teachings in Titus 2 is behavioral integrity, which involves living in a manner consistent with professed beliefs. Leaders must avoid giving false impressions and maintain authenticity in their adherence to sound doctrine (Guzik, 2018). This principle is vital in empowering others to do "good works" and ethical behavior, as demonstrated by recent research emphasizing the role of integrity in leadership (Yazdanshenas & Mirzaei, 2023). Paul provides both theoretical and direct words to support his instructions.

A practical application of this principle can be observed in youth development programs within the church, which focus on mentorship and the gospel. Youth leaders must foster moral integrity and cultivate future leaders grounded in ethical values (Lanker, 2010). Positive youth development programs prioritize establishing moral integrity to nurture responsible and ethical student leaders (Arshad et al., 2021). Organizations must design such systems with integrity and purpose to achieve ethical outcomes (Fried, 1997; Reimer & Slade, 2023). Youth benefit from mentorship relationships only when marked by integrity-building characteristics.

Teaching Followers Integrity and Restoring Honor

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Titus 2 underscores the transformative role of experienced leaders in teaching and restoring honor through integrity, particularly in the context of mentorship. This mentorship is not just about imparting knowledge but about fostering leadership transcendence and the holistic development of individuals. It is a powerful tool that inspires and motivates mentors and mentees (Reynolds et al., 2023). The period between Christ's first and second coming is a time for discipleship training, where leaders should mentor followers of Christ to live with integrity and purpose (Thompson, 2001). The goal of this development process is to grow followers and restore honorable behavior in line with the will of God.

Ethical Training and Development

The application of Titus 2 in leadership development extends to ethical training and the structured teaching of integrity. Wisdom and experience, as highlighted in the epistle, are crucial for developing leaders (Beal, 1983). Integrating these values into workplace spirituality can transform leaders and organizational culture, promoting morality, truth, and ethical conduct in day-to-day operations (Naidoo, 2014). Formal and informational training and development must intentionally focus on honesty, character development, and behavioral expectations in line with scripture, values, and Christ-centered ethics.

Fostering Leadership Development

To foster leadership development effectively, it is essential to focus on character, competence, connection, and culture (Do et al., 2023). These elements create a holistic environment where young leaders can draw from collaborative experiences, enriching their leadership roles with practical wisdom, practice, and ethical insights (Sparkman, 2017). The audience can feel more engaged and committed to their leadership development by emphasizing these key elements. The mentorship model outlined in Titus 2 serves as a blueprint for these developmental relationships, ensuring that future leaders can navigate challenges with virtue and moral fortitude.

The teachings of Titus 2 provide a robust framework for leadership development that prioritizes integrity. Leaders can cultivate an environment where integrity is paramount by emphasizing behavioral rectitude, ethical training, and the transformative power of mentorship. This approach strengthens individual leaders and fosters a culture of ethical decisions and moral excellence within the broader organization.

CONCLUSION

The teachings of Titus 2 offer a timeless and profound framework for leadership development centered on integrity. This manuscript has examined the critical role of teaching and mentorship in nurturing integrity within modern leadership development contexts through an exegetical analysis of Paul's instructions to Titus. Christian leaders

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can foster environments where integrity thrives by applying sound doctrine, moral character, and relational mentorship.

Integrity is not merely an aspirational trait but a fundamental requirement for effective and transformational leadership. Leaders who embody integrity influence others through consistent and honest behaviors that align with their faith and beliefs. This alignment is crucial in shaping organizational culture and inspiring trust among followers. Through the continuous process of personal growth and trustworthy behavior, leaders can model a powerful example, demonstrating that integrity is at the core of their leadership.

Teaching and mentorship are pivotal in developing integrity in others. Paul's letter to Titus underscores the necessity of mentoring relationships, where experienced leaders guide followers in the right way of living, creating a cascade of development essential for discipleship. This mentorship dynamic, particularly the role of older individuals mentoring the younger, is vital for establishing a foundation of integrity that spans generations and highlights the importance of investing in the church and organizations' future.

The practical application of Titus 2's principles in contemporary leadership development involves fostering behavioral integrity, ethical training, and a holistic approach to personal growth. Leaders must avoid giving false impressions, maintain authenticity in their adherence to sound moral doctrine, and empower others to complete their "good works" with ethical behavior. Programs focused on development, mentorship, and the gospel are crucial in nurturing morality and cultivating future leaders grounded in ethical values.

By emphasizing character, competence, connection, and culture, leaders can create a holistic environment for follower development. This approach ensures young leaders draw from collaborative experiences, enriching their roles with practical wisdom and ethical insights from those who have walked the path before them. The mentorship model outlined in Titus 2 serves as a blueprint for these developmental relationships, ensuring that future leaders navigate challenges with integrity and moral fortitude to model the way.

In conclusion, the teachings of Titus 2 provide a robust and comprehensive guide for leadership development that prioritizes integrity. Christian leaders can cultivate environments where integrity is paramount by integrating behavioral continuity with faith, ethical training, and the transformative power of mentorship. This approach strengthens individual leaders and fosters a culture of right behavior and moral excellence, ensuring that the legacy of integrity continues to inspire and guide future generations.

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Next Steps for Christian Leaders

Scripture calls Christian leaders to actively embody and teach integrity in every aspect of their lives and leadership. It is imperative to take Paul's instructions to Titus to heart and apply them diligently. Leaders must:

1. **Model Integrity**: Consistently align actions with beliefs, demonstrating honesty and ethical behavior in all circumstances.
2. **Mentor Others**: Invest time and resources in mentoring relationships, guiding others in right living, and fostering a culture of integrity.
3. **Promote Ethical Training**: Develop and implement programs emphasizing ethical behavior and sound doctrine, ensuring that future leaders are grounded in moral values.
4. **Foster a Culture of Integrity**: Create environments where integrity is valued and practiced, encouraging open communication, personal accountability, and ethical decision-making.

By taking these steps, Christian leaders can ensure that integrity remains a foundational principle in leadership development. This approach will ultimately lead to the growth of morally grounded and transformational leaders who can positively impact their communities, organizations, and the world around them.

About the Author

Dr. Emi Barresi, a human-centric global agile leader, brings 15 years of remote experience in technology and organizational transformation, informed by industrial-organizational psychology. She has successfully coached a Fortune 100 organization through a rigorous Agile transformation and, most recently, spearheaded the establishment of business agility practices within business intelligence for a medical organization. Emi is the developer of the Human Ethics Approach for Remote and Tech-Hybrid (HEARTH) Leadership Model. This framework promotes human-centric leadership to foster ethical remote work and seamless integration of technology. She is an expert in effective remote teaming and integrating advanced technologies—including AI and robotics—to improve collaboration and team performance. With a profound passion for humanity at the core of her work, she advocates for equitable, flexible, and innovative solutions that empower both organizations and individuals.

Emi holds a doctorate in Strategic Leadership from Regent University and a master's degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Her academic and professional achievements, combined with numerous accolades such as Regent University's DSL Project of the Year and Leadership Excellence awards, underscore her expertise in transformation, remote, and tech-integrated leadership, as well as the future of work.

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WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS TO A FULFILLED UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW: AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 5:17-48 AND JESUS' APPROACH TO LEADING CHANGE

Jennifer I. Braganza

This research examined how Kotter's (1995) leading change framework is illustrated through Jesus' organizational change as presented in Matthew 5:17-48. Limited research exists on the application of organizational change models in biblical studies. Using socio-rhetorical analysis, specifically inner texture and intertexture analyses, this study explored exemplary examples of how Jesus created a vision, communicated change, and empowered action, enacting steps three through five of Kotter's (1995). In Matthew's gospel, Jesus redefined holiness from adherence to the teachings of the Pharisees and scribes to the pursuit of righteousness as the path to heaven. His change message was rooted in Old Testament scripture, aligning with His audience's beliefs, and illustrated through provocative examples. He also set clear expectations, urging compassion towards one's enemy as well as one's neighbor. This research shows effective strategies for executing three steps of Kotter's (1995) leading change process but does not show the entire process end-to-end. Additional pericopes would be required to show how Jesus led organizational change from initiation to institutionalization.

Jesus Christ led one of the greatest organizational changes in human history. His message resonates two millennia later with 2.18 billion followers today (Hackett et al., 2011). Kotter's (1995) framework remains the most widely referenced change management approach with over 2000 citations (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Despite thousands of articles and decades of application of Kotter's (1995) approach to leading change, successful organizational change remains elusive, with only about one-third of transformations succeeding (McKinsey, 2021). Kennedy (2023) stated, "Change leadership cannot be reduced to following a process or sequence. If change leadership was that simple to follow or implement, then leading change would not be so demanding

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and dependent on leaders to lead" (p. 98). Therefore, a study of Jesus as a change leader could illustrate what is required for successful organizational change.

Other studies have evaluated Jesus as a change leader using other frameworks, especially related to individual transformation. McCabe (2008) assessed Jesus' approach against Gestalt's cycle of experience and Lewin's force field model, concluding that Jesus effectively led Peter through both models in John 21. Keebler (2018) also conducted an exegetical analysis of John 21 and found that Jesus successfully changed Peter's mindset and behaviors through servant leadership. Dixon (2021), using socio-rhetorical analysis, concluded that Jesus' use of transformational leadership upskilled Nicodemus.

From an organizational change perspective, Kennedy (2023) identified five actions Jesus took to lead effective change: (1) creating an appealing vision (Kingdom of God), (2) recruiting disciples to be his change agents, (3) welcoming everyone to join him, (4) role-modeling the desired behavior, and (5) sustained his change through establishing the church (pp. 101-102). Additionally, Kennedy (2023) recognized six best practices in Jesus' change leadership as "clarity in vision, creating teams, consistency in communication, challenge by calling up, confrontation to resistance, and commitment to the vision" (p. 102).

Wilson (2010) determined, "Jesus demonstrated that there is tremendous value in synthesizing characteristics from multiple models and theories" (p. 19), noting that Jesus integrated the leader-member exchange theory, transactional leadership, servant leadership, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership to achieve change in John 21. Similarly, Wood Jr (2021) concluded, "As a dynamic force, Jesus Christ demonstrated the capacity to bring creative change to lives, teams, organizations and communities" (p. 24).

In summary, there is limited research about Jesus' use of Kotter's change management framework. Existing studies focused on an individual's change, leadership styles, and components of change management from different models. The purpose of this exegetical study is to explore how Jesus led the largest organizational change in history successfully through an exegetical analysis focusing on the antitheses in Matthew 5:17-48 through the lens of Kotter's (1995) leading change approach. First, I review relevant change management literature, followed by the socio-rhetorical method—specifically inner and intertexture analyses. Then, I present the analysis, key findings, and insights for change management.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History and Evolution

Kotter studied over 100 organizations and realized that most organizational changes fail. He created his eight-step process as a "vision" for how organizations could be successful (Mento et al., 2002, p. 45). Since its initial publication in 1995, Kotter's model has been cited over 2000 times (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Kotter has refined his

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change management process from his initial article in 1995 (Kotter, 1996). Kotter and Cohen (2002) focused on overlaying winning hearts and minds and changing behavior across the eight-step process. Kotter (2014) addressed the need for speed in executing organizational change and updated his initial framework to include a “dual operating system” of “management-driven hierarchy” and “strategy acceleration network” (p. 37).

Overview of Kotter’s Leading Change Process

Kotter’s leading change process consists of eight steps that must be followed sequentially. Kotter (1995) said, “Skipping steps creates only the illusion of speed and never produces a satisfying result” (p. 59). Kotter and Cohen (2002) concluded that many of the steps do, in fact, overlap but that the steps should still be executed in sequence (p. 58). They found that “the central issue is never strategy, structure, culture, or systems” and is, in fact, “changing the behavior of people,” which requires speaking to people’s hearts instead of their heads (p. x).

Step 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency. The first step is to make the case for change. The importance of this step is to help people understand that staying in the current state is riskier than pursuing change (Kotter, 1995, p. 60). Kotter (1995) estimated that about half of organizational changes fail in this step. Fredberg and Pregmark (2022) identified a paradox between creating a sense of urgency while fostering the positive attitudes necessary for innovation and creativity to flourish. Often, creating a sense of urgency sparks fear and other negative emotions that diminish creativity. However, companies can create a sense of urgency by using consultants (Kotter, 1996, p. 44). Armenakis et al. (1993) agreed that external voices reinforce the need for change. Kotter (1995) said urgency is achieved when 75% of leadership supports the change (p. 62). Kotter and Cohen (2002) described obstacles to urgency, such as “complacency” and fear-driven freezing (p. 17).

Step 2: Forming a Powerful Guiding Coalition. Kotter’s (1995) second step builds sponsorship from influential leaders. Kotter (1996) stressed that the coalition must have sufficient authority, knowledge, influence, respect, and capability to overcome resistance, make sound decisions, and execute the change process (p. 53). Sittrop et al. (2021) noted the coalition’s role in shaping vision, communicating wins, ensuring skills are in place, and monitoring change integration.

Pollack and Pollack (2015) found that sponsorship at multiple leadership levels—not just one—is needed throughout change. O’Reilly et al. (2010) found that the aggregate commitment of leaders across the organization determined the buy-in from the employees. If one level did not have enough support, a different level could make up the difference. However, a certain threshold needed to be met. Wentworth et al. (2020) observed that changes in the team driving the transformation resulted in delays as the new leaders needed to get onboarded and become champions for the change.

Step 3: Creating a Vision. A desired future state must be articulated that appeals to different stakeholders, including employees, customers, and shareholders (Kotter, 1996, pp. 67-84). Martin et al. (2014) found that having an inspiring vision motivated

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employees and drove longer-term culture change. Kotter (2014) said the vision must be "head and heart driven" and "must speak to the genuine and fundamental human desire to contribute to some bigger cause, to take a community or an organization into a better future" (p. 24). Collins and Porras (1996) described a sound vision as consisting of "core ideology" and "envisioned future" (p. 66). "Core ideology" connects the vision to purpose and values, while "envisioned future" pictures an aspirational state that will require significant effort to realize (Collins & Porras,1996, p. 66).

Step 4: Communicating the Vision. The vision must be shared widely to build shared understanding. Kotter and Cohen (2002) titled this step "communicate for buy-in" (p. 83), emphasizing gaining employee commitment. Kelman (1958) described commitment types: compliance, identification, and internalization. Of the three types, only internalization commitment aligns with the change itself, while with the others, the employee is focused on rule-following and staying part of the group (p. 53). Therefore, the change needs to be connected with core values and the group's purpose to enable more intrinsic commitment. Washington and Hacker (2005) found that managers well-informed about the change viewed it more positively, as understanding reduced resistance. Jansen (2004) emphasized communicating urgency, feasibility, and "drama" to make the message impactful. This can be done through careful design of the change message. Change messages should address the need, leadership support, feasibility, and personal impact (Armenakis et al., 2002).

Step 5: Empowering Others to Act on the Vision. This step enables behavior change across the organization. Kotter (1996) identified structures, skills, systems, and supervisors as key supports (p. 102). System barriers include misaligned rewards and recognition (Kotter & Cohen, 2002, pp. 108-112). Middle managers may resist if early phases fail to engage them (Kotter & Cohen, 2002, pp. 104-108). Additionally, training and coaching help build confidence and skills. Ferrari (2022) found that training enhances self-efficacy, boosting belief in success. Kappelman and Richards (1996) stated that empowered employees are more adaptable and less resistant as their need for control is met (p. 29). Armenakis et al. (1993) concluded that readiness includes reducing resistance by addressing beliefs and attitudes, the importance of earlier steps in winning the hearts and minds of employees, so that they will take the necessary steps to adopt the change.

Step 6: Planning for and Creating Short-Term Wins. The sixth step recognizes the need to share early wins to solidify progress and momentum. Roberto and Levesque (2005) described an experimentation period where leaders pilot changes before an organization-wide implementation. To deliver short-term wins, people need to focus on where they can achieve results quickly (Kotter & Cohen, 2002, pp. 127-129). These actions should deliver measurable progress that proves the direction of the vision is valid. This enables the communication of early wins for the organization to rally around. It also confirms that the new way is working (Kotter, 1996). Kotter and Cohen (2002) listed additional benefits, including "an emotional uplift," which keeps momentum, takes away power from resistors, and brings more people on board who were not yet engaged (p. 127). Mento et al. (2002) found that even recognition after a

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milestone was met from the sponsor helped keep the team motivated and spurred more ideas and opportunities.

Step 7: Consolidating Improvements and Producing Still More Change. As the transformation continues, the change must be implemented across the organization. As more of the organization is included, it is essential to have the proper structure in place to drive progress and monitor performance. In order to influence organizational performance toward the vision, the leaders must take the time to explain what is needed and how the organization and the individuals will benefit (Yukl & Gardner, 2020, p. 321). This may be balanced with directive behaviors focused on important milestones and KPIs that make progress toward the company's objectives (Yukl & Gardner, 2020, p. 320). Jansen (2004) stated that to keep momentum toward the change, it is important to continue communicating the urgency (why the change is needed) and progress toward the vision with excitement. Longenecker and Rieman (2007) added that it is crucial to communicate urgency, emphasizing the positive outcomes and not using fear-based motivation.

Step 8: Institutionalizing New Approaches. In step eight, the change is embedded and sustained through integration in business-as-usual processes and systems. Armenakis et al. (1999) found that many changes fail because they do not have leadership support from initiation through institutionalization. Kotter (1995) described companies that declare victory too soon or that do not ensure that changes are made to organizational structure, like performance management, so the changes eventually evaporate (p. 67). Roberto and Levesque (2005) defined this phase as "realigning," when roles and responsibilities, performance goals, and other structural elements within the organization are updated to reinforce the change.

Evaluation

Appelbaum et al. (2012) specified that Kotter's change model was based on his own experiences and research and contained no outside sources. ''Kotter's change management model appears to derive its popularity more from its direct and usable format than from any scientific consensus on the results'' (Appelbaum et al., 2012, p. 764). Additional research confirms elements of Kotter's process, though little research exists that supports the framework in its entirety (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

Pollack and Pollack (2005) applied Kotter's process and found that it oversimplified the actions required by assuming a linear flow. Additionally, while Kotter's process reflects a top-down approach, it needs to align with organizational leaders at different levels: "Kotter's work remains ambiguous and relatively silent concerning the issue of whether change should be managed as a single instance of his Process or as multiple instances distributed throughout an organisation" (Pollack & Pollack, 2005, p. 62).

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RESEARCH DESIGN

Socio-rhetorical analysis (SRA) is a method of exegetical analysis that applies qualitative methods from social sciences through different textural analyses. Gowler (2010) states, "Inner texture includes linguistic patterns within a text, structural elements of a text, and the specific manner in which a text attempts to persuade its reader" (p.195). Inner texture analyzes the pericope, identifying textual units from which repetitive patterns, progressive patterns, opening-middle-closing patterns, argumentative patterns, and sensory–aesthetic patterns may be identified (Henson et al., 2020). Textual units help identify "divisions that assist us in understanding changes in themes," including "time indicators, a shift of focus within the text, or a shift from narrative to the commentary" (Henson et al., 2020, p. 84). Repetitive patterns were a way for Scripture writers to help people remember and discern the "theological significance" of the verse (Henson et al., 2020, p. 85). Progressive patterns look at the pericope's structure and the flow of repetitive language through the passage (Henson et al., 2020, pp. 89-91). Opening-Middle-Closing patterns evaluate the story of the passage (Henson et al., 2020, p. 92). Argumentative patterns assess how the author supports "underlying beliefs" or the purpose of the passage (Henson et al., 2020, p. 93). Sensory-Aesthetic patterns identify the use of language that suggests emotions, thoughts, and other actions associated with our senses, such as seeing, hearing, and touching (Henson et al., 2020, p. 94).

Intertexture analysis considers how the passage interacts with sources outside of the text itself from five different perspectives: oral-scribal, cultural, social, historical, and reciprocal (Henson et al., 2020). In oral-scribal intertexture analysis, the attribution of the text is considered (Henson et al., 2020, p. 109). Cultural intertexture examines the "cultural context" of Scripture (Henson et al., 2020, p. 144). This includes references that would be known to the audience, allusions to traditions without specifying them, and echo, which is generic and indirect and cannot be tied to a specific tradition (Henson et al., 2020, pp. 114-115). Next, social intertexture considers social contexts such as social roles, identities, relationships, codes, and institutions (Henson et al., 2020, p. 117). Next, historical intertexture entails understanding particular incidents mentioned or hinted at within a text (Henson et al., 2020, p. 119). Lastly, reciprocal intertexture considers the passage in the broader context of Scripture and religious knowledge (Henson et al., 2020, p. 120). The selected pericope will be evaluated utilizing inner texture and intertexture analyses.

EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 5:17-48

The selected pericope is part of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel. Most of this passage is unique to Matthew and absent from the other gospels (deSilva, 2018, p. 219). Exceptions include the theme of "meeting evil with good" in Matthew 5:39-48 also found in Luke 6:27-36 and "making peace with your adversary" in Luke 12:57-59 and Matthew 5:25-26 (deSilva, 2018, p. 143). deSilva (2018) noted it is unlikely that the passage represents "the exact words of Jesus but rather the authentic voice and purpose of Jesus" (p. 163). Jesus' spoken word would have been in a Semitic

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language and translated. Also, the gospels are written from “the memory of the apostles” (deSilva, 2018, p.163).

