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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY FOR SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN THE WEST CENTRAL  
KOREAN CONFERENCE

by

Jae Sun Kim

Advisers: Jeanette Bryson

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: DEVELOPING A DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY FOR SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN THE WEST CENTRAL KOREAN CONFERENCE

Name of Researcher: Jae Sun Kim

Name and degree of faculty advisers: Jeanette Bryson, PhD; Bruce L. Bauer, DMiss

Date completed: October 2012

Purpose

The purpose of this Ministry Focus Project document was to develop a theoretical and practical framework for implementing a discipleship ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the West Central Korean Conference in South Korea and ultimately to cultivate a consciousness of discipleship among Adventists. The worldwide Seventh-day Adventist denomination is growing, but it seems that Adventist churches are failing in the area of discipleship. Making disciples needs to be an important part of our Adventist culture. A discipleship curriculum would help the pastors and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Korea to become mature, committed, reproducing witnesses for Christ.

## Method

This study uses demographic data and statistics regarding South Korea. A theoretical framework for this study was established based on the literature review. A systematic discipleship curriculum is offered as the basis for growing churches and deepening the religious experience and commitment through discipleship ministry.

## Results

A discipleship ministry needs to have a strong foundation in biblical concepts. Church members grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples through spiritual formation and discipleship. The church should offer effective disciple-making models to its members. Attending worship services is not enough to grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples. The congregational profile of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Korea analyzed the current situation, membership trends, and ministerial context. The study revealed some very important challenges that the members of the Korean Church need to seriously consider. Church members leave the church at almost the same rate as people who come into the church. A discipleship ministry is one of the best ways to make a healthy church.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate the need for a discipleship ministry that focuses on cultivating a level of consciousness of the importance of incorporating discipleship among Adventists. Currently, outreach to save souls is largely dependent on the individual activities of pastors and public evangelism. It is time to focus on a discipleship ministry at the local church level that nurtures new and current members.

Andrews University  
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

DEVELOPING A DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY FOR SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCHES IN THE WEST CENTRAL  
KOREAN COFERENCE

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Jae Sun Kim  
October 2012

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### Dedicated

To my loving and patient wife, Yonghee, who will be happy to see this project completed. To my daughter, Jeein, who wanted to be the first to read this project.

To both of my parents, who will be glad to have their son and daughter back.

To God, who always answers prayer.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCC	Campus Crusade for Christ
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ECKC	East Central Korean Conference
EFCA	Evangelical Free Church of America
G12	Groups of Twelve
KOSTAT	Statistics Korea
KUC	Korean Union Conference
LXX	Septuagint
MWKC	Midwest Korean Conference
SEKC	Southeast Korean Conference
SRCC	Sa-Rang Community Church
T-Net	Training Network
WCKC	West Central Korean Conference

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Personal History**

The worldwide Seventh-day Adventist denomination is growing rapidly in terms of numbers. It seems, however, that the emphasis is on adding members to the congregation by evangelism while the training of members for discipleship is neglected. According to the *Annual Report* of the Korean Union Conference 2011, it is reported that only 58,000 baptized members attend church each Sabbath ((Department of Personal Ministry Department of Koren Union Conference, 2011). This represents 27% of the membership. The lack of attendance supports my suggestion that discipling is not considered as important as it should be in the Seventh-day Adventist Church culture in South Korea.

Once someone has joined a particular congregation, they are encouraged to attend weekly worship services and join a Sabbath School class. However, that is not enough. Church leaders need to assist a new Christian in spiritual growth and development. As I look back on my experience in college and in the seminary, I realize that almost no emphasis was placed on a discipleship ministry. Pastors need to have strong theological training, but they also need an equally strong training for discipleship ministry.

When I could not find a place and a person to teach me about discipleship ministry in the Adventist circles in Korea, I found a discipleship training seminar being

offered by the Baptist Church. I attended the Baptist Church seminar, and it opened my eyes to the importance and possibilities inherent in a discipleship ministry. Even today, it is difficult to find an article on discipleship in Adventist journals or books. Most of the articles on discipleship that I have been able to find are written by non-Seventh-day Adventists.

As I reviewed my 10 years of ministry, I found that I have focused my ministry on three criteria: the number of baptisms, the number of weekly attendees, and the amount of tithe. I was trying to complete these church goals every year, and while these three criteria are good and are needed, just focusing on numbers and monetary values contributes to a loss of focus on a discipleship ministry.

In my personal ministerial experience in the West Central Korean Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, I have seen that the majority of church members are not very active in the discipleship ministry of the church. I became convinced of the potential and effectiveness of the “ministering church member” through my three years of experience in conducting training sessions for the members in my local church. I also found support for discipling through the review of literature, research reports, and testimonies. It seems that there is a pressing need to involve more church members in a discipleship ministry.

Currently, the issue of discipleship training is emerging as an important matter of concern for the Adventist churches in South Korea. In recent years, before coming to Andrews University, I noticed the surging growth of other denominations. When I attended the discipleship training seminar conducted by the Baptist Church, I was impressed by the systematic approach to discipling. Their church growth has largely been the result of discipleship training and the equipping of members for church growth. In my

observation, many Seventh-day Adventist churches in Korea lack an understanding of discipleship. In addition, the Adventist Church as a whole does not have any systematic training programs for its church members.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is preparing and baptizing people because of its wonderful evangelistic programs, such as those featuring Mark Finley, Dwight K. Nelson, and Douglas Bachelor. The Church should continue its strong emphasis in evangelism, but it needs to equally emphasize a strong discipleship program. It is a crucial part of Christ's Great Commission. A discipleship curriculum will help produce disciple-makers who will become effective witnesses for Christ. The training will help develop ministry skills for the discipling and equipping of members for ministry. Disciples are lifelong learners and followers of God's guidance.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to cultivate a consciousness of discipleship-focused ministry and develop a systematic discipleship curriculum that will benefit the pastors and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Korea to become mature, committed, reproducing witnesses for Christ.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Christianity without discipleship is Christianity without Christ. In other words, without discipleship, Christianity cannot exist; the act of accepting and following Jesus activates the Christian faith and creates a desire to share His love with others. On the average, every day in 2009, 2,889 believers accepted the gospel and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the world. The total membership, as of December 31,

2009, was 16,307,880, meaning that within the total world population there was one baptized Seventh-day Adventist for every 418 people in the world.

According to Kim (2011), a KUC reporter, by the end of the second quarter in 2011, it was reported that the Korean Adventist Church had a membership of 214,000. This means that the membership increased by 54,000 within a three-year period of time. However, as mentioned earlier, it is reported that only 58,000, or 27% of baptized members attend worship on Sabbath. Again, discipleship training could make a difference.

Even if the church leaders are familiar with the effectiveness of discipleship training, they might benefit from a guide that includes ideas on how to start and manage a discipleship ministry. Therefore, the aim of this project document is to provide a guide whereby churches may explore possibilities for a successful and sustainable implementation of discipleship training ministry in South Korea.

### **Justification for the Project**

Preliminary observations of South Korean Seventh-day Adventist churches and a study of non-Adventist South Korean churches experiencing growth show that discipleship training is one of the most effective ways to facilitate healthy church growth and maintain a vibrant spirituality among church members. A widespread interest in a discipleship training ministry has begun to permeate most of the Adventist churches in South Korea during the last decade. Despite this widespread interest in a discipleship training ministry, the Adventist churches in South Korea seem to lack an understanding of such a ministry and there is very little knowledge of any systematic training program, hence the study and program proposals.

Through my own personal experience, I became convinced that the ministry of discipleship training is an effective method of Christian ministry that stands on firm scriptural foundations and is capable of bringing church renewal and revitalization to the Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church. Numerically, laypersons comprise more than 98% of the church, but most of them are largely inactive. Discipleship training can best be implemented by developing and following a model of discipleship training which engenders more meaningful participation of the laity including both new and old members in the mission of the church because the model can act as a guide.

### **Expectations for the Project**

This project is expected to contribute to a positive transformation of the church growth vision of the church. A discipleship ministry will foster spiritual maturity and a sense of mission in the lives of church members. A discipleship curriculum will produce disciple makers who will become effective witnesses for Christ. A discipleship curriculum will develop the ministry skills of the disciple for the purpose of equipping other members for ministry.

This project will also help to broaden an understanding of a theological basis for discipleship ministry. Above all, the implementation of the suggestions in the document will potentially lead congregations to view a discipleship ministry as part of the preparation for Second Coming of Jesus Christ in a more biblical manner.

### **Delimitations**

This project will briefly review Kolb's Experiential Learning theory and four other contemporary models. The application of this project was delimited to Adventist

church leaders and members who live in South Korea.

### **Definition of Terms**

This project uses several frequently cited terms that are operationally defined as follows:

*Disciple:* A person who is committed to the process of growing by adjusting his or her lifestyle in order to obey and follow Jesus. Disciples love others as Jesus loves them; they abide in Him to build and train others into mature, reproducing disciples.

*Discipleship:* Introducing people to the Savior and contributing toward the development of mature Christians, building them to Christian maturity, and training them to reproduce and be effective witnesses for Christ.

*Spiritual formation:* For the Christian, this basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ.

*Worldview:* The culturally-dependent, implicit, fundamental organization of the mind. This implicit organization is composed of presuppositions or assumptions that predispose one to feel, think, and act in predictable patterns.

### **Description of Project Process**

Chapter 1 of the project document begins with the purpose of the project, statement of the problem, its justification, and expectations. Delimitations are presented in the section, along with a glossary of terms used in this project.

Chapter 2 presents the most important and frequently asked questions with regard to the necessity of a discipleship ministry and the biblical concept of discipleship is

explored. The theological basis of a discipleship ministry, based on the biblical mandate and goal of discipleship in the Bible, is provided.

Chapter 3 provides a literature review on the topic of the project and explores the relationship between how human beings learn and how human beings grow spiritually into the likeness of Christ as disciples. This chapter also explores how church members grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples through spiritual formation. Then, the chapter addresses effective disciple models in the local church.

Chapter 4 includes a congregational profile of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Korea. The chapter analyzes the current situation, membership trends, and ministerial context. It reveals some very important challenges that the members of the Korean Adventist Church need to seriously consider and how best developing a discipleship ministry would greatly help to address these challenges.

Chapter 5 presents a detailed summary of the discipleship curriculum that will be applied and developed for the Adventist churches in South Korea.

Chapter 6 provides a summary of the theological foundation, literature review, and profile of the South Korean context, and the discipleship curriculum, along with conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER II

### A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR A THEOLOGY OF DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY

#### **Introduction**

Currently, church growth is the focus of many churches, but, too often, the focus is on quantitative rather than qualitative church growth. Interpreting the health of a church by the size of its membership may be one way to measure, but it is not the best indication of a successful ministry.

Cole (2010) states, “Church is not the barometer of how Christianity is doing. Ultimately, transformation is the product of the Gospel. It is not enough to fill our churches; we must transform our world. Society and culture should change if the church has been truly effective” (p. 61). The measure of the church’s influence is found in society—on the streets, not in the pews.

The question that immediately arises is whether these concepts of discipleship and disciple-making are biblical. This chapter addresses the biblical and theological foundation for the project dissertation. The biblical and theological foundation for this project will be established by developing a theology of discipleship. This chapter begins by presenting a proper understanding of biblical discipleship and then, based on the findings, a discipleship strategy will be suggested that is both biblical and culturally relevant.



Bonhoeffer (1966) strongly states that “Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ” (pp.63-64). Without discipleship, Christianity does not exist, because following Jesus activates the Christian faith. Unfortunately, non-discipleship “Christianity” dominates much of the thinking of the contemporary church (Hull, 2006, pp. 15-16). When we lose discipleship, we also lose vibrant Christianity. Bill Hull correctly writes, “The average church leadership team is a maintenance committee”(Hull, 1988, p. 35). The church is in a general state of crisis; a lack of inner spiritual development.

Bill Hull (2006) states,

Jesus taught that faith means to follow. That was his first test of a person’s faith (Luke 9:23-25). Following, however, isn’t short term. Discipleship isn’t a program or an event; it’s a way of life. It’s not for a limited time, but for our whole life. Discipleship isn’t for beginners alone; it’s for all believers for every day of their life. Discipleship isn’t just one of the things the church does; it is what the church does. (p. 24)

Most churches grow by transfer. The rule of the day is rotation of the saints. The number of real conversions to Christ by some ‘great churches’ is meager. . . . In reality, the churches with the best programs are crowded, along with the best restaurant because they entertain (Hull, 1988, p. 20). Also, most church growth today is only transfer growth as opposed to kingdom growth. In this respect, discipleship is God’s very best for His people.

### **Biblical Discipleship**

In nearly all religions and in many philosophical schools, the normative tradition is established and preserved by a process of discipleship. Discipleship is a prominent

feature of many religions, such as Hindu, Buddhist, and Hellenistic training. In comparison with other religious groups, the Israelites did not surround the bearers of their traditions with notable veneration. The Torah was seen as God's law rather than the wisdom of Moses; the messages of the prophets were viewed as the word of God rather than the prophet's own. Yet leaders, such as Moses, Elijah, and Jeremiah, had servants and assistants who in some cases were divinely appointed to succeed their masters.

God's discipleship strategy grows out of a proper understanding of biblical discipleship. There are two reasons why a proper understanding of biblical discipleship is important to this project. First, an incomplete understanding may result in models of discipleship that tend to emphasize some aspect of true biblical discipleship while ignoring other equally important issues. Second, the dynamics of discipleship, as they occurred within the cultural setting of the Old Testament and the first century, should be understood before those dynamics can be applied to the world today.

### Definition of Terms

Many churches today are interested in *doing* discipleship. Yet there seems to be confusion as to what constitutes discipleship and what the word "disciple" means. This study seeks to address this issue in order to help church members better understand the biblical concept of discipleship. The following terms will be defined in this project dissertation in the ministry context:

#### **Disciple**

Buttrick (1962) observes that the term disciple is derived from the New Testament Greek word *mathetes*, "a learner" from the Greek term *manthano*, "to learn" and the Latin

*discipulus*, "a scholar." In other words, a disciple is a learner or pupil, one who accepts and follows a given doctrine or teacher (vol. 14, p. 845). Newton (2003) states literally, disciple means learner; the Greek word *mathetes* is the root of our word mathematics, which means "thought accompanied by endeavor." Disciples think and learn, but they also move beyond learning to doing—they endeavor. Even in Jesus' time, disciples were those who were more than pupils in school, they were apprentices in the work of their master (p.15). It is accepted Greek, in use from Herodotus on down, and always means the pupil of someone, in contrast to being the master or teacher. In Matt 10:24 and Luke 6:40 it implies that the person not only accepts the views of the teacher, but that he is also in practice an adherent.

A disciple is one who learns from a teacher and is sent to deliver those teachings to others. A disciple is usually someone committed to a significant master. The word "disciple" and its related verbal form sometimes has an educational, intellectual sense (Matt 10:24; 13:52).

Wilkins (1992) describes a disciple in the following way:

Disciple is the primary term used in the Gospels to refer to Jesus' followers and is a common reference for those known in the early church as believers, Christians, brothers/sisters, those of the way, or saints, although each term focuses upon different aspects of the individual's relationships with Jesus and others of the faith. The term was used most frequently in this specific sense; at least 230 times in the Gospels and 28 times in Acts. (p. 38)

In his study, Wilkins (1992, p. 40) noticed: In the Gospel, disciple already had a meaning before Jesus used the word. In the first century, the cultural understanding of a disciple was one who was more than just a learner; the disciple was also a "follower." He (1992, pp. 105-118) also stated that initially, all of Jesus' followers were referred to as

disciples; but what we generally think of as the “disciples” today are the twelve men whom Jesus chose to train and send out for His kingdom work. This group was the seedbed of the incipient church.

Bonhoeffer (1959) warned that the church had “evolved a fatal conception of the double standard—a maximum and a minimum standard of Christian obedience” (p. 47). In his book, Hull (1988) observed: “A disciple, then, is a reborn follower of Jesus. The common teaching is that a Christian is someone who by faith accepts Jesus as Savior, receives eternal life, and is safe and secure in the family of God; a disciple is a serious Christian active in the practice of the spiritual disciplines and engaged in evangelizing and training others. There is no biblical evidence for any separation between a Christian and a disciple” (Hull, 1988, pp. 54-60).

Hull (2006, pp. 41-44) noted that the proof is in the lack of power in the lives of most believers and the general effectiveness of the church in making an impact on society and accomplishing the Great Commission. The longer the myth that a disciple is a secondary identity reserved for the elite, the more we will continue to produce “bar-code Christians” who are following after “non-discipleship Christianity.” Everyone who expresses faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior becomes a disciple and, by implication, begins a lifelong, Spirit-led journey of growth and formation in the likeness of the One whom they follow.

### **Disciple-Making**

In his book, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, Hull (2006) observed that the term disciple-making comes from the verb *matheteusate*, which means to “make

disciples” (Matt 28:19). Three dimensions distinguish disciple-making from discipleship:

1. Deliverance: The first step in making disciples is evangelism, the part of the Great Commission that tells us to baptize them. All disciples should be actively involved in finding others who need Christ.

2. Development: Once a disciple makes a commitment to Christ, the next step is developing character and ability in terms of working for Jesus.

3. Deployment: Once a disciple makes a commitment to Christ, the final step is sending. Deploying the disciple in mission comes from the “go” aspect of the Great Commission. (p. 34).

## **Discipleship**

In his study, *The Complete Book of Discipleship*, Hull (2006) observes that *discipleship*, the widely accepted term that describes the ongoing life of the disciple, also describes the broader Christian experience. This word isn’t a pure biblical expression, but a derivative. Yet, most Christians today tend to accept discipleship as the process of following Jesus (p. 35).

In his study, Ladd (1993) observed:

Discipleship to Jesus was not like discipleship to a Jewish rabbi. The rabbis bound themselves to the Torah; Jesus bound his disciples to himself. The rabbis offered something outside of themselves; Jesus offered himself alone.... Discipleship to Jesus involved far more than following in his retinue; it meant nothing less than complete personal commitment to him and his message. (pp. 105-106)

According to Hull (2006), “*Ship* added to the end of *disciple* means “the state of” or “contained in.” So discipleship means the state of “being a disciple” (p. 35). In fact, the term discipleship has a nice on-going feel—a sense of journey, the idea of becoming a

disciple rather than having been made a disciple. Discipleship is simply the process of being educated by a teacher. At other times, discipleship seems to involve life transformation (Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34), in which case discipleship is seen as the process of becoming like one's master. In his study, Samra (2003) states:

Discipleship involves both becoming a disciple and being a disciple. At times the focus is on the entrance into the process, but most often the focus is on growing in the process (maturity); it includes both teaching and life transformation. It is a general call for everyone and also an intense process for a select few. Therefore it is best to think of discipleship as the process of becoming like Christ. (p. 220)

### **Spiritual Formation**

Spiritual formation is a universal experience. Dallas Willard (2002) writes that "It is a process that happens to everyone. . . . Terrorists as well as saints are the outcome of spiritual formation. Their spirits or hearts have been formed" (p.19). In Christianity, the focus of Spiritual Formation is on Jesus. It is a life-long process as a believer desires to become a disciple of Jesus and become more like Him. This is possible because of the divine grace of the Gospel and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. Willard notes that "spiritual formation for the Christian basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself" (p. 22).

There are many definitions of spiritual formation. Some call for absolute obedience to a leader or ruling group. Some call for certain "evidences" that are believed to confirm one's spirituality. Some promise plenty and prosperity to those who fulfill certain requirements. In his book, Mulholland (1993) writes that "it may be better for me to develop a working definition of spiritual formation that has integrity with the scriptural witness to life in relationship with God" (p. 15).

Scripture is quite clear in its insistence that humanity has fallen short of God's purposes for our creation. It is equally clear in its revelation that God works graciously through all the aspects of human life to bring us to the fulfillment of God's will for our wholeness. Spiritual formation is a process of involvement with God's gracious work. Once we understand spiritual formation as a process, all of life becomes spiritual formation. Cooperation with God's gracious work moves us toward the wholeness of Christ (p. 16). The English poet William Henley (1888) captured the spirit of our culture well when he wrote, "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul" (p. 15). But spiritual formation as "being conformed" will reveal that God is the initiator of our growth toward wholeness and we are to be pliable clay in God's hand. Spiritual formation in the image of Christ will also be seen to move against the grain of our self-actualization culture and prevailing perspectives which tend to create God in our image. The image of Christ will be seen as the ultimate reality of human wholeness (pp. 16-17).

The term *spiritual formation* is derived from Gal 4:19: "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you." The word formed comes from *morphe*, which means "to shape." When combined with Greek prepositions, it is rendered as "conformed" in Rom 8:29 and "transformed" in 12:2. Most accurately, spiritual formation describes the sanctification or transformation of disciples. Many scholars agree that believers can attain spiritual growth through the practice of spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines are exercises that usher one into God's presence, where His life has the opportunity to transform our lives.

Willard (1988) writes: "We meet and dwell with Jesus and his Father in the disciplines for the spiritual life"(p. xi). Spiritual disciplines are a strategy that leads

toward spiritual formation. In his book, Richard Foster (1998, p. v) includes several internal, external, and corporate disciplines one should engage in through one's Christian life. These include the following internal disciplines: meditation, prayer, fasting, and study. External disciplines include: simplicity, solitude, submission, and service.

### **Discipleship in the Old Testament**

In order to understand the concept of discipleship in the Bible, it is necessary to study the Old Testament. In his book, *The Pattern of Discipleship in the New Testament*, Logenecker (1996) noted:

“Disciple” and “follower” were common expressions in the secular parlance of antiquity. But they seem not to have been widely used with religious significance in Jesus' day. “Disciple” (*mathetes*) appears at most only three times in the LXX (possibly at Jer 13:21; 20:11; 46:9). The Hebrew equivalent for “disciple” (*talmid*, “pupil” / “learner,” derived from the verb *lamad*, “to learn”) occurs only once in the Old Testament (1 Chron 25:8, of a student among the temple musicians), with its substantive particle “one who is taught” (*lammud*) appearing in this manner, at best, only a small handful of times (Isa 8:16; probably also Isa 50:4; 54:13). The words for “disciple,” “pupil,” or “learner” (whether *talmid* or *lammud* or their cognates) have not been found, to date, in the Aramaic or Hebrew texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, even though great stress was placed on instruction and various degrees of learning in that community. (p. 2)

In the Old Testament, discipleship terminology is rare. But the concept is there. As Wilkins (1988) notes, “Even though the terms for disciple are not found in abundance in the Old Testament various relationships in Israel were true ‘discipleship’ relations since they share universal characteristics of discipleship relations” (p. 52). There is evidence that several OT leaders and prophets functioned educationally in a discipleship role. Such relationships as Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, and other groups of prophets describe a possible *dedaskalos/mathetes* relationship that was to reappear at the time of Jesus.

We need to examine both the words and concept of *mathetes* in the Old Testament.



Wilkins' point is that the Hebrew equivalent to *mathetes* is *talmidh*, which literally means "taught one" (Wilkins, 1988, p. 45). The Old Testament often speaks of walking in the ways of another, whether for good or evil (Judg 2:17; Kgs 21:21; 2 Chr 20:32). Many of the kings after David were spoken of as either walking in the way of David or not walking in the way of David. Since he was a man after God's own heart, he in some ways was the incarnation of what God desired and this incarnation was available for all future kings to see and imitate.

