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A Delphi Study of the Biblical/Doctrinal Knowledge That Ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ Consider Essential for Spiritual Development

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ABSTRACT

A DELPHI STUDY OF THE BIBLICAL/DOCTRINAL KNOWLEDGE
THAT MINISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES/CHURCHES
OF CHRIST CONSIDER ESSENTIAL FOR
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

by

Jeffrey D. Derico

Chair: Duane Covrig

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

School of Education

Title: A DELPHI STUDY OF THE BIBLICAL/DOCTRINAL KNOWLEDGE THAT
MINISTERS OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES/CHURCHES OF CHRIST
CONSIDER ESSENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Date completed: April 2012

Purpose and Rationale of the Study

The primary role of the minister is to spiritually lead others and facilitate their

spiritual growth. Traditionally, biblical and doctrinal teachings have played an essential

role in this process. Sadly, two recent trends have worked against this pastoral role. First,

research indicates that Americans and many Christians are less and less biblically literate.

Second, spiritual growth scholars have observed that church leaders seem less and less

prepared to convey biblical knowledge that can systematically and effectively guide

others in their spiritual growth.

Christian spiritual growth literature establishes a functional and necessary

connection between biblical literacy and spiritual growth. Both scholars and clerical

leaders have articulated a leadership mandate on ministers that challenges them to guide church members toward spiritual growth.

The purpose of this study is to use a Delphi panel of experts to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual development of congregants.

Method

A Delphi study was employed to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered most essential for facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Invitations to participate in the study were sent to 250 Christian Church/Church of Christ ministers via email. A custom web-based instrument was used to allow participants to select biblical and doctrinal ideas they thought were most essential for spiritual growth in church members. Respondent characteristics were also collected. Three Delphi rounds were used to finalize a list of 26 most selected biblical and doctrinal teachings.

Findings

An initial 600-item list of biblical and doctrinal teachings was refined by three Delphi rounds with 43 ministers to a final list of 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items perceived to be most essential for facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Those 26 items were:

1. Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

2. Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

3. Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)

4.   Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

5.   Grace

6.   Prayer

7.   God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)

8.   Bible (Word of God)

9.   Forgiveness (remission of sins)

10. Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

11. Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)

12. Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

13. Worship

14. Repentance (Repent)

15. Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)

16. Evangelism (Witnessing)

17. Communion (Lord's Supper)

18. Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)

19. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

20. Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

21. Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

22. Fruit of the Spirit

23. Jesus

24. Perseverance (through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)

25. Salvation, Plan of

26. Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter).

I used literature, comments from ministers, and my ministerial experience to explore possible reasons these biblical/doctrinal teachings emerged as the most essential for spiritual growth. Suggested rationale for how each respective item contributes to the pursuit of spiritual growth was provided.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The process of honing down the essential array of biblical and doctrinal teaching created insight into the Gospel commission to preach and teach and make growing disciples for Christ (Matt 28:18-20). The intent was not to dumb down Christian teachings to only a few constructs but instead to create a focus on the concepts that ministers believe must be reinforced in today's churches to help members experience spiritual development.

Several recommendations were offered for pastors, congregations, ministry and theological training institutions, and researchers. Pastors can use this study for personal development, teaching new converts, preparing the global teaching agenda for the church, and preparation of weekly teaching and preaching material.

Congregations can incorporate the items identified in this study into teaching venues, small-group curriculum, and assessment tools designed to measure biblical literacy. Churches can also use this study as a basis for evaluating prospective ministry staff members and candidates for ordination.

Ministry and theological training institutions can use this study to set degree requirements, establish course objectives, and conduct assessment of student learning.

Researchers can build on this study through replication and validation. Replication studies can focus on various faith traditions and faculty in the areas of theology, biblical studies, and practical ministry. Validation studies can be used to determine whether or not a correlation exists between spiritual growth and knowledge of items identified in this study and similar studies.

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To Carrie, for sacrificing in so many ways to make this achievement possible. You encouraged me when I was discouraged, you accommodated my writing even when it meant that you had to carry the load alone, and you forfeited your rightful claim to my time and attention more often than I care to admit. You are the true love of my life.

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The participants of this study, for giving of yourself so that the Kingdom of God may be advanced.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as a general introduction to the study. Special attention is given to the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research question, the research design, the theoretical framework, the definitions of key terms, the limitations of the study, and the organization of the study.

Background of the Problem

Many churches attempt to efficiently and effectively convey information about God, the Bible, Christ, morality, grace, etc. (Griggs, 1990, p. 240). This desire reflects the historic nature of teaching as a primary activity of the church since the first century, a function grounded in biblical precedent and instruction. The Gospel writers indicate that Jesus spent much of his time teaching. Paul's first priority when he entered a new town was to go to the synagogue to teach (Acts 17:1-3). The book of Acts describes a pattern of the early church that includes the "apostles' teaching" (Acts 2:42). The Bible explicitly affirms the importance of instruction related to the Word of God (Deut 6:6-9; Ps 78:2-7; 2 Tim 2:2).

Today, congregants have access to weekly sermons, Sunday school lessons, small group lessons, and Bible studies. Over the course of a year, individuals could be exposed to over 100 hours of face-to-face theological instruction (Ellis, 1982, p. 60). This vast array of theological learning opportunities raises three important questions.

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1. To what degree does the church's effort produce biblical literacy?

This is the most basic question church leaders might ask to assess their teaching efforts. The question could be answered by using a comprehensive Bible literacy examination that identifies the level of biblical knowledge of church members. Such an instrument, however, would return data of limited value. It might accurately measure what people know but it would not necessarily identify an individual's competency related to important knowledge. Thus, meaningful assessment of an individual's biblical literacy requires that another question be asked.

2. To what degree is biblical knowledge facilitating its intended purpose?

This question suggests that church leadership involves casting a vision, clarifying values, and providing direction. Biblical literacy has been identified as means by which individuals can be culturally literate (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1988; Prothero, 2007b) and be prepared to learn at multiple levels of higher education (Wachlin, 2005, 2006). These however are not the primary reason church leaders seek to convey biblical knowledge. The primary objective of biblical teaching in the context of the local church is to produce spiritual growth (Downs, 1994; Felton, 1997; Gangel & Wilhoit, 1997; Gilliard, 2001). This distinct objective requires one additional question to be asked.

3. To what degree do church leaders understand what constitutes essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge?

This question introduces a leadership concern more fundamental than the ability to convey general knowledge. More precisely this question implies that some pieces of biblical data are more valuable than others particularly where a specific objective has been identified. Lewis and Palmer (1989) overtly support this premise by declaring, "We

cannot know every word of the Bible, of course, so we have to select" (p. 24). Hayes (1969) proposed that a "core idea" of biblical knowledge could be identified (p. 229). Downs (1994) declares, "There is a content to be believed, and that content has specifics" (p. 18). Acknowledging the existence of a value hierarchy is an essential step for leaders and points to a final point.

A meaningful and objective standard should be developed by which church leaders can strategically define, convey, and measure biblical literacy. It more fundamentally suggests the importance of clearly identifying the goals associated with conveying biblical knowledge. The church leader's ability to instill meaningful biblical literacy in congregants is directly related to the degree to which he understands the desired objectives of biblical literacy and the specific knowledge most likely to produce those results.

Statement of the Problem

Spiritual discipline literature places a heavy emphasis on Bible study (R. Foster, 1998; Willard, 1991; Willard & Johnson, 2006). Biblical literacy is presented as an expectation by spiritual growth scholars (Wilhoit, 2008, p. 40) and an essential activity by Christian educators (Downs, 1994). R. Foster (1998) acknowledges, "One of the great needs among Christians today is simply the reading of large portions of Scripture" (p. 71). Rees (2006) supports this premise by identifying theology as a "*critical* discipline" (p. 10). Willard (2002) says simply, "Information is first" (p. 103). Hayes (1969) declares the Bible to be central (p. 229). Furthermore there exists broad agreement that familiarity with biblical teaching is a precursor to spiritual development (Downs, 1994; Felton, 1997; Gangel & Wilhoit, 1997; Gilliard, 2001). Packer and Parrett (2010) declare, "In

order to be fully useful, Christians must know their faith well" (p. 9). One might expect based on this emphasis that the average congregant would be well versed in the Bible but research suggests many churches are not succeeding (Gallup, 1990).

In 1990, a Gallup poll found that biblical illiteracy was "widespread" and a survey of contemporary literature suggests things have not improved in almost 20 years since that poll was conducted. A Gallup poll (2003) found that only 28% of Christians regularly study the Bible to find direction for life and the consequences of this statistic are far-reaching. A 2010 Pew Research Center survey found that Americans continue to demonstrate a lack of biblical literacy (Lugo, 2010). Stephen Prothero, chairman of the religion department at Boston University, writes, "U.S. citizens know almost nothing about the Bible. Although most regard it as the word of God, few read it anymore. Even evangelicals from the Bible Belt seem more focused on loving Jesus than on learning what he had to say" (Prothero, 2007a, p. A23). Willard and Johnson (2006) note, "Failure to know what God is really like and what his law requires destroys the soul, ruins society, and leaves people to eternal ruin. . . . This is the tragic condition of Western culture today" (p. 74). Research consistently demonstrates that Americans are unfamiliar with even basic biblical content (Prothero, 2007b).

Biblical illiteracy might reasonably be attributed to a failure of individual Christians to pursue spiritual development. Kroll (2007) concurs and suggests biblical illiteracy "has more to do with inattention than inability" (p. 58). The argument goes that a spiritually mature believer will allocate the time and energy necessary to become biblically competent. It could be argued equally reasonably though that biblical literacy is an essential ingredient for developing the maturity necessary to pursue knowledge in the

first place. Addressing this catch-22 requires the focus to be turned away from the individual and toward the church.

Christians who lack biblical knowledge sufficient to achieve spiritual development are reliant upon the church to provide guidance, education, resources, encouragement, support, and assessment. Stowell (1997) states that "the key to every ministry is the quality of the shepherd who leads" (p. 11). This begs the question as to whether or not church leaders have an understanding of what biblical information should be taught in an effort to develop a life-long quest for spiritual growth in their congregants (Willard, 1991, p. 16). In response to this question the Barna Group suggest, "Pastors want to guide others on the path to spiritual wholeness, but they are often not clearly defining the goals or the outcomes of that process" (Barna, 2009). Dykstra (1999) echoes this sentiment with a stronger condemnation that identifies a "broad incapacity on the part of our churches" (p. 8). Christians are being taught biblical information in great quantities but not necessarily the material that can best produce spiritual growth (Dykstra, 1999, p. 8).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use a Delphi panel of experts to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual development of congregants.

The Research Question

The research question for this study is, "What are the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items perceived by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth of church members?"

Research Design

This section provides information related to the research design. Special attention is given to the Delphi Method, the participants, the research instrument, and the pilot test.

The Delphi Method

The Delphi Method, also known as Delphi Technique (Keeney, Hasson, & McKenna, 2011, p. 1), was selected for this study due to its usefulness in synthesizing the diverse beliefs, perspectives, and experiences of a panel of independent experts into reliable and meaningful data (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Dalkey, Brown, & Cochran, 1969; Fischer, 1978; Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Fischer (1978) explains that the reliability and meaningfulness of the resulting data are not primarily a result of the diverse perspectives obtained from experts. Instead, he suggests that the Delphi Method is effective because it is able to fulfill a specific epistemological function.

> Dalkey posited three possible sources of predictions. At one extreme is knowledge, at the other extreme is speculation, and in between is opinion. Knowledge is substantiated by solid evidence, speculation by no evidence, and opinion by some evidence. Where knowledge is absent, as it may well be in forecasting the future, the Delphi method seeks to elicit the opinion of several experts and to reach a consensus about some future probability. (p. 64)

The objective of the current study is not to necessarily achieve consensus in the technical sense but instead to facilitate an exchange of ideas amongst experts in an effort to arrive at conclusions that are affirmed by the majority (Van Dijk, 1989, p. 189).

Participants

The panel of experts used in this study consisted of professional ministers serving Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. The research instrument contained questions

related to ministry experience, academic achievement, average weekly attendance of the respective church, and geographic location.

I adhered to the protocols required by the Andrews University Internal Review Board throughout each phase of the study. Participants received an informed consent document prior to the study that described the purpose of the study, the expected time investment, and rights related to withdrawal from participation.

Research Instrument

A web-based instrument was developed to qualify participants and conduct the Delphi study. Participants were emailed a hyperlink at the beginning of each round that directed them to a secure web site on which the instrument was hosted. An introduction to the study and an informed consent form were provided upon entry. Participants were given approximately 2 weeks to sign in and complete each Delphi round.

The first phase of data-gathering focused on capturing demographic information. Participants provided information such as gender, ministry role, academic credentials, ministry tenure, geographic location, and average church attendance. The research instrument gathered this information and tracked stage completion while maintaining participant anonymity.

The research instrument then presented a qualifying question that asked whether or not each participant believed biblical knowledge to be essential to spiritual growth. Continued participation in the study was contingent upon participants answering this question affirmatively. Qualified participants were presented the initial list of 600 biblical/theological knowledge items (List of Round One Items in Appendix D).

Participants were guided through three rounds in which they selected a progressively smaller number of biblical/theological items (100, 50, and 25 respectively) considered essential as a precursor to spiritual development. The instrument permitted participants to submit items that were not included on the list. Write-in items that received sufficient support were included in the subsequent stage. Code was included in the instrument design to ensure that the predetermined number of items was chosen, taking into account items added by the participant.

Pilot Test

The field study was conducted to ensure the research instruments would be understood and completed in accordance with the original intentions of the researcher. Five participants were selected to review the biblical/doctrinal item list and complete the first Delphi round. Field study participants were asked to evaluate the appropriateness of the content, the ease of use, and potential for participant fatigue.

Significance of the Study

The primary role of ministers is spiritual leadership (Stowell, 1997) and their ultimate leadership objective is to facilitate spiritual growth in the lives of individual Christians (Downs, 1994; Gallagher & Newton, 2009; Schaper, 2009). A popular if not principal strategy for achieving this end is to empower congregants with biblical knowledge. Such a strategy is theologically sound (Col 1:25-28; 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 2:1-3) but its effective implementation faces obstacles, the most serious being a lack of clarity regarding what biblical/doctrinal knowledge is most essential for spiritual growth.

This disconnect is fueled in part by a natural tension between the promise that "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for

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training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16) and the reality that "you cannot teach everything. Some things must get more attention than others" (Anthony, 2001, p. 120). Even though it is reasonable to conclude that every part of the Bible has *some* value, it does not by necessity follow that every piece of biblical/doctrinal has *equal* value, especially as it applies to specific spiritual, interpersonal, ethical, and moral objectives.

This study established an objective standard by which spiritual leaders can plan, implement, and assess a spiritual growth curriculum in the church. Of equal significance is that the resulting list of essential biblical/doctrinal items was developed through rigorous and reliable research focused on full-time ministers of local congregations.

Theoretical Framework

The Bible Literacy Project, Inc., conducted a study (Wachlin, 2005) that asked high-school teachers whether or not biblical knowledge is necessary for teens to be well educated. The participants were also asked to identify what biblical knowledge provides the best foundation for learning at the high-school level. A subsequent study (Wachlin, 2006) asked college professors what biblical knowledge incoming students need prior to matriculating to maximize his or her ability to learn at the college level. These studies established three important points about the Bible and how biblical knowledge contributes to personal development. First, both studies concluded that professional educators believe biblical knowledge to be an important factor in a student's academic development. Second, the studies affirmed that specific biblical information can be used to accomplish academic goals. Third, participants affirmed certain biblical knowledge items as more important than others relative to context and desired outcomes.

The current study applies these three research considerations to the Church's attempt to facilitate spiritual development. Participants were asked to identify whether or not biblical/theological knowledge is considered to be an important factor in an individual's spiritual development. The study questioned whether or not specific biblical/theological knowledge can be used to accomplish spiritual development. Finally, participants were asked to identify which biblical/theological items are most important in order to achieve spiritual development.

Definition of Terms

For clarity and consistency throughout the study, the following definitions of terms are provided that may be new to readers.

Christian Churches and Churches of Christ represent one of three Restoration Movement groups that formed in America about the year 1800 as a result of the Second Great Awakening (Baker, 2006, p. 6). With a heritage rooted in the Protestant Reformation, the Restoration Movement developed "in order to restore the church to the ideals that are pictured in the New Testament" (North, 1994, p. 6). Chapter 2 offers a more in-depth introduction to this faith tradition.

Biblical literacy carries several connotations in literature including possession of knowledge (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 2002; Lewis & Palmer, 1989; Prothero, 2007b). A second aspect of biblical literacy moves beyond rote learning to the ability to apply the biblical principles in daily life as the highest of five levels of learning (Wilhoit, 2008, p. 53). A third aspect of biblical literacy encompasses knowledge, includes interpretation, and takes yet one more step. This approach focuses on the ability to understand the Bible

as a "coherent whole" (Liddy & Welbourne, 1999, p. 1366), a single revelation and story of redemption (Griggs, 1990, p. 247; Hansen, 2010, p. 38; Legg, 2002, p. 405).

A biblical/theological knowledge item is defined as any distinguishably unique piece of information contained in the Bible. This definition includes but is not limited to individuals, relationships, activities, statements, historical events, parables, letters, doctrines, creeds, themes, and any combination thereof (Jeynes, 2010, p. 524).

Spiritual growth is related to the rules, norms, expectations, and laws that guide spiritual existence and spiritual relationships (Wilhoit, 2008, p. 52). Specifically it is observable and measurable development in holiness, reflection of Jesus, a personal relationship with God, and duplication of oneself through evangelism and mentoring. This will be discussed more in the next chapter.

Limitations

The findings of this study should not be considered normative for every faith tradition. Religious heritage is based on factors that can significantly affect priority of biblical doctrine and perceptions of how biblical literacy relates to spiritual growth (Gallagher & Newton, 2009, p. 257). While the Delphi research method accounts for diversity within the research sample, this study utilized a homogeneous sample and can thus only be used to describe the views held by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the research question, background, nature of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, definition of terms, and study limitations. The second chapter contains a

review of relevant literature. Chapter 3 is dedicated to issues related to methodology

including the rationale for use of the Delphi Method, the selection of the research sample,

data-collection procedures, protocol for synthesizing each round of data, and data

analysis. Findings of the study are discussed in Chapter 4. The final chapter provides

interpretation of the data and makes recommendations for pastors, congregations,

ministry and theological training institutions, and researchers.

Conclusion

Christian spiritual development has traditionally been grounded in and guided by

Bible knowledge and specific biblical/theological concepts advocated for centuries by

Christian spiritual leaders (E. L. Hayes, 1969, p. 229). With the decrease in biblical

literacy, there appears to be concern whether Christian members are receiving the

knowledge they most need for spiritual development. This study allowed ministers to

select and itemize biblical principles that provide essential biblical information that can

facilitate spiritual growth. Through the application of the Delphi Method, the

collaboration of a sample of experts identified the 26 most essential biblical/theological

knowledge items for the development of spiritual growth.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a survey of relevant literature in an effort to build a theoretical framework for the current study. The chapter consists of four sections, the first of which focuses on the nature of spirituality and its relationship to the church. The second section investigates the role of biblical literacy in and to a variety of contexts. The third section focuses on an assessment of biblical literacy in the Western Church. The fourth section presents a history and description of the study population.

Spirituality

The purpose of this section is to establish a functional perspective and language related to spirituality. Four primary topics will be reviewed including an introduction to spirituality in literature. The second topic is the relationship between spirituality and religion. The third will center on spiritual growth as it applies to leadership in the local church. The fourth will review various definitions of spiritual formation found in literature. This section will end with a concluding paragraph.

Introduction

Scholars have given much attention to spirituality, yet no universally accepted definition exists (Love & Talbot, 2009, p. 616) which has resulted in some inconsistencies in literature (Zinnbauer, 1997, p. 549). The variation seems to exist

because the study of spirituality has moved well beyond discussions of religion into disciplines such as psychology (Beck, 2006), psychotherapy (Eck & Moon, 2002), medical care (R. B. Gilbert, 2002), life stage (Kläden & Feeser-Lichterfeld, 2006), and learning theory (Tisdell, 2003). This has resulted in an equaled diversity in perspectives of scholars and respective study populations. The expansion of research beyond the related yet distinct topic of spirituality as an aspect of religious development (Allport, 1950; Kahoe, 1985; Kwilecki, 1988; McDargh, 1984; Neff, 2006; Saucier & Skrzypińska, 2006) has greatly diversified the values, philosophies, and belief systems that contribute to definitions of spirituality.

In some cases spirituality is stripped of any strictly biblical connotation (Ballard, 2003; Estanek, 2006; Tisdell, 2003). Ballard (2003) overtly states, "The Bible may be historically interesting but it cannot, except highly selectively, be of value today. There are other more accessible and recent sources of inspiration and insight" (p. 364). Schaper (2009) claims, "Not even scripture is perfect" (p. 16). Other studies such as Hyman and Handal (2006) investigate spirituality from a variety of religious perspectives. The consequence is that spirituality becomes diluted so much that it can refer to an "experience of relationship to a higher power, as well as the experience of 'no-thingness'" (Chandler, Holden, & Kolander, 1992, p. 170). The focus shifts from a biblical view of God, the dual nature of mankind, and the relationship between the two and defines spirituality in reference to a "Life-force, God, higher power, higher self, cosmic energy, Buddha nature, or Great Spirit" (Tisdell, 2003, p. 28). In some cases spirituality is defined in humanistic terminology such that "the practice of spirituality is any deliberate task that draws people into a disciplined and more intimate relationship to

that which they consider transcendent, greater than and more powerful than the self"

(Wellman, 2002, p. 189). These approaches to spirituality are insufficient for the purpose

of this study.

The definition of spirituality utilized in the current study is based upon the belief

that the Bible is the authoritative (MacArthur, 2001, p. 141), inspired, and inerrant (Liddy

& Welbourne, 1999, p. 1363) revelation of God to mankind. It is built upon a biblical

view of the nature of God, the nature of creation, and belief that mankind is composed of

a dual nature. Spirituality is thus understood to have application to ontology (J. B. Poll &

Smith, 2003, p. 133), behavior (Thayer, 2004, p. 196), and discipleship (Love & Talbot,

2009, p. 617; Yount, 2008, p. 6).

<center>Spirituality and Religion</center>

Defining and consistently applying the relationship between spirituality and

religion is a common challenge when writing in the arena of spiritual growth (Hyman &

Handal, 2006; Zinnbauer, 1997). A review of relevant literature returns three primary

views of the relationship between religion and spirituality. One view is that spirituality

and religion should be considered synonymous, though this view largely disappeared

from literature in the 1990s (Estanek, 2006). The second view is that spirituality and

religion are two different constructs. The third view is technically a category that consists

of a range of beliefs that claim religion and spirituality are related to some degree. The

following discussion addresses the latter two views respectively.

There is much support for the conclusion that religion and spirituality are distinct

constructs (Estanek, 2006; Neff, 2006). Zullig, Ward, and Horn (2006) for instance argue

that religion is "an organized belief system with set rituals and practices, which are

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acquired in places of worship, whereas spirituality has been conceptualized as a way of being (learned anywhere), which predetermines how individuals respond to life experiences" (p. 255). Dowling et al. (2004) also argue for a distinction in terms by defining spirituality as "seeing life and living in new and better ways, taking something to be transcendent or of great value, and defining self and relation to others in ways that move beyond the petty or material concerns to genuine concern for others" and religiosity as "the relationship with a particular doctrine about a supernatural power through institutional affiliation and participation in prescribed practices" (p. 7). Zinnbauer (1997) finds that spirituality is "commonly regarded as an individual phenomenon and identified with such things as personal transcendence, supraconscious sensitivity, and meaningfulness," whereas religion is "formally structured and identified with religious institutions and prescribed theology and rituals" (p. 551). Other scholars choose a pragmatic approach over or alongside the theoretical argument to draw a distinction between spirituality and religion.

This approach is generally founded on the belief that religion is primarily concerned with concepts such as function, activity, or association while spirituality deals with experience, relationship, commitment, affect, or emotion. The essential consequence of this perspective is that spirituality and religiosity can be experienced simultaneously or separately and thus must be understood as different. Saucier and Skrzypińska (2006) highlights this phenomenon when they report, "In America, virtually all religious people call themselves spiritual, as do some nonreligious people" (p. 1259). Zullig et al. (2006) describe it more clearly with, "Individuals can be very spiritual without performing in any formal religious practice and spirituality can have different meanings to different

individuals. . . . Furthermore, although religion may be an outward demonstration of spirituality for some, religiosity does not guarantee spirituality" (p. 256). Both the theoretical and pragmatic arguments for a distinct definition of spirituality and religion are well represented in literature. So also is the view that spirituality and religion share some level of interaction or interrelation.

While relatively few studies have been conducted to determine how the general public perceives the relationship between spirituality and religion (Zinnbauer, 1997, p. 551), those that have taken place demonstrate that individuals tend to see a casual if not necessary connection between religion and spirituality. McSherry, Cash, and Ross (2004) found that patients tended to be unclear about the definition of spirituality and thus believed there to be great similarity between spirituality and religion (p. 938). Zinnbauer (1997) found that almost half (41.7%) of the individuals surveyed believe that "religiousness and spirituality overlap but they are not the same concept" (p. 555). These beliefs are not limited to the general population. Much support for the interrelation between spirituality and religion can be found amongst scholars as well.

Tisdell (2003) suggests that "spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many adults they are at times interrelated" (p. 30). Hill and Hood (1999) identify "conceptual overlap between religion and spirituality [in that] both religion and spirituality are understood as a search for or experience of the sacred, as defined by the individual" (p. 1019). Not only are spirituality and religion perceived to be interrelated but scholars associate them closely enough that it has in some cases created significant confusion and overlap in literature.

Zinnbauer, Pargament, and Scott (1999) note that "different social scientists have different definitions of religiousness and spirituality" (p. 892). This is not totally surprising or concerning in and of itself but the implication goes well beyond the lack of consistent definitions. The consequence of inconsistent definitions is that scholars often find themselves without a grounding point for meaningful discussion. Hay (2000) demonstrates this inevitability when in an effort to interact with Macmurray's work is forced to clarify, "When he uses the word `religion' he is referring to what I have been calling spirituality" (p. 44).

For the purpose of this study spirituality is considered distinct from religion though a close relationship between the two concepts is granted. Religion is seen as "one's search for the sacred that can be viewed objectively, occurs externally and involves a commitment to organizational practices, rituals and beliefs" (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278). Spirituality can take one of three connotations depending on the perspective by which it is defined.

From an ontological perspective spirituality refers to the non-material spirit that, combined with a material body, composes the human person (J. B. Poll & Smith, 2003, p. 133). In this context spirituality conveys that humans possess a spiritual nature. From a behavioral perspective, spirituality is the degree to which one is living in accordance with the law and will of God (Thayer, 2004, p. 196). In this context spirituality conveys that an individual can choose to live in accordance with God's Law or choose to rebel against it. From a discipleship perspective spirituality refers to an ongoing process toward spiritual goals (Love & Talbot, 2009, p. 617; Yount, 2008, p. 6). Each of these connotations contributes to the current study, though of particular importance is its relationship to

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spiritual growth. Thus the following section seeks to review literature in order to establish a definition of spiritual growth.

Spiritual Growth

Any attempt to define spiritual growth must begin by establishing which of the various perspectives of spirituality is most appropriate upon which to base the definition. This exercise is essential because it provides an objective rationale by which some aspects of spirituality are declared relevant and beneficial while others are declared insufficient and irrelevant. The three that will be considered in this section are the ontological approach to spiritual growth, the behavioral approach to spiritual growth, and the discipleship approach to spiritual growth.

The ontological perspective of spirituality focuses on the spirit as primary "stuff" of which human beings are composed (Cottrell, 2002, p. 134). Some scholars view the spirit as a part of the physical body (DeHoff, 1998, p. 338). Others define it as "unembodied personal power" that is "capable of interacting with, influencing, and in some manner even inhabiting a body" (Willard, 1991, p. 64). Some authors refer to the spirit as distinct from both the material body and the immortal soul (Willard, 2002, p. 38). The biblical view and the one historically held within evangelical Christianity (Erickson & Hustad, 2001, p. 181) is that the spiritual nature is a component of humans that is distinct from the material nature though synonymous with the soul (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 138-140; Grudem, 1994, p. 473). It is "the part of you that is most real—the very essence of you that God knew before he brought you forth in physical form, the part that will exist after your body goes into the ground" (Barton, 2008, p. 13).

If reflective of an individual's most basic composition we might naturally expect that spiritual growth means that the spiritual nature of humans can increase in size or measure similar to the way the physical body grows. Mulholland (1993) hints at this idea by suggesting that "spiritual growth is, in large measure, patterned on the nature of physical growth" (p. 21) though he stops short of declaring that spiritual growth is ontological in nature and instead focuses on "spurts of growth" as the extent of the commonality. An ontological definition of spiritual growth is supported in neither Scripture nor scholarly literature. This lack of support leads us to consider additional options such as the behavioral view of spirituality.

The behavioral view focuses on spirituality as a measure of how closely one's life corresponds to God's Law. A person is spiritual when he or she ascribes to and lives in accordance with biblical principles. Spiritual growth from the behavioral perspective can thus be viewed as reflecting God's Law in one's life more clearly over time (Buker, 2003, p. 152). Though some authors minimize the importance of behaviors as an aspect of Christianity (M. D. Roberts, 2002, pp. 21-22), biblical and scholarly support for such a relationship abounds.

First Peter 2:1-12 affirms behavior as an aspect of spiritual growth.

> Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. . . . Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. (NASB)

Ephesians 4:14-29 also demonstrates that biblical writers expected change in behavior as a component of spiritual growth.

> As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in

deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. (NASB)

This pattern is reflected in scholarly literature as well. Buker (2003) defines spiritual growth in part to be "a lifestyle that is increasingly characterized by the principles of the Kingdom of God" (p. 152). In a study conducted to investigate the relationship between spirituality and religion, Hyman and Handal (2006) included "guiding behavior" as one measure of assessment (p. 270). Bonhoeffer (1995) holds unswervingly to the importance of the believer's obedience (pp. 63-65). Willard (2002) concurs by declaring obedience to be "an essential outcome of Christian spiritual formation" (p. 23).

The previous evidence demonstrates that the behavioral perspective of spirituality as a basis for spiritual growth enjoys much biblical and scholarly support. However the temptation to grant priority to the behavioral view on the basis of this testimony must be tempered because these and other sources also suggest that the behavioral approach is not

a fully sufficient framework for spiritual growth (M. D. Roberts, 2002, p. 22). Barton (2008) states that spiritual transformation is "an organic process that goes far beyond mere behavioral tweaks to work deep, fundamental changes at the very core of our being" (p. 16). The discipleship view of spirituality is offered as an alternative.

The discipleship view of spirituality shares much in common with the behavioral view. It is non-ontological in nature and is thus not concerned with building the spirit in the same sense as a body builder increases muscle mass. Instead the discipleship view grants that spiritual growth is related to outcomes of living according to the power, influence, and standard of the Holy Spirit (Barton, 2008, p. 16; Buker, 2003, p. 152; Thayer, 2004, p. 196) in an effort to become conformed to the image of Christ (Barton, 2008, pp. 15-16; Mulholland, 1993, p. 25; Sanders, 2007, p. 161). This definition of spiritual growth encompasses the behavioral view and adds several additional measures. The discipleship view is based on the premise that living according to the Spirit involves behavioral, cognitive, relational, and affective measures (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 5-6). Mulholland affirms this by declaring, "Every thought we hold, every decision we make, every action we take, every emotion we allow to shape our behavior, every response we make to the world around us, every relationship we enter into, every reaction we have toward the things that surround us and impinge upon our lives—all of these things, little by little, are shaping us into some kind of being" (p. 23). The discipleship approach to spiritual growth is reflected in Scripture as well. Colossians 1:9-12 reads:

> For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for

the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. (NASB)

Second Peter 1:5-8 also conveys a perspective of spiritual growth that includes more than behavioral responses:

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB)

Spiritual growth is commonly understood to be an ongoing process (Barna, 2009; DeHoff, 1998; Kläden & Feeser-Lichterfeld, 2006; Legg, 2002; Love & Talbot, 2009; J. B. Poll & Smith, 2003; Simpson, Cloud, Newman, & Fuqua, 2008). Spiritual development is an "experiential phenomenon" (Gallagher & Newton, 2009, p. 235) that while mysterious (Barton, 2008, p. 16) is not "mystical, sentimental, devotional, psychological, or the result of clever secrets" (MacArthur, 2001, p. 16; Willard, 2002, p. 31). Spiritual development is instead a subjective (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278) and personal (R. Foster, 2009, p. 30) pursuit characterized by the search of the sacred (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278), maturity (MacArthur, 2001, p. 15), conforming an individual to Christ (MacArthur, 2001, p. 15), shaping individuals into Christians (Felton, 1997, p. 92), transcending one's "locus of centricity" (Love & Talbot, 2009, p. 618), and "the renewing of the whole person from the inside, involving differences in thought, feeling, and character" (Willard, 1998, p. 107).

Spiritual development results in a "new mode of functioning" (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 170) when individuals "live differently from the norm because of their faith, leading lives that conform to the dictates of Scripture without cutting corners or trying to interpret biblical passages for personal comfort or advantage" (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5).

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Mulholland (1993) describes this journey as "a pilgrimage of deepening responsiveness to God's control of our life and being" (p. 12) and spiritual formation as "a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others" (p. 15).

For the purpose of this study the definition of spiritual development is a synthesis of MacArthur (2001), Willard (1998), Chandler et al. (1992), and Mulholland (1993). Spiritual growth is a life-long pursuit of four goals including (a) holiness (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5), (b) a more clear reflection of Jesus (G. Barna, 2001, p. 18) in knowledge (R. Foster, 1998, p. 66), attitudes (Gomez & Fisher, 2003, p. 1976), priorities (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 169), behaviors (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5), and relationships (Thayer, 2004, p. 200), (c) a personal relationship with God (Barton, 2006, p. 15) and (d) investment in other individuals through evangelism, mentoring, or ministry (Thayer, 2004, p. 200).

<div align="center">Spiritual Growth and Church Leadership</div>

Barna's (2001) conviction that individuals must learn and understand principles of Christian living (p. 21) is a legitimately obvious and elementary concept, though it should not be quickly dismissed as unimportant. It is in fact a principle that has far-reaching implications, one being that spiritual growth requires some level of education, guidance, encouragement, and accountability (Peterson, 1989, p. 57). This section reviews literature related to the priority of spiritual leadership in the Church.

It seems natural that the minister of the local church would hold a place of prominence and influence in how Christian education is infused into the congregation (Harner, 1939, p. 9) because placing the responsibility on oneself is like putting "a fox in charge of the chicken coop" (Peterson, 1989, p. 98). The conclusion that follows

naturally is that church leaders are the primary agents of discipleship. This is the consistent testimony in spiritual growth literature.

According to Collinson (2005) the historical focus of the Church's mission has been discipleship (p. 247), and today spiritual growth is still identified as the primary measure of ministry success (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 8-10). The goal of the church leader is to raise up a congregation that is "continually engaged in discerning the presence and call of God to them and, both individually and collectively, responding in worship and service" (Rees, 2006, p. 5). Schaper (2009) states, "The primary product or fruit . . . of a parish is spiritually mature people" (p. 16) and Peterson (1989) places the responsibility for "guiding growth into maturity" (p. 57) on church leaders, a sentiment echoed in literature (Barton, 2008; Downs, 1994; Gallagher & Newton, 2009; Lewis & Palmer, 1989). Wilhoit (2008) states this most explicitly by declaring that facilitating spiritual growth is "*the* task of the church" (p. 15). The primary question then is not whether or not the minister is responsible for leading and teaching congregants toward spiritual growth but instead what needs to be taught in order to achieve that goal. The following section will provide a review of literature related to biblical literacy.

Biblical Literacy

The potential outcomes of biblical literacy are "complex" (Jeynes, 2010, p. 525). Scholars have studied the correlation between biblical knowledge and social views (Grossman, 2010a), behavioral outcomes (Jeynes, 2010; Nelson, 2004), academic achievement (Jeynes, 2009), and psychological factors (Beck, 2006). These and similar studies are designed to measure the capacity of biblical literacy to affect individuals and groups, and each contributes significantly to the broad biblical literacy dialogue. The

purpose of the current study however requires that *what biblical literacy can do* be forfeited as a primary concern in favor of *outcomes that cannot be achieved in the absence of biblical literacy*.

This change in perspective is important because it challenges traditional thinking about how biblical literacy should be defined, taught, and assessed. This new paradigm dismisses the view, "Teach the Bible and good things will happen" as a narrow and incomplete strategy. Alternatively its core concerns are that certain goals will not occur unless biblical knowledge is achieved and that starting with the end in mind brings focus and clarity related to the specific knowledge necessary to achieve the desired goal. Three such outcomes are citizenship, orthodoxy, and spiritual growth.

Biblical Literacy and Citizenship

The separation of church and state has widened dramatically over the last several decades. Meachum and Gray (2009) describe America as "a nation decisively shaped by religious faith [yet] our politics and our culture are, in the main, less influenced by movements and arguments of an explicitly Christian character than they were even five years ago" (p. 34). The interpretation and application of Thomas Jefferson's infamous reference to the separation of church and state has created such a division between religion and civics that it seems ridiculous to suggest that citizenship is affected in any way by biblical literacy much less significantly so. This however is precisely what scholars conclude. Biblical literacy is identified as an essential precursor to the ability to understand contemporary culture in the United States, contribute to civic dialogue, and interact meaningfully within society.