This passage contains what are commonly called the six antitheses. However, Jesus says that he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17, New American Bible, 2010/1970). deSilva (2018) stated that Jesus’ statement about fulfilling the law and not abolishing it was probably directed at “critics in the synagogue who spoke of Jesus as a lawbreaker and his followers as having departed from the ways that please God” (p. 228). Trout (2015) summarized the antitheses this way: “These contrasts are generally understood in one of three ways: firstly, Jesus is stating the true intention or interpretation of the law; secondly, Jesus is deepening the law; or thirdly, Jesus’ divine authority over the law is being demonstrated” (p. 3). Hence, they are not antitheses and are better titled something else, but since they are commonly called this, I will continue to refer to them as such.

Inner Texture Analysis

Opening-Middle-Closing Pattern Analysis. The pericope is divided into eight textual units: an introductory unit, six middle units, and a concluding unit, as shown in Table 1. The six middle units are often referred to as the antitheses. These are easily identified by a repetitive pattern that begins with “it was said” (Matt. 5:21-47, NAB). Allison (1987) argued that instead of six antitheses, there are actually two triads, each starting with the words, “You have heard that it was said to your ancestors” (Matt. 5:21, 33, NAB). The first triad addresses murder, adultery, and divorce. The second triad focuses on “oaths,” “retaliation,” and “love” (p. 432). Stassen (2003) stated, “The first member of each triad is traditional righteousness. The second member is a diagnosis of a vicious cycle and its consequences. The third member is a transforming initiative that points the way to deliverance from the vicious cycle” (p. 268).

Table 1

Textual Units in Matthew 5:17-48

Verse	Unit A: Introduction
17	“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.
18	Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place
19	Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
20	**I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.**
	Unit B Middle 1
21	“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’
22	But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raqa,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna.

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23	Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you,
24	leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.
25	Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison.
26	Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.
	Unit C Middle 2
27	"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'
28	But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
29	If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna.
30	And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.
	Unit D Middle 3
31	"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.'
32	But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.
	Unit E Middle 4
33	"Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, 'Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.'
34	But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God's throne;
35	nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.
36	Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black.
37	Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one.
	Unit F Middle 5
38	"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
39	But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on [your] right cheek, turn the other one to him as well.
40	If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well.
41	Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles.
42	Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.
	Unit G Middle 6
43	"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'
44	But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,
45	that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.
46	For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same?
47	And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same?
	Unit H: Closing
48	**So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.**

The thesis of the pericope is Matthew 5:20, where Jesus talks about the righteousness needed to enter the kingdom of heaven. In the concluding textual unit, He discusses "being perfect as your heavenly father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48, NAB).

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Repetitive and Progressive Patterns. In the first verse, Jesus sets the formula for the middle units, stating that He has not come to abolish the law but fulfill it (Matt. 5:17, NAB). In each middle unit, He mirrors this with a statement that begins "it was said" where he describes the law from the Old Testament or the then current interpretation of the law followed by "But I tell you," offering a revised interpretation of the law to attain the righteousness needed to enter heaven. Even in the closing, Matthew refers to Leviticus 11:44 "You shall make and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy" with his writing "Be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48, NAB). Matthew carefully chose perfect instead of holy because the Pharisees had misinterpreted holiness as "separateness" instead of "love and generosity" (deSilva, 2018, p. 240).

Another pattern is the use of judicial language. Jesus refers to "judgment," "judge," "prison," "fines," and "Sanhedrin," as well as three references to Gehenna (a place of divine punishment). This contrasts with the introductory unit where Jesus mentions heaven four times and with the closing unit where Jesus says that the sun will rise on "the bad and the good" and the rain will fall on "the just and unjust," implying mercy for all, not just the righteous (Matt. 5:45, NAB). deSilva (2018) stated that throughout this pericope, there is a theme that Christians are "called to reflect the character of God" (p. 240). deSilva (2018) further noted Jesus' teaching against "an eye for an eye" reflects God's behavior. God gives grace and mercy to all, not just those who have earned it.

Jesus' selection of characters is noteworthy. With the exception of woman/wife, the remainder are either similar to brother or enemy. Brother can be interpreted as neighbor or fellow Christian (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004). According to Barker and Kohlenberger (2004), *enemy* refers to those who persecute the follower. Either way, Jesus clearly instructs followers to treat them the same. Lawson (2008) agreed, stating, "Christians cannot lead double lives, treating the community of believers one way and treating non-believers another" (p. 34).

Sensory-Aesthetic. There is significant use of sensory language in this pericope. Each middle unit contains words associated with ears and mouths (e.g., saying, hearing). In the three middle units, there is a focus on thoughts and feelings. Jesus indicates that actions are not enough to attain the perfection necessary to be with the Father in heaven; followers must also have holy thoughts and feelings. In the first middle unit, not performing the action of murder as dictated by the Old Testament is not sufficient; Christians must not feel anger in their hearts to be righteous. Later in the second middle unit, it is not sufficient to not commit adultery; Christians must not feel lust to be righteous.

deSilva (2018) commented that in this teaching, Jesus focuses on the commonality between emotion and action – that when followers fail to show their neighbors through feelings/emotions the appropriate respect they deserve, they essentially "dehumanize" them (p. 257). In addition, Stassen (2003) stated that "the teaching on anger is a realistic diagnosis of a vicious cycle, a mechanism of temptation that leads to alienation from God and neighbor, and to murder and insurrection – therefore destruction and judgment" (p. 272).

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The word “love” is used four times in the sixth antithesis, seventh textual unit. Barker and Kohlenberger (2004) stated that love refers to both the emotion and the action. The antithesis is connected to Jesus’ statement later in Matthew 22:36-40. Matthew’s Jesus clearly indicates the importance of this antithesis when He later describes the second greatest commandment.

Argumentative. The introductory unit provides a thesis for the entire pericope. Jesus came to fulfill, not abolish the law, and help followers understand what it means to be righteous enough to go to heaven (v. 20). Then, throughout the middle units, He provides ten examples of the behaviors that would be required (v. 24, v. 25, v. 29, v. 30, v. 37, v. 39, v.40, v. 41, v. 42, and v. 44). He closes with achieving this level of righteousness will make followers perfect like the heavenly Father, implying that they can then enter the kingdom of heaven.

Inner Texture Analysis Findings. From inner texture analysis of the pericope, some insights are derived. First, Jesus ties the change to something people already believe in—the law from Moses. In fact, He implies with His words that He is building off the existing law, not changing it. The audience would have been familiar with His references to the Old Testament in each antithesis. He was anchoring his new teaching to something they understood and believed in deeply. deSilva (2018) stated that Matthew believed the “Torah is truly fulfilled only in the light of Jesus’ authoritative teaching on doing God’s will” (p. 235). Connecting His teachings to the Torah is essential because when the Gospel was written, both Jewish Christians and Jews believed that the Torah was the way to God.

Second, Matthew’s Jesus uses familiar situations but shocking or surprising examples (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004). Matthew’s writings show hyperbole to make his point. Cruise (2018) stated that Matthew’s Jesus sought “to engage his audience emotionally by shocking them mentally” (p. 98). “Hyperbole provided the vehicle in communication through which ideas could be emphasized by things becoming extraordinarily large, numerous, faster, or challenging” (Cruise, 2018, p. 99). In conclusion, an inner texture analysis of the passage highlights examples of Jesus’ approach to winning hearts and minds to a fulfilled understanding of righteousness.

Intertexture Analysis

Oral-Scribal Intertexture. There are seven oral-scribal recitations of the Old Testament within the pericope. Marcus (2023) identified that the “thesis statements” within the pericope were “either a biblical citation or a close paraphrase of one or more biblical passages” (p. 121). Jesus begins each reference with “you have heard” as the references would have been well-known to the audience. The oral-scribal recitations provide evidence of Matthew's statement that Jesus was not abolishing the law but fulfilling it. Table 2 shows these oral-scribal recitations.

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Table 2
Oral-Scribal Recitation in Matthew 5:17-48

Verse	Oral-Scribal Recitation Occurrences	
21	"You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment	Exod 20:13; Exod 21:14; Deut 5:17.
27	"You shall not commit adultery"	Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18.
31	"Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce"	Deut 24:1.
33	"Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow"	Num 30:3.
38	"An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"	Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21.
43	"You shall love your neighbor"	Lev 19:18.
48	“So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”	Lev 11:44

Goldstone (2017) concluded that the antithesis and Exodus 21 had commonalities, including murder, the underlying emotion of anger, and the role of the Sanhedrin. Also, France (2007) wrote that the adultery verses would have brought to mind the adultery by David in 2 Samuel 11:2-4 “where such a desire led not only to adultery but also to murder” (Section 4b2 Adultery). Therefore, this pericope would have significantly reminded the audience of the Old Testament.

Social Intertexture. The pericope has different social intertextures, including social roles, social institutions, and social relationships. Social roles include Pharisees, scribes, tax collectors, and pagans. Pharisees were the experts on interpreting Jewish law at the time of Matthew’s writing (deSilva, 2018; Amevenku & Boaheng, 2020). They sought to apply ancient laws to contemporary society, believing that “loyalty to the one God and the belief that obedience from the heart meant blessing and divine favor” (deSilva, 2018, p. 26).

Multiple social relationships are mentioned: (1) husband/wife, (2) neighbor, (3) enemy, and (4) debtor/creditor. In Jewish culture, marriage was for legacy—children and inheritance (deSilva, 2018, p. 111). In Roman culture, marriage was political (deSilva, 2018, p. 111). Another social relationship was neighbor, which referred to a fellow Jew (France, 2007). Similarly, brother most likely did not refer to a biological relationship but meant a fellow Jew or believer (France, 2007). An enemy could have referred to those who persecute you (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004) or political enemies (France, 2007). A fourth social relationship would be that of debtor-creditor. Borrowers were usually poor, and while Old Testament law protected them, these protections were ignored in Jesus’ time (Bible Gateway, n.d.). Roman law allowed a creditor to have a debtor imprisoned until their debt was paid (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004; Bible Gateway, n.d.).

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A social institution mentioned in the pericope is the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was a council overseen by a high priest (deSilva, 2018, p. 37). Guelich (1973) described "the practice of placing an accused killer on trial before a local court to determine the sentence on the basis of the circumstances" (p. 46). Guelich (1973) observed that the antithesis implies that people should be taken to court for anger like they would for murder, which was clearly intended as hyperbole. The purpose may have been to "demonstrate the inadequacy of the Jewish understanding of the Law" (Guelich, 1973, p. 51). France (2007) concurred, writing, "The two words of abuse, "stupid" and "fool" (the latter used by Jesus himself in 23:17), are not readily distinguishable in either meaning or severity; both are everyday utterances, significant enough in a society which took seriously public honor and disgrace, but not the sort of exceptional abuse which might conceivably form the basis of litigation" (Section Murder).

An example of social code is the references to lex talionis. Lex talionis "was not given to foster vengeance; the law explicitly forbade that (Lev. 19:18). Rather, it was given, as the Old Testament context shows, to provide the nation's judicial system with a ready formula of punishment, not least because it would decisively terminate vendettas. The trouble is that a law designed to limit retaliation and punish fairly could be appealed to as justification for vindictiveness" (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004, Mt 5:38-39a). Lex talionis sought proportional retribution.

Another social code appears when Jesus called his followers to give their tunics if their cloaks were asked for. Based on social codes, this would have been understood as hyperbole, as a Jewish person would not walk around unclothed (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004). Also, the Jewish people had a legal right to their coat since it was protected in Old Testament law as it could be used by the poor as a blanket: "What the opponent could not have dared to claim, the disciple is to offer freely, even at the cost of leaving himself with nothing to wear or to keep warm with" (France, 2007, Section Retribution).

Cultural Intertexture. Within the pericope, there are several cultural references. In the first antithesis related to murder, there is a reference to sacrifice at the altar:

> The only "altar" at which an offering could be made was that of the temple in Jerusalem. This saying, presumably uttered in Galilee, thus envisages a worshipper who has traveled some eighty miles to Jerusalem with his "offering" (probably a sacrificial animal), who then leaves the animal in the temple while he makes a journey of a week or more to Galilee and back again in order to effect a reconciliation with his offended brother or sister before he dares to present his offering. (France, 2007, Section Murder)

As France (2007) described, it is another example that the audience would have recognized as reinforcing the importance Jesus placed on reconciliation with one another.

Divorce had different practices among the Jewish people compared to Greek or Roman laws. In Jewish law, only men could divorce their wives, while in Greek or

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Roman practices, wives or husbands could request a divorce (deSilva, 2018). Divorces in Jewish communities could be for many reasons, including infertility, adultery, no sons, and other minor reasons (deSilva, 2018). Another common practice was swearing oaths, similar to swearing today, where people would use other alternatives in place of the name of God (France, 2007). It had become common practice to swear by God to establish the sincerity.

Slapping someone's cheek would have been insulting, and retribution could have been sought, resulting in penalties from a small fine to cutting off an ear (France, 2007). However, to slap the right cheek, as described in the pericope, was a backhanded slap, which is even more insulting and would require double the penalty (France, 2007). The pericope also references carrying a Roman soldier's belongings for a mile (France, 2007). "This oppressive practice was of course, deeply resented by the people of occupied Palestine, but it was a Roman legal provision and they would have no choice about complying up to the limit required ('mile' was a Roman, not a Jewish measure)" (France, 2007, Section Retribution).

There is also a need to understand the perceptions of specific social roles, such as Pharisees or tax collectors, to understand the comparison being drawn in the pericope. Pharisees and scribes would have been seen as the embodiment of righteousness (Amevenku & Boaheng, 2020). "To speak of a 'righteousness which goes far beyond that of the scribes and Pharisees' might therefore seem to be an impossible, even ridiculous, ideal" (France, 2007, Section Fulfilling the Law: General Principles). On the other hand, tax collectors were despised. France (2007) stated that references to tax collectors and Gentiles who are outside of the "disciple community" are "Jewish terms for those whom they regarded as the bottom of the moral scale" (Section Fulfilling the Law: Summary).

Lastly, from a social context, Jesus would have been considered an outsider in Judea as a Galilean. France (2007) described the atmosphere between Judea and Galilee as:

> Economically Galilee offered better agricultural and fishing resources than the more mountainous territory of Judea, making the wealth of some Galileans the envy of their southern neighbors. Culturally Judeans despised their northern neighbors as country cousins, their lack of Jewish sophistication being compounded by their greater openness to Hellenistic influence. Linguistically Galileans spoke a distinctive form of Aramaic whose slovenly consonants (they dropped their aitches!) were the butt of Judean humor. Religiously the Judean opinion was that Galileans were lax in their observance of proper ritual, and the problem was exacerbated by the distance of Galilee from the temple and the theological leadership which was focused in Jerusalem. (Section Galilee and Jerusalem)

This provides important context for how Jesus would have been received in Judea. He would have faced many stereotypes because of where He was from.

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Reciprocal Intertexture. From a perspective of reciprocal intertexture, there is a theme of fulfillment of the law in a new way in the pericope, which is seen elsewhere in the canon. This theme of fulfillment is seen throughout the gospel of Matthew (France, 2007). Later in Matthew 22:37-41: “He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments” (NAB). Additionally, this theme is seen again multiple times in the New Testament. For example, in Galatians 5:14: “For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (NAB).

A second theme is treating one another with the same kind of mercy, compassion, and love that God bestows on everyone. In Colossians 3:12-14, it is written, “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection” (NAB). Another example is from James 1:19-20: “Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God” (NAB). Therefore, the themes prevalent in the Matthean antitheses of the fulfillment of the law and God’s righteousness are also evident across Scripture.

Intertexture Analysis Summary. Intertexture analysis confirms two insights identified through inner texture analysis related to (1) how Jesus used his references to the Old Testament to help people adapt to his more complete understanding of the law and (2) his use of hyperbole to make his point on the inadequacy of that time’s interpretation of the law. It also identified new observations from which to review the pericope, including social and cultural background on the practices of the day. Reciprocal intertexture also highlighted additional passages throughout the New Testament with themes related to fulfillment and God-like righteousness.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the inner texture and intertexture analyses, four key themes emerged: (1) how Jesus fulfills or updates Jewish law from the Old Testament, (2) the redefining of holiness to righteousness to attain heaven, (3) the use of hyperbole to illustrate key messages, and (4) applying these updates to how everyone, not just fellow believers, should be treated.

Fulfilling or Revising the Old Testament?

One of the key overarching themes of Matthew’s writing is the focus on the fulfillment of the law through Jesus’ teaching. Marcus (2023) stated:

> The first thing to note is that it is not unusual for legists in traditional societies both to revise inherited laws and customs and to insist that they are not changing

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> a thing.[...] All societies change, and with these changes comes the need to change the law, but how does one do that if the law, coming from a divine source, is deemed eternal and hence irrevocable? One answer is to affirm that the law has not changed, but has merely revealed a previously hidden aspect of itself—has been, to use Matthew's word, fulfilled. (p.132)

For example, the second commandment in the Old Testament evolved from its initial writing of multi-generational punishment to immediate punishment of the wrongdoer (Marcus, 2023). The question then becomes who is authorized to revise the law (Marcus, 2023). The Pharisees claimed this authority based on their knowledge of Jewish law and their role in Jewish culture, but Jesus, as the Messiah, could rewrite the law to reconcile the Jewish people with God's law (Marcus, 2023). Therefore, Jesus had the power to update the law, but in an analogous way to what had been done in the Old Testament, Matthew presents Jesus' updates not as abolishment but as fulfilled interpretation.

Additionally, Jesus connects his changes to the familiar Mosaic Law. He implies he is building on—not replacing—the law. The audience would recognize his Old Testament references in each antithesis. He anchors his new teaching in what they already believed. This formula—quoting Jewish law, then updating its application—runs throughout the pericope. deSilva (2018) stated that Matthew believed the "Torah is truly fulfilled only in the light of Jesus' authoritative teaching on doing God's will" (p. 235). Connecting His teachings to the Torah was essential because when the Gospel was written, both Jewish Christians and Jews believed that the Torah was the way to God.

This theme of fulfillment or bringing to completion the Old Testament is seen throughout Matthew—in the rich young man (Matthew 19:17), the way of discipleship (Matthew 19:22), and Jesus' statement, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Matt. 24:35; deSilva, 2018, p. 235). Marcus (2023) agreed, writing, "After all, 'confirmation bias' is a powerful force, and many members of Matthew's community probably would have been predisposed to see Jesus' pronouncements as being in line with the Law laid down by Moses."

From Holiness to Righteousness

From inner texture analysis, a pattern in each middle unit was identified. Jesus begins each with a statement that begins "it was said," where he describes the law from the Old Testament or the then-current interpretation of the law, followed by "But I tell you," which is where he shares a revised interpretation of the law in order to attain the righteousness needed to enter heaven. Even in the closing, Matthew refers back to Leviticus 11:44 "You shall make and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy" with his writing "be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Matthew carefully selected perfect instead of holy because the Pharisees had misinterpreted holiness to be "separateness" instead of "love and generosity" (deSilva, 2018, p. 240).

Another example is the reference to the righteousness of the Pharisees and Scribes in the passage. In the time of the gospel, there would have been no question

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that the Pharisees and Scribes set the standard for righteousness (Amevenku & Boaheng, 2020). They were seen as the embodiment of holiness and were the experts in the law (Amevenku & Boaheng, 2020). The passage essentially says that to go to heaven, one must be holier than the most holy people the Jewish people could have thought of. This would have been very unexpected to them – that to go to heaven, followers would have to be holier than the holiest people they saw.

Hyperbole to Emphasize the Change

Matthew's Jesus uses familiar situations but shocking or surprising examples (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2004). Matthew's writings show how Jesus used hyperbole to make his point. Cruise (2018) stated that Matthew's Jesus sought "to engage his audience emotionally by shocking them mentally" (p. 98). "Hyperbole provided the vehicle in communication through which ideas could be emphasized by things becoming extraordinarily large, numerous, faster, or challenging" (Cruise, 2018, p. 99). For example, in the social intertexture analysis, it was identified that leaving the altar to reconcile with a peer would take a week. Jesus suggests that people should be tried in court for their thoughts. These are examples of hyperbole.

Expected Behaviors in Response to God's Mercy

deSilva (2018) stated that throughout this pericope, there is a theme that Christians are "called to reflect the character of God" (p. 240). In the closing unit, Jesus says that the sun will rise on "the bad and the good" and the rain will fall on "the just and unjust," implying mercy for all, not just the righteous (Matt. 5:45, NAB). deSilva (2018) indicated that the basis for Jesus' teaching against "an eye for an eye" is that this is how God behaves; Matthew's writing indicates that God gives grace and mercy to all, not just those who have earned it. Followers are expected to show mercy to one another in response to the common grace God has bestowed on us. Barker & Kohlenberger (2004) wrote, "Jesus' disciples have as their example God himself, who loves so indiscriminately that he sends sun and rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous" (Section Matthew 5:44-47).

For the last two antitheses, Lawson (2008) stated, "Be a peacemaker with your opponents, and do more than is expected of you" and "Love your opponents and show genuine concern for them" (p. 30). In both of these, God-like grace is expected not just for your allies or neighbors but also for your opponents. This calls Christians to a higher level of behavior than is commonly expected.

INSIGHTS ON LEADING CHANGE FROM THE EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW 5:17-48

Limited research on how Kotter's (1995) leading change framework is utilized in the significant organizational change led by Jesus. Existing research focused on how change management frameworks were successfully applied to individual transformations by Jesus (McCabe, 2008; Keebler, 2018; Dixon, 2021). From the

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exegetical analysis, the pericope provides insights on steps 3-5 of Kotter's (1995) model: creating a vision, communicating a vision, and empowering others to act.

Creating A New Vision: Righteousness Instead of Holiness

The context of the pericope often exists in corporate settings. A policy or procedure is followed to the letter, but not the meaning; therefore, employees are ineffective. For example, to create a customer-focused, service-oriented culture, a call center may institute a guideline that agents should greet and thank the caller at the end of the call. While the agents say the words, their tone does not align, so the customer still does not feel appreciated. These agents are following the letter of the policy but not meeting the underlying purpose.