Wilkins (Green, McKnight, & Marshall, 1992) observed that Samuel (1 Sam 19:20-24), Elisha (2 Kings 4:1, 38; 9:1), Isaiah (Isa 8:16; 50:4), Jeremiah (Jer 36:32), and Ezra (Ezra 7:6, 11) each had their followers (p. 176). In addition to these examples from Israel's social structure, two one-on-one relationships are noteworthy, that of Moses and Joshua, and Elijah and Elisha. It is interesting to note that both of these relationships took place at key times in Israel's history.

#### Moses and Joshua

The Bible refers to Joshua as Moses' aide or servant (Exod 24:13; 33:11; Num 11:28; Josh 1:1), even from his youth. The Hebrew word means "one who serves" or "an assistant." Joshua is first mentioned as the servant or assistant of Moses (Exod 24:13; Num 11:28). In Num 11:28, Joshua calls Moses, "My lord," a term of respect signifying the obedience and respect appropriate in the master-servant roles. Joshua served with Moses, accompanying him on the mountain and leading in his place (Josh 17:8) and on his behalf (Num 32:28). Moses commissioned Joshua in the sight of the people and gave him authority from God (27:18-23). Moses taught Joshua lessons Moses himself had

learned from God (Deut 3:21; 31:7-8).

Moses rebuked Joshua for narrow-minded thinking (Num 11:28-29; cf. Mark 9:38-41) and gave him a spirit of wisdom (Deut 34:9). Moses was instructed to strengthen and encourage Joshua (1:38; 3:28), both giving and teaching him the Law in order to make Joshua the leader he needed to be (Josh 1:7). Joshua did a number of things he had seen and learned from Moses, including crossing impassable water, spying out the land, and giving copies of the Law. Joshua was blessed by God (Josh 4:14). “Just as the LORD had commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses” (11:15).

Whyte (1967) states, “It is beautiful to see Moses’ best disciple so jealous of other gifted men, and all out of pure honor and love to his great master” (p. 166). In his study, Whyte observed that the relationship between Moses and Joshua is as a master-disciple relationship, even though the specific term is not mentioned (p. 166).

### Elijah and Elisha

God told Elijah whom to choose as his successor (1 Kgs 19:16). Elisha is described as a servant of Elijah. Elijah and Elisha have characteristics similar to the relationship between Moses and Joshua. The Hebrew word that means “one who serves” or “an assistant” is the same designation used of Moses and Joshua (1 Kgs 19:21). Elijah's call of Elisha, comparable to Jesus’ call of His disciples, meant that Elisha had to leave everything and follow Elijah (19-21; 2 Kgs 2:2, 6). Because of their close relationship, Elisha referred to Elijah as his father (v. 12). Elisha was so influenced by Elijah that when Elijah departed Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit (v. 9).

Elijah, like Joshua, did things similar to what his master had done, thereby confirming that he had become like his master. Elisha parted the same river that Elijah had parted on their way to Elijah's ascension; also, both of them performed a miracle of multiplying oil. When Elijah called Elisha to follow, "then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered to him" (1 Kgs 19:21). Elijah shared his daily life with his servant and instructed him through this personal fellowship. Elisha not only served him but learned to be a prophet by imitating Elijah.

In summary, in the Old Testament, discipleship terminology is rare. But the concept is there. The terms for disciple are not found in abundance in the Old Testament; however various relationships in Israel were true 'discipleship' relations since they share universal characteristics of discipleship relations. There is evidence that several OT leaders and prophets functioned educationally in a discipleship role.

## **Discipleship in the New Testament**

### Discipleship in the Gospels

The question that immediately arises is whether these concepts of discipleship and disciple making are biblical, or whether they are human—devised programs of some twentieth-century groups. The Gospels give us a biblical basis to answer these questions. Jesus' very first act in His public ministry was to call His disciples. In the Gospels, the term disciple is used in many ways, but mainly to describe the follower of Jesus. In Matt 8:21 and 22, we read "Another disciple said to him, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead." Also, Luke 14:27 says, "And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my

disciple.” The word is sometimes used to refer to a small group of Jesus’ followers, namely the Twelve.

It is also used to describe followers other than the Twelve. For example, the term is used to describe a large crowd of followers of Jesus in the Gospels of Luke and John. Therefore, the Gospels and Acts all show that these disciples—the Twelve, the other disciples, and a crowd of disciples—all share something in common: they are all followers of Jesus. In the Great Commission, one can also see a parallel relationship between the terms “disciples” and “followers” of Jesus. Prior to giving his followers the Great Commission, Jesus spent time with them, teaching them how to be his disciples.

Colson and Vaughn (1992) write,

Nor do most choose a church on the basis of its capacity to disciple and equip for ministry, yet that should be our very first consideration. If the church is the Body, the holy presence of Christ in the world, its most fundamental task is to build communities of holy character. And the first priority of those communities is to disciple men and women to maturity in Christ and then equip them to live their faith in every aspect of life and in every part of the world. (p. 282)

Discipling is still the number one ministry that Jesus desires for His church today. The main goal of the Great Commission is not to just make new converts. Jesus specifically commanded his followers to go into the world to make others into His disciples. In the Great Commission, Jesus also made it clear that “disciples” are those who have been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and taught to obey everything Jesus commanded. In the Great Commission, Jesus Christ gave the Christian church its marching orders.

Jesus said to go and make disciples of everyone everywhere. Jesus Christ was simply telling the original men that He himself disciplined to continue His disciple-making

ministry by reproducing themselves in other people. “Come, follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt 4:19). The early disciples faithfully followed Jesus’ exhortation and example. John the Baptist’s disciples said, “Everyone is going to him” (John 3:26). There were many people who came to hear Him and also to be healed. Jesus had many followers and was well-known in the area as a miracle worker and preacher. But Jesus increasingly spent more and more time with the twelve disciples, when he neared His time of crucifixion.

In his book, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Coleman (1964) states,

Jesus literally staked his whole ministry upon his disciples...He could not bear to have his close disciples miss His purpose . . . Thus He prayed ‘not for the world,’ but for the few God gave Him ‘out of the world.’ Everything depended upon their faithfulness if the world would believe on Him ‘through their word.’ (p. 27)

Why did Jesus not attempt to build the masses to greater and greater numbers?

Why did he choose only a few men, such as fishermen and men with limited ability?

1. Jesus wanted to make sure that there would be a core group of people who understood His mission to make disciples of all nations.
2. Jesus continued with His plan, and in those last few days before His ascension, He kept pouring Himself into those closest to Him.
3. He truly was interested in spiritual multiplication in which the disciples did all they could to make more disciples until the good news of the Kingdom of God had infiltrated all of the earth.
4. Jesus commanded His followers to “Go make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19). His last words are evidence of this fact.

## **Selection of Disciples**

### **Men were His Method**

Jesus spent much time and energy in preaching, teaching, healing, and performing miracles, but He spent His maximum-quality time training, apprenticing, and discipling twelve men. Coleman (Hanks & Shell, 1981) says, men were His method, and He concentrated on a few. The initial objective of Jesus' plan was to enlist men who could bear witness to His life and carry on His work after He returned to the Father. Men were to be His method of winning the world to God. His concern was not with programs to reach the multitudes, but with men whom the multitudes would follow. Jesus called all His closest disciples in the first year of the His ministry (pp. 40-42).

### **Men Willing to Learn**

As the prominent author of discipleship, Coleman (Hanks & Shell, 1981) puts it, Yet Jesus saw in these simple men the potential of leadership for the kingdom. They were indeed "unlearned and ignorant" according to the world's standard (Acts 4:13), but they were teachable. Though often mistaken in their judgments and slow to comprehend spiritual things, they were honest men, willing to confess their need. Their mannerisms may have been awkward and their abilities limited, but with the exception of the traitor, their hearts were big. What is perhaps most significant about them was their sincere yearning for God and the realities of His life. (p. 43)

They were impulsive, temperamental, easily offended, and had all the prejudices of their environment. They had no academic degrees. Most of them were raised in the poor section of the country around Galilee. But Jesus called them to fulfill His mission in the world. The Master could mold them into a new image. Jesus can use anyone who is willing to be used.

## Concentrated upon a Few

Accordingly, Jesus “called His disciples, and He chose from them twelve, whom also He named apostles” (Luke 6:13-17). Coleman (Hanks & Shell, 1981) observes, that as the company of followers around Jesus increased, it became necessary by the middle of His second year of ministry to narrow the select company to a more manageable number. One cannot transform a world except as individuals in the world are transformed, and individuals cannot be changed except as they are molded in the hands of the Master (pp. 43-44).

## **Association with Jesus**

Jesus method was to use human resources and His methodology was to spend quality time with His disciples, pouring His life into theirs. To do this, He had to be with them, and this is the concept of association.

## He Stayed with Them

Jesus focused his life upon twelve men, most of whom were from Galilee. The first job description Jesus gave to these men was perhaps simply to be with Jesus. “He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him.” (Mark 3:14). This concept of proximity has been a center stage. Coleman (Hanks & Shell, 1981) observes that this was the essence of His training program—just letting His disciples follow Him. Jesus had no formal schooling, no seminary. Jesus taught these men His way by drawing them close to Himself. He was His own school and curriculum. The religious teachers of His day insisted upon their disciples adhering strictly to certain rituals and formulas of knowledge. But Jesus asked only that His disciples follow Him (p. 57).

## Closer as Training Ends

Having a long-range view of Kingdom growth means that we as spiritual leaders must concentrate upon producing Jesus' life in just a few people rather than attempting to convert the masses.

Coleman (Hanks & Shell, 1981) states

The time which Jesus invested in these few disciples was so much more by comparison to that given to others that it can only be regarded as a deliberate strategy. He actually spent more time with His disciples than with everybody else in the world put together. He ate with them, slept with them, and talked with them for the most part of His entire active ministry. They walked together along the lonely roads; they visited together in the crowded cities; they sailed and fished together in the Sea of Galilee; they prayed together in the deserts and in the mountains; and they worshiped together in the synagogues and in the temples. (p. 61)

## Discipleship in the Epistles

The concept of disciple is expressed in the New Testament through the word *mathetes*. The substantive meaning "discipleship," however, does not occur in the New Testament. Willard (2006) writes, "The word 'disciple' occurs about 269 times in the New Testament. 'Christian' is found three times and was first introduced to refer precisely to disciples of Jesus. . . . The New Testament is a book about disciples, by disciples, and for disciples of Jesus Christ" (p. 1). In the Epistles, the word "disciple" is surprisingly absent. This does not mean that disciples did not exist; on the contrary, the concept of discipleship is present throughout the Epistles.

Paul never uses the specific words to describe a disciple, but he demonstrates them over and over in his use of the terms discipling and discipleship. In the Epistles, Paul clearly focused on Jesus Christ and His grace as his message and he used discipleship as his mission methodology. Paul evangelized both Jews and Gentiles,



introducing them to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He then immediately began to train and disciple them. “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Col 2:6-7).

In the Epistles, there are examples of his constant efforts to train, and disciple his new converts while he was physically absent. Paul so much wanted these young members to grow and develop into mature disciples of Jesus Christ. He wrestled with much emotion in Gal 4:19, “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.” In fact, the discipleship principles that Jesus initiated and that were recorded in the Gospels and Acts continue to exist in the Epistles.

According to Wilson (1976):

The word “disciple” does not occur in the New Testament Epistles. There it seems to be replaced by the word “saint” from the Greek word *hagios*, meaning “one set apart” or “a holy person.” The word “saint” is clearly used of those to be taught (Rom 15:22; Eph 4:12), but it has the broader connotation of any believer set apart to God. The abrupt cessation of the use of the “disciple” probably occurred because in the Greek world it had a more distinctive meaning implying a person as a learner of worldly wisdom from the philosophers and rhetoricians. (p. 51)

W. Foster (1982) asserts, “The most frequent use of the term *mathetes* in the New Testament is to imply followers of Christ. About 90% of its uses are not specifically limited to the twelve. In Acts, the term *mathetes* becomes the distinctive title for all who believe in Christ” (pp. 8-9). Literally, the term *mathetes* means “a learner.” Thus, a disciple is one who is taught, one who learns.

The Epistles continue to use many terms that are used in the Gospels and Acts to convey the meaning of disciples. These terms include brother/sisters, believers, and

Christians. Furthermore, there are many metaphors related to the principles of discipleship in the Epistles. Some examples include following Jesus, leading people to Christ, cross-bearing, abiding in Jesus' Word, loving other believers, and the need to bear fruit. Based on the common link between a disciple and a Christian, from the Gospels to the Epistles, it can be concluded that a disciple of Jesus is in fact a believer. To be a believer automatically makes one a disciple.

These are not two different groups of followers of Christ. Once a person becomes a believer by coming to faith in Christ, a life of discipleship begins. Some may be good disciples or bad disciples, but they are disciples. For a disciple, spiritual maturity and growth must be the goal. The ongoing process of growing and becoming more like Jesus is called discipleship.

## **The Characteristics of Disciples in the Bible**

### **The Characteristics of the Disciples of Christ**

This section examines the characteristics of disciples using biblical passages that specifically reference the characteristics of disciples. Biblical discipleship is unique because it is integrally connected to Jesus Christ, particularly in its method and goal. Because transformation into the image of Christ is the goal of discipleship (Phil 2:5), those characteristics associated with Christlikeness should be developed and observed in Christian disciples themselves.

Based on a study of the New Testament, the qualities that characterize a Christian disciple should include the following traits of commitment to following Christ in all the various areas of one's life: (a) obedience, (b) humility, (c) living a servanthood lifestyle,

(d) willing to live sacrificially for Jesus, (e) sharing in the works of Jesus, (f) becoming like Christ or Christlikeness, (g) abiding in Christ's Word, (h) loving one another, and (i) bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

Henrichsen (1974), a participant in Navigator Mission, notes the characteristics of discipleship in his book *The Disciples Are Not Born*. He states that the disciple is: (a) one who receives God's goals for their life to be their own; (b) one who is willing to pay any price to make the will of God come in his or her life; (c) one who loves the Word of God; (d) one who has the heart of a servant; and (e) one who loves people (pp. 3-18).

Gary W. Kuhne (1978), an officer of CCC of America said that the disciple is: (a) One who is hungry for the Word of God; (b) One who has a thirst for the holy life; (c) One who earnestly wants to know more about God; (d) One who wants to be used by God; (e) One who loves people (pp. 23-28).

In his book, *The Making of a Disciple*, Keith Philips (1981) says that a disciple is : (a) one who has zeal to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ; (b) one who gives help; (c) one who is obedient to God; (d) one who is sincere; and (e) one who is looking for others who have potential to be disciples (pp. 8-29).

In his book, *True Discipleship*, William MacDonald (1962) notes a disciple is: (a) one who has love for Jesus Christ more than anything else; (b) one who is willing to give up himself or herself for the sake of Christ; (c) one who takes up his or her own cross; (d) one who follows in the footsteps of Jesus Christ; and (e) one who meditates on the words of Gods (pp. 6-7).

These outlines of what scholars have described as the qualities that characterize a disciple of Christ show there is a common understanding that a disciple is shaped by his

or her training. Specifically, a disciple has the following characteristics based on the training:

1. A hunger for the Word of God and living by it.
2. Acceptance of Jesus as Savior and loving and serving Him.
3. Sacrifice of all for God and eagerness to be used by Him.
4. Desire to be a witness of God at any time.
5. Servant-mindedness.

Looking at these points, it is evident that discipleship is dependent upon training.

### The Biblical Meaning of Discipleship

#### **In the Gospels: Following Christ**

Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (Kierkegaard, Lowrie, Thornton, & Varenne, 2004) called the typical Christian response as that of *admiring* Christ instead of *following* Christ (p. 223). What does it really mean to be a follower of Jesus? This part examines the meaning of following Christ in the Gospels. When Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17), the proper response was for them to leave their nets and follow Him (Mark 1: 18). Green (1997) notes that being a “follower” in a metaphorical sense draws its meaning from this example of literally following Him. Therefore, if one was not willing to leave one’s family, it was impossible for him to be a disciple (p. 24).

When Jesus was physically present on earth, He stated requirements for being His disciple. Jesus called on disciples to give up their wealth and their familial ties. Family was the individual’s source of identity, so renouncing it would mean becoming virtually a

nobody. In Luke 9:58-62, Jesus uses a strong metaphor to stress the importance of the denouncement of former connections.

Discipleship in the time of Jesus was accomplished by literally following Jesus wherever he led. The concept of following Jesus and to become like Him is expounded in a number of passages in the Gospels. In Mark 10:39-40, Jesus indicated that, to become like Him, His disciples would have to go through what He would experience. Becoming like one's master results from being a follower of him (Matt 10:24-25). Following one's master is also a key to succeeding in spite of obstacles. This is because success is found in the things the master tells his disciples in secret, which they proclaim to all.

Jesus stated (Matt 13:16-17) that the disciples were privileged because they could see what He did and hear what He said (Grundry, 1994, p. 7). When the disciples were apart from Christ, their activities did not go well (Matt 14:22-24; 17:14-18; 26:36-46, 69-75) (Longenecker, 1996, p. 42). Mark recorded relatively little of Jesus' teaching on discipleship, and yet a major theme of his Gospel is discipleship, for he stressed, more than the other three Gospel writers, that the Twelve became disciples by following Christ's example. This also explains the contrast between the disciples constant failure and Jesus' constant success, as highlighted by Mark.

In Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-19:41), Luke recorded a significantly large amount of Jesus' teaching on discipleship issues. At the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the travelogue Jesus called others to follow Him (9:23-27, 57-62; 14:25-33; 18:18-30). Those who wished to become like Christ had to go with Him to Jerusalem, where He would suffer and die. Discipleship then is a journey that is taken with Jesus, a journey in which one suffers before arriving in glory. In the Fourth Gospel the "beloved

disciple” was a model disciple, (Green, 1997, p. 6) with a close relationship to Jesus.

Therefore, in the Gospels, discipleship is the process of becoming like Christ. Discipleship was accomplished by (a) being physically with Christ, (b) seeing what He did, hearing what He said, (c) being corrected by Him, and (d) following His example.

### **In the Rest of the New Testament: Imitation**

In the Gospels, and to a lesser degree in Acts, the word *disciple* was used as a title in narrative material simply to designate those who were believers. We discovered in the study of the New Testament Epistles that the concept of “imitation” was closely related to Jesus’ idea of discipleship. After Jesus ascended to heaven, He was no longer physically present with His disciples, which necessitated a change in the idea of discipleship. This change manifests itself in a change in terminology. The word *disciple* is not used outside of the Gospels, except in Acts where it is a technical term referring to all believers (Longenecker, 1996b, pp. 72-73). Yet the goal of the Christian life is to become like Christ (Erickson, 1983, p. 970), just as this was stressed in the Gospels (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:13-15; Col 3:9-10; 1 John 3:2).

In the Gospels, becoming like Christ was accomplished by physically going where He went, seeing what He did, hearing what He said. But in Acts and the Epistles, because Christ was not physically present, becoming like Him could not be accomplished by spending time with Him. Instead of the word *disciple*, a new but related concept was brought to the forefront, namely, the concept of imitation (Wilkins, 1995). Several words express this idea: (Nida, 1988) *μιμέομαι* (“to use as a model; imitate, emulate, follow,” 2 Thess 3:7-9; Heb 13:7; 3 John 11); *μιμητής* (“one who imitates someone else; does what

that person does,” 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:14; Heb 6:12); and *συστημι* (“one who joins with others in following an example,” Phil 3:17) (Nida, 1988, pp. 41-49).

In other passages (e.g., 1 Cor 7:7-11; Gal 4:12-20; Phil 4:9; Jas 5:10-11), these terms are not used, but the concept of doing what another did is present (Sumney, 1997, p. 534). In some of these verses, the person to be imitated is not physically present, whether God (Eph 5:1), Christ (1 Pet 2:21), Abraham (Rom 4:12; Heb 6:12), or the prophets (Jas 5:10-11). In other verses, the object of imitation is someone who was or had been physically present with the readers (1 Cor 4:16; 2 Cor 12:18; Gal 4:12; Phil 3:17; 4:9; 2 Thess 3:7-9; Heb 13:7; 3 John 11). Two important verses combine these ideas: “You also became imitators of us and of the Lord” (1 Thess 1:6) and “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).

Imitation then is similar to discipleship in the sense that it is the process of transferring one’s lifestyle to the next generation. Having progressed in the process of imitating Christ, Paul encouraged his converts to imitate *him*. These two different objects for imitation imply that there are two different parts to the process: learning and incarnation (Arndt, Danker, & Bauer, 2000, pp. 609-610). Though Abraham, the prophets, and Christ are not physically present today, believers can learn from their examples in the Scriptures, and thus become more like Christ. In addition, as less mature believers interact with more mature believers who are incarnating Christ’s character, the less mature believer becomes more like Christ.

Then, after Christ ascended, the New Testament language switched to an emphasis on “imitation.” These two aspects of discipleship are still evident in that

Christians are commanded (a) to learn about Christ through teaching, preaching, and studying, and (b) to imitate those who are like Him. Both parts are still essential, but they can be carried out separately. Therefore, Paul taught the Romans what Christ had done, but he did not suggest they imitate him, since they had not personally lived near him. As an example, Timothy could live the Christlike life modeled for him by Paul and be a model for the Corinthian Christians without being the primary teacher of the community at Corinth (1 Cor 4:16-17).

### **Theological Motivation for Discipleship**

Discipleship is an important concept for the church. It is essential not only to understand the true meaning of biblical discipleship, but also to embrace the necessity of discipleship. The Bible shows that discipleship is necessary for the following reasons: (a) discipleship is mandated in the Great Commission, and the (b) ultimate goal of discipleship is transformation into Christlikeness.

### **Biblical Mandate of Discipleship**

Discipleship ranks as God's top priority because Jesus practiced it and commanded us to do it, and His followers continued it. Jesus got straight to the point with simple words. This is known as the "Great Commission" that is defined in Matt 28:19-20.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)

Jesus revealed the blueprint or methodology for fulfilling His mission on earth. In the original Greek language making disciples is in the imperative case, meaning that it is



a strict command.

In his book, *The Disciple Making Pastor*, Hull notes:

The participles—going, baptizing, and teaching—are all subordinate to the action of the main verb in this passage: the command to disciple or make disciples. God’s primary plan for the Church is for disciples of Jesus to develop other men and women into disciples! (1988, p. 35)

A successful discipleship ministry grows out of a proper understanding of biblical discipleship and the Great Commission. An incomplete or flawed understanding of biblical discipleships may result in incomplete models of discipleship. Phillips (1981) compares the following:

Dynamic difference between converting one person a day to Jesus Christ (evangelizing) compared with discipling one person a year to full reproducing maturity. After only twelve years we can see that making disciples, who can reproduce themselves, really is the only effective and efficient way to accomplish the vast global mission goal of reaching everyone with the gospel of Jesus Christ. (p. 23)

Discipleship means learning from and following a teacher. As the prominent disciple-making pastor Hull (2006) puts it,

Making disciples has nothing to do with winning others over to a philosophy or turning them into nice people who smile a lot. Rather the Great Commission launches a rescue mission; all followers receive orders with full authority to take action wherever they happen to be. All is the Great Commission’s key word—all authority, all sacrifice, all-out effort, all the time, for all people. (p. 26-27)

To be a Christian is more than a conversion; it is the radical transformation that leads to a whole new way of life. Discipleship implies forsaking the former way of life and committing one’s life to live as God, by His grace, requires. The ultimate goal is to live the life of a disciple of Christ. Becoming a disciple and making disciples, therefore, are God’s imperatives for every Christian.