Hirsch et al. (2002) state, "No one in the English speaking world can be considered literate without a basic knowledge of the Bible" (p. 1). Their claim is not focused on literacy as a measure of whether or not an individual is able to read and write but instead on an individual's understanding of "social and political consequences that transcend the individual" (Ntiri, 2009, p. 98). The focus is the ability to comprehend the significant factors that influence contemporary culture in America whether they are written, spoken, painted, or otherwise.

Meaningful interaction and interpretation of any form of communication within a given society requires an "appropriate, tacitly shared background knowledge" (Hirsch, 1983, p. 165). Biblical literacy is an important aspect of this knowledge base in part because communicators expect that readers have at least a basic familiarity with biblical references and themes (Reedy, 2006, p. 33). It is also important because biblical references and themes are woven through many of the most significant pieces of Western literature (Schippe & Stetson, 2006, p. 12). Familiarity with the Bible is one basis upon which individuals gain a functional understanding of Western culture and is therefore also necessary to contribute to "America's great intellectual, moral, and civic discussion" (Schippe & Stetson, 2006, p. 11). Unfortunately biblical literacy in America is being threatened because the values that defined and guided past generations are no longer being transmitted forward (Cooper, 1993, p. 118).

Civil society is based on "shared meanings and shared concepts and depends as well upon shared modes of discourse for negotiating differences in meaning and interpretation'' (Bruner, 1990, p. 13). The loss of these fundamental principles of communication creates a breakdown in dialogue and eventually a degeneration of the

very foundation of the social structure (Cooper, 1993, p. 118). Religion has been described as "the most volatile constituent of culture" and as such must be considered an essential component of Bruner's (1990, p. 13) "shared meanings and shared concepts" (p. 13). Because biblical Christianity has served historically as the religious foundation of American society (Orsi, 2004, p. 737), it is no surprise that where biblical literacy is lost "fundamental questions are trivialized or become difficult even to pose" (Dykstra, 1999, p. 6). A lack of Bible knowledge limits perspective upon which contribution to civic dialogue can be based and restricts meaningful interaction in American society.

Hirsch (1983) states, "A certain extent of shared, canonical knowledge is inherently necessary to a literate democracy" (p. 165). In this context he is referring to "canonical" not in the sense of the biblical canon but instead as an established compilation of information that forms society's values and norms. There are two reasons though that biblical literacy should be included in the meaning of "canonical knowledge." Most importantly Hirsch (Hirsch et al., 2002) himself declared in a later work, "No one in the English speaking world can be considered literate without a basic knowledge of the Bible" (p. 1). Furthermore, other researchers including Schippe and Stetson (2006) suggest that biblical literacy enhances individuals' understanding of the American democracy and equips them to thoughtfully participate in it (p. 11).

Biblical Literacy and Orthodoxy

Orthodoxy refers to the "correct content of faith" (Downs, 1994, p. 18) that reflects an "unchanging, external moral authority" (Fox & Tabory, 2008, p. 318). And though orthodoxy must be recognized as contextual with respect to religious heritage (Orsi, 2004), all evangelical Christian groups share a common view of the Bible's

significance in defining and protecting orthodoxy. The following sections discuss two aspects of orthodoxy as they are formed by and are dependent upon biblical literacy. The first focuses on orthodoxy as a religious curriculum and the second centers around Christian education as a means by which orthodoxy can be conveyed and formalized in the context of local congregations.

Curriculum

Much of the published literature related to curriculum is dedicated to the instructional purposes and methodologies of public schools and universities. This is to be expected since the development of curriculum is an "essential function of school leadership" (Wiles, 2009, p. 2). There are pockets of work that extend beyond these contexts, however, and the educational work of the church is one example (Anthony, 2001; Heim, 1952; Legg, 2002). Whether employed at the local university or the local church, the theoretical framework for curriculum is the same. The present challenge is to understand the interplay between biblical literacy and that framework in the context of a spiritual curriculum. And even as we begin we face a significant hurdle because literature reveals that no broadly agreed upon definition of curriculum exists (Wiles, 2009, p. 2).

Morris and Hamm (1976) describe curriculum theory as a diverse field and as such better represented as a multiplicity of theories as opposed to a single homogeneous system (p. 299). Popkewitz (2009) overlays curriculum with historical and political perspectives and as such defines it as, "to consider what is taken as 'natural' to see, think, and act in the present as historically produced; and that the double sense of the subjects of schooling—the disciplines that organize curriculum and the child as the object of change—is the political" (p. 314). Hayes and DiSanto (1969) introduce an interplay

between the learner, the learned, and the learning within curriculum development (p. 44).

McKeen and Fortune (1987) include similar concepts and add characteristics of society

and its institutions (p. 223). Dillon (2009) points to Schwab's "marvelously expressed"

definition, and it is employed here as a concise yet thorough integration of perspectives,

beliefs, and components commonly expressed by scholars and practitioners:

> Curriculum is what is successfully conveyed to differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skill, taste, and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students who are known to the decision makers. (Schwab, 1983, p. 240)

This definition provides an important framework for this study because it

incorporates and more importantly legitimizes multiple components that often comprise

curriculum theory and practice. More specifically, it introduces "legitimated bodies of

knowledge" as a fundamental component of curriculum.

Some scholars believe that curriculum should not be viewed as a simple list of

items to be taught and learned, a view not new but certainly renewed in response to

Hirsch et al.'s (1988) work. In a review of *Cultural Literacy*, Scott (1988) suggested that

an identifiable list of knowledge items can be viewed as "just one more sensationalist

educational jeremiad" (p. 333). P. Cook (2009) echoes this concern with Hirsch's

approach and appeals to a resolution passed by The National Council of Teachers of

English (NCTE) on November 22, 1987, as corroborating evidence. The NCTE

resolution strongly disavowed any association between curriculum and knowledge-based

education. It says in part, "An accumulation of particular facts such as titles, names,

phrases, and dates negates its very integrity" (p. 491). What may be surprising is that

similar beliefs are broadly represented in spiritual curriculum literature. Sherrill (1944)

presents an early statement on this topic with, "Christian education is not to be conceived as one definitive body of content" (p. 2), a view possibly held in response to wide theological, hermeneutical, and educational understandings reflected in various Bible curricula (Legg, 2002, p. 409). What should be included in a spiritual curriculum varies from scholar to scholar.

Wilhoit (2008) suggests that curriculum is primarily focused on concepts of doing and being as opposed to concepts of knowledge (pp. 47-49). In this way he draws a distinction between "orthodoxy of belief" and "orthodoxy of life" (Reed & Prevost, 1993, p. xx) with the idea that the pursuit of theology can assist the local church to become a community *of biblically formed* and *socially responsive* Christians (Rees, 2006, p. 5). The belief that the Bible is more about living a particular lifestyle than it is about a compendium of knowledge is popular and has been a part of spiritual growth literature for decades (Neal & Richmond, 1962, p. viii). Welbourne (2003) provides yet another perspective by declaring that biblical literacy is more than "the baseline of minimally accepted knowledge of facts" and highlighting the importance of interpretation and communication of literary genres and texts (p. 1).

Three points must be made in response to the aforementioned challenges. First, the purpose of the current study is not to limit the definition of curriculum to a simple list of knowledge points. More fundamentally it must be noted that content is an essential component of curriculum (B. O. Smith, 1976, p. 191) and as such specific knowledge is the mortar that firmly joins curricular outcomes to formational issues of culture, politics, history, and justice. Third, I respond to Welbourne (2003, p. 1) with Flinders's (1996) belief that "interpretation is the first step beyond this surface-level content and into

questions of meaning. From an enactment perspective, this dimension of the study pertains directly to how content ideas are understood within the context of instruction" (p. 361). The key here is to understand that curriculum—whether a system, a model, or objective—must include specific points of knowledge. Olbricht (1965) states, "One learns from nature by observing its entities, and similarly he learns from revelation by studying its facts" (pp. 211-212). The consistent pattern in literature demonstrates that concepts such as interpreting meaning and practical application are hollow, meaningless, and more fundamentally impossible in the absence of content.

McKeen and Fortune (1987) agree that curriculum theory is affected by variables such as the learner, teacher, subject matter, delivery systems, and society but also maintain conveyance of content as a key component (p. 225). Even scholars who express a dissenting view of a knowledge-based approach recognize that teaching as a transfer of content knowledge is somehow related to the broad context of curriculum theory (P. G. Cook, 2009, p. 497; Scott, 1988, p. 338). P. Cook (2009) demonstrates this by noting that Hirsch accounts for "the static (e.g., common knowledge, the content of learning) and the flexible (e.g., rhetorical ability, familiarity with shifting discursive milieus), resulting in a relatively coherent pedagogical program" (p. 488). Though content is not the whole of curriculum theory, methodology and interpretation are only possible when there exists content on which to build, theorize, and apply.

The essential nature of content for curriculum theory enjoys significant support in literature and more importantly the critical nature of a focused and intentionally selected content. Purkiser (1959) declared more than 50 years ago the importance of giving consideration to the beliefs that matter most (p. 9). Anthony (2001) states, "One of the

major reasons that a curriculum must be planned is that the choices of instructional

methodology and emphasis are important" (p. 120). B. Smith (1976) believes that the

precise content of which curriculum should be comprised is of "primary importance" (p.

191). The reasonable conclusion is that a foundational component of curriculum

development involves filtering the breadth of possible topics and identifying the

knowledge that is best suited to facilitate the desired outcomes (Morris & Hamm, 1976,

p. 300). At the most basic level spiritual growth is built upon theological soundness

(Downs, 1994, p. 7). This leads naturally into a review of literature related to the specific

content most appropriate for a spiritual curriculum.

G. Barna (2001) developed The Competencies Model of discipleship that includes

10 core beliefs: the Trinity, salvation by grace, authority of the Bible, personal God,

identity in Christ, church, humanity, compassion, eternity, and stewardship (p. 135).

Felton (1997) points back to John Wesley's belief that a sound grasp of biblical topics

such as God, sin, mankind, and grace is an essential precursor to spiritual development

(p. 99). Burge (1999) suggests a curriculum surrounding four primary areas: Old

Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, Christian Doctrines, and Christian

Disciplines (p. 48). Neal and Richmond (1962) include the church and its mission,

personal faith and experience, the Christian in society, the Bible in life, Christians and

their world, and the Christian family. Purkiser (1959) sets forth six items in his book

Beliefs That Matter Most including beliefs about the realm of faith, beliefs about the

triune God, beliefs about redemption, beliefs about the new life in Christ, beliefs about

entire sanctification, and beliefs about the church and the future. Sherrill (1944)

associates a spiritual curriculum with the search for knowledge related to the nature of

God, how God reveals himself to Creation, how to discern God's will, and what he calls "the ultimate values of the universe" (p. 2). It is reasonable to suggest that authors believe the knowledge items/categories included in their work to be important. It is also appropriate to conclude that the authors recognize a direct correlation between each knowledge item/category and a particular goal. What is not always overtly known is whether or not authors believe their list to be comprehensive and whether or not their lists are appropriately specific related to key biblical passages, events, and persons.

Even in a book so audaciously titled *Beliefs That Matter Most* (Purkiser, 1959) the author recognized the need for moderation. He notes that the title could reasonably have been *Some Beliefs That Matter Most* because, "Many topics of importance are not treated at all, and others most briefly" (Preface). The goal of the current study is to identify knowledge items that truly matter most if the objective is spiritual growth. The goal is "to develop curricula and undertake research on problem-solving" in order to "theorize, regularize and rationalize processes to change people" (Popkewitz, 2009, p. 304). Recognizing that this goal requires some interplay between cultural, political, and personal considerations it is essential that knowledge of the Bible is paramount in the context of Christian Education.

Christian Education

Countless pages have been dedicated to Christian education in literature (Anthony, 2001; Coe, 1929; Gangel & Wilhoit, 1997; Reed & Prevost, 1993; Sherrill, 1944; Yount, 2008). From these works a variety of definitions for Christian education can be gleaned. Some authors offer quite short and somewhat redundant definitions such as, "Christian education is 'education for Christian living" (Daniel, Wade, & Gresham, 1987,

p. 13). Most definitions however are more involved and range from a fractured list of key components (Anthony, 2001, p. 13) to traditional definitions that are coherent and relatively concise. George Albert Coe (1929) defines Christian education as "the systematic, critical examination and reconstruction of relations between persons, guided by Jesus' assumption that persons are of infinite worth, and by the hypothesis of the existence of God, the Great Valuer of Persons" (p. 296). Harner (1939) contributes a slightly different perspective with, "Christian education is a reverent attempt to discover the divinely ordained process by which individuals grow toward Christlikeness, and to work with that process" (p. 20), a conviction shared by Downs (1994, p. 17). Out of these and other definitions come a myriad of perspectives, methodologies, philosophies, and approaches to Christian education.

Some authors present a historical perspective of Christian education (Reed & Prevost, 1993; Sherrill, 1944). Others provide a heavy focus on the relationship between education and human development (Anthony, 2001). Methodology is yet another common approach for framing Christian education (Daniel et al., 1987). Authors have presented Christian education through the lens of philosophy (Gangel & Benson, 1983), educational psychology (Yount, 1996), and learning theory (Downs, 1994). Some authors such as Harner (1939) seem well ahead of their time as they present a wide range of beliefs, goals, methods, and challenges that are still being wrestled with today. Each legitimately contributes to the theoretical landscape, and it is helpful to understand the scope of Christian education literature although the evaluation of specific tenets represented in each work extends beyond the scope of the current project. The goal of this section is to focus on the role of biblical literacy in Christian education.

This might seem obvious and thus an unnecessary point but authors such as Burge (1999) suggest that many churches today "put less premium on education than they do on personal development and therapeutic wholeness" (p. 48). He goes on to suggest that the natural consequence is that "religious certainty is anchored less to historical and theological fact than it is to compelling spiritual encounters. Thus sermons become more therapeutic and less instructional; and the validity of what we do on Sunday morning is grounded in what we feel, not in what we think" (p. 48). Packer and Parrett (2010) offer a similar perspective. They state that a foundational commitment to Christian belief is "being replaced by the idea that those who adhered to the church system and kept up religious appearances were still free to believe or disbelieve as their personal judgment might suggest" (p. 11). They point to this trend to explain why there is an epidemic of seriously malnourished Christians. The full consequences extend well beyond a general spiritual condition. The loss of the Bible as the primary spiritual guidance and grounding "endangers both the correctness of our theology and the genuineness of our relationship with God" (M. D. Roberts, 2002, p. 20). We can no longer presume that the Bible's role in Christian education is clearly identified or that it holds a place of significance in the spiritual curriculum even though both are clearly and consistently identified in literature.

Christian education as a discipline inherently and legitimately incorporates theories derived from a variety of social science fields (Downs, 1994, p. 14) but its foundation is consistently identified as biblical study and theology (Anthony, 2001, p. 13). It is out of this "active body of convictions held" that the objectives of Christian education will be born (Sherrill, 1944, pp. 1-2). Thus "the Bible deserves and should be given the preeminent role in the educational ministry of the church" (Yount, 2008, p. 97)

and biblical literacy must serve as the foundation of any spiritually focused curriculum (E. L. Hayes, 1969, p. 229).

Biblical Literacy and Spiritual Growth

Biblical literacy has received much attention in literature (Beal, 2009; Grossman, 2010b; Hansen, 2010; Lugo, 2010; Schaper, 2009). Gilliard (2001) identifies the Bible as "the Church's book" (p. 5). It is described as the primary source of theological and educational commitments (E. L. Hayes, 1969, p. 225). The Bible is an inspired and inerrant message from God (Liddy & Welbourne, 1999, p. 1363) to humans and as such is the standard for faith (Burge, 1999, p. 47), teaching (E. L. Hayes, 1969, p. 225), and practice for Christians (Nelson, 2004, p. 52). This section investigates literature related to biblical literacy and its effects on churches and individual Christians. Specifically biblical literacy will be presented as an essential precursor to spiritual growth.

Swindoll (1987) identifies the mind as the front line of the spiritual battle between forces of evil and forces of good (p. 1). Savage (2010) goes one step farther and points to learning as a key factor in spiritual maturity (p. 91). This is an important clarification because it suggests knowledge has spiritual implications and more specifically it suggests that knowledge of certain things can promote spiritual growth. What these claims fail to do however is identify the object of functional knowledge.

Evidence from a survey of spiritual growth literature points to the Bible as one object of knowledge by which individuals are transformed into a child of God (P. Roberts, 1939, p. 18). Gilliard (2001) goes so far as to say that spiritual growth is the most fundamental goal of the Bible (p. 5). However, to what degree and in what ways

biblical knowledge is related to spiritual growth are the topics of some debate. Some scholars seek to minimize the significance of the Bible related to spiritual growth.

Gallagher and Newton (2009) for instance point to authors like Wellman (2002) who place a stronger emphasis on "strength and coherence" of the spiritual message than the content of that message (p. 235). Wilhoit (2008) also cautions against a facts-based approach to spiritual growth (pp. 51-52). Wanak (2004) declares that simply knowing about God is an incomplete growth strategy (p. 51). Collinson (2005) says, "Formal teaching alone will never communicate the full spectrum of what it means to be a follower of Jesus" (p. 249). Maintaining a balanced view of the importance of biblical knowledge versus other spiritual growth factors is reasonable though not at the expense of biblical knowledge as a primary component of spiritual growth pursuits.

Bible literacy is identified as a key strategy by which individuals seek spiritual victory (Swindoll, 1987, p. 4), a measure commonly associated with moral judgment (Nelson, 2004, p. 48). Nelson (2004) affirms this perspective through research that finds biblical knowledge to be "associated with greater maturity, both religious and moral" (p. 52). The practical effects of the Bible are summarized by Legg (2002). She says, "When we raise questions, study scripture, and enter its world, the Bible can inform us, shape us, judge us, inspire us, motivate us, and energize us to be a people of faith today" (p. 405). This conviction is shared by Wilhoit (2008) who declares, "The Christian story found in the Bible should form our lives" (p. 140). Even authors who claim that community and relationships are the primary factors in developing spiritual growth grant that biblical literacy is an important component (Collinson, 2005, p. 248). Many scholars assign Bible literacy the primary and essential role in spiritual growth of Christians.

Biblical knowledge is regularly identified as the foundational component of the spiritual growth process (MacArthur, 2001, p. 141; Yount, 1996, p. 4). Willard and Simpson (2005) declare that spiritual formation is manifested in God's Word (p. 19). Kroll (2007, p. 58) calls biblical literacy the "first step toward spiritual maturity" (p. 58). Biblical literacy is also shown to be a function of spiritual formation through claims made by ministers and scholars that individual Christians need to spend more time reading and studying the Bible.

Wellman (2002) found that the majority of the pastors interviewed called for a greater emphasis on scriptural study (p. 192). Another testament to biblical literacy as an essential component of spiritual growth is that, while some spirituality-focused research instruments lack a theological component as illustrated by the Spiritual Assessment Inventory (Hall & Edwards, 2002), many such as the Holy Spirit Questionnaire (Fee & Ingram, 2004), the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (Thayer, 2004), and the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (Ellison, 1983; Gomez & Fisher, 2003) include biblical knowledge as one of several measures of spiritual health and development. These and other studies demonstrate that scholars assign a functional connection between biblical literacy and spiritual growth. Such a conclusion naturally leads to a review of considerations related to biblical literacy in the American Church.

Biblical Literacy in the American Church

Trends related to biblical literacy in America have been a point of interest for many decades (Fowler, 1984; E. L. Hayes, 1969; Heim, 1952). Studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between biblical literacy and psychological factors (Beck, 2006), moral judgment (Nelson, 2004), academic ability (Jeynes, 2009),

generational categories (Moenning, 2002), and spirituality (Ballard, 2003). This section addresses the current level of biblical literacy in the American church and the responses to that level represented in literature.

E. L. Hayes (1969) described a "slippage of the Bible from the center of Christian educational concern" more than 50 years ago (p. 224). Lewis and Palmer (1989) found a similar trend 20 years later when they declared, "Even in our evangelical Sunday schools we manage to avoid a clear understanding of our Christian faith" (p. 16). Packer and Parrett (2010) suggest, "The food we get and give in our learning and teaching [in the church], though no doubt tasty, does not nourish us as spiritual food should" (p. 10). The authors go on to suggest that "smatterings of truth, blurry notions about God and godliness, and thoughtlessness about the issues of living . . . are all too often the marks of evangelical congregations today" (p. 16). Schaper (2009) describes the Church's challenge related to biblical literacy in terms of trying to teach algebra to church members who cannot add (p. 15). Stivers (2003) points to a "serious decline in reading comprehension" in America and suggests that the consequence is a media-heavy perspective that perpetuates a "pseudo-morality" (p. 69). The inevitable result of this trend in the Church is a vast deficiency in biblical literacy (Gallup, 1990; Lugo, 2010; Prothero, 2007b; Willard & Johnson, 2006). Responses to this circumstance vary.

It is lamented by pollsters (Prothero, 2007b, p. 7), church statisticians, and Christian educators (Lewis & Palmer, 1989, p. 15). Practitioners and scholars offer numerous methods, models, and strategies by which to curb the downward trajectory (Griggs, 1990; Kybird, 2006; Liddy & Welbourne, 1999). Others such as the authors of the U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey report (Lugo, 2010) attempt to alleviate this

tension by denying the existence of a valid or identifiable standard. "We would not," they state, "give the public an 'A,' an 'F' or any other grade because we have no objective way of determining how much the public *should* know about religion" (Lugo, 2010, p. 4). These responses are found to be insufficient for two reasons.

First, attempts to address biblical illiteracy in the Church are impractical unless a clear and focused body of content is identified by which literacy can be defined, taught, and ultimately assessed. Second, these responses operate under the presumption that biblical literacy is universally effective. That is, the responses assume that a single vaguely defined approach to biblical literacy will positively and equally influence measures such as moral judgment, psychological factors, and spirituality. This study seeks to address and overcome both limitations by identifying the most important biblical/theological knowledge items related specifically to spiritual growth.

History and Characteristics of the Study Population

This study seeks to identify beliefs related to biblical literacy and spiritual growth from the perspective of ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. This section introduces and examines several features of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ including historical foundations, identity, and current influences.

Historical Foundations

Any attempt to study a distinct faith tradition must include an inquiry into the religious context out of which the movement was born. This section presents a brief explanation of the birth of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, patterns of interaction between individual churches, and a description of the primary demographic represented in this church group.

Origins and Early Influences

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ are one of three groups born out of the Restoration Movement, a religious tradition founded out of the "religious ferment and theological reconfiguration" of the Second Great Awakening (Baker, 2006, p. 7). Also known as the Stone-Campbell Movement, this religious tradition received its namesake from two "rogue Presbyterians," Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone (J. M. Cook, 2006, p. 129). Two of the "religious radicals" pursuing religious reform based on "the inalienable right of common people to interpret the New Testament for themselves" (Hatch, 1995, p. 547; Toulouse, 2004a, p. 178), Campbell and Stone broke separately from their respective denominational structures and led distinct groups until a merger in the late 1820s and early 1830s (North, 1994, p. 167; Phillips, 2005, p. 48) that created "one of the most significant native-born American religious movements" (Casey & Foster, 2002, p. 1).

The Stone-Campbell Movement was founded upon principles of Christian unity, biblical authority, and a desire to restore the Church to its first-century roots (North, 2001, p. 108; Rhodes, 2005, p. 113; L. G. Thomas, 1941, p. 63). Rallying cries of this young movement included, "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity" (Rollmann, 1997, p. 129) and, "No creed but the Bible" (Baker, 2006, p. 8). The latter was an important and fundamentally unique approach to unity, which is historically established, measured, and protected through written statements of faith (North, 2001, p. 108). The overt rejection of creeds meant that Restoration Movement Churches would require a different standard for unity. The solution needed to be more than an ideal yet less than a dogma. This conflict was effectively resolved with, "Where the Scriptures

speak, we speak; Where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent" (Webb, 1990, p. 104). Neither a denial of absolute truth nor an acceptance of every whim of doctrine, these words established the Bible as the sole standard of Christian doctrine, fellowship, and practice while at the same time allowing for multiple and sometimes divergent theological perspectives. The inherent freedom afforded by this philosophy of unity permitted and even encouraged voluminous written and oral dialogue.

Early leaders of the Restoration Movement regularly used printed materials to influence the thought and practice of their respective groups. Two examples of formational documents are "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery" and "The Declaration and Address." Both served as a proverbial line in the sand and introduced ideals that would eventually define the Restoration Movement.

"The Last Will and Testament" was penned in 1804 marking the end of a short-lived splinter group of the Presbyterian Church that included Stone and three other ministers (Ward, 1958, p. 76). In this document the group declared, "We will, that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one Body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling." Five years later the father of Alexander Campbell, Thomas Campbell, wrote the "Declaration and Address" to reflect the beliefs of the newly formed Christian Association of Washington. He wrote:

> Rejecting human opinions and the inventions of men as of any authority, or as having any place in the Church of God, we might forever cease from further contentions about such things; returning to and holding fast by the original standard; taking the Divine word alone for our rule; the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide, to lead us into all truth; and Christ alone, is exhibited in the word, for our salvation. (Campbell, 1809, pp. 3-4)

These documents and their respective assertions paved the way for many more influential letters, papers, and articles.

Barton Stone served as Editor and contributor for the *Christian Messenger*, a monthly journal published from November 1826 to April 1845 (Phillips, 2005, p. 49). With this outlet he would maintain communication and influence with the newly decentralized churches of the Stone Movement (Cheatham, 2004, p. 194). The journal included teaching and reflection on a variety of doctrinal topics and correspondence with other early Restoration Movement leaders (Cheatham, 2004; K. J. Gilbert, 2001; Ward, 1958). Publishing monthlies was a common strategy for religious leaders of the time, and Alexander Campbell would use it well (Webb, 1990, p. 239).

Campbell developed somewhat of a tenuous relationship with the Baptists after his break from the Presbyterian Church. He launched a journal called the *Christian Baptist* in 1823, though his intention was not to support or further the doctrinal objectives of the Baptist denomination (Fletcher, 2003, p. 85). It was published for 7 years when publishing came to an end in part because Campbell became concerned that the label "Christian Baptists" was being imposed on the Campbellites and because Baptist Churches were beginning to expel his followers in response to criticism contained in the journal (Snyder, 2004, p. 175). Campbell's printing press did not sit idle long though. The final issue of the *Christian Baptist* marked the beginning of what would be an even more significant journal for Campbell and the Restoration Movement.

Just one year later Campbell began publishing the *Millennial Harbinger*, a journal very similar in structure and content to the *Christian Baptist*. Publishing began in 1830 and it quickly developed into what would be the "most important forum for shaping the

thought and practice of the Stone-Campbell Movement before the Civil War" (D. A.

Foster, 2004, p. 517). Its inception was timely and it served as a valuable platform for

Campbell to report on the developing merger with churches of the Stone Movement. The

Millennial Harbinger also served as a unifying force as the Stone-Campbell Movement

grew to maturity (D. A. Foster, 2004, p. 518). Publication ceased in 1870, four years after

Campbell died and less than three decades before the first of two major rifts in the Stone-

Campbell Movement fellowship.

A Fracture in Unity

The ideal of unity seemed tenuous even as the Stone-Campbell Movement formed

since it required individuals and churches to draw distinctions from existing

denominational structures and authority. It was a firmly held ideal nonetheless and so

much so that North (2001) states, "It goes without saying . . . that Christian unity is one

of the foundation stones of the Restoration Movement" (p. 106). From the beginning,

Restoration Movement leaders embraced the motto, "In matters of faith, unity; in matters

of opinion, liberty, in all things, love" (Ward, 1958, p. 74). They were one of the

"isolated voices crying out on behalf of Christian unity in the midst of a nineteenth-

century sectarian wilderness" (Callen, 1997, p. 15). The pursuit of Christian unity shaped

the theology and practice of the movement and continues to be a hallmark of Stone-

Campbell churches today. This in spite of events that would redefine the movement in the

late 1800s and early 1900s.

By the mid-1850s Alexander Campbell's *Millennial Harbinger* had begun to lose

its influence as a unifying and defining force for the Restoration Movement (D. A.

Foster, 2004, p. 518). Barton Stone moved from Kentucky to Illinois in 1834 and by 1845

the *Christian Messenger* ceased publication. Stone died in 1844 and Campbell's death in 1866 brought the passing of the "greatest promoter of this reformation" (Garrett, 2004, p. 112). The *Christian Standard*, *American Christian Review, Gospel Advocate*, and other magazines replaced the *Millennial Harbinger* in influence and Campbell's torch of "protector of the Bible and defender of the faith" was passed to capable figures like J.W. McGarvey (North, 1994, p. 236; Webb, 1990, p. 252). Yet the unity that characterized the Stone-Campbell Movement was facing tension in the face of a civil war and changing religious and cultural landscapes.

Disagreements related to the propriety of musical instruments in the church, missionary organizations, and salaried local ministers began to polarize leaders and congregations, though North (1994) notes that these were simply symbols of the true point of contention: the application of biblical authority (p. 246). They did however serve as the pragmatic points of debate and practice that local congregations were forced to address. Articles and editorials were being published on these topics in the major Stone-Campbell Movement journals as early as 1864 and by 1889 definitive and significant stands had been taken opposing the "innovators" (North, 1994, p. 250). The first of two major Restoration Movement splits functionally occurred before the end of the 19th century, though not until 1906 was there official recognition of the distinction between the Christian Churches and the non-instrumental Churches of Christ (North, 1994, p. 251; Olbricht, 2004a, p. 212). The relatively subtle and peaceful first split would not be descriptive of the second fracture.

Almost exactly 100 years after the "Declaration and Address" was published by Thomas Campbell came what R.C. Foster (1954) calls the "apostasy of the restoration

movement" (p. 16). The formation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the early 1900s was marked by great animosity and discord (R. C. Foster, 1954, p. 17; Webb, 1990, p. 185).

Three factors that contributed to the second split of the relatively young Stone-Campbell Movement were the rise of modernism and its focus on literary criticism, the Federated Church controversy, and open membership (Webb, 1990, p. 249). Just as application of biblical authority was the primary focus of the first split (North, 1994, p. 246), so too was it the paramount issue in the second fracture . Disciples have historically assigned authority for Christian faith and life to the Bible though many Disciples leaders "affirmed the conclusions of the higher critics and abandoned a propositional approach to the Bible" (Toulouse, 2004a, pp. 178-179). Adding fuel to the fire was the adoption of a denominational structure during the first half of the century that provided regional oversight for churches, though official denominational identity would not occur until 1968 (Toulouse, 2004a, p. 181; Webb, 1990, p. 185). The transition to distinct fellowships was slow and took several intermediate steps starting at the national level division in the late 1920s, filtering down to the state level in the 1940s, and finally to local congregations in the late 1940s and 1950s (North, 1994, pp. 334-335; Webb, 2004a, p. 185). This final step forced individual churches to make firm allegiances with Disciples or to break ties with their organizing structures that had slowly and methodically developed over the previous decades.

A New Identity

The Stone-Campbell Movement and the Restoration Movement had become identifying titles of three distinct religious groups, which resulted in new titles being

applied to the respective groups. The first group that split was identified as Non-instrumental Churches of Christ. The second splinter group adopted the title Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ). The remaining church group came to be identified by the title Christian Churches/Churches of Christ (Wetzel, 2001, pp. 4-5).

This "cumbersome" name was adopted because both titles had historically been used by Stone-Campbell churches and because these congregations continue to use one or the other title today (Webb, 2004a, p. 185). The following discussion introduces key aspects of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ including Church Polity, Characteristic Teaching, and Demographics.

<center>Church Polity</center>

Cottrell (2002) defines polity as "the system by which the church is governed" (p. 419). Defined as such, Christian Churches/Churches of Christ are congregational. Each local congregation maintains autonomy in all areas of ministry, teaching, and practice (Webb, 2004a, p. 188). Thus the group represents a fellowship of individual congregations as opposed to a denomination (Mead, Hill, & Atwood, 2005, p. 252; Miethe, 1990, p. 255) though challenges to the "non-denominational" identity of the Stone-Campbell Movement were raised as early as the late 1800s (Webb, 1990, p. 239).

Such challenges are often based on the fact that Christian Churches/Churches of Christ cooperate in many areas (Wetzel, 2001, p. 4) and share many common resources including missions organizations, ministry training institutions, conventions, and publishing houses (Miethe, 1990, p. 255). Webb (1990) addresses this concern by noting, "Even the North American Christian Convention, which functions somewhat as an umbrella organization for the Christian Churches and derives the major part of its support

from churches, scrupulously avoids any appearance of acting in an official capacity" (p. 424). The Stone-Campbell Movement was founded upon the demand for independent congregations based on the New Testament church (North, 1994, p. 56), and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ continue to operate as a "Brotherhood," what Miethe (1990) defines as "a cooperative association of like-minded congregations" (p. 255). This independence raises the natural question as to whether Christian Churches/Churches of Christ are a legitimately identifiable group at all.

In an attempt to answer this question McNicol (1999) suggests a four-item assessment to determine whether a group constitutes an identifiable theological tradition. The test focuses on whether or not group members share a common understanding of the following items:

> (1) how one understands the nature of the human at birth, (2) how one comes into the household of faith, (3) how one continues in it, (4) and what one's understanding is of the defeat of death. (p. 68)

The following section demonstrates that Christian Churches/Churches of Christ are a distinct and identifiable tradition by outlining characteristic teachings of this fellowship of congregations.

Characteristic Teaching

Early Stone-Campbell Movement leaders affirmed the authority of *sola scriptura* and fiercely opposed any secondary standard of doctrinal teaching (Duke, 2009, p. 4). They believed a "common sense" interpretation of Scripture was available to every believer (Hull, 2002, p. 5) and allowed for broad freedom based on the classic adage, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; Where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent" (Webb, 1990, p. 104). It is interesting that the broad freedom did not produce a wide

range of divergent teaching from one congregation to another. The separation from the liberally inclined Christian Churches (Disciples) notwithstanding, Stone-Campbell Movement churches maintained remarkable consistency related to key doctrines. This section will provide a brief description of characteristic teachings of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ related to the Bible, Baptism, the Holy Spirit, Election, and Gender Roles.

The Bible

One of the most significant characteristic teachings of the Christian Churches/ Churches of Christ is related to the nature of the Bible, though not every point is unique to this faith tradition. The Bible is believed to be divinely inspired and authored (Duke, 2009, p. 5) and as such considered the sole source of inerrant and absolute truth (Liddy & Welbourne, 1999, p. 1363). To this point Van der Poll (2003) concludes that when a paradigm includes "a Bible without any objective truth that is universally true for all men, regardless of their community, we have to wonder if such a paradigm is still a *Christian* one" (p. 216). Christian Churches/Churches of Christ teach the Bible as the Word of God and uniquely "sufficient for the faith and practice of the church" (Wetzel, 2001, p. 8).

Baptism

The significance, function, mode, and candidacy of biblical baptism have been primary concerns from the very beginning of the Stone-Campbell Movement (North, 1994, p. 61). Its early significance is demonstrated by the facts that Thomas Campbell identified it as one of three biblical sacraments (J. M. Hicks, 2008, p. 35) and it regularly surfaced in discussions related to fellowship (North, 1994, pp. 21-31). Hawkins (2002)

identifies baptism as one doctrine that has defined Stone-Campbell churches (p. 50). In regard to function, baptism is considered the "means of grace through faith for justification" (J. M. Hicks, 2008, p. 36) and a condition for salvation including forgiveness of sins (Webb, 1990, pp. 158-159) and the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 360-366). Immersion is considered the only valid form of Christian baptism in part because baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (J. M. Hicks, 2008, p. 37), in part because the Greek word *baptizo* means "dip," "plunge," "immerse," "submerge," "sink," "go under," and "drown" (Cottrell, 2002, p. 368), and in part because the consistent biblical pattern in teaching and practice associates Christian baptism with immersion (L. E. Hicks, 1992, p. 209). Finally Christian Churches/Churches of Christ teach "believer's baptism," the view that immersion for salvation is available exclusively to repentant adults (Cottrell, 2002, p. 368). Alexander Campbell came to this conclusion after the birth of his first child resulting in his own immersion (North, 1994, pp. 112-113) and participation in debates in which he argued against the practice of infant baptism (Fletcher, 2003, p. 85). The prevailing view among Christian Churches/Churches of Christ is, "Baptism applies only to adults and to young people who are old enough to know what they are doing" (Cottrell, 2002, p. 368).

Holy Spirit

Stone-Campbell Movement beliefs about the Holy Spirit generally revolve around personhood, the Holy Spirit's role in the origin of the Bible, the Holy Spirit's role in the conversion and life of individual believers, and the application of charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. As for the former, Christian Churches/Churches of Christ teach that the Holy Spirit is a distinct divine person within the Godhead (Cottrell, 2002, p. 286). The Holy

Spirit is believed to have a functional role in the origin of the Bible (Cottrell, 2002, p. 287), conversion (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 293-297), and the Christian life (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 290-291). Aligning with Campbell's view, Christian Churches/Churches of Christ do not require a "Holy Spirit experience" to demonstrate conversion (Artman, 2002, p. 83; Cottrell, 2002, p. 296). Related to charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, it should be noted that Campbell and Stone held somewhat divergent views, Stone tending toward a more "active, irrational view" and Campbell toward a "rationalist" view (D. A. Foster, 2003, p. 96). Christian Churches/Churches of Christ generally maintain a "cessationist" view of charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, which means that they believe that miraculous gifts (i.e., miraculous healing, speaking in tongues, raising individuals from the dead, etc.) served a specific purpose within biblical history and have since been abandoned by God as the normal pattern in the post-apostolic Church Age (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 297-305).