Similarly, Jesus wants to change the mindset and behaviors of people in order for them to be successful, in this case, to go to heaven. Lawson (2008) declared, "These six antitheses, as well as the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, challenge the radical, countercultural community that Jesus is calling into existence, to live a righteousness that is higher than the traditional teachings of the Pharisees" (p. 33). The Pharisees had interpreted the Torah incorrectly, focusing on "holiness as separateness" instead of "holiness as love and generosity" (deSilva, 2018, p. 236). Therefore, Jesus needs to define a new vision for His followers.

Jesus provides an exemplary example of how a leader can position the need for change. In this pericope, He talks about the difficulty of getting to heaven, which can be assumed to be a goal for the audience of Matthew's gospel. Jesus says, "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20, NAB). His new vision was righteousness instead of holiness.

Communicating the New Vision: Anchoring to Existing Beliefs & Hyperbole

From the SRA, it is clear that the Pharisees and scribes were encouraging the Jewish people to a compliance and identification organizational commitment (Kelman, 1958). These types of commitment are about conformance to remain in the group. Jesus seeks a higher level of commitment from followers. Therefore, in the pericope, Jesus leverages two approaches in developing his change message. First, by anchoring on the Old Testament, He is leaning into confirmation bias (Marcus, 2023). Secondly, in His use of exaggeration, He crystallizes the mindset shift that is required in the change. He uses stories to highlight the dramatic nature of the change. In this way, He exemplifies what Jansen (2004) described as drama to build change momentum.

In his change message, Jesus includes many of the components of an effective change message: the context for the change (why it is needed), the change will address the need, the change has leadership support, the change is feasible, and the personal impact of the change (Armenakis et al., 2002). He articulates that the change is needed in order for people to get to heaven, implying that what they are doing today is not

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enough. He describes how the behavior is in response to the Father's own common grace and mercy. He provides examples through stories that show it is possible.

Empowering Action: A New Bar is Set for Believers

Jesus provides clear direction and expectations for how followers can act in order to realize the shared vision (righteousness to achieve heaven): "The processes by which knowledge gets revised in the context of major change implies some sort of 'frame-breaking' experience in which an organization's existing beliefs, meanings, and activities are called into question and need to be supplanted with new or revised meanings and activities" (Gioia et al., 2012, p. 369). Therefore, Jesus provides concrete activities to replace the ones He calls into question. The code is clear. Followers should not just love their fellow believers, but also those who persecute them. Lex talionis is no more. Believers should extend non-believers the same grace and mercy that God the Father bestows on them.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research identifies elements of Kotter's (1995) leading change framework that Jesus used in the New Testament, in particular steps 3-5. It contributes to understanding how Jesus led organizational change. It does not answer the question of how Kotter's (1995) end-to-end framework needs to be applied, which remains a gap in the existing research. Additional pericopes would need to be studied to see if Jesus applied the steps in sequence. For example, the calling of the Apostles could illustrate the creation of the guiding coalition, or the epistles could illustrate how the change was institutionalized.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, through an SRA of Matthew 5:17-48, learnings from how Jesus led organizational change can be derived related to creating a vision, communicating a vision, and empowering others to act (Kotter, 1995). These include redefining the vision of what it takes to get to heaven, communicating this vision using impactful examples and considering confirmation bias, and lastly, giving followers clear guidelines to empower action. This study contributes to the existing scholarly literature by illustrating how Kotter's (1995) leading change framework illustrates exemplary organizational change practices. It also adds to the practitioner's book of knowledge, providing practical guidance for how leaders can improve their change management techniques.

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THE CHRISTIAN TRANSFORMATIONAL TEAM LEADERSHIP MODEL (CTTL): LEADING AND COMMUNICATING WITH A PAULINE EMPHASIS

Nathan Massey

Ephesians 4:12-13 instructs Christian leaders to “equip the saints for the purpose of ministry” (Eph 4:12 ESV). Paul’s call is not for pragmatic results or greater productivity, while such outcomes may rightfully occur. He instead proposes equipping’s end as a transformation into “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13). As such, this article builds a transformational team leadership model, Christian Transformational Team Leadership (CTTL), based on individual and environmental transformation in Jesus Christ. The CTTL argues an appropriate and Christian team-building process follows these steps: 1) For God’s glory through gospel transformation (purpose/why), 2) calling (mission/what), 3) character (values and beliefs/who), 4) competency (strategy/how), 5) and convictional discipleship into environmental transformation (vision/where). Scripture and modern Christian and secular academics support the thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

Building construction and architecture are complicated tasks in Japan. Frequent earthquakes and typhoons plague the island nation. Building a house in Japan requires a more profound commitment to foundation integrity, building materials, and construction practices than in other parts of the world. For example, most residents living in Okinawa, Japan, reside in solid concrete boxes. While Okinawans may not win architectural awards, most remain confident in their houses’ strength when the ground shakes or the winds blow. Much like an Okinawan house’s construction, wise Christian leaders are purposeful in building teams, starting with a solid foundation (purpose), choosing strong building resources (mission, values/beliefs), competently putting these resources together (strategy), before finally moving in the kitchen table to sit around and

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map out where the team is going (vision). This leadership pathway proposes a Christian team-building model based on the team's transformation in Christ and expresses theological foundations on collaborative or team leadership. The model is named the Christian Transformational Team Leadership (CTTL) model, which is centered on Ephesians 4:12-13 where Paul calls believers to "equip the saints for the purpose of ministry," and in that team equipping process, believers transform into "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (ESV). The CTTL argues an appropriate and Christian team-building process follows these steps: 1) For God's glory through gospel transformation (purpose/why), 2) calling (mission/what), 3) character (values and beliefs/who), 4) competency (strategy/how), and 5) convictional discipleship into environmental transformation (vision/where). The categories in parentheses within the steps correspond to Justin Irving's commentary on how to align organizational culture.[1] The CTTL proposes that leaders build their teams in sequence. However, steps two, three, and four contain some overlap. Communication is vital to team building. Therefore, certain sections will address communication and how it relates to the section's topic. Scripture and modern Christian and secular academics support the thesis. Formal Christian ministry settings and the broader context among Christian leaders in the secular workforce are appropriate for implementing the CTTL model.

GOD'S GLORY THROUGH GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION (PURPOSE)

The purpose of Christian-led teams is twofold. First, God creates glory for himself through image-bearers. The CTTL model proposes that all team activity is rightly directed for the glory of God. God's glory is the foundation of the CTTL building. The Westminster Catechism summarizes mankind's purpose succinctly, biblically, and clearly: "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever."[2] A team's purpose rooted in God's glory is primary for Christian leaders guiding the collaboration process, for a team without a purpose is a team placed on a sandy foundation. The Apostle Paul implores individuals, including Christian team members, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31 ESV). God created man in his image, shining his image across his creation and bringing order to his creation through humankind (Gen. 1:27-28); thus, even in the sometimes mundane work of organizing meetings, Christians understand the magnitude and honor found in fruitful endeavors. Christian workers comprehend the gift of work, rest in his sovereignty, asking, "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us" (Ps. 90:17). Perhaps the greatest motivator (purpose) for the Christian team member is the modeling of the Trinity. As Ryan Hartwig and Warren Bird note, "Christianity is unique among major religions in presenting one God who eternally exists and functions as a divine team [the Trinity]. This fact certainly undergirds the idea of God's people working in unity through teams."[3]

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[1] Justin Irving, *Healthy Leadership for Thriving Organizations*: *Creating Contexts Where People Flourish* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 153-154.

[2] "Westminster Larger Catechism," last modified May 12, 2021, accessed March 25, 2024, https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/westminster-larger-catechism.

[3] Ryan T. Hartwig, Warren Bird, and Dave Ferguson, *Teams That Thrive*: *Five Disciplines of Collaborative Church Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015), 44. Kindle.

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Secondly, God achieves glory, in part, through individual and corporate gospel transformation, without which humanity "exchange[s] the *glory* of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things" (Rom. 3:23, my italics). Christians are made into new creations in Christ at salvation (2 Cor. 5:17). The Spirit transforms the mind to look more like Christ (Rom. 12:2). While sin still has effect in a broken world (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23), Christians remain confident that Christ's imputed righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21) and the Spirits guidance and power (Rom. 8:5) ensure sin has no ultimate power in each individual's life.

Furthermore, like the Trinity, Christians live in community. The New Testament both prescribes and describes the common good of life within the Church, especially the local church, "for the body [of Christ] does not consist of one member but of many" (1 Cor. 12:14). As Christian communities grow in Christlikeness, there is a further burden to spread Christ's kingdom. As D. A. Carson notes, Christians are called to interact with the surrounding world. He suggests:

> Because creation gave us embodied existence, and because our ultimate hope is resurrection life in the new heaven and new earth, we will understand that being reconciled to God and bowing to the Lordship of King Jesus cannot possibly be reduced to privatized religion or a form of ostensible spirituality abstracted from full-orbed bodily existence now.[4]

In other words, Christ's work, the knowledge of that work, and the reality of that work in the Christian's life today compel Christians living in the community to co-create shalom in the world around themselves in the present. As Carson suggests, gospel transformation will rightly branch out into our teams and community. Still, before environmental transformation is considered (application), the CTTL model must continue to build the team's metaphorical house of calling, character, and competency.

CALLING

God's glory through gospel transformation is a team's foundation. Now, the CTTL model considers the building material. These next two steps may occur simultaneously within the group and form the cohesive structure of the team. Without it, the team will lack integrity and God's direction.

The second step in the CTTL model is calling. Calling aligns with Irving's cultural alignment categories of the team's mission or asking, "*What* is the team called to do?" Take, for instance, a church's mission statement: "We exist to know Jesus and make him known." The purpose (why) is that church members exist to know Jesus and, by implication, give him glory. The mission, or *what* church members are *called* to do, is to make him known. Calling can be considered the external and visible concrete blocks of the CTTL building, providing strength against misalignment and misdirection.

[4] D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 228.

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Jesus leaves his apostles and future followers with a simple calling: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). While Christians may find themselves pursuing different and good callings throughout life, Jesus's great commission should remain the central calling to what the team endeavors. This is not to suggest Christians in a workplace outside the Church are doing unworthy work. God calls Christians to be fruitful and create order (Gen. 1:28). Making disciples that look like Jesus should be the central calling to all Christian endeavors.

Calling and Communication

Like Jesus's clear and concise calling in the Great Commission, Christian leadership teams create and communicate the team's mission with clarity. Justin Irving found as a research theme that organizational leaders prioritize mission communication and focus.[5] Irving suggests mission statements "must be clear and easily accessible," combating mission drift.[6] Team members seek clarity in their language, avoiding what sociolinguists call powerless speech. Powerless speech, such as hedges ("I think") and tag questions ("wouldn't it?"), undermine and muddy credibility and competence in the mission.[7] James, likewise, calls believers to clarity in commitment when corporately agreeing, such as developing a mission: "Let your 'yes' be yes and your 'no' be a no, so that you may not fall under condemnation" (Jas. 5:12).

Not only should the mission be clearly communicated, but there should also be a consistent and repetitive voicing of the mission, calling the leadership team and others in the organization to expected behaviors and outcomes. Communicated mission helps create a culture. Secular and Christian theorists place importance on aligning followers toward a common mission and *creating*, not just sustaining, the culture. Completing this step requires leaders to "[maintain] the drumbeat of ideology."[8] John Kotter suggests keeping mission communication free of jargon, repetitive, and distributed through multiple platforms**.**[9] The Apostle Paul exemplifies a concise, consistent, and repetitive mission statement directed toward both the divisions in the Corinthian church and those external opponents: "We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor. 1:23).

Mission development and communication should focus on both external and internal team communication. Internally, healthy teams develop missions democratically. Craig Johnson and Michael Hackman note, "Democratic leadership communication contributes to relatively high productivity (whether or not the leader directly supervises followers) and to increased satisfaction, commitment, and cohesiveness."[10]

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[5] Irving, *Healthy Leadership for Thriving Organizations*, 158.

[6] Irving, *Healthy Leadership for Thriving Organizations*, 157-158.

[7] Craig E. Johnson and Michael Z. Hackman, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, 7th edition (Waveland Press, Inc., 2018), 156-157, Kindle.

[8] Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains*, 75-78.

[9] John P. Kotter*, Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 89-94, Kindle.

[10] Johnson and Hackman, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, 44.

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CHARACTER

If calling is the visible, concrete block used in building the symbolic CTTL house, then character is the more intangible and hidden mortar and rebar holding the concrete block together. While character may be less visible, wise leadership teams understand organizations will eventually crumble without honest and reliable membership. Character defines *who* makes up the team by installing team members based on their *values and beliefs.* Scripture is clear on character and leadership. In writing to his mentee, Timothy, Paul encourages Timothy to build a church leadership team focusing on character. Church elders must be "sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money" (1 Tim. 3:2-3). These character traits align with biblical morality, supporting the Great Commission's call to learn and observe Christ's teachings. In short, Paul and the Great Commission align purpose, calling (mission), and character (values and beliefs). Likewise, with clearly stated values, "leaders and organizational members are able to go about their work [the mission] with a freedom that flows from this clarity."[11]

Secular theorists conclude that character plays a vital role in team development. Leadership team coach and academic Peter Hawkins defines transformational leadership as "the process of collectively engaging the commitment and participation of all major stakeholder groups to radical change in the context of shared purpose, values, and vision."[12] The key to Hawkins' definition is "shared values," which promote courage, lifelong learning, endurance through ambiguity, and the ability to see oneself as a change agent.[13] Christians should keep a critical eye when reading Hawkins and other secular promoters of TL. These scholars base their idea of transformation on a secular worldview.[14] Christian leaders pursue the transformation of themselves and their followers unto Christlikeness, grounded in God's word for his glory. Unbelievers may be present on the team, especially outside the local church context. Through God's common grace and building a culture, non-believers can align with a godly character. Ultimately, gospel transformation for all team members should be the goal within the CTTL model. Likewise, Ephesians 4:12-13 calls Christian endeavors (ministry) to a character standard (stature of the fullness of Christ) and not to outcomes like the number of Sunday worship service attendees or production efficiency.

Character and Communication

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[11] Irving, *Healthy Leadership for Thriving Organizations*, 157-158.

[12] Peter Hawkins, *Leadership Team Coaching: Developing Collective Transformational Leadership*, 4th edition (Kogan Page, 2021), 16.

[13] Hawkins, *Leadership Team Coaching*, 41.

[14] Hawkins, for example, calls for transformational teams to be intrinsically motivated to stop global warming and decrease the "population explosion." While Christians are called to steward the earth's resources and atmosphere with deep care, we are also called first to glorify the Father through pursuing Christlikeness and being fruitful and multiplying (Gen 1). See Hawkins, Leadership Team Coaching, 12, for more insights into Hawkin's worldview.

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Promoting and communicating a biblical ethic and morality can be challenging, even within a Christian context. Team members may feel pressure to deceive, coerce, or intimidate for better short-term outcomes. Christian leadership teams swim against such currents and courageously stand firm in their character commitments. Christian academics Mark McCloskey and Jim Louwsma build their leadership model around the seven virtues. They argue that influential and righteous leaders must maintain dynamic determination, courageous character, and emotional maturity when working in relationships. McCloskey and Louwsma note, “Courageous Character is the strength to do the right thing when it’s not the easy or popular thing to do—to stand strong for the people, organizations, and causes in their care. Courage and love are inseparable.”[15] Thus, wise leadership team members stand firm on their convictions. Christian team members lovingly build relationships on the team and with those they lead based on Scripture and the leading of the Spirit.

COMPETENCY

Returning to Ephesians 4:12-13, Paul affirms the outcome of the equipping process to be transformation into Christlikeness for both the leaders and the followers. The Spirit’s means to cause the transformation is “equipping the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:12). Equipping ensures teams are competent in resourcing and team make-up. *Competency* provides a *strategy* for *how* the team will get where it is going. The CTTL model defines team leadership competence as embracing, assessing, and including a variety of God-given giftings that increase team efficiency and innovation, all while pursuing ongoing learning and healthy communication. In the CTTL model house, leaders have poured a firm foundation (purpose—God’s glory) and gathered their building resources on site: calling and character. Now, it is time to begin assembling these resources with purposefulness.

Equipping requires intentionality and direction in how leaders resource and point individuals and teams toward a goal. For example, consider a local church switching from a more programmatically driven strategy to a direct equipping strategy. The pastors desire that congregants begin seeing themselves as the primary disciplers of their families and others in and outside the church. Focusing on secondary church staff and core leaders who are not pastors, the pastoral team would begin to equip these leaders with resources and teaching methods to disseminate the new mission. Throughout that process, the pastors would encourage secondary leaders to take on new leadership roles, increasing their influence over congregants encountered throughout the week. Pastors would place secondary leaders in areas that accentuate their giftings and present critical feedback throughout the process. These changes might be uncomfortable and stretching, but these environments often allow for a deeper trust in God’s goodness among secondary leaders. Within the scenario, young leaders would likely grow in how to influence others righteously while allowing the pastors to

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[15] Mark McCloskey and Jim Louwsma, *The Art of Virtue-Based Transformational Leadership*, First Edition (Bloomington, MN: The Wordsmith, 2014), ch. 2, sec. “Overview of the 4-R Model,” para. 4-10. Kindle.

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model clearly communicated objectives (calling), ensuring the team would be correctly resourced (competency).

Scripture calls for leaders and teams to be competent. For example, Paul outlines a minimal threshold for Christian competency for one to be a member of an elder team. First, 1 Timothy 3:2-7, the commonly cited biblical leadership text, only explicitly names one competency—teaching (1 Tim. 3:2). Secondly, Timothy 3:4 gives the implied competency of managing his household well. The home is a microcosm of the relational management of the greater world outside the house. If a Christian leader fails to manage his home properly and lovingly, how is he expected to manage others? William Mounce correctly observes, “The core competency Paul cites is that the elder must be a proven manager of people…While any qualified elder will grow through ‘on-the-job training,’ his managerial ability must be to some degree visible before appointment [as seen among his family].”[16] Paul makes the point that to be a competent elder team member, elder candidates must also competently manage the team closest to themselves: their family.

While leadership teams should pursue faithfully equipping their team members and those they lead, the Bible also describes healthy teams as assessing and affirming individual backgrounds and giftings. First Corinthians 12 highlights the reality of the Church’s diversity in make-up and giftings: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:12-13). Here, Paul states that the body of Christ comprises different ethnic and national groups. Later in the chapter, he designates that each individual within the church has gifts to bless the church (1 Cor. 12:27-31). Likewise, Paul sought to invite more diverse and poorer groups of people to the table in places like Phillipi by subverting the normal hierarchical social norms of the Roman Empire.[17] Therefore, Paul highlights the strength of diversity. Christians should also find great hope in the diversity of roles in the Trinity. Stan Ott notes:

> The members of the Trinity share a common vision for ministry. They enjoy fellowship in wonderfully loving relationships. And each member of the Trinity has a unique “task” or role in the process known as salvation history [or God’s work in revealing salvation]. They are the essential fusion of relationships and work—the missional fellowship.[18]

Researchers confirm the strength of diversity, suggesting that “team member diversity promotes vigorous and constructive debate, increases creativity, prevents groupthink, normalizes the appreciation of differences as an undergirding team value,

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[16] William D. Mounce, “The Noble Task: Leadership in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Biblical Leadership: Theology for the Everyday Leader,* ed. Benjamin K. Forrest and Chet Roden (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017), 448.

[17] Joseph Hellerman, *Embracing Shared Ministry: Power and Status in the Early Church and Why It Matters Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Ministry, 2013), 123.

[18] Hartwig, Bird, Ferguson, *Teams that Thrive*, 44.

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and produces better decision making."[19] Embracing diversity also produces more innovation. Innovation requires both new ideas and an avenue for those ideas to be introduced to the team. One such method is brainwriting, in which team members write ideas down before disseminating those ideas to the team, ensuring quieter members' ideas are considered.[20]

The assessment of competence is inherent in Paul's description of the elder onboarding process and the sifting of church gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. A wise leadership team reflects and accounts for each member's competency, value, and limitations. Justin Irving and Mark Strauss offer wise counsel on "sober self-assessment," through Paul's words in Romans 12:3: "For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment." Irving and Strauss give an apt example: "Just as the captain of a ship can operate a vessel best when fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses, … so leaders will be most effective when they are self-aware, fully cognizant of their strengths and weaknesses, their potential and limitations."[21] A team of only administrators may keep the organization following established protocols. Still, to the team's detriment, it lacks others gifted in casting vision, inspiring others, and teaching well.

Wise leadership teams take assessment results seriously and pursue growth in areas of weakness that inhibit team effectiveness. One avenue may be opening the team to professional team coaching. Peter Hawkins defines team coaching as "enabling a team to function at more than the sum of its parts, by clarifying its mission and improving its external and internal relationships."[22] While external expertise may provide an outside perspective, leadership teams should continue to pursue ongoing leadership equipping internally as well. Albert Mohler suggests that good leaders, including leadership teams, grow in learned competencies through deep thinking, strategic reading, and practicing writing.[23]

Competency and Communication

While teams are wise to pursue competent individuals and ongoing education, team competency falls apart without clear and defined communication. Returning to the church direct equipping example at the beginning of the section, the core leadership would provide clear and emotionally stable ways to communicate both internally and externally with easy-to-remember models and mission statements. Effective and transformational teams pursue competent approaches to communication. Timothy Franz notes research that "Good communication processes— the right message

[19] Hartwig and Bird, *Teams that Thrive*, 127.