In summary, the Great Commission is a reminder to those who have decided to follow Jesus that they should actively engage in making disciples. Discipleship is the goal of evangelism. The Great Commission reveals Jesus' heart and priority. They also indicate a method that will fulfill God's plan to rescue the world. The church must take discipleship seriously if it is to be obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. A commitment to be and make disciples must be the central act of every disciple and every church.

#### Ultimate Goal of Discipleship is Transformation into Christlikeness

The reason discipleship is necessary in the church is because discipleship is the process by which spiritual growth occurs. George Barna (2001) notes that four out of five believers said that having a deep, personal commitment to the Christian faith is a top priority for their future (p. 34). Churches have a tremendous opportunity to facilitate deeper commitment among believers. Most born-again adults (95%) acknowledge that their church encourages spiritual growth. But only half of the believers feel that discipleship is one of the two or three highest ministry priorities of their church; the other half say it is just one of many ministries or programs at their church. A relatively small number of born-again adults report that their church helps them develop specific paths to follow to foster spiritual growth (p. 46).

Throughout Scripture, believers are commanded to be transformed and grow into maturity. Discipleship means entering into a lifelong relationship with Jesus. The disciple is not there merely to learn from a teacher but to share an entire life. Every follower of Christ is encouraged to grow toward maturity in faith. Full maturity to be attained is

defined as “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Kittel, Friedrich, and Bromiley (1985) point out that the term “mature,” means “perfect” or “complete” (vol. 8, pp. 67-69).

Christians are admonished to become mature through the building up or growing of the body of Christ. This is the same goal that is also in Paul’s mind when he writes, “We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me” (Eph 1:28-29). Paul also makes the same point in Rom 12:1-2. According to this verse, becoming mature also means to “offer your bodies as living sacrifices,” be “holy and pleasing to God,” “do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,” and “be able to test and approve what God’s pleasing and perfect will is.”

Believers must grow, and the ultimate goal is to grow to become like Christ. Paul says, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5). To be like Christ Jesus is the ultimate goal for all believers. In the Gospels, Jesus invites his followers to learn from him and to imitate him. Believers must grow toward maturity in faith and becoming like Christ. Jesus’s call to learn from Him is still true and valid for believers today. With the ultimate goal for Christians to be like Christ, discipleship becomes even more urgent and important. This is because discipleship is the process that will enable believers to move towards maturity, and ultimately to become like Christ. In his study, Wilkins (1992) observed that discipleship is the corporate responsibility of the church. The church has the responsibility to disciple believers so that they can become more like Christ (p. 345). Therefore, discipleship is a process that must be undertaken not

just by an individual believer, but by the church as a whole.

In summary, the ultimate goal of every believer in Jesus is to become like Christ. Without a continuous process of discipleship, that transformation into Christlikeness will not be possible. It is true that the growth of a believer will ultimately be God's responsibility, but discipleship is the means or process that God has given to his followers, for growth towards Christlikeness.

## CHAPTER III

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

The local church should be a biblically-ordained and relevant vehicle for transformational discipleship. The church was given the primary responsibility for making disciples. Jesus commissioned those who would become the formative core of the early church to make disciples. The local churches then renewed a commitment to grow authentic disciples and to reform a discipleship process. In many churches, where discipleship is seen as just a component of its mission, the process takes the form of programs for motivated learners or an elective track for the truly committed.

Discipleship is not just one component of the church but must be a guiding value that permeates every ministry area. In this chapter some of the major works dealing with discipleship are reviewed. First, the relationship between learning and growing spiritually into the likeness of Christ as disciples is explored. Then, how church members grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples through spiritual formation and disciple models is explained. Finally, this chapter addresses effective disciple models for the local church.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is a time to focus on *true* discipleship. People are searching for answers, for relationships, for meaning. The church should have everything that people are seeking. In his book, *Growing True Disciples*, Barna (2001) insists that a church will

have to make disciples in order to improve the quality of disciple-making strategies. It must change from an emphasis on building consensus to building character, must move from concern about quantity (people, programs, square footage, dollars) to concern about quality (commitment, wisdom, relationships, value, lifestyle), and must alter people's focus from feel-good activities to absolute commitment to personal growth, ministry, and authenticity in their faith (p. 8-9). This also describes the need of the Korean church.

The continuing decline in both numbers and influence of Christian churches within the broader culture is increasingly evident in North America, and also in South Korea. Drane (2008, pp. 3-18) critiqued church trends as moving toward a "fast food" spirituality. He suggests the need for a reinvigorated style of ministry, and a restatement of classic Christian beliefs for the 21st century. He states, "to continue as we are may be comfortable, but could also be institutionally suicidal. . . Our options are simple. We either do nothing, and the decline continues, or we ask fundamental questions and take whatever steps may be necessary to re-imagine church life" (p. vii).

Jacobsen (1975) wrote:

Our churches are filled with people who outwardly look contented and at peace but inwardly are crying out for someone to love them . . . just as they are confused, frustrated, often frightened, filled with guilt, and often unable to communicate even within their own families. (p. 41)

Barna (2005) identifies what he calls a transformation in the process by which millions of believers are growing in Christ. According to him, many of these "revolutionaries" are leaving the local church in an effort to experience purposeful spiritual growth outside the structure and authority of what they consider to be an ineffective model for achieving God's purposes in contemporary society. He endorses a

self-serving discipleship process in which believers piece “together spiritual elements they deem worthwhile, constituting millions of personalized ‘church’ models” (p. 64).

I believe that a biblical discipleship model can be developed to satisfy the human need for spiritual development.

### **Discipleship and Learning Theories**

The church too often thinks that when new believers have accepted Jesus as their Savior and have understood the basic doctrines of the church, that knowledge will lead them into a close walk with Christ. If members regularly attend corporate worship services, it is assumed that all is well. But Willard (2002) is skeptical about that assumption. “One of the greatest contemporary barriers to meaningful spiritual formation in Christlikeness is overconfidence in the spiritual efficacy of ‘regular church services’ . . . Though they are vital, they are not enough. It is that simple” (pp. 249-250).

In Maslow’s theory, the lower the level, the more basic and powerful the need. When a person becomes a Christian, the most basic need is no longer food or water or shelter. The most basic need becomes the commitment to follow Christ, to be a disciple.

Shields (2011) points out:

Most of the time, those of us in spiritual leadership can effectively share with our church members why it is important to be a disciple of Christ, but often we stop short in teaching our people how to be a disciple. Both are important to the maturation of a Christian. (p. 6)

Many new Christians express a need for someone to show them how to be a Christian. The preaching may have brought them into the church, but they need follow-up teaching. Downs (1994) states “Choosing between preaching and teaching is like choosing between the right and left wing of an airplane. As both wings are critical to

flight, both ministries are critical to spiritual growth. When ignored, the outcome can be disastrous” (p. 224). In Paul’s discussion of spiritual gifts in Eph 4:11 he says, “Some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.” He uses a Greek construction that indicates the office of pastor and teacher was held by the same person (Knight, 2010). Commenting on this passage, Bruce (1961) notes that “The two terms ‘pastors (shepherds) and teachers’ denote one and the same class” (p. 86). A look at learning theory can explain why preaching is not enough. There is an analogous relationship between how people learn and how people grow spiritually.

#### Model of Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

People learn in different ways. In the early 1970s, David Kolb identified two dimensions of learning: perceiving and processing. The ways in which people perceive and process information constitutes their “learning style.” Some perceive life through their senses and feelings by direct (subjective) experiences. Others perceive life through their intellect (objectively) by conceptualizing or thinking. Most of us have a blend of these two lenses, but we usually favor one. People process new experiences through reflecting (observing) or through action (doing)—or somewhere in between (Shields, 2011).

Experiential learning is usually discussed in contrast to traditional learning. Traditional learning refers to formal instruction that is teacher-dominated. The teacher lectures and the students listen or take notes. Experiential learning attempts to actively involve the students in their own learning actively. Probably the most frequently cited model of experiential learning theory is that developed by Kolb (1984). It is a circular



model consisting of four modes of knowing: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. These four modes are parts of a two-dimensional process: grasping the experience or taking in information (concrete experience and abstract conceptualization) and transforming experience (reflective observation and active experimentation). For Kolb, this two dimensional process defines learning. Learning can be initiated in any mode, and it must take place in all four modes for optimum growth. For this reason, preaching is not enough to disciple Christians because preaching brings learning through only one learning mode: abstract conceptualization; that is, interacting with the spoken Word.

Kolb sees all learning as beginning in experience (concrete experience). The person then asks, “What happened?” (reflective observation). The person is then able to put into abstract symbols words, that describe what was learned (abstract conceptualization). The next step is for the person to behave in a different manner based on the new understanding (active experimentation). Kolb’s model of experiential learning theory has both strong historical support rooted in empirical research and analogous relationships to other contemporary models of learning theory. Important Christian learning comes from outside of personal experience.

It comes from the Bible, which evangelical Christians believe contains divinely given revelation about God and His will for human beings. Kolb (1984) defines learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience; . . . it is not an independent entity to be acquired or transmitted” (p. 38). As a revealed religion, Christianity assumes that there is objective knowledge outside of an individual and that this knowledge can be transmitted, even though imperfectly, and

understood.

### Transformative Learning and Discipleship

Transformative learning is a process of critical self-reflection, or a process of questioning the assumptions and values that form the basis for the way we see the world. Values are not necessarily changed but are examined, their source is identified, and they are accepted and justified or revised, or possibly rejected. Transformative learning may occur as a result of a life crisis, such as a change of job, retirement, death of a spouse, a move, or a divorce. However, it may also be precipitated by challenging interactions with others including an educator, by participation in carefully designed exercises and activities, and by stimulation through reading or visual materials (Cranton, 1992, p. 146).

Transformational learning occurs through the processes of formation and transformation. Formation is the ordinary educational and discipleship activities we use in churches. According to Loder (1989) transformation occurs through the following five-step model:

1. Conflict-in-context. We experience a conflict or problem or unsettling idea in our “world.” The “more one cares about the conflict the more powerful will be the knowing event” (p. 37).

2. Interlude for scanning. In this step people search for solutions, involving both conscious and subconscious searching (p. 37).

3. Insight felt with intuitive force. This is the knowing event, the time that the “constructive act of the imagination” occurs. This moment of insight is provided by the Holy Spirit interacting with the human spirit (p. 38).

4. Release and re-patterning. There is a release of psychic energy built up during the search (an “aha” or “Eureka” or “Hosanna” moment) (p. 4).

5. Interpretation and verification. We begin to interpret our world from a new perspective provided by the insight. When the Holy Spirit is behind the transformation, Loder (1989) calls the process “convictional knowing” and transforming moments (p. 220). Convictional knowing is when the self meets the Holy and is transformed. Convictional knowing is the work of the Holy Spirit (p. 217). The transformational process occurs not once, but over and over again throughout one’s lifetime (Loder, 1989).

What starts these conflicts? A simple answer would be “life.” But Loder, who is not given to simple answers, explains it this way: “Being human entails environment (the lived World), selfhood (the Self), the possibility of not being (Void), and the possibility of new being (the Holy)” (p. 69). The “possibility of not being” or the Void creates the conflict. It is the ‘world’ that suffers the rupture that initiates the knowing event, and finally it is the ‘world’ that is recomposed to include the gain that is accomplished by transformation (pp. 74-75).

First, true transformational learning involves an encounter with God. Knowing truth is not enough, encountering truth is. Kenneth Leech (1985) suggests that all true theology is about transformation, about changing human beings and changing the world, in and through an encounter with the true God. For example, the two disciples on the Emmaus road had the law and the prophets explained to them. They were told the truth but were not transformed. They did not recognise Jesus until He revealed Himself to them (Luke 24:13-35).

Second, for transformation learning to take place, there must be appropriate

intentional teaching or instruction. Wenger (1998) argues that “learning cannot be designed” but accepts that learning takes place in appropriate environments that foster learning (p. 225). Therefore, teaching or instruction must be given in a suitable learning environment. It must be age appropriate, sensitive to life’s crises, certain stages of faith, easy to understand, and have its foundation in the Bible. The Bible must be central in transformational learning. Walter Bruegemann (1982) insists that “the educational process, faithfully carried out, can be performed by those who submit to the canonical process” (p. 7). By the canonical process, Bruegemann means that the Bible interprets the Bible in a hermeneutical move that breathes fresh life into biblical theological knowledge.

Third, transformational learning is not only cognitive but encompasses the whole person. Transformational learning fulfils the goals of Christian spiritual formation, the growth of Christ’s life in us, the formation of a people of God, and our partnership in the redemptive work of God (Loder, 1989, pp. 92-122). This learning interconnects with the other dynamic elements of spiritual formation as a holistic approach to learning.

The church plays a crucial role in the nurture of believers (LeMasters, 1992, p. 138). The church provides formal and informal instruction for the believer. Formally, instruction in the faith is achieved through the new believer’s class, sermons, Sabbath school (or Sunday school), and so on. Much of a person’s understanding of his faith grows out of such formal instruction. It is a rare person who is disciplined enough to be totally on her own in studying and growing in knowledge.

Informally, the church also provides vital instruction for the growing Christian. One way this is accomplished is through the example of the lives of more mature believers. The fellowship of Christians is often key in stimulating us to obedience in

some area of their lives. The second way the church informally instructs us is through the mutual sharing of what God is doing in each life. Thus the church is important to the growing Christian, because of the formal and informal instruction it provides.

Jones (1984, pp. 66-68) notes at least four necessary characteristics of a church as a learning community:

1. The church has an atmosphere in which persons are encouraged to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. The atmosphere encourages growth; it does not require or dictate it.

2. The church provides opportunities for discipleship training for those who seek it. In the stages of life, there are seasons appropriate for reassessment, challenge, and growth.

3. The church has a discipleship plan that continuously lifts up adult discipleship as an active priority in the church's decision making and planning.

4. The church uses its diversity to inspire creative discipleship and to discover personal freedom within a framework of mutual accountability. Mutual voluntary accountability is the discipline needed in the church to hold it to a course of maturity.

### Spiritual Formation and Discipleship

Spiritual formation is a broader term than discipleship as noted by Willard (2006) and yet an integral part.

### **Comparing Spiritual Formation and Discipleship**

Dallas Willard (2006) defines spiritual formation in Christ as “the process whereby the innermost being of the individual (the heart, will or spirit) takes on the

quality or character of Jesus himself” (p. 53), “Discipleship is a life of learning from Jesus Christ how to live in the Kingdom of God now, as he himself did” (p. 62). Here, Willard, distinguishes clearly that while there are certain overlaps between discipleship and spiritual formation, spiritual formation is a more holistic term (a process of character formation), while discipleship (how to live in the Kingdom of God) forms a subset of it. Willard gave two reasons why spiritual formation is becoming a popular term.

First, discipleship is a term that had pretty well lost its meaning because of the way it had been misused. Discipleship on the theological right has come to mean preparation for soul winning under the direction of parachurch organization. Discipleship has been farmed out to such organizations because the local church really wasn’t doing it. On the left, discipleship had come to mean some form of social activity or social service, from serving soup lines to political protest to whatever. The term *discipleship* has currently been ruined so far as any solid psychological and biblical content is concerned (p. 53).

The other reason Willard gave for the increasing use of the term spiritual formation is that denominational and traditional differences are not taken as seriously now as they were in the past and a new term is needed to describe our commitment to God. Spiritual formation is considered a suitable and acceptable term. There has been much confusion about the meaning and usage of the words: discipleship, spiritual formation, and Christian spiritual formation. These words are sometimes used interchangeably by some teachers and pastors while others offer a more nuanced definition. Here I will offer some definitions of these terms.

Spiritual formation is the process of forming our inner spiritual beings (soul),

which manifest outwardly as our character. This is an ongoing process that starts when we are in our mothers' womb and continues until we die. There are numerous influences that affect our spiritual formation: cultural legacy, childhood experiences, ethnicity, the socio-political environments in which we live, the dominant culture in our society, and our social interactions with other people, including our family members. Often these influences act subconsciously by a process of socialization or enculturation. In other words, all of us are undergoing spiritual formation all the time, whether we are conscious of it or not.

Christian conversion (accepting Christ) involves a change in status by justification by faith and through the formative regeneration of our souls (sanctification). Christian spiritual formation starts after conversion. Christian spiritual formation is the process of the redemptive inner transformation of the character of a person to reflect the character of Christ Himself. There are two components to Christian spiritual formation: (a) the work of the Holy Spirit, and (b) the willingness of a person to follow Christ in discipleship. Christian spiritual formation is a collaborative divine-human interaction. The influences that act on Christian spiritual formation are similar to those experienced by all living human beings. Additional influences are the formative practices of the Christian faith communities (Christian education) and the Word of God.

Discipleship is the part of Christian spiritual formation where each individual is involved. The Holy Spirit is ever willing to be involved but respects our choices and will not force us to be disciples. Discipleship is following and obeying the teachings of Jesus Christ and, in doing so, becoming Christ-like in our character. Jesus summarizes this by saying that, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross

daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). To be His follower, Jesus points out that there is a part about denying self, and there is another part about following Him.

Luke helpfully gives us some essential features of discipleship. These essentials are trust (Luke 9:37-43); suffering (Luke 9:44-45); humility (Luke 9:46-50); purpose (Luke 9: 51-56); commitment (Luke 9: 57-62); involvement (Luke 10:1-20), and prayer (Luke 10:21-24). However, all these need the work of the Holy Spirit if Christian spiritual formation is to take place. We cannot will or discipline our bodies into spiritual transformation.

### **The Purpose of Spiritual Formation**

Raising up successive generations of committed disciples is the responsibility of the local church. But, the reality is that far too many churches have abandoned intentional discipleship. Wilhoit (2008) clearly defines the local church’s assignment:

Spiritual formation is the task of the church. Period. It represents neither an interesting, optional pursuit by the church nor an insignificant category in the job description of the body. Spiritual formation is at the heart of its whole purpose for existence. The church was formed to form. Our charge, given by Jesus himself, is to make disciples, baptize them, and teach these new disciples to obey his commands. The witness, worship, teaching, and compassion that the church is to practice all require that Christians be spiritually formed...the fact remains that spiritual formation has not been the priority in the North American church that it should be. (pp. 15-16)

In *Care of Mind, Care of Spirit*, May (1992) states, “Spiritual formation is a rather general term referring to all attempts, means, instruction, and disciplines intended towards deepening of faith and furtherance of spiritual growth. It includes educational endeavors as well as the more intimate and in-depth process of spiritual direction” (p. 6). In Christian Spiritual Formation, the focus is on Jesus. It is a life-long process as a believer desires to become a disciple of Jesus and become more like him. Willard (2002)



writes that “spiritual formation for the Christian basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself” (p. 22). Tang (n.d.) states:

The purpose of Christian spiritual formation is three-fold reflecting the economy of the Triune God. Christian spiritual formation is (1) to restore image of God within us so that we reflect the character of Christ; (2) to form a people of God –the body of Christ; and (3) to be part of God’s plan of reconciliation with all of creation. Christian spiritual formation is Trinitarian in basis as it is an invitation to join in the *perichoresis* or eternal dance of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Reframing Christian Spiritual Formation, para. 10)

#### **Four Different Approaches of Spiritual Formation**

One generation ago, evangelical Protestants had hardly heard of the phrase “spiritual formation.” Now many evangelical seminaries offer programs in spiritual formation. Howard Evan (2002) states:

Formation, like the forming of a pot from clay, brings to mind shaping and molding, helping something potential become something actual. Spiritual formation speaks of a shaping process with reference to the spiritual dimension of a person’s life. Christian spiritual formation thus refers to the process by which believers become more fully conformed and united to Christ. (p. 46)

The growing interest in spiritual formation is, for the most part, very healthy, and can be found in mainline Christianity such as traditional evangelical and Pentecostal/charismatic circles. Interest in spirituality has hit mainline Christianity like a flood. But contemporary spiritual formation is difficult to identify. It is a multidisciplinary subject involving psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, education, and theology. But the fundamental commonality among the different authors is that the concept of spiritual formation is about spiritual growth. In this study, the subject is examined from four different approaches.

## Social Sciences

In terms of spiritual formation, Dallas Willard (2002) discusses the spiritual transformation that only happens as each essential dimension of the human being is transformed to Christlikeness under the direction of a regenerate will interacting with constant overtures of grace from God. Such transformation is not the result of mere human effort and cannot be accomplished by putting pressure on the will (heart, spirit) alone (p. 41-42).

Willard regards spiritual formation as character formation (2002). However, he approached spiritual formation through the disciplines of philosophy, theology, psychology, and personality theories. Willard (2006) notes that “psychological and theological understanding of the spiritual life must go hand in hand” (p. 74).

In Willard’s model of the human self, the mind is thought/feeling and the spirit is heart/will. He describes three patterns of spiritual formation such as vision of living in the Kingdom of God now, intention to be a Kingdom person, and means of spiritual formation (2002). These “means for spiritual transformation” are “for replacing of the inner character of the ‘lost’ with the inner character of Jesus: his vision, understanding, feelings, decisions, and character” (p. 89).

Transformation is achieved by discovering, reflecting, identifying, and modifying the six aspects of human personality: thoughts, feelings, choice, body, social context, and soul that prevent us from becoming like Jesus. Once people have identified these failings, they can take steps to retrain the inner person into a new worldview, habits, attitudes, and feelings. The chief means of spiritual formation is studying and meditating on the Scriptures.

## Spiritual Practices

The spiritual practices or disciplines have a rich history. The practice of spiritual direction is widely practiced in Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican churches, but is relatively unknown in other Protestant churches. Recent studies (R.J. Foster, 1998; Whitney, 1997; Willard, 1988) identify twelve to twenty spiritual practices. A comprehensive list includes Bible reading, meditation, Scripture memorization, prayer, worship, evangelism, service, stewardship, fasting, silence, solitude, journaling, submission, and frugality.

Most evangelical Christians focus on just seven of the disciplines: Bible reading, Scripture memorization, prayer, worship, evangelism, service, and stewardship. Most people think of discipline as negative action, such as soldiers and employee. But practicing spiritual disciplines has much more of a positive quality. John Ortberg (1997) states, “Disciplined people can do the right thing at the right time in the right way for the right reason” (p. 55).

Spiritual practices develop habits of the heart that make a disciple more capable of answering the call of God. Jesus told the disciple that by participating in a certain action, such as staying awake and being in prayer they could reach a quality of spiritual strength. Being trained is a product of practice. These habits change our souls. For example, prayer, solitude, and fasting can break the chains of lust or sexual perversion. The discipline of worship can release us from a constant preoccupation with ourselves. Keeping a prayer journal can replace depression and bitterness with joy and forgiveness. The practice of spiritual formation involves submission of the body, submission of the will, and the consistent submission of life’s appetites to the lordship of Christ (Hull, 2006,

p. 206).