Election

The Reformed theology of the Presbyterian and select Baptist groups in the early days of the Stone-Campbell Movement was naturally in conflict with the Arminianism of other Baptist groups and Wesleyan Methodist faiths (Blowers, 2000, p. 135). Scott became convinced that the mission of the Holy Spirit was "only to the church and not the means through which one entered the church," effectively disassociating with Reformed views of election (Olbricht, 2004b, p. 12). Campbell also maintains personal responsibility while at the same time acknowledges the Holy Spirit's role in conversion (Olbricht, 2004b, p. 17). Stone-Campbell Movement churches rejected Calvinism in part because it failed to offer believers assurance of their salvation (J. M. Hicks, 2003, p. 164). Based on Stone and Campbell's views on election, some scholars associate

Restoration Movement churches with classic Armenianism (J. M. Hicks, 2003, p. 166)

though such associations are often nothing more than a convenient contrast to classic

Calvinism. Contemporary Christian Churches/Churches of Christ technically reject both

systems as unacceptable positions (Blowers, 2000, p. 139).

Gender Roles

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ maintain a conservative view of gender

roles specifically in the contexts of the home (Burns-Watson, 1995) and the Church

(Grasham, 1999). Though there was some approval of women preachers early in the

Stone-Campbell Movement (Grasham, 1999, pp. 212-213), leaders ultimately concluded

that biblical teaching prohibits women from serving as preachers, teachers in mixed-

gender contexts, and elders (Cottrell, 2002, p. 432; Webb, 2004a, p. 188).

Demographics

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ enjoy some ethnic and socio-economic

diversity, though it has struggled historically to become fully diverse related to either

category. Scholars lament that many view the Restoration Movement as "little more than

a complacent middle class aggregation of fossilized Campbellites" (North, 1994, p. 354)

and "mostly white, middle-class, Southern people" (Humble, 1979, p. 15). The lack of

diversity though should not be interpreted as a lack of intentionality or interest in the

pursuit of diversity (Kelley, 2004, pp. 18-19).

Americans of African descent participated in Stone-Campbell congregations very

early in its history (Lyda, 2004, p. 11; Olbricht, 2004a, p. 217). Two factors though

curtailed efforts to establish truly integrated congregations, the first being the American

Civil War. Significant changes occurred in attitudes inside and outside the walls of local

congregations. Many Black Christians were "systematically excluded or encouraged to form separate, segregated congregations" (Olbricht, 2004a, p. 217). The second factor that contributed to segregation amongst Christian Churches/Churches of Christ was the discord and fractures that occurred in the Stone-Campbell Movement at the turn of the 20th century.

The stage was set in 1917 at the formation of the National Christian Missionary Convention by African American constituents. This is a significant event because the pre-existence of the National Christian Missionary Convention effectively served as an ethnic barrier when the North American Christian Convention was formed in 1927 due to the split between Christian Churches/Churches of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples). Though efforts have been made on both sides toward integration, efforts are slow to produce significant results (Kelley, 2004, pp. 17-21). Only 100 African American congregations are estimated to exist out of the approximately 5,500 total Christian Churches/Churches of Christ (Kelley, 2004, pp. 20-21).

Current Influences and Resources

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ share many resources that receive support, provide resources, and generally contribute to the mission and ideals of the Stone-Campbell movement. This section introduces and briefly describes several of these resources including Publishing Houses, Journals and Publications, Conventions, Ministry Training Institutions, and Churches.

Publishing Houses

Two publishing houses are closely associated with Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. The Standard Publishing Company has served the Stone-Campbell Movement

since the mid-19th century while the College Press Publishing Company was established relatively recently.

Standard Publishing Company was established in Cleveland, Ohio, as a result of an 1865 meeting of 14 men in the home of T.W. Phillips, Sr. (Webb, 2004c, p. 698). Originally formed as the Christian Publishing Association, the company was established to publish the *Christian Standard* (North, 1994, p. 238). The company was relocated to Cincinnati several years later after being purchased by Isaac Errett. Standard Publishing Company navigated significant strife, conflict, and tension over its life span. In spite of these challenges the Standard Publishing Company has maintained a close connection with Christian Churches/Churches of Christ and consistently produced theologically conservative magazines, Sunday-school literature, Vacation Bible School curriculum, books, tracts, and other types of publications (Webb, 1990, p. 427).

The College Press Publishing Company is a relatively small corporation located in Joplin, Missouri. It was established in 1959 by Don DeWelt, a professor at Ozark Bible College (now Ozark Christian College), who began producing materials for his classes (DeWelt, 2004, pp. 227-228). It has grown to approximately 40 employees and has published many significant books, commentaries, and ministry resources in addition to reprints of historical documents including the full *Millennial Harbinger*, the *Biography of Elder Barton Warren Stone*, and *The Gospel Restored*. While College Press Publishing Company primarily serves Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, it also "caters to the larger Christian bookstore marketplace" (DeWelt, 2004, p. 228).

Journals

There are two primary journals that support Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, one focused on ministry and the other on scholarship. The older of the two and ministry-oriented journal is the *Christian Standard*. The younger journal is an academic publication called *Stone-Campbell Journal*.

The *Christian Standard* has been in publication since 1866 (North, 1994, p. 238). Originally published in Cleveland, Ohio, and subsequently moved to Cincinnati in 1869, the *Christian Standard* played a "major role in the history of Disciples of Christ and Christian Churches" (Webb, 2004b) and became the "primary voice for the Movement" (North, 1994, p. 239). The *Christian Standard* continues to be published as a church ministry resource and has "no journalistic rival among Christian Churches/Churches of Christ" (Webb, 2004b, p. 199).

The *Stone-Campbell Journal* was originally formed and published by College Press Publishing Company from 1998 until 2005 when ownership was transferred to Stone-Campbell, International, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization located in Loveland, Ohio. The founding General Editor of the *Stone-Campbell Journal* and founder/President of Stone-Campbell, International is William R. Baker. The *Stone-Campbell Journal* is a semi-annual academic journal that represents all three branches of the Stone-Campbell Movement. The original editorial board included scholars from Christian Churches (Disciples), Churches of Christ, and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ (Baker, 2004). The *Stone-Campbell Journal* was identified as one of three "significant occurrences that have propelled scholarship forward in the last decade" (Baker, Kissling, & Springer, 2007, p. 169). A particularly important contribution of the *Stone-Campbell*

Journal is that it provides a platform for Christian Church/Church of Christ scholars to make available their more academic work associated with their Ph.D. theses and other serious projects to fellow scholars, libraries, and interested ministers and students (Baker, 2004, p. 721).

Conventions

Conventions, councils, and societies have been employed by religious groups from the beginning of church history. The Stone-Campbell Movement followed this trend by forming such organizations as the American Christian Missionary Society in 1849, the General Convention of Churches of Christ in 1912, the International Convention of the Disciples of Christ in 1920, and the United Christian Missionary Society in 1919.

The formation of the latter resulted in "greater fragmentation" in the Restoration Movement (Toulouse, 2004b, p. 750) and as a result the North American Christian Convention was formed in 1927 by a group that could no longer support the goals of the United Christian Missionary Society (Miethe, 1990, p. 255; T. C. Smith, 2004, p. 420). Since that time the North American Christian Convention has been the "great cohesive force to which all Christian Churches and institutions relate" (Webb, 1990, p. 427). This place of preeminence is currently being challenged however by the second national convention of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

Many missionaries believed that the North American Christian Convention provided insufficient exposure to missions work and specifically to individual missions organizations and missionary families (Webb, 1990, p. 428). In response to this limitation the first National Missionary Convention was convened in Springfield, Illinois, on April

20, 1948 (Birney, 2004). The Convention has grown steadily and currently boasts an annual attendance in excess of 10,000.

Ministry Training Institutions

The *Christian Standard* identifies 43 Christian Church/Church of Christ ministry and theological training institutions. Table 13 (Appendix B) lists each institution along with the respective Full Time Equivalent enrollment for the 1999-2000 ("Christian Colleges, 1999-2000," 2000, pp. 20-21), 2005-2006 ("Christian Colleges, 2005-2006," 2006, pp. 10-11), and 2010-2011 ("Christian Colleges, 2010-2011," 2011, pp. 16-17) academic years.

Summary

This chapter described the nature of spirituality and its relationship to the church, the role of biblical literacy in and to a variety of contexts, biblical literacy in the Western Church, and the history and features of the study population.

Spirituality is defined in literature from an ontological perspective (Barton, 2008, p. 13; DeHoff, 1998, p. 338), a behavioral perspective (Buker, 2003, p. 152; M. D. Roberts, 2002, pp. 21-22), and a discipleship perspective (Barton, 2008, pp. 15-16; Mulholland, 1993, p. 25; Sanders, 2007, p. 161). The discipleship perspective is best suited as the basis of spiritual growth for this study and is thus defined as a life-long pursuit of four goals including (a) holiness (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5), (b) a more clear reflection of Jesus (G. Barna, 2001, p. 18) in knowledge (R. Foster, 1998, p. 66), attitudes (Gomez & Fisher, 2003, p. 1976), priorities (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 169), behaviors (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5), (c) a personal relationship with God (Barton, 2006, p. 15), and (d) investment in other individuals through evangelism, mentoring, or ministry (Thayer,

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2004, p. 200). Each measure represents a distinct area of potential growth that requires some level of leadership in order to be achieved (Peterson, 1989, p. 57).

Discipleship is consistently described as the primary objective of the Church (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 8-10; Collinson, 2005, p. 247; Wilhoit, 2008, p. 15) and is therefore the most important concern and measure of success for church leaders (Barton, 2008; Downs, 1994; Gallagher & Newton, 2009; Lewis & Palmer, 1989). The Bible is the most basic of the many resources, strategies, and tools that can be employed to facilitate spiritual growth (Burge, 1999, p. 47; E. L. Hayes, 1969, p. 225).

A review of literature reveals studies that investigate the relationship between biblical knowledge and social views (Grossman, 2010a), behavioral outcomes (Jeynes, 2010; Nelson, 2004), academic achievement (Jeynes, 2009), and psychological factors (Beck, 2006). The current study reviews literature related to additional outcomes such as citizenship (Hirsch et al., 2002, p. 1; Schippe & Stetson, 2006, p. 11) and orthodoxy (Anthony, 2001, p. 210; Rees, 2006, p. 5) to demonstrate that biblical literacy can reasonably be considered a necessary precursor to spiritual growth (Gilliard, 2001, p. 5; Nelson, 2004, p. 52; Savage, 2010, p. 91).

A foundational premise of the current study is that ministers in the American church are currently facing a double-edged sword related to spiritual leadership. First, many church members lack even a basic knowledge of the Bible (Lewis & Palmer, 1989, p. 16; Packer & Parrett, 2010, p. 16; Schaper, 2009, p. 15). Second, church leaders have a poor understanding of what biblical knowledge should be taught in order to most efficiently and effectively lead toward spiritual growth (Barna, 2009; Dykstra, 1999, p. 8). The current study seeks to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items identified

by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ as essential precursors of spiritual development of church members. Chapter 3 describes the methodology adopted for the current study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the framework and mechanics of the current study. The

Delphi Technique was employed in three rounds to gather, organize, and return responses

in an effort to achieve a final honed list of items affirmed by the majority of participants.

A custom web-based instrument was used to gather independent perspectives of an expert

panel consisting of ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. This chapter

discusses the research design, the participants, the panel size, the data collection, the data

analysis, and reliability and validity.

Research Design

This section describes the research design. Attention is given to the Delphi

Technique as a distinct research method, an evaluation of the appropriateness of the

Delphi Technique for this study, and the research objectives supported by Delphi

Technique.

The Delphi Technique (Delphi Method)

The Delphi Technique dates back to the 1950s and 1960s and is attributed to

Norman Dalkey and Olaf Helmer and their efforts at the RAND Corporation (Franklin &

Hart, 2007, p. 238; Ziglio, 1996, pp. 4-5). Since then more than 1000 Delphi studies have

been conducted in a variety of scientific disciplines for the purpose of planning, evaluation, forecasting, and issue-exploration (Adler & Ziglio, 1996, p. ix; Kennedy, 2004, p. 511; H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221). The Delphi Method is regularly applied to studies on social policy (H. P. McKenna, 1994) and is gaining popularity in areas such as medical care (Fink, Kosecoff, Chassin, & Brook, 1984, p. 979; Keeney et al., 2011; H. McKenna & Keeney, 2008; Williams & Webb, 1994) and education (Franklin & Hart, 2007; Scheffler & Logan, 1999; Shands & Levary, 1986).

Three main types of Delphi are the classical Delphi, the decision-making Delphi, and the policy Delphi. Franklin and Hart (2007) identify the classical Delphi method as "a forum for establishing facts about a specific situation or topic," the decision-making Delphi as a way "to encourage collaborative decision making," and the policy Delphi as a means for "idea generation about a topic" (p. 238). The current study applies the classical method.

Appropriateness of the Delphi Technique

Ziglio (1996) notes that in some cases the "best available information is the judgment of knowledgeable individuals" (p. 15). In these scenarios researchers must rely on numerous group judgment techniques such as group discussions, conferences, brainstorming, and other interactive group processes (Mitchell, 1991, p. 338; Ziglio, 1996, p. 15). Studies conducted as early as the 1960s have compared and contrasted the various options and have concluded that the Delphi Method offers "distinct advantages" over the others (Ziglio, 1996, p. 15). One such advantage is its ability to address a variety of logistical challenges.

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Franklin and Hart (2007) suggest that the goals of the Delphi Method are to document and assess group decisions, to identify the collective knowledge of the sample group, and to facilitate the emergence of new ideas about the topic (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 238). A common problem scholars face in pursuit of these objectives is the fact that experts are often unavailable to serve as research subjects (Helmer, 1975, p. xix). In some cases the experts are dispersed over a geographical area too great to convene in one location (Ziglio, 1996, p. 9). In other instances the number of experts is too great to make a face-to-face meeting practical (Mitchell, 1991, p. 339). Another common problem that scholars face is the complex nature of research questions and tasks (Ziglio, 1996, p. 9). Researchers occasionally find that pride and vanity of individual experts short-circuits open and meaningful interaction in a group setting. Linstone and Turoff (1975) identify seven such challenges that may serve as a reasonable justification for employing the Delphi Method:

1. The problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis.

2. The individuals needed to contribute to the examination of a broad or complex problem have no history of adequate communication and may represent diverse backgrounds with respect to experience or expertise.

3. More individuals are needed than can effectively interact in a face-to-face exchange.

4. Time and cost make frequent group meetings infeasible.

5. The efficiency of face-to-face meetings can be increased by a supplemental group communication process.

6. Disagreements among individuals are so severe or politically unpalatable that the communication process must be refereed and/or anonymity assured.

7. The heterogeneity of the participants must be preserved to assure validity of the results (i.e., avoidance of domination by quantity or strength of personality) (p. 4).

These challenges are overcome by various characteristics of the Delphi Method. The ability to use mail or web-based survey instruments to gather and synthesize data means that no geographical constraints related to the selection of study participants (Fink et al., 1984, p. 980). Complexity is overcome by the Delphi's straightforward and ordered technique (Ziglio, 1996, p. 9). Thomas (1981) notes that the Delphi Method compensates for pride through "really quiet, thoughtful conversation, in which everyone gets a chance to listen. The background noise of small talk, and the recurrent sonic booms of vanity, are eliminated at the outset and there is time to think. There are no voices, and therefore no rising voices" (p. 118). The ability to overcome a wide range of research obstacles makes the Delphi Method an attractive option for scholars (Franklin & Hart, 2007, pp. 238-239).

The Delphi Method is perceived by some to be primarily a forecasting tool (Mitchell, 1991, p. 339) but it is able to accomplish a much more diverse range of research objectives. Linstone and Turoff (1975) suggest that "there are few areas of human endeavor which are not candidates for application of Delphi" (p. 4) and offer the following as possible applications of the Delphi Method:

1. Gathering current and historical data not accurately known or available

2. Examining the significance of historical events

3. Evaluating possible budget allocations

4. Exploring urban and regional planning options

5. Planning university campus and curriculum development

6. Putting together the structure of a model

7. Delineating the pros and cons associated with potential policy options

8. Developing casual relationships in complex economic or social phenomena

9. Distinguishing and clarifying real and perceived human motivations

10. Exposing priorities of personal values and social goals (p. 4).

The objectives and research challenges associated with the current study make the Delphi Technique the preferred methodology. The purpose of the project is to understand the complex relationship between biblical literacy and spiritual growth. To achieve this goal the Delphi panel includes a large and geographically dispersed group of ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ.

Methodology Objectives

The Delphi Method is designed to achieve multiple objectives. The first is related to the specific research question of each respective scholar (Kennedy, 2004, p. 511; H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221). In this way every study has a unique research objective. At the same time every study that utilizes the Delphi Method shares a common goal. Delphi is based on the premise that opinions formed by a group of experts are more valid than those based on those of a single expert (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 3). The practical consequence is that researchers must synthesize numerous and varying individual beliefs, attitudes, and projections into a single result.

Consensus is commonly understood as 100% support even if the support is qualified or coerced. Some scholars suggest that consensus requires only 51% agreement (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222). The balanced approach seems to be that the Delphi

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Method seeks to "guide group opinion towards a final decision" (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1223) defined by "concurrence" (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222) or "agreement" (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 4). Though some scholars question the Delphi Method's ability to produce consensus in any definition of the term (Goodman, 1987, p. 733), it is broadly considered a valid group consensus strategy (Goodman, 1987, p. 730; Helmer, 1967, p. 498; Kennedy, 2004, p. 511; H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221).

The current study seeks agreement related to specific Bible knowledge items as precursors to spiritual formation. Agreement is established by tallying the number of participants who identified respective knowledge items. The items selected most often were carried into subsequent Delphi rounds.

Participants

The Delphi Method is broadly considered dependant upon the quality of the participants (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 241; Williams & Webb, 1994, p. 181). This is affirmed by the fact that literature consistently defines Delphi participants as experts (Goodman, 1987; Kennedy, 2004). Fink et al. (1984) make this assumption clear by suggesting that participants should be chosen in part because "they are not likely to be challenged as experts in the field" (p. 981). Others acknowledge the subjective nature of the term and offer tempered and more specific characteristics of model participants.

Ziglio (1996) states that the definition of experts "varies according to the context and field of interest in which the Delphi Method is going to be applied" (p. 14). He notes that Delphi participants need not hold academic credentials and degrees but instead must demonstrate "the acquisition of experience, special skill in, or knowledge of a particular subject" (p. 14). Others such as Keeney et al. (2011) and McKenna (1994) affirm this

view by choosing to describe panelists as "informed individuals." Multiple strategies have been suggested for determining the eligibility of prospective participants.

Linstone and Turoff (1975) identify self-rating as a reasonable basis on which expertise can be assigned (p. 234). Mitchell suggests using relevant literature to identify key figures in the respective field, identifying individuals who have had significant involvement in the respective industry for the previous 5 years, and requesting additional recommendations as panelists are added to the panel (Mitchell, 1991, p. 340). Goodman (1987) offers the following helpful and balanced perspectives:

> It would therefore seem to be more appropriate to recruit individuals who have knowledge of a particular topic and who are consequently willing to engage in discussion upon it without the potentially misleading title of 'expert'. The results would then represent that particular group's opinions at a given point in time. The stress on the expert opinion within the Delphi technique appears to have developed from the desire to predict future events which for most studies is a dubious and unrealistic aim. (p. 732)

The process and rationale for recruiting study participants should be carefully developed and executed (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 244) because the eligibility and credibility of panelists are of paramount importance (Goodman, 1987, p. 731). Furthermore the process and criteria for selecting the expert panel should be fully disclosed to the reader (Mitchell, 1991, p. 340). Intentionality and transparency allow readers to make intelligent judgments about the panel's credibility and, by association, the validity of the study (Kennedy, 2004, p. 505). This leads to an important consideration related to the participants of the current study.

Spiritual-growth authors and researchers suggest that ministers are contributing factors in the biblical illiteracy of congregants (Dykstra, 1999, p. 8) which raises a question related to the wisdom of asking individuals who are contributing to a problem to be the ones who identify a solution. There are two reasons, however, that ministers can

reasonably be employed in this effort. First, ministers possess focused and relevant experience related to spiritual leadership. Second, the problem is not necessarily a result of a biblically illiterate minister. It is instead a result of the minster's inability to filter the breadth of possible biblical topics and identify the knowledge that is most relevant and effective (Morris & Hamm, 1976). This study overcame this deficiency by using the Delphi Method which capitalized on the training and experience of a group of ministers while giving a structured framework that guided them toward consensus. Thus, ministers can be reasonably engaged as participants and, more specifically, as expert panelists.

Ministers can be affirmed experts based on four factors, the first being that vocational ministers have uniquely relevant experience, perspective, insight, and skills related to spiritual leadership. Second, many ministers have pursued formal theological and practical ministry training that enhances their leadership perspective and credibility. Third, ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ were selected in particular in an effort to return data from a focused theological perspective. Finally, participants were selected in a way that offers diversity in a wide range of congregational factors including geographic location, average weekly attendance, and urban/rural setting.

Panel Size

The sample size is a critical component of a Delphi study design, though it should not be considered a strict statistical enterprise (Ziglio, 1996, p. 14). Effective Delphi panels can be as small as eight individuals (Mitchell, 1991, p. 342) and significantly larger in certain research contexts (Ziglio, 1996, p. 14). Mitroff and Turoff (1975) suggest that a primary component of the Delphi is "the assumption that a large number of 'expert' judgments is required in order to 'treat adequately' any issue" (p. 22). It should

be noted however that studies have shown that increasing the number of participants

above 15 provides "only marginal benefit to the distillation process resulting from the use

of the Delphi Method" (Ziglio, 1996, p. 14) and "the average group error decreases very

little with each additional member" (Mitchell, 1991, p. 342). This does not mean however

that a large sample size is not beneficial.

A common characteristic of Delphi studies is high panel attrition (Franklin &

Hart, 2007, p. 244; H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1224; Mitchell, 1991, p. 341). This occurs

when panelists fail to complete all of the Delphi rounds due to fatigue or other factors

(Fink et al., 1984, p. 980). Utilizing a relatively large sample increases the chances that a

sufficient number of participants will contribute to each Delphi round. This strategy also

produces a self-randomized panel of experts, though scholars generally conclude that the

selection of qualified participants renders statistical randomization unnecessary in Delphi

studies (Goodman, 1987, p. 731).

A total of 250 individuals were invited to participate in the study in order to

account for normal patterns of attrition and in an attempt to achieve diversity related to

education, church size, geographic location, and other factors that might affect beliefs

about the relationship between biblical/doctrinal knowledge and spiritual growth. I

utilized the *Directory of the Ministry: A Yearbook of Christian Churches and Churches

of Christ* (2011) to identify individuals serving in Stone-Campbell Movement churches. I

invited ministers from every state represented in the *Directory of the Ministry* with

consideration of average weekly attendance (see Table 7 in Appendix A). Level of

education is not consistently noted in the *Directory of the Ministry*, but some individuals

were chosen specifically because their title indicated completion of a doctoral degree.

Reliability and Validity

Scholars must produce rigorously conducted research in order to achieve a meaningful effect on practice or theory (Merriam, 2009, p. 210). Two important factors to consider when evaluating the academic rigor of a study are reliability and validity (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 8) though there are varying perspectives of how these terms should be defined and applied (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 18; Creswell, 2007, p. 202).

Merriam (2009) defines reliability as "the extent to which research findings can be replicated" (p. 221) while Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) suggest that the primary measure of reliability is consistency (p. 85). Validity is considered by some to be "the degree to which something measures what it purports to measure" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 85). Others draw distinctions between internal validity and external validity (Merriam, 1998, p. 201; 207) and methodological validity and interpretive validity (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 86). Some scholars suggest credibility and dependability are more appropriate concepts for qualitative research than positivist concepts like reliability and validity (Creswell, 2007, pp. 202-204; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 19). Beyond problems with defining the terms, the nature of social science research itself presents scholars challenges related to reliability and validity.

Merriam (2009) views validity in the context of social science as a relative goal as opposed to an objective and concrete product (p. 214). Morgan (1997) illustrates this principle by noting the possibility that various methods might return differing results when studying individuals or groups, thus raising concerns of validity (p. 12). Reliability is similarly problematic in social sciences. The potential inconsistencies exist naturally in

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social science research because "human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 221). Scholars must carefully balance the need for producing valid and reliable data with the variability and unique nature of social science research.

Striking this balance can be accomplished by paying close attention to "a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented" (Merriam, 2009, p. 210). The following sections address issues of reliability and validity related specifically to the Delphi Method.

Challenges to Reliability and Validity in the Delphi Method

The Delphi Method has come under scrutiny in part because of its perceived unscientific approach to sampling and testing of results (Ziglio, 1996, p. 13). Some concerns stem from the more fundamental claim that the Delphi Method does not necessarily produce consensus even though it is by design a decision-making model (Goodman, 1987, p. 733). Others note that the results of Delphi studies, even if consensus could be reasonably achieved, may not in fact present the "best" judgments (Mitroff & Turoff, 1975). It is not surprising then that some scholars dismiss the Delphi Technique as social manipulation and trickery (L. Thomas, 1995, p. 118). Several factors have contributed to the suspicion directed at the Delphi Method.

A primary factor that fuels attacks against the Delphi Method is that there are many variations of the method being employed by researchers. These modifications are seen as a threat to the Delphi's credibility (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 4). The result has been that the Delphi Method is "widely used, and abused, in numerous applications" (Mitchell,

1991, p. 333). To write off the Delphi Method as ineffective or unreliable based on such concerns however is neither necessary nor reasonable.

Ziglio (1996) notes that equating ineffective or inappropriate applications of the Delphi Method with the Delphi Method itself is a fundamental mistake (p. 13). Furthermore, more than 1,000 Delphi studies have been conducted and published (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221). While not every application of the method can be affirmed as rigorously designed and applied, a sufficient number of studies have been completed in order to compile the following affirmations of the Delphi Method.

Affirmations of Reliability and Validity in the Delphi Method

The Delphi Method has experienced significant changes since initial comments and criticisms contained in publications in the 1960s and 1970s (Mitchell, 1991, p. 339). Furthermore, some of those early works are considered by some to be out of date (Ziglio, 1996, p. 16). The growing consensus in literature is that the Delphi works "sometimes wonderfully well" (L. Thomas, 1995, p. 118) and holds a rightful claim to validity based in part on its ability to "examine and accurately reflect the subject under study" (Goodman, 1987, p. 731; Helmer, 1967, p. 498). Franklin and Hart (2007) offer the following affirmations of the Delphi Method:

1. The sequential nature of the research instrument provides adequate time for thinking and reflection.

2. The structured nature of the communication helps participants remain problem-centered and focused.

3. The use of questionnaires eliminates face-to-face debates, undue influence of dominant personalities, and avoidance of group think (pp. 238-239).

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Mitchell (1991) concludes that the Delphi Method accounts for the following

challenges to validity that many other group judgment techniques struggle to overcome:

1. The pressure to conform

2. The influence of dominant personality types

3. 'Status incongruity,' wherein low status participants may be inhibited and 'go
along' with opinions of high status participants, even though they feel their opinions are
better

4. 'Self-weighting,' where participants attempt to influence others in proportion
to their self-perceived competence

5. 'Ego,' which reduces the likelihood that respondents will change their minds

6. 'Rutting,' which is when groups become set in one mode of discussion (p.
339).

Keeney et al. (2011) raise the significant concern that the Delphi Method "should

not be considered a replacement for rigorous scientific reviews of published reports or for

original research" (p. 13). Helmer (1967) presents two insightful options for the pursuit

of social science research that are worthy rebuttals of Keeney et al. The first option is that

scholars "wait indefinitely until we have an adequate theory enabling us to deal with

socioeconomic and political problems as confidently as we do with problems in physics

and chemistry" and the second more appealing option is that scholars "obtain the relevant

intuitive insights of experts and then use their judgments as systematically as possible"

(p. 499). Ziglio (1996) affirms the latter sentiment by declaring, "There is no reason why

the Delphi Method should be less methodologically robust than techniques such as

interviewing, case study analysis, or behavioral simulations, which are now widely

accepted as tools for policy analysis, and the generation of ideas and scenarios" (p. 13).

Data Collection

Thomas (1981) declared that the Delphi Method "has a simple, almost silly sound

(p. 117) and Ziglio (1996) declared it "fairly straightforward" (p. 9). It is known as a

"systematic solicitation and collation of judgments" (Delbecq, Gustafson, & Van de Ven,

1975, p. 10). The simple, straightforward, and systematic nature of the Delphi Method is

not a commentary on its capacity to tackle complex issues but is instead a description of

the data collection process (Ziglio, 1996, p. 9).

The Delphi Method relies on strategically developed questionnaires (Franklin &

Hart, 2007, p. 239; Ziglio, 1996, p. 9) that guide participants through multiple survey

rounds (L. Thomas, 1995, p. 118). A series of increasingly focused interactions is formed

by feedback provided in previous rounds (Helmer, 1967, p. 498; Keeney et al., 2011, p.

4). Also critical to the overall research design is the delivery system by which surveys are

distributed and analyzed.

Instrument

Ziglio (1996) notes that questionnaires can be delivered via mail or a

computerized system (p. 9). This nod to automated systems was not original to Adler and

Ziglio but was in fact present in seminal Delphi literature. Linstone and Turoff (1975)

stated that using computers to deliver and compile research instruments "has the

advantage of eliminating the delay caused in summarizing each round of Delphi, thereby

turning the process into a real-time communications system" (p. 5). The current study

utilized a custom web-based research instrument.

Anonymity

Some scholars suggest there are benefits to participants knowing who else is part of the expert panel (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1224). Linstone (1975) concludes that there are times that credibility of responses must be based in part on the identity of the respective participant (p. 585). Goodman (1987) suggests that anonymity has the potential to create a lack of accountability (p. 732). Deception in the form of manipulation and propaganda are also possible where anonymity exists (Linstone, 1975, p. 586). Even in the face of such concerns, the majority view that anonymity is preferred in Delphi studies (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

Anonymity is believed to protect participants from penalty, mockery, or other "undesirable psychological effects" (Mitroff & Turoff, 1975, p. 22) that their opinion might otherwise incur (Goodman, 1987, p. 732). Anonymity also ensures that participants provide uncontaminated views and can be "open and truthful about their views on certain issues, which in turn provides insightful data for the researcher" (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 9). Efforts were made to ensure anonymity and independent voice throughout the study. This was accomplished through intentional design of the research instrument (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1224).

Delphi Rounds

The Delphi Method utilizes a multistage approach in which each stage builds on the results of the previous round (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221). The classic Delphi Method consists of four rounds (Fink et al., 1984, p. 980; Keeney et al., 2011, p. 11) though the current trend is to conduct studies in two or three rounds (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 11; Mitchell, 1991, p. 347). Fink et al. (1984) considers the Delphi study complete

when there is "a convergence of opinion or when a point of diminishing returns is reached" (Fink et al., 1984, p. 980). The ability to achieve these results in two or three rounds will be dependent upon the quality of information included in round one (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 245).

Whereas the first round of Delphi studies traditionally consist of open-ended questions (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 11), the current study presented a predetermined list of 600 biblical/theological knowledge items developed from an exhaustive review of relevant literature (Franklin & Hart, 2007, p. 245). This research design, in which previously developed information is presented in lieu of asking participants to generate information in round one, has been called a "reactive Delphi" (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222). The current study is not fully reactive however because participants were afforded an opportunity to add to the list if they believed essential biblical/theological items were missing. Items added by participants were included in the subsequent round. The opportunity for the participants to contribute to the list is a way to stimulate interest and increase commitment to the study (Mitchell, 1991, p. 344).

Round One

This section describes various components of Round One including development of the data instrument, the initial invitation list, the initial list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items, and the invitation distribution system. Round One was conducted between October 5 and October 21, 2011.

Data instrument

The data instrument was a custom web-based survey designed by the researcher and developed, hosted, and managed by eBlair Solutions (www.eblairsolutions.com).

Round One consisted of four phases, the first being acquisition of Informed Consent. The second phase gathered demographic information. The third phase consisted of a single qualifying question that asked whether or not participants believed biblical/doctrinal knowledge to be an essential precursor to spiritual growth. Only participants who answered this question affirmatively were allowed to proceed to the final phase which consisted of a two-step process designed to refine the initial list of 600 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items to the 100 most essential items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members.

The first data selection step presented a list of 600 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items along with a single checkmark next to each item. Participants were asked to select any item considered essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members without consideration of how many items are selected. This approach was employed at this phase to allow participants to select items without feeling the need to weigh the value of any one item over another. The instrument also afforded opportunity to add items if participants believed essential items to be missing. After working through the entire list of 600 items, participants were able to proceed to the second step, provided that a minimum of 100 items was selected including items added by the participant.

The second data selection step presented a list of only the items chosen on the previous page along with a statement that identified the number of items the participant needed to deselect in order to reach exactly 100 items, taking into account the additional items added by the participant. The statement automatically updated each time the participant deselected an item. When exactly 100 items were selected, the statement instructed participants to scroll to the bottom of the page and select the Submit button.

Biblical/doctrinal knowledge items

The initial list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items presented to participants in Round One was developed by cross-referencing eight books focused on biblical literacy. Each book identified items considered important from one of three perspectives: cultural literacy, general biblical content, or systematic theology. Cross-referencing the contents of the eight books produced a list of 2,453 items (see Table 10 in Appendix C). Any item included in three or more books was included in the first Delphi round. The resulting list contained 600 items after some strategic grouping of items such as geographic regions, rivers, seas, spiritual disciplines, etc. (see List of Round One Items in Appendix D).

Invitation distribution

Initial invitations were sent via an email containing a direct link to the web-based survey instrument. Emails were created in Microsoft Word and personalized (e.g., incorporated the participant's title and name) by utilizing the mail merge to email function (see Round One Invitation Email in Appendix B).

A reminder email was sent mid-way through the second week of Round One to encourage individuals who had not yet completed the survey to participate (see Round One Reminder Email in Appendix B).

Round Two

This section describes various components of Round Two including the data instrument, the list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items, and the invitation distribution system. Round Two was conducted between October 26 and November 9, 2011.

Data instrument

The Round Two instrument facilitated data gathering in two steps. The first data selection step presented a list of 150 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items along with a single checkmark next to each item. Participants were asked to select any item considered essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members without consideration of how many items are selected. This approach was employed at this phase to allow participants to select items without feeling the need to weigh the value of any one item over another. Participants were also provided an opportunity to add missing essential items to the list. After working through the entire list of 150 items, participants were able to proceed to the second step as long as a minimum of 50 items was selected including items added by the participant.

The second data selection step presented a list of only the items that were selected on the previous page along with a statement that identified the number of items the participant needed to deselect in order to reach exactly 50 items, taking into account the additional items added by the participant. The statement automatically updated each time the participant deselected an item. When exactly 50 items were selected taking into account any items added by participants, the statement instructed participants to select the Submit button.

Biblical/doctrinal knowledge items

Selections from Round One were compiled into a frequency distribution (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222) and sorted descending by frequency. Biblical/doctrinal knowledge items from Round One were chosen to be included in the Round Two list based on a 30% or higher degree of agreement. The 127 items that met this criteria were

added to the 23 items added by participants in Round One resulting in a Round Two list

totaling 150 items (see List of Round Two Items in Appendix D).

Invitation distribution

Invitations were sent via an email containing a direct link to the web-based survey

instrument. Emails were created in Microsoft Word and personalized (e.g., incorporated

the participant's title and name) by utilizing the mail merge to email function (see Round

Two Invitation Email in Appendix B).

A reminder email was sent mid-way through the second week of Round Two to

encourage individuals who had not yet completed the survey to participate. The content

of the reminder email was as follows (see Round Two Reminder Email in Appendix B).

Round Three

This section describes various components of Round Three including the data

instrument, the list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items, and the invitation distribution

system. Round Three was conducted between November 10 and November 23, 2011.

Data instrument

The Round Three instrument facilitated data gathering in three steps. The first

data selection step presented a list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items along with a

single checkmark next to each item. Participants were asked to select any item considered

essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members without

consideration of how many items are selected. This approach was employed at this phase

to allow participants to select items without feeling the need to weigh the value of any

one item over another. The ability to add missing essential items to the list was

eliminated in Round Three. After working through the entire list of 51 items, participants were able to proceed to the second step provided a minimum of 25 items was selected.

The second data gathering step presented a list of only the items chosen on the previous page along with a statement that identified the number of items the participant needed to deselect in order to reach exactly 25 items. The statement automatically updated each time the participant deselected an item. When exactly 25 items were selected, the statement alerted participants that the Submit button was activated.

The final data gathering step asked participants to provide a brief explanation of why each of the top 25 selections is one of the most essential items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth. Participants were not required to contribute narrative.