[20] Franz, *Group Dynamics and Team Interventions*, 250.

[21] Irving and Strauss, *Leadership in Christian Perspective*, 37.

[22] Hawkins, *Leadership Team Coaching*. 79.

[23] Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, See chapter 7 "Leaders are Thinkers," chapter 12 "Leaders are Readers," and Chapter 20 "The Leader as a Writer," for discussions on each topic.

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through the correct medium with as little interference as possible to the proper receiver— can certainly help groups and teams to yield higher performances."[24]

Good leaders consider all communication and input, even suggestions from newcomers to the team. In the spirit of Paul writing to the Galatians, "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone." Christian leadership teams value and honor other team members' ideas, even when conflict arises. Allowing and reinforcing candor respectfully increases team trust and commitment.[25]

CONVICTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP INTO ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSFORMATION (VISION)

The last step in the CTTL process places the kitchen table inside the imaginative house. The kitchen table is often where relationships are fostered, both inside the family (team) and in welcoming visitors. It often intersects with the team's thoughts and the external culture. Here is the application or vision of *where* the team is and *where* the team is going. This process is two-fold. First, the team still focuses on internal consistency and mission, but the broader organizational transformational process is added and enacted here.

Evaluating *where the team is* means assessing the team's spiritual health. Ephesians 4:12-13 points to the Christian leader's goal among his or her followers: Christlikeness. Good leadership teams are not satisfied with the status quo. Even secular scholars Johnson and Hackman agree: "Transformational leaders ignore the adage, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' Instead, the transformational leader adopts the attitude, 'If it ain't broke, you're not looking hard enough.'"[26] Secular transformational leaders look to transform and motivate leaders through such pursuits as conserving the Earth's resources.[27] While such secular pursuits might be honorable (or even biblical), Christian transformational leaders first start with the convictional discipleship among each team member. Convictional is used here as a modifier to discipleship to emphasize a deep-seated yearning to lead others that can only be provided through one's own transformed mind and desires (Rom. 12:2; Phil. 2:13). Team members call one another in the same, yet imperfect sense, as Paul calls the Corinthians: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). Transformation must start with individuals at a team level. Duane Litfin notes about ongoing learning, "Our primary motive for doing so must not be the transformation of culture. Our prime motive must be *obedience* to *Jesus Christ*. Then, if the living Christ graciously chooses to use our efforts to mold our culture into more of what he wants it to be, we will be grateful [original italics]."[28] Likewise, leading is intricately intertwined with teaching and learning.

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[24] Franz, *Group Dynamics and Team Interventions*, 191.

[25] Franz, *Group Dynamics and Team Interventions*, 425.

[26] Johnson and Hackman, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, 111.

[27] Hawkins, *Leadership Team Coaching*, 12.

[28] Duane Litfin, *Conceiving the Christian College* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), Ch 3, sec "Intrinsic Motives," para 4, Kindle.

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Christian leadership teams concern themselves with deep pursuits of God's truths and teaching those among the group and those they lead.

Evaluating *where the team is going* shifts the vision outward. Transformed teams should joyfully and obediently interact and disciple the team itself, organizational culture, all organizational stakeholders, and the world at large (Rom. 1:14-17; Acts 1:8). Transformed teams proclaim and seek a peace that only the gospel brings. Nicholas Wolterstorff (1988), in his short work on reason, relays a similar message: "The goal of human existence is that man should dwell at peace in all his relationships: with God, with himself, with his fellows, with nature, a peace which is not merely the absence of hostility, though certainly it is that, but a peace which at its highest enjoyment."[29]

CONCLUSION

As leadership (imperfectly) creates shalom, order, and gospel transformation through their guidance, the helix of the CTTL continues its upward journey. God is glorified as his image bearers carry out the tasks he provides. Through convictional discipleship, more organizational members experience gospel transformation (step 1). A new CTTL house is under construction as leaders "equip the saints for the purpose of ministry…to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12-13).

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THE STEWARD LEADER, THE DELIBERATELY DEVELOPMENTAL ORGANIZATION, AND DISCIPLESHIP: TRANSFORMING FOLLOWERS OF JESUS FOR KINGDOM INFLUENCE

Christopher DiVietro

Leadership is understood as influence, process, and stewardship, with stewardship drawing its meaning from a range of historical, Biblical, and contemporary sources. Steward leadership in the church has multiple points of intersection with discipleship. A useful framework for developing and deploying followers of Jesus through the church is the Deliberately Developmental Organization (DDO). A DDO is built around the assumption that organizations will flourish when they are deeply aligned with people's strongest motive, which is to grow. This alignment requires overcoming internal obstacles to change, taking stock of and intentionally transcending blindspots, and leveraging errors and weaknesses as prime opportunities for transformation. A DDO framework can benefit the church by bolstering her identity as a colony of heaven in two ways: strengthening her internal health, which Kuyper understands as institution, and strengthening her external presence, which Kuyper understands as organism. A DDO framework strengthens the church by providing the structures and processes that form, equip, and release followers of Jesus for life and ministry.

INTRODUCTION

Recent research indicates that 56% of self-identified American Christians define their faith as entirely private. Further, 39% of American Christians are not in any sort of active discipling relationship, while only 28% are actively engaged in an ongoing peer-to-peer discipleship community (Barna, 2022). Among the various obstacles one might imagine as hindering entrance into discipling relationships, only 7% of Christians cite failure to find time as the chief reason for their lack of engagement. For those who are

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very or somewhat interested in disciplemaking, main obstacles include: 35% who say "I'd want someone to teach me to do it well," 33% who say "Finding ways to keep it engaging over time," 32% who say "Making it a priority with all of the other things I'm juggling," and 28% who say "I feel like I would be imposing my beliefs on someone else" (Barna, 2024).

The picture that emerges is complex, portraying an American church composed of relatively isolated followers of Jesus who lack the understanding, motivation, and competencies necessary to fully define, embrace, and enter a comprehensive life of discipleship. The picture that emerges is also one in which followers of Jesus can be viewed, at least partially, as awaiting attention, intention, and invitation from others, primarily perhaps, by their leaders. Indeed, Ezekiel's prophecy against the shepherds of Israel contains a notable indictment: The shepherds neglected the sheep they were called to tend, feeding themselves and allowing the sheep to be scattered (Ezek. 34:1-10). Notably, the Lord refers to the sheep as "My sheep," indicating His ultimate ownership of the sheep and framing His shepherd's duties as care in His stead; in a word: Stewardship.

This emerging picture presents an opportunity for intervention; an identification of the place in which change is possible. Three opportunities for such intervention are discernible: First, the nature of leadership within the church—specifically, leadership viewed through lenses of shepherding and stewardship—carries implications for how pastors engage congregants. Second, the Deliberately Developmental Organization (DDO) framework presents a unique opportunity to understand how the church may faithfully embody discipling relationships. Third, this DDO framework, paired with a Kuyperian understanding of the church and her place within society, prepares the church to faithfully disciple within her as well as within the prevailing context in which she finds herself.

STEWARDS, SHEPHERDS, AND THE CHURCH

Leadership is often understood as the process whereby a single individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal—that process being a transactional series of interactions as a leader affects followers (Northouse, 2018). Leaders within the church require additional nuanced layers of understanding; modern and popular conceptions of leadership are certainly applicable, but also certainly not sufficient. A primary metaphor used by the Biblical authors in the Old and New Testaments for leaders of the people of God is that of a shepherd appointed by God to care for His flock (Wilder and Jones, 2018). Such an appointment carries connotations of calling, accountability, and stewardship (Laniak, 2006); the imagery of the steward helps illuminate the role of the shepherd.

The steward—*radah* in the Old Testament and *epitropos* or *oikonomos* in the New Testament—is the trusted representative with delegated authority and responsibility (Kamer, 2018; Peter, 2020; Birch, 2002). Genesis 1:28 depicts God investing humans with the delegated authority to care for—to *have dominion over*—His

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creation (Birch, 2002; Kamer, 2018; Keller, 2011). Explicit in this delegated authority is the responsibility to rule over without abusing or destroying the entrusted resources (Kamer, 2018; Keller, 2011). Further, as ruler and servant who is accountable (rather than autonomous) for the cultivation (rather than exploitation) of resources (Keller, 2011; Peter, 2020), the godly steward is expected to care for the resources of another as they were the true owner, with intent to multiply them as if they were their own (Keller, 2011).

The delegated authority of stewardship draws out a particular and parallel reality in the shepherd's role as leader of the people of God. God Himself is chief shepherd over His people (Gen. 48:15; Ps. 23; Isa. 40:11; Mic. 7:14), meaning His called shepherds are those who care and lead as He would; "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15). Shepherds are stewards called to lead the flock of God with the heart of God, character of God, and the actions of God.

The New Testament explicitly expresses this understanding when Peter encourages delegated-responsibility shepherd-leadership of the people of God: "...shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you…" (1 Pet. 5:2). The authority of the undershepherd lies not in their superiority but in their opportunity, having been called by the Great Shepherd to perform acts of service on behalf of the sheep. The undershepherd is accountable to the Great Shepherd (Bennett, 1989), who is model and archetype (Jn. 10:1-21). Responsibilities modeled include knowing, leading, feeding, and protecting the flock (Witmer, 2010).

As other New Testament epistles continue unfolding the extent to which the leader of the people of God is therefore both a shepherd and a steward over the household of God (1 Cor. 4:1-2; 1 Cor. 9:16-18; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; 1 Tim. 3:15; Titus 1:7; Tooley, 1965), the resources that they are called to shepherd, steward, and cultivate come into view. From the New Testament onward, the flock of God consists of those who have accepted the teachings of Jesus and seek to partner with Him (Phil. 1:3-11; Stark, 2012). If these followers of Jesus are the primary resources overseen by steward-shepherds, then their cultivation includes a trajectory of growth, maturation, and Christlike transformation (Birch, 2002; Keller, 2011; Peter, 2020).

CULTIVATING DISCIPLES

This transformational sentiment is captured by the word *disciple*, which means literally *pupil* or *learner* and comes from the Greek verb *manthanein*, meaning *to learn* (Longenecker, 1996). Repeatedly in the New Testament, the use of the expressions and exhortations "disciple," "to be/become a disciple," or "to follow," communicate the concepts of imitation, example, or patterning (Belleville, 1996; Longenecker, 1996), often through personal relationships (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Belleville, 1996; Marriott, 2022) based around the proclaimed Word of God (Dixon and Rogers, 2023). Dever (2016) differentiates between discipleship as one's own call to follow Jesus and

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discipling as one's call to help others follow Jesus. Mark 1:17 presents a tripartite framework for understanding discipleship: a) *Follow me*: Invitation to follow Jesus, b) *and I will make you become*: Transformation to become like Jesus, and c) *fishers of men:* Engagement in the mission of Jesus (Putman, 2010).

Discipleship is therefore an invitation to a flourishing life of union with Christ, and subsequently partaking in God's life-giving mission (Coetzee et al., 2023). At the risk of unhelpfully conflating distinctive endeavors, Dixon and Rogers (2023) note just how diverse the streams of thought are that feed contemporary discussions of discipleship—one could argue that evangelism and discipleship are in some ways inseparable and even indistinguishable from each other (Coetzee et al, 2023). Evangelism can be understood as discipleship or faith-sharing in a relationship of trust with someone who is not yet a follower of Jesus (Nel & Schoeman, 2019), affirming the interwoven nature of both concepts. Maddix (2013) uses the term "missional discipleship" to holistically include both participation in God's mission and faithful relational discipleship. One hears echoes of Winter's (1974) archetypal analysis of Jewish synagogue patterns and Jewish missionary patterns, later borrowed by the Christian church, and manifested as congregations (modalities) and missionary endeavors (sodalities).

While discipleship is central to the mission of the church in terms of relational engagement with the surrounding context (Matt. 28:19; Coetzee et al., 2023; Dixon and Rogers, 2023), the trajectory of formation that steward-shepherds are charged with perpetuating includes a necessary intergenerational aspect (2 Tim. 2:2; Greenway et al., 2022; Greenway et al., 2023). Indeed, such intergenerational transmission has always been a core tenet of the people of God (Ex. 12:26-27; Ex. 13:8; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 78:1-4). Faithful resource cultivation by the steward-shepherds of God necessitates intergenerational transmission, as well (2 Tim. 2:2; Keller, 2011; Tooley, 1965).

STEWARD LEADERSHIP

Here, at the intersection of delegated responsibility, resource cultivation, and intergenerational transmission, contemporary research enriches the Biblical understanding of stewardship by amplifying and underscoring its long-term orientation. Stewardship is defined as the extent to which an individual willingly subjugates his or her personal interests to act in the protection of others' long-term welfare (Hernandez, 2012). Being a steward implies that the ultimate purpose of one's work is for others, not oneself, and promotes a view of responsibility that is larger than oneself (Senge, 1990). Critically, this especially applies to extended time horizons, long-term organizational orientation, and positive cycles of intergenerational reciprocity through promoting the well-being of future generations (Hernandez, 2008).

Stewardship behaviors often emerge within the context of intergenerational social dilemmas in which the decision maker must act in the present while future others experience future consequences of the decision (Wade-Benzoni et al., 2008; Wade-Benzoni, 2002; 2003). The social contract implied by stewardship implies that the steward leader will take personal responsibility at the interpersonal and institutional level

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to serve both the interests and needs of followers (Hernandez, 2008). Prolonged interaction promotes a follower's judgment of the reliability and dependability of, and therefore trust in, the leader (Hernandez, 2008). Whereas long-term organizational functioning is often an *outcome* of positive organizational action, stewardship behavior necessarily *prioritizes* long-term welfare (Hernandez, 2012).

Steward-shepherds, then, are charged with the well-being and Christlike spiritual transformation—discipleship—of those under their care (Belleville, 1996; Peter, 2020). The lifelong and long-term transmission of these discipleship endeavors is central to the mission of the church (Coetzee et al., 2023; 2 Tim. 2:2) and positioned as a unique strength of steward leadership (Hernandez 2008; 2012). The DDO is an organizational framework that encapsulates the aforementioned trajectories through a series of related systematic structures and processes, promoting both steward-shepherd faithfulness and effective discipling relationships.

THE DELIBERATELY DEVELOPMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The DDO is a unique organizational framework that, if applied to the church, can facilitate the processes by which steward-shepherds responsibly cultivate the flock of God under their care: "A DDO is organized around the deceptively simple but radical conviction that organizations will best prosper when they are deeply aligned with people's strongest motive, which is to grow" (Kegan et al., 2014a). This predisposition reimagines the role of people development in organizational life (Kegan et al., 2014a).

Growth, however, is neither an abstract reality nor an easily accessible achievement. In fact, a significant waste of resources in any company is the time and energy employees devote to preserving their reputations, putting their best selves forward, and hiding their inadequacies. A more radical organizational orientation encourages employees to acknowledge their weaknesses and learn from them, and facilitates the very environment in which employees see their weaknesses not as vulnerabilities but as ideal opportunities for personal growth (Kegan et al., 2014b). Such an orientation aligns with the steward-shepherd's call to develop and maximize the resources under their care, namely, facilitating the maturation of the people of God as they are conformed into the image of Jesus.

The DDO enacts this alignment in three ways: overcoming internal obstacles to change, taking stock of and intentionally transcending blindspots, and leveraging errors and weaknesses as prime opportunities for transformation (Kegan et al., 2014a). A DDO displays three categories of features, each with its own series of propositions.

Table 1.1 Key Features and Tenets of a Deliberately Developmental Organization

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Features	**Key Tenets**
Principles	
Running on Principles	Shared principles actively shape conduct and decisions, from the smallest to the most strategic.
Adults can Grow	A DDO's uniqueness is the possibility of new life, of emergence, new capability, and evolution at the individual and collective level - by the possibility of development.
Weakness is a Strength; Error is an Opportunity	The unchosen expression of vulnerability - demonstrations of incompetence or inadequacy in a given instance - are seen as growing edges, company resources, and assets which should be publicly engaged.
The Interdependent Bottom Line	The goals of profitability and fostering development are neither a "both/and" nor an "either/or." Instead, very bold institutional aspirations and further-developed human capabilities are each part of a single whole.
Practices	
Destabilization can be Constructive	Feeling regularly destabilized is more the rule than the exception. "Pain plus reflection equals progress."
Closing the Gaps	In a never-ending quest to protect ourselves, we allow gaps to form between people, between plans and actions, and even between parts of ourselves. Organizations make the greatest progress if we can overcome the ways of thinking and acting that serve only to protect ourselves from conflict and embarrassment. Members of a DDO come to trust the organization as an ongoing engine for the growth of its members. "Pain plus reflection (in a sufficiently safe and trustworthy community) equals progress."
Timescale for Growth, not Closure	Efficiency and effectiveness are two very different prospects. What looks very inefficient (in the first order) may be highly effective (in the second order).
Interior Life is Part of What is Managed	Interior operations - internal behaviors and psychological strategies - are no less real for being intangible or invisible. Routine practices openly encourage, and seek to make regular room for, the personal and the interior, on behalf of explicitly

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	welcoming the whole person into work every day.
Communities	
Rank Does Not have its Usual Privileges	A meritocracy of ideas is the ideal. Leadership's tendency to use its power to design and sustain structures that protect itself from challenge sets a limit on the organization's ability to exceed itself.
Everyone is HR	People-development is everyone's responsibility through seamless support. People-development is not a separate activity, or an additive to the business engine, but is rather an essential and integrated component of the business engine.
Everyone Needs a Crew	Everyone has a "crew," an ongoing group that can be counted on not only to be an instrument of your vulnerability - calling you on your own blindspots and reactivity - but a support to your own growth because of that vulnerability.
Everyone Builds the Culture	Individual alignment with the best of the organization's culture is essential - but is not sufficient. All employees are expected to contribute to the shaping of the culture - to step forward at any time to improve how the organization does its work.

Note: Adapted from Kegan et al. (2014a)

Because the DDO is, at any moment, the emergent result of the existing processes for people working together, everyone is expected to contribute to the observation, diagnosis, and revision of the processes at the heart of the work (Kegan et al., 2014a). Therefore, the development of people, processes, and products is involved in an ever-intertwined upward spiral of organizational momentum.

The DDO functions as an ideal framework by which a steward-shepherd may maximize the resources for which they are responsible—the Christlike development of the people of God through discipling pathways—due to its inherent tendency to prioritize the enacted development and formation of organizational members. Such development maximizes the ability of the steward-shepherd by both increasing the internal efficacy of discipling pathways and promoting the equipping of followers of Jesus for faithfulness in their engagement with the surrounding context. This maximization underscores the very identity of the church as a colony of heaven.

THE CHURCH AS A COLONY OF HEAVEN

Abraham Kuyper presents the church as both an organism and an institution. As an organism, the church:

> Bears a unique life within herself and self-consciously upholds the independence of that life over against the old life. The church is an organism

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> because she lives according to her own rule and must follow her own vital law. The church is an organism, finally, because what will later unfold from her buds is fully supplied already within her seed…That organism is the heart of the church. From that heart her lifeblood flows, and where that pulse of her life ceases, the institution alone never constitutes the church. (Kuyper, 2013, pp. 36-37)

The church as organism is the church insofar as she exists in communion with God pursuant to His intentions for her.

As an institution, the church does not merely exist for the sake of this communion—that communion is oriented with intention and purpose:

> "Word and Sacrament"—behold the foundational parameters of the design according to which the institution is constructed. For neither the proclamation of that Word nor the administration of that sacrament is an organic operation. They presuppose human consciousness; they need human organization; they require a human act. They do not operate automatically, but through man as the instrument of the Lord. Their figurative representation is not that of something growing from a root, but of something being constructed on a foundation. It is a mistake to view the church simply as an association of like-minded people, one that simply manifests what they share (Kuyper, 2013, p. 41).

The church as an organism remains a special form of unity and community consisting of all those who are connected through union to Christ, and therefore bound one to another like a body (de Bruijne, 2014). The church as an institution then turns this community outward in a vehicle for public action through administering, nurturing, and spreading the Word of Christ (de Bruijne, 2014). One may further distinguish between the church as an institution, as the body of Christ gathered around word and sacraments for worship and discipline, and the church as an organism, as the body of Christ in the totality of its multidimensional vocations in the world (Bolt, 2001).

Kuiper (1983) continues this trajectory by asserting that the church is both an organism and an organization. An organism is a body composed of different organs or parts performing special functions that are mutually dependent and essential to life; this can be anything biological, from something as simple as a single-celled organism to something as complex as a human. An organization is the systematic union of individuals in a body whose officers, agents, and members work together for a common good; this can be any large unit of diverse elements structured to coordinate, cooperate, and synchronize their activity.

Kuiper (1983) notes that Scripture clearly conceives of the church as both: Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 refer to the church body as a living organism, while Jesus says He will build His church, and Acts clearly envisions a church with structure, purpose, and teleology. These images are then mixed when 1 Peter 2:5 presents the

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church as living stones being built into a household. Kuiper (1983) concludes, "Because the church is at once an organism and an organization, it is supernatural without being unnatural, invisible but also visible, heavenly and therefore not of the world, yet for the present definitely in the world." The institutional church is, by nature, outward-facing in the world because, even though the world has been altered and distorted by sin, it is not so lost in the sense that followers of Jesus have permission to escape from it instead of engaging the public realm (Bacote, 2010).

Engagement of the world by the institutional church is therefore natural, normative, and assumed. An integrated understanding views the gathered church of redeemed believers as those who serve as witnesses to the new order, as agents for it, and as first models or exemplars of it (Plantinga, 1983). "The means or 'engine' of any social, cultural, or political agenda must be focused upon men and women being converted through the special grace of the gospel proclaimed, being nurtured in the gathered church, learning to apply Christ's Lordship to all areas of life, and sent out," (Strange, 2015). The church as an organism provides for the life, vibrancy, and vitality of followers of Jesus, who are so enlivened not for their own ends but for the purpose of being sent.