Richard Foster in his *The Celebration of Disciplines: The Path to Spiritual Growth* reintroduces evangelicals to a large number of spiritual disciplines beyond the quiet time, reading the Bible, prayer and evangelism (Foster, 1998). “New” spiritual disciplines are reintroduced, such as silence and solitude (Barton, 2004), fasting (Piper, 1997). These spiritual disciplines help to instil in practitioners a habit of worship and listening (Willard, 1988). Practising these spiritual disciplines also motivate people to recommit their lives to spiritual formation (Wilkins, 1997).

Spiritual disciplines are not about information, but about the formation of our spirits, attitudes and actions that rise from exercising these disciplines. We practice them until they become second nature.

## Teaching

The empowerment of the church for participation in God’s mission is dependent on a congregation’s commitment to lifelong teaching and learning that nurtures spiritual formation. It is the responsibility of the church to provide opportunities and hospitable space that will facilitate this ongoing process of learning and maturing. Christians have always known and constantly taught that a relationship with God is lived out in experience through our relationship with one another. Griffith (Groome & Horell, 2003) defines spirituality as “a consciously lived relationship with God in Christ, through the indwelling of the Spirit, in the context of a Christian community of faith in the midst of the world” (p. 56).

Teaching and learning is an important theme in any discussion of spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is not anti-intellectual. Spiritual formation embraces the

intellect but moves beyond belief into action. There is a need to re-examine our teaching and learning in a rapidly changing world. The centrality of the Bible is regarded as the foundation for spiritual formation. Mulholland's (Mulholland, 1985), *Shaped by the Word: the Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation* highlights the importance of biblical studies in spiritual formation.

Eugene Peterson (1996) points to spiritual readings, novels, poetry, music, and drama as other sources of nourishment (pp. 1-87). According to Johnson (Johnson, 1989), Christian spiritual formation has to do with (a) finding out through and with the help of the faith community how to be a Christian in these times, in this place; (b) how to recognize and confess our self-deception; (c) how to walk according to the Spirit; (d) how to recognize where we are refusing the Christian story and choosing instead the stories of culture and civil religion; (e) how to acquire Christian character; (f) how to learn the skills required by the Christian story, such as praying, meditating, repenting, loving, welcoming the stranger; and how to actualize our Christian vocation over the course of a lifetime (p. 28-29).

With regards to Christian education, Johnson writes, first we must decide to become Christian. Next we must submit ourselves to prolonged instruction and initiation. We must give ourselves over to the Story, begin to participate in it; only then do we really begin to understand! "I participate fully in order that I might understand." Johnson describes Christian spiritual formation as a process of learning "how to" while Christian education is a process of learning "what it is" to be a Christian. The Christian Story is the strand that ties Christian education and Christian spiritual formation together. The church has a responsibility to teach, exhort, encourage, rebuke and disciple. The task of teaching

disciples in the church occurs on two levels: scripturally and experientially. Teaching the Bible to believers provides the foundation for making disciples and for nurturing them. The church also provides experiences that nourish, influence, and develop individuals within the fellowship of a church.

## Community

Christianity has been shaped by men and women who loved people and handed them something of God in their very human lives. Their spiritual practices were woven into the fabric of their lives on the loom of relationships, both with God and with humanity.

Bill Hull (2006) notes, “Community describes the relationships we form to help us live out our beliefs. In community, others hold us accountable for our heart’s intentions, they test our words and sentiments, and they rescue us from a life of waste and self-indulgence” (p. 189-190). Spiritual formation is often understood to be personal or individual activities one performs to get closer to God and to discipline oneself. But no one discipline exists by itself without interactions with others. There are also corporate spiritual disciplines that the whole community of faith can do together.

*Renovarē*, a parachurch organization, has moved from their initial emphasis on “spiritual formation” (initially called discipleship) to “spiritual formation based congregations,” to the “with-God” perspective of spiritual formation. The *Renovarē* Spiritual Formation Bible defines spiritual formation as the process of transforming the inner reality of the self (the “inward being” of the psalmist) in such a way that the overall with-God life seen in the Bible naturally and freely comes to pass in us. Our inner world (the “secret heart”) becomes the home of Jesus by His initiative and our response (R. J.

Foster, 2005).

Richard Foster (2005) first made mention of spiritual formation based congregations in his Pastoral Letter, May 2005 and one year later in May 2006. This time, he listed the characteristics of a spiritual formation based community:

1. The process of Christian spiritual formation and life-long discipleship is the foundation of individual and congregational life.

2. Everyone is encouraged to be involved in an intentional process for formation in Christlikeness.

3. The natural outcome of events for individual participation in the fellowship is ever-increasing formation and transformation into the ways and heart of Jesus.

4. Spiritual formation in Christlikeness is a process not a program.

5. Pastors and lay leadership are fully committed to participation in the spiritual formation process.

6. There is a great diversity of sources from which to draw for Christian faith and practice.

7. The classical Spiritual Disciplines—such as prayer, fasting, service, and guidance—are highly valued, taught on, and practiced.

8. All are encouraged to explore the writings of the great devotional authors of the Church, such as Saint Augustine, Julian of Norwich, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Others have recognised the importance of relationships in community. Some scholars have identified the spiritual-forming roles of spiritual leaders and mentors.

James Houston (2002) identifies the importance of mentoring in spiritual formation in his book, *The Mentored Life*. Many scholars have written on this important aspect of spiritual

formation. Spiritual formation does not occur in a vacuum but in relationships with other people in a community.

Wilhoit (2008) centers spiritual formation in the context of a community, informed by the nature of man and of God, transformed by the Holy Spirit, and facilitated by formative practices. One important aspect that is pointed out by Wilhoit is that “conflict has a unique way of forming us” (p. 174). Obviously this is different from many “Christian” teachings that advocate conflict avoidance as a way of keeping peace in a Christian faith community. This is especially true in an Asian context where conflict is to be avoided, as conflict often results in a no-win situation. Community experiences constitute the most common process for discipleship in the local church.

### **Models of Discipleship**

The effectiveness of discipleship in every church is primarily determined by its church model. Some church models intrinsically pay less attention to discipleship; other church models make discipleship a very high priority and even make it the foundation of their ministry.

#### **Four Models of Effective Discipleship**

Ogden (2003) points out that the best word to characterize the state of discipleship today is “superficial.” Ogden goes on to quote the Joint Statement on Discipleship at the Eastbourne Consultation that “we acknowledge that the state of the Church is marked by growth without depth. Our zeal to go wider has not been matched by a commitment to go deeper” (p. 22). Hull (2006) warns that “ignoring the crisis is like a man who will not deal with a heart problem” (p. 12). Many researchers and scholars believe the superficial



state in the church is caused by a lack of discipleship training. Both Barna (2005) and Ogden (2003) have pointed out that the absence of a clear pathway for spiritual growth is a key cause of discipleship deficiency in many churches. In order to search for pathways, effective discipleship models will need to be explored. So, four models that are known to provide clear pathways for spiritual growth and that have been successfully implemented by many churches in different ministry settings are considered : (a) Rick Warren's Saddleback Model, (b) Bill Hull's Training-Network (TNET) Model, (c) Robert Coleman's Eight Step Model, and (d) the G12 Cell-Group Model. The first two models were created as its founders learned from their own practical experience. The third model was academically formulated from a scholarly investigation of Scripture. Lastly, there is the once popular G12 cell group model.

### **Rick Warren's Saddleback Model**

Rick Warren's book *The Purpose-Driven Life* uses the simple illustration of a baseball diamond to capture the idea that spiritual progress is a journey. Warren (1995) shares the secret behind the fast growing Saddleback Valley Community Church, which he founded in 1980. He identifies five circles of commitment and says, "The goal of the church is to move people from the outer circle (low commitment/maturity) to the inner circle (high commitment/maturity)" (p. 131).

He also uses the diagram of a baseball field to describe the Life Development Process. Through 100 Level Classes, which focus on "Knowing Christ," the church seeks to move people to become committed to church membership. Through 200 Level Classes, which focus on "Growing in Christ," the church seeks to move people to be committed to

spiritual maturity. Through 300 Level Classes, which focus on “Serving in Christ,” the church seeks to move people to be committed to ministry. And lastly, through 400 Level Classes which focus on “Sharing Christ,” the church seeks to move people to be committed to missions (p. 130). Warren breaks the spiritual journey down into these steps, beginning with a basic relationship with Christ to the crown of its curriculum: missions.

Warren sees spiritual growth as a process that occurs over time in the context of community. The diamond gives church leaders practical handles, providing easy to understand concepts. Hull (2006) criticizes the Saddleback approach, arguing that “they don’t deal with the mystery and subtleties of Christian spiritual formation. That can only occur when spiritual people seek God together and find their own way. Disciples must eventually struggle in prayer to know what God wants them to do next” (pp. 168-169).

### **Training Network (T-Net)**

The Training Network (T-NET) began with Bill Hull, a pastor committed to returning his church and others to their disciple-making roots. While establishing his own church in disciple making, Bill wrote several books showing how the Gospels describe in detail Jesus own method of making disciples and how we can use His method. Hull brought in church consultant, Bob Gilliam, to develop the process for instructing churches and in 1991 T-NET was born. Nurtured under the umbrella of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), T-NET is now an independent interdenominational ministry. Since its implementation, T-NET has been identified by many Christian leaders as an effective strategy for discipleship. At the foundation of T-NET is Bill Hull’s four-phase disciple-making system. This system was actually documented in Alexander B.

Bruce's (1963) *The Training of The Twelve* which was then adopted by Hull in a twentieth-century context.

Hull (2006) divides Jesus' ministry into four different phases in , *The Complete Book of Discipleship*.

1. "Come and See": In a four-month period, Jesus extended an invitation to five men to see and consider His claims and then make a commitment to become His disciples.

2. "Come and Follow Me": In a ten-month period, Jesus invited these fishermen to make a deeper commitment; He offered to train them by showing them how to conduct ministry and by doing it with them.

3. "Come and Be with Me": In another twenty-month period, Jesus chose the Twelve and called them into an even higher level of commitment. He gave each of them special responsibilities and authority, and he spent more time with them to prepare them to disciple others.

4. "Remain in Me": In a short period before His crucifixion, Jesus reminded the disciples of the importance of their ongoing walk with Him by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. T-NET summarizes the tasks of the church in four words: *Evangelize* (Come and See); *Establish* (Come and Follow Me); *Equip* (Come and Be with Me); and *Empower* (Remain in Me). T-NET encourages followers to pattern these four phases of Jesus' ministry to make disciples.

### **Robert Coleman's Master Plan Model**

Robert Coleman (1964) is a highly esteemed Christian scholar who has raised up many Christian academic scholars. He has published numerous books on discipleship. In

*The Master Plan of Evangelism* Coleman explains his eight-step disciple-making model.

1. *Selection: Jesus called a few men to follow him.* According to the world's standards, they were uneducated and ignorant people. But in Jesus' eyes they were potential leaders for world mission because they were honest, willing to confess their sins, and willing to learn. Jesus concentrated on these few, and the world was changed through them.

2. *Association: Jesus was with them.* With the first disciples, the essence of Jesus' training was learned as His disciples followed Him. He drew them close to Himself, becoming His own school and curriculum.

3. *Consecration: He required obedience.* Jesus expected His disciples to obey Him. He did not require them to be smart, but He wanted them to be loyal—to the extent that obeying Him became the distinguishing mark they were known by. "Disciples" meant they were the Master's "learner" or "pupils." Later Jesus' disciples became known as "Christians" (Acts 11:26), a fitting description for obedient followers who took on the character of their leader, Jesus.

4. *Impartation: He gave Himself.* Jesus gave His disciples everything that the Father had given them (John 15:5): His peace (John 15:33), His joy (John 15:11), the keys to His kingdom (Matt 15:19), and His own glory (John 16:22,24). He withheld nothing, not even His life.

5. *Demonstration: He showed them how to live.* Jesus showed the disciples how to pray, study, and relate to others. More than twenty times, the gospels recount Jesus' practice of prayer. He taught the disciples about the use of the Scripture by extensively using words from the Old Testament. The disciples saw Jesus interact with Nicodemus,

the woman at the well, the rich young ruler, and many others. Jesus showed them how to talk to and treat others.

6. *Delegation: He assigned them work.* From day one, Jesus prepared His disciples to take over the ministry. He gradually turned over responsibility by sending out the seventy-two (Matt 10:1-42) and giving extensive instructions to the Twelve (Luke 10:1-20). He told the disciples to follow His methods, expect hardships, and go out in pairs. Following His resurrection, He gave the disciples the responsibility to take the gospel to the entire world (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).

7. *Supervision: He kept checking on them.* Whenever Jesus gave the disciples work to do, He followed up with them. He listened to their reports and then blessed them. When He was with the disciples, He spent time helping them understand the reason for a previous action or preparing them for a new experience. He used questions, illustrations, warnings, and admonitions to teach the disciples what they needed to know to reach the world.

8. *Reproduction: He expected them to reproduce.* Jesus told the disciples to pray for workers (Matt 9:35-38), and He called them to teach everyone to obey His teaching (Matt 28:20). He required the costly elements of leadership development and reproduction, and expected the disciples to reproduce by finding other disciples who would also follow Jesus. Coleman's eight-phase system to make disciples is well-recognized in Christian communities.

### **The G12 Cell-Group Model**

The G12 Vision is a strategy for Christian evangelism to fulfill the Great

Commission. It is founded upon the idea that every Christian can mentor and lead twelve people in the Christian faith, following the example of Jesus. It was first modeled in Bogotá, Colombia by Pastor César Castellanos and his wife Claudia after Castellanos had a vision from God instructing him to implement this structure of cell groups of 12. In the early 1990s, largely due to the remarkable numeric growth of several churches in Seoul, Korea, the concept of a Cell-Group Church began to spread quickly in churches in Korea, Southeast Asia, and the U.S. Many Korean pastors and lay leaders including the writer himself attended Cell-Group Church Conferences held in Seoul. At those conferences, attendees were introduced to Ralph Neighbour and Jenkins' (1990) ideas of the Cell Group Church. We learned that a cell-group church centers its entire ministry on the regular gathering of cell groups.

However, not to be confused, a church that has cell groups is not necessarily a cell-group church; a cell group-church must be one which centers its ministry on cell groups. At those conferences, attendees learned how Neighbour's ideas and methods were successfully implemented in some churches. Later, some Korean pastors embraced the idea and led their churches to transition from the traditional program-based model to Neighbour's cell-group-based model.

Some other pastors also planted new churches based on the cell-group church model. In the most recent decade, a new adaptation of the cell-group model, called G12, has been adopted by a small number of American churches. G12 is a strategy that was developed by Cesar Castellanos Dominguez following his visit to the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, where the Pastor David Yonggi Cho had successfully implemented the cell structure. The G12 vision, also referred to as Groups of 12 or Government of 12, is a

strategy for church growth based on the concept that each person should mentor and raise up twelve disciples who then each subsequently mentor twelve more disciples.

The “Ladder of Success” is used to describe the main steps of the G12 Vision.

1. Win: Evangelism aiming to win people to a new belief in Christ.

2. Consolidate: This stage involves attending an Encounter with God weekend retreat, where a new believer is ‘consolidated’ in the faith by prayer, exposing of generational curses, casting out of demons, and deep repentance.

3. Disciple: At this stage, individuals are expected to enroll in the School of Leaders, which will begin to train the believer to recruit new disciples.

4. Send: Leaders are ‘sent’ to do the work by establishing a new cell group of 12 men or 12 women depending on the gender of the “leader.”

The above mentioned step-wise models are quite valuable in that they provide a clear mechanism for spiritual growth, and they are practical in many church settings. Each model is adequate to a particular church setting. For example, Rick Warren’s model is tremendously effective in his church, Saddleback Valley Community. He has church planning seminars every few months and numerous pastors, pastor-candidates, and lay leaders attend. Those who have attended his church planning seminar and adopted his model in their churches have successful ministries. But not all of them can claim the same type of success. However, it is unclear how Rick Warren’s model can be implemented and become successful in college-oriented churches.

And Rick Warren’s model, Bill Hull’s T-NET model, and Robert Coleman’s eight-step disciple-making method, require new adjustments in view of today’s complex challenges. That is, many church members do not begin to come to church with the idea

of becoming a disciple. Even when these church members begin a discipleship program, some members may stay for a shorter time than is needed to complete the said models and leave the area or the church to attend a different church. Moreover, each step does not integrate the other steps well, compartmentalizing each part. This is unlike Jesus' holistic approach to discipleship, which although having a sequential nature, integrated each part so that many of Jesus' concepts were taught throughout his three year ministry.

Therefore, it is worthy to examine other types of discipleship models. No matter how effective these approaches are at leading people to Christ and enabling the church to grow, the right approach should adopt the biblical patterns of the leadership modeled after Jesus' beautiful life and ministry in the New Testament. It is essential to move beyond the well-known existing models, for better implementation of the Great Commission of our Lord who said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19).



## CHAPTER IV

### A CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE OF THE WEST CENTRAL KOREAN CONFERENCE AND KOREAN ADVENTISTS

#### **Introduction**

##### Ministerial Context of WCKC and Korean Adventists

#### **Introduction of the Korean Adventist Congregation**

The West Central Korean Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is the largest conference in Korea in terms of population. This conference serves more than 18,300,000 people in Korea. This population represents 30% of the population of Korea. There are 169 churches and 31 companies with 171 ordained and 42 licensed ministers. This Conference belongs to the Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists belongs to the Northern Asia-Pacific Division of the General Conference. The Adventist Church in Korea was initiated in 1904 with four churches and 71 baptized members. Currently, the Korean Adventist Church consists of one union conference and five local conferences, including 14 different denominational institutions. Two major local conferences (East Central and West Central Korean Conference) are located in Seoul, while the remaining three local conferences are located in the major cities of Daejeon, Daegu, and Gwangju.

According to the year-end quarterly report of 2011, in the Personal Ministry of the Korean Union Conference (Department of Personal Ministry Department of Korean Union Conference, 2011), Korean Adventist churches had 216,037 members and 892 ordained and licensed ministers serving 875 churches and companies. It was reported that only 62,404 individuals attend worship each Sabbath. The number of baptized members who attend worship each Sabbath is 58,453. I will comment of this later in the paper.

### **History of the Korean Adventist Church**

While visiting Japan, Son Heung Cho converted to Seventh-day Adventism in 1904 through the influence of evangelist Hitte Kuniya. While staying in Kobe, he was taught about Adventist beliefs by a Japanese Adventist pastor, Hitte Kuniya, and was baptized on June 12, 1904. As a result, Mr. Son gave up his trip to Hawaii and left for home. On his way home, Son in turn converted Giban Im from the Methodist denomination (Land, 2005).

Giban Im settled down in Jinnampo and evangelized some neighbors. Missionary W. R. Smith established a mission headquarters in Sunan the following year, 1906. In 1907, W. R. Smith established the Euimyung School in Sunan with the help of church members in the area. In 1912, the missionaries established their headquarters in Seoul and formed the Chosen Conference in 1917. The Mission Conference and the first higher education course were established in the Euimyung School. Two years later, the Korean Church was promoted to a Union Mission at the first union constituency meeting in Sunan (Land, 2005). The oppression of the Japanese Empire reached its climax when the Church was forced to be dissolved in 1943. Church leaders were imprisoned and Pastor

Taehyun Choi was martyred as a result of torture (J. K. Lee, 2001).

In the 1950s the Korean Peninsula once again became devastated as a result of the 3 year-long Korean War. However, it was also a result of the war that the Adventist Church was allowed to expand its influence in the Korean society. During the war, the Seoul Adventist Hospital took up temporary refuge on Jeju Island and opened a free clinic for refugees. Then the postwar reconstruction plan of the Korean Government provided the Adventist Church with a chance to participate in a relief ministry for the poor on an official basis.

As a result of the Korean-American Relief Agreement in 1958, the Adventist Church was selected as one of the official relief organizations and it provided aid to about 80 thousand destitute people annually. This resulted in explosive church growth in terms of quantity. In 1965, the Korean Union Mission had six local missions and the number of Sabbath School students reached more than 100 thousand.

But, the economic depression of the late 1960s caused a rapid decrease in church membership and consequently the number of local missions declined to three. In the late 1970s, the Korean Adventist Church began to recover its strength when its organization was restructured, this time based on five local missions. In 1983, the Korean Church had enough members and finance to warrant conferences status.

### **Community Context**

Korea is located in East Asia, and occupies the southern half of the Korean Peninsula bordering the East Sea and the Yellow Sea. Korea finds itself squeezed between three titans: China, Japan, and Russia. Over 70% of the land in Korea is

mountainous with the eastern regions consisting of mainly rugged mountain ranges and deep valleys.

Korea, according to Shin (2006), is believed to be among the world's most ethnically homogeneous nations. This mono-ethnicity led Shin to express concerns in his article about ethnic pride, prejudice, and discrimination. Koreans also maintain their own distinctive language, culture, and customs. It is an ancient family-oriented society, heavily based on Confucianism, which even in modern times retains the basic patterns and manners of family-centered life. Korea has been influenced by four major religions: Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and Shamanism. Many Koreans follow more than one religion, as many new Christian converts continue to practice ancestor worship and perform Buddhist rites.

The population of Korea is 48,754,657, as of July 2011, according to the Statistics of CIA (CIA, 2011). Due to the low birth rate and extended average life span, the percentage of children is decreasing while the population of the aged is increasing. See Figure 1.

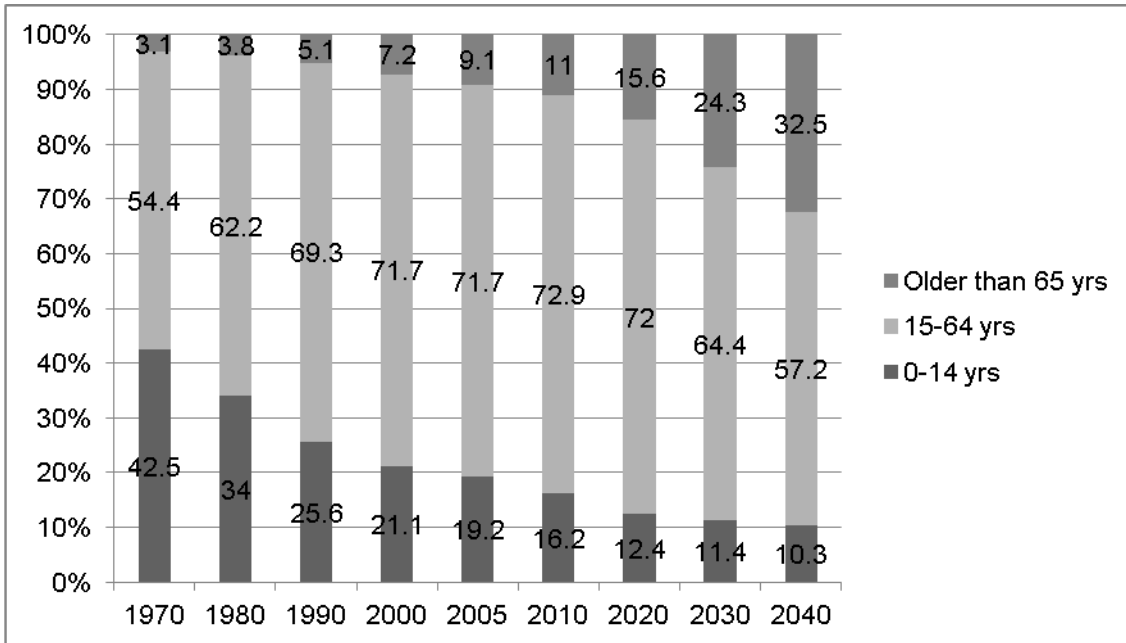


Figure 1. Composition of population by age. Adapted from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ks.html>

Religion plays a significant part in the life of the Korean people. According to Statistics Korea (KOSTAT, 2005), 53.5% of Koreans are religious. Buddhism is the most dominant religion in Korea. Combined with Buddhism, Christianity, and Catholicism account for more than 50 % of the population with religion. Currently, Catholicism is growing fast, while Protestant Christianity is declining in numbers. See Figure 2.