Biblical/doctrinal knowledge items

Selections from Round Two were compiled into a frequency distribution (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222) and sorted descending by frequency. A total of 76 biblical/ doctrinal knowledge items from Round Two were chosen to be included in the Round Three list based on a 30% or higher degree of agreement (see List of Round Three Items in Appendix D).

Round Three invitation distribution

Invitations were sent via an email containing a direct link to the web-based survey instrument. Emails were created in Microsoft Word and personalized (e.g., incorporated the participant's title and name) by utilizing the mail merge to email function (see Round Three Invitation Email in Appendix B).

A reminder email was sent mid-way through the second week of Round Three to encourage individuals who had not yet completed the survey to participate (see Round Three Reminder Email in Appendix B).

Summary

The Delphi Technique was selected as the methodology for the current study. The Delphi was developed in the 1960s and 1970s and has since been utilized in thousands of research studies addressing a wide range of research topics and fields. It is uniquely suited for the current study because it allows increasingly focused information to be gathered based on expert contributions over the course of multiple rounds. The Delphi Method is a robust research technique that results in valid and reliable results.

The current study used a custom web-based research instrument to identify biblical/theological knowledge items that are essential precursors for spiritual growth. The research was carried out over a three-round Delphi study. Data from each round were entered into a frequency distribution, sorted to identify the most frequently selected items, and returned to participants in progressively lesser numbers until the 25 most essential knowledge items remained.

The success of a Delphi study is dependent upon the credibility and qualifications of the participants. Because the current research was focused on spiritual leadership and biblical/theological knowledge, ministers were selected to comprise the expert panel. Christian Churches/Churches of Christ were exclusively targeted in an effort to provide a focused religious perspective for the study. Though a relatively small expert panel is sufficient, a population sample was employed in order to ensure consideration of a broad range of perspectives, to create a self-randomizing sample, and to overcome attrition.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter describes results of the three-round Delphi study that produced a list of 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered by ministers of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. This chapter begins with a discussion of the sample characteristics. Each of the subsequent three sections is focused on one round of the Delphi study.

Sample Characteristics

This section discusses the sample characteristics of participants who completed the final round of the Delphi study. The sample characteristics represented in each round can be found in Table 1. The characteristics captured in this study were participant ministry role, participant ministry tenure, participant age, participant ethnicity, participant education level, participant alma mater, participant gender, participant state, participant church setting, and participant church average weekly attendance.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics

		Round One		Round Two		Round Three	
		N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Gender	Male	65	98.48	53	100.00	43	100.00
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Age	26-30 years	1	1.52	1	1.89	0	0.00
	31-40 years	17	25.76	16	30.19	12	27.91
	41-50 years	22	33.33	16	30.19	14	32.56
	51-60 years	19	28.79	14	26.42	11	25.58
	> 60 years	6	9.09	6	11.32	6	13.95
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ethnicity	Caucasian	65	98.48	53	100.00	43	100.00
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Highest Degree	Associate	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
	Baccalaureate	22	33.33	19	35.85	14	32.56
	Master of Arts (or similar)	23	34.85	19	35.85	16	37.21
	Master of Divinity	8	12.12	6	11.32	4	9.30
	Doctor of Ministry	9	13.64	7	13.21	7	16.28
	Doctor of Philosophy	2	3.03	1	1.89	1	2.33
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ministry Role	Senior/Preaching/Lead	63	95.45	51	96.23	41	95.35
	Associate	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
	Pastoral Care	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ministry Tenure	2-5 years	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
	6-10 years	1	1.52	1	1.89	0	0.00
	11-15 years	12	18.18	12	22.64	10	23.26
	16-20 years	15	22.73	13	24.53	9	20.93
	>20 years	36	54.55	26	49.06	23	53.49
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Region Division	New England	1	1.52	1	1.89	0	0.00
	Mid-Atlantic	2	3.03	1	1.89	0	0.00
	East North Central	16	24.24	14	26.42	10	23.26

Table 1−*Continued.*

		Round One		Round Two		Round Three	
		N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Region Division	West North Central	11	16.67	9	16.98	8	18.60
	South Atlantic	10	15.15	8	15.09	6	13.95
	East South Central	7	10.61	6	11.32	5	11.63
	West South Central	6	9.10	6	11.32	6	13.95
	Mountain	9	13.64	7	13.21	7	16.28
	Pacific	3	4.55	1	1.89	1	2.33
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Church Setting	Rural	19	28.79	15	28.30	9	20.93
	Suburban	36	54.55	28	52.83	25	58.14
	Urban	10	15.15	10	18.87	9	20.93
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Average Weekly	<100	5	7.58	5	9.43	4	9.30
Attendance	101-149	11	16.67	10	18.87	9	20.93
	150-199	7	10.61	7	13.21	6	13.95
	200-499	23	34.85	18	33.96	10	23.26
	500-999	7	10.61	5	9.43	5	11.63
	1,000-2,499	10	15.15	6	11.32	7	16.28
	2,500-3,999	2	3.03	2	3.77	2	4.65
	Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00

Note: Regional divisions as defined by the United States Census Bureau.

Participant Ministry Role

The Round Three sample consisted of 41 Senior/Preaching/Lead Ministers

(95.35%). One participant (2.33%) served in an Associate Minister role and one

participant (2.33%) served as a Pastoral Care Minister (see Table 1).

Participant Tenure

Slightly more than half of Round Three participants (53.49%) had been in ministry for more than 20 years. Ten participants (23.26%) had achieved between 11 and 15 years of ministry experience. Nine participants (20.93%) had served between 16 and 20 years. One participant (2.33%) had served between 2 and 5 years (see Table 1).

Participant Age

The ages of Round Three participants varied from a range of 31-40 years (27.91%) to over 60 years (13.95%). Twelve participants (27.91%) were between 31-40 years, 14 participants (32.56%) were between 41-50 years, and 11 participants (25.58%) were between 51-60 years of age (see Table 1).

Participant Race

All 43 Round Three participants (100%) identified themselves as Caucasian (see Table 1).

Participant Education Level

The highest theological or ministry degree possessed by 1 participant (2.33%) was an Associate Degree. A baccalaureate degree was the highest degree possessed by 14 participants (32.56%). Another 16 participants (37.21%) possessed a Master of Arts (or similar). The Master of Divinity was possessed by 4 participants (9.30%). A total of 8 participants (18.60%) possessed doctoral degrees, 7 (16.28%) a Doctor of Ministry, and 1 (2.33%) a Doctor of Philosophy (see Table 1).

Participant Alma-Mater

Twenty-four educational institutions were represented in Round Three. A total of 9 participants (20.93%) held degrees from Cincinnati Christian University, 6 (13.95%) possessing a graduate degree and 3 (6.98%) possessing an undergraduate degree. Johnson Bible College and Emmanuel School of Religion were each selected by 4 participants (9.30%). Kentucky Christian College and Central Christian College of the Bible were each identified as the alma mater of 3 participants (6.98%). Nebraska Christian College was selected by 2 participants (4.65%). An additional 18 institutions were each identified by 1 participant (2.33%) (see Table 9).

Participant Gender

All 43 Round Three participants (100%) were male (see Table 1).

Participant Location

The geographic location of Round Three participants spanned 25 states and all nine regional divisions defined by the United States Census Bureau. East North Central states contributed 10 participants (23.26%). The West North Central region was home to 8 participants (18.60%). Mountain states produced 7 participants (16.28%). South Atlantic and West South Central states were each represented by 6 participants (13.95%). There were 5 participants (11.63%) living in East South Central states and 1 participant (2.33%) living in a Pacific state (see Table 1).

Participant Church Setting

Suburban churches contributed 25 participants (58.14%) to Round Three. Rural and urban churches were each identified by 9 participants (20.93) (see Table 1).

Participant Church Average Weekly Attendance

The average weekly attendance of Round Three churches ranged from less than

100 (9.30%) to between 2,500-3,999 (4.65%). Slightly less than one-quarter (23.26%)

averaged between 200-499. Nine churches (20.93%) had an average weekly attendance

of between 101-149. Seven churches (16.281%) averaged between 1,000-2,499.

Churches averaging 150-199 were represented by 6 participants (13.95%). Five churches

(11.63%) had an average weekly attendance between 500 and 999 (see Table 1).

Round One

This section describes two aspects of the first Delphi round. The first focuses on

participation. The second one describes Round One findings.

Participation

The 250 invitations produced 66 records with a corresponding submit date. An

additional 21 participants launched the instrument but failed to complete the survey. Of

the 66 participants who completed the survey, 64 contributed to the development of the

Round Two list. One of the 66 participants did not contribute to the development of the

Round Two list because he answered the qualifying question, "No," indicating the belief

that biblical/doctrinal knowledge is not an essential precursor to spiritual growth. That

individual was not invited to participate in Round Two or Round Three. A second

participant noted in a narrative field that he answered the qualifying question, "Yes" in

order to explain why he believed that the answer is "No." The 100 items identified by

this participant were eliminated from Round One data for three reasons. First, one criteria

for participating in the study is that participants believe that biblical/doctrinal knowledge

is an essential precursor to spiritual growth. Second, it was not possible to determine

whether or not the participant randomly selected 100 items in order to submit data. Finally, the comment about the qualifying question was counted as one of the 100 items, further tainting the record. The participant was invited to participate in Round Two to avoid the invasive nature of trying to identify the participant's identity.

One record experienced a technical malfunction that resulted in the loss of demographic information and email address. Demographic fields associated with this participant reflect "Not displayed" in Table 3 and Table 4. This participant was not invited to participate in Round Two to avoid the invasive nature of trying to identify the participant's identity.

Findings

The findings are presented in two sections. The first section offers analysis of the Round One frequency distribution table. The second section describes the list of items participants believed to be missing from the Round One list.

Frequency Distribution

Selections were applied to a frequency distribution table in order to identify the most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items (see Table 2 for the top 100 items or Table 11 in Appendix E for the unabridged list). Agreement among the top 100 items ranged from a high of 60 participants having selected Jesus (95.24%) and Jesus' Physical Resurrection (95.24%) to a low of 25 participants (39.68%) having selected Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath). Eighty-one items were selected by 32 or more participants (50.79%). The 75% agreement mark fell at item 26 (48 participants).

Of the 100 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round One, almost one-third (29%) were related to Jesus Christ. Seventeen items (17%) were

Table 2

Round One Frequency Distribution

Response	*N*	%
Jesus	60	95.24
Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)	60	95.24
Forgiveness (Remission of sin)	58	92.06
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)	57	90.48
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	57	90.48
Jesus crucified	57	90.48
Jesus' sinlessness	56	88.89
Bible (Word of God)	54	85.74
Communion (Lord's Supper)	54	85.74
Jesus' nature (God, human)	54	85.74
Body of Christ	53	84.13
Jesus gives the Great Commission	53	84.13
Jesus' blood sacrifice	53	84.13
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	53	84.13
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	52	82.54
Blood of Christ	51	80.95
Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)	51	80.95
God (First Person of the Trinity)	51	80.95
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	51	80.95
Grace	51	80.95

90

Table 2–*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)	51	80.95
Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)	50	79.37
Repentance (Repent)	50	79.37
Sin (Transgression, Trespass)	50	79.37
Crucifixion	48	76.19
Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples (cup of wine, loaf of bread)	48	76.19
Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)	47	74.60
Evangelism (Witnessing)	47	74.60
Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)	47	74.60
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	46	73.02
Disciple	45	71.43
Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)	45	71.43
Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)	45	71.43
Atonement	44	69.84
John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)	44	69.84
John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)	44	69.84
Fruit of the Spirit	43	68.25
God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)	43	68.25
Jesus buried in tomb	43	68.25
Justification (by faith)	43	68.25
Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)	43	68.25

Table 2–*Continued.*

Response	*N*	%
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	42	66.67
Christ's divine activities (Creation, providence, redemption)	42	66.67
Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)	42	66.67
Gospel (Good News)	42	66.67
Ten Commandments	42	66.67
Heaven	41	65.08
Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)	41	65.08
Law versus Grace	41	65.08
Salvation, Plan of	41	65.08
Sermon on the Mount	41	65.08
Free will	40	63.49
Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)	40	63.49
Salvation	40	63.49
Sanctification (Sanctify)	40	63.49
Jesus' miracles (Turns water into wine, heals the son of the Official, raises Lazarus from the dead, feeds the five thousand, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, walks on water, etc.)	38	60.32
Jesus ascends to heaven	38	60.32
Adam and Eve	37	58.73
Conversion	37	58.73
Eternal life (everlasting life)	37	58.73
Holy Spirit, Gifts of the	37	58.73
Jesus' birth to the virgin Mary	37	58.73
Second Coming (End Times)	37	58.73

Response	N	%
Virgin birth	36	57.14
Image of God, Created in the	35	55.56
Incarnation	35	55.56
Church, The (congregation)	34	53.97
Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)	34	53.97
Fall, the	34	53.97
John 1:1 (In the beginning was the Word)	34	53.97
Messiah	34	53.97
Resurrection (at Second Coming)	34	53.97
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)	34	53.97
Spiritual warfare	34	53.97
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)	33	52.38
Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)	33	52.38
Jesus tempted in the wilderness by Satan	33	52.38
Christology (Study of Christ)	32	50.79
Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection	32	50.79
Jesus' titles (Alpha and Omega, Bread of Life, Christ, Immanuel, King of the Jews, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Savior, Son of God, Son of Man, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Nazarene, Good Shepherd, etc.)	32	50.79
Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket. . . . Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works)	32	50.79

Table 2–*Continued.*

Response	N	%
New Creation	31	49.21
Wrath (Wrath of God)	31	49.21
Jesus baptized by John the Baptist	30	47.62
Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection in the Upper Room, once with Thomas absent and once with Thomas present	30	47.62
Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good)	30	47.62
Tithe	30	47.62
Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied by Peter, James, and John who all fall asleep	29	46.03
Temptation (Tempt)	29	46.03
Creation	28	44.44
Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)	28	44.44
Trinity	28	44.44
Abrahamic covenant	27	42.86
Evil (Natural Evil, Moral Evil)	27	42.86
Miracle (Miracles)	27	42.86
Death	26	41.27
Lord's Prayer, The	26	41.27
Matthew 5:44 (Love your enemies)	26	41.27
Matthew 6:19-20 (Do not store up treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy)	26	41.27
Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath)	25	39.68

related to salvation including the four traditional components of the plan of salvation. Twelve items (12%) were Bible verses. The identity, nature, and activities of the three persons of the Godhead were the focus of 9 items (9%). Items related to the Second Coming of Jesus were the focus of 4 items (4%). Four items (4%) were related to the nature of the Fall and its consequences. Titles for believers consisted of 4 items (4%). Satan and other related items made up 4 items (4%). Three items (3%) were related to the Bible. Church and its nature were the focus of 3 items (3%).

Items Considered Missing

Ten participants believed essential items were missing from the Round One list, eight of whom contributed multiple items. Two participants added an item related to the birth and mission of the early church as described in Acts 2. Portions of 1 John 2 were added by two participants. The following list contains the 23 items added by participants:

1. 1 Corinthians 10 (Lesson of trusting God)

2. 1 John 2 (Set free from sin in order to show love)

3. 1 John 2:6 (The one who says he abides in Him must walk as He walked)

4. 1 Peter 2:21 (You have been called to this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps)

5. Abortion

6. Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)

7. Agape (love)

8. Bible (formation of)

9. Davidic Covenant

10. Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

11. Eph 4:32 (Following Christ's example of forgiving others)

12. Ephesians 1 (Identity in Christ)

13. Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

14. Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

15. Paul's use of "in Christ" to denote the specific relationships we have with Christ as believers

16. Philippians 2:12-13 (Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure)

17. Prayer

18. Role of Government

19. Second chances (God loves you)

20. Speaking in tongues

21. Stewardship that would involve our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.

22. The "one another" passages (the responsibility to grow and invest in the people around us)

23. Worship

Round Two

This section describes two aspects of the second Delphi round. The first one focuses on participation. The second one revolves around the findings.

The 64 Round Two invitations produced 53 records with a corresponding submit date. An additional four participants launched the instrument but failed to complete the survey before Round Two closed.

Findings

Round Two findings are presented in two sections. The first section offers analysis of the Round Two frequency distribution table. The second section describes the list of items participants believed to be missing from the Round Two list.

Frequency Distribution

The items selected by participants in Round Two were applied to a frequency distribution table in order to identify the 50 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items (see Table 3). Agreement ranged from a high of 48 participants (90.57%) having selected Baptism (immersion, New Birth) to a low of 22 participants (41.51%), which was achieved by four items which expanded the total to 51 items: Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire), John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son), Law versus Grace, and Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God). The 75% agreement was exceeded at item 5 (41 participants). The 50% agreement level fell at 27 participants (50.94%).

Of the 23 new items added by participants in Round One, 6 (11.76%) ranked in the top 51 selections in Round Two. These items included Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple) (84.91%), Prayer (71.70%), Worship (66.04%), Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.) (60.38%), Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church) (50.94%), and Obedience

Table 3

Round Two Frequency Distribution

Response	*N*	%
Baptism	48	90.57
Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)	45	84.91
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	44	83.02
Grace	43	83.13
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	41	77.36
Communion (Lord's Supper)	38	71.70
Prayer	38	71.70
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	37	69.81
Repentance (Repent)	37	69.81
Evangelism (Witnessing)	35	66.04
Worship	35	66.04
Forgiveness (remission of sins)	34	64.15
Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)	33	62.26
Fruit of the Spirit	33	62.26
Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy) Jesus	33	62.26
Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)	32	60.38
Atonement	31	58.49
Bible (Word of God)	31	58.49

Table 3–*Continued.*

Response	*N*	%
Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)	31	58.49
Eternal life (everlasting life)	30	56.60
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	30	56.60
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	30	56.60
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	29	54.72
Salvation, Plan of	29	54.72
Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)	28	52.83
Jesus crucified	28	52.83
Justification (by faith)	28	52.83
Sin (Transgression, Trespass)	28	52.83
Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)	27	50.94
Christology (Study of Christ)	27	50.94
Obedience (Choosing God's ways)	27	50.94
Blood of Christ	26	49.06
Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)	26	49.06
Crucifixion	26	49.06
God (First Person of the Trinity)	26	49.06
Jesus gives the Great Commission	26	49.06
John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)	26	49.06
Salvation	26	49.06
Heaven	25	47.17

Table 3–*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jesus' nature (God, human)	24	45.28
Spiritual warfare	24	45.28
Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)	23	43.40
Body of Christ	23	43.40
Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)	23	43.40
Resurrection (at Second Coming)	23	43.40
Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)	23	43.40
Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)	22	41.51
John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)	22	41.51
Law versus Grace	22	41.51
Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)	22	41.51

(choosing God's ways) (50.94%). No Round Two items that ranked above the top 100 items in Round One appeared in the top 51 items in Round Two.

Of the 51 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round Two, 11 items (21.57%) were related to salvation including the four traditional components of the plan of salvation. Ten items (19.60%) were related to Jesus Christ. The identity, nature, and activities of the three persons of the Godhead were the focus of 9 items (17.65%). Four items (7.84%) were Bible verses. Church and its nature were the

focus of 3 items (5.88%). Three items (5.88%) were related to the Bible. Items related to the Second Coming of Jesus were the focus of two items (3.90%). Satan and other related items made up two items (3.90%).

Items Considered Missing

Two participants typed comments in the space made available to add missing items considered essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Neither comment was added to the Round Three list. The item related to making disciples was not included in Round Three because a similar item was already represented on the list and the second comment was excluded because it was not a biblical item. The two comments were presented as follows:

1. "This entire list consists of either knowledge items or personal spiritual disciplines. What is not included anywhere that I can see is the skills involved in Making Disciples. Such things as how to teach spiritual truth and disciplines, how to discern a person's level of spiritual maturity, how to help them find the next step for them in their walk, how to help them identity the voice of the HS in their life, how to help them learn how to make disciples. True maturity comes when we are making disciples who are making disciples."

2. "Narrowing it down to 50 was tough."

<div align="center">

Round Three

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This section offers information on two aspects of the third Delphi round. The first one focuses on participation. The second one revolves around the findings.

Participation

Round Three invitations were sent to 53 participants who completed Round Two plus two individuals who missed the deadline but contacted me to request permission to be included in Round Three. The 55 Round Three invitations produced 43 records with a corresponding submit date. An additional 8 participants launched the instrument but failed to complete the survey before Round Three closed.

Findings

Round Three findings are presented in two sections. The first section offers analysis of the Round Three frequency distribution table. The second section includes analysis of the explanations of why participants believed items to be one of the most essential 25 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members.

Frequency Distribution

The items selected by participants in Round Three were applied to a frequency distribution table in order to identify the 25 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items (see Table 4). Agreement among the top 25 items ranged from a high of 30 participants (69.77%) having selected Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple) to a low of 16 participants (37.21%), which was achieved by 5 items which expanded the total to 26 items. A 75% or higher agreement level was not achieved by any item in Round Three. The 50% agreement level fell at 22 participants (51.16%).

Of the 23 new items added by participants, 6 (23.07%) ranked in the top 26 selections in Round Three. These items included Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple; 69.77%) which received the highest total number of selections in Round Three,

Table 4

Round Three Frequency Distribution

Response	*N*	%
Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)	30	69.77
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)	29	67.44
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	29	67.44
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	29	67.44
Grace	28	65.12
Prayer	28	65.12
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	27	62.79
Bible (Word of God)	26	60.47
Forgiveness (remission of sins)	25	58.14
Obedience (Choosing God's ways)	25	58.14
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	24	55.81
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	24	55.81
Worship	24	55.81
Repentance (Repent)	23	53.49
Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)	23	53.49
Evangelism (Witnessing)	22	51.16
Communion (Lord's Supper)	21	48.84

Table 4—*Continued*.

Response	N	%
Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)	19	44.19
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)	17	39.53
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	17	39.53
Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)	17	39.53
Fruit of the Spirit	16	37.21
Jesus	16	37.21
Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)	16	37.21
Salvation, Plan of	16	37.21
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)	16	37.21

Prayer (65.12%), Obedience (choosing God's ways; 58.14%), Worship (55.81%), Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.; 53.49%), and Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church; 44.19%).

Twenty-five items were included in the Round Three list beyond the top 51 items in Round Two. Of those items, 4 (15.38%) appeared among the top 26 items identified in Round Three: 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter; 39.53%), Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker; 39.53%), Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter; 37.21%), and Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.; 37.21%).

Of the 26 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round Three, 5 items (19.23%) were related to salvation including two of the four traditional components of the plan of salvation (Baptism [immersion, New Birth] [67.44%] and Repentance [Repent] [53.49%]). Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust) and Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior) fell below the top 26 mark, though it should be noted that 16 participants (37.21%) selected "Salvation, Plan of" which afforded it a spot in the top 26 items. There were also 5 items (19.23%) in the top 26 list related to spiritual disciplines. This included the umbrella topic Spiritual Disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.; 67.44%) as well as four specific disciplines: Prayer (65.12%), Worship (55.81%), Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.; 53.49%), and Evangelism (Witnessing; 51.16%). The identity, nature, and activities of the three persons of the Godhead were the focus of 3 items (11.53%).

Three items (11.53%) referred specifically to Bible verses. The Church and its nature were the focus of 2 items (7.69%). Two items (7.69%) were related to the Bible. Round Three participants chose to forego 9 of the 10 items related to Jesus Christ selected in Round Two in favor of the single Round Three item Jesus (37.21%).

Explanations Associated With the Top 26 Items

This section is organized according to the top 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items. Analysis is offered related to reasons participants believed each item is one of the 25 most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members.

Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

Explanations were given by 26 participants for why "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" is one of the top 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). A common theme among the responses was related to Discipleship as a "vital" aspect of one's Christianity. Related to this was an emphasis on the fact that Christians are "called," that is, expected to achieve something significant. Participants communicated this sentiment by declaring, "We are called not to be converts, but to be disciples" and "Being a Christian is more than a title it is a lifestyle." The second theme focused on knowledge of discipleship as a prerequisite for achieving the lifestyle to which we have been called.

Participants believed the ability to achieve discipleship is dependent upon knowing what it means to be a disciple. One participant stated, "If I am to follow Jesus I need to know what is expected." Others wrote, "We must know what we are striving for" and, "To be a disciple, one must understand what it means to be a disciple." Another thread focused on leadership implications of understanding what it means to be a disciple.

Participants noted, "Many Christians are unaware of what it really means to be a disciple" and suggested such ignorance negatively affects more than one's personal spiritual growth pursuits. Participants also believed disciples are obligated to lead others toward discipleship. Knowledge of what it means to be a disciple was regarded as foundational for any effort to "teach it to someone else" and to "spur believers on to pursue true followership with God."

Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

Explanations were given by 24 participants for why "Baptism (immersion, New Birth)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three justifications were identified by participants including the belief that baptism serves as "the initial incorporation of the new believer into the body of Christ." Two implications emerged related to this theme. One is that baptism is the "beginning of our growth," "the first step" of the discipleship journey, and that this knowledge "sets us on the right spiritual path." The second implication is that knowing the biblical view of baptism is necessary "for helping others become disciples." One aspect of this "start of that new life in Christ" is reflected in the second pattern.

Participants highlighted the importance of sharing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. This "joining" was described as "an identification" with Christ as well as a "literal joining with Christ" through which we "rise to a new life in him." Baptism was described as a "precious and powerful" image that serves as "a significant motivator for people to continue to grow in Christ." The third theme found in the responses was related to the work of the Holy Spirit in and after baptism.

Participants addressed a variety of ways that baptism relates to the Holy Spirit including describing it as one factor in "making the heart ready for the Holy Spirit." A second connection identified baptism as the occasion "a person receives the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit at baptism" through which individuals experience "life change by the power of the Holy Spirit." One participant clarifies the significance of this point with,

"Without the Holy Spirit's work there can be no real spiritual growth." Finally, baptism is described as "connected to the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture,
Evangelism, and Mercy)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/ doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth (see Appendix F). The first of three themes that emerged from responses was the "great need to understand and get back to the work of the true Church." One reason offered in support of this premise was, "Without a clear purpose we will just wander around aimlessly." A second rationale offered by a participant stated, "Christian growth comes by knowing that the church has a purpose." The connection between "Christian growth" and the purpose of the church is at the heart of the second theme.

Responses point to a biblical mandate for the Church to serve as a facilitator of spiritual growth. Believers, says one participant, must "understand the on-going purpose of the church to make disciples and not to sit around and have their needs met." The Church was identified by participants as an agent of "encouragement and accountability" specifically toward the goal of growing "closer in their relationship with Christ." A third theme highlighted relational aspects of the Church.

One participant noted, "The plan of Scripture is for the Christian life to be communal, not to be lived out in isolation." This statement conveys two ideas. The first is that participation in the Church is an essential part of the spiritual growth process. The second suggests that the Church is designed to be "the 'family' that Christ-followers

journey with." Participants noted that this relational context is a prime environment in which Christians model the "one another's" found in the Bible.

Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship,
meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control,
acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses, the first reflecting the functional nature of spiritual disciplines. Some responses described spiritual disciplines passively as "good practices to employ in your life" or " things Christians do," or a way in which "discipleship is demonstrated in the real world." The majority of participants, however, viewed spiritual disciplines as "critical" and "vital" activities that serve as "tools" and "agents." The second theme is related to the outcomes assigned to these tools and agents.

Participants viewed spiritual disciplines as internal and external activities. The external aspect focused on spiritual disciplines as "tools and habits that the Spirit of God uses to form and mold us." The internal aspect focused on spiritual disciplines as "our part" which requires personal "sacrifice and discipline." Both aspects were viewed as "activities of spiritual growth."

Some participants ascribe general and undefined outcomes to spiritual disciplines such as to "deepen people," and "grow in our walk with Christ." The majority of responses, though, described spiritual disciplines as providing specific "direction and focus." Spiritual disciplines were believed to be "ways that Christians grow in their

relationship with Christ." They were described as means to "form and mold us into His image," to "become more like God, and to "keep us connected to our Lord, learning from Him, and following His ways." Participants also ascribed to spiritual disciplines the ability to "allow us to be formed to God's design" and to "bring our lives more into line with God's will for our lives."

Grace

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "Grace" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Five themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the relationship between grace and salvation. One participant noted that individuals are "saved by grace" and another identified grace as "the central message of our salvation." The second theme revolved around grace as an influencer of an individual's beliefs and thought.

Grace was believed to function as a basis for religious identity in that it is the "distinguishing characteristic of Christianity vs. all other world religions." Grace was also described as a guide for religious thought and practice in that it "keeps us from believing in the false teaching that we are saved by our works." The belief that individuals are not "saved by works" is the heart of the third thread.

Multiple participants offered comments conveying that grace is given "without reserve or condition" though this belief that grace is a free gift was tempered by a demand that individuals "recognize the high cost associated with it." The availability of grace was considered to be "not about what we can do—it's about what He has done," which points to the fourth theme.

Grace was believed to be a reflection of God's nature. Grace was described by one participant as something that "explains the nature of God." Participants noted that grace "helps us realize God's love for us" while at the same time demonstrates that God is "both just and merciful." How individuals respond to God is the focus of the fifth theme.

Participants considered grace to be an important motivating force. "God's grace," said one participant, "is the only cause we have to come to Him." When a person has accepted God's free gift, the belief is that grace will "motivate Christian[s] to grow." Furthermore, an understanding of grace is believed to have the capacity "to grow them," one significant outcome being "sharing it with others."

Prayer

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Prayer" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Five themes emerged from the responses, the first one being the "vital" nature of prayer. Prayer was described as the "foundation of walking in faith." It was likened to "breathing for spiritual life" and another participant affirmed this with, "A Christian without prayer is like a fish without water." A key implication that naturally follows is that "we need to know how to communicate with God." The second theme focused on prayer as communication.

Prayer was described as a "means of communication" and a strategy that "deepens communication with God." Multiple participants communicated the idea that God "wants us to talk to Him," including one response that employed family imagery of a "heavenly Father [who] wishes for His children to talk to him." Another participant highlighted the significance of the fact that we have the ability and mandate to communicate with "our

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Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer." Finally, prayer was described as "a two-way line of communication" that includes "speaking to and listening to the Father." The third theme that emerged from the responses focused on relational outcomes of prayer.

One participant noted, "Communication is key to any relationship. Learning to talk to and with God is not only vital, it is lifegiving." Prayer was considered "essential to develop a relationship with [God]." It was also described as an activity that "brings us closer to God," improves our "connection to a Holy God," "aligns our will with God's will," and allows us to "feel God's presence." The fourth theme identified in the responses was related to practical benefits of prayer.

Several participants identified prayer as a source of strength, and one participant suggested that prayer was "the power behind all the great Biblical leaders." A variety of outcomes were assigned to prayer including "strength, guidance, and understanding," "comfort and strength," and that which "gives us strength and fills our hearts with hope." The fifth theme related to prayer focused on spiritual benefits.

Prayer was considered "essential to our spiritual growth" in several ways. It was described as the "key to understanding spiritual growth," the means by which individuals can "grow as Christians," and more specifically the means by which individuals can "grow in the ways [God] wants us to."

God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal,
good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent,
omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence,
immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit,
true, wise, wrathful)

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent,

omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including two related to identity.

The first reference to identity focused on God. Participants noted, "God is different than any being we know" yet still acknowledged, "HE is GOD." Participants suggested that an understanding of God's attributes demands that Christians "live out a life that is in awe of God" and "celebrate the power and majesty of God." The second reference to identity focuses on humans in that understanding God's nature "helps us to understand ourselves." Living in awe of God's attributes also helps "get it in our head I am unqualified to be my own god." The second theme focuses on knowledge of God's attributes as a motivation to emulate Him.

Participants described God as the "object of our affections." "If you're going to worship God," said one participant, "it would make sense to discover what God says about himself." In addition to an object of worship, participants viewed God as "our example" and concluded the best way to achieve this is "to get to know Him better and better." This leads to the third theme which focused on how knowledge of God's nature is related to spiritual growth.

Participants explained that spiritual growth is dependent upon knowledge of God's attributes because, "In order to know what He expects, we must know Him!" Others identified specific outcomes that stem from a knowledge of God's attributes. Participants noted, "For spiritual growth, understanding who (what) God is helps our decisions and obedience," "Understand His attributes allows us to more confidently abide

in Him and thus advance our growth process," "The more we learn of Him, the more we can extend our devotion and dependence" and "the more we are able to experience the fullness of God's presence." The fourth theme drawn from responses is related to the belief, "Our concept of God is formed by recognizing His attributes."

Participants believed that knowing the attributes of God not only affects the "concept of God" but also "determines how we interpret His word." Knowing God's attributes is described as a factor in "how we respond (or cannot respond) to salvation" and "how we tolerate our sins," particularly in "time of great sinfulness."

Bible (Word of God)

Explanations were given by 22 participants for why "Bible (Word of God)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including a focus on the Bible as one means by which individuals can know something about God.

Participants described the Bible as the means by which we can know God. The Bible was considered "the source of all God has specifically revealed of Himself." One participant noted that individuals, "cannot know God, His plan for us, or how to live for Him without his word." Participants also described the Bible as the means by which we can learn how God interacts with Creation. The Bible was identified as "the handbook for God's activity in history interacting with mankind and entering the human world to bring life change." The second theme revolved around the nature of the Bible's message.

Participants viewed the Bible as "the foundation for right and wrong," our "authority," and "our source of truth and life." The Bible was believed to be the source of

"truth in a world that chooses to not have a truth that is eternal." As the standard by which all information, perspectives, and beliefs should be evaluated, the Bible also serves as "our true north" in life. This practical application for life is the focus of the next theme.

The Bible was described as an "instruction book" and "the one and only road map for their life." It was viewed as the primary means for "determining the will of God." Participants believed individuals cannot know "His plan for us" or "how to live for Him" in the absence of the Bible. The fourth theme relates to spiritual growth as a specific part of our life and development.

Spiritual growth was said to be dependent upon "a workable knowledge of the scripture" and an understanding of "the importance of God's Word." An understanding of the Bible was described as "how we grow in Christ" and the way in which individuals can "see where and how they need to change to please God." Participants identified the Bible as "the blueprint for spiritual growth" and "what we feed on in order to grow Spiritually."

Forgiveness (remission of sins)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Forgiveness (remission of sins)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four primary themes emerged from the responses and were summarized well by one participant who wrote, "We need to accept Christ's forgiveness to be able to move ahead in the faith. A growing Christian understands forgiveness, accepts it for themselves, offers it to others, and lives it out in everyday life."

Participants placed a heavy emphasis on God's forgiveness. One participant wrote, "I need the forgiveness of the God who created me." It was described as "another

huge part of the salvation process" and "the great gift of salvation that allows us to access the great promise!" The "central message of Christ" was considered to be the ability "to both receive and give forgiveness." The latter concept is the focus of the second theme.

To forgive others was considered "one of the greatest spiritual challenges" yet also "one of the core components to the faith." God's forgiveness was described as an event that "transforms our lives" and one that naturally prompts us in turn to "forgive those around us." One participant pointed to Jesus' teaching to highlight that "if we cannot forgive others, He cannot forgive us either." The third theme revolves around a specific way in which we must forgive.

One participant wrote, "This is the one thing some new believers need to understand more that many others. My sins are gone, God has forgiven me." The response goes on to say, "I can forgive myself!" The ability to offer forgiveness to oneself was represented in several responses including one that claimed, "In order to move forward in discipleship one must understand that they have been freed from past." The fourth theme is future oriented and focuses on specific benefits of forgiveness.

One benefit of forgiveness represented in the responses corresponds to grace and salvation manifested through God's forgiveness. As one participant wrote, "Without forgiveness, we are lost to our sins and to our sinful nature." Participants believed that "forgiveness is all about a second chance" and is our "reason for hope." Forgiveness was believed to be "necessary for a relationship with God" and "the starting point of discipleship." It was described as that which "models and helps grow our faith."

Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "Obedience (Choosing God's ways)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses, the first one being the relationship between obedience and salvation.

Participants concluded that obedience is related to salvation in two ways. First, obedience was described as "necessary" for salvation in that it is a "critical action to be taken towards God's Word." Second, obedience was described as both externally and internally motivated. It was viewed as externally motivated in that it is a prerequisite for "glorifying God" and as such is an expectation imposed on Christians. "Though we are saved by Grace," stated one participant, "God still demands us to be obedient." Obedience was also described as an internally motivated hallmark of a Christian's life. Participants described obedience as a response "to God's free gift of grace" out of which "we choose to serve and obey because of love." The second theme is related to a specific way God responds to obedience.

Participants noted that obedience "is pleasing to God." Christians who respond obediently to God and His Word were believed to "please God with their actions" and "grow more mature in their faith." The latter concept is the focus of the third primary theme that emerged from the responses.

Obedience was described as functionally related to spiritual growth. Participants believed, "A disciple learns obedience first," "We cannot grow in our spiritual walk

without a knowledge of God's ways and a willingness to be obedient to Him," and "To grow in Christ I have to learn about and practice obedience to what He wants from me." Spiritual growth was believed to manifest "when we strive to be like Him." The fourth theme related to obedience views obedience as evidence of spiritual growth.

Participants believed obedience to be a reflection of surrendered life. "Our faith, our spiritual growth," stated one participant, "is evidenced in our choosing God's way." Obedience was described as "the nuts and bolts of walking the talk." Another participant appealed to a similar analogy by stating, "I can talk a good game, but the reality is living that good game and that is wrapped up in obedience." Obedience was also considered a response that "shows God we love Him."

Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the importance of God's Word being accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

Participants believed, "God's Word is God-breathed. It is true. It is trustworthy. It is relevant." This conclusion was considered important for two reasons. First, participants concluded, "Something has to be the marker" because "without this understanding Christianity will become a series of negotiables from a human perspective" and we would be "left to our own devices." The second reason participants viewed the validity and

reliability of the Bible to be essential is, "If the whole of the Bible is not the authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired Word of God, then we might as well read Harry Potter." Participants recognized that a Bible void of authority and validity would simply be "another book among many." The second theme focused on the specific attestations of the accuracy, reliability, and authority of the Bible.

The Bible was described as a "point of absolute reference." Multiple participants pointed to the internal testimony of 2 Tim 3:16-17 to suggest, "The Bible is sufficient and gives us the guidance we need to follow in God's ways" and "it is inspired by Him and it is used for teaching, rebuking, training." The third theme that emerged from the responses focused on spiritual growth as one outcome that results from knowledge of the Bible's attributes.

Knowledge of the Bible's attributes was believed to be "very important." The ability to defend the authority and reliability of God's Word was considered "a step in the right direction for a person's spiritual growth." One participant went even further and declared it "a MUST for spiritual growth."

Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit.

Participants believed the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit to be "God's/Christ's presence in the believer today." This specific role of the Holy Spirit was considered an imperative to "understand Him more" and to "claim" the "amazing powerful gift of God, real and living within us." The second theme described how the Holy Spirit sets Christians apart.

Responses fell into two categories related to ways the Holy Spirit can "make us holy." First, participants believed the Holy Spirit to be one factor that sets Christians apart from the world and "distinguishes us from non-believers." The second way the Holy Spirit sets Christians apart is by helping individuals overcome temptation. Participants wrote, "The most challenging part of growing as a Christ follower is [to] become sensitive to the movement of the Spirit," yet maintained, "We are not left to our own abilities." The Holy Spirit's role was identified as "indwelling us to help us get through a sin filled world." The third theme focused on the power provided by the Holy Spirit.

Participants suggested, "The Spirit is the life force of the church" who instills "vibrancy in the life of the believer." The Holy Spirit was also described as the "driving force in every Christians life" that results in "a Spirit of power, not timidity." The fourth theme was related to the Holy Spirit's role in spiritual growth.

Participants believed that spiritual growth "is impossible with out the person and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives" and that several factors affect the Holy Spirit's influence in an individual's spiritual growth. Participants suggested that Christians who seek spiritual growth must have the Holy Spirit "serving as teacher." Spiritual growth was also considered to be dependent on the Christian's "reliance on the work and power of the Holy Spirit."

Worship

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Worship" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on worship as more than a Sunday activity.

Participants believed that worship is "more than a rocking band on Sunday morning" and neither "confined to a worship center on Sunday morning" nor simply "a religious ceremony that we go through each week." Worship was instead defined as a "full-life response to God's grace" demonstrated by "all a [Christian] is to do and be 24/7." Participants described worship as "focusing on God" in "a daily time of closeness with God." One participant believed that worship is not only an activity in which individuals pursue closeness with God but an activity that "draws me closer to Him." Worship was described as "the way we express our love and devotion to God" and "the practice of remembering and proclaiming how awesome God is and what He has done for me." More specifically it was identified as "the adoration of God through all circumstances and situations" where "one sees the presence of God in nature, and beauty, and in the mundane and frustrations and sorrows of life." Demonstrating a heart for worship in these ways was considered the hallmark of a "life that is beginning to understand growth spiritually." This focus on spiritual growth is the second theme drawn from responses.

Participants believed "learning to worship our Lord" to be an essential part of the spiritual growth "process" through which we "fulfill our purpose before God." Worship was identified as both "the essence of growth" and "the ongoing product of spiritual

growth." The relationship between worship and spiritual growth was summarized in, "A life of transformation is a life of worship." The third theme revolved around the focus of our worship.

Worship was described as "the expression of the value we place on God." More precisely, participants pointed to God as the only appropriate object of worship with, "God alone is worthy of our adoration. Anything else is idolatry" and "It is all about Him—anything less is not worship and is not discipleship." Two motivations of worship were the topic of the fourth theme.

The first motivation for worship is related to the nature of the Godhead. That we are motivated to worship simply in response to who God is was communicated by, "Once we know Jesus we will worship HIM." The second motivation for worship identified by participants was related to the activities of God. Worship was described as a "response to God's grace" motivated out of "love and praise and gratitude."

Repentance (Repent)

Explanations were given by 18 participants for why "Repentance (Repent)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses, the first focusing on the relationship between repentance and salvation.

Participants believed repentance produces grace, forgiveness, and hope "before and after conversion" which highlights that "repentance is not a one time process when they accept Christ. Repentance is a constant part of our growth process." The second theme addressed the nature of repentance.

Repentance was associated with a change of focus and thinking. Repentance was described as "the act of replacing self centered life with a Christ oriented love centered life." Participants believed, "To truly change the heart you must also change the focus of life." Repentance was also associated with "[changing] our minds in such a way that we see ourselves from God's perspective" leading us to "desire the kinds of changes that move us further into the flow [of] God's grace and blessings." The third theme focused on turning away from sin as an aspect of repentance.

Repentance was considered a strategy for "handling sin that pursues us throughout earthly life." Participants focused on the Christian as "a new creation" in whom "the man of sin [is] put to death, and Christ should reign in our lives." Some participants noted that repentance is to "turn away from the sinful nature and turn toward God" and "the reaction to God's grace by the repelling of our sinful nature." Others focused on the more practical application of repentance in which Christians "learn the healthy practice of turning from sin and toward Christ." The fourth theme that emerged from the responses focused on the relationship between repentance and spiritual growth.

Repentance was described as "a thermometer and thermostat of our spiritual maturity" because it is "the essence of transformational living." Participants believed that "repentance must accompany the spiritual journey" and that "a daily observance leads one to mature in the faith."

Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" is one of the 26

most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on stewardship as a counter-cultural approach to managing resources.

Participants noted, "The love of money haunts so much in our world" and pointed to a biblical pattern that is "different from everything we have learned culturally." Key issues surrounding stewardship are related to "'who owns it all' and what our role is supposed to be in handling everything." Participants believed the biblical pattern demonstrates "all our possessions are owned by God. We are managers of all we have." Stewardship was considered essential because "without a basic understanding of stewardship we will never be the mangers of Gods gifts that we ought, and the work of the Church will struggle to move forward." The second theme focused on stewardship as a means by which Christians bless others.

Participants noted, "God has blessed us" and as a result participants believed believers have an obligation to learn "how to live under God's blessing." The expected consequence of this knowledge is that Christians would be a "conduit through which He can bless others." One participant wrote, "If we are truly sanctified (wholly his) then all we possess is dedicated to serving him by serving others." "First-century Christians were offered as a positive example in which the church was "sharing resources with each other, and with those in need." Participants believed "our willingness to give and share fuels the church and Kingdom." The third theme revolved around internal considerations of motivations and applications of stewardship.

Participants stated, "Where your heart is that is where your interests will rest and be utilized." A Christian's stewardship was believed "to reveal how our hearts are yielded

to the kingdom, how we view the 'sowing the seeds of the gospel,' and give toward God's kingdom agenda." Several participants referred to the use of money as a practical and relevant illustration of stewardship principles. Participants noted, "Jesus said our heart is reflected in the use of money," and "Our use of money reveals where our heart is, and for whom we are living." The fourth theme turns attention to the relationship between stewardship and spiritual growth.

Stewardship was considered to be a "huge component of Spiritual growth" and "directly connected to discipleship and to the original creation commission." Participants believed, "A right attitude toward the things of this world is necessary for us to fix our eyes on our relationship with God and the world to come." One participant added, "I question whether [spiritual growth] can even begin without a biblical understanding of stewardship." This sentiment was shared by another participant who wrote, "Stewardship is central/absolutely essential to discipleship/[spiritual growth]." Participants believed that "making the best use of the resources placed in our care because we understand that God has blessed us with them for His purposes and not our own will mold your life in a way that it reflects His character." Stewardship was also considered "one of the surest indicators of our maturity in Christ."

Evangelism (Witnessing)

Explanations were given by 18 participants for why "Evangelism (Witnessing)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on evangelism as an expectation.

Evangelism was called "the main thing we as disciples are to do." Participants believed, "One who imitates Christ and the disciples must share the message of salvation to those around them" and that Christians should "be able to at least give testimony to our own faith walk." The second theme focused on motivations for evangelism.

While it is reasonable to suggest the motivation to do so is that "when you really become a follower of Jesus, you WANT to talk about him," participants noted that evangelism is "perhaps the most difficult practice in one's life" and concluded that "most Christians, young and old, fail to grow in this area of their relationship with the Lord." Corresponding to this belief, the majority of references to motivations for evangelism focused on the biblical mandate to be "prepared to give a reason for the Hope they have in Christ." Multiple participants appealed to the Great Commission as the basis for this expectation. One participant wrote, "The great commission (Matt 28:18-20) charged the disciple to spread the good news to all who would listen." The conclusions drawn from this passage included, "We have the same charge," "We have been commissioned to be His "Ambassadors," and "He told us to go, baptize them and teach them to obey everything that Christ commanded." The third theme that emerged from the responses focused on three ways evangelism benefits Christians.

First, evangelism was believed to be an effective way to "learn more about Christ." One participant noted, "It is clear that we do not fully understand all we have in Christ until we lead someone to Christ." A second benefit of evangelism for the Christian was described with, "My faith is deepened and strengthened when I share the Good News of Jesus." The third benefit of evangelism is that it "strengthens our faith in action."

Communion (Lord's Supper)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Communion (Lord's Supper)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on communion as a memory tool.

Communion was described as "the most important remembrance for every Christian." It was described as a "vital link" and "a necessary intimacy" that "reminds Christians what God did about sin." Participants pointed to the fact that "Jesus instituted this method of remembering the source and cost of grace" and that "Paul made it clear in 1 Cor 11 that we are to remember, renew, and proclaim our faith in Jesus through the observance of the Lord's Supper." The second theme focused on ways communion serves as a connection between Christians and Jesus.

Participants believed that communion serves as "the way we connect with Christ on a regular basis." It was also considered "a literal connection to the body and blood of Jesus" through which "we come into actual contact with Jesus and his grace." The third theme revolves around the connection between communion and spiritual growth.

An understanding of communion was considered "imperative" in order "to grow closer to God through Christ" and "live out a life of devotion to the one who died in their place." Participants declared communion "the central aspect of our worship" that in part "keeps us focused upon Him." Participants believed that "we need constant reminders of what Jesus did so we can have a growing relationship with him," because "without remembering we slip back into ourselves."

Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/ the birth and mission
of the Church)

Explanations were given by 17 participants for why "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/

the birth and mission of the Church)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal

knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see

Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the

"purpose and place of the church in God's plan."

Knowledge of Acts 2:42ff. was deemed essential because "WE need to

understand the mission that God has called the church to do" and, "if we are to be the

church we need to see how the first church functioned." This passage was also considered

a "good display of the new purpose and calling for Christ-followers" which includes

engaging a community of believers that "fosters growth." The second theme focused on

the identity of the Church.

Participants highlighted Acts 2:42ff. out of a conviction that "the church is not the

building." This perspective is based on the belief that the Church is composed of many

individuals who form "the body of Christ" and who represent the "lived out expression of

God's love."

1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

Explanations were given by 15 participants for why "1 Corinthians 13 (Love

chapter)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the

purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three

themes emerged; the first one focused on the definition of love.

Participants believed knowledge of 1 Cor 13 is essential because an

"understanding of what love is in the biblical perspective is vital" and because the text

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describes a "form of love" that is "so essential yet so rare, even within the Church." The passage was also considered valuable because it "is vital for how do we put love into action" since it describes "the behavior of love," "the actions of God-quality love," and the motivation for us "to act, live and serve." The second theme describes the relationship between 1 Cor 13 and the identity of Christians.

Love is considered to be "the fundamental mark of Christians" and believers are believed to be known by "how we love one another." First Corinthians 13 was said to offer an "excellent description of love" that provides a framework by which individuals can become "an imitation of Christ." The third theme focuses on the relationship between 1 Cor 13 and spiritual growth.

Participants concluded that "to grow spiritually, you must learn to love, not as the world loves, but in a new way" and that "since God is love, and Jesus said love is the distinguishing feature of his followers, a practical working definition of real love must be the basis for any [spiritual growth]."

Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the indwelling gift of the Spirit.

Participants believed that Christians must "understand each part of the trinity" and specifically "the power and purpose of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit was identified by participants as "God's Spirit indwelling us and empowering us" and "the 'hidden'

personality that resides within us who gives us power to overcome and claim vistory in life." Additional roles that the Holy Spirit plays in the life of a believer are the focus of the second theme.

The Holy Spirit was believed to be the way we "know and hear from God as Christians" as well as the One who "guides, leads, and changes us, brings us spiritual gifts." One participant wrote, "There is no possible way to live out a life in Christ Jesus without the help of the Holy Spirit—[He] intercedes for us, strengthens us, reminds us of scriptures, directs what we should say, directs us into truth." The Holy Spirit was believed to provide "the power to be disciples." Application of this power from the Spirit for the purpose of spiritual growth was the focus of the third theme.

Participants believed that Christians are "dependant upon [the Holy Spirit's] power and transforming work" because "we cannot grow on our own merit" and "we will not grow with out the Holy Spirit." Thus, participants concluded that we must allow The Spirit to be "active in our lives" as "the change agent in our spiritual development."

Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on the "commission."

Importance and priority of Matt 28:18-20 were assigned based on two factors. Participants noted that the Great Commission is significant first because "learning what we are called to do is vital" and second because it contains "the last words of Jesus to Christians." The Great Commission was considered our "call of duty" and "our main

mission as Christ-followers." The specific command contained in Matt 28:18-20 was the focus of the second theme.

Participants concluded, "We have a God given job" and as such "believers need to understand that and do it." The "key instruction" contained in Matt 28:18-20 is that Christians need to "make more disciples." Participants believed that the disciple-making process includes attempts to "reproduce our faith in others" through "evangelism and teaching." The third theme related to the Great Commission focused on spiritual growth.

Along with the call to make disciples, the Great Commission was believed to convey a "call to growth" and the demand that "we have His commission in view." Participants believed that "people who put an emphasis on [making disciples] tend to grow more than others that consider it only a suggestion." The attributes of a "growing Christian" were defined as the ability to "understand what it means to be a disciple, work at that in his own life and then begin to replicate that in others—that's growth."

Fruit of the Spirit

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Fruit of the Spirit" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first focused on the Fruit of the Spirit as goals for spiritual growth.

Participants identified the Fruit of the Spirit as "things your life should be producing" if the "Spirit [is] active in your life." They were considered "key" descriptions of the "qualities of the redeemed life God makes possible in us." The second theme focused on the Fruit of the Spirit as the "product of a life of spiritual growth."

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The Fruit of the Spirit were considered a "mark of spiritual growth" and "evidence of growth." Participants believed the Fruit are a "good idea of what happens inside a person when they follow Jesus" and are measures by which Christians can "gauge our progress in growing in Him." The Fruit of the Spirit were considered "tangible measures of a life surrendered to Christ." The third theme focused on the Fruit of the Spirit as spiritual growth tools.

Participants believed, "This fruit is essential for us to be what God wants us to be" and are "a clear, practical package of ideals that a person can study and begin to put in practice in their lives resulting in spiritual growth." Understanding the Fruit of the Spirit was considered an important tool that "will help us strive for more fruit to grow."

Jesus

Explanations were given by 13 participants for why "Jesus" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the nature of Jesus.

Participants considered it necessary to know the divine attributes of Jesus including, "preeminent, predestine, the divine logos, the wisdom of God, his supremacy, the King of kings and Lord of lords, that he loves, cares for, and nurtures his bride." They also highlighted aspects of the attributes modeled in the Gospels including "full of love and compassion, meeting faith with mercy." The second theme related to the primary activities of Jesus.

Jesus was described as "the central figure of the Bible and of history" as well as "the embodiment of God's Grace" because He is "the One who gave His life for us."

Participants described Jesus as "the life of God in human form who shows us what God is like and who completed the mission of salvation for mankind." The third theme focused on Jesus as an object of spiritual growth.

Participants described Jesus as "the one we are to follow" because He is "the fulfillment of spiritual maturity in mankind." Knowing Jesus' "divine claims, His life, Purpose, and model" were identified as motivations that "will make us love Him and grow in Him more." In contrast, participants believed that "we'll never grow in anything" without a knowledge of Jesus.

Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution,
through suffering, etc.)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the inevitability of suffering in life.

Participants noted, "Followers of Christ are not promised problem-free lives." In fact, the consistent message in the responses was significantly more pessimistic in that "all people experience hardships and pain," "we WILL suffer," and "every Christian, new or old, will face life's problems." Participants believed that Christians "should be taught to expect it." Conveying the knowledge "that difficult times will come and the Christians are certainly not exempt from those" was considered essential in order to ensure "disciples aren't [disillusioned] or confused with wrong expectations." The second theme focused on tenacity as an aspect of perseverance.

Participants believed "living for Christ is a marathon not a sprint." This suggests that "we are called to follow even when it is hard and difficult." Participants added, "God calls us to persevere, and enables us to do so through the power of the Holy Spirit." The third theme focused on the relationship between perseverance and spiritual growth.

Hardships and difficulties were considered necessary experiences "in order to grow closer to Christ." Participants believed Christians grow "through hardships and difficulties" by which individuals "become Christ-like." Life challenges were considered an environment in which believers can grow "by leaps and bounds" in "patience and teach us endurance in life."

Salvation, Plan of

Explanations were given by 11 participants for why "Salvation, Plan of" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on benefits of knowledge to the Christian.

Participants believed that Christians need to "understand the process in accepting Christ" because it is "basic knowledge that keeps us assured of God's love and His mercy" and also "allows us to understand sin, freewill, belief, confession, repentance, etc." Knowledge of the plan of salvation was considered "essential to have [a] journey with God." The vast majority of the responses reflected the second theme which focused on evangelism.

Participants noted, "Once we become a Christian we can not forget that others need to know this plan." The conclusion drawn from this principle is, "Disciples of Jesus should be equipped to take a person who does not know Jesus to the Lordship of Christ."

Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary,
Prince of Darkness, Tempter)

Explanations were given by 10 participants for why "Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses; the first one focused on the nature of Satan.

Participants described Satan as our "adversary" and "enemy." He was identified as "working very hard" and "having great success right now in the church" because "he wants us to fail." Satan was believed to be "alive and well and doing all he can to destroy our walk with the Lord." The second theme revolves around the latter objective.

Participants concluded that "Satan is opposed to our spiritual growth" and that "Satan's work on the earth is to prevent spiritual growth." Two points of knowledge were identified as essential. First, "the enemy must be clearly identified and understood before we can be ready for any spiritual battle to follow." Second, we must understand "who He is [in order to] help us know how to fight him as we grow."

Conclusion

This chapter described data gathered over a three-round Delphi study. The study produced a list of 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered by ministers of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Also included were explanations of why participants considered each respective item one of the most essential 26 items.

The following chapter offers a summary of the study and findings, makes recommendations, and discusses implications for church leadership.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

Introduction

The previous chapters introduced the study, offered a review of relevant literature, described the research methodology, and presented findings. This chapter serves as a summary of the study and will discuss the background of the problem, the research question and research design, the conceptual framework and key literature, findings, a summary of findings, discussion, recommendations, and a conclusion.

Background and Problem

One of the primary objectives of church leaders is to teach congregants about God, the Bible, Christ, morality, grace, etc. (Griggs, 1990, p. 240). The priority of theological instruction is based on biblical precedent and instruction. The early church modeled "the apostle's teaching" as one of its primary activities (Acts 2:42). The biblical writers described teaching as a priority in the ministries of Jesus (John 3:2), the twelve apostles (Acts 6:2), Paul (Acts 17:1-3), and early church leaders (2 Tim 2:2). The biblical writers also used straightforward instruction to convey the importance of theological teaching (Deut 6:6-9; Ps 78:2-7; 2 Tim 4:2).

As a result of this biblical mandate to teach, congregants today have access to weekly sermons, Sunday school lessons, small-group lessons, and Bible studies that

could add up to more than 100 hours of face-to-face theological instruction every year (Ellis, 1982, p. 60). The voluminous theological instruction taking place in contemporary churches raises three important questions. First, are efforts producing biblical literacy in congregants? Second, to what degree is biblical knowledge facilitating its intended purpose? Finally, to what degree do church leaders understand what constitutes essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge? These progressively focused questions about biblical literacy reveal the research problem.

The importance of biblical literacy for the life of a Christian is consistently affirmed in literature. It is presented as an expectation by spiritual growth scholars (Wilhoit, 2008, p. 40) and an essential activity by Christian educators (Downs, 1994). Rees (2006) calls theology a "*critical* discipline" (p. 10). R. Foster (1998) says, "One of the great needs among Christians today is simply the reading of large portions of Scripture" (p. 71). Willard (2002) says simply, "Information is first" (p. 103). Unfortunately, research demonstrates that Americans are unfamiliar with even basic biblical content (Prothero, 2007b).

The Gallup Organization (2003) found that only 28% of Christians regularly study the Bible to find direction for life so it is no surprise that a 2010 Pew Research Center survey concluded Americans are biblically illiterate (Lugo, 2010). Stephen Prothero (2007b) offered a more pointed condemnation when he wrote, "U.S. citizens know almost nothing about the Bible. Although most regard it as the word of God, few read it anymore. Even evangelicals from the Bible Belt seem more focused on loving Jesus than on learning what he had to say." The consequences of this ignorance are far

reaching as biblical illiteracy is considered to put individuals at a distinct disadvantage in many areas of life.

Biblical literacy has been declared critical preparation for higher education (Wachlin, 2005, 2006) and an essential characteristic of culturally literacy (Hirsch et al., 1988, 2002; Prothero, 2007b). Hirsch et al. (2002) go as far as to suggest, "No one in the English speaking world can be considered literate without a basic knowledge of the Bible" (p. 1). A high degree of priority is given to biblical literacy related to education and cultural awareness and it is assigned an even greater significance related to the pursuit of spiritual formation.

Scholars broadly agree that biblical literacy is a necessary precursor to spiritual development (Downs, 1994; Felton, 1997; Gangel & Wilhoit, 1997; Gilliard, 2001). Nelson (2004) notes that biblical knowledge is "associated with greater maturity, both religious and moral" (p. 52). Packer and Parrett (2010) declare, "In order to be fully useful, Christians must know their faith well" (p. 9). Savage (2010) believes learning to be a key factor in spiritual maturity (p. 91). Kroll (2007) calls biblical literacy the "first step toward spiritual maturity" (p. 58). The precise concern of my second question however goes beyond the casual cause-and-effect relationship between biblical literacy and spiritual growth. The significance of the question is illuminated by Gilliard (2001) who identifies spiritual growth not only as a *product* of Bible knowledge but also as the most fundamental *goal* of the Bible (p. 5). This necessary and functional connection between biblical literacy and spiritual growth gives significance to the third question.

Two considerations are introduced by the third question, the first being the importance of spiritual leadership. Stowell (1997) indicates that the success of any

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ministry is dependent upon "the quality of the shepherd who leads" (p. 11) and spiritual growth is identified as the primary measure of ministry success (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 8-10). The foremost goal of every church leader is thus to provide guidance, education, resources, encouragement, support, and assessment (Peterson, 1989, p. 57) that result in "spiritually mature people" (Schaper, 2009, p. 16). The second consideration relates to the leader's capacity to achieve this goal.

Capacity in the context of this study relates to leadership knowledge as opposed to leadership behaviors. The primary concern is whether or not church leaders have an understanding of what biblical information should be taught in an effort to develop a life-long quest for spiritual growth in their congregants (Willard, 1991, p. 16). In response to this question the Barna Group suggest, "Pastors want to guide others on the path to spiritual wholeness, but they are often not clearly defining the goals or the outcomes of that process" (Barna, 2009). Dykstra (1999) echoes this sentiment with a stronger condemnation that identifies a "broad incapacity on the part of our churches" (p. 8). Christians are being taught biblical information in great quantities but not necessarily the material that can best produce spiritual growth (Dykstra, 1999, p. 8). This is the problem addressed by the research question.

Research Question and Research Design

This section describes the research question and several aspects of the research design including the Delphi Method, development of the initial biblical/doctrinal item list, and the data instrument.

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Research Question

The research question for this study is, "What are the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items perceived by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth of church members?"

Delphi Method

The Delphi Method, also known as Delphi Technique (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 1), was selected to answer the research question due to its capacity to synthesize the diverse beliefs, perspectives, and experiences of a panel of independent experts into reliable and meaningful data (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Dalkey et al., 1969; Fischer, 1978; Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

The objective of the Delphi Method is to "guide group opinion towards a final decision" (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1223) defined by "concurrence" (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222) or "agreement" (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 4). Though some scholars question the Delphi Method's ability to produce consensus in any definition of the term (Goodman, 1987, p. 733), it is broadly considered an effective and valid group consensus method (Goodman, 1987, p. 730; Helmer, 1967, p. 498; Kennedy, 2004, p. 511; H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1221).

Development of the Initial Biblical/Doctrinal Item List

The initial list of biblical/doctrinal knowledge items presented to participants in Round One was developed by cross-referencing eight books focused on biblical literacy. Each book identified items considered important from one of three perspectives: cultural literacy, general biblical content, or systematic theology. Cross-referencing the contents of the eight books produced a list of 2,453 items (see Table 10 in Appendix C). Any item

included in three or more books was included in the first Delphi Round. The resulting list

contained 600 items after some strategic grouping of items such as geographic regions,

rivers, seas, spiritual disciplines, etc.

Data Instrument

The data instrument was a custom web-based survey designed by the researcher

and developed, hosted, and managed by eBlair Solutions (www.eblairsolutions.com).

Round One consisted of four phases, the first being acquisition of Informed Consent. The

second phase gathered demographic information. The third phase consisted of a single

qualifying question that asked whether or not participants believed biblical/doctrinal

knowledge to be an essential precursor to spiritual growth. Only participants who

answered this question affirmatively were allowed to proceed to the final phase which

consisted of a two-step process designed to refine the initial list of 600 biblical/doctrinal

knowledge items to the 100 most essential items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual

growth in church members. The Round Two and Round Three instruments guided

participants through a two-step data-gathering process identical to the Round One

instrument other than the number of biblical/doctrinal items decreased with each round.

Agreement

This study utilized agreement to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items

perceived by Christian Church/Church of Christ ministers to be most essential for the

purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Selections from each Delphi

round were compiled into a frequency distribution (H. P. McKenna, 1994, p. 1222) and

sorted descending by frequency. Items selected by 30% or more participants were carried

into subsequent Delphi rounds along with any items added based on the belief that an essential item was not represented on the list.

Theoretical Framework

Two studies conducted by the Bible Literacy Project, Inc. (Wachlin, 2005, 2006) concluded that professional educators believe biblical knowledge to be an important factor in a student's academic development. The studies also demonstrated that specific biblical information can be used to accomplish academic goals. Finally, certain biblical knowledge items were determined to be more important than others relative to context and desired outcomes.

The current study applies these considerations to the leadership context of the local church. Participants were asked to identify whether or not biblical/theological knowledge is an essential precursor to an individual's spiritual development. The study then asked participants to identify the biblical/theological items considered most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in congregants.

Key Literature

This section reviews literature that builds the theoretical, philosophical, and practical framework for the current study. Attention will be given to the nature of spirituality, the definition of spiritual growth, the role of church leadership in spiritual growth, and several considerations related to biblical literacy including its relationship to spiritual growth.

Spirituality

Spiritual growth is considered the measure of ministry success (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 8-10). In order to achieve this goal, church leaders must understand the nature of spiritual growth and spirituality specifically. The latter topic is often introduced in literature by its relationship to religion (Dowling et al., 2004; Hyman & Handal, 2006; Zinnbauer, 1997; Zullig et al., 2006).

One of the two most common conclusions is that spirituality and religion are totally distinct concepts (Dowling et al., 2004; Zullig et al., 2006). This is illustrated by Zinnbauer (1997) who identifies the contemporary view of spirituality as "an individual phenomenon and identified with such things as personal transcendence, supraconscious sensitivity, and meaningfulness" and religion as "formally structured and identified with religious institutions and prescribed theology and rituals" (p. 551). This view allows for and is argued to some degree based on the belief that spirituality and religiosity can be experienced simultaneously or separately.

Saucier and Skrzypińska (2006) illustrate this phenomenon by stating, "In America, virtually all religious people call themselves spiritual, as do some nonreligious people" (p. 1259). Zullig et al. (2006) describe it more clearly with, "Individuals can be very spiritual without performing in any formal religious practice and spirituality can have different meanings to different individuals. . . . Furthermore, although religion may be an outward demonstration of spirituality for some, religiosity does not guarantee spirituality" (p. 256). It must be noted however that not everyone grants that spirituality and religion are totally distinct. A second common conclusion is that spirituality and religion are related to some degree.

Researchers have demonstrated that the general public believes there to be much similarity between spirituality and religion (McSherry et al., 2004, p. 938). This is illustrated by Zinnbauer (1997) who found that almost half (41.7%) of the individuals surveyed believe "religiousness and spirituality overlap but they are not the same concept" (p. 555). This view is echoed by scholars like Tisdell (2003) who suggests that "spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many adults they are at times interrelated" (p. 30). Hill and Hood (1999) identify "conceptual overlap between religion and spirituality [in that] both religion and spirituality are understood as a search for or experience of the sacred, as defined by the individual" (p. 1019).

For the purpose of this study spirituality and religion are considered distinct concepts, though a close relationship between the two is granted. Religion is seen as "one's search for the sacred that can be viewed objectively, occurs externally and involves a commitment to organizational practices, rituals and beliefs" (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278). Spirituality is viewed from a discipleship perspective (Love & Talbot, 2009, p. 617; Yount, 2008, p. 6) as opposed to an ontological perspective (J. B. Poll & Smith, 2003, p. 133) or a behavioral perspective (Thayer, 2004, p. 196). The working definition of spiritual growth is grounded in this specific view of spirituality.

<div align="center">Spiritual Growth Defined</div>

All three perspectives of spirituality are represented in literature. The ontological perspective of spirituality focuses on the spirit as "stuff" of which human beings are composed (Cottrell, 2002, p. 134), whether distinct from both the material body and the immortal soul (Willard, 2002, p. 38), part of the physical body (DeHoff, 1998, p. 338), "unembodied personal power" (Willard, 1991, p. 64), or the perspective historically held

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within evangelical Christianity (Erickson & Hustad, 2001, p. 181) that views the spiritual nature as distinct from the material nature and synonymous with the soul (Cottrell, 2002, pp. 138-140; Grudem, 1994, p. 473). From this definition of spiritual growth we might naturally expect that spiritual growth means that the spiritual nature of humans can increase in size or measure similar to the way the physical body grows. Mulholland (1993) hints at this idea by suggesting, "Spiritual growth is, in large measure, patterned on the nature of physical growth" (p. 21). Broad support for an ontological definition of spiritual growth, however, is not found in Scripture or scholarly literature. The behavioral view is offered as an alternate option.

The behavioral view focuses on spirituality as a measure of how closely one's life corresponds to God's Law. A person is spiritual when he or she ascribes to and lives in accordance with biblical principles (Buker, 2003, p. 152). Biblical support of the behavioral view abounds. Passages like 1 Cor 3:1, Gal 6:1, Eph 4:14-29, and 1 Pet 2:1-12 suggest a necessary connection between behavior and spiritual growth. Spiritual growth scholars draw a similar conclusion (Bonhoeffer, 1995, pp. 63-65; Willard, 2002, p. 23). An example of this view is offered by Buker (2003) who defined spiritual growth in part as "a lifestyle that is increasingly characterized by the principles of the Kingdom of God" (p. 152). The behavioral view of spirituality is not however a fully sufficient framework for spiritual growth (M. D. Roberts, 2002, p. 22). Barton (2008) demands that spiritual transformation goes "far beyond mere behavioral tweaks to work deep, fundamental changes at the very core of our being" (p. 16). This points to the discipleship view of spirituality as the preferred model for this study.

The discipleship view grants that spiritual growth is related to outcomes of living according to the power, influence, and standard of the Holy Spirit (Barton, 2008, p. 16; Buker, 2003, p. 152; Thayer, 2004, p. 196) in an effort to become conformed to the image of Christ (Barton, 2008, pp. 15-16; Mulholland, 1993, p. 25; Sanders, 2007, p. 161). This approach to spiritual growth encompasses the behavioral view and adds additional measures. The discipleship view is based on the premise that living according to the Spirit involves behavioral, cognitive, relational, and affective measures (G. Barna, 2001, pp. 5-6). The discipleship approach to spiritual growth is also reflected in Col 1:9-12 and 2 Pet 1:5-8. From this discussion stems additional concerns related to the precise nature of spiritual growth.

Spiritual growth is commonly understood to be an ongoing process (Barna, 2009; DeHoff, 1998; Kläden & Feeser-Lichterfeld, 2006; Legg, 2002; Love & Talbot, 2009; J. B. Poll & Smith, 2003; Simpson et al., 2008). It is described as an "experiential phenomenon" (Gallagher & Newton, 2009, p. 235) that while mysterious (Barton, 2008, p. 16) is not "mystical, sentimental, devotional, psychological, or the result of clever secrets" (MacArthur, 2001, p. 16; Willard, 2002, p. 31). Spiritual development is instead a subjective (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278) and personal (R. Foster, 2009, p. 30) pursuit characterized by the search of the sacred (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p. 278), maturity (MacArthur, 2001, p. 15), conforming an individual to Christ (MacArthur, 2001, p. 15), shaping individuals into Christians (Felton, 1997, p. 92), transcending one's "locus of centricity" (Love & Talbot, 2009, p. 618), and "the renewing of the whole person from the inside, involving differences in thought, feeling, and character" (Willard, 1998, p. 107).

For the purpose of this study spiritual growth is defined as a life-long pursuit of

four goals including (a) holiness (G. Barna, 2001, p. 5), (b) a more clear reflection of

Jesus (G. Barna, 2001, p. 18) in knowledge (R. Foster, 1998, p. 66), attitudes (Gomez &

Fisher, 2003, p. 1976), priorities (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 169), behaviors (G. Barna,

2001, p. 5), and relationships (Thayer, 2004, p. 200), (c) a personal relationship with God

(Barton, 2006, p. 15), and (d) investment in other individuals through evangelism,

mentoring, or ministry (Thayer, 2004, p. 200). The means by which individuals

accomplish these goals is the focus of the next section.

Spiritual Growth and Church Leadership

Spiritual growth requires education, guidance, encouragement, and accountability

(G. Barna, 2001, p. 21; Peterson, 1989, p. 57). The primary agents of these activities have

been identified as the Church (Collinson, 2005, p. 247; Wilhoit, 2008, p. 15) and more

specifically church leaders (Barton, 2008; Downs, 1994; Gallagher & Newton, 2009;

Lewis & Palmer, 1989). Schaper (2009) states, "The primary product or fruit . . . of a

parish is spiritually mature people" (p. 16) and Peterson (1989) tasks church leaders with

"guiding growth into maturity" (p. 57). The following section addresses the primary tool

with which church leaders facilitate spiritual growth.

Biblical Literacy

Biblical literacy has been shown to affect an individual's social views (Grossman,

2010a), behavioral outcomes (Jeynes, 2010; Nelson, 2004), academic achievement

(Jeynes, 2009), and various psychological health (Beck, 2006). Scholars also identify

biblical literacy as a factor in more complex factors including citizenship, orthodoxy, and

spiritual growth.

Citizenship

Citizenship is a measure of one's ability to understand contemporary American culture, contribute to civic dialogue, and interact meaningfully within society (Schippe & Stetson, 2006, p. 11). It is built on "shared modes of discourse for negotiating differences is meaning and interpretation'' (Bruner, 1990, p. 13) and an "appropriate, tacitly shared background knowledge " (Hirsch, 1983, p. 165). Canonical knowledge is included in the body of knowledge necessary to a "literate democracy" (Hirsch, 1983, p. 165).

Communicators expect readers to have at least a basic familiarity with biblical references and themes (Reedy, 2006, p. 33). This is important because biblical references and themes are woven through many of the most significant pieces of Western literature (Schippe & Stetson, 2006, p. 12). Scholars also assign importance to biblical literacy because biblical Christianity has served as the religious foundation of American society (Orsi, 2004, p. 737). As a result, Hirsch et al. (2002) conclude, "No one in the English speaking world can be considered literate without a basic knowledge of the Bible" (p. 1).

Orthodoxy

Orthodoxy refers to the "correct content of faith" (Downs, 1994, p. 18) that reflects an "unchanging, external moral authority" (Fox & Tabory, 2008, p. 318). And though orthodoxy must be recognized as contextual with respect to religious heritage (Orsi, 2004), all evangelical Christian groups share a common view of the Bible's significance in defining and protecting orthodoxy. The way in which biblical literacy contributes to orthodoxy is of particular importance to the current study since it is based on the premise that it is possible to identify a curriculum of biblical knowledge capable of facilitating spiritual growth most effectively.

Some scholars believe curriculum should not be viewed as a simple list of items to be taught and learned. In a review of Hirsch et al. (1988), Scott (1988) suggested that an identifiable list of knowledge items can be viewed as "just one more sensationalist educational jeremiad" (p. 333). Sherrill (1944) states, "Christian education is not to be conceived as one definitive body of content" (p. 2). Welbourne (2003) notes that biblical literacy is more than "the baseline of minimally accepted knowledge of facts" and highlights the importance of interpretation and communication of literary genres and texts (p. 1). These however are insufficient and inconsistent objections.