Such rhythms emanating from the church as an institution are intended to engage the surrounding world but are not intended to establish an explicitly Christian society. For Kuyper, God's common grace in the world is the presupposition of the possibility of Christian cultural activity (Zuidema, 1972). God's common grace in the world is an invitation to the church to be present by indirect means, developing society through the presence of faithful followers of Jesus in every area of life (Bacote, 2010). Faithfully present followers of Jesus do not, therefore, derive their legitimation, regimentation, or impetus from the institutional church, but instead are sent from the institutional church to respond faithfully to the God-given mandate and norms for a given sphere of life (DeMoor, 2021).

The ultimate teleology of this faithful presence is not necessarily salvific, and therefore not a formalized state church or Christian nation (Bacote, 2010). Instead, "...there is a grace even where it does not lead to eternal salvation, and that we are therefore duty-bound to honor an operation of divine grace in human civic life by which the curse of sin, and sin itself, is restrained though the link with salvation is lacking" (Kuyper, 1998). The grace of God that is embodied in the people of God, cultivated by the steward-shepherds of God, and manifest by the movement of God in His people, is a propellant for the people of God to respond to the invitation of common grace in the surrounding world, and to trust God with the consequences.

Faithfulness in this framework necessitates a gathering for worship and formation and a scattering for mission, invoking again the two modalities of the church identified by Winter (1974). The specifics of such gathering and sending are the very movements a DDO framework might equip the church to faithfully express. Through understanding her purpose as maximizing the organic embodied union of believers to Christ and to one another, such that fully-formed believers may be released into the

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world for the formal and institutional representation of the gospel in word and deed, a DDO framework provides both the vision and the process by which the steward-shepherd may faithfully cultivate the people of God under their care.

THE INTERSECTION OF A DDO AND A DISCIPLING CHURCH

Contrary to many programmatic tendencies of the Western church today, discipleship is less taught than it is caught. Often, faith learning—developing, growing, and changing in faith—takes place amid everyday life, often in informal spaces through conversations amidst the ups and downs of everyday living (Butler, 2023). Recall that discipleship or faith-sharing requires a relationship of trust (Nel & Schoeman, 2019), further underscoring the reality that "belonging" is not only a methodology but also integrally part of a praxis-orientated discipleship of the people of God (Coetzee et al., 2023). Discipleship, then, requires a trusting and sufficiently present community of relationships.

And yet, Davis (2022) observes a notable deficiency in the attention paid to emotional intelligence in discipleship literature. Defined as the ability to, "identify and regulate our own emotions, to recognize the emotions of other people and feel empathy toward them, and to use these abilities to communicate effectively and build healthy, productive relationships with others" (Corliss, 2020, p. 3), those with high Emotional Intelligence are believed to be more likely to be able to identify, express, and control their own emotions, and to use emotions to enhance thinking and relationships (Gonzales, 2022). Davis (2022) exhaustively summarizes why emotional intelligence and emotional self-regulation are necessary characteristics for the follower of Jesus. Discipleship steeped in relationship would therefore benefit from greater attention to and integration of whole-life engagement, including emotional intelligence.

Greenway et al (2022) highlighted the oft-identified criticality of relationships for effective discipleship within emerging generations and noted the interdependency of discipleship and generalized character formation, i.e., love, humility, compassion, forgiveness, etc. Greenway et al. (2023) further propose the following five-fold framework for cultivating character through discipleship with emerging generations: (1) cultivating trust, (2) modeling growth, (3) teaching for transformation, (4) practicing together, and (5) making meaning. Discipleship, then, requires robust and personalized intergenerational interaction for cross-generational transmission.

If the steward-shepherd is to faithfully cultivate the resources under their care, and the chief resource to cultivate is the people of God through discipleship and discipling, and if prime opportunities for refining discipleship involve ordinary relationships, emotional self-regulation, and personalized intergenerational interaction, then the DDO is an ideal framework for comprehensively embodying these features. The DDO's primary emphasis on people development through intentional formation pathways and communities, and the DDO's recognition that people development is an integrated and holistic part of the organization's overall mission, make it the perfect framework for the steward-shepherd's cultivation of the people of God. A potential

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implementation would integrate the features and tenets of a DDO with a church's clear emphasis on discipleship and mission understood through the lenses of a church as both an organism and an institution—A Deliberately Developmental and Discipling Church (DDDC).

Table 1.2 A Deliberately Developmental and Discipling Church (DDDC)

Features	Key Tenets	Ecclesial Integration	Key References
Principles			
Running on Principles	Shared principles actively shape the conduct and decisions, from the smallest to the most strategic.	Rigorous adherence to the explicitly articulated principles forms the litmus test by which current initiatives are assessed, and new initiatives are analyzed.	1 Cor. 2:2
Adults can Grow	A DDO's uniqueness is the possibility of new life, of emergence, new capability, and evolution at the individual and collective level - by the possibility of development.	A growth mindset (Ng, 2018) is fundamental to the posture of a follower of Jesus, and efforts to facilitate personal growth, transformation, and change are quintessential activities of the church.	Rom. 8:12-30; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 2 Cor. 5: 14-21 Phil. 1:6; Phil. 2:12-13 Phil. 3:4-16; Col. 2:6-7
Weakness is a Strength; Error is an Opportunity	The unchosen expression of vulnerability - demonstrations of incompetence or inadequacy in each instance - are seen as growing edges, company resources, and assets which should be publicly engaged.	Hardship, weakness, trials, and suffering are inescapable realities for the follower of Jesus, who benefits from leaning into rather than avoiding these circumstances.	Rom. 5:1-5; 1 Cor. 1:26-31 2 Cor. 4:7-18; 2 Cor. 11:16-12:10; Phil. 2:1-11
The Interdependent Bottom Line	The goals of profitability and fostering development are neither a "both/and" nor an "either/or." Instead, very bold institutional aspirations and further-developed human capabilities are each part of a single whole.	Healthy Christians and faithful mission are interdependent realities. The mission of the people of God is dependent on the health of the people of God, and the teleology of a healthy body of believers is intentional engagement with the surrounding world.	Jn. 20:19-23; Matt. 28:16-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 2:14-17; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 2 Tim. 2:2
Practices			
Destabilization can be Constructive	Feeling regularly destabilized is more the rule than the exception. "Pain plus reflection equals progress."	Clear opportunities for development and clear invitations to take next steps of development are critical to avoiding complacency.	Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 3:4-16

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		Intentional development within the congregation, as is preparation for opportunities outside of the congregation. Create, invite, and reflect upon teachable moments.	
Closing the Gaps	In a never-ending quest to protect ourselves, we allow gaps to form between people, between plans and actions, and even between parts of ourselves. Organizations make the greatest progress if we can overcome the ways of thinking and acting that serve only to protect ourselves from conflict and embarrassment. Members of a DDO come to trust the organization as an ongoing engine for the growth of its members. "Pain plus reflection (in a sufficiently safe and trustworthy community) equals progress."	Pursue transparency, honesty, and authenticity. Where are the gaps between someone's faith in Jesus and their public persona? Are followers of Jesus living integrated lives without any division between sacred and secular?	1 Tim. 1:15
Timescale for Growth, not Closure	Efficiency and effectiveness are two very different prospects. What looks very inefficient (in the first order) may be highly effective (in the second order).	Willingness to accept that the Kingdom of God operates differently than the external world surrounding the church. A "scorecard" that values faithfulness while trusting God for fruitfulness.	Matt. 5-7; Matt. 9:35-38; Mk. 4:1-34
Interior Life is Part of What is Managed	Interior operations - internal behaviors and psychological strategies - are no less real for being intangible or invisible. Routine practices openly encourage, and seek to make regular room for, the personal and the interior, on behalf of explicitly welcoming the whole person into work every	Engagement with coaching, spiritual direction, conflict resolution, mentoring, discipling triads, and similarly related communities of formation.	Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16

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	day.		
Communities			
Rank Does Not have its Usual Privileges	A meritocracy of ideas is the ideal. Leadership's tendency to use its power to design and sustain structures that protect itself from challenge sets a limit on the organization's ability to exceed itself.	Mutual accountability and trust between pastoral staff, elders, and ministry volunteers. Church leaders are called to serve, not be served, and their chief qualification is their character.	Mk. 10:32-45; 1 Tim. 3:1-14; Titus 1:5-9
Everyone is HR	People-development is everyone's responsibility through seamless support. People-development is not a separate activity, or an additive to the business engine, but is rather an essential and integrated component of the business engine.	Followers of Jesus in each congregation have mutual responsibility for one another. This is especially true of older, wiser, and more mature followers of Jesus as they interact with younger followers.	Phil. 1:27; 1 Tim. 5:1-2
Everyone Needs a Crew	Everyone has a "crew," an ongoing group that can be counted on not only to be an instrument of your vulnerability - calling you on your own blindspots and reactivity - but a support to your own growth because of that vulnerability.	Personal transparency writ large is aided by key personal relationships who help all within the community know and be known.	Eph. 5:19; Phil. 1:27; Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 5:1-2
Everyone Builds the Culture	Individual alignment with the best of the organization's culture is essential - but is not sufficient. All employees are expected to contribute to the shaping of the culture - to step forward at any time to improve how the organization does its work.	The phrase, "church consumer," is an oxymoron, and everyone is called to contribute in substantive ways to the overall mission of the church. According to the Organizational Attunement Grid (Mancini, 2008), pirates, stowaways, and passengers are all invited to be crew.	Eph. 4:11-16

Adapted from Kegan et al. (2014a)

The faithful steward-shepherd seeking to implement a DDDC will model behaviors they hope to see and will work to facilitate clear opportunities to embody central features and key tenets of a DDO properly contextualized to a church. These efforts are critical not only to the internal life of the church but also to the external witness of the church. A DDDC can develop followers of Jesus within the walls of a

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church, but also prepare to release them for engagement with the surrounding community on behalf of the institution. Proper contextualization will identify unique opportunities to tailor processes adept at discipling within and preparing to engage without.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH, APPLICATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION

Practically, a DDDC would create clear pathways for intentional, intergenerational discipleship among its members. While programmatic organization has a role to play in the church, discipling efforts must fundamentally exist as organic and natural relationships. While ministry context will dictate specific forms, these discipling efforts can have two functional trajectories.

First, a process for inviting members of the church family into formative relationships that systematically and didactically convey essentials of the Christian faith. What does it mean to follow Jesus? What does it look like in my life and my home when Jesus is my king? How does the Lordship of Jesus affect my identity, my relationships, my priorities, my free time, etc? Such a process can include formal pipelines for intrachurch leadership development that equips and prepares those leaders to serve the church as an organism.

Second, a process for forming and releasing followers of Jesus into the world around them. If God's common grace in the world is an invitation to the church to be present by indirect means, then the church ought to develop a process for equipping and sending members who can develop society through the presence of faithful followers of Jesus in every area of life. Such initiatives have come under the auspices of "Faith and Work" or "Faith, Work, and Economics" and can help ensure that a DDDC is properly situated to contribute to the intellectual, physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual well-being of the community in which she finds herself.

CONCLUSION

From the New Testament onward, the primary resource stewards-shepherds are called to cultivate are the followers of Jesus who congregate as His church, and their cultivation is a process of Christlike transformation - discipleship. Research shows that discipleship requires a trusting and sufficiently present community of relationships, would benefit from a greater attention to and integration of whole-life engagement, including emotional intelligence, and requires robust and personalized intergenerational interaction for cross-generational transmission.

If the steward-shepherd is to faithfully cultivate the resources under their care, and the chief resource to cultivate is the people of God through discipleship and discipling, and if prime opportunities for refining discipleship involve ordinary relationships, emotional self-regulation, and personalized intergenerational interaction—then the DDO is an ideal framework for comprehensively embodying these features. The DDO's primary emphasis on people development through intentional formation

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pathways and communities, and the DDO's recognition that people development is an integrated and holistic part of the organization's overall mission, make it the perfect framework for the steward-shepherd's cultivation of the people of God. A potential implementation would integrate the features and tenets of a DDO with a church's clear emphasis on discipleship and mission understood through the lenses of a church as both an organism and an institution—Deliberately Developmental and Discipling Church (DDDC).

About the Author

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SURVEYING LEADERSHIP THEORY INTEGRATION TRENDS IN UNDERGRADUATE COURSEWORK AT SELECTED BAPTIST SCHOOLS

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Analyzing the intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory in undergraduate coursework at selected Baptist colleges and universities contributes data about the breadth of students' exposure to popular leadership theories. Empirical evidence correlates participating faculty members' rate of theoretical introduction to perceptions about each theory's theological compatibility with Christian orthodoxy. Trends in the number of leadership theories presented are shown to vary as a function of undergraduate enrollment. The survey invites further study on patterns of theoretical coverage and the process of theological analysis of leadership theory.

Keywords: Christian theology, leadership theory, Christian higher education

INTRODUCTION

The intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory provides rich opportunities for important critical reflection. Christian researchers engaging at this nexus appear to hold diverse perspectives on the overall suitability—and particularly the theological compatibility—of popular leadership theories with Christian orthodoxy and practice. Christian scholars who identify compatibility gaps in leadership theories are left with at least three options to resolve this dissonance: accept the theory in the form presented despite any recognized conceptual friction points, reject the theory in favor of some other existing or future framework considered to be more biblically faithful, or sufficiently modify the theory so the revised version comports sufficiently with prioritized theological convictions.[30] Some scholars are willing to utilize a leadership model in its

[30] Jack Barentsen and Dustin D. Benac, "The Value and Impact of Servant Leadership Discourse in Church Leadership Studies," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Servant Leadership*, ed. Satinder Dhiman

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original or popularized form, provided the theory is assessed to be at least principally, if not distinctively, congruent with Christian orthodoxy.[31] A second position rejects theories considered to be rooted in heretical principles and then seeks to replace those theories with more biblically legitimate approaches.[32] A third stance taken by many Christian researchers is to lean on the value of general revelation and modify a given leadership theory—to Christianize it—thereby bringing the theoretical framework within the boundaries of orthodoxy before employing the revised expression.[33] Fresh exploration into how Christian members of the academy form theological conclusions on leadership theories and make decisions about if and how they introduce those theories to students in higher education coursework stands to improve understanding about an important feature in the contemporary landscape of Christian leadership.

Baptist colleges and universities constitute one subset within the broader landscape of Christian higher education. Most Baptist schools in the United States are affiliated with the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU), a voluntary organization of forty-three member schools in four countries: Canada, Haiti, the Philippines, and the United States.[34] The thirty-nine domestic member schools are spread across fifteen States. The Mississippi River serves to geographically divide domestic member schools almost exactly in half. The twenty-one institutions listed in Appendix 1 are positioned to the west of this prominent geographical feature, and the remaining nineteen schools reside to the east. The current research is a qualitative study that aims to contribute heuristically to the field of Christian leadership by answering this question: How do selected IABCU member schools located west of the Mississippi River integrate popular leadership theories into the academic preparation of undergraduate students to build and manage effective organizations?

I began with four hypotheses. First, the data will show that respondents introduce servant leadership to undergraduate students more so than any other theoretical leadership construct. Second, the data will demonstrate that respondents expose transformational leadership to undergraduate students at a rate second only to servant leadership. Third, the respondents will identify servant leadership as the leadership

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and Gary E. Roberts (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan, 2023), 499–503. J. Keith McKinley, *Evaluating Leadership: A Model for Missiological Assessment of Leadership Theory and Practice* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2024), 163. Jason B. Palmer, “Theologically Analyzing Secular Leadership Theory: Evidence of Pelagius’s Teachings in the Servant Leadership of Robert Greenleaf.” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 23, no. 1 (2024): 79.

[31] Marty McMahone, “A Solid Foundation for Servant Leadership,” *Journal of Biblical Integration of Business* 26, no. 1 (2023): 60.

[32] Larry G. Locke, “The Clay Feet of Servant Leadership,” *Journal of Biblical Integration of Business* 22, no. 1 (2019): 34–42.

[33] Examples include Tod Bolsinger, *Canoeing the Mountains* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015) which modifies adaptive leadership theory and McKinley who modifies transformational leadership theory.

[34] “Member Schools,” International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities, accessed May 28, 2025, https://www.baptistschools.org/member-schools/. The member school list reflects two changes since the time of the survey. One international institution—Southern Baptist College, Philippines—has been added, and one domestic institution has been removed: Southwest Baptist University. The present research uses the member school list reflected online as of September 13, 2024.

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approach, theory, or model having the highest theological compatibility with Christian practice. Fourth, the data will support a general correlation between the frequency of a leadership approach, theory, or model's introduction to undergraduate students and faculty members' perceptions on the approach, theory, or model's theological compatibility with Christian practice.

One general assumption permeates this study: the Baptist Faith and Message and the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy effectively describe the authority of the Bible.[35] Several narrower assumptions follow. First, all twenty-one institutions in the survey group offer at least one undergraduate course that introduces students to one or more leadership theories. Second, surveying ten member schools—particularly the five with the highest undergraduate enrollment and the five with the lowest undergraduate enrollment—will yield a valuable sample of faculty trends and perspectives among all twenty-one member schools in the survey group. This second assumption acknowledges the limitations in broadly generalizing the results associated with smaller data sets. Third, the researcher's employment in a full-time staff and adjunct faculty role at one of the ten surveyed schools at the time of the survey, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, will not appreciably impact the reliability of the results.

The lag in enrollment data reflected on the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) database limits the research, in that the NCES enrollment data available on October 19, 2024, still reflects enrollment figures reported for Fall 2023. The research is further limited by the willingness of the academic deans at the ten surveyed institutions to forward the survey instrument to all eligible faculty members—and only eligible faculty members—and the willingness of those eligible faculty to voluntarily complete the survey. I delimited the study first by investigating only domestic IABCU member schools, second by narrowing the survey group roughly in half using a prominent feature of physical geography, third by choosing ten member schools from the survey group for engagement based on selected enrollment criteria, and fourth by considering undergraduate curriculum to the exclusion of graduate and doctoral level coursework. Peter Northouse's descriptions of each identified leadership approach, theory, and model serve as the definitional baseline for this study.[36]

RESEARCH DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The research methodology consisted of first developing an original survey instrument using Qualtrics software. The survey instrument content is available in Appendix 2. I then used the NCES database to ascertain the latest publicly available enrollment data reported by each of the twenty-one domestic IABCU member schools

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[35] "Baptist Faith and Message 2000," Southern Baptist Convention, accessed October 4, 2024, https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/. "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, October 28, 1978, https://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI_1.pdf.

[36] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 9th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2022).

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located west of the Mississippi River.[37] Using this enrollment data, I identified the five schools with the largest undergraduate enrollment and the five schools with the smallest undergraduate enrollment. The five institutions with the largest reported undergraduate enrollments were Baylor University (15,213), California Baptist University (8,334), Missouri Baptist University (4,549), University of Mary-Hardin-Baylor (3,072), and Dallas Baptist University (2,971). The five schools with the smallest undergraduate enrollments were Howard Payne University (773), Williams Baptist University (562), Jacksonville College (471), Texas Baptist College at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (309), and Criswell College (122).

I used those ten schools' publicly accessible websites to identify the academic deans appearing to oversee the preponderance of undergraduate leadership coursework and sent each of those ten deans—one per institution—a personalized email on September 13, 2024, that included a link to the survey instrument. The email requested that each respective dean forward the invitation to faculty members at their institution who met the research criterion of teaching one or more courses introducing leadership theory to undergraduate students. I proposed a two-week survey window and requested that voluntary participants respond by September 27, 2024. As of September 23, 2024, nine responses had been received from four of the ten institutions, so I sent one reminder email to the academic deans at the six surveyed schools with no faculty respondents thus far. After this reminder, four more respondents from three previously unrepresented institutions completed the survey. I prioritized the anonymity of individual respondents and the attributability of any specific responses to participating institutions.

The survey instrument consisted of five questions. Question 1 asked the participant to select the primary IABCU member school at which they teach one or more undergraduate courses that introduce leadership theory to undergraduate students. The primary purpose of this question was to confirm that the respondent was a faculty member at one of the ten surveyed institutions and, therefore, eligible to participate in the study. All current IABCU institutions were listed as selectable responses. Question 2 asked participants to indicate the type of faculty appointment held: full-time or adjunct. This information was collected to see if any noticeable trends were present between full-time and part-time faculty respondents. Question 3 listed ten leadership approaches, theories, and models drawn from the ninth edition of Northouse's *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (2022) and asked respondents to select all of those that they introduce to undergraduate students in their coursework. Question 4 listed those same ten leadership approaches, theories, and models and asked respondents to assess whether they consider each to be theologically compatible with Christian practice, theologically compatible when appropriately modified, or not theologically compatible even when modified. An undecided option was also provided. Question 5 asked respondents to identify the course names and course numbers of the undergraduate classes they teach that introduce leadership theory. Like Question 1, Question 5 was intended to further

[37] "College Navigator," National Center for Education Statistics, accessed September 13, 2024, https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/. See Appendix 1.

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validate the eligibility of the respondent for participation in the research by confirming their current role in teaching undergraduate coursework.