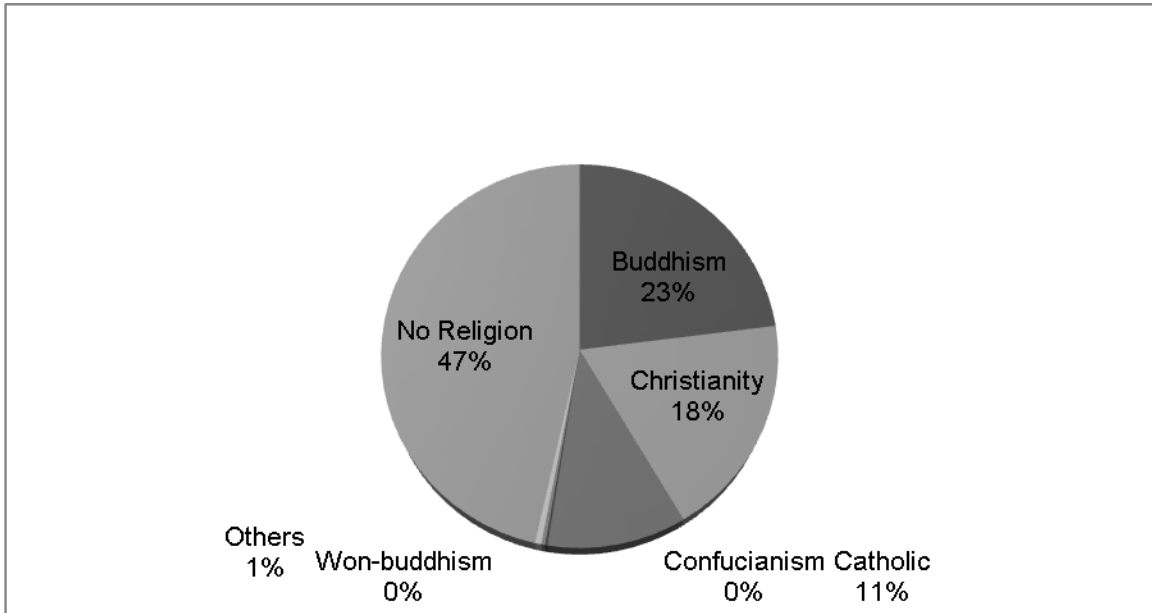


Figure 2. Distribution of Population by Religion (2005). Adapted from <http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/help/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=34529>

Korea is a country with a dense population and a scarcity of natural resources. In spite of such disadvantages, Korea has accomplished unprecedented and rapid economic growth since 1960. Korea is presently regarded as one of the world's top10 economies. The educational consciousness of Korean parents has perhaps has played a key role in achieving such a result. Education is one of the primary values among the Korean people. Great pressure is placed on children to pursue higher education. As depicted in Figure 3, the percentage of college graduates more than quadrupled from 7.7% in 1980 to 31.4% in 2005. The increase of the highly educated ratio is so rapid that college graduates as a percentage of the population increases 1% annually.

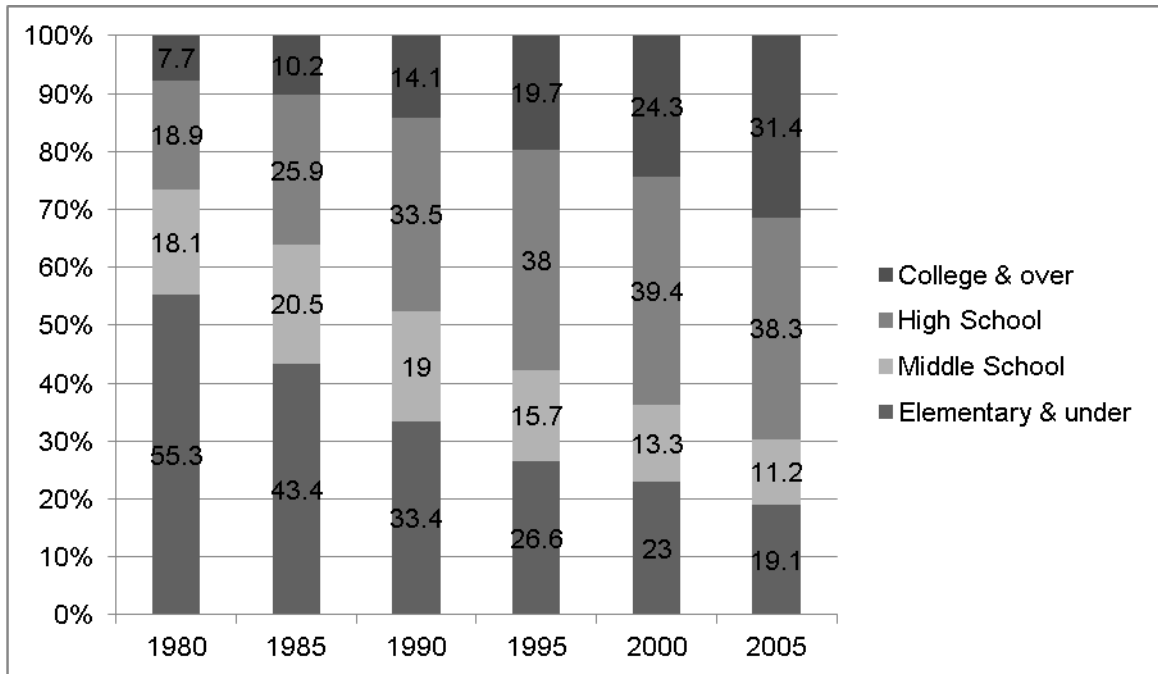


Figure 3. Composition of population by educational attainment. Adapted from <http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/help/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=34529>

Industrialization has changed not only the lifestyle of Koreans but also the shape of Korean social structure. Korea was traditionally an agricultural country. Currently, however, those who are engaged in tertiary education number two times more than the total number of those who work in the primary and secondary level. One of the serious social problems of Korea is economic and geographical polarization. As of 2009, about 47.6% of the Korean population and nearly a half of gross domestic product are concentrated in the area of Seoul, the capital. This concentration of population in the capital creates social, economic, and political problems. It is widely believed that the changed industrial structure and over-zealous enthusiasm for education have sped up that polarization.

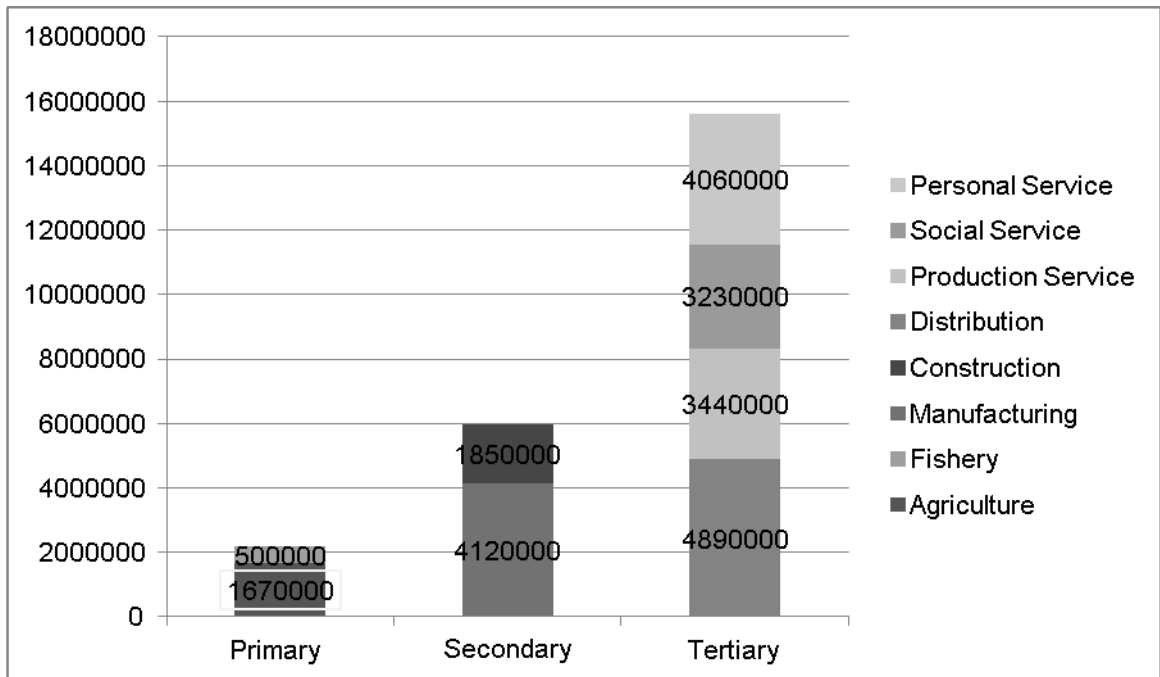


Figure 4. Population distribution by employment—indicates those employed who have completed elementary school, secondary school, college/university (tertiary).. Retrieved from <http://kostat.go.kr/portal/english/help/1/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=34529>

The Korean government once tried to solve the problem by relocating the capital city and by using the construction of company towns in their local areas.

The Korean Adventist Church, with its increased membership, improved its population per member ration from 298.70 to one to 230.33 to one between 2000 and 2009. This implies that the growth rate of membership has surpassed the rate of increase in population. In reality, however, considering the slight increase in attendance rate, it cannot be said that the member per population ratio has increased.

Korean social structure and values have influenced the overall structure of the Adventist Church in Korea. Many Adventist parents whose children are in middle school



and high school have tended to move to the capital area in search for a better educational environment for their children. This has caused polarization between the churches in the capital and other local areas, because the churches in the rural areas are struggling from a lack of young adults.

### **Membership Trends**

The church membership of the Korean Union Conference has increased steadily over the last 10 years. As indicated in Figure 5, Adventist membership in Korea has grown 3.1% on average since 2002. This growth rate is comparable with the other Protestant denominations of Korea. Park (2011) states, “from the 1970s to the 1980s, the Korean church grew rapidly. But this explosive growth began leveling off after the centennial anniversary of the Korean Protestant Church in 1984 and the growth rate decreased toward the end of the 1990s” (p. 31). According to Park (2011), the Korean Protestants have decreased in membership over the last 10 years, losing 143,898 members (p. 32). The Korean Protestant churches recorded a negative -1.4% growth rate between 1995 and 2005 with a decrease in membership of 143,898.

The number of Catholics and Buddhists increased, while the number of Protestants decreased from 1995 to 2005. Catholics increased by over two million, a growth rate of 74.4% for the decade. Park (2011) has suggested four reasons why the Catholics increased rapidly. They have four virtues: (a) resistance to injustice, (b) a capacity for organizing, (c) probity, and (d) the bonds of relationship.

According to the quarterly report of the KUC (KUC, 2002-2011), the number of attending members of KUC has just grown 5.4% for 10 years. Figure 10 shows that only

3,239 people of KUC were added to the number of attendees in spite of the more than 65,172 who joined the church through baptism and profession of faith during the same decade. The WCKC is no different than the KUC in terms of the number of attending members on each Sabbath. See Figure 5 and 6.

According to the quarterly report of the KUC ( 2002-2011), the number of attending members of WCKC has just grown 2.1% in 10 years. Figure 11 shows that only 409 people of WCKC were added to the number of attending in spite of more than 23,901 who joined the church through baptism and professions of faith during the same decade. This indicates that people leave the church at almost the same proportion as people who come into the church.

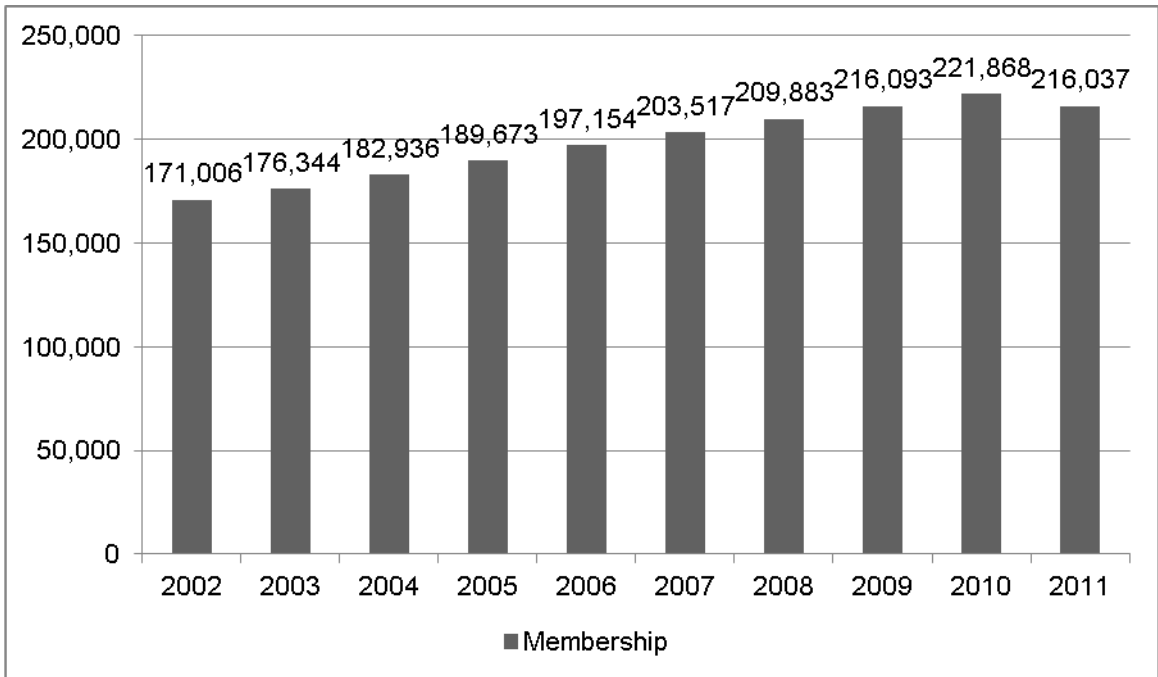


Figure 5. Annual membership transition of KUC in 2002-2011. Adapted from the quarterly report from 2002 to 2011. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

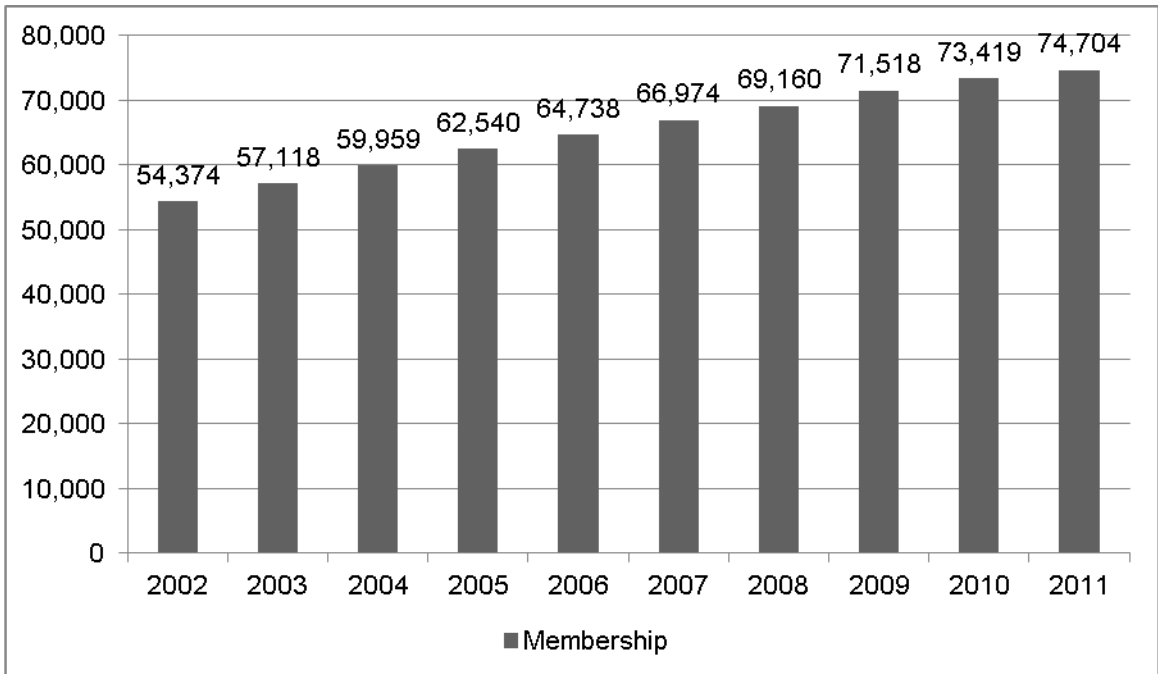


Figure 6. Annual membership transition of WCKC in 2002-2011. Adapted from the *Quarterly report from 2002 to 2011*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

As it is reported, what makes people decide to join or to leave the church is not the truth they have, but relationships. It has been suggested that people leave the church unless they make at least six or seven friends in the church within six months. Therefore, the suggestion is that the Adventist churches in Korea should emphasize the importance of nurturing new members and should develop programs or strategy to strengthen relationships between new members and old members.

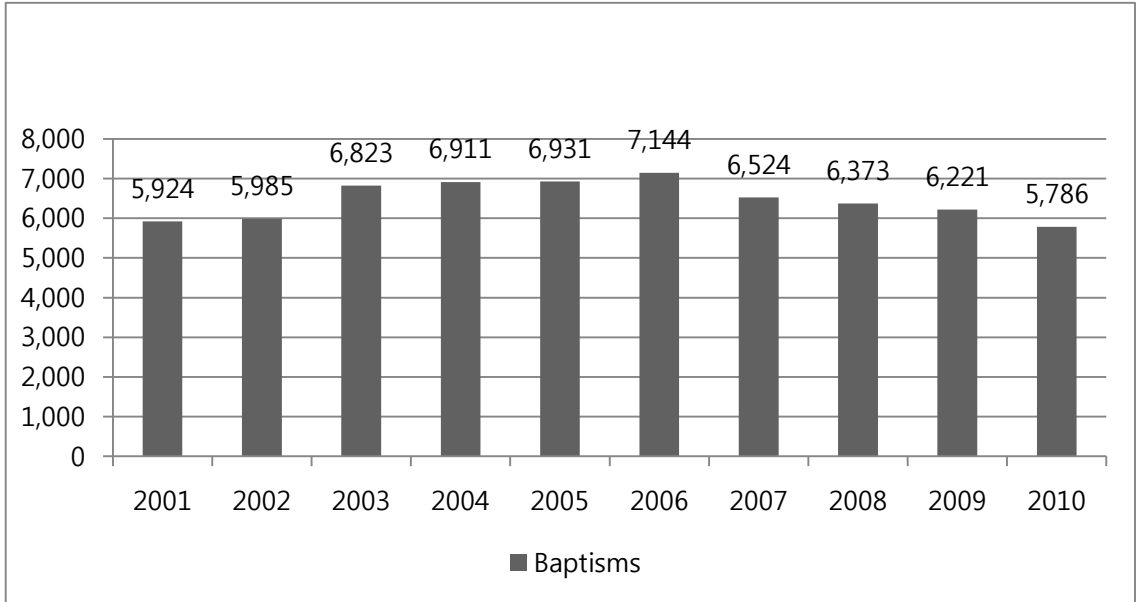


Figure 7. Annual baptisms of KUC in 2001-2011. Adapted from *Quarterly report from 2002 to 2011*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

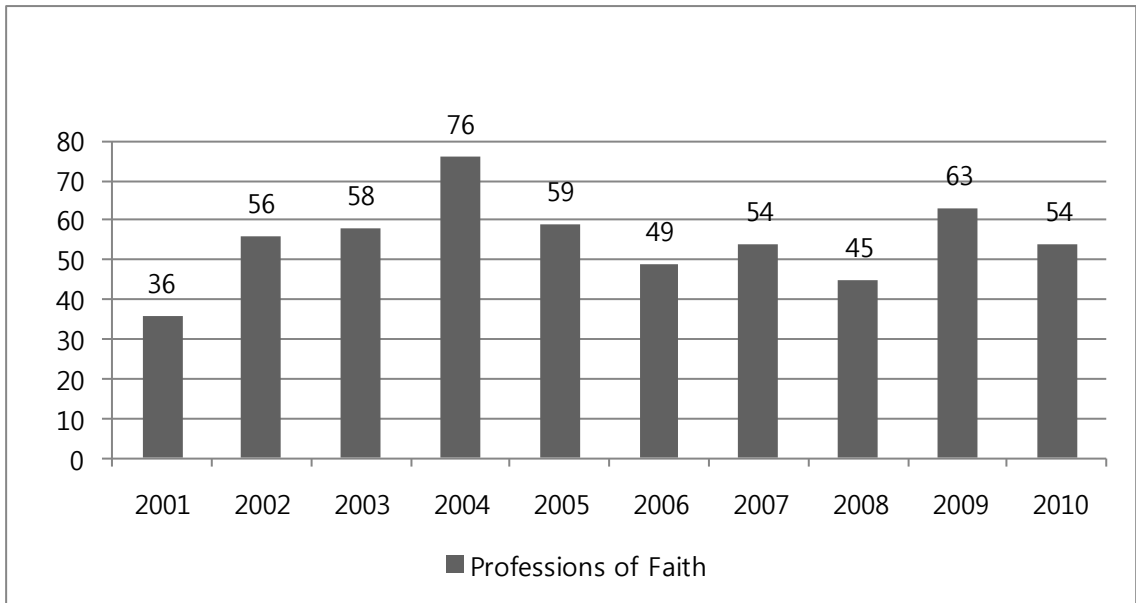


Figure 8. Annual Professions of Faith of KUC in 2001-2010—Persons previously baptized accepted as members by profession of faith. Adapted from the *Quarterly report from 2002 to 2011*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

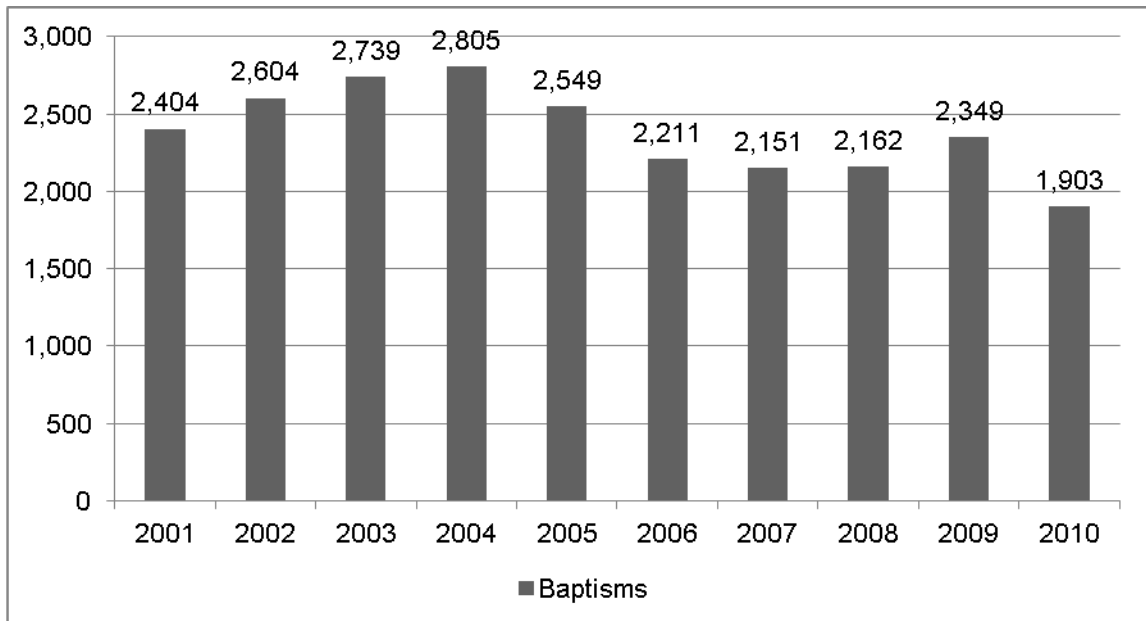


Figure 9. Annual Baptisms of WCKC in 2001-2010, Adapted from the *Quarterly report from 2002 to 2011*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

According to the Korean Union Conference Constituency Session in 2009 (KUC, 2009), it was reported that the Korean Adventist Church had 216,093 members. See Figure 6. However, it is estimated that only 61,951 attend worship each Sabbath. See Figure 10. Considering that children and the unbaptized are included in these numbers, it is assumed that less than a quarter of the official members attend Sabbath worship on a regular basis. According to Kim (2011), a KUC reporter, by the end of the second quarter in 2011, it was reported that the Korean Adventist Church had 214,000 members. There was a 54,000 increase compared to 2008. However, it is reported that only 58,000 people attended worship each Sabbath in 2011. That means that only 27% of the baptized members attended church on Sabbath. Figure 10 shows the attendance from 2002-2011.