Interpretation for instance is important but it cannot supplant the value of content. Flinders's (1996) affirms this by noting that interpretation "pertains directly to how content ideas are understood within the context of instruction" (p. 361). Literature demonstrates that learning, observation, and interpretation are possible only in response to facts (Olbricht, 1965, pp. 211-212). Thus curriculum must by definition build upon specific points of knowledge (B. O. Smith, 1976, p. 191).

Purkiser (1959) gave consideration to the beliefs that matter most more than 50 years ago (p. 9). Others note that identifying points of emphasis (Anthony, 2001, p. 120) are of "primary importance" (B. O. Smith, 1976, p. 191). A foundational component of curriculum development must thus involve filtering the breadth of possible topics and identifying the knowledge that is best suited to facilitate the desired outcomes (Morris & Hamm, 1976, p. 300). Numerous models of religious identity and discipleship affirm this.

One of the earliest compilations of essential doctrines is the Apostles' Creed. This curriculum of sorts included God the Father Almighty, God the Creator, Jesus and His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit, Jesus' suffering and death under Pontius Pilate,

the burial and resurrection of Jesus on the third day, the ascension of Jesus into heaven, Christ's role in judgment after His Second Coming, the Holy Spirit, the nature of the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the hope of bodily resurrection, and eternal life (Grudem, 1994, p. 1169). Barna (2001) developed The Competencies Model of discipleship that includes 10 core beliefs: the Trinity, salvation by grace, authority of the Bible, personal God, identity in Christ, church, humanity, compassion, eternity, and stewardship (p. 135). Felton (1997) points back to John Wesley's belief that a sound grasp of biblical topics such as God, sin, mankind, and grace is an essential precursor to spiritual development (p. 99). Neal and Richmond (1962) include the church and its mission, personal faith and experience, the Christian in society, the Bible in life, Christians and their world, and the Christian family. Purkiser (1959) presents six items including beliefs about the realm of faith, beliefs about the triune God, beliefs about redemption, beliefs about the new life in Christ, beliefs about entire sanctification, and beliefs about the church and the future. The number of models demonstrates the popularity of content-based curriculum and the belief that it has the capacity to facilitate spiritual growth (Popkewitz, 2009, p. 304). The following section surveys literature to determine whether or not the popularity and belief are warranted.

Spiritual Growth

Biblical knowledge is considered the primary component of the spiritual growth process (MacArthur, 2001, p. 141; Yount, 1996, p. 4). Willard and Simpson (2005) declare that spiritual formation is manifested in God's Word (p. 19). Kroll (2007) calls biblical literacy the "first step toward spiritual maturity" (p. 58). Individual aspects of spiritual growth are also directly attributed to biblical knowledge.

Spiritual growth scholars point to the Bible as one means by which individuals seek spiritual victory (Swindoll, 1987, p. 4), are transformed into a child of God (P. Roberts, 1939, p. 18), and achieve "greater maturity, both religious and moral" (Nelson, 2004, p. 52). Legg (2002) declares that the Bible can "inform us, shape us, judge us, inspire us, motivate us, and energize us to be a people of faith today" (p. 405). Spiritual growth assessment instruments also demonstrate that scholars believe biblical literacy to contribute to spiritual growth.

The Holy Spirit Questionnaire (Ingram & Sandvik, 1994), the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (Thayer, 2004), and the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (Ellison, 1983; Gomez & Fisher, 2003) include biblical knowledge as one of several measures of spiritual health and development. The consistent pattern in literature shows that biblical literacy has a necessary and functional connection to spiritual growth. Such a conclusion naturally leads to a review of considerations related to biblical literacy in the American Church.

Findings

This study sought to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Participants were guided through three Delphi rounds in which they were asked to systematically hone an initial list of 600 items down to 100, 50, and 25 respectively.

Qualifying Question

Participants were presented a qualifying question prior to beginning the Delphi rounds. The question asked the participant whether or not biblical literacy is essential in

order to achieve spiritual growth. Only those who answered this question affirmatively were permitted to complete the survey. Of the 66 records with a corresponding submit date, 64 responses (97%) were affirmative. One participant answered the question "No" and a second dissenter marked the qualifying question "Yes" but then used a subsequent text field to indicate that he believed the answer to be "No" but wanted to explain why.

Summary of Delphi Findings

The three Delphi rounds returned two types of findings. The first was a list of the most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge.

Biblical/Doctrinal Knowledge Items

The Delphi study returned the 26 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items. Table 5 shows the top 26 items with corresponding *N*, Percentage, and Rank for each Delphi round. The list exceeded the anticipated 25 items due to a five-way tie at the 16 response (37.21%) mark.

Frequency Distribution

The items selected by participants in Round Three were applied to a frequency distribution table to identify the 26 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items (see Table 4). Agreement among the top 26 items ranged from a high of 30 participants (69.77%) having selected "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" to a low of 16 participants (37.21%), which was achieved by five items. A 75% or higher agreement level was not achieved by any item in Round Three. The 50% agreement level fell at 22 participants (51.16%).

Table 5

Top 26 Item Selection by Round

Item	Round One			Round Two			Round Three		
	N	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank
Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)				45	84.91	2	30	69.77	1
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)	57	90.48	T4	48	90.57	1	29	67.44	T2
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	52	82.54	15	44	83.02	3	29	67.44	T2
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	53	84.13	T11	41	77.36	5	29	67.44	T2
Grace	51	80.95	T16	43	81.13	4	28	65.12	T5
Prayer				38	71.70	T6	28	65.12	T5
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	51	80.95	T16	37	69.81	T8	27	62.79	7
Bible (Word of God)	54	85.71	T8	31	58.49	T18	26	60.47	8

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Table 5−*Continued.*

Item	Round One			Round Two			Round Three		
	N	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank
Forgiveness (remission of sins)	58	92.06	3	34	64.15	12	25	58.14	T9
Obedience (Choosing God's ways)				27	50.94	T30	25	58.14	T9
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	42	66.67	T42	29	54.72	T24	24	55.81	T10
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	46	73.02	30	30	56.60	T21	24	55.811	T10
Worship				35	66.04	T10	24	55.81	T10
Repentance (Repent)	50	79.37	T17	37	69.81	T8	23	53.49	T14
Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)				32	60.38	17	23	53.49	T14
Evangelism (Witnessing)	47	74.60	T27	35	66.04	T10	22	51.16	16
Communion (Lord's Supper)	54	85.71	T8	38	71.70	T6	21	48.84	17

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Table 5−*Continued.*

Item	Round One			Round Two			Round Three		
	N	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank	*N*	%	Rank
Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)				27	50.94	T30	19	44.19	18
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)	33	52.38	T75	21	39.62	T52	17	39.53	T19
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	57	90.48	T4	30	56.60	T21	17	39.53	T19
Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)				20	37.74	T58	17	39.53	T19
Fruit of the Spirit	43	68.25	T37	33	62.26	T13	16	37.21	T22
Jesus	60	95.24	T1	33	62.26	T13	16	37.21	T22
Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)	22	34.92	T111	18	33.96	T66	16	37.21	T22
Salvation, Plan of	41	65.08	T47	29	54.72	T24	16	37.21	T22
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)	34	53.97	T67	21	39.62	T52	16	37.21	T22

Note: Ranks denoting a "T" represent a tie for the respective ranking.

Of the 23 new items added by participants, 6 (23.07%) were represented in the 26 most commonly selected items in Round Three. These items included "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" (69.77%), "Prayer" (65.12%), "Obedience (choosing God's ways)" (58.14%), "Worship" (55.81%), "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" (53.49%), and "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)" (44.19%).

Twenty-five items were included in the Round Three list beyond the top 51 items in Round Two. Of those items, 4 (15.38%) appeared among the top 26 items identified in Round Three: "1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)" (39.53%), "Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)" (39.53%), "Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)" (37.21%), and "Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)" (37.21%).

Of the 26 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round Three, 5 items (19.23%) were related to salvation including two of the four traditional components of the plan of salvation (e.g., "Baptism [immersion, New Birth]" [67.44%] and "Repentance [Repent]" [53.49%]). "Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)" and "Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)" fell below the top 26 mark, though it should be noted that 16 participants (37.21%) selected "Salvation, Plan of" which afforded it a spot in the top 26 items. There were also 5 items (19.23%) in the top 26 list related to spiritual disciplines. This included the umbrella topic "Spiritual Disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)" (67.44%) as well as four specific disciplines: "Prayer" (65.12%), "Worship" (55.81%), "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time

management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" (53.49%), and "Evangelism (Witnessing)" (51.16%). The identity, nature, and activities of the three persons of the Godhead were the focus of 3 items (11.53%). Three items (11.53%) referred specifically to Bible verses. The Church and its nature were the focus of 2 items (7.69%). Two items (7.69%) were related to the Bible. Round Three participants chose to forego 9 of the 10 items related to Jesus Christ selected in Round Two in favor of the single Round Three item Jesus (37.21%).

Narrative

The second type of result was narrative explaining why each item was selected as one of the most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth. The number of entries varies between items because participants were not required to provide narrative prior to submitting the top 25 items. The following descriptions are summaries of the key themes related to each respective item.

Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

Explanations were given by 26 participants for why "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" is one of the top 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including discipleship as a "vital" aspect of one's Christianity. The second theme focused on knowledge of discipleship as a prerequisite for achieving the lifestyle to which we have been called. The third theme focused on leadership implications based on the suggestion that Christians are obligated to "teach it to someone else" and to "spur believers on to pursue true followership with God."

Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

Explanations were given by 24 participants for why "Baptism (immersion, New Birth)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the belief that baptism serves as the "first step" of the discipleship journey and understanding this step is necessary for "helping others become disciples." The second theme focused on the importance of sharing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. This "joining" was described as "an identification" with Christ as well as a "literal joining with Christ" through which we "rise to a new life in him." The third theme was related to the work of the Holy Spirit in and after baptism. This included the Holy Spirit's role in "making the heart ready" and the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit.

Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/ doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the "great need to understand and get back to the work of the true Church." The second theme focused on a biblical mandate for the Church to serve as a facilitator of spiritual growth. The Church was identified by participants as an agent of "encouragement and accountability" toward the goal of growing "closer in their relationship with Christ." The third theme highlighted relational aspects of the Church including participation in the Church as an essential part of the spiritual growth process, the church as "the 'family' that Christ-followers journey

with," and a prime environment in which Christians model the "one another's" found in the Bible.

Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses including a focus on spiritual disciplines as "critical" and "vital" activities that serve as "tools" and "agents." The second theme focused on the outcomes of spiritual disciplines. Participants viewed spiritual disciplines as "our part" that God uses "to form and mold us into His image."

Grace

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "Grace" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Five themes emerged from the responses including the relationship between grace and salvation. Participants noted that individuals are "saved by grace" and that grace is "the central message of our salvation." The second theme focused on grace as an influencer of worldview in that it serves as the "distinguishing characteristic of Christianity vs. all other world religions." The third theme focused on grace as an alternative to a "saved by works" salvation. Multiple participants noted that grace is offered "without reserve or condition" and that the availability of grace is "not about what we can do—it's about what He has done." The

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fourth theme focused on grace as a reflection of God in that it "explains the nature of God." Participants noted that grace "helps us realize God's love for us" while at the same time demonstrates that God is "both just and merciful." The fifth theme focused on the belief that grace will motivate individuals "to come to Him" and motivate Christians "to grow."

Prayer

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Prayer" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Five themes emerged from the responses including prayer as a "vital" spiritual activity. Prayer was described as the "foundation of walking in faith" and like "breathing for spiritual life." The second theme focused on prayer as "a two-way line of communication" that "deepens communication with God." Multiple participants highlighted our ability and mandate to communicate with "our Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer." The third theme that emerged from the responses focused on prayer as a relational activity that "brings us closer to God," improves our "connection to a Holy God," "aligns our will with God's will," and allows us to "feel God's presence." The fourth theme focused on practical outcomes of prayer including "strength, guidance, and understanding," "comfort and strength," and that which "gives us strength and fills our hearts with hope." The fifth theme identified prayer as "essential to our spiritual growth" in several ways. It was described as the "key to understanding spiritual growth," the means by which individuals can "grow as Christians," and more specifically the means by which individuals can "grow in the ways [God] wants us to."

God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good
jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent,
one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect,
self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including a two-part focus on identity. God was described as "different than any being we know" and as a result participants believed Christians should "live out a life in awe of God" and "celebrate the power and majesty of God." Participants also believed knowledge about God's nature "helps us to understand ourselves" and helps "get it in our head I am unqualified to be my own god." The second theme focused on knowing "what God says about himself " because "in order to know what He expects, we must know Him!" Participants believed this knowledge establishes God's nature as "our example." The third theme focused on how understanding God's nature "allows us to more confidently abide in Him and thus advance our growth process." Knowledge of God's nature was believed to facilitate spiritual growth because it helps us "extend our devotion and dependence" and "experience the fullness of God's presence." The fourth theme focused on how "our concept of God is formed by recognizing His attributes." Participants believed that knowing the attributes of God not only affects the "concept of God" but also "determines how we interpret His word."

Bible (Word of God)

Explanations were given by 22 participants for why "Bible (Word of God)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including a focus on the Bible as one means by which individuals can know something about God. The Bible was considered "the source of all God has specifically revealed of Himself." The Bible was identified as "the handbook for God's activity in history interacting with mankind and entering the human world to bring life change." The second theme revolved around the Bible as "the foundation for right and wrong," our "authority," and "our source of truth and life." The Bible was believed to be the source of "truth in a world that chooses to not have a truth that is eternal." The third theme focused on the Bible as an "instruction book" and "the one and only road map for their life." It was viewed as the primary means for "determining the will of God." The fourth theme focused on the relationship between spiritual growth and an understanding of the Bible. Participants identified the Bible as "the blueprint for spiritual growth" and "what we feed on in order to grow Spiritually."

Forgiveness (remission of sins)

Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Forgiveness (remission of sins)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). The four primary themes that emerged from the responses were summarized by one participant who wrote, "We need to accept Christ's forgiveness to be able to move ahead in the faith. A growing Christian understands forgiveness, accepts it for themselves, offers it to others, and lives

it out in everyday life." Participants placed a heavy emphasis on our ability "to both receive and give forgiveness." The second theme focused on God's forgiveness as an event that "transforms our lives" and one that naturally prompts us in turn to "forgive those around us." The third theme focused on the message, "My sins are gone, God has forgiven me." The importance of forgiving oneself was represented in several responses including one that claimed, "In order to move forward in discipleship one must understand that they have been freed from [the] past." The fourth theme is focused on practical benefits of forgiveness. Participants believed that "forgiveness is all about a second chance" and is our "reason for hope." Forgiveness was believed to be "necessary for a relationship with God" and "the starting point of discipleship."

Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

Explanations were given by 21 participants for why "Obedience (Choosing God's ways)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including obedience as both an externally and internally motivated response. It was described as externally motivated in that it is a prerequisite for "glorifying God" and as such "necessary" for salvation. Obedience was described as internally motivated in that "we choose to serve and obey because of love." The second theme focused on obedience as "pleasing to God." Christians who respond obediently to God and His Word were believed to "please God with their actions" and "grow more mature in their faith." The latter concept is the focus of the third primary theme. Obedience was described as functionally related to spiritual growth in that "a disciple learns obedience first." Participants concluded, "To grow in Christ I have to learn about

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and practice obedience to what He wants from me." The fourth theme related to obedience views obedience as evidence of spiritual growth. "Our faith, our spiritual growth," stated one participant, "is evidenced in our choosing God's way."

Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the belief that God's Word is accurate, reliable, and authoritative. Participants believed that "God's Word is God-breathed. It is true. It is trustworthy. It is relevant." Participants recognized that a Bible void of authority and validity would simply be "another book among many." The second theme focused on specific claims to accuracy, reliability, and authority of the Bible. Multiple participants alluded to the Bible as the "point of absolute reference" by pointing to the internal testimony of 2 Tim 3:16-17. The third theme focused on knowledge about the attributes of the Bible as "a step in the right direction for a person's spiritual growth." One participant went even further and declared it "a MUST for spiritual growth."

Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including

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the belief that the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit is "God's/Christ's presence in the believer today." The second theme focused on two categories related to ways the Holy Spirit can "make us holy." Participants believed that the Holy Spirit "distinguishes us from non-believers" and helps Christians overcome temptation. The third theme focused on the Holy Spirit as "the life force of the church" who instills "vibrancy in the life of the believer." The Holy Spirit was also described as the "driving force in every Christians life." The fourth theme focused on the Holy Spirit's role in spiritual growth. Participants believed that spiritual growth "is impossible with out the person and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives."

Worship

      Explanations were given by 23 participants for why "Worship" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including a focus on worship as more than "a religious ceremony that we go through each week." Worship was instead defined as a "full-life response to God's grace" demonstrated by "all a [Christian] is to do and be 24/7." The second theme focused on worship as a hallmark of a "life that is beginning to understand growth spiritually." Worship was identified as both "the essence of growth" and "the ongoing product of spiritual growth." The third theme focused on worship as "the expression of the value we place on God." More precisely, participants pointed to God as the only appropriate object of worship with "God alone is worthy of our adoration. Anything else is idolatry" and "it is all about Him—anything less is not worship and is not discipleship." The fourth theme focused on two motivations out of which worship flows. Participants believed that we are prompted

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to worship "Once we know Jesus." The second motivation for worship identified by participants was related to the activities of God. Worship was described as a "response to God's grace" motivated out of "love and praise and gratitude."

Repentance (Repent)

Explanations were given by 18 participants for why "Repentance (Repent)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including the belief that repentance produces grace, forgiveness, and hope "before and after conversion" which highlights that "repentance is not a one time process when they accept Christ" but instead is "a constant part of our growth process." The second theme focused on repentance as a change of focus or thinking. Repentance was associated with "the act of replacing [the] self-centered life with a Christ oriented love centered life" and "[changing] our minds in such a way that we see ourselves from God's perspective." The third theme identified the product of repentance as "a new creation" in whom "the man of sin [is] put to death, and Christ should reign in our lives." The fourth theme focused on the belief that "repentance must accompany the spiritual journey." Repentance was considered "the essence of transformational living" and "a thermometer and thermostat of our spiritual maturity."

Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management,
social involvement, outreach, etc.)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual

growth in church members (see Appendix F). Four themes emerged from the responses including stewardship as "different from everything we have learned culturally." Stewardship was related to "'who owns it all' and what our role is supposed to be in handling everything." The second theme focused on stewardship as a "conduit through which He can bless others." One participant wrote, "If we are truly sanctified (wholly his) then all we possess is dedicated to serving him by serving others." The third theme focused on motivations and applications of stewardship. A Christian's stewardship was believed to "reveal how our hearts are yielded to the kingdom, how we view the 'sowing the seeds of the gospel,' and give toward God's kingdom agenda." The fourth theme focused on stewardship as a "huge component of Spiritual growth" and "directly connected to discipleship and to the original creation commission." Participants believed that "Stewardship is central/absolutely essential to discipleship/[spiritual growth]" and is also "one of the surest indicators of our maturity in Christ."

Evangelism (Witnessing)

Explanations were given by 18 participants for why "Evangelism (Witnessing)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including a focus on evangelism as an expectation. It was called "the main thing we as disciples are to do." Participants believed that "one who imitates Christ and the disciples must share the message of salvation to those around them" and that Christians should "be able to at least give testimony to our own faith walk." The second theme focused on motivations for evangelism. One participant noted, "When you really become a follower of Jesus, you WANT to talk about him." Many other references to

motivations for evangelism focused on the biblical mandate to be "prepared to give a reason for the Hope they have in Christ." The third theme that emerged from the responses focused on three ways evangelism benefits Christians. It was believed to be an effective way to "learn more about Christ," a way by which "faith is deepened and strengthened," and a catalyst of stronger "faith in action."

Communion (Lord's Supper)

Explanations were given by 19 participants for why "Communion (Lord's Supper)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the Lord's Supper as "the most important remembrance for every Christian." It was described as a "vital link" and "a necessary intimacy" that "reminds Christians what God did about sin." The second theme focused on communion as "the way we connect with Christ on a regular basis" and a means through which "we come into actual contact with Jesus and his grace." The third theme focused on the connection between communion and spiritual growth. It was considered "imperative" in order "to grow closer to God through Christ" and "live out a life of devotion to the one who died in their place." Participants declared communion "the central aspect of our worship" that in part "keeps us focused upon Him."

Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/ the birth and mission
of the Church)

Explanations were given by 17 participants for why "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/ the birth and mission of the Church)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see

Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses including a focus on the "purpose

and place of the church in God's plan." Knowledge of Acts 2:42ff. was deemed essential

because "WE need to understand the mission that God has called the church to do," and

"if we are to be the church we need to see how the first church functioned." The second

theme focused on the conviction that "the church is not the building." This perspective is

based on the belief that the Church is composed of many individuals who form "the body

of Christ" and who represent the "lived out expression of God's love."

1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

Explanations were given by 15 participants for why "1 Corinthians 13 (Love

chapter)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the

purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three

themes emerged including the belief that knowledge of 1 Cor 13 is essential because it "is

vital for how do we put love into action" since it describes "the behavior of love," "the

actions of God-quality love," and the motivation for us "to act, live and serve." The

second theme describes the relationship between 1 Cor 13 and the identity of Christians.

Love was considered to be "the fundamental mark of Christians," and believers are

believed to be known by "how we love one another." The third theme focused on

knowledge of 1 Cor 13 as a means of spiritual growth. Participants concluded that "to

grow spiritually, you must learn to love, not as the world loves, but in a new way" and

that "since God is love, and Jesus said love is the distinguishing feature of his followers,

a practical working definition of real love must be the basis for any [spiritual growth]."

Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including a focus on "the power and purpose of the Holy Spirit" specifically as manifested as "God's Spirit indwelling us and empowering us." The second theme focused on the Holy Spirit as the agent through whom we "know and hear from God as Christians" and the One who "guides, leads, and changes us, brings us spiritual gifts." The third theme focused on the belief that Christians are "dependant upon [the Holy Spirit's] power and transforming work" as "the change agent in our spiritual development."

Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the Great Commission as "the last words of Jesus to Christians." The Great Commission was considered our "call of duty" and "our main mission as Christ-followers." The second theme was focused on the belief, "We have a God-given job" and as such "believers need to understand that and do it." The third theme pointed to the Great Commission as a "call to growth." Participants believed that "people who put an emphasis on [making disciples] tend to grow more than others that consider it only a suggestion."

Fruit of the Spirit

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Fruit of the Spirit" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including the Fruit of the Spirit as "things your life should be producing" if the "Spirit [is] active in your life." They were considered "key" descriptions of the "qualities of the redeemed life God makes possible in us." The second theme focused on the Fruit of the Spirit as a "mark of spiritual growth" and "evidence of growth." The Fruit of the Spirit were considered "tangible measures of a life surrendered to Christ." The third theme focused on the Fruit of the Spirit as "essential for us to be what God wants us to be" and a tool that "will help us strive for more fruit to grow."

Jesus

Explanations were given by 13 participants for why "Jesus" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses including a focus on characteristics of Jesus' nature including "preeminent, predestine, the divine logos, the wisdom of God, his supremacy, the King of kings and Lord of lords, that he loves, cares for, and nurtures his bride." The second theme focused on Jesus as "the central figure of the Bible and of history" and "the life of God in human form who shows us what God is like and who completed the mission of salvation for mankind." The third theme focused on Jesus as "the one we are to follow" because He is "the fulfillment of spiritual maturity in mankind." Knowing Jesus' "divine claims, His life, Purpose, and model" were identified as motivations that "make us love Him and grow in Him more."

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Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution,
through suffering, etc.)

Explanations were given by 14 participants for why "Perseverance (Through
hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)" is one of the 26 most essential
biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in
church members (see Appendix F). Three themes emerged from the responses, including
a focus on the convictions, "All people experience hardships and pain," "We WILL
suffer," and "Every Christian, new or old, will face life's problems." Participants believed
that Christians "should be taught to expect it." The second theme focused on tenacity as
an aspect of perseverance. Participants believed that "living for Christ is a marathon not a
sprint." The third theme focused on the belief that hardships and difficulties are necessary
experiences "in order to grow closer to Christ." Life challenges were considered an
environment in which believers can grow "by leaps and bounds" in "patience and teach us
endurance in life."

Salvation, Plan of

Explanations were given by 11 participants for why "Salvation, Plan of" is one of
the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating
spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the
responses including the belief that Christians need to "understand the process in
accepting Christ" because it is "basic knowledge that keeps us assured of God's love and
His mercy" and it "allows us to understand sin, freewill, belief, confession, repentance,
etc." The second theme focused on the understanding of the plan of salvation as a
motivation for evangelism. Participants noted, "Once we become a Christian we can not
forget that others need to know this plan." The conclusion drawn from this principle is,

"Disciples of Jesus should be equipped to take a person who does not know Jesus to the Lordship of Christ."

Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary,
Prince of Darkness, Tempter)

Explanations were given by 10 participants for why "Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)" is one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members (see Appendix F). Two themes emerged from the responses including Satan as "our adversary" and "the enemy." Satan was believed to be "alive and well and doing all he can to destroy our walk with the Lord." The second theme focused on the belief that "Satan is opposed to our spiritual growth" and that "Satan's work on the earth is to prevent spiritual growth." Two points of knowledge were identified as essential. First, "the enemy must be clearly identified and understood before we can be ready for any spiritual battle to follow." Second, we must understand "who He is [in order to] help us know how to fight him as we grow."

Summary of Findings

Participants were found to believe that biblical literacy is an essential precursor to spiritual growth. Only 2 participants (3%) out of 66 believed otherwise. The three-round Delphi study identified 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered most essential by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. The final list exceeded the anticipated 25 items due to a five-way tie at the 16 response (37.21%) mark.

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The items selected by participants in Round Three were applied to a frequency distribution table to identify the most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items (see Table 4). Agreement among the top 26 items ranged from a high of 30 participants (69.77%) having selected Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple) to a low of 16 participants (37.21%), which was achieved by 5 items including "Fruit of the Spirit," "Jesus," " Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.," "Salvation, Plan of," and "Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)." Of the 23 new items added by participants, 6 (11.76%) ranked among the 26 most commonly selected items.

Items that met this criteria include "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" (69.77%), which received the highest total number of selections in Round Three; "Prayer" (65.12%), "Obedience (choosing God's ways)" (58.14%), "Worship (55.81%)," "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" (53.49%), and "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)" (44.19%).

A broad range of rationales was offered to explain why items were selected as most essential. The majority of the explanations reflected a careful treatment of the various topics and provided reasonable justifications for inclusion of items in the final list (see Appendix F).

Discussion

This section includes discussion related to key aspects of the study including the top 26 items, notable omissions, limitations, narrative characteristics, and result items compared to existing model items.

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Top 26 Items

The 26 items considered most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members reflect in many ways the religious heritage of the participants. The Stone-Campbell Movement has distinctive and often deeply held doctrinal beliefs about the Bible, baptism, the Holy Spirit, and the nature of the Church, among other topics. The historical theological focus on these four topics explains in part why they represent more than one-third (35%) of the top 26 items. Also worthy of note is an apparent doctrinal contradiction raised by two items on the list.

The message consistently affirmed in the New Testament is that Christians are saved by grace through faith (see John 3:16; 1 Pet 1:9; especially Eph 2:8). Thus it is not surprising that "Grace" appears in the list of most commonly selected items. A key aspect of this doctrine, however, is that grace is fundamentally opposed to salvation through works. This makes "Obedience (Choosing God's ways)" a somewhat surprising choice to appear on the same list as "Grace." A reasonable explanation for this odd combination is the focus on spiritual growth as the specific desired outcome. Holiness, sanctification, and obedience are closely related theological concepts and all three are direct results of spiritual growth. Thus, "Obedience (Choosing God's ways)" is also a perfectly appropriate selection for the list even if it stands in somewhat of a doctrinal tension with "Grace." Surprising for different reasons is the inclusion of "1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)."

The intent here is not to discount the significance of 1 Cor 13 as much as to note the fact that it was included at the expense of items discussed later in the Notable Omissions section. One possible explanation for this item appearing on the list is Jesus'

teaching in Matt 22:35-39 in which he identifies the two greatest commandments, one being, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." This mandate to demonstrate love to others gives legitimacy to "1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)" as one of the 26 most essential biblical/doctrinal items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth. The next point of interest is focused on potential barriers to spiritual growth.

The inclusion of "Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)" on the top 26 list demonstrates a broad acknowledgment that an enemy stands in direct and overt opposition to spiritual growth efforts. The addition of "Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)" further illustrates that participants believed spiritual growth to be wrought with stumbling blocks, danger, and opposition. The next theme to be addressed in this section is focused on discipleship as a natural outpouring of spiritual growth pursuits.

"Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)" is reasonably considered essential where the goal is to grow in one's pursuit of discipleship. This priority is demonstrated by the fact that this item was the most selected item on the final list. Equally significant though is that "Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)" was included in the list because it demonstrates that discipleship is not exclusively focused on one's own spiritual growth. Participants considered it essential to reach out to other individuals in an effort to duplicate spiritual growth both through evangelism and guiding other Christians toward spiritual growth. The final theme to be addressed here is a surprising pattern of Jesus-related items across the three Delphi rounds.

Of the 100 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round One, almost one-third (29%) were related to Jesus Christ. The two most commonly

selected items related to Jesus in Round One were "Jesus" and "Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)." Both were tied for the number one selection overall (95.24%). Of the 51 most commonly selected biblical/doctrinal knowledge items in Round Two, only 10 (19.60%) were related to Jesus Christ. "Jesus" was the highest rated Jesus-related item in Round Two, tied for the 13th spot overall. Of the 26 most commonly selected items in Round Three, "Jesus" was the only Jesus-related item (4%) to make the list. Adding even more intrigue is the fact that "Jesus" was part of the very last grouping to be included in the top 26 list having been selected by only 16 participants (37.21%). The drop from 29 Jesus-related items in Round One to a single item in Round Three might reasonably be explained by the increasingly difficult choices required as the rounds progressed. More specifically, it is reasonable that the very specific items related to Jesus would be foregone in favor of the more general "Jesus" in order to make room for other biblical/doctrinal items on the list. What this does not explain, however, is the dramatic drop in agreement related to "Jesus" from the top selection in Round One to the last group of included items in Round Three. More troubling still is the fact that 27 participants (63%) of the 43 who completed Round Three failed to select "Jesus" as one of the most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. Nine other Jesus-related items were selected by between 6 (13.95%) and 15 (34.88%) participants. Also worthy of note is the possibility that attrition throughout the study affected the distribution of Jesus-related selections.

The number of participants decreased from 66 in Round One to 53 in Round Two and finally to 43 in Round Three. This attrition could have lowered the number of selections related to Jesus in two ways. First, the 23 participants who completed Round

One but failed to complete Round Three may have considered Jesus-related items more essential than the rest of the participants. In this scenario the number of Jesus-related items would naturally drop off simply because participants who considered these items essential ceased to be represented in the final round. The second way attrition might explain the drop in Jesus-related items is focused on specific items related to Jesus. The 23 participants who completed Round One but failed to complete Round Three may have selected a higher proportion of Jesus-related items beyond the general "Jesus" option as compared to the rest of the participants. In this scenario "Jesus" is the only Jesus-related item to make the final list because the participants who were prone to selecting more specific items related to Jesus were not represented in the final round.

Notable Omissions

It is not surprising that distilling the Bible down to 26 items naturally results in some notable omissions. Even with the daunting nature of the task in mind, however, there are several biblical/doctrinal items missing from the list that demand mention.

The Restoration Movement was established "to restore the church to the ideals that are pictured in the New Testament" (North, 1994, p. 6). The focus on the early Church combined with priority given to the New Covenant for faith and practice gives some rationale for why none of the 26 most commonly selected items are directly related to Old Testament doctrine, persons, or events. A New Covenant focus does not however fully explain how some extremely important items such as "Creation *ex nihilo* (Creation out of nothing by God's Word)," "Fall, the," and "Ten Commandments" can miss the cut. The same question must be asked of other topics including "Sin (Transgression, Trespass)," "Mankind (Body and spirit/soul)," and "Eternal life (everlasting life)."

Each of these topics holds immense significance in Christian doctrine and practice. It might be reasonably asked, for instance, whether or not a person can hope to achieve spiritual growth in the absence of a clear understanding of the doctrine of sin. Similarly, one's capacity to achieve spiritual growth might be justifiably dependent upon an understanding of the biblical view of Mankind as a combination of body and soul/spirit and how each relates to each other. Possibly even more significant is the omission of "Eternal life (everlasting life)" since it is the ultimate goal spiritual growth is meant to achieve (1 Pet 1:9; Phil 2:12). These tensions were fortunately represented in the data. Though "Mankind (Body and spirit/soul)" did not make it out of Round One, "Sin (Transgression, Trespass)" was selected by 14 participants (32.56%) and "Eternal life (everlasting life)" was selected by 13 participants (30.23%).

Limitations

The findings of this study should not be considered normative for every faith tradition. Religious heritage is based on factors that can significantly affect priority of biblical doctrine and perceptions of how biblical literacy relates to spiritual growth (Gallagher & Newton, 2009, p. 257). While the Delphi research method accounts for diversity within the research sample, this study utilized a homogeneous sample and can thus only be used to describe the views held by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. A second limitation of this study relates to the racial makeup of the sample.

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ enjoy some ethnic and socio-economic diversity though it has struggled historically to become fully diverse related to either category. Scholars lament that many view the Restoration Movement as "little more than a complacent middle class aggregation of fossilized Campbellites" (North, 1994, p. 354).

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As a result, Caucasian was the identified race of every participant of this study. The third limitation of this study relates to the gender makeup of the sample.

Christian Churches/Churches of Christ do not traditionally permit women to serve as elders, preachers, or teachers in mixed-gender contexts (Cottrell, 2002, p. 432; Webb, 2004a, p. 188). As a result, only men participated in this study.

Narrative Characteristics

A broad range of theological and practical rationales was offered to explain why items were selected as most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. The majority of the responses appeared to reflect careful consideration of how items related to spiritual growth pursuits. However, there are two factors that limit the narrative's ability to fully explain the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items.

First, participants offered explanations only in favor of the 25 items selected as the most essential. Participants did not identify why other items were *not* selected nor did participants explain why one item was selected over another item. The latter particularly limits the ability to understand why one topic such as "Eternal life (everlasting life)" attracted selections instead of a similar topic such as "Heaven" and vice versa. The second limitation relates to appeals to religious heritage as a justification of validity.

Consistency of perspective among participants was sought by selecting Christian Church/Christian Church ministers. The goal was not to return data reflecting religious tradition but instead to return data built upon a shared view of hermeneutics, theology, and ecclesiology. The possibility however must be noted that religious tradition may be used as a justification for selecting an item as opposed to objective biblical perspective. An example of this was identified in narrative responses related to "Baptism (immersion,

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New Birth)" in which a participant responded, "[I'm] a Christian church pastor, c'mon man!" Such responses do not necessarily threaten the validity of the study since it technically reflects the stated goal, but it does raise questions about the level of objectivity represented in the narrative.

Result Items Compared to Existing Model Items

Table 6 compares the 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge item list identified by this study with a variety of previously existing models of discipleship and religious identity. Included are the 12-item Apostle's Creed (Grudem, 1994), Barna's (2001) 10-item Competencies Model of discipleship, John Wesley's (Felton, 1997) 4-item model, Neal and Richmond's (1962) 6-item model, and Purkiser's (1959) 6-item model. Two types of matches are reflected in the table. The first are direct matches that represent identical or virtually identical language. The second are indirect matches that represent similar items or closely related items. Of the 26 items identified in this study, the following 12 did not directly or indirectly match any item contained in the models identified above:

1. Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

2. Prayer

3. Worship

4. Repentance (Repent)

5. Evangelism (Witnessing)

6. Communion (Lord's Supper)

7. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

8. Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

9. Fruit of the Spirit

10. Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)

11. Salvation, Plan of

12. Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter).

Apostle's Creed (Grudem, 1994)

Of the 12 items that comprise the Apostle's Creed, only "The hope of bodily resurrection and eternal life" lacked a match to the current study. Two items directly matched "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)." One item directly matched both "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" and "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the church." One item directly matched "Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)" and indirectly matched "Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)." One item directly matched "Communion (Lord's Supper)." One directly matched "Forgiveness (remission of sins)." The 6 remaining items indirectly matched "Jesus."