RESULTS

Fourteen faculty members from at least seven of the ten surveyed institutions listed in Table 1 voluntarily responded to the survey instrument prior to the deadline for a 70% institutional response rate. One of those fourteen was a full-time faculty respondent who completed the survey but did not select an institution from the dropdown menu on Question 1. I assessed the likelihood of that respondent teaching at one of the ten surveyed IABCU schools to be high since the survey was only distributed via direct communication between me and academic deans at the ten selected institutions; however, this respondent's data was omitted from the study since institutional affiliation with a school in the survey group could not be positively confirmed. Another full-time faculty member at the school in the survey group partially completed the survey on October 4, 2024; however, this survey was omitted from the study due to its late submission and the relative incompleteness of the data provided. Data from the remaining twelve surveys (n=12) were included in the study. This set of twelve included the response of one full-time faculty participant who did not answer two sub-portions of Question 4: the theological compatibility assessments regarding authentic leadership and adaptive leadership.

Table 1. Surveyed IABCU Member Schools

Institution	Enrollment		Number of Faculty Respondents	
	Undergraduate	Total	Full-Time	Adjunct
Baylor University	15,213	20,709	1	0
California Baptist University	8,334	11,495	1	0
Missouri Baptist University	4,549	5,231	0	0
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	3,072	3,575	2	0
Dallas Baptist University	2,971	4,348	2	0
Howard Payne University	773	838	0	0
Williams Baptist University	562	584	1	0
Jacksonville College	471	471	1	0
Texas Baptist College at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	309	2,286	0	0
Criswell College	122	163	2	2
TOTALS			10	2

All twelve answered Questions 1 and 5 in ways that confirmed their eligibility to participate in the study. The full-time and adjunct faculty appointment information collected in Question 2 provided some information; however, the small number of participating adjuncts mitigated the significance of any associated findings. Further, the data related to full and part-time faculty status could not be presented in a way that protected institutional anonymity. As a result, that information is withheld from the research report.

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Five of twelve respondents (42%) indicated that they introduce the trait approach to undergraduate students. None of the twelve respondents (0%) consider the trait approach to be theologically compatible with Christian practice; however, ten (83%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. Two respondents (17%) consider the trait approach to be not theologically compatible with Christian practice, even in modified form. Table 2 summarizes the data from respondents regarding the trait approach.

Table 2. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Trait Approach to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Trait Approach to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Trait Approach to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	0	0	0
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	4	6	10
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	1	1	2
Undecided	0	0	0
TOTALS	5	7	12

Six respondents (50%) indicated that they introduce the skills approach to undergraduate students. Three of the twelve respondents (25%) consider the skills approach to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Nine (75%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. Table 3 summarizes the data from respondents regarding the skills approach.

Seven respondents (58%) indicated that they introduce the behavior approach to undergraduate students. Three of the twelve respondents (25%) consider the skills approach to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Eight (67%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One (8%) finds the behavior approach to be not theologically compatible with Christian practice, even in modified form. Table 4 summarizes the data from respondents regarding the behavior approach.

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Eight respondents (67%) indicated that they introduce the situational approach to undergraduate students. Three of the twelve respondents (25%) consider the situational approach to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Nine (75%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. Table 5 summarizes the data from respondents regarding the situation approach.

Table 3. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Skills Approach to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Skills Approach to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Skills Approach to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	2	1	3
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	4	5	9
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	0	0
TOTALS	6	6	12

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Table 4. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Behavior Approach to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Behavior Approach to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Behavior Approach to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	3	0	3
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	4	4	8
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	1	1
Undecided	0	0	0
TOTALS	7	5	12

Table 5. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Situational Approach to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Situational Approach to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Situational Approach to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	2	1	3
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	6	3	9
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	0	0
TOTALS	8	4	12

Six respondents (50%) indicated that they introduce the goal-path approach to undergraduate students. One respondent (8%) considers the goal-path approach to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Ten (83%) consider the approach to be

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capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One respondent (8%) is undecided on the theological compatibility of the goal-path approach. Table 6 summarizes the data from respondents regarding the goal-path approach.

Six respondents (50%) indicated that they introduce the leader-member exchange theory to undergraduate students. Two respondents (17%) consider leader-member exchange theory to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Eight (67%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. Two respondents (17%) are undecided on the theological compatibility of leader-member exchange theory. Table 7 summarizes the data from respondents regarding leader-member exchange theory.

Ten respondents (83%) indicated that they introduce transformational leadership to undergraduate students. Six respondents (50%) consider transformational leadership to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Five (42%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One respondent (8%) is undecided on the theological compatibility of transformational leadership. Table 8 summarizes the data from respondents regarding transformational leadership.

Table 6. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Goal-Path Approach to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Goal-Path Approach to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Goal-Path Approach to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	1	0	1
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	5	5	10
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	1	1
TOTALS	6	6	12

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Table 7. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Leader-Member Exchange Theory to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Leader-Member Exchange Theory to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Leader-Member Exchange Theory to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	2	0	2
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	4	4	8
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	2	2
TOTALS	6	6	12

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Table 8. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Transformational Leadership to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Transformational Leadership to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Transformational Leadership to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	5	1	6
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	5	0	5
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	1	1
TOTALS	10	2	12

Seven of twelve respondents (58%) indicated that they introduce authentic leadership to undergraduate students. One of the twelve respondents chose not to provide a response regarding the theological compatibility of authentic leadership. Five of eleven respondents (45%) consider authentic leadership to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Five of eleven (45%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One of eleven respondents (9%) is undecided on the theological compatibility of authentic leadership. Table 9 summarizes the data from respondents regarding authentic leadership.

Eleven respondents (92%) indicated that they introduce servant leadership to undergraduate students. Eight respondents (67%) consider servant leadership to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Three (25%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One respondent (8%) is undecided on the theological compatibility of servant leadership. Table 10 summarizes the data from respondents regarding servant leadership.

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Table 9. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Authentic Leadership to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Authentic Leadership to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Authentic Leadership to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	3	2	5
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	4	1	5
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	1	1
No Response	0	1	1
TOTALS	7	5	12

Table 10. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Servant Leadership to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Servant Leadership to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Servant Leadership to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	7	1	8
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	3	0	3
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	1	0	1
TOTALS	11	1	12

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Eight of twelve respondents (67%) indicated that they introduce adaptive leadership to undergraduate students. One of the twelve respondents chose not to respond to the theological compatibility of adaptive leadership. Three of eleven respondents (27%) consider adaptive leadership to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. Seven of eleven (64%) consider the approach to be capable of theological compatibility when appropriately modified. One of eleven respondents (9%) is undecided on the theological compatibility of adaptive leadership. Table 11 summarizes the data from respondents regarding adaptive leadership.

Table 11. Faculty Perceptions on the Compatibility of Adaptive Leadership to Christian Practice

	Faculty Introducing Adaptive Leadership to Undergraduate Students	Faculty Not Introducing Adaptive Leadership to Undergraduate Students	All Faculty Respondents
This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	3	0	3
When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice	5	2	7
This leadership approach, theory, or model is not theologically compatible with Christian practice even in a modified form	0	0	0
Undecided	0	1	1
No Response	0	1	1
TOTALS	8	4	12

DISCUSSION

A thought-provoking nautical thread undergirds the Bible's treatment of the concepts of leading and leadership. In the Old Testament, Proverbs 11:14 states, "Without guidance, a people will fall, but with many counselors there is deliverance."[38] Brown suggests *direction* and *counsel* as alternative translations for the word often rendered *guidance* [תַּחְבֻּלָה], and Klein adds two more options to that list: *wisdom* and *cunning*.[39] Brown and Klein each go on to suggest the Hebrew root word connotes the

[38] All biblical quotations come from the Christian Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.

[39] Francis Brown, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 287. Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English* (New York: MacMillian Publishing Company, 1987), 697.

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idea of “rope-pulling” and is related to “steering, directing a ship.”[40] The process of effectively leading organizations seems to bear some close similarities to the safe navigation of a maritime vessel.

In the New Testament, Paul includes the concept of *leading* or *administration* in Romans 12:8 [προϊστάμενος] and 1 Corinthians 12:28 [κυβερνήσεις] as part of lists of spiritual gifts. The term used in the letter to the church at Corinth is found only once in the New Testament. The verb form [κυβερνάω] of this accusative feminine plural noun is a nautical term meaning to steer or guide a vessel, and, according to Danker, the plural noun form in 1 Corinthians 12:28 “indicates varieties of such leading positions in the ecclesial body of Christ.”[41] The need for capacity to develop and implement strategies for stewarding vessels through difficult circumstances and avoiding shipwreck invites Christian leaders to explore the theories that best equip them to build and manage effective organizations. Just as nautical pilots train rigorously to master their craft, those aiming to lead as God expects do well to consider critically the best theories and practices for realizing this outcome.

Guiding organizations that accomplish their missions and flourish on an interpersonal level finds choice soil in biblical *servanthood,* which Dew defines as “the character that causes us to place others before ourselves, helping where people have need, and finding joy in a life focused on others.”[42] Mark 9:35 records Jesus telling His twelve disciples, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be last and servant of all.” In Matthew 23:11, Jesus says, “The greatest among you will be your servant.” The Lord went beyond talking about servanthood. He practiced servanthood incarnationally. Philippians 2:7-8 tells us, “Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity. And when he had come as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.” Christ’s example serves as a standard for evaluating popular theoretical frameworks for leadership.

Northouse identifies ten leadership approaches, models, and theories for consideration: the trait approach, skills approach, behavior approach, situational approach, path-goal approach, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership, authentic leadership, servant leadership, and adaptive leadership. Christian scholars, however, lack consensus on how to handle leadership theories that some posit are founded upon various unorthodox assumptions and principles. The positions held by such critics can be illustrated with a few examples, all of which are values-based theories.

First, James MacGregor Burns popularized transformational (or transforming) leadership and juxtaposed it with transactional leadership, but he did nothing to tether

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[40] Brown, 287; Klein, 697.

[41] Frederick William Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 573.

[42] James K. Dew, Jr., *Let This Mind Be in You* (Brentwood, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2023) 1, 66.

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his concept to Christian orthodoxy, even generally.[43] Bass and others further developed transformational leadership, but McKinley shows that a theological analysis of transformational leadership (and every other) leadership theory is critically important for Christians endeavoring to integrate leadership concepts well. McKinley suggests a theological examination on teleological, ontological, authority, and ethical grounds.[44]

Second, a growing number of Christian academics argue that Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership is unsupportable by Christian theology.[45] While Christianized versions of servant leadership are easy to find, some scholars consider Greenleaf's seminal works to be theologically questionable. I have elsewhere demonstrated support for Niewold and Kimotho's separate claims that Greenleaf's seminal work on servant leadership bears the evidence of Pelagius' heretical positions regarding the inherent goodness of human nature and the effectiveness of human free will.[46] If those findings are accepted, then Greenleaf's servant leadership theory demands a Christian response of either sufficient modification or rejection. Instead of co-opting Greenleaf's "servant leader" terminology to describe Jesus as Reed and myriad others have done, the need to recover a biblical servanthood that is untethered from unorthodox theological baggage is magnified.[47] The case of servant leadership theory illustrates the necessity of critical analysis of leadership theories using the biblical and theological lenses.

Third, Ronald Heifetz's adaptive leadership theory relates leader behaviors with individuals' work and promotes defining and solving tough problems through changes "in values, beliefs, or behavior" and may involve the inclusion of "competing value perspectives" for success to be realized.[48] Equipping and mobilizing practitioners to engage adaptive problems in a way that clarifies aspirations, moves them closer to a

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[43] James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

[44] J. Keith McKinley, *Evaluating Leadership: A Model for Missiological Assessment of Leadership Theory and Practice* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2024), 17.

[45] Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977). For example, Jack W. Niewold, "Incarnational Leadership: Towards a Distinctly Christian Theory of Leadership," PhD diss., Regent University, 2006; Jack W. Niewold, "Beyond Servant Leadership," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no. 2 (2007): 118–134; Audrey V. Shirin, "Is Servant Leadership Inherently Christian?," *Journal of Religion and Business Ethics* 3, Article 13 (2014): 23–25; Locke; Stephen G. Kimotho, "Is Servant Leadership a 'Christian Theory?' A Critical Examination of Greenleaf's Servant Leadership Concept," *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies* 6, no. 3 (2019): 71–78; Hwa Yung, *Leadership or Servanthood?: Walking in the Steps of Jesus* (Carlisle: United Kingdom: Langham Global Library, 2021), 12–14, 128; Jack Barentsen and Dustin D. Benac, "The Value and Impact of Servant Leadership Discourse in Church Leadership Studies," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Servant Leadership*, ed. Satinder Dhiman and Gary E. Roberts (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan, 2023), 489–516; and Jason B. Palmer, "Theologically Analyzing Secular Leadership Theory: Evidence of Pelagius's Teachings in the Servant Leadership of Robert Greenleaf," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 23, no. 1 (2024): 79–102.

[46] Palmer, "Theologically Analyzing Secular Leadership Theory."

[47] Lora L. Reed, "Servant Leadership as Demonstrated in one 21st Century Church: A Case Study," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership 13*, no. 1 (Fall 2023): 33.

[48] Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1994), 22, 23, 25. Northouse, 285, 299, 300.

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solution, and fosters thriving in the face of formidable adversity is the essence of adaptive leadership theory.[49] The expectation that tackling tough problems will often necessitate an evolution in values is a distinguishing component of progress within the framework of adaptive leadership theory; nevertheless, many Christians demand theological limits to acceptable adaptation in tackling tough problems.[50]

West and Stoeckle warn "Christian religious leadership authors" against committing "the double-sin of uncritically appropriating industrial paradigm constructs from assumptive systems which are incompatible with their core principles of transcendental, theistic, humanistic, and revelation-dependent epistemology and ethics."[51] To heed this warning and avoid the tendency to "simply baptize secular leadership models and import them into our work for Christ without subjecting them to critical examination," any productive analysis of must clarify the origins of each approach and consider current scholarship in light of Christian theology.[52]

Literature in the field of Christian literature constitutes one source for understanding the intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory. Another source is curriculum content involving leadership theory. The perspectives of the faculty members teaching those courses regarding the theological legitimacy of theories shape the frequency and manner of introduction. The present study explores faculty trends regarding the introduction of leadership approaches, theories, or models in academic coursework and faculty assessments of each framework's theological compatibility with Christian practice to better understand the intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory.

Properly comprehending undergraduate students' comparative exposure to various leadership approaches, theories, or models hinges largely on understanding the frequency with which faculty introduce those frameworks during academic coursework. The survey data show that respondents present servant leadership to their undergraduate students more than any other leadership approach, theory, or model, thereby validating my first hypothesis. The data demonstrates respondents introduce transformational leadership at a rate second only to servant leadership, thereby

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[49] Ronald A. Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2009), 14, 303; Bernard M. Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*. 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 17; Heifetz, 87. See also Linda Louise Schubring, "A Study in Adaptive Leadership: How Christian Associates' Teams and Individuals in Europe Navigate Change," D.I.S. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2012.

[50] Heifetz, 26, 34, 35; Joseph Mathew, "Persistent Pioneers: Training Leaders for Mission to Unreached People Groups through India's Light the World Missions," D.I.S. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2020, 16–17; Bolsinger, 41, 65–66, 94, 104, 106, 128; Jason B. Palmer, "Missiological Adaptation as a Framework for Chaplains in Civil-Military Engagement," *Military Chaplain Review* (November 2024): 19–25.

[51] Russell W. West and John D. Stoeckle, "Theorizing Religiously-Based Organization Leadership: Mapping the Intersections," *Journal of Religious Leadership* 4, nos. 1–2 (2005): 162.

[52] Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values, and Empowering Change* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1991), 34.

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validating my second hypothesis. When the remaining eight leadership approaches, theories, and models in Table 12 are considered in descending order, the frequency with which respondents introduce those frameworks seems to follow routinely observed levels of comparative popularity in Christian academic literature and collegial dialogue. Despite some contemporary researchers' examination of trait approaches, especially regarding leader emergence and effectiveness, and their assertion that the trait approach is experiencing a revival, particularly over the past decade, the trait approach alone bears the unenviable distinction of being the only surveyed framework that is introduced by less than half of the respondents.[53]

Table 12. Comparative Introduction of Leadership Approaches, Theories, and Models

	Number (Percentage) of Respondents Introducing to Undergraduate Students	Number (Percentage) of Respondents Not Introducing to Undergraduate Students
Servant Leadership	11 (92%)	1 (8%)
Transformational Leadership	10 (83%)	2 (17%)
Adaptive Leadership	8 (67%)	4 (33%)
Situational Approach	8 (67%)	4 (33%)
Authentic Leadership	7 (58%)	5 (42%)
Behavior Approach	7 (58%)	5 (42%)
Leader-Member Exchange Theory	6 (50%)	6 (50%)
Path-Goal Approach	6 (50%)	6 (50%)
Skills Approach	6 (50%)	6 (50%)
Trait Approach	5 (42%)	7 (58%)

Table 13 ranks the ten leadership approaches, theories, or models with respect to respondents' perspectives on each one's theological compatibility with Christian practice. Few Christian leadership scholars will likely be surprised to find servant leadership outpacing all nine theoretical competitors, thereby validating my third hypothesis. Servant leadership's first-place theological compatibility placement matches the theory's comparative frequency of introduction in coursework taught by the respondents. Likewise, transformational leadership occupies the second place in both lists. Continuing the trend, authentic leadership, adaptive leadership, and situational leadership appear among the next three places in both Tables 12 and 13. Behavior

[53] Northouse, 30; D. Scott DeRue, Jennifer D. Nahrgang, Ned Wellman, and Stephen E. Humphrey, "Trait and Behavioral Theories of Leadership: An Integration and Meta-analytic Test of Their Relative Validity," *Personnel Psychology* 64 (2011): 7–52; John Antonakis, David V. Day, and Birgit Schyns, "Leadership and Individual Differences: At the Cusp of a Renaissance," *The Leadership Quarterly* 23 (2012): 643, 648; Stephen J. Zaccaro, Jennifer P. Green, Samantha Dubrow, and MaryJo Kolze, "Leader Individual Differences, Situational Parameters, and Leadership Outcomes: A Comprehensive Review and Integration," *The Leadership Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (2018): 38; Micha Popper, *Leaders Who Transform Society: What Drives Them and Why We Are Attracted* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 16.

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approach, skills approach, leader-member exchange theory, path-goal approach, and trait approach follow the pattern by appearing among the bottom portion of both groups.

Comparing the data submitted by faculty at larger schools with the data submitted by smaller schools in more detail reveals some discernible trends regarding the scope of student exposure to theory. Four of the twelve respondents indicated that they introduce all ten leadership approaches, theories, and models, and all four of those respondents teach at one of the five surveyed schools with the highest undergraduate enrollment. In total, the six respondents from the five largest schools averaged introducing 8.2 of the ten leadership approaches, theories, and models to undergraduate students, whereas the six respondents from the five smallest schools averaged introducing 4.2 of those same ten frameworks.

Of the one hundred eighteen individual responses from the twelve respondents regarding theological compatibility with Christian practice, there were thirty-four (28.8%) assessments of theological compatibility and seventy-four (62.7%) instances of perceived theological compatibility with appropriate theoretical modification. These two categories sum to 91.5% of the total cases. Only three responses (2.5%) found a given approach, theory, or model to be incompatible with Christian practice, even when modified. The other seven responses (6%) reflected undecided positions.

Table 13. Comparative Perceptions of Theological Compatibility with Christian Practice

	Number (%) Indicating Theological Compatibility	Number (%) Indicating Theological Compatibility When Modified	Number (%) Indicating Lack of Theological Compatibility	Number (%) Undecided
Servant Leadership	8 (67%)	3 (25%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)
Transformational Leadership	6 (50%)	5 (42%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)
Authentic Leadership (n=11)	5 (45%)	5 (45%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)
Adaptive Leadership (n=11)	3 (27%)	7 (64%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)
Situational Approach	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Skills Approach	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Behavior Approach	3 (25%)	8 (67%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)
Leader-Member Exchange Theory	2 (17%)	8 (67%)	0 (0%)	2 (17%)
Path-Goal Approach	1 (8%)	10 (83%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)
Trait Approach	0 (0%)	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	0 (0%)

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The twelve surveys identified thirty-four incidents of respondents assessing a given leadership approach, theory, or model to be theologically compatible with Christian practice. In twenty-eight of these cases (82%), the respondent indicated that they introduce the leadership approach, theory, or model in undergraduate coursework. In the other six cases (18%) where a respondent finds a leadership approach, theory, or model to be theologically compatible with Christian practice, they do not introduce the theoretical concept to undergraduate students.

The twelve surveys identified seventy-four incidents of respondents assessing a given leadership approach, theory, or model to be theologically compatible with Christian practice when appropriately modified. In forty-four of these cases (59%), the respondent indicated that they introduce the leadership approach, theory, or model in undergraduate coursework. In the other thirty cases (41%) where a respondent finds a leadership approach, theory, or model to be modified such that it becomes theologically compatible with Christian practice, they do not introduce the theoretical concept to undergraduate students.

Twelve surveys identified three incidents of respondents assessing a given leadership approach, theory, or model to be not theologically compatible with Christian practice, even when modified. In one of these cases (33%), the respondent indicated that they introduce the leadership approach, theory, or model in undergraduate coursework. In the other two cases (67%) where a respondent finds a leadership approach, theory, or model to be theologically incompatible with Christian practice, even when modified, they do not introduce the theoretical concept to undergraduate students.

The twelve surveys identified seven incidents of respondents indicating that they were undecided as to whether a given leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice. In one of these cases (14%), the respondent indicated that they introduce the leadership approach, theory, or model in undergraduate coursework. In the other six cases (86%) where a respondent is undecided on whether a leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice, they do not introduce the theoretical concept to undergraduate students.

FINDINGS

The data presented in Table 12 suggests respondents are broadly familiar with the ten leadership approaches, theories, or models referenced in Northouse's work. For nine of the ten theoretical concepts Northouse identifies, at least half of the twelve respondents indicated that they introduce the leadership framework to undergraduate students. The data support a general state of theoretical literacy in the field of leadership among the respondents, which strengthens the quality of the findings.