The West Central Korean Conference (WCKC) has the largest membership among the five conferences with 74,232 members. From 2008 to 2011 membership increased by 23,875. However, in the WCKC, only 23.1% of the baptized members attend on Sabbath. Only 17,208 baptized members attend church from a membership of 74,232 each Sabbath. In the East Central Korean Conference (ECKC), only 23.9% of baptized members attend each Sabbath. This means that only 17,140 baptized members attend church out of 71,581 members each Sabbath. In the Midwest Korean Conference (MWKC), only 31.1% of baptized members attend each Sabbath, or 8,917 baptized members out of 26,909 each Sabbath. In the Southeast Korean Conference (SEKC), only 39.3% of baptized members attend each Sabbath, or 8,126 baptized members attending 20,266 each Sabbath. Church attendance for each conference has not changed, even though more than 6,000 new members joined the Adventist Church each year.

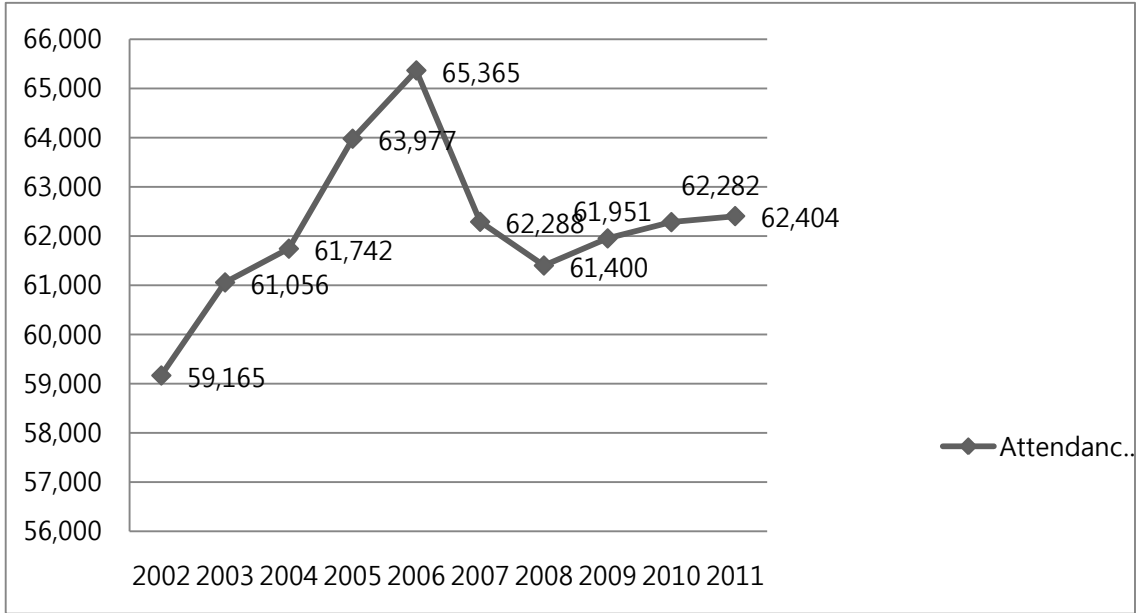


Figure 10. Attendance of Members of KUC in 2011. Adapted from KUC (2011), the *Quarterly Report 3/4 of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

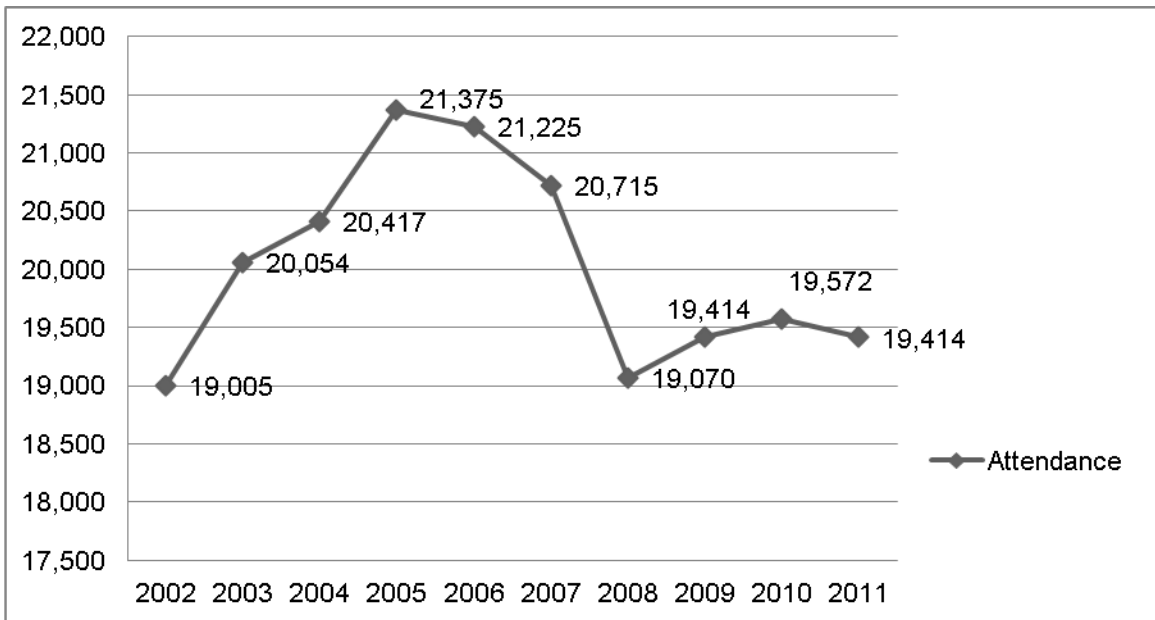


Figure 11. Attendance of Members of WCKC in 2011, Adapted from KUC (2011), the *Quarterly report (3/4) of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

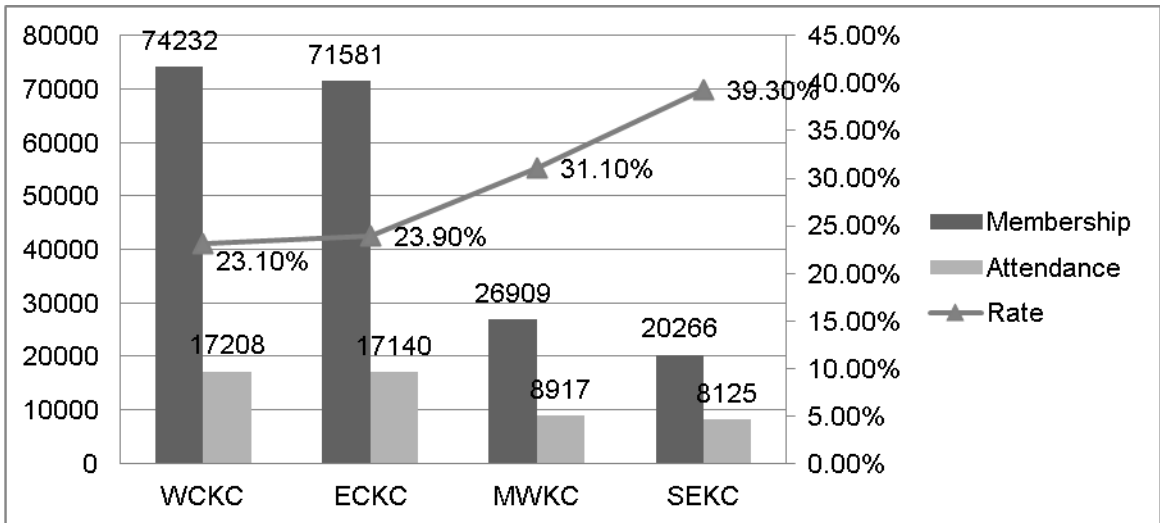


Figure 12. Attendance of Baptized Members Each Sabbath in 2011. Figures indicate different attendance rates in each conference. Adapted from KUC (2011), *the Quarterly report (3/4) of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

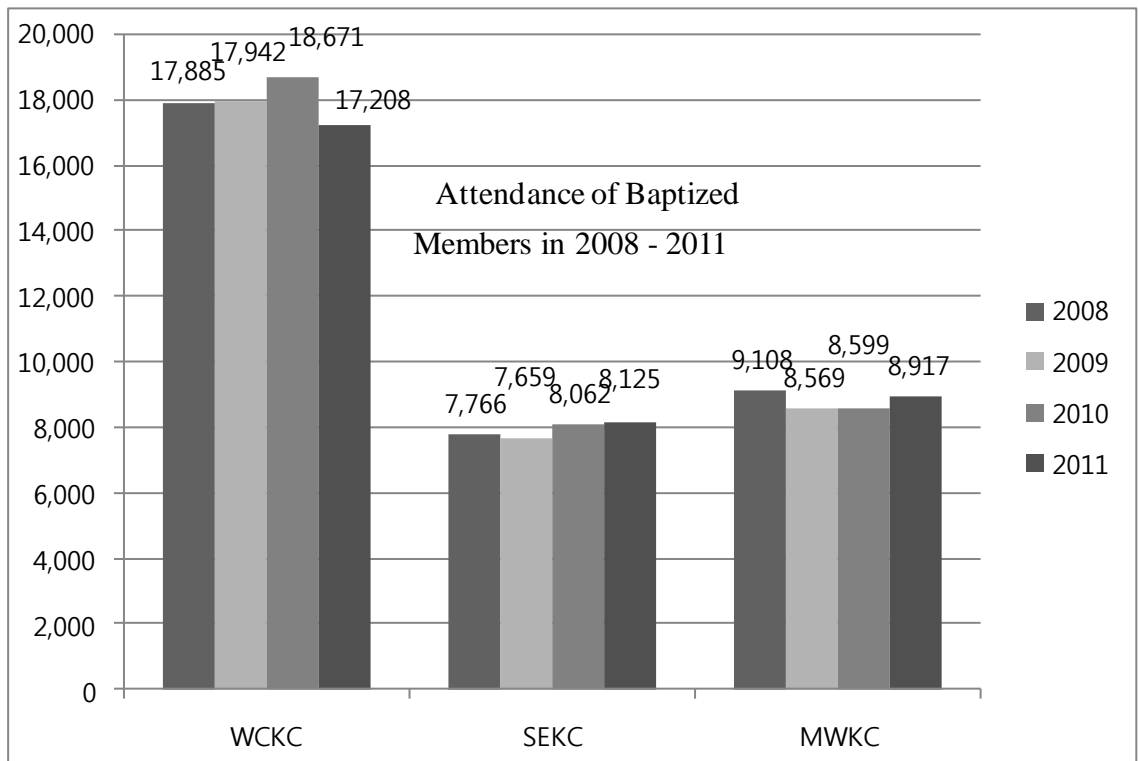


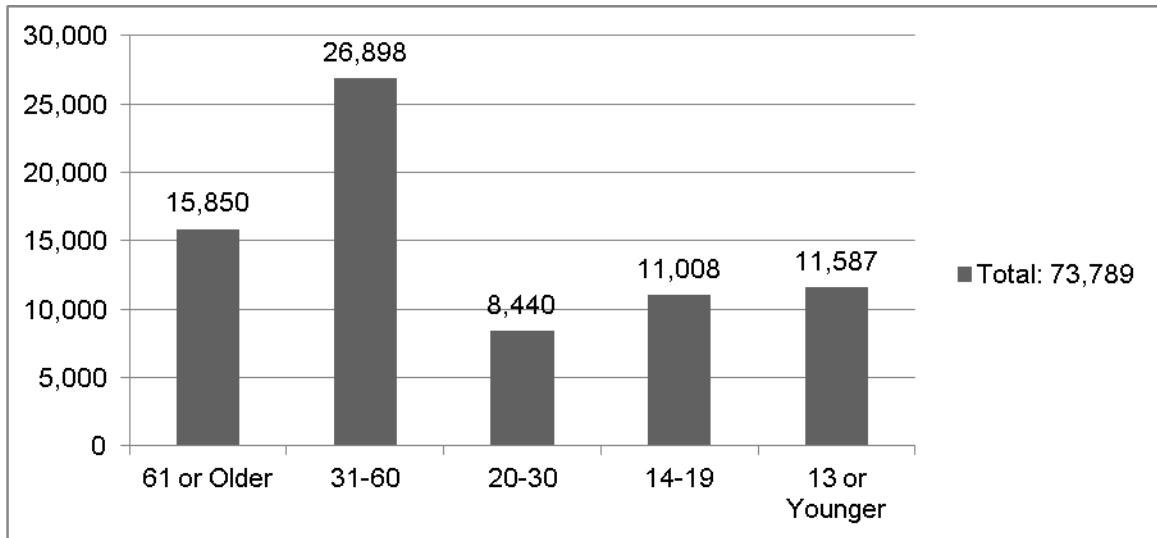
Figure 13. Attendance of Baptized Members in 2008 - 2011. Adapted from the 2011 *Quarterly Report (3/4) of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



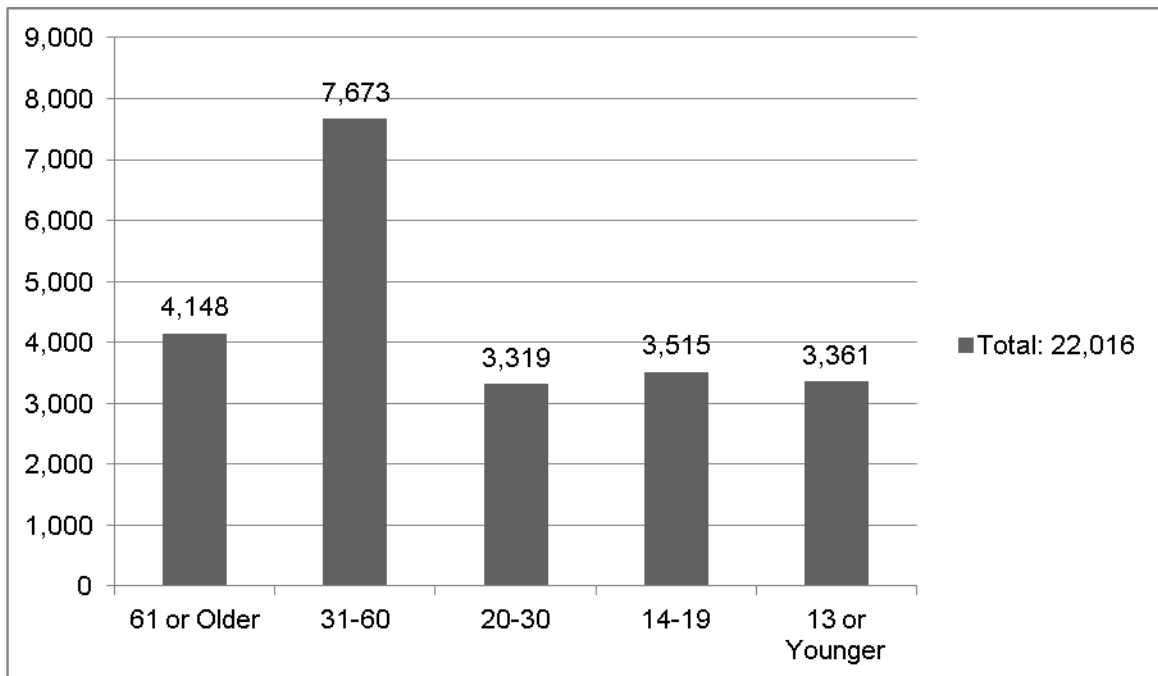
Kim (2011) reported that, according to the Personal Ministry Report of the KUC, currently 70% of the membership is not attending church on Sabbath. This fact points out that it is time to focus on a discipleship ministry and not just focus on the baptism of new members. Each conference must also find a way to recover those church members who are not attending. It is time to focus on a nurturing ministry for new members through a discipleship training program.

### **Ministry Overview**

In 1999, Korean society was designated as an aging society as people aged 65 and older exceeded 7% of the population. It is expected that Korea will be a super aged society by the year 2026 with people aged 65 and older expected to exceed 20% of the population. Aging is not an exception for the Adventist Church. According to the quarterly report as figure 14 shows, currently about 21% of the Sabbath School members of KUC are older than 61 years old. Eighteen percent of Sabbath School members of WCKC is older than 61. The data (see figures 14 and 15) clearly show that the Adventist Church in Korea could be an aging church in 10 years.



*Figure 14. Age Group of Sabbath School of KUC in 2011. Adapted from KUC (2011). Adapted from 2011 Quarterly Report 3/4 of KUC. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*



*Figure 15. Age Group of Sabbath School of WCKC in 2011. Adapted from 2011 Quarterly Report 3/4 of KUC. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

Figure 16 shows that a total of 23,092 members in the KUC are directly involved in church leadership as pastors, elders, deacon, and deaconess. A total of 6,854 members in the WCKC are directly involved in church leadership (see Figure 17). This implies that, even without mentioning other leadership roles, approximately one third of the members play a core role in church administration and ministry. The proportion of deacons to deaconess is another example that reflects the structure of the Korean Adventist Church. As indicated in Figure 17, the number of deaconesses is three times that of deacons. In spite of such a dominant role of women, the number of women elders in the KUC is only six. Women are excluded from major leadership roles in the church.

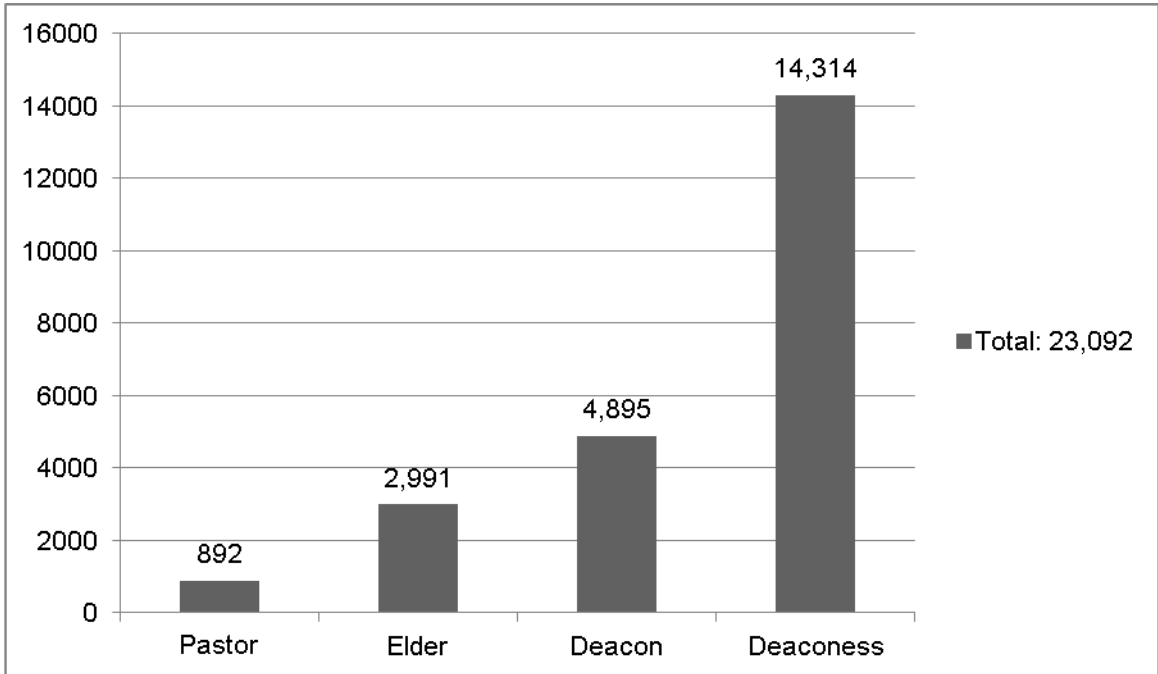


Figure 16. Church Leadership of KUC in 2011. Adapted from the *2011 Quarterly Report 3/4 of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