Barna (2001)

Of the 10 items that comprise Barna's Competencies Model of discipleship, only "Humanity" and "Eternity" lacked a match to the current study. One item indirectly matched "Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)," "Jesus," and "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect,

Table 6

Direct (D) and Indirect (I) Matches to Previous Models of Discipleship and Identity

Item	Apostle's Creed		Barna (2001)		Felton (1997)		Neal & Richmond (1962)		Purkiser (1959)	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)				●				●		●
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)										
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	●		●				●		●	
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)				●						
Grace			●		●					●
Prayer										
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	●		●	●	●					●

Table 6−*Continued.*

Item	Apostle's Creed		Barna (2001)		Felton (1997)		Neal & Richmond (1962)		Purkiser (1959)	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Bible (Word of God)			●				●			
Forgiveness (remission of sins)	●		●		●					●
Obedience (Choosing God's ways)										●
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)			●				●			
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)		●		●						●
Worship										
Repentance (Repent)										
Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)			●							
Evangelism (Witnessing)										

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Table 6–*Continued.*

Item	Apostle's Creed		Barna (2001)		Felton (1997)		Neal & Richmond (1962)		Purkiser (1959)	
	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I	D	I
Communion (Lord's Supper)										
Acts 2:42ff (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)	●		●				●			●
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)										
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	●		●							●
Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)										
Fruit of the Spirit										
Jesus	●	●	●							●
Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)										
Salvation, Plan of										
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)										

self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)." One item directly matched both "Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible inspired, necessary, sufficient)" and "Bible (Word of God)." One item directly matched both "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" and "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the church." One item directly matched "Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time, management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)" and indirectly matched "Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control)." One item directly matched "Grace." One item directly matched "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)." The final item indirectly matched "Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control)."

John Wesley (Felton, 1997)

Of the four items attributed to Wesley, "Sin" and "Mankind" lacked a match to the current study. One item directly matched "Grace" and the fourth item directly matched "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)."

Neal and Richmond (1962)

Of the six items that comprise Neal and Richmond's model, "The Christian in society," "Christians and their world," and "The Christian family" lacked a match to the current study. One item directly matched both "Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative,

inerrant, infallible inspired, necessary, sufficient)" and "Bible (Word of God)." One item directly matched both "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" and "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the church." The final items indirectly matched "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)."

Purkiser (1959)

Of the six items that comprise Purkiser's model, "The realm of faith" and "Entire Sanctification" lacked a match to the current study. One item is indirectly related to "Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)," "Jesus," and "God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)." One item directly matched "Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)" and indirectly matched "Acts 2:42ff. (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the church." One item indirectly matched "Forgiveness (remission of sins)." The final items indirectly matched "Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)."

<div align="center">

Recommendations

</div>

This study has many implications for pastors, congregations, ministry and theological training institutions, and researchers. This section will offer recommendations for ways the findings can be utilized within each category.

Pastors can use the findings of this study as a basis for pursuing personal and pastoral development:

1. Improve capacity to teach these concepts and how they contribute to spiritual growth by increasing personal familiarity and depth of knowledge related to each topic.

2. Prepare an overarching teaching agenda for the church that strategically and systematically incorporates each of the top 26 knowledge items.

3. Incorporate the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items into weekly teaching and preaching venues.

Congregations can use the findings of this study to design and implement learning and assessment tools:

1. Develop a curriculum for small groups, Bible studies, and mentoring programs.

2. Design an introductory curriculum for new converts.

3. Create tools that measure depth of knowledge related to each concept.

4. Incorporate assessment of knowledge and doctrinal alignment related to each concept into evaluation of prospective ministry staff members and ordination candidates.

Researchers can build on this study through projects that focus on replication, validity, and methodology:

1. Replicate this study in the context of other faith traditions in order to identify similarities and differences that emerge out of distinctive theological, hermeneutical, and ecclesiastical perspectives.

2. Replicate this study utilizing theology, biblical studies, and practical ministry faculty as the Delphi panel of experts to evaluate whether or not educators share similar beliefs related to biblical literacy as a precursor to spiritual growth.

3. Conduct research that measures the correlation between knowledge of the top 26 items and spiritual development.

4. Conduct research focused on methods that most effectively lead to knowledge, retention, and application of the top 26 items toward spiritual development.

Ministry and theological training institutions can use this study as a foundation for dialogue related to many aspects of curricular emphasis and application:

1. Determine what classes should be required for ministry programs.

2. Establish course objectives in Bible, theology, and ministry classes.

3. Develop tools to conduct assessment of student learning related to the top 26 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items.

Implications for Church Leadership

As noted in the previous section, there are several ways the findings of this study can be used to inform and improve a church's programs, curriculum, and assessment. The implications, however, extend well beyond new ways to do church. This study also offers a new way of thinking about efficient, effective, and intentional spiritual leadership by raising fundamental questions about the purpose and vision of the Church.

This study encourages a fresh look at the Great Commission and the pastor's role in accomplishing those objectives, particularly as they are affected by biblical/doctrinal knowledge. This study focuses on the "make disciples" part of the Great Commission and offers a list of items that can be taught and preached toward that end. Though while the focus might naturally fall on the pastor in this exchange, it should also be noted that this study introduces learning as an important implication in two ways.

First, pastors who use biblical/doctrinal knowledge as a way to facilitate spiritual development might assess their own biblical literacy and pursue learning that enhances knowledge in key areas. Second, pastors might balance "What is taught" with "What is learned." This distinction brings to light the fact that a curriculum represents only one part of the discipleship equation. Teaching the curriculum is also an essential component

that has as its primary objective student learning. Thus, spiritual development might be expected to occur most readily when a knowledgeable teacher conveys the most essential information in ways that result in learning. The appropriate measure of ministry success is the focus of the final implication addressed in this section.

The previous implications suggest that the successful minister is not the one who can passionately, eloquently, or masterfully lead a Bible study. Neither is success based solely on the ability to facilitate learning because learning is not the end in and of itself. Biblical teaching should result in learning that prompts spiritual growth illustrated by a dad who is the spiritual leader of the home, a woman who leads a co-worker to Christ, or a young person who gives time, energy, or money to help someone in need. The ability to use biblical teaching strategically in order to engender these leadership activities amongst church members is the hallmark of the successful spiritual leader.

Conclusion

This study showed a pattern in literature pointing to a functional and necessary connection between biblical literacy and spiritual growth (Gangel & Wilhoit, 1997; Gilliard, 2001; Legg, 2002; Nelson, 2004; Wilhoit, 2008; Willard & Simpson, 2005). This connection was furthermore affirmed by assessing the perceptions of the study sample. This study demonstrated that a clear and pointed leadership mandate is present in spiritual growth literature (Barton, 2008; Downs, 1994; Gallagher & Newton, 2009; Lewis & Palmer, 1989; Schaper, 2009). This study echoes the need noted in literature for pastors and other religious leaders to play a central leadership role in providing resources that facilitate spiritual development in church members.

Church leaders were shown to be the primary agent for guiding church members to the requisite knowledge for pursuing a lifelong pursuit of spiritual growth (Schaper, 2009; Wilhoit, 2008). Unfortunately, the Church is facing two leadership challenges today. First, consistent testimony from authors and researchers points to biblical illiteracy in epidemic proportions in the United States (Prothero, 2007a, 2007b; Willard & Johnson, 2006). The second leadership challenge highlighted by this study is that many spiritual leaders lack an understanding of what biblical knowledge is most essential in order to facilitate spiritual growth in church members (Barna, 2009; Dykstra, 1999). This study sought to address the latter challenge in order to empower leaders to address the former challenge.

A Delphi study was employed to identify the biblical/doctrinal knowledge items considered by ministers of Christian Churches/Churches of Christ to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. The initial 600-item list was systematically honed over three rounds to a final list of the 26 most commonly selected items. Explanations corresponding to each of the top 26 items were also gathered in an effort to provide a clear rationale for how knowledge of each item affects the pursuit of spiritual growth.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS TABLES

Table 7

Invited Churches with N and Average Weekly Attendance

State/District	N	Average Weekly Attendance
Alabama	4	65, 70, 110, Unknown
Alaska	4	50, 200, 350, 1750
Arizona	8	75, 220, 250, 380, 950, 1400, 8050, Unknown
Arkansas	4	100, 275, 400, 650
California	12	100, 150, 200, 350, 450, 500, 600, 1200, 2000, 3900, 4000, Unknown
Colorado	8	150, 260, 365, 600, 1200, 1300, 3300, Unknown
Connecticut	2	100, 200
Delaware	2	200, 400
District of Columbia	1	100
Florida	10	150, 230, 275, 465, 600, 700, 800, 1310, 1500, 3700
Georgia	6	200, 250, 400, 600, 1500, 4763
Hawaii	2	60, 642
Idaho	4	170, 300, 1650, 2400
Illinois	12	180, 225, 350, 500, 750, 800, 1000, 1167, 1500, 2750, 3800, 4200
Indiana	12	165, 271, 350, 550, 750, 800, 950, 1800, 2050, 2300, 3480, 5400
Iowa	4	100, 400, 842, 1477
Kansas	4	200, 850, 1131, 6392
Kentucky	12	70, 200, 301, 450, 614, 767, 800, 1000, 1100, 1400, 2300, 2663
Maine	1	Unknown
Maryland	2	450, 2388

Table 7–*Continued.*

State/District	N	Average Weekly Attendance
Massachusetts	1	Unknown
Michigan	12	130, 150, 200, 200, 300, 350, 450, 450, 530, 700, 700, 1350
Minnesota	4	110, 190, 225, 395
Mississippi	2	125, 230
Missouri	12	150, 200, 300, 425, 560, 600, 650, 850, 1100, 2000, 2000, 3300
Montana	2	225, 600
Nebraska	4	100, 275, 550, 1050
Nevada	2	5000, Unknown
New Hampshire	2	120, 1481
New Jersey	2	120, 250
New Mexico	4	175, 250, 350, 435
New York	4	130, 250, 259, 300
North Carolina	8	125, 250, 320, 400, 486, 700, 1800, 1996
North Dakota	---	N/A
Ohio	12	150, 200, 350, 400, 600, 700, 800, 950, 1000, 1150, 1650, 2600
Oklahoma	4	230, 500, 800, 1600
Oregon	10	150, 200, 300, 446, 546, 750, 1100, 1500, 1500, Unknown
Pennsylvania	4	277, 425, 600, 750
South Carolina	4	150, 220, 230, 962
South Dakota	2	150, 250
Tennessee	8	75, 250, 440, 500, 600, 800, 900, 1350
Texas	8	30, 250, 300, 400, 750, 1250, 2400, 5000
Utah	2	185, 300

Table 7−*Continued.*

State/District	N	Average Weekly Attendance
Vermont	1	Unknown
Virginia	4	250, 850, 1200, 1400
Washington	4	450, 2300, 2220, 4000
West Virginia	4	200, 325, 453, 585
Wisconsin	4	150, 219, 350, 1000
Wyoming	2	113, 200

Table 8

Restoration Movement Higher Education Institutions

Institution	1999-2000 Enrollment (FTE)	2005-2006 Enrollment (FTE)	2010-2011 Enrollment (FTE)
Alberta Bible College, Calgary, AB, Canada	111.4	149.0	98.0
Atlanta Christian College, Atlanta, GA	343.0	410.0	1,035.0
Blueridge College of Evangelism, (formerly Bluefield College of Evangelism)Wytheville, VA	27.0	98.0	---
Boise Bible College, Boise, ID	99.0	153.7	175.6
Central Christian College of the Bible, Moberly, MO	123.0	517.0	292.1
Christian Kingdom College, Winchester, VA	---	36.5	38.0
Cincinnati Bible College (Undergraduate division of Cincinnati Christian University), Cincinnati, OH	580.0	763.0	729.0
Cincinnati Bible Seminary (Graduate division of Cincinnati Christian University), Cincinnati, OH	247.0	232.0	202.0
Colegio Biblico, Eagle Pass, Texas	6.0	57.0	---
College of the Scriptures, Louisiville, KY	1.0	2.0	---
Crossroads College (formerly Minnesota Bible College), Rochester, MN	105.8	---	161.8
Dallas Christian College, Dallas, TX	249.0	344.0	292.0
Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, TN	110.0	118.0	132.0
Florida Christian College, Kissimmee, FL	205.0	198.6	290.6
Great Lakes Christian College, Lansing, MI	168.0	190.5	209.0
Hope International University, Fullerton, CA	442.3	1,008.0	800.0
Johnson Bible College, Knoxville, TN	527.0	853.0	816.0
Kentucky Christian College, Grayson, KY	552.0	589.0	528.6
Lincoln Christian College (Undergraduate division of Lincoln Christian University), Lincoln, IL	583.0	645.0	776.0

Table 8−*Continued*.

Institution	1999-2000 Enrollment (FTE)	2005-2006 Enrollment (FTE)	2010-2011 Enrollment (FTE)
Lincoln Christian Seminary (Graduate division of Lincoln Christian University), Lincoln, IL	136.0	201.0	---
Lincoln Christian College East, Bel Air, MD	35.0	---	---
Louisville Bible College, Louisville, KY	74.1	111.0	60.2
Manhattan Christian College, Manhattan, KS	304.0	303.0	319.1
Maritime Christian College, College, Charlottetown, PEI, Canada	21.0	17.4	16.9
Mid-Atlantic Christian University (formerly Roanoke Bible College), Elizabeth City, NC	140.8	163.5	152.0
Mid-South Christian, Memphis, TN	12.0	31.0	13.0
Milligan College, Milligan College, TN	892.1	925.7	1,077.0
Nebraska Christian College, Norfolk, NE	120.0	139.0	130.0
Northeast Ohio Bible College, East Liverpool, OH	---	5.0	---
Northwest Christian College, Eugene, OR	480.0	391.0	570.0
Ozark Christian College, Joplin, MO	635.0	787.0	610.0
Puget Sound Christian College, Edmonds, WA	202.0	121.0	---
San Jose Christian College, San, Jose, CA	392.0	---	---
St. Louis Christian College, Florissant, MO	167.0	237.0	307.0
Summit Christian College (formerly Platte Valley Bible College), Scottsbluff, NE	43.0	42.0	30.0
Summit Theological Seminary, Peru, IN	142.0	---	1,243.0
TCM International Institute	---	192.0	200.0
William Jessup University	---	482.0	674.4

Table 9

Alma Maters

Alma Mater	Round One		Round Two		Round Three	
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Abilene Christian University	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Andersonville Theological Seminary	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Ashland Theological Seminary	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Atlantic Baptist College	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Bethel Seminary	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Candler School of Theology	1	1.52	0	0.00	1	2.33
Central Christian College of the Bible	3	4.55	3	5.66	3	6.98
Cincinnati Bible College	4	6.06	3	5.66	3	6.98
Cincinnati Bible Seminary	9	13.64	9	16.98	6	13.95
Dallas Christian College	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Emmanuel School of Religion	5	7.58	4	7.55	4	9.30
Florida Christian College	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Hope International University	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Johnson Bible College	5	7.58	4	7.55	4	9.30
Kentucky Christian College	7	0.61	6	11.32	3	6.98
Lincoln Christian College	5	7.58	4	7.55	1	2.33
Lincoln Christian Seminary	2	3.03	2	3.77	0	0.00
Londen Institute	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Louisville Bible College	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Lubbock Christian University	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33

Table 9−*Continued.*

	Round One		Round Two		Round Three	
Alma Mater	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%
Midwestern School of Evangelism	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Nebraska Christian College	2	3.03	2	3.77	2	4.65
Pepperdine	1	1.52	0	0.00	1	2.33
Puget Sound Christian College	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Summit Christian College	1	1.52	1	1.89	0	0.00
Summit Theological Seminary	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Talbot School of Theology	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Vanguard University Southern California	1	1.52	1	1.89	1	2.33
Western Seminary	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00
Not Displayed	1	1.52	0	0.00	0	0.00

Note: Alma Mater represents the institution that awarded the highest earned degree.

APPENDIX B

INVITATION AND REMINDER EMAILS

ROUND ONE INVITATION EMAIL

Dear <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

I am a PhD Candidate at Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI) and am pleased to be approaching the final stages of my program. I am writing you because the next step in my journey includes gathering data for my dissertation and you have been identified as a candidate for participation.

My dissertation is focused on how ministers of Independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ perceive the relationship between biblical/doctrinal knowledge and spiritual growth. You are one of 250 ministers randomly selected to participate in this study. The list was developed to represent every state, a wide range of church sizes, and a variety of socio-economic contexts.

Participation would require approximately two hours of your time over the next eight weeks broken down into three web-based surveys. The first round would take between 45-60 minutes and the last two rounds would take between 30-45 minutes each. The data instrument will allow you to save your progress if you need to take a break and return to the survey at a later time.

As an incentive, participants who complete all three rounds within the allotted time (two weeks per round) will be entered into a drawing. One participant on this list will be randomly selected as the recipient of an Apple iPad 2.

Please click the following link to view the Informed Consent information and begin the first survey. The first round will be open for two weeks. Thank you in advance for contributing to this study.

http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=45555&lang=en

Blessings!

Jeffrey

ROUND ONE REMINDER EMAIL

Good afternoon, <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

This is a quick reminder for those who are still interested in taking part in my dissertation research which seeks to identify how ministers of Independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ perceive the relationship between biblical/doctrinal knowledge and spiritual growth.

The first round will close at the beginning of the work day this coming Thursday morning (October 20). If you have already begun the process, please take some time today or tomorrow to wrap up Round One. If you haven't started, you still have time to contribute to this important study. The following link will direct you to the web-based survey.

http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=45555&lang=en

Please let me know if you have any questions or difficulty with the link.

Blessings

Jeffrey

P.S. If you have already completed Round One, thank you! You are receiving this email only because you provided an alternate email address that I wasn't able to match with an email address on my original distribution list. You can disregard the reminder. Round Two invitations will be sent early-mid next week.

ROUND TWO INVITATION EMAIL

Dear <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

Thank you for participating in this research project! The time and energy you invested to complete Round One is greatly appreciated.

I have spent the last several days compiling, analyzing, and organizing the data from the first round and I'm pleased to report that we are now ready to launch Round Two.

The following link will navigate you to the Round Two survey. Please let me know if you have any difficulty accessing or completing the survey. This round will be active until Noon on Wednesday, November 9.

http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=38234&lang=en

Blessings!

Jeffrey

ROUND TWO REMINDER EMAIL

Good afternoon, <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

Thank you again for participating in my dissertation research. You are contributing important insights that will help us better understand how churches can facilitate spiritual growth through focused biblical teaching. I look forward to continuing this journey of discovery together.

I am writing to remind you that Round Two is currently open and that it will close this Wednesday, November 9 at Noon. The current survey can be accessed via the following link:

> http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=38234&lang=en

Please let me know if you have any difficulty accessing or completing Round Two.

Blessings!

Jeffrey

ROUND THREE INVITATION EMAIL

Dear <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

Thank you for your continued willingness to contribute to my dissertation research. I am pleased to be sending your invitation to participate in the third and final round.

This round will be identical to the previous rounds with one notable exception. As has been the trend, you will be asked to further narrow the list to the 25 most essential biblical/doctrinal knowledge items for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members. The significant difference in Round Three is that you will be asked to provide a brief description of why you believe each selected item is one of the 25 most essential (Please provide narrative only for the 25 items you identify as most essential).

The following link will navigate you to the Round Three survey. Please let me know if you have any difficulty accessing or completing the survey. This round will be active until Noon on Wednesday, November 23.

http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=32623&lang=en

Blessings!

Jeffrey

ROUND THREE REMINDER EMAIL

Good afternoon, <Participant Title> <Participant Last Name>,

Thank you for participating in the first two rounds of my dissertation research. You are now collaborating with 64 other ministers to bring this study to a close by identifying the 25 biblical/doctrinal knowledge items you believe to be most essential for the purpose of facilitating spiritual growth in church members.

If you have not had an opportunity to complete Round Three, please remember that it will close at Noon on Wednesday, November 23. Also, don't forget that participants who complete all three rounds will be placed in a drawing and one individual will be randomly selected as the recipient of an Apple iPad 2.

The following link will direct you to the web-based survey.

http://derico.itagconnect.com/index.php?sid=32623&lang=en

Please let me know if you have any difficulty accessing or completing the survey instrument.

Blessings!

Jeffrey

P.S. If you have already completed Round Three, thank you! You are receiving this email only because you provided an alternate email address that I wasn't able to match with an email address on my Round Three distribution list. You can disregard the reminder.

APPENDIX C

ROUND ONE LIST VALIDATION

Table 10

Round One List Validation

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
1 Corinthians 9:22 (All things to all people)	●					●		●
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)	●					●		●
1 Thessalonians 5:2 (The Lord will come just like a thief in the night)		●			●	●		
1 Timothy 6:10 (Love of money is the root of all evil)	●				●	●		●
2 Corinthians 3:6 (For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life)					●	●		●
2 Corinthians 5:7 (Walk by faith, not by sight)	●		●			●		
Aaron (brother of Moses)	●	●				●		●
Abraham (Abram)	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Abraham's (Abram) call to Canaan by God		●	●					●
Abraham (Abram) willing to sacrifice Isaac	●		●		●	●	●	●
Abraham's (Abram) and Lot separate		●	●					●
Abrahamic covenant	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Absalom (son of King David)	●	●				●		●
Absalom (son of King David) leads a revolt against David with the help of Ahithophel and is defeated and dies at the hand of Joab after being caught by his hair in an oak tree	●	●						●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Acts 20:35 (It is more blessed to give than to receive)					●	●		●
Adam and Eve	●	●			●	●	●	●
Adam and Eve's first three children (Cain, Abel, Seth)	●	●			●	●		●
Adoption	●		●	●	●			
Adultery	●					●		●
Ahab (an evil king of Israel)	●	●				●		●
Ahasuerus (another name for Xerxes, Esther's husband and Persian king)	●	●			●			
Altar	●					●		●
Ananias and Sapphira die after lying to the Holy Spirit		●				●		●
Angel (Angels)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Angels, Types of (Cherubim, Seraphim, Archangels, etc.)	●	●	●		●	●		●
Angels, Named (Archangels Gabriel and Michael)	●	●			●	●		●
Antichrist	●		●		●	●	●	●
Apocalypse (Greek meaning revelation)	●				●	●	●	●
Apostle	●	●				●		●
Aquila and Priscilla (tentmakers in Corinth)	●	●						●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Ark of the Covenant	●	●				●		●
Armageddon	●				●	●	●	●
Assyria	●					●		●
Atonement	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
Authors (C.S. Lewis, John Milton, Thomas Merton, Charles Darwin, Kurt Vonnegut, etc.)	●					●	●	●
Baal (The name of many heathen gods; generally credited with controlling rain, crops, fertility, fruit, and cattle)	●	●				●		●
Babel, Tower of (Dispersion and language confusion)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Babylon	●				●	●		●
Babylonian exile (captivity)	●				●	●		●
Balaam	●	●						●
Balaam's donkey	●	●						●
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Barnabus		●				●		●
Beatitudes (Blessed are those…)	●				●	●	●	●
Belshazzar (the last Babylonian king)	●	●				●		
Bethany	●					●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Bethlehem	●	●			●	●		●
Bible (Word of God)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bible, Books of the	●	●			●	●		●
Bible, Geography of the	●	●			●	●		●
Bible, Geography of the: Regions (Canaan, Galatia, Galilee, Judea, Samaria)	●	●			●	●		●
Bible, Geography of the: Rivers (Euphrates, Jordan, Nile, Tigris)	●	●			●	●		●
Bible, Geography of the: Seas (Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Mediterranean Sea)	●				●	●		●
Bible, Original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek)	●	●			●			●
Bible, Prophecy	●	●	●	●				
Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)	●		●			●		●
Bible, Old Testament sections (Pentateuch, Torah, etc.)	●					●	●	●
Bible, Testaments (Old Testament, New Testament)	●				●	●	●	●
Bible, Translations of the (NASB, NIV, KJV, etc.)	●				●	●		●
Bible, Ancient Translations the (Vulgate and Septuagint)	●	●			●	●	●	●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Blasphemy	●					●		●
Blessings and curses	●					●		●
Blood of Christ	●				●	●		●
Body of Christ	●				●	●		●
Book of Life	●					●		●
Caesar Augustus	●	●						●
Cains sacrifice rejected by God	●	●			●			●
Cain kills Abel	●	●			●	●		●
Caleb (a good spy)	●	●				●		●
Calvary (Golgatha)	●				●	●		●
Canon (Makeup, development, etc.)	●					●		●
Centurion		●				●		●
Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)	●				●	●		●
Christ's divine activities (Creation, providence, redemption)	●	●	●					
Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)	●				●	●	●	●
Christianity			●		●	●	●	●
Christology (Study of Christ)	●		●				●	
Church, The (congregation)	●		●	●		●		●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)			●	●				●
Circumcision (Physical and spiritual)			●			●		●
Communion (Lord's Supper)	●		●	●	●	●		●
Concubine	●					●		●
Condemnation, eternal (eternal damnation; fire and brimstone; unquenchable fire)	●		●		●	●	●	●
Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)	●	●				●		
Conversion	●					●		●
Cornelius			●			●		●
Covenant	●		●		●	●		●
Creation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Creation *ex nihilo* (Creation out of nothing by God's word)	●	●		●	●			
Creeds (Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed)			●	●		●	●	●
Crown of thorns					●	●		●
Crucifixion	●				●	●		●
Cults (Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, etc.)					●	●	●	●
Cyrus (also called Cyrus the Great; head of Persian Empire)	●	●				●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Daniel (member of the Judean royal family)	●	●			●	●		●
Daniel and the lion's den		●			●	●		●
Darius the Mede (conquered Babylon and made Cyrus king; the name of several Medo-Persian rulers)	●	●				●		
David (son of Jesse, shepherd, future king of Israel)	●	●			●	●		●
David accepts Goliath's challenge and kills him		●			●	●	●	●
David crowned king of Judah		●			●			●
David commits adultery with Bathsheba	●	●			●			●
David orders Uriah be placed in the most dangerous part of the battle so he is killed	●	●			●			
David described by God as a Man after God's own heart	●					●		●
Day of Atonement	●					●		●
Dead Sea Scrolls	●				●	●		●
Death	●		●	●			●	
Deborah (the fourth judge)	●	●				●		●
Demon (Demons)			●	●		●		●
Depravity			●			●		●
Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)	●		●			●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Disciple	●	●	●		●	●		●
Dispensationalism						●	●	●
Doctrine	●				●			●
Ecclesiastes 1:2 (Vanity of vanities! All is vanity)	●	●			●	●		●
Ecclesiastes 1:9 (There is nothing new under the sun)					●	●		●
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (For everything there is a season)	●				●	●		●
Ecclesiastes 8:15; Luke 12:19 (Eat, drink, be merry)	●				●	●		●
Ecclesiastes 11:1 (Cast your bread upon the waters)					●	●		●
Eden, Garden of	●	●			●	●	●	●
Egypt	●	●	●		●	●		●
Elder (pastor, shepherd)					●	●		●
Election				●		●		●
Eli (Israel's high priest)		●			●			●
Elijah (a prophet of Israel)	●	●			●	●		●
Elijah (a prophet of Israel) defeats the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel and executes them		●			●			●
Elijah experiences the presence of God in a gentle wind		●				●		●
Elijah (a prophet of Israel) is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire		●			●			●

Table 10—*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Elisha (a prophet of Israel, and Elijah's successor)	●	●				●		●
Elisha succeeds Elijah	●	●						●
Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist)	●	●				●		●
Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) told by Gabriel (the angel) that she will have a son	●	●						●
Elizabeth's (mother of John the Baptist) baby leaps within her when Mary visits	●	●						●
Enoch	●	●				●		
Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)	●			●		●		
Ephesians 4:26 (Don't let the sun go down on your anger)	●	●				●		
Ephraim (son of Joseph and Asenath)	●	●				●		
Epiphany	●					●	●	●
Epistle	●					●		●
Esau (son of Isaac and Rebekah)	●	●	●		●			●
Esau sells his birthright to Jacob	●		●		●	●		●
Eschatology	●					●		●
Esther (also called Hadassah, queen of the Persian Empire; wife of Xerxes [Ahasuerus])	●	●				●		●
Esther saves the Jews in Persia from destruction		●				●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Eternal (eternity)	●			●		●		●
Eternal life (everlasting life)	●			●		●		●
Ethics					●		●	●
Evangelicalism						●	●	●
Evangelism (Witnessing)			●	●		●		●
Eve is tempted/deceived by the serpent in the Garden of Eden	●				●	●		
Evil (Natural Evil, Moral Evil)	●	●	●				●	●
Exodus, The	●	●			●	●	●	●
Exodus 3:13-14 (I AM who I AM)	●				●	●		●
Exodus 21:23-24; Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:21; Matthew 5:38 (Eye for an eye)	●				●	●		●
Ezra (author of biblical books Ezra and Esther; led a group back to Israel to reinitiate worship there)	●	●						●
Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)	●	●	●	●		●		●
Faith Traditions (Denominations; Church groups)			●		●	●	●	
Fall, the	●	●			●	●	●	●
Fall, the (results in pain, sickness, and death)	●			●	●			
Fall, the (results in God's curse)	●				●			●
False prophets (Wolf in sheep's clothing)	●		●		●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Flood, The Great	●	●			●	●		●
Forbidden fruit	●				●	●		●
Foreknowledge		●		●	●			
Forgiveness (Remission of sin)	●			●		●		●
Free will	●	●		●		●		●
Fruit of the Spirit				●	●	●		●
Fundamentalism						●	●	●
Genesis 1:1-2 (In the beginning…)	●	●			●	●		●
Genesis 1:3 (Let there be light)	●				●	●		●
Genesis 1:27 (Creation of male and female)	●				●	●		●
Genesis 1:28 (Be fruitful and multiply)	●					●		●
Genesis 3:19 (For you are dust, and to dust you will return)					●	●		●
Gentile	●				●	●		●
Gideon (the fifth judge)	●	●				●		●
Gideon tests God with a fleece	●	●				●		●
Gideon defeats the Midianites	●	●				●		●
Glorification (Glorified Body)				●	●	●		●
Glory	●	●	●			●		●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Glory, *shekinah* (manifestation of God's glory)	●	●	●					●
God (First Person of the Trinity)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
God's titles (Abba, Adonai, El Shaddai, Elohim, Father, Jehovah, Lord, Yahweh)	●	●		●	●	●		●
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)		●	●	●		●		●
God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)	●	●		●		●	●	●
Golden Rule					●	●	●	●
Goliath (Philistine warrior giant who was killed by David)	●	●				●		●
Good Samaritan, Parable of	●	●			●	●	●	●
Gospel (Good News)	●		●	●	●	●		●
Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)	●				●	●	●	
Grace	●			●		●		●
Hades	●					●		●
Hagar (Sarah's maid)	●	●	●			●		●
Haggai (a prophet of God)	●	●				●		●
Hannah (Samuel's mother)	●	●				●		●

Table 10–*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Hanukkah (Chanukah)	●					●	●	●
Heaven	●		●	●	●	●		●
Heaven, Reward in	●			●			●	
Hebron	●	●				●		
Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)	●		●	●	●	●		●
Herod Agrippa II (ruler of Palestine; before whom Paul appeared)	●	●						●
Herod Antipas (ruler of Palestine) has John the Baptist beheaded at the request of Salome	●	●				●		●
Herod the Great (ruler of Palestine; ruled at the time of Jesus' birth)	●	●				●		●
Herod the Great kills all male infants in Bethlehem	●	●				●		●
Herodias (wife of Herod Antipas)	●	●						●
Hezekiah (a king of Judah)		●				●		●
Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)	●					●		●
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	●			●	●	●		●
Holy Spirit, Gifts of the	●		●	●		●		●
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	●			●		●		●
Homosexuality	●					●		●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Hosanna	●					●		●
Hypoctrite	●					●		●
Idol (graven image)	●					●		●
Image of God, Created in the	●	●	●	●		●		●
Incarnation	●	●	●			●		●
Intertestamental Period: The Apocrypha (Fourteen books written during the Intertestamental Period were accepted as scripture by Catholics though none were accepted into the Protestant canon)	●	●			●	●		●
Intertestamental Period: The Talmud (a commentary on the law of Moses compiled by Jewish religious leaders over a period of approximately 800 years, between 300 B.C. and A.D. 500	●	●				●		
Isaac (son of Abraham and Sarah)	●	●	●		●	●		●
Isaac marries Rebekah	●	●	●					●
Isaiah (a prophet of God)	●	●			●			●
Isaiah prophecies about the coming Messiah (Isaiah 9; Isaiah 53, etc.)		●			●	●		●
Isaiah 2:4; also Micah 4:3 (Swords into plowshares)	●					●		●
Isaiah 11:6 (The lion will lay down with the lamb)					●	●		●
Ishmael (son of Abraham and Sarah's maid Hagar)	●	●	●			●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Israel, Land of (Canaan, Holy Land, Land flowing with milk and honey, Palestine, Promised Land)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Israelites (Hebrews; Jews; Chosen People)	●	●			●	●		●
Israelites become slaves to Egypt	●	●			●			●
Israelites cross the Red Sea	●	●			●			●
Israelites receive provisions from God after the Exodus (Guidance from a pillar of fire and pillar of cloud, purified water at Marah, manna from heaven, water from the rock)	●	●			●	●		●
Israelites witness God's presence with thunder, lightning, and a dense cloud at Mt. Sinai and are told to not approach the mountain	●	●			●			
Israelites worship the golden calf	●	●			●			●
Israelites construct the Tabernacle		●	●					●
Israelites send twelve spies into Canaan (giants in the land)	●	●				●		●
Israelites wander in the wilderness for forty years	●	●			●	●		●
Israelites cross the Jordan River into Canaan led by Joshua	●	●			●			●
Israelites experience military victories (Jericho, Canaanites, etc.)	●	●				●		●
Israelites demand a King	●	●						●
Jacob (also called Israel; son of Isaac)	●	●	●		●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Jacob steals Isaac's blessing from Esau	●		●		●	●		●
Jacob's dream (Jacob's ladder)	●		●		●	●		●
Jacob's meets Rachel at a well		●	●			●		
Jacob marries Leah and then Rachel	●	●	●					●
Jacob wrestles with God	●		●		●			●
Jacob and his sons move to Egypt	●					●		●
James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead)	●	●				●		●
James (half-brother of Jesus)	●	●						●
Jeremiah (a prophet of God)	●	●			●	●		●
Jeremiah 13:23 (Can a leopard change its spots?)	●				●	●		
Jericho	●					●		●
Jeroboam I (the first king of the Northern Kingdom)	●	●						●
Jerusalem	●				●	●	●	●
Jerusalem destroyed (AD 70)					●	●		●
Jesus	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Jesus' birth to the virgin Mary	●	●		●	●		●	●
Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes	●	●				●		●
Jesus dedicated at the temple	●	●						●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Jesus acknowledged by Simeon and Anna when Joseph and Mary present Jesus at the temple	●	●						●
Jesus teaches in the temple at the age of twelve	●	●			●			●
Jesus baptized by John the Baptist		●		●	●		●	●
Jesus tempted in the wilderness by Satan	●	●			●	●		●
Jesus responds to each temptation with "It is written…"	●	●			●	●		●
Jesus calls the disciples		●				●	●	●
Jesus' miracles (Turns water into wine, heals the son of the Official, raises Lazarus from the dead, feeds the five thousand, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, walks on water, etc.)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)		●			●			●
Jesus rebukes the religious leaders	●	●			●			●
Jesus teaches in parables	●	●			●		●	●
Jesus speaks to Nicodemus	●	●						●
Jesus speaks to the woman at the well		●				●		●
Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (You who are without sin cast the first stone)	●	●			●	●		●
Jesus visits Mary and Martha	●	●				●		●
Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration; witnessed by Peter, James, and John	●	●						●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Jesus enters Jerusalem (the Triumphal Entry)	●	●				●		●
Jesus clears the money changers from the temple	●	●				●		●
Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection		●			●			●
Jesus is plotted against by the religious leaders	●	●						●
Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples (cup of wine, loaf of bread)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Jesus is betrayed by Judas Iscariot with a kiss	●	●			●	●		●
Jesus denied by Peter	●	●			●	●		●
Jesus mocked by Herod and Roman soldiers		●			●			●
Jesus kept in custody while Barabbas is released by Pilate	●	●						●
Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied by Peter, James, and John who all fall asleep	●	●						●
Jesus' trial (before the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, Pontus Pilate, Herod Antipas, Pontus Pilate again)	●	●						●
Jesus sentenced to death by Pilate	●	●			●			●
Jesus flogged by Roman soldiers	●	●					●	●
Jesus crucified	●	●		●	●		●	●
Jesus buried in tomb	●	●						●
Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Jesus' tomb visited by Mary Magdalene and other women		●			●		●	●
Jesus' appears to and interaction with Mary Magdalene after the resurrection	●	●						●
Jesus appears to two men on the road to Emmaus after the resurrection		●				●	●	●
Jesus appears to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection		●					●	●
Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection in the Upper Room, once with Thomas absent and once with Thomas present		●					●	●
Jesus ascends to heaven	●	●		●		●	●	●
Jesus gives the Great Commission		●				●		●
Jesus' nature (God, human)	●	●		●				●
Jesus' sinlessness			●	●	●			
Jesus' blood sacrifice	●	●	●	●			●	
Jesus' titles (Alpha and Omega, Bread of Life, Christ, Immanuel, King of the Jews, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Savior, Son of God, Son of Man, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Nazarene, Good Shepherd, etc.)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Jezebel (the evil wife of Ahab)	●	●			●	●		●
Joab (David's general)	●	●				●		●