I found a consistently strong correlation between the rate of a leadership approach, theory, or model's introduction to undergraduate students and the respondent's perception of the theological compatibility of the leadership approach, theory, or model with Christian practice. The relative rate of introduction is almost

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directly proportional to perspectives on the theological compatibility of those leadership approaches, theories, or models. Theoretical frameworks judged to be more theologically compatible get introduced more often, and those frameworks assessed to be less theologically compatible get presented predictably less often. This general correlation affirms my fourth hypothesis. This finding is particularly important given that the level of assessed theological compatibility significantly impacts whether responding faculty members ever introduce a theoretical concept.

Respondents from five schools in the survey group with the largest undergraduate enrollment indicated that they introduce undergraduate students to a wider range of leadership approaches, theories, or models referenced in Northouse's work compared to the respondents from five schools with the smallest undergraduate enrollment. The participating faculty from the larger schools reported introducing their undergraduate students to essentially double the number of leadership approaches, theories, or models compared to their colleagues at sister schools with smaller undergraduate student bodies. All six respondents (100%) from the smaller schools indicated that they introduce servant leadership, and five (83%) introduce transformational leadership. If these trends were to prove representative of all IABCU member schools, then schools with smaller undergraduate enrollments appear to have an opportunity to open the aperture of theoretical awareness in the field of leadership among undergraduate students.

Respondents overwhelmingly contend that the ten leadership approaches, theories, and models are either theologically compatible in their original or popularized form or can be made compatible through suitable modification. Most respondents hold that most theoretical constructs require modification before they are deemed theologically compatible with Christian practice. Respondents rarely introduce theories to students that they either assess to be theologically incompatible with Christian practice or have not come to a decision regarding the theory's theological compatibility. The lack of exposure to leadership approaches, theories, or models that some undergraduate students experience as a function of patterns associated with the size of their school's enrollment or their professor's theological assessments could limit the number of theoretical frameworks upon which they have to draw for building and managing effective organizations.

These findings invite practical recommendations and implications for integrating leadership theory into undergraduate coursework at Christian institutions. A first would see all professors who teach leadership theory maximize the number of leadership theories that they introduce. The second would appeal to faculty for students to be provided opportunities to critically assess each leadership theory's aspects of compatibility and incompatibility with Christian theology. McKinley's Leadership Assessment Matrix is commended as an evaluative tool for this work.[54] A third suggestion calls for instructors to propose best practices to students for adapting leadership theories for sufficient compatibility with Christian orthodoxy when such modification is deemed appropriate. Operationalizing the findings in these ways stands

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[54] McKinley, 156.

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to enhance the equipping of students for faithful application of leadership theories in diverse circumstances.

I also identified findings related to research methodology. The survey instrument could have been improved in several ways. First, Question 1 could have provided respondents with a “none of the above” option when selecting a primary institutional affiliation. This would have ensured every respondent had an applicable choice in the drop-down menu of options. Second, a question could have been added that inquired about the highest degree earned by the respondent. This would have enabled to researcher to weight responses according to academic credentials. Third, a question could have been added that inquired about the number of graduate hours the respondent had completed in the field of leadership. This would have enabled to researcher to better assess responses according to academic experience. Fourth, the survey could have been bolstered through subsequent interviews with participating faculty members to better understand their pedagogical decisions and theological perceptions.

CONCLUSION

The present survey investigated the way selected IABCU member schools located west of the Mississippi River integrate popular leadership theories into the academic preparation of undergraduate students to build and manage effective organizations. The importance of critical theological analysis of leadership theory found support through the strong correlation observed between participating professors’ perception of the theological compatibility of a given leadership approach, theory, or model with Christian practice and their decision on whether to introduce that leadership approach, theory, or model to undergraduate students. Having empirical evidence that describes trends that seem to be commonly observed in the field of Christian leadership provided substance to ongoing academic discourse.

The study also identified the need for further inquiry. If respondents consider most secular leadership theory to be either theologically acceptable or modifiable to become theologically acceptable, then what process are they using to guide them in modifying leadership approaches, theories, or models to bring each leadership framework within the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy? Learning more about how Christian faculty members at a tactical level conduct the process of theoretical modification makes a phenomenological study particularly attractive. Additional research would also be necessary to make generalized claims regarding all IABCU member schools located west of the Mississippi River, all IABCU member schools, and the more comprehensive collection of Christian institutions of higher education, such as those affiliated with the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Future studies could be further expanded to include contexts beyond undergraduate coursework (i.e., graduate and doctoral coursework, local church and parachurch ministry settings, and the practice of leadership by Christians in the marketplace).

The intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory is an area ripe for contribution. Regardless of how theologically compatible Christian scholars find the

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various leadership approaches, theories, or models to be with Christian practice, the significance of critically reflecting on theoretical systems through theological lenses is crucial. The process of critical examination allows scholars to differentiate the descriptive and prescriptive treatment of leaders and leadership found in the Bible from the array of popular leadership approaches, theories, or models rooted, too often, in secular assumptions and heretical principles. In so doing, Christian researchers continue the quest for a distinctively and holistically Christian understanding of leadership.[55]

APPENDIX 1: UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT DATA FROM IABCU MEMBER SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

State	Institution	Undergraduate Enrollment Indicated in NCES as of October 19, 2024
Texas	Baylor University	15,213
California	California Baptist University	8,334
Missouri	Missouri Baptist University	4,549
Texas	University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	3,072
Texas	Dallas Baptist University	2,971
Texas	Houston Christian University	2,823
Texas	Wayland Baptist University	2,275
Missouri	Southwest Baptist University	1,836
Arkansas	Ouachita Baptist University	1,730
Texas	East Texas Baptist University	1,579
Texas	Hardin-Simmons University	1,347
Oklahoma	Oklahoma Baptist University	1,330
Missouri	Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	1,009
Louisiana	Louisiana Christian University	832
Texas	Howard Payne University	773
Arkansas	Williams Baptist University	562
Texas	Jacksonville College	471
Texas	Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	309
Texas	Criswell College	122
California	Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention	No enrollment data posted
Texas	Stark College and Seminary	No enrollment data posted

[55] Niewold, "Incarnational Leadership."

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APPENDIX 2: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Question 1: At which member school of the International Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU) do you teach one or more undergraduate courses that introduce leadership theory to students? If you hold multiple appointments, please select the institution at which you teach most.

Answers (select one from a dropdown menu):

- Baptist Health Sciences University
- Baylor University
- Blue Mountain Christian University
- Bluefield University
- California Baptist University
- Campbell University
- Campbellsville University
- Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary and College
- Carson-Newman University
- Charleston Southern University
- Clear Creek Baptist Bible College
- Criswell College
- Dallas Baptist University
- East Texas Baptist University
- Fruitland Baptist Bible College
- Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention
- Hardin-Simmons University
- Houston Christian University
- Howard Payne University
- Jacksonville College
- Louisiana Christian University
- Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Mississippi College
- Missouri Baptist University
- New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
- North Greenville University
- Oklahoma Baptist University
- Ouachita Baptist University
- Queensland University of Haiti
- Samford University
- Shorter University
- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Southern Philippines Baptist Theological Seminary
- Southwest Baptist University
- Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

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Stark College and Seminary
The Baptist College of Florida
Union University
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
University of the Cumberlands
Wayland Baptist University
William Carey University
Williams Baptist University

Question 2: What type of faculty appointment do you hold at that institution?

Answers (select one):
Full-time Faculty
Adjunct Faculty

Question 3: Which of the leadership approaches, theories, and models listed below do you introduce to students in your undergraduate leadership courses? Note: List drawn from Peter G. Northouse, Leadership: Theory and Practice, 9th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2022).

Answers (select as many as appropriate):
Trait Approach
Skills Approach
Behavior Approach
Situational Approach
Path-Goal Approach
Leader-Member Exchange Theory
Transformational Leadership
Authentic Leadership
Servant Leadership
Adaptive Leadership

Question 4: Which of the following assessments best describes your perspective as a Christian scholar on the leadership approaches, theories, and models listed below?
Trait Approach
Skills Approach
Behavior Approach
Situational Approach
Path-Goal Approach
Leader-Member Exchange Theory
Transformational Leadership
Authentic Leadership
Servant Leadership
Adaptive Leadership

Answers (select one of the following four choices for each of the options below):

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Option 1: This leadership approach, theory, or model is theologically compatible with Christian practice
Option 2: When appropriately modified, this leadership approach, theory, or model can be made theologically compatible with Christian practice
Option 3: This leadership approach, theory, or model is not compatible with Christian practice, even in a modified form
Option 4: Undecided

Question 5: What are the course names and course numbers of the undergraduate courses you teach that introduce leadership theory?

Answers (blank text box provided)

About the Author

Jason B. Palmer, Th.M., joined the staff of Goodwater Church—a church plant in Whitefish, Montana—as Executive Pastor in July 2025 following six years as Dean of Spiritual Life and University Chaplain at University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. He is an ordained Southern Baptist minister, retired U.S. Army Chaplain, and Ph.D. student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary majoring in Christian Leadership. His research interests focus on the intersection of Christian theology and leadership theory.

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STAKEHOLDER SHOCK: MILGRAM, JESUS, AND STAKEHOLDER ETHICS

Alex G. Wright

This cross-disciplinary study examines the overlap between Jesus' Sermon on the Plain and Milgram's experiments. Whereas a great deal of social scientific research has been conducted since Milgram's experiments, these studies and findings were pivotal and are still widely discussed both in academia and popular culture. A summary of Milgram's experiments, including differing opinions as to the significance of the findings, is included. Jesus' Sermon on the Plain is examined utilizing exegetical research. The themes from this examination, which are applied to the treatment of stakeholders in contemporary organizations, are: (a) treat stakeholders ethically even if superiors give contrary orders, (b) manage the fear of non-compliance, (c) treat all stakeholders well, not just those who can reciprocate, (d) increase physical and mental proximity to stakeholders, and (e) avoid resignation to unethical stakeholder treatment. While social scientific and exegetical research are applied to organizational leadership, the current literature has done little to combine the insights from these disciplines in the context of organizational leadership; this article seeks to address that gap.

INTRODUCTION

Each day, business leaders are involved in activities that affect other people, and from a moral and ethical perspective, the treatment of these "other people" should be a priority. However, myriad examples exist of organizations doing things that are harmful to these stakeholders. As differentiated from shareholders, stakeholders include anyone and everyone affected by the actions of an organization (Certo & Certo, 2019, p. 515). This, of course, includes shareholders and investors but also employees, customers, suppliers, and members of the community in which the organization operates. Organizational leaders are faced with the challenge of whether to embrace shareholder theory by seeking solely to maximize shareholder returns, or represent donor interests in the case of non-profits, or stakeholder theory by seeking the good of the larger group

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of affected individuals (Smith, 2003, p. 85). Both social scientific and exegetical research can be applied to this challenge.

Christian leadership scholars believe that Jesus Christ is the paragon of perfect leadership (Blanchard & Hodges, 2005, p. 4). Jesus' leadership was enabled—at least in part—by his grasp and understanding of human nature. Jesus proved to be particularly insightful and instructive when it came to how humans should treat one another, perhaps most famously summed up in the Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Matt. 7:12, NIV). In contemporary times, one of the most eye-opening studies regarding human nature and how humans treat one another was the infamous electric shock experiment performed by Stanley Milgram, in which 65% of participants were willing to deliver a deadly electric shock to another person. Findings from Social Psychology have long been applied to business practices, but there is also ever-increasing research seeking to integrate scriptural teachings with business practices (Mabey et al., 2017, p. 757). However, the confluence of these two areas—Social Psychology and scriptural exegesis—represents a gap in the literature. If the results of studies such as Milgram's are valid, and if Jesus' teachings indeed represent truth, then these findings and teachings should coalesce to yield themes that can confidently be applied to organizational settings. The purpose of this article is to address this gap in the literature with specific regard to stakeholders. This cross-disciplinary study examines the overlap between a portion of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:32-36) and Milgram's experiments. The themes from this examination are then applied to the ethical treatment of stakeholders in contemporary organizations.

MILGRAM'S EXPERIMENTS

Since the time of Milgram's experiments, a great deal of social scientific research has been performed. Milgram's study is included in this analysis not because it is the be-all-and-end-all of social scientific research, but rather because it was a pivotal study that is still widely discussed in both academia and popular culture. Therefore, Milgram's study provides valid and viable social scientific findings for this current analysis.

The purpose of Milgram's experiments was to "reproduce the kind of destructive obedience that Milgram maintained was essential to sustaining the bureaucratically managed forms of mass murder that occurred in Europe during World War II" (Navarick, 2009, p. 155). A small pilot experiment performed with students at Yale University had convinced Milgram that "People would obey commands even when those commands were contrary to their deeply rooted standards of behavior" (Blass, 2004, p. 69).

Milgram actually performed several versions of the experiment because he wanted to test the effects of proximity on obedience to authority. The series of proximity experiments is described in greater detail below, but here the general procedure and results of the most well-known of these experiments are described (Milgram, 1963). The experiment would be supervised by an "experimenter" in a gray technician's coat who, in reality, was a high school biology teacher. Each subject was placed in the role of teacher and paired with a confederate who was labeled the learner. The teacher-subject watched as the learner was strapped into a chair and had electrodes affixed, which the

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teacher-subject was told were connected to the shock generator in the adjoining room in which the teacher's experience would take place.

This shock generator had 30 switches labeled with 15-volt intervals from 15 to 450 volts. In addition to the numbers, the switches were divided into successive groups of four that were designated as Slight Shock, Moderate Shock, Strong Shock, Very Strong Shock, Intense Shock, Extreme Intensity Shock, and Danger: Severe Shock. The final two switches were simply designated XXX. In the experiment, the shock generator would not, in fact, deliver any shocks to the learner, but the teacher needed to believe that real shocks were being delivered. To further convince the subject of the shock generator's authenticity, each subject was given a sample shock before their turn as the teacher. This sample shock of 45 volts was delivered by pressing the third switch on the shock generator. According to Milgram:

> Details of the instrument were carefully handled to ensure (sic) an appearance of authenticity. The panel was engraved by precision industrial engravers, and all components were of high quality. No subject in the experiment suspected that the instrument was merely a simulated shock generator. (p. 373)

The purpose of the experiment, as told to the subject, was to determine the effect that punishment had on learning. The learning task involved the memorization and recall of a series of paired words; after reciting a list of paired words, the teacher would read a single word and give the learner four choices for which word was originally paired with the stated word. The learner would respond by pushing one of four buttons to answer. Upon each incorrect answer, the teacher was to administer an electric shock to the learner, and with each successive incorrect answer, the administered shock should "move one level higher on the shock generator" (Milgram, 1963, p. 374).

In the original experiment, no reaction from the learner was seen or heard until the 300-volt shock was administered, at which point the learner would pound on the wall loudly enough to be heard by the teacher-subject. At this point, the teacher-subject would usually turn to the experimenter for guidance. In response to the teacher-subject's query, the experimenter would use a series of prods such as, "Please continue" (Milgram, 1963, p. 374). Upon receiving the 315-volt shock, the learner once again protested by banging on the wall. After this, however, the learner made no further protestations and ceased providing answers. The experimenter instructed the teacher-subject to wait ten seconds before considering a non-response to be an incorrect answer and administering the next level of shock. If the teacher-subject protested, the experimenter would respond with one of the prods.

Of the 40 subjects in this experiment, only five quit the experiment after the 300-volt shock when the learner first banged on the wall. Four more quit after the 315-volt shock. An additional five subjects quit at intervals between 330 and 375 volts. The remaining 26 teacher-subjects – 65% of the participants – continued through the administration of the 450-volt shock to the unresponsive learner.

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The results of this experiment have been used to demonstrate people's willingness to set aside their own moral and ethical convictions to comply with authority. However, Kaposi (2017) posited that Milgram's experiment does not demonstrate the lengths that people will go to obey legitimate authority, but rather the extreme difficulty that people have in resisting coercive force (p. 382). Kaposi argued that, because the subject had interacted with the "arbitrary and criminally destructive authority figure" who showed no regard for the suffering of the victim, it is quite possible that the subject believed that "any decision to disengage may result in some destructive consequences regarding their own well-being" (p. 398). In other words, based on the observations of the pain inflicted by the authority figure's experiment, the subjects may have feared that, if they refused to continue the experiment, they would be subjected to similar suffering. If this is true, it complicates the interpretation of the results; subjects were not simply obeying a perceived authority figure but rather were acting out of a sense of self-preservation.

Whereas the results of this experiment were startling, the willingness of individuals to either obey authority or comply with coercive force to the point of injuring another person is only one important finding of this experiment. Another significant finding, and often left out of discussions of the experiment in popular culture, is the role that proximity played in the subjects' willingness to inflict harm. In the pilot study, the subjects would often turn their heads after administering the shock so that they could not see the individual on the other side of the silvered glass. This, Milgram inferred, indicated that there might be a relationship between the remoteness of the learner and the actions of the subject (Blass, 2004, p. 93). To test this facet of behavior, Milgram developed the four-part proximity series in which the distance of the learner was described as (a) remote, (b) voice feedback, (c) proximity, and (d) touch proximity (Blass, 2004, p. 97). The experiment described above, for which the obedience rate was 65%, was the remote variation. In the voice feedback variation, the procedure was the same except that the teacher-subject "could hear through the partition the learner's somewhat muffled though clearly discernible verbal reactions to the shocks" (Russell & Gregory, 2005, p. 330). In this variation, the rate of obedience fell slightly to 62.5% (Russell & Gregory, p. 330). In the third variation, proximity, the procedure was again the same except that the learner was seated within a few feet of the teacher-subject; in this variation, the obedience level was only 40% (Blass, 2009, p. 41) Finally, in the touch proximity variation, the procedure was altered so that the learner refused to continue after the 150-volt shock; at that point, the teacher-subject was instructed to force the learner's hand onto a shock plate. In this variation, obedience fell to 30% (McLeod, 2007, p. 4).

Even in the touch-proximity variation of the experiment, however, the teacher-subjects administered an average of 18 shocks (260 volts) which was well beyond when "the learner first declared the shocks to be painful, began emitting loud groans, and started begging to be let out of the experiment, and just at the point of the victim's first horrible 'agonized scream'" (Gilbert, 1981, p. 690). This lends credence to Kaposi's contention that the subjects were responding to coercive force rather than perceived legitimate authority. The results show that the teacher-subjects were affected by the closer proximity yet continued to administer painful shocks. Rather than concluding that

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subjects felt obligated to continue harming individuals whom they could see and touch simply because a perceived authority figure told them to, it is more rational to conclude that the teacher-subjects worried that to cease compliance would endanger their own well-being. Yet, when proximity was increased, the subjects were much more likely to eventually overcome fear for their welfare and choose to stop inflicting harm on the victim. This interpretation of the results does more to illuminate the power of proximity to decrease individuals' willingness to cause harm to another person, even in response to coercion, and the power of abstraction to make it easier to rationalize submission to coercion.

The question may be asked, what relevance does Milgram's experiment have for contemporary businesses? Though Milgram's work was focused primarily on the concept of obedience to authority, it also demonstrates the effects of proximity and abstraction. Sinek (2007) argued that:

> Milgram's experiment is being carried out every day in offices across the country . . . When we divorce ourselves from humanity through numerical abstraction, we are, like Milgram's volunteers, capable of inhuman behavior. Just like the conditions Milgram set in his experiment, the physical separation between us and those on the receiving end of our decisions can have a dramatic impact on lives. (pp. 126-127)

In other words, when members of an organization are physically and mentally distanced from stakeholders to the point that some stakeholders are mere abstractions, organization members are much less likely to consider stakeholder well-being. Those who are not abstractions, such as top investors, large clients, C-level supervisors, and board members, certainly receive consideration. Those who have become more abstract, on the other hand, such as low-level employees and their families and members of the community where the organization does business, are easier to ignore and thus easier to harm. This idea of abstraction—only caring for those who are close to you or who can most benefit you—is not unique to Milgram's experiment, however. A warning against such abstraction can also be found in the teachings of Jesus in his Sermon on the Plain.

JESUS' TEACHING IN LUKE 6:32-36

Before delving into the exegetical study of Luke 6:32-36, it is necessary first to offer some background on the Gospel of Luke as a whole. Luke was written to a primarily Gentile audience to "give an orderly account" of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ (1:3, ESV). Luke was hired by Theophilus to do this to "confirm the commitment made by Theophilus and other readers like him as they joined the Christian movement" (DeSilva, 2004, p. 309). Green (1997) noted that this gospel is primarily concerned with the concept of salvation, but also stated that:

> Salvation is neither ethereal nor merely future, but embraces life in the present, restoring the integrity of human life, revitalizing human communities, setting the cosmos in order, and commissioning the community of God's people to put God's

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> grace into practice among themselves and toward ever-widening circles of others . . . Salvation embraces the totality of embodied life, including its social, economic, and political concerns. (pp. 24-25)

Thus, the Gospel of Luke is concerned not only with theological orthodoxy—right belief—but also with orthopraxy—right action. Throughout the narrative, the reader is constantly invited to ask, “How should a follower of Christ act?” This is especially true in the Sermon on the Plain, which is “the first teaching Jesus specifically directs to his disciples” (Just, 1996, p. 283). Therefore, the section of the Sermon on the Plain chosen for this study represents a viable source of insight regarding how followers of Jesus should treat others, insights that can then be applied to the contemporary organizational treatment of stakeholders.