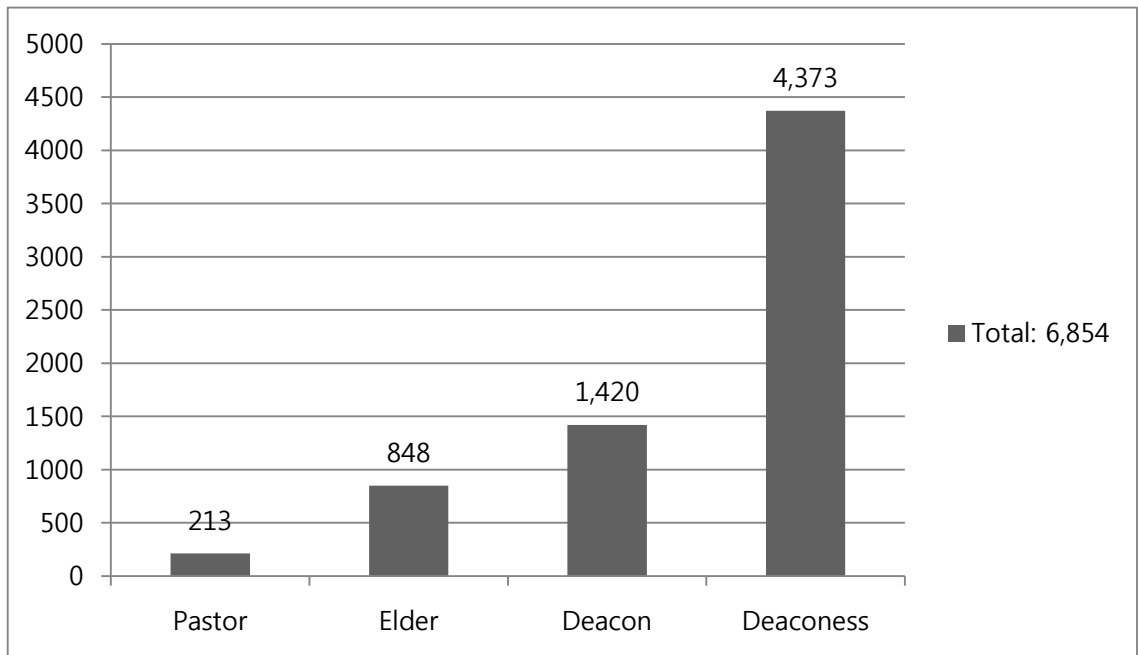
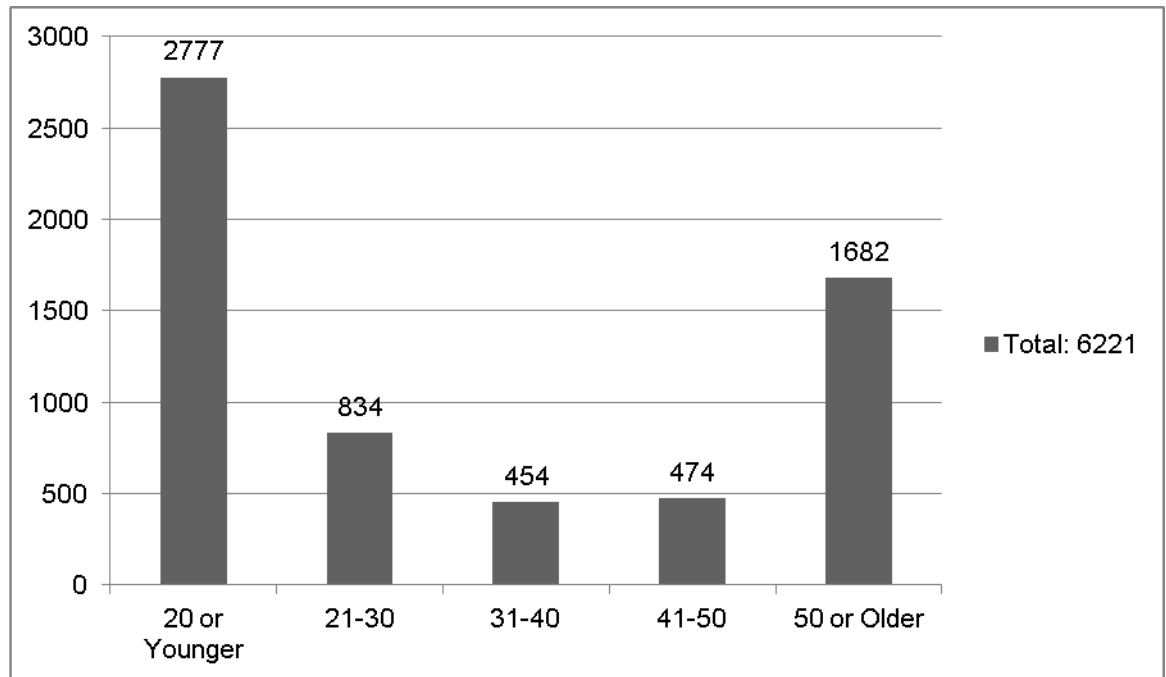


Figure 17. Church Leadership of WCKC in 2011. Adapted from *2011 Quarterly Report 3/4 of KUC*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Figure 18 shows that 6,221 people were baptized in 2009. The age groups, 21- 50, however, are not as represented as those younger than 20 and older than 50. The Adventist churches in Korea are struggling with reaching this group. Note that 2,777 of the newly baptized members are younger than 20. According to the Annual Statistical Report of the KUC (KUC, 2009), it is reported that the number of baptized students was 3,059. Almost half of those baptized in 2009 were full time students. This implies that half of the new members joined the church because of a relationship with their Adventist family or educational institutes. In the local church context, then, it appears that it is rare to baptize young and highly educated people.



*Figure 18. Age Group of the Baptized in 2009. Adapted from 2009 Annual Statistics. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

Figure 19 shows the education level of people baptized in 2009. This indicates the challenge of the Korean Adventist Church to develop strategies to reach out to the middle and upper classes of people.

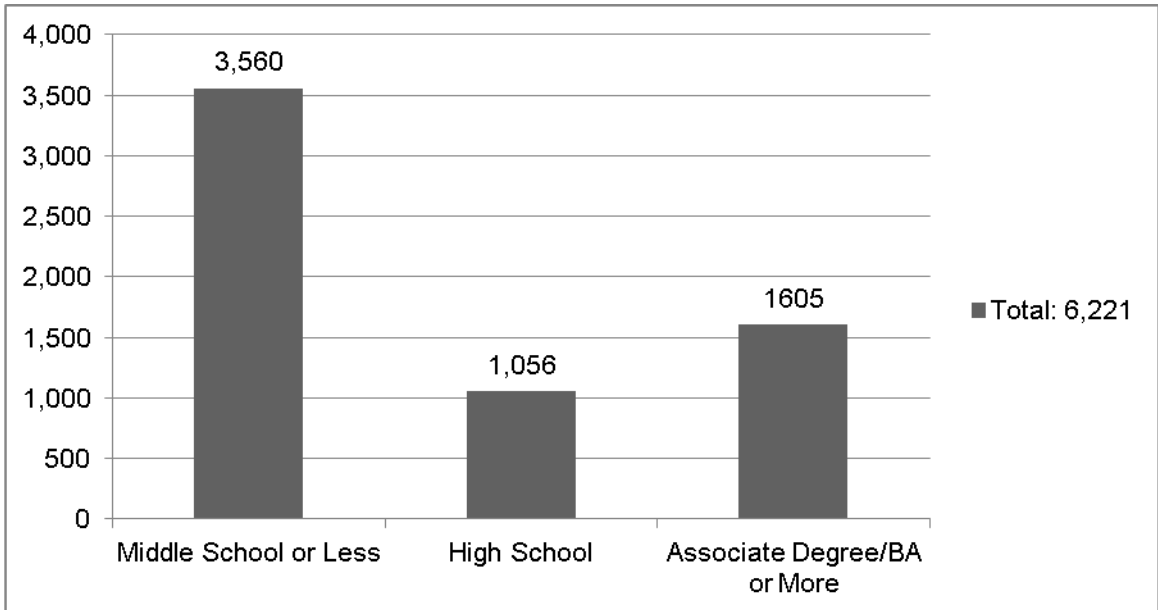


Figure 19. Education Background of the Baptized in 2009. Adapted from *Annual Statistics*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Another challenge is that fewer and fewer members are involved in evangelism. According to the *Quarterly Report* of the KUC (KUC, 2011), only 844 people were baptized as a result of a direct relationship with a lay member. A total of 152 were baptized due to a direct relationship with lay members in the WCKC. Saving souls is largely dependent on the activities of pastors or public evangelism. According to the quarterly report of the Korean Union Conference, only 20,693 members (6,468 members in the WCKC) participated in personal ministry in the third quarter of 2011 while 8,602

(3,371 members in the WCKC) were reported to have joined community service activities. New members rarely have a chance to build a relationship with church members before they join the church. As a result, new members usually do not have strong relational ties to encourage them to remain in the church.

Since 2004, the Personal Ministry Department of the KUC began to emphasize the importance of small group ministries and personal evangelism. Model churches were selected and leadership workshops were provided. Many churches organized small groups and began to train small group leaders. According to the third quarterly report in 2011 of the KUC (KUC, 2011), the number of organized small groups increased from 533 in 2005 to 3,667 in 2011. More churches began to operate small group leadership and discipleship programs. Compared to the 2007 reports, the number hosting the discipleship training program in local church was doubled in 2011. A total of 27 churches have operated the discipleship training programs in the local church in the KUC. This is an effective way for maturing new and old members in the local church.

The pattern of evangelism has also been changed. Instead of public evangelism aimed at many and unspecified people, local churches were encouraged to host small group evangelism in which specific groups of people were invited. Target groups were diverse. According to the report for the 2009 constituency meeting of the KUC (KUC, 2009), the small group evangelistic efforts were intended for certain target populations; for example, foreign students, patients, spouses, housewives aged 30-40, and so forth. Technologies such as satellite and internet were used to promote the small group activities.

Church members were encouraged to invite their friends and neighbors, not to

their church but to their home where they would participate in the evangelistic meetings through television or the internet. Nowadays, a small group based ministry is widely regarded as an alternative method to reach the individualized people in Korea.

### **Analysis of Congregations in WCKC**

The rapid change of social structure triggered by the economic crisis in the 1990s has caused a decline in the church growth rates throughout most Christian denominations, including Adventists. This changed social structure has influenced, in particular, the structure of declining local churches. The number of attending members and young people has decreased. Institutionalization and polarization of churches in urban and rural settings is another factor that has caused some local churches to struggle to survive.

The KUC has exceptional and abundant human resources. Many young Adventists are willing to commit their lives to the cause of God. According to data from the One Thousand Missionary Movement Headquarter, by 2008 the number of Korean Adventist Youth who had served in a mission field for at least one year was 1,013 since the movement began in 1992 in the Philippines. The passion these youth had in their mission spreads to the churches when they return. It should be noted that as long as there are young people who are willing to commit their lives to the Lord, the Adventist Church in Korea has hope. These returned missionaries are a good human resource that can be used in a discipleship ministry. Their experience can be a blessing to the local church.

One of the major weaknesses of the Adventist churches in Korea is that they do not represent the average population of Korean society very well. As indicated in the earlier figures, the population pyramid, education level, and job diversity of Adventists



do not coincide with that of the Korean community. This may weaken the relational contact point between the church and society. This is a challenge that the Korean Adventist Church should overcome and reach out to its community with more effectiveness and maximize its influence.

Externally, postmodernism and secularism have changed the overall pattern of consciousness among Adventists. Postmodernism and secularism are a challenge for the future in Korea. Postmodernism is a general and wide-ranging term applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, and cultural criticism, among others. Paulien (2008) explains that in many ways, today's younger generation, often called "postmoderns," are the polar opposites of traditional people. Postmoderns are interested in truth and interested in faith, but they are determined not to be subject to the faith claims of others. In postmodernism, truth is not primarily found in science, the Bible, or the church. Instead, truth is primarily found in relationships and in the telling of stories. Postmoderns want to believe in God and serve their fellow humans, but they are suspicious of any attempts to organize groups that hold those beliefs. As a result, postmodernism, in spite of its spirituality and its affirmations of faith, is deeply challenging to the goals of Adventism or to those of any other traditional form of institutional religion (pp. 32-33). Economic growth and a changed industrial and social structure have weakened the expectancy of a soon Second Coming of Jesus. A sense of sacredness toward the Sabbath has declined.

The world has changed. The Korean society has also seen and is seeing similar changes. A monumental shift took place when society moved from the modern paradigms to postmodern paradigms of how we view the world, the church, and even God.

Postmoderns are often less religious but more spiritual. They are more influenced by experience than authority. They are frequently less affected by individualism than community. According to the standard measures of discipleship, in this new Korean society the Adventist Church is failing to make disciples as it should. Adventist churches in Korea must look for a way to respond to the upcoming challenges. Many people are hungry for a real relationship with others. Discipleship ministry and small groups can contribute to fulfilling those desires.

### **Summary**

The demographics of Adventist churches in Korea do not represent the life and shape of the population of the Korean society at large. In other words, the average Adventists are older and less educated than the average person in Korea. This fact points out that the Adventist Church must find a way to overcome this dilemma.

Additionally, Adventists are a minority in Korean society. As of 2011, it is estimated that one out of 226 Koreans is a baptized Adventist. Local churches also do not have adequate human or financial resources to influence their communities. The average Adventist church in Korea has 243 members. However, in terms of attending members, they have fewer than 70 members. Church members leave the church at almost the same proportion as people who come into the church. Saving souls is largely dependent on the individual activities of pastors and public evangelists. These facts point out that it is time to focus on a discipleship ministry. Nurturing the new and old members should be more of a focus in the local church. Discipleship is definitely a positive approach to fulfilling the Great Commission. The Adventist Church needs to focus on discipleship ministry in

terms of fulfilling the Great Commission.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM PLAN FOR WCKC

#### **Introduction**

It is imperative to define discipleship because many church leaders have misunderstood the meaning, resulting in many inconsistencies in its practice. Some church leaders see discipleship as a didactic spiritual relationship and others view it as a program in the church. Most Christians today tend to accept discipleship as a process of following Jesus. Discipleship means the state of “being a disciple.” Discipleship is seen as the process of becoming like one’s master. Therefore, discipleship is a life of learning from Jesus Christ how to live in the Kingdom of God now, as He himself did. Ogden (2007) noted that “discipling is an intentional relationship in which we walk alongside other disciples in order to encourage, equip and challenge one another in love to grow toward maturity in Christ. This includes equipping the disciple to teach others as well” (p. 17).

Discipling members should be the heart of the ministry of faithful churches because it is central to the Great Commission. What is the best way to disciple the members at the local church level in the West Central Korean Conference? The counters of Christian bookstores are filled with numerous books directly related to the topic of discipleship. In the broadest sense, every Christian publication of an instructive nature is a reflection of an author’s desire to disciple fellow believers. Programs for Christian discipleship training are abundant. However, many times, Bible study courses and discipleship training programs do not spiritually satisfy the participants. Audio and video

manuals show foreign backgrounds and the perspective of the Church is ambiguous.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop discipleship programs that are well adapted to the Korean tradition and to Adventist doctrine and Church culture.

As a local church pastor, over the last couple of years I have been developing a discipleship ministry, the Discipleship Curriculum. This chapter's objective is to develop a discipleship curriculum that could attract seekers and introduce them to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and His fundamental doctrines. Then, the plan is to train them to be spiritual leaders using their spiritual gifts in the church and the community for the glory of God.

As Adventists, we do well at public evangelism. We are committed to public evangelism, both theologically and financially. According to the General Conference statistical report (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, 2009), the year 2009 marked the seventh time in Seventh-day Adventist history when more than 1,000,000 individuals joined our communion of faith through baptism or profession of faith in a single year. The 1,055,312 accessions in 2009 mean that, on the average, every day in 2009, 2,889 believers accepted the gospel and joined Church. The total membership, as of December 31, 2009, was 16,307,880 and meant that, within the total world population, there was one baptized Seventh-day Adventist for every 418 people in the world.

The concern is that, once these new members join our church, we are weak at developing and maturing them in Christ. Traditionally, once someone has joined, all we do is encourage them to attend weekly worship services and attend a Sabbath School class. They often need more involvement to assist in spiritual growth and development.

What is greatly needed and missing, in a word, is discipleship. We have an obligation as a Christian body to offer the opportunity for each person to be the loving, inspired disciple that they can be.

It is believed that a discipleship ministry may inspire the awakening of the great potential of all church members and to the activation of ministry. As members of discipleship Bible study groups talk to each other, they can develop creative ideas in terms of ministry, spiritual life, and children's education. Because they share personal messages from God by reading the Scriptures they can grasp many interpretations that are more insightful than any other sources, such as sermons and Bible commentaries. This potential provides a wonderful treasure for churches.

The potential of prayers offered cooperatively by church members, whenever they gather and share their lists of prayers, also hold endless potential. In addition, church members can become one spiritual family in the Lord by and through such prayers. Through these prayers, church members can care for each other and can heal the spiritual wounds of others. Pastors can also deal with pastoral care more adequately in a discipleship program. So this program would be highly beneficial to long time members as well.

John Oak (1993), senior pastor of the Sa-Rang Community Church (SRCC), has influenced me concerning the discipleship curriculum's overall structure. Those structures are part of a well-organized program. Oak is a man of passion and vision for the discipleship ministry. The following two statements note and help us to understand discipleship ministry. First, there was statement in the Sunday church bulletin of SRCS, (Oak, 1993) "Our most important vision is making the laity Christ's disciples. There is no

reason to excuse immature faith” (p. 22). Second, according to his church vision statements, (Oak, 1993) “Because I believe that the quality of church depends on laity and how much the church develops the possibility of them” (p. 21).

There are many programs for spiritual growth in the Sa-Rang Community Church. Many ingredients are needed for the growth of any church. If newcomers come to the SRCC, they feel welcomed because of the well-organized and thoughtful systems that have been designed for newcomers. They are immediately led to the Newcomers Meeting and a small group is led by the lay-people or staff of the SRCC. They also receive an introduction to the discipleship-training program by someone familiar with the program. There are two steps to discipleship: the Basic Program and the Advanced Program.

After the discipleship-training program has been completed, people can choose other programs, including an Evangelism Explosion Clinic, the Laity Bible College for the Academic Study of the Bible, and other fellowship meetings. As a result of the discipleship training program, SRCC has seen both qualitative and quantitative growth. The SRCC is a significant model for discipleship among Korean churches.

One reason that making disciples has been difficult for the local church in the last decades is the lack of effective models. In an effort to develop a practical model for discipleship in the local church, this program is trying to adapt the four models described in chapter 3, based on Kolb’s relational and experiential theory. Our lives are woven together, so that who we are and what we do always influences other people. Church must focus on not only preaching but also teaching and relationship.

One-on one approach and the small group is based on G12 model. Jesus’ three-year relationship with his twelve disciples is the main model used for small group. It

provides intimacy; a variety of gifts; and an ideal training vehicle for reproduction. This program is based on Rick Warren's step-wise model. Also this is based on biblical patterns of the leadership modeled of Coleman. Four phase of Jesus' ministry to make disciples of Bill Hull's model based on this training.

Regarding the course subjects and class materials of each section, I was not dependent on John Oak, but rather designed all of the materials found in the discipleship curriculum. The rest of the content of this chapter will describe in full detail the objective, the materials, and the plan for each class based on the proposed discipleship curriculum. This chapter will explain the basic guidelines of the discipleship training curriculum, such as preparation, the recruiting process, and methods used.

### **Basic Guidelines for the Discipleship Training Curriculum**

#### Preparation

T. Lee (1986) observed that when Jesus Christ trained His twelve disciples, He preferred to have conversations with His disciples and teach them in a small group setting rather than deliver a message in front of a crowd. To help followers grow into maturity, it is possible to use both individual and small group methods (p, 51). In recent days, people are usually very busy and it takes a lot of time to see spiritual growth in trainees. To provide a training program, all must invest time with no thought of recognition or praise from others. It is important to own the vision of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship training is not designed to produce a product but to encourage individuals to dedicate themselves to a life of being disciples of Jesus Christ. It is critical for participants to pay attention and endeavor to accept the training. In carrying out this



project, trainers and trainees must prepare in the following ways:

First, prayer must precede the training itself. The goal of all trainees needs to be to emulate Jesus Christ. Jesus prioritized prayer. With prayer, trainers should block everything out to think about what the trainees need and help them plan how they are going to satisfy those needs. Discipleship must be given and received on one's knees. Discipleship received on one's knees is like a tree planted by a river bearing fruit according to the season. Through prayer, trainees can better see an individual developing, bearing beautiful fruit, and giving in abundance to the Lord.

Secondly, constant love must permeate the training. Trainees need to have a heart that is open to accept and love people. Discipleship training must be given in love; such love can change any person. This is why I constantly ask for more love in my heart.

Thirdly, humility must characterize the training. "He must become greater; I must become less" (John 3:30). John the Baptist's words encapsulate the attitude of the leading disciples and those who are learning. Authority must be relinquished and replaced with humility.

### Recruiting Process

The church should put a notice about recruitment on bulletin boards and in weekly papers three months before the start of the program. The notice should outline how many trainees can enter each training season, the deadline for application, the qualifications, the interview and test schedule, and when announcements will be made indicating who have passed.

The importance of choice cannot be overestimated. The discipleship program

suggests the following pre-requisites for disciples:

- Be 30 – 65 years of age
- Have permission from the spouse
- A healthy body and a sound job
- Be at least one year post-baptism
- One who has completed the New Family course
- One who is willing to learn and share the gospel with others

1. Look for a faithful person. Even though a person may have other faults, a faithful person has potential.

2. Choose people who have sufficient time; the training includes many hours of homework and requires a weekly commitment of one and half hour everyday to complete the homework.

3. Choose trainees with the gift of teaching and leadership, as trainees will be leaders of their own small groups after one or two years. The following procedure was used for the actual training:

#### The Opening Ceremony

First, recruit eight to twelve trainees for each class and organize the training sessions before the opening ceremony. The trainees should attend an opening ceremony for a number of reasons, the main one being orientation, but the motivation factor is also critical. Oak (1996) states: “This service is important because it motivates those who have not yet signed up for training and it gives the resolution and determination to do well to those in the discipleship training program” (p, 106).

A director for each session must be in place. The position of treasurer and other

service positions will need to be filled. The trainer then chooses the first meeting time and location. The opening ceremony will help facilitate interaction and help set up the structure guidelines. For example, the trainees need to understand the importance of observing the meeting times. Trainees should arrive 10 minutes before the meeting time. Everyone is expected to do the assigned homework. Some snacks are recommended, but it should be decided if a snack time should be included in the class and who should pay for them.

The trainer encourages daily work to support the development of life-long learning habits. Ogden and Meyer (2007) state, “Learning disciples plow furrows in the soil of their hearts in order that the implanted seed of God’s Word can take root and bear much fruit. These furrows are created through the classic spiritual disciplines (habits)” (p, 29): Bible reading, a prayer life, memory Bible verses, and spiritual journaling.

Recitation of Bible verses is a vital part of training. The problems related to the recitation of a biblical verse for many people involve making the recitation an activity closely associated with real life. The director must be sure the selected phrases are meaningful and become part of the people’s thinking and practice. The trainees should have opportunities to use the phrases. In addition, the trainer should exhort participants to monitor their participation. Temptations to quit the training could arise because of poor health, family opposition, loss of interest, doubt, and even dislike of the trainer. At the close of the first session, all members of the group should pray for one another.

## Training

Training begins the week following the opening ceremony. The following

methodologies are critical to the success of the program:

1. Bible study must be inductive.
2. Focus must be given to those areas in the training that encompass living a full life.
3. The trainer must pray for and monitor the trainees as their character and lives change. The trainees should also be encouraged to pray for each other.
4. Encouragement and positive feedback needs to be frequently given.
5. A variety of questions need to be posed to the group so that all are included in the group process.

### The Program

The training begins with praise to God for about 15-20 minutes. Prayer, both silent and spoken, follows. Through weekly praise and prayer, trainees are prepared for the class. The trainers check themselves on the self-checklist to make sure their homework assignment each week is completed. They also share the results of their quiet time, their private prayer theme during the previous week, and recite the memory verses. Normally, study lasts for one and a half hours.

Trainers need to prepare themselves and focus on the teaching for each particular week. Use of the inductive approach requires the preparation of insightful, focused questions that will lead participants to a deeper understanding and comprehension of the material, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. After the study, a simple meal is shared, such as lunch boxes prepared by the trainees.