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Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Job	●	●			●	●		●
Job tested by Satan with God's permission	●	●			●			●
Job's comforters (friends)	●	●			●			●
Job remains faithful to God	●	●			●			●
Job restored by God	●	●			●			●
Job 19:20 (Skin of my teeth)	●					●		●
John 1:1 (In the beginning was the Word)	●				●	●		●
John 8:12 (I am the light of the world)		●				●		●
John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)	●					●		●
John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)	●			●		●		●
John the Baptist	●	●			●			●
John the Baptist preaches and baptizes in the wilderness, declaring Jesus to be the Messiah (Lamb of God)	●	●			●			●
John the Baptist eats locusts and wild honey	●	●				●		●
Jonah (a prophet of God)	●	●			●	●		●
Jonah (a prophet of God) is thrown overboard by the sailors during a great storm and swallowed by a big fish	●	●			●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Jonathan (King Saul's son)	●	●				●		●
Joppa	●	●				●		
Joseph (father of Jesus)	●	●			●	●		●
Joseph (father of Jesus) worked as a carpenter		●			●		●	
Joseph (father of Jesus) instructed by the angel to wed Mary	●	●						●
Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary escape to Egypt	●	●						●
Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary return from Egypt to Nazareth	●	●			●			●
Joseph (son of Jacob and Rachel)	●	●	●		●	●		●
Joseph's (son of Jacob) dreams	●	●				●		●
Joseph (son of Jacob) sold by brothers	●	●			●	●		●
Joseph (son of Jacob) thrown in jail after the unsuccessful advances by Potiphar's wife	●	●				●		●
Joseph (son of Jacob), the favored son receives a coat of many colors from his father	●	●	●		●	●		●
Joseph (son of Jacob) interprets Pharaoh's dreams	●	●			●	●		●
Joseph (son of Jacob) is kind to his brothers	●	●			●	●		●
Josephus	●	●				●		●
Joshua (Moses' successor)	●	●			●	●		●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Judah (son of Jacob and Leah)	●	●				●		●
Judaism	●				●	●	●	●
Judas Iscariot commits suicide by hanging		●			●			●
Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)	●		●	●	●	●		●
Justification (by faith)	●		●	●		●		●
Kingdom, Divided (Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom)	●				●	●		●
Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven)	●		●			●		●
Laban (Rebekah's brother; Jacob's father-in-law and uncle)	●	●	●			●		
Law versus Grace	●					●		●
Lazarus	●				●	●		●
Law, the	●		●			●		●
Leaven	●					●		●
Leper (Leprosy)	●					●		●
Leviathan	●				●			●
Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39 (Love your neighbor as yourself)	●				●	●		●
Light versus Darkness	●					●		●
Liturgy						●	●	●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Lord's Prayer, The	●	●			●	●	●	●
Lost sheep, Parable of		●				●		●
Lot (Abraham's nephew)	●	●						●
Lot's wife turns into a pillar of salt	●	●			●	●		●
Love, Brotherly		●	●			●		
Luke the physician (author of the Gospel of Luke)	●	●	●					●
Luke 23:34 (Father, forgive them for they know not what they do)					●	●		●
Maccabees, 1 & 2	●				●			●
Malachi (prophet of God)	●	●				●		●
Manasseh (son of Joseph and Asenath)	●	●				●		
Mankind (Body and spirit/soul)			●	●		●		
Mark 12:17 (Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's)	●	●			●	●		●
Mark of the Beast (666)	●					●		●
Marriage (Matrimony)	●		●				●	●
Martha	●	●				●		●
Martyr (Martyrdom)	●					●	●	●
Mary Magdalene	●	●			●	●	●	●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Mary (mother of Jesus)	●	●			●		●	●
Mary (mother of Jesus) told by Gabriel (the angel) that she will have a son	●	●			●			●
Mary (mother of Jesus) travel to Bethlehem with Joseph for the census	●	●						●
Mary (mother of Jesus) births Jesus in a Bethlehem stable because there was no room in the inn	●	●			●		●	
Mary births Jesus, wraps him in swaddling cloths, and places him in a manger	●	●			●		●	
Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes shepherds visiting baby Jesus	●	●			●	●		●
Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes wise men who bring gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus	●	●			●	●		●
Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5 (This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased)	●					●		●
Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the salt of the earth…You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket…Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 5:39 (Whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also… Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two)					●	●		●
Matthew 5:44 (Love your enemies)					●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Matthew 6:19-20 (Do not store up treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy)	●					●		●
Matthew 6:24 (No man can serve two masters…You cannot serve both God and wealth)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 6:28-29 (Consider the lilies of the field)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 7:1 (Judge not, lest you be judged)					●	●		●
Matthew 7:6 (Do not give what is holy to dogs, do not cast your pearls to the swine)					●	●		●
Matthew 7:7 (Ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you)					●	●		●
Matthew 7:14 (The gate is small and the way is narrow)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 7:20 (By their fruits you will know them)					●	●		●
Matthew 8:22 (Let the dead bury their own dead)					●	●		●
Matthew 11:28-30 (Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden)				●		●		●
Matthew 12:30 (He that is not with me is against me)		●			●			●
Matthew 13:57 (A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household)	●	●			●	●		●
Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39 (Blind leading the blind)	●					●		●
Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33 (Get behind me Satan)	●				●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Matthew 17:20 (If you have faith a small as a mustard seed)	●					●		●
Matthew 19:6 (What God has joined together let man not separate)	●					●		●
Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:14-15 (Let the children come to me)	●	●				●		●
Matthew 19:23-26 (It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 19:30 (The first will be last and the last will be first)		●			●	●		●
Matthew 22:13-14 (Many are called but few are chosen)	●				●	●		●
Matthew 25:31-46 (Separating the sheep from the goats)	●					●		●
Matthew 25:40-45 (To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to me)	●	●				●		
Matthew 26:41 (Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak)	●					●		●
Matthew 26:42; Luke 22:42 (Let this cup pass from me. Not my will but your will be done)	●					●		●
Matthew 27:46 (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)	●				●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Matthias selected to replace Judas Iscariot as apostle		●				●		●
Messiah	●		●		●	●	●	●
Methuselah	●	●			●	●	●	●
Methuselah dies at the age of 969	●	●				●		●
Micah 6:8 (O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?)	●	●				●	●	●
Minister (pastor, clergy)					●	●	●	●
Miracle (Miracles)	●		●			●		●
Miriam (Moses' sister)	●	●						●
Missionary (Missions)			●			●		●
Mordecai (Esther's cousin; eventual prime minister of the Persian Empire)	●	●			●			
Mosaic Covenant			●		●	●		
Moses, Law of (Mosaic Law)	●				●	●		●
Moses	●	●			●	●	●	●
Moses is born and saved by being hidden in a floating basket	●	●				●		●
Moses kills an Egyptian and flees Egypt		●				●		●
Moses and the burning bush	●	●			●	●		●

Table 10–*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Moses receives the Ten Commandments	●	●			●			●
Moses breaks the original tablets and receives replacements	●	●			●			
Moses makes a bronze serpent to save the Israelites	●	●						●
Mount Ararat	●				●	●		●
Mount of Olives	●					●		●
Mount Sinai	●	●			●	●		●
Mustard Seed, Parable of the	●	●					●	
Nahum (a prophet of God)	●	●				●		●
Nazareth	●				●	●		●
Nebuchadnezzar II	●					●		●
Nehemiah (leader of a group who went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall)	●	●						●
Nero	●	●			●	●		
New Creation	●		●			●		
New Heaven and New Earth			●	●	●	●		
New Jerusalem	●		●			●		
Ninety-five theses						●	●	●
Noah	●	●			●		●	●

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Table 10–*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Noah's Ark, Story of (ark, animals, flood, raven, dove, olive branch, etc.)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Noah curses Ham after he sees his father naked	●	●			●			
Noah's family (Unnamed wife, Shem and unnamed wife, Ham and unnamed wife, and Japheth and unnamed wife)	●	●			●			
Noachic Covenant		●	●		●	●		
Ordain (Ordination)	●					●		●
Original Sin	●		●		●			●
Orthodox (Orthodoxy)	●					●	●	●
Parable	●	●			●	●		●
Paradise				●		●		●
Passover, The first	●	●			●	●		●
Passover, the Festival		●			●		●	●
Patriarchs		●			●	●		●
Paul (Saul)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Paul (Saul) persecutes Christians		●			●		●	●
Paul's (Saul) conversion on the road to Damascus	●	●			●		●	●
Paul (Saul) and Barnabus go on first missionary journey; Mark (John Mark) accompanies them		●					●	●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Paul (Saul) goes on second missionary journey; Silas accompanies him		●					●	●
Paul (Saul) and Silas witness to the Philippian jailer		●	●					●
Paul (Saul) preaches on Mars Hill in Athens		●				●		●
Paul (Saul) goes on third missionary journey		●					●	●
Pearl of Great Price, Parable of	●	●			●	●		●
Pentecost, Feast					●	●		●
Pentecost (post-resurrection)	●	●			●	●		●
Persia	●					●		●
Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)	●	●		●	●			
Peter (Simon/Cephas)	●	●			●	●		●
Peter (Simon/Cephas) confesses Jesus as Christ, the Son of God	●	●				●		●
Peter (Simon/Cephas) preaches at Pentecost and 3,000 are baptized		●			●			●
Peter (Simon/Cephas) and John heal a crippled man		●				●		●
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life)		●			●	●		●
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) commands that all Hebrew boys be killed	●	●			●			●
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) refuses to let the Israelites go	●	●			●			●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) relents and allows the Israelites to leave though changes his mind and pursues them	●	●			●			●
Pharaoh's (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) army destroyed in the Red Sea	●	●			●			●
Pharisees and Sadducees	●	●			●	●	●	●
Philip (the evangelist) shares the Gospel with the Ethiopian		●				●		●
Philistines	●	●			●	●		●
Philosophies/Worldviews (Atheism, Agnosticism, Deism, Calvinism, Darwinianism, Arminianism, Monotheism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Pluralism, Creationism, Secular Humanism, New Age, Theistic Evolution, etc.)	●				●		●	●
Pontius Pilate	●	●			●	●		●
Pontius Pilate attempts to convince the leaders to release Jesus; he washes his hands to demonstrate that Jesus' fate was no longer his responsibility	●	●			●			●
Potiphar	●	●	●			●		
Predestination			●	●		●	●	●
Prodigal Son, Parable of	●	●			●	●	●	●
Prophecies, Messianic	●	●			●	●		
Prophet	●				●	●		●

Table 10—*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath)				●	●	●		
Protestantism (Protestant)	●			●	●	●	●	●
Proverbs 11:2; 16:18 (When pride comes, then comes disgrace; Pride goes before destruction)	●				●	●		
Proverbs 15:1 (A soft word turns away anger)					●	●		●
Psalm 23	●				●	●		●
Queen of Sheba visits King Solomon	●	●			●	●		●
Rabbi	●					●		●
Rahab	●	●				●		●
Rebekah (Laban's sister, Isaac's wife)	●	●	●			●		●
Reformation, The	●					●	●	●
Reformation, Five pillars of the (Salvation as taught in the scriptures alone, by Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, to the glory of God alone)				●		●	●	●
Regeneration				●	●	●		
Rehoboam (Solomon's son)	●	●				●	●	●
Repentance (Repent)					●	●		●
Resurrection (at Second Coming)			●	●	●		●	●
Revelation 9 (Four Horsemen)	●				●	●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Roman Empire	●					●		●
Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)				●		●		●
Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)				●		●		●
Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good)	●					●		●
Ruth (wife of Boaz, mother of Obed, grandmother of Jesse, great-grandmother of King David)	●	●			●			●
Ruth follows Naomi (Where you go, I will go. Your people will by my people…)	●				●	●		●
Ruth marries Boaz	●	●				●		●
Sabbath	●		●		●	●	●	●
Sacraments	●					●	●	●
Sacrifice (burnt offering)	●					●		●
Saints	●			●		●		●
Salvation			●		●	●		●
Salvation, Plan of	●	●	●	●		●		●
Samaritans	●					●		●
Samson (the twelfth judge)	●	●			●	●		●
Samson kills one thousand men with a donkey's jawbone	●	●				●		●

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Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Samson removes the doors and doorposts of Gaza	●	●						●
Samson deceived by Delilah and loses his strength when his hair is cut by the Philistines	●				●			●
Samuel	●	●				●		●
Sanctification (Sanctify)			●	●		●		●
Sarah (Sarai, Abraham's wife and half sister)	●	●	●			●		●
Sarah laughs when she hears the guests suggest that she would bear a child	●	●	●					
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Satan, Origin of	●	●					●	●
Satan roams the earth seeking to cause spiritual damage to mankind	●	●	●		●			●
Satan destined for eternal confinement in hell	●	●	●		●			●
Saul (first king of Israel)	●	●			●	●		●
Saul (first king of Israel) becomes jealous of David		●			●			●
Saul (first king of Israel) is wounded in battle and dies by falling on his own sword; his body is hung on the wall at Beth-shan		●			●			●
Scapegoat	●						●	●
Scribe (Scribes)		●					●	●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Second Coming (End Times)	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Second Coming (End Times), Timing of	●			●		●	●	●
Second Coming (End Times), Events surrounding	●			●		●	●	●
Sermon on the Mount	●	●			●	●	●	●
Serpent, The					●	●	●	●
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and the fiery furnace	●	●				●		●
Sheol	●					●		●
Shibboleth (Password used by the Israelites because their enemies had difficulty pronouncing it)	●				●	●		●
Silas	●	●				●		●
Simon of Cyrene carries Jesus' cross	●	●						●
Sin (Transgression, Trespass)			●	●		●		●
Sin debt		●		●	●			
Sins, Seven deadly						●	●	●
Social Gospel	●					●	●	●
Sodom and Gomorrah	●				●	●	●	●
Solomon (son of King David)	●	●			●	●		●
Solomon (son of King David) succeeds David as King of Israel	●				●			●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Solomon (son of King David) asks God for wisdom and God grants it	●	●			●			
Solomon (son of King David) builds the temple in Jerusalem	●	●			●			●
Solomon (son of King David) falls into idol worship	●	●						●
Sower, Parable of	●	●						●
Spirituality (Spiritual)	●					●	●	
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	●	●		●		●		●
Spiritual warfare			●	●			●	
Stephen the Martyr	●	●		●		●		●
Synagogue	●	●				●		
Tabernacle	●					●		●
Tabernacles, Feast of	●	●				●		
Talents, Parable of the		●				●		●
Tarsus	●	●				●		
Temple, The	●				●	●		●
Temple curtain torn in two after Jesus' death	●					●		●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Temptation (Tempt)	●	●				●		
Ten Commandments	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#1 You shall have no other gods before me)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#2 You shall not make for yourself an idol)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#3 You shall not take the name of your Lord God in vain)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#4 Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#5 Children obey/honor your parents)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#6 You shall not murder)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#7 You shall not commit adultery)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#8 You shall not steal)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#9 You shall not bear false witness)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Commandments (#10 You shall not covet)	●				●	●	●	●
Ten Plagues	●	●			●	●		●
Ten Plagues (#1 The Nile turned to blood confronted the Egyptian god Hapi, the god of the river)	●	●			●			●

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Ten Plagues (#2 Frogs confronted the Egyptian god Kekt, whose image was a frog)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#3 Flies confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#4 Gnats confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#5 Disease among cattle confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#6 Boils)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#7 Hail)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#8 Locusts)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#9 Darkness confronted Re, Ra, or Amon-Ra, the sun god of Egypt)	●	●			●			●
Ten Plagues (#10 Death of firstborn sons)	●	●			●			●
Theologians (Calvin, Luther, Kierkegaard, Moody, Spurgeon, etc.)	●			●		●		●
Thomas (the disciple) doubts Jesus' resurrection	●	●			●			
Three virtues (Faith, hope, and charity)	●		●		●			●
Timothy	●	●						●
Tithe		●				●	●	●
Transfiguration	●						●	●

Table 10−*Continued.*

Item	Beal (2009)	Beers (2007)	Easley (2006)	Grudem (2005)	Hirsch (2002)	Lewis (1989)	Prothero (2007)	Taylor (2005)
Tree of Life		●				●		●
Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil		●			●	●		●
Trinity		●		●		●	●	●
Twelve apostles (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Matthias)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Twelve disciples (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas Iscariot)	●	●			●	●	●	●
Twelve tribes (Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Levi, Menasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Zebulun)	●	●			●	●		●
Unleavened bread	●					●		●
Virgin birth	●		●			●	●	●
Weeds, Parable of the	●	●				●		
World Religions (Hinduism, Islam, etc.)	●	●			●		●	
Wrath (Wrath of God)	●		●			●		
Zacchaeus		●				●		●
Zechariah (a prophet of God)		●				●		●

APPENDIX D

DELPHI ROUND ITEM LISTS

LIST OF ROUND ONE ITEMS

1. 1 Corinthians 9:22 (All things to all people)

2. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

3. 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (The Lord will come just like a thief in the night)

4. 1 Timothy 6:10 (Love of money is the root of all evil)

5. 2 Corinthians 3:6 (For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life)

6. 2 Corinthians 5:7 (Walk by faith, not by sight)

7. Aaron (brother of Moses)

8. Abraham (Abram)

9. Abraham's (Abram) call to Canaan by God

10. Abraham (Abram) willing to sacrifice Isaac

11. Abraham's (Abram) and Lot separate

12. Abrahamic covenant

13. Absalom (son of King David)

14. Absalom (son of King David) leads a revolt against David with the help of Ahithophel and is defeated and dies at the hand of Joab after being caught by his hair in an oak tree

15. Acts 20:35 (It is more blessed to give than to receive)

16. Adam and Eve

17. Adam and Eve's first three children (Cain, Abel, Seth)

18. Adoption

19. Adultery

20. Ahab (an evil king of Israel)

21. Ahasuerus (another name for Xerxes, Esther's husband and Persian king)

22. Altar

23. Ananias and Sapphira die after lying to the Holy Spirit

24. Angel (Angels)

25. Angels, Types of (Cherubim, Seraphim, Archangels, etc.)

26. Angels, Named (Archangels Gabriel and Michael)

27. Antichrist

28. Apocalypse (Greek meaning revelation)

29. Apostle

30. Aquila and Priscilla (tentmakers in Corinth)

31. Ark of the Covenant

32. Armageddon

33. Assyria

34. Atonement

35. Authors (C.S. Lewis, John Milton, Thomas Merton, Charles Darwin, Kurt Vonnegut, etc.)

36. Baal (The name of many heathen gods; generally credited with controlling rain, crops, fertility, fruit, and cattle)

37. Babel, Tower of (Dispersion and language confusion)

38. Babylon

39. Babylonian exile (captivity)

40. Balaam

41. Balaam's donkey

42. Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

43. Barnabus

44. Beatitudes (Blessed are those…)

45. Belshazzar (the last Babylonian king)

46. Bethany

47. Bethlehem

48. Bible (Word of God)

49. Bible, Ancient Translations the (Vulgate and Septuagint)

50. Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary,

sufficient)

51. Bible, Books of the

52. Bible, Geography of the

53. Bible, Geography of the: Regions (Canaan, Galatia, Galilee, Judea, Samaria)

54. Bible, Geography of the: Rivers (Euphrates, Jordan, Nile, Tigris)

55. Bible, Geography of the: Seas (Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Mediterranean

Sea)

56. Bible, Original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek)

57. Bible, Prophecy

58. Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)

59. Bible, Old Testament sections (Pentateuch, Torah, etc.)

60. Bible, Testaments (Old Testament, New Testament)

61. Bible, Translations of the (NASB, NIV, KJV, etc.)

62. Blasphemy

63. Blessings and curses

64. Blood of Christ

65. Body of Christ

66. Book of Life

67. Caesar Augustus

68. Cains sacrifice rejected by God

69. Cain kills Abel

70. Caleb (a good spy)

71. Calvary (Golgotha)

72. Canon (Makeup, development, etc.)

73. Centurion

74. Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)

75. Christ's divine activities (Creation, providence, redemption)

76. Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)

77. Christianity

78. Christology (Study of Christ)

79. Church, The (congregation)

80. Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)

81. Circumcision (Physical and spiritual)

82. Communion (Lord's Supper)

83. Concubine

84. Condemnation, eternal (eternal damnation; fire and brimstone; unquenchable fire)

85. Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)

86. Conversion

87. Cornelius

88. Covenant

89. Creation

90. Creation ex nihilo (Creation out of nothing by God's word)

91. Creeds (Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed)

92. Crown of thorns

93. Crucifixion

94. Cults (Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, etc.)

95. Cyrus (also called Cyrus the Great; head of Persian Empire)

96. Daniel (member of the Judean royal family)

97. Daniel and the lion's den

98. Darius the Mede (conquered Babylon and made Cyrus king; the name of several Medo-Persian rulers)

99. David (son of Jesse, shepherd, future king of Israel)

100. David accepts Goliath's challenge and kills him

101. David crowned king of Judah

102. David commits adultery with Bathsheba

103. David orders Uriah be placed in the most dangerous part of the battle so he is killed

104. David described by God as a Man after God's own heart

105. Day of Atonement

106. Dead Sea Scrolls

107. Death

108. Deborah (the fourth judge)

109. Demon (Demons)

110. Depravity

111. Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)

112. Disciple

113. Dispensationalism

114. Doctrine

115. Ecclesiastes 1:2 (Vanity of vanities! All is vanity)

116. Ecclesiastes 1:9 (There is nothing new under the sun)

117. Ecclesiastes 3:1 (For everything there is a season)

118. Ecclesiastes 8:15; Luke 12:19 (Eat, drink, be merry)

119. Ecclesiastes 11:1 (Cast your bread upon the waters)

120. Eden, Garden of

121. Egypt

122. Elder (pastor, shepherd)

123. Election

124. Eli (Israel's high priest)

125. Elijah (a prophet of Israel)

126. Elijah (a prophet of Israel) defeats the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel and executes them

127. Elijah experiences the presence of God in a gentle win

128. Elijah (a prophet of Israel) is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire

129. Elisha (a prophet of Israel, and Elijah's successor)

130. Elisha succeeds Elijah

131. Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist)

132. Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) told by Gabriel (the angel) that she will have a son)

133. Elizabeth's (mother of John the Baptist) baby leaps within her when Mary visits)

134. Enoch

135. Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)

136. Ephesians 4:26 (Don't let the sun go down on your anger)

137. Ephraim (son of Joseph and Asenath)

138. Epiphany

139. Epistle

140. Esau (son of Isaac and Rebekah)

141. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob

142. Eschatology

143. Esther (also called Hadassah, queen of the Persian Empire; wife of Xerxes [Ahasuerus])

144. Esther saves the Jews in Persia from destruction

145. Eternal (eternity)

146. Eternal life (everlasting life)

147. Ethics

148. Evangelicalism

149. Evangelism (Witnessing)

150. Eve is tempted/deceived by the serpent in the Garden of Eden

151. Evil (Natural Evil, Moral Evil)

152. Exodus, The

153. Exodus 3:13-14 (I AM who I AM)

154. Exodus 21:23-24; Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:21; Matthew 5:38 (Eye for an eye)

155. Ezra (author of biblical books Ezra and Esther; led a group back to Israel to reinitiate worship there)

156. Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)

157. Faith Traditions (Denominations; Church groups)

158. Fall, the

159. Fall, the (results in pain, sickness, and death)

160. Fall, the (results in God's curse)

161. False prophets (Wolf in sheep's clothing)

162. Flood, The Great

163. Forbidden fruit

164. Foreknowledge

165. Forgiveness (Remission of sin)

166. Free will

167. Fruit of the Spirit

168. Fundamentalism

169. Genesis 1:1-2 (In the beginning…)

170. Genesis 1:27 (Creation of male and female)

171. Genesis 1:28 (Be fruitful and multiply)

172. Genesis 1:3 (Let there be light)

173. Genesis 3:19 (For you are dust, and to dust you will return)

174. Gentile

175. Gideon (the fifth judge)

176. Gideon defeats the Midianites

177. Gideon tests God with a fleece

178. Glorification (Glorified Body)

179. Glory

180. Glory, shekinah (manifestation of God's glory)

181. God (First Person of the Trinity)

182. God's titles (Abba, Adonai, El Shaddai, Elohim, Father, Jehovah, Lord, Yahweh)

183. God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)

184. God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)

185. Golden Rule

186. Goliath (Philistine warrior giant who was killed by David)

187. Good Samaritan, Parable of the

188. Gospel (Good News)

189. Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

190. Grace

191. Hades

192. Hagar (Sarah's maid)

193. Haggai (a prophet of God)

194. Hannah (Samuel's mother)

195. Hanukkah (Chanukah)

196. Heaven

197. Heaven, Reward in

198. Hebron

199. Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)

200. Herod Agrippa II (ruler of Palestine; before whom Paul appeared)

201. Herod Antipas (ruler of Palestine) has John the Baptist beheaded at the request of Salome

202. Herod the Great (ruler of Palestine; ruled at the time of Jesus' birth)

203. Herod the Great kills all male infants in Bethlehem

204. Herodias (wife of Herod Antipas)

205. Hezekiah (a king of Judah)

206. Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)

207. Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

208. Holy Spirit, Gifts of the

209. Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

210. Homosexuality

211. Hosanna

212. Hypoctrite

213. Idol (graven image)

214. Image of God, Created in the

215. Incarnation

216. Intertestamental Period: The Apocrypha (Fourteen books written during the Intertestamental Period were accepted as scripture by Catholics though none were accepted into the Protestant canon)

217. Intertestamental Period: The Talmud (a commentary on the law of Moses compiled by Jewish religious leaders over a period of approximately 800 years, between 300 B.C. and A.D. 500

218. Isaac (son of Abraham and Sarah)

219. Isaac marries Rebekah

220. Isaiah (a prophet of God)

221. Isaiah prophecies about the coming Messiah (Isaiah 9; Isaiah 53, etc.)

222. Isaiah 2:4; also Micah 4:3 (Swords into plowshares)

223. Isaiah 11:6 (The lion will lay down with the lamb)

224. Ishmael (son of Abraham and Sarah's maid Hagar)

225. Israel, Land of (Canaan, Holy Land, Land flowing with milk and honey, Palestine, Promised Land)

226. Israelites (Hebrews; Jews; Chosen People)

227. Israelites become slaves to Egypt

228. Israelites construct the Tabernacle

229. Israelites cross the Jordan River into Canaan led by Joshua

230. Israelites cross the Red Sea

231. Israelites demand a King

232. Israelites experience military victories (Jericho, Canaanites, etc.)

233. Israelites receive provisions from God after the Exodus (Guidance from a pillar of fire and pillar of cloud, purified water at Marah, manna from heaven, water from the rock)

234. Israelites send twelve spies into Canaan (giants in the land)

235. Israelites wander in the wilderness for forty years

236. Israelites witness God's presence with thunder, lightning, and a dense cloud at Mt. Sinai and are told to not approach the mountain

237. Israelites worship the golden calf

238. Jacob (also called Israel; son of Isaac)

239. Jacob steals Isaac's blessing from Esau

240. Jacob's dream (Jacob's ladder)

241. Jacob's meets Rachel at a well

242. Jacob marries Leah and then Rachel

243. Jacob wrestles with God

244. Jacob and his sons move to Egypt

245. James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead)

246. James (half-brother of Jesus)

247. Jeremiah (a prophet of God)

248. Jeremiah 13:23 (Can a leopard change its spots?)

249. Jericho

250. Jeroboam I (the first king of the Northern Kingdom)

251. Jerusalem

252. Jerusalem destroyed (AD 70)

253. Jesus

254. Jesus acknowledged by Simeon and Anna when Joseph and Mary present Jesus at the temple

255. Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (You who are without sin cast the first stone)

256. Jesus' appears to and interaction with Mary Magdalene after the resurrection

257. Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection in the Upper Room, once with Thomas absent and once with Thomas present

258. Jesus appears to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection

259. Jesus appears to two men on the road to Emmaus after the resurrection

260. Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration; witnessed by Peter, James, and John

261. Jesus ascends to heaven

262. Jesus baptized by John the Baptist

263. Jesus' birth to the virgin Mary

264. Jesus' blood sacrifice

265. Jesus buried in tomb

266. Jesus calls the disciples

267. Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples (cup of wine, loaf of bread)

268. Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)

269. Jesus clears the money changers from the temple

270. Jesus crucified

271. Jesus dedicated at the temple

272. Jesus denied by Peter

273. Jesus enters Jerusalem (the Triumphal Entry)

274. Jesus flogged by Roman soldiers

275. Jesus gives the Great Commission

276. Jesus is betrayed by Judas Iscariot with a kiss

277. Jesus is plotted against by the religious leaders

278. Jesus kept in custody while Barabbas is released by Pilate

279. Jesus' miracles (Turns water into wine, heals the son of the Official, raises Lazarus from the dead, feeds the five thousand, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, walks on water, etc.)

280. Jesus mocked by Herod and Roman soldiers

281. Jesus' nature (God, human)

282. Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)

283. Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection

284. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied by Peter, James, and John who all fall asleep

285. Jesus rebukes the religious leaders

286. Jesus responds to each temptation with "It is written"

287. Jesus sentenced to death by Pilate

288. Jesus' sinlessness

289. Jesus speaks to Nicodemus

290. Jesus speaks to the woman at the well

291. Jesus teaches in the temple at the age of twelve

292. Jesus tempted in the wilderness by Satan

293. Jesus teaches in parables

294. Jesus' titles (Alpha and Omega, Bread of Life, Christ, Immanuel, King of the Jews, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Savior, Son of God, Son of Man, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Nazarene, Good Shepherd, etc.)

295. Jesus' tomb visited by Mary Magdalene and other women

296. Jesus' trial (before the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, Pontus Pilate, Herod Antipas, Pontus Pilate again)

297. Jesus visits Mary and Martha

298. Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes

299. Jezebel (the evil wife of Ahab)

300. Joab (David's general)

301. Job

302. Job tested by Satan with God's permission

303. Job's comforters (friends)

304. Job remains faithful to God

305. Job restored by God

306. Job 19:20 (Skin of my teeth)

307. John 1:1 (In the beginning was the Word)

308. John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)

309. John 8:12 (I am the light of the world)

310. John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)

311. John the Baptist

312. John the Baptist preaches and baptizes in the wilderness, declaring Jesus to be the Messiah (Lamb of God)

313. John the Baptist eats locusts and wild honey

314. Jonah (a prophet of God)

315. Jonah (a prophet of God) is thrown overboard by the sailors during a great storm and swallowed by a big fish

316. Jonathan (King Saul's son)

317. Joppa

318. Joseph (father of Jesus)

319. Joseph (father of Jesus) worked as a carpenter

320. Joseph (father of Jesus) instructed by the angel to wed Mary

321. Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary escape to Egypt

322. Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary return from Egypt to Nazareth

323. Joseph (son of Jacob and Rachel)

324. Joseph (son of Jacob), the favored son receives a coat of many colors from his father

325. Joseph's (son of Jacob) dreams

326. Joseph (son of Jacob) sold by brothers

327. Joseph (son of Jacob) thrown in jail after the unsuccessful advances by Potiphar's wife

328. Joseph (son of Jacob) interprets Pharaoh's dreams

329. Joseph (son of Jacob) is kind to his brothers

330. Josephus

331. Joshua (Moses' successor)

332. Judah (son of Jacob and Leah)

333. Judaism

334. Judas Iscariot commits suicide by hanging

335. Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)

336. Justification (by faith)

337. Kingdom, Divided (Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom)

338. Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven)

339. Laban (Rebekah's brother; Jacob's father-in-law and uncle)

340. Law versus Grace

341. Lazarus

342. Law, the

343. Leaven

344. Leper (Leprosy)

345. Leviathan

346. Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39 (Love your neighbor as yourself)

347. Light versus Darkness

348. Liturgy

349. Lord's Prayer, The

350. Lost sheep, Parable of

351. Lot (Abraham's nephew)

352. Lot's wife turns into a pillar of salt

353. Love, Brotherly

354. Luke the physician (author of the Gospel of Luke)

355. Luke 23:34 (Father, forgive them for they know not what they do)

356. Maccabees, 1 & 2

357. Malachi (prophet of God)

358. Manasseh (son of Joseph and Asenath)

359. Mankind (Body and spirit/soul)

360. Mark 12:17 (Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's)

361. Mark of the Beast (666)

362. Marriage (Matrimony)

363. Martha

364. Martyr (Martyrdom)

365. Mary Magdalene

366. Mary (mother of Jesus)

367. Mary (mother of Jesus) told by Gabriel (the angel) that she will have a son

368. Mary (mother of Jesus) travel to Bethlehem with Joseph for the census

369. Mary (mother of Jesus) births Jesus in a Bethlehem stable because there was no room in the inn

370. Mary births Jesus, wraps him in swaddling cloths, and places him in a manger

371. Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes shepherds visiting baby Jesus

372. Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes wise men who bring gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus

373. Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5 (This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased)

374. Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the salt of the earth…You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket…Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works)

375. Matthew 5:39 (Whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also… Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two)

376. Matthew 5:44 (Love your enemies)

377. Matthew 6:19-20 (Do not store up treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy)

378. Matthew 6:24 (No man can serve two masters…You cannot serve both God and wealth)

379. Matthew 6:28-29 (Consider the lilies of the field)

380. Matthew 7:1 (Judge not, lest you be judged)

381. Matthew 7:6 (Do not give what is holy to dogs, do not cast your pearls to the swine)

382. Matthew 7:7 (Ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you)

383. Matthew 7:14 (The gate is small and the way is narrow)

384. Matthew 7:20 (By their fruits you will know them)

385. Matthew 8:22 (Let the dead bury their own dead)

386. Matthew 11:28-30 (Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden)

387. Matthew 12:30 (He that is not with me is against me)

388. Matthew 13:57 (A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household)

389. Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39 (Blind leading the blind)

390. Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33 (Get behind me Satan)

391. Matthew 17:20 (If you have faith a small as a mustard seed)

392. Matthew 19:6 (What God has joined together let man not separate)

393. Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:14-15 (Let the children come to me)

394. Matthew 19:23-26 (It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven)

395. Matthew 19:30 (The first will be last and the last will be first)

396. Matthew 22:13-14 (Many are called but few are chosen)

397. Matthew 25:31-46 (Separating the sheep from the goats)

398. Matthew 25:40-45 (To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to me)

399. Matthew 26:41 (Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak)

400. Matthew 26:42; Luke 22:42 (Let this cup pass from me. Not my will but your will be done)

401. Matthew 27:46 (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)

402. Matthias selected to replace Judas Iscariot as apostle

403. Messiah

404. Methuselah

405. Methuselah dies at the age of 969

406. Micah 6:8 (O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?)

407. Minister (pastor, clergy)

408. Miracle (Miracles)

409. Miriam (Moses' sister)

410. Missionary (Missions)

411. Mordecai (Esther's cousin; eventual prime minister of the Persian Empire)

412. Mosaic Covenant

413. Moses

414. Moses, Law of (Mosaic Law)

415. Moses is born and saved by being hidden in a floating basket

416. Moses kills an Egyptian and flees Egypt

417. Moses and the burning bush

418. Moses receives the Ten Commandments

419. Moses breaks the original tablets and receives replacements

420. Moses makes a bronze serpent to save the Israelites

421. Mount Ararat

422. Mount of Olives

423. Mount Sinai

424. Mustard Seed, Parable of the

425. Nahum (a prophet of God)

426. Nazareth

427. Nebuchadnezzar II

428. Nehemiah (leader of a group who went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the

wall)

429. Nero

430. New Creation

431. New Heaven and New Earth

432. New Jerusalem

433. Ninety-five theses

434. Noah

435. Noah's Ark, Story of (ark, animals, flood, raven, dove, olive branch, etc.)

436. Noah curses Ham after he sees his father naked

437. Noah's family (Unnamed wife, Shem and unnamed wife, Ham and unnamed wife, and Japheth and unnamed wife)

438. Noachic Covenant

439. Ordain (Ordination)

440. Original Sin

441. Orthodox (Orthodoxy)

442. Parable

443. Paradise

444. Passover, The first

445. Passover, the Festival

446. Patriarchs

447. Paul (Saul)

448. Paul (Saul) persecutes Christians

449. Paul's (Saul) conversion on the road to Damascus

450. Paul (Saul) and Barnabus go on first missionary journey; Mark (John Mark) accompanies them

451. Paul (Saul) goes on second missionary journey; Silas accompanies him

452. Paul (Saul) and Silas witness to the Philippian jailer

453. Paul (Saul) preaches on Mars Hill in Athens

454. Paul (Saul) goes on third missionary journey

455. Pearl of Great Price, Parable of

456. Pentecost, Feast

457. Pentecost (post-resurrection)

458. Persia

459. Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)

460. Peter (Simon/Cephas)

461. Peter (Simon/Cephas) confesses Jesus as Christ, the Son of God

462. Peter (Simon/Cephas) preaches at Pentecost and 3,000 are baptized

463. Peter (Simon/Cephas) and John heal a crippled man

464. Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life)

465. Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) commands that all Hebrew boys be killed

466. Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) refuses to let the Israelites go

467. Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) relents and allows the Israelites to leave though changes his mind and pursues them

468. Pharaoh's (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) army destroyed in the Red Sea

469. Pharisees and Sadducees

470. Philip (the evangelist) shares the Gospel with the Ethiopian

471. Philistines

472. Philosophies/Worldviews (Atheism, Agnosticism, Deism, Calvinism, Darwinianism, Arminianism, Monotheism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Pluralism, Creationism, Secular Humanism, New Age, Theistic Evolution, etc.)

473. Pontius Pilate

474. Pontius Pilate attempts to convince the leaders to release Jesus; he washes his hands to demonstrate that Jesus' fate was no longer his responsibility

475. Potiphar

476. Predestination

477. Prodigal Son, Parable of

478. Prophecies, Messianic

479. Prophet

480. Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath)

481. Protestantism (Protestant)

482. Proverbs 11:2; 16:18 (When pride comes, then comes disgrace; Pride goes before destruction)

483. Proverbs 15:1 (A soft word turns away anger)

484. Psalm 23

485. Queen of Sheba visits King Solomon