This subsection of the Sermon on the Plain begins with three rhetorical questions designed to juxtapose followers of Christ and non-followers. Jesus said:

> If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. (Luke 6:32-34, NRSV)

The use of the word “sinners” may appear to be a harsh descriptor for those who reciprocate love and goodness and loan to those who repay. In this context, “sinners” are those whose actions show them to be outsiders to the Christ-following community (Green, 1997). Edwards (2015) stated that using “sinners” here is a case of using the rhetorical device of hyperbole to describe “the way ordinary people behave. Good as their behaviors may be, they are nevertheless not reflective of Jesus’ way in the world, and thus not Christian” (pp. 200-201). Though these “sinners,” or non-disciples, do not seek to follow Jesus, even they follow the pattern of doing good to those who do good to them. For his followers, however, Jesus demands generosity that goes beyond mere reciprocity and becomes gift-giving (Johnson, 1991). Indeed, Pope Francis (2021) noted that those who “love can transcend and overflow” the basic demands of reciprocity and live according to the requirements of the gospel by giving “freely and fully” (p. 75). Wolter (2016) referred to this type of behavior as a “boundary marker,” the type of behavior that separates followers of Christ from non-followers who tend to act out of self-interest (p. 282). Disciples, then, are expected to go beyond the pattern of reciprocity and giving to receive and, instead, treat all people with love and kindness (Carroll, 2012, p. 153).

Why does Jesus demand that his disciples act in this manner? Because this type of unconditional love and kindness reflects the character of God. Indeed, Gonzalez (2010) stated, "Though we often tend to think that the basis for the Christian ethics of love is the Golden Rule, in the final analysis the basis for Christian ethics is the very nature and action of God” (p. 94). The principles for how followers of Christ should treat others are not simply derived from how those followers would like others to treat them but rather from how God—who is kind even to those who are ungrateful and wicked

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(Luke 6:35)—would treat others. The fact that God does not embrace the principle of reciprocity Godself but rather is friendly and merciful to those who do not warrant such treatment, is why followers of Christ behave this way (Wolter, 2016, p. 283). Practicing this way of life is a sign of being “children of the Most High” (Luke 6:35), visible demonstrations that one is a child of God. And Jesus said that living one’s life as a child of God in this manner will be rewarded (Luke 6:36). This reward from God is not to be viewed in the same human terms of reciprocity against which Jesus was teaching, as if Jesus was simply saying to abandon doing good for those people from whom one hopes to receive and instead do good in hopes of receiving from God. No, this is a reward given for obedience to those who are not expecting a reward.

However, this concept of a reward from God goes far beyond questions of individual actions and rewards and expressly challenges one of the foundational principles of the Roman Empire: patronage. The dominant culture in Jesus’ time was dictated by the Pax Romana, the notion that the Emperor spread peace and well-being to all of the residents of the Empire (deSilva, 2004, p. 335). Because of this supposed beneficence of the emperor, all the residents of the empire were obligated to serve the interests of the emperor lest they be cut off from his patronage. Yet, as Green (1997) noted, “If God, and not the emperor, is identified as the Great Benefactor, the Patron, and if people are to act without regard to cycles of obligation, then the politics of the Empire is sabotaged” (p. 274). While this meaning is less clear to contemporary Western readers, the original hearers of Jesus’ message would have understood these words to be a direct challenge to the dominant culture of the Roman Empire (Dunn, 2013, p. 291). This theme of challenging the Empire is one that was carried on by the Early Church as demonstrated by their proclamation that, “Jesus is Lord,” which, by extension, meant that the emperor was not (Diehl, 2012, p. 39).

Wright (2014) emphasized the countercultural nature of Jesus’ commands in this pericope by noting that what stands out is “their scarcity. How many people do you know who really live like this? How many communities do you know where these guidelines are rules of life?” (p. 75). The Book of Homilies (Certain Sermons or Homilies, 1852) went so far as to say that the actions prescribed by Jesus are “mere absurdities” that are “contrary to all reason” (p. 347). Carroll (2012) noted that choosing to practice generosity rather than simple reciprocity is “subversive and countercultural” (p. 153). Extending love, goodness, or material resources to those who can reciprocate was nothing special because this was the cultural norm, but this cultural standard was not enough according to Jesus (Bock, 1994).

According to Robbins (1996), in Scripture, a counterculture “arises from a dominant culture and/or subculture and rejects one or more explicit and central values of the culture . . . The theory of reform is to provide an alternative, and to hope that the dominant society will ‘see the light’” (p. 169). Indeed, Kirk (2003) argued that this portion of the pericope is focused on the “transformation of norms that govern social, economic, and religious patterns of life” (p. 673). In other words, Jesus was trying to change the status quo; he was trying to change the way that every major institution was functioning in that culture. If that was the case in the first century CE, why should contemporary followers of Christ expect anything different in the twenty-first century CE?

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In much the same way as the commands Jesus gave in this passage, the idea that businesses should take all stakeholders into account—rather than just those with money, power, and influence—could be characterized as countercultural and seen by many as absurd and contrary to reason. Economist Milton Friedman (1970) famously railed against the concept of corporate social responsibility—the notion that for-profit organizations owe anything to anyone other than owners and shareholders—and emphasized that the only responsibility of a business is "to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits." Though there are increasing calls for businesses to engage in corporate social responsibility, there are still many who side with Friedman and argue that preserving the well-being of all stakeholders would be detrimental to those to whom maximum profits are owed.

Yet, when followers of Christ extend considerate treatment only to those to whom it is owed, they are not heeding the tenets set forth by Christ; they are simply doing what non-followers accept as the norm. Indeed, Jesus was "promulgating the cessation of obligation, insisting that behaviors are not predetermined by what one owes to whom, nor by what one expects to receive from another" (Green, 1997, p. 273). The danger of ignoring stakeholders other than those whom one owes or from whom one hopes to receive increases as individuals within organizations become further removed from those stakeholders, just as the lack of proximity made Milgram's subjects more likely to willingly inflict harm on another person. This combination of Scripture and Social Psychology provides principles that yield both theoretical and practical principles regarding the ethical treatment of stakeholders.

PRINCIPLES FOR TREATMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

The analysis of the synthesis of the preceding review of Milgram's experiments and Jesus' teaching in Luke 6:32-36 has yielded five themes that should be applied by contemporary organization members to organizational stakeholders. These themes are to (a) treat stakeholders ethically even if superiors give orders to the contrary, (b) manage the fear of non-compliance with orders that would harm stakeholders, (c) treat all stakeholders well, not just those who can reciprocate or to whom it is thought to be owed, (d) seek to increase physical and mental proximity to stakeholders to know who is affected and how they are affected by organizational actions, and (e) avoid resignation to ubiquitous unethical treatment of stakeholders. Each of these themes is discussed in greater detail below.

Treat Stakeholders Ethically Even if Superiors Give Orders to the Contrary

In Milgram's experiment, the supposed researcher told the teacher-subject to continue the experiment when the teacher-subject raised concerns about what they were doing. Though different explanations have been offered as to why, the fact remains that the teacher-subject continued the process that they believed was inflicting pain on another person at the instruction of a perceived authority figure. In the first-century Mediterranean, the treatment of others was dictated by the social mores of the Pax Romana, which, of course, was established and maintained by the ultimate political authority: the Roman emperor. Thus, people were expected to treat others based on

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their social status; to treat others better or worse than their status demanded would be a violation of the authority through which the prevailing social system was established. In contemporary organizations, it is not an aberration for subordinates to be given instructions by their superiors that, if followed, would lead to unethical treatment of stakeholders. Indeed, Uhl-bien and Carsten (2007) noted that “Leaders have been the prime culprits in many major ethical scandals” and that this “unethical behavior leaves few untouched” (p. 187). Complying with unethical commands and attempting to escape culpability by claiming to simply be following orders puts organizational subordinates in the same moral position as those who only loved those who could reciprocate or the teacher-subjects in Milgram's experiments. The term for this is crimes of obedience, which is defined as when “followers are influenced by a leader to engage in behavior they would otherwise consider unethical” (Hinrichs, 2007, p. 69).

These crimes of obedience can be especially difficult to resist when the actions ordered are framed as being what is best for the organization. This rationalization—that it is necessary to act in ways that could harm stakeholders for the good of the organization—requires examination, because it is a commonly employed excuse to convince organization members to engage in these types of behaviors. Umphress and Bingham (2011) labeled such behavior as unethical pro-organizational behavior, which they defined as “actions that are intended to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members (e.g., leaders) and violate core societal values, mores, laws, or standards of proper conduct” (p. 622). Perhaps the most basic human right is the right not to be harmed by others (Rawls, 1971). This is why there is an adverse reaction when harm is unduly inflicted upon people, such as in Milgram's experiments. If individuals have a right—such as the right to not be harmed—it does not matter how much good others may gain by violating that right; a right creates a responsibility to not violate that right, and any choice or action that eschews this responsibility is unethical (Wolterstorff, 2013, p. 51). Of course, there are exceptions, such as it may be ethical to inflict harm on someone who is harming others, but these are the exceptions rather than the rule. Therefore, no matter how much an organization may benefit from the unethical treatment of stakeholders, the rights of stakeholders to not be harmed supersede the additional benefit to the organization. This will almost certainly raise questions about permissible exceptions as well. What about terminations and layoffs, beating out the competition so they are forced out of business, or relocating out of a particular community? Would these actions not harm stakeholders, but sometimes be necessary for the well-being of the organization? Once again, it is beyond the scope of this current study to answer every possible scenario, and it would be foolish to claim that a single tenant could adequately respond to each imaginable complicated situation. For those who are followers of Christ, however, and for any who are seeking to be ethical members of an organization, the rule—which may only be overruled in rare and extreme circumstances—is to ensure the ethical treatment of all stakeholders even if those in authority instruct otherwise.

Organizational members must treat stakeholders ethically, regardless of whether those in authority give orders to the contrary. This commitment to stakeholder well-being, even when superiors instruct subordinates to ignore the well-being of certain stakeholders, is a necessary standard in contemporary organizations. This is consistent

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with the call for widespread upward ethical leadership in which subordinates "maintain ethical standards in the face of questionable moral conduct by higher ups" (Uhl-bien & Carsten, 2007, P. 194).

Overcome Fear of Non-Compliance

The second principle expands upon the first; if one chooses to disobey instructions that would harm stakeholders then one will naturally be opening oneself to the consequences of non-compliance. The prospect of such consequences will almost certainly cause a fearful reaction, but to comply with the first principle, this fear must be overcome. As was noted in the discussion of Milgram's experiment, Kaposi (2017) argued that coercive force, and the fear that they would be caused to suffer, played a large role in the teacher-subjects' willingness to inflict harm. While this possibility is compelling and is almost certainly true to an extent, it does not excuse the actions of the teacher–subjects. Likewise, in Jesus' teachings, the commands to abandon the status quo of reciprocity in favor of a new radical countercultural approach would have caused trepidation, as evidenced by the number of people Scripture says chose not to follow Jesus. By going against the social mores, one would not only be deprived of the chance to be rewarded by benefactors, but it would also invite scrutiny from the authorities. Jesus was aware of these possibilities and even mentioned them to his followers (Matt. 10:16-23). However, he also made clear that these were not acceptable reasons not to follow the teachings. Therefore, while one might fear retribution for disobeying instructions that would harm stakeholders, ethical organization members must overcome that fear.

In a study of those who had demonstrated courage in such circumstances, Glazer et al. (2009) noted that, "Without their willingness to endure on behalf of their beliefs, without their determination to help their communities, serious problems would lie buried beneath the surface with the potential to do great damage to unknowing and unprotected victims" (p. 442). Similarly, Adams et al. (2020) referred to these individuals as "heroes" stating that, "Heroes do not often point out that their work was done on the basis of equitable returns or entitlements. Heroes overcome fear and vulnerability."

This is not, of course, to say that such selfless and heroic actions are easy. One suggestion for overcoming fear is to seek out like-minded people in the organization to develop a sense of workplace solidarity and resist unethical commands (Murphy, 2016, p. 8). If Milgram's teacher-subjects were in a group of people all expressing ethical reservations about the experiment, how might the results have been different? In addition to solidarity, or, perhaps, if solidarity cannot be found, Kish-Gephart et al. (2009) argued that embracing empathetic anger (anger at the mistreatment of others) and voice efficacy (the belief that one can speak out and have a positive effect) can help to overcome the fear response (pp. 180, 182). Though the specifics will vary by person and organization, the fear of reprisal must be overcome to ensure that all organizational stakeholders are treated ethically.

Treat All Stakeholders Well, Not Just Those to Whom It is Traditionally Owed

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The first two principles focused on ethical stakeholder treatment in the face of authoritative commands or organizational culture that says to do otherwise. These next three principles demonstrate the fact that, for the preceding principles to be necessary, the attitude and actions of the individual toward organization members must be ethically informed. For members of organizations, it will be very tempting, and may perhaps be one's default modus operandi, to only be concerned about treating well those to whom it is owed or those who can return the favor. This is precisely the type of reciprocity behavior against which Jesus warned his followers; only treating others well when it will benefit the individual is harmful to those who have no means by which to bestow such benefits. In the Milgram experiment, the teacher–subject inflicted harm on the learner in compliance—whether due to fear or obedience to authority—with the commands of the researcher. In those experiments, the idea of reciprocity drove the teacher–subject to harm the learner because the learner had no means by which to benefit the teacher–subject.

In contemporary for-profit organizations, those who could be sources of reciprocity would be superiors, owners or shareholders, and large customers. There is no doubt that organization members do indeed have obligations to these entities that differ from other stakeholders. For example, whereas a member of the community in which an organization operates is a stakeholder, that individual is not owed the obedience of a superior, the benefit maximization of an owner, or the service of a paying customer. However, that individual is owed not to be harmed by the actions of the organization.

Where this all gets difficult, however, is the fact that taking responsibility for the ethical treatment of a wider group of stakeholders can be detrimental to shareholder value (Hillman & Keim, 2001, p. 125). This juxtaposition is certainly not new; the debate between shareholder theory—that leaders' primary duty is to maximize shareholder returns—and stakeholder theory—that leaders must "balance the shareholders' financial interest against the interests of other stakeholders . . . even if it reduces shareholder returns"—has been going on for decades (Smith, 2003, p. 85). Interestingly, firms in Europe and Japan have traditionally held to the stakeholder theory, and it was not until relatively recently, with increased investments from the United States, that major European and Japanese companies have begun to feel the pressure to maximize shareholder value (Clarke, 1998, p. 190). This demonstrates that stakeholder-focused organizations are not as far-fetched or aberrant as Friedman's disciples might suggest. In fact, until the 1960s, the stakeholder-oriented philosophy of leadership was even the norm in the United States (Magill, et al., 2015, pp. 1707-1708).

Charreaux and Desbrieres (2001) noted that shareholder value is an incomplete measure of value creation because "the firm's decisions lead to consequences for all stakeholders" (p. 107). Because of this, these two researchers proposed a measurement of value creation that included all stakeholders; benefits derived by stakeholders add to the value created by the organization, and costs to the stakeholders decrease the value created by the firm (pp. 109-110). Though this pluralistic view of value creation is more holistic in nature, the researchers noted that the difficulty of quantifying the costs and benefits to all stakeholders makes this concept more

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beneficially viewed from a qualitative perspective (p. 125). It is this inability to quantify the potential harm and benefits to stakeholders, as well as the lack of an unambiguous definition of what such a model would consist of, that has prevented the stakeholder model from asserting its full potential influence (Tse, 2011, p. 51). However, once again, this is not an excuse for individual members of organizations to eschew their ethical responsibilities.

Increase Proximity to Stakeholders to Know How They Are Affected

Whereas an organization-wide focus on the ethical treatment of stakeholders is preferable, it is not a necessary prerequisite for each member of the organization to have an ethical stakeholder focus. In other words, a well-defined statement of stakeholder treatment need not exist in order for individuals to act ethically with respect to stakeholders. It is the responsibility of each member of the organization to know who is being affected by their actions and those of the organization, and how people are affected by those actions. This awareness is necessary to protect against the ignorance of harmful consequences, but it also encourages more ethical treatment of the stakeholder by the organization's member.

In Milgram’s experiments, the teacher-subject was more likely to disobey commands to harm the learner as the proximity between the teacher-subject and the learner increased. As the teacher-subjects were more readily able to see whom they were harming and the type of harm they were causing, they were more likely to act ethically. In the pericope examined for this study, Jesus commanded his followers to, “Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return” (Luke 6:35, NRSV). While it is not implicitly stated in the passage, it is clear that, in order to love and do good to one’s enemies, one must know who those individuals are and how they are being affected by one’s actions. Therefore, both Milgram’s experiments and Jesus’ instructions are indicators of the importance of proximity between organizational members and stakeholders.

According to Mencl and May (2009), there are three types of proximity: social proximity, psychological proximity, and physical proximity (p. 206). Social proximity refers to identification with another person because of common group membership based on one or more shared personal characteristics. Psychological proximity exists when individuals have a personal and/or affective relationship. Finally, physical proximity is the most basic type of proximity and refers to the spatial closeness of individuals.

Some stakeholders naturally have higher proximity to organizational members than others (Schons & Steinmeier, 2015, p. 358); it is the responsibility of organizational members to increase proximity between themselves and stakeholders who are not naturally proximate. Proximity between organization members and stakeholders has been shown to “have a significant impact on whether the [stakeholders] and their claims are prioritized as powerful, urgent and/or morally legitimate” (Lähdesmäki et al., 2019, p. 381). Those stakeholders who do not have natural proximity to the organization are at a

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disadvantage unless there are intentional steps taken by members of the organization to increase proximity.

Mencl and May (2009) argued that, when decision-makers are aware of the proximity between themselves and those affected by their decisions, the decision-makers are more likely to make ethical decisions and stated that, "Organizations may wish to encourage their managers to get to know their . . . stakeholders well, while respecting their rights of privacy, to encourage ethical responses” (p. 220). The adage, “Out of sight, out of mind,” seems to be true for ethical considerations of stakeholders; when there is less proximity between the stakeholder and member of the organization, the member of the organization will give less thought to how his/her actions and those of the organization affect the “out of sight” stakeholder. Therefore, members of organizations must seek ways to increase proximity between themselves and stakeholders.

Avoid Resignation to Widespread Unethical Treatment

The final principle gleaned from the examination of Milgram’s experiments and Jesus’ teachings in Luke 6:32-36 is that organization members must avoid the defeatist thinking of, “Even if I don’t treat these stakeholders unethically, someone else will.” Though this study has focused on the positive aberrations, those who chose to defy fear and authority in Milgram's experiments and those who would do the same to obey Jesus' teaching, the majority of people in Milgram’s experiment did not choose these actions. Scripture seems to indicate that, after Jesus left earth, there were only about 120 disciples committed to him (Acts 1:15). Though this number is somewhat debated by scholars, it is clear that those truly seeking to follow the way of Christ were the extreme minority. In Milgram's experiments, even though increased proximity decreased the number of teacher-subjects who were willing to deliver the final shock, recall that the teacher-subjects in the touch-proximity variation still delivered an average of 18 shocks (260 volts) after the learner had begun to beg to be let out of the experiment at 10 shocks or 150 volts. In the context of this current study, these realities of human nature may lead organization members to ask why they should behave ethically toward stakeholders when many people will still choose to do the opposite. This is somewhat akin to the principle above that states that organizational members must overcome the fear of disobeying unethical orders, but in this principle, it is resignation and hopelessness that must be overcome.

This is not to minimize the pressure of how to respond to unethical commands, nor is it to say that those who follow through on such commands are irredeemably evil. As discussed above, many within the organization will choose to take unethical actions if they believe the outcomes will be in the organization's best interest, a phenomenon called unethical pro-organization behavior. Organization members are more likely to engage in such behaviors when it is encouraged by the organization, either explicitly or implicitly. When unethical behavior is the organizational norm, adherence to this behavior can be seen as destructive conformity, which refers to behavior that follows the norms of the organization but goes against the larger body of ethical norms, or hypernorms (Warren, 2003, p. 628). When an organizational member chooses to

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adhere to hypernorms in defiance of organizational norms, this individual is engaging in constructive deviance (Warren, p. 628).

The norms and expectations of the workplace are powerful and can greatly influence an individual's perceived ability to behave ethically, the "extent to which managers and employees believe that they have sufficient time, budgets, equipment, information, and authority at their disposal to fulfill their ethical responsibilities" (Kaptein, 2011, p. 849). If organization members cannot act ethically within all these constraints, then they may feel that they do not have the ability to behave ethically. In fact, when confronted with their unethical behavior, many organization members will attempt to explain that they acted unethically because they were expected to in order to benefit the organization (Liu & Qiu, 2015, p. 151). In such an organizational culture, an organization member may rightly assume that, even if they choose to act ethically toward all stakeholders, someone else in the organization will treat vulnerable stakeholders unethically. Once again, however, this does not excuse the responsibilities that individual members of organizations have to treat stakeholders ethically and attempt to influence the organization as a whole to do the same. It is for this reason that organization members cannot simply resign themselves to the inevitable unethical treatment of stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

This study makes a unique contribution by combining an analysis of a famous social scientific study with exegetical research of a portion of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain and applying the insights to stakeholder treatment in contemporary organizational settings. In many ways, these principles challenge organizations' conventional wisdom and the status quo of stakeholder treatment. For those seeking to follow Christ as the epitome of perfect leadership, as Pope Francis (2021) noted, eschewing the standards of reciprocity and treating all people well are requirements of faithfulness to the gospel (p. 75). However, for those who do not consider themselves followers of Christ, these principles of ethical treatment of all stakeholders still hold on the basis of human morality. This study has demonstrated the theoretical foundation of these principles; future research should begin to examine the application of these principles in practical settings.

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