For the trainer, post-session work includes checking homework, quiet time, writing letters of encouragement, and recording each trainees' growth in the journal they

maintain throughout the process. Sessions would begin at the end of February and continue through the beginning of December, with a two-month vacation during the summer.

### The Commencement Service

The final session is considered to be equally as important as the opening session. The commencement service announces graduates to the congregation and offers corporate congratulations. Experience will show that commencement gives the new class of trainees motivation to hold high expectations for their experience.

### **Discipleship Training Curriculum**

Training courses should consist of a new family follow-up course with two-step training (Basic, Advanced). Each course takes 36 weeks and 33 weeks to complete. The texts consist of a variety of subjects. Before and after each course the materials should be reviewed.

#### New Family Course: Step by Step (7-week program)

When a new person is guided to the church, he or she needs protection and care. Newcomers are treasures of the church and need discipleship training. At church, the text, *Step by Step*, is best used. The course is seven weeks long and consists of one lesson per week. The content is focused on how to adapt to church activities and basic religious beliefs rather than the doctrines of Christianity. Attendees will then be led to the leader who will disciple them and help them grow in the Word of God. The trainer should provide a minimum of one hour of training per week for seven weeks in order to finish the set of lessons.

The trainer may offer Skype conference calls for the family course when newcomers do not have enough time to attend every class. But the church recommends attending face-to-face classes for the Step by Step course. The church should congratulate the newcomers for completing the class and award them with presents. Because the growing process of faith in Jesus is similar to the nurturing of a baby without protection, newcomers are in jeopardy of growing slowly or becoming spiritually handicapped or spiritually lost.

### **Training Course Outline**

This course is designed for the registered newcomers in the church, including believers from other churches. The training text for the new family course is divided into the previously-delineated lessons. The following offers a brief description of each lesson.

**Lesson One: Who Am I?** This lesson is designed to help students understand the gifts God has given them individually and to elicit an intentional desire for salvation, the gospel, and the cross.

**Lesson Two: Who is Jesus?** This lesson gives clear answers to the subject of faith, focusing on Christ as a unique Savior in whom one can trust.

**Lesson Three: What is Faith?** This lesson helps students understand that faith is the only key to salvation and they must believe and trust Christ.

**Lesson Four: Assurance of Faith.** This lesson teaches them that salvation is given by the Word of God and the Spirit.

**Lesson Five: What is the Bible?** This lesson teaches that the Bible is the Word of God and guides students to learn, read, listen, and apply the Word in daily life.

Lesson Six: What is Church Life? This lesson explains the definition of church, the necessity of church, and a church's duty. Students are introduced to the important activities of church life.

Lesson Seven: Family and social life. This lesson shows them the attitude of the believer in family and society through examples found in the Bible.

#### Basic Course: Steps to Christlikeness (36 Week Program)

The purpose of this course is to lead the students into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and develop spiritual maturity. During this course, training focuses on the person and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Too often, in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, once a new person joins the church, they are typically encouraged to be faithful in their attendance at Sabbath School and worship. Nothing else is done in a systematic way. The discipleship curriculum takes into account the responsibility of teaching the new disciples how to continue to grow spiritually.

#### **Objective**

It is important to develop a balanced Christian life style—personally, spiritually, and socially. This is one of the objectives of the program. In regards to the basic program, it begins with the foundation of Christian living. Focusing on the formation of spiritual habits must be a priority for a Christian. First, the educational purpose of the basic course is to enable the person to develop spiritual habits such as a quiet time, prayer, Bible study, and meditation in their daily life.

Second, another purpose of the basic course is to develop a Christian spiritual foundation. The trainees may be new Christians or individuals who did not receive any

previous training. The trainees will be taught to understand the basis of their spiritual foundation through topics such as, “Who Is God?” “What Is the Sabbath” “Why Did Jesus Come to This World?”

### **Training Course Outline and Description**

1. First Quarter: Foundation of the Discipleship Training—five weeks.

Lesson One: My Confession of Faith and Testimony.

The objective of this lesson is to encourage the trainees to share their confession of faith and testimony. It will be helpful in the process of learning to understand each other. Also, it will be helpful for the trainees to look back at their lives and acknowledge the leading of God, realizing that they are in God’s mighty hands.

Lesson Two: Quiet Time

In this lesson, the students will practice developing a quiet time. This is an important part of discipleship training. They will practice quiet time throughout their discipleship training, taking time to listen to God’s voice and apply His Word to their life journey. They will learn why, how, and what silence can provide the trainee.

Lesson Three: Living and Active Word

In this lesson, the trainer will guide the students, helping them to attain an understanding and appreciation for the value of the Bible, biblical inspiration, and biblical authority. The trainer will teach how to incorporate the study of the Bible into their daily life.



#### Lesson Four: Answers to Prayer

In this lesson, the trainer will lead the students into a meaningful prayer process. The trainees need to know the meaning of prayer and to understand the contents and methods of prayer, as well as how to receive power through prayer. Prayer is one of the most important habits of discipleship training.

#### Lesson Five: A New Way to Pray

In this lesson, the trainer will facilitate daily encounters with Jesus, approximately 20 twenty minutes in the early morning. The reading of the four Gospels, prayer, and journaling are the main points of “a new way to pray.” Prayer is the one of the most important habits of discipleship training. A new way to pray will guide Christ-centered prayer and devotional Bible reading. The trainee may write a letter to or from Jesus. Trainees should learn and practice a new way to pray every week.

#### 2. Second Quarter: Steps to Christlikeness—13 weeks

Course description: The book, *Steps to Christ* (White, 1908) is Ellen G. White’s discipleship manual. In the discipleship curriculum, discipleship is defined as “becoming more like Jesus Christ.” This little volume is packed with deep theological insights into the nature of God and man, as well as numerous practical suggestions that foster genuine spiritual growth.

The course textbook, *Steps to Christ*, will be used each week. The following outline shows the topics covered:

1. Introduction—God’s Love for Man
2. The Sinner’s Need of Christ
3. Repentance

4. Confession
5. Consecration
6. Faith and Acceptance
7. The Test of Discipleship
8. Growing Up Into Christ
9. The Work and the Life
10. A Knowledge of God
11. The Privilege of God
12. What to Do with Doubt
13. Review—Rejoice in the Lord

This class reveals White's deep insights into spiritual maturity and discipleship principles that enhance spiritual growth and development. It is wonderful to receive practical and tangible suggestions for spiritual growth. Disciples want to grow and develop. They desire to be victorious Christians and appreciate concrete concepts that work.

Third Quarter: Spiritual Discipline – six weeks

Course description: In this class trainees will not only rediscover and learn about these spiritual disciplines, but they will also experience them and enjoy their spiritual benefits. The point of these spiritual exercises is to help members be more loving, like Jesus. The most important spirit of the disciplines is love. The textbook for this class is *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster (R. J. Foster, 1998). *Celebrating the Disciplines: A journal workbook to accompany celebrating of discipline* (R. J. Foster, 1992) is a good workbook to practice each area, such as inward, outward, and corporate

disciplines. This book is destined to become a Christian classic on spirituality. This book is balanced and practical.

The following outline shows the topics covered in the class:

1. The Inward Disciplines: Meditation and Prayer
2. The Inward Disciplines: Fasting and Study
3. The Outward Disciplines: Simplicity and Solitude
4. The Outward Disciplines: Submission and Service
5. The Corporate Disciplines: Confession and Worship
6. The Corporate Disciplines: God's Guidance through Group

The purpose of each spiritual discipline is to enhance one's relationship with Jesus Christ. In the church, we often announce that "Christianity is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!" This is correct theologically and biblically. The real question is: How do we foster our personal relationship with Jesus? We must be intentional and deliberate in setting aside time and preparing for spiritual growth in our personal relationship with Jesus. For instance, spending one hour each morning praying to Jesus must be planned. It may take work to secure that amount of time from a busy schedule; it may be work in the sense of persistence in prayer for that duration of time. Having a meaningful relationship with anyone is a considerable investment of effort. This class will hopefully have a tremendous impact on the participants, if they are willing to make a commitment to persevering in the training process.

#### 4. Fourth Quarter: Committed Christian—13 weeks

##### Step 1: Basic Christianity—6 weeks

This step presents the core doctrines of Christianity. It also clearly demonstrates how

Jesus Christ is the central doctrine. The textbook that is used for this course is *Seventh-Day Adventists Believe* (2005). The following lesson topics make up the six-week Basic Christianity curriculum. The doctrines covered in this course are the major doctrines shared by most Christian churches and denominations.

1. Trinity
2. God's Law and Grace
3. Holy Spirit
4. The Second Coming of Jesus Christ
5. Fall of Human Being and the Result
6. Righteousness by Faith

Step 2: Distinctive Adventist Beliefs—seven weeks

This course continues where the Basic Christianity course left off, presenting the distinctive core of biblical doctrines unique to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is the purpose of this class to reveal the Christ-centered heart of each of these important doctrines. This class has the same textbook as the previous one.

The following outline indicates the doctrines covered in this particular course. Please note that these doctrines are not only unique to only the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Many Christian denominations teach and uphold some of these doctrines, such as baptism by the Baptist denominations and Sabbath keeping by the Seventh-Day Baptist denomination. All of these individual doctrines can be found in one or more of the Protestant reformation churches. What is unique is that we have gathered these individual reformation doctrines and brought them together into one church. Lessons seven to thirteen have video clips, around 15-25 minutes. In the class, trainees will be shown the

video clips to help them learn effectively. The clips distributed to the trainees for the further study are the following:

7. Sabbath
8. Baptism
9. Judgment
10. Sanctuary
11. State of the Dead
12. Spirit of Prophecy and Ellen G. White
13. Sanctification and Perfection

### **Basic Course and Early Bird Bible School (Week 13 to 36)**

While they are participating in the basic course of discipleship training, trainees should participate in the Early Bird Bible School (<http://www.ebible.com>) as a student. Trainees will be taught for 12 weeks, starting with the basic course. This is required of all trainees. To complete the basic course of discipleship training will take more than 25 weeks. Trainees will be taught the broad concepts of the Bible every morning for 12 weeks, via Skype on Monday through Friday. The first class textbook is *Let the reader understand* (S. Kim, 2009). This training is commissioned education by the Early Bird Bible School. After trainees are finished with the first class, they will be taught from the books of Daniel and Revelation for 12 weeks via Skype every morning, Monday through Friday. The second class focuses on Hope. Both of these courses will be taught for 40 minutes via Skype and will encourage them to have faith in Bible truths and Revelation.

## **Basic Course and Sharing Feedback with Members via Skype**

While the participants are doing the *Steps to Jesus* course for 13 weeks and the *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* (White, 1896) course for 12 weeks, they should share their feedback with their team members via Skype. It will take 30 minutes every Monday at a selected time. Churches will offer CDs and textbooks to all trainees at Orientation Class. Trainees should read each portion of the week and listen to the CD at least once. After they have finished *Steps to Christ* and *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, lessons from the life of Jesus will follow for an additional 12 weeks.

### Advanced Course—33 weeks

#### **Objective**

The overall focus of this course is on ministry and faithfully serving Jesus Christ within the context of the local church. First, the educational purpose of the advanced course is to give an understanding of the church. The main purpose of a church is to give glory to God and send people around the world.

Second, the purpose of this course is to help equip God's people with the skills they need for ministry. As a result of this course, they will learn how to teach the Bible within a small group and to serve others as a lay leader.

#### 1. First Quarter: The New Reformation—nine weeks

We are living in a day when we are discovering that ministry is not what professionals do for or with the laity, but what God does through the whole body of Christ. This class will teach the biblical doctrines of the church. The textbook for this class is *Healthy Christians Make a Healthy Church* (Oak, 2003) and *Kyihoiwha*

*Pyongshindoei Jahwasang (Leadership Ministry)* (Oak, 2008).

So many biblical words like laity, saint, minister, priest, and clergy have connotations that are almost completely opposite of what those words communicated originally to the people of the New Testament. This class will help to liberate the disciples so that they can become active in meaningful ministry for God and His Kingdom.

1. Definition of Church
2. Reason for the Existence of the Church: Worship
3. Reason for the Existence of the Church: Training
4. Reason for the Existence of the Church: Witnessing
5. Qualification of a Disciple: A Complete Dependent
6. Qualification of a Disciple: A Witness
7. Qualification of a Disciple: A Servant
8. Members of the Body and the Cooperative Ministry
9. You are Royal Priesthood

2. Second Quarter: Creating Community and Leading Small Groups—five weeks

The textbook for this course is *Creating Community* (Stanley & Willits, 2004). In the Creating Community and the Leading a Small Group course, trainees learn clear and simple principles to help people connect in meaningful relationships. This course deals with five keys to building a small group culture. Simple principles for small groups are key points to apply in the small group context, are what God desires for each of us, and what He uses to change our lives. The small group program is not just a program; it

should become our lifestyle. This course offers several insights for the future small group leader.

1. People Need Community
2. Leaders Need Clarity
3. Church Need Strategy
4. Connection Needs Simplicity
5. Processes Need Reality

3. Third Quarter: How to Study and Teach Bible - Best Bible Study—

seven weeks

The textbook for this course is *Discipleship Journal's Best Bible Study Methods* (Munro & Couchman, 2002). In this course, trainees learn 32 ways to study Scripture. The trainees will be exposed to various methods through this class. The objective of this course is to help help trainees find the best study methods to change their lives and that of others.

1. Pull Your Stuff Together
2. Begin with the Basics
3. Keep It Interesting
4. Live What You Learn
5. Life Changing Bible Study (1) - Observation
6. Life Changing Bible Study (2) - Interpretation
7. Life Changing Bible Study (3) – Application



#### 4. Fourth Quarter: Leading and Teaching Bible a Study Class—15 weeks

The text book is *Gareuchimye Baeuneun Sungkyongyeongu (Learning by Bible Teaching)* (M. H. Kim, 2004). The main purpose of this course is equipping a Bible teacher in a small group or one-to-one class. Each week, participants study two chapters and present Bible lessons to each other or in front of the class.

##### Step 1: Christian Life:

- a. Bible Study
- b. Prayer Life and Trinity

##### Step 2: Experience of Salvation

- a. The Origin of Sin and Death
- b. Savior Jesus and Faith
- c. Born Again and Justification

##### Step 3: Keeping the Lord's Day

- a. Law and Gospel in the Sabbath
- b. Sabbath and Sunday Worship

##### Step 4: Second Coming of Jesus

- a. Second Coming and Nearness of the Second Coming
- b. Unrighteousness and Heaven

##### Step: 5 Bible Prophecy

- a. World History in Prophecy
- b. The 2300 Days and Nights and the Pre-Advent Judgment

##### Step: 6 True Church

- a. True Church

- b. Our Body is the Sanctuary
- c. Precious Promises and the Holy Spirit
- d. Review

### **Advanced Course and Early Bird Bible School**

While the participants are doing the advanced course of discipleship training, trainees participate in the Early Bird Bible School as students. This is required for all of trainees in order to complete the discipleship training. It will take more than 13 weeks. Trainees will be taught the life guide as a gospel worker for 12 weeks via Skype on Monday through Friday every morning for 40 minutes.

Trainees will start the Early Bird Bible School depending on the schedule. The textbook is *Let the Reader Understand: Understanding of the Word Wholly and Systematically III* (S. Kim, 2009). This training is received via commissioned education by the Early Bird Bible School. It is free for every student who wants to learn about Bible truths. After the trainees have completed the first level class (Faith) and second level class (Hope) as basic course trainees, they will be taught Christian life style issues as these relate to being an Adventist. This course also will guide them as to how to serve others as gospel workers for 12 weeks via Skype on Monday through Friday every morning for 40 minutes. It will encourage them to become servants of God's word.

### **Advanced Course and Sharing Feedback with Members via Skype**

While trainees are doing the advanced course, they will take the Christian Service course for five weeks. The text book is *Christian Service* (White, 1996). They will share their lessons with their team members via Skype. It will take 30 minutes every Monday.

After they finish that course, the book *Desires of Ages* (White, 1898) will be used for the next 20-week course for lessons about Jesus' life via Skype. The church will offer CDs and textbooks for all trainees. Trainees are to read each chapter twice and listen to the CD at least once. The team members will alternate leadership.

### **Guidance for the Basic and Advanced Homework**

#### 1. Preparation for the Lesson

- a) Trainee should study each week's lesson before class.
- b) Pre-study is a requirement of the trainee.

#### 2. Prayer Life

- a) More than 30 minutes every day
- b) The same place and time
- c) A New Way to Pray—at least twice a week

#### 3. Quiet Time

- a) At least once a week
- b) More than 30 minutes
- c) Best time is early in the morning if possible.

#### 4. Memory Verses

- a) At least twice a week
- b) Memorize and recite for each other without the help of the Bible

#### 5. Bible Reading

- a) Reading the Bible every day, following a schedule
- b) Brief Journaling

## 6. Reading Requirement

- a) Every quarter complete the reading of a book.
- b) Every quarter there should be a book discussion.

## 7. Share Summaries of the Sabbath Sermons

## 8. Spiritual Journal

- a) Submit one spiritual journal entry.
- b) Write the thoughts and feelings throughout each week.

## 9. Life Application

- a) Submit the results from practice of learning or feeling.
- b) A New Way Prayer Journal

### **Time Table for Discipleship Training**

10:00 - 10:15 (15 minutes) Talking with a member

10:15-10:30 (15 minutes) Sharing homework (QT & Reaction Paper)

10:30 - 10:50 (20 minutes) Praise and Prayer

10:50 - 12:00 (70 minutes) Studying Text Book

12:00 - 12:15 (15 minutes) Song and Prayer

### **Summary**

In this chapter, there is a detailed description of the content of the discipleship program to be developed at the local church level in the WCKC. This curriculum will help trainees to be more like Jesus. After these training programs, the church will provide additional discipleship training programs, such as prayer training, quiet time camp, and family camp. These programs should help leaders to grow quantitatively and qualitatively.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this Ministry Focus Project document is to develop a theoretical and practical framework for implementing a discipleship ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the West Central Korean Conference in South Korea and ultimately to cultivate a consciousness of discipleship among Adventists. The worldwide Seventh-day Adventist denomination is growing, but it seems that Adventist churches are failing in the area of discipleship. Making disciples needs to be an important part of our Adventist culture. There is a difference between making members and discipling them.

In my observation, the church needs to assist each Christian in spiritual growth and development. From my experience, it seems that almost no emphasis is placed on a discipleship ministry. A discipleship curriculum would help the pastors and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Korea become mature, committed, reproducing witnesses for Christ. A discipleship curriculum can produce disciple makers who will become effective witnesses for Christ. The training will develop the ministry skills of the disciple for the purpose of equipping other members for ministry. Disciples are lifelong learners and followers of God's guidance. It is my goal to develop a discipleship

curriculum that will aid both the pastors and members in growing to maturity in Christ.

The foundation of discipling new and regular members is based on the biblical mandate in Matthew 28:18-20, where followers are requested to go and make disciples. Discipleship strategies are both biblically and culturally relevant. There is evidence that several OT leaders and prophets functioned educationally in a discipleship role. Such relationships as Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, and other groups of prophets describe the discipleship relationship that was also used at the time of Jesus. The NT gives the biblical basis for discipleship ministry in the Gospels and Epistles.

There is an analogous relationship between how people learn and how people grow spiritually. Probably the most frequently cited model of experiential learning theory was the one developed by Kolb. It is a circular model consisting of four modes of knowing: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. However, true transformational learning involves an encounter with God. For transformation learning to take place, there must be appropriate intentional teaching or instruction. In other words, church members grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples through spiritual formation training, and an understanding of discipleship models. Thus, developing a discipleship ministry will greatly help to address this and other challenges. The discipleship curriculum, arranged as a systematic course of study, will lead to spiritual maturity and reproduce other disciples.

### Lessons Learned

My journey to Andrews University began when a conference official approached me and asked if I would like to study in the Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

I was then a church pastor, but prior to that I had worked as an elementary school chaplain on the campus of Sahmyook University. At that time, there were over 900 students for whom I was responsible. I was keenly interested in providing spiritual development on an individual basis, but I was not sure how to approach the task. In the local church setting, I began to develop a discipleship training program, but I still I needed more training.

During my four years in the Doctor of Ministry program at Andrews, I have learned much about leadership and how to mobilize church members. I began to better understand the equipping process for current and new members. Then, the Hickory North Carolina Church invited me to serve as their pastor. They asked if I would provide discipleship training. Taking my experience from Korea and the studies at Andrews, I began to develop a discipling ministry.

The lessons learned from the classes offered in my seminary cohort include the following:

1. Leadership skills—how to lead individuals and groups.
2. Organization skills—how to prepare training sessions and mobilize others to serve in God's work.
3. Spiritual Life—Dr. Dybdahl's class helped me understand how to incorporate spiritual formation skills into my own daily life and the lives of those who have never had a relationship with Christ, as well as those who have already been baptized and are regular members.
4. Attrition—the training in small group ministry helped me to see how I could approach those who have been baptized, but who had left the church. It also showed

me how the small group can affect Christian lifestyle decisions and help prevent members from leaving the church.

### **Conclusions**

A discipleship ministry has a strong foundation in biblical concepts. The theological basis for such a ministry is provided on the basis of that biblical mandate and the goal of discipleship in the Bible.

The literature review explored how the relationship between human beings imitates how human beings grow spiritually into the likeness of Christ as disciples. Church members grow into the likeness of Christ as disciples through spiritual formation and discipleship. Attending worship services is not enough to grow into the likeness of Christ. The church should offer effective disciple-making models to its members.

As mentioned earlier, the congregational profile of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Korea analyzed the current situation, membership trends, and ministerial context. The study revealed some very important challenges that the members of the Korean Church need to seriously consider. One of the issues has to do with attrition. Church members leave the church at almost the same rate as people who come into the church. Saving souls is largely dependent on the individual activities of pastors or public evangelism. These facts point out that it is time to focus on a discipleship ministry. Nurturing the new and old members should be more of a focus in the local church.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

It is hoped that the findings of this study will be used as a springboard for further research. The following are some suggestions for future research:



1. A study should be conducted to discover the relationship between learning theory and a discipleship ministry. As revealed in this study, the worship service is not enough to promote growth into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

2. Start a discipleship ministry in every local church. A study should be carried out to examine the barriers to a discipleship ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Korea.

3. A study should be carried out to examine the level of loyalty of Adventists to the fundamental truths of Adventism.

4. A study should be conducted identifying lifestyle and value systems of Adventists in Korea, given the influence of materialism and secularization, which are regarded as dysfunctional barriers to a discipleship ministry.

5. Studies should be done to explore and analyze the discipleship ministry programs being conducted by the local churches sponsored by Adventists in Korea.

6. A study should be done to explore and analyze the Sabbath School lessons and discipleship curriculum in the local church.

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### **Education**

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Doctor of Ministry in Leadership (2009 – 2012)

**Andrews University**  
MA in Pastoral Ministry (2008 – 2009)

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MA in World Mission Completion (1996 – 1997)

**Sahmyook University**  
Bachelor of Arts, Major in Theology (1988 – 1996)

### **Work Experience**

**Assistant Pastor** (2010 – Present)  
Hickory Korean-American Church

**Senior Pastor** (2005 – 2008)  
Shindo SDA Church

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Taekang Adventist Elementary School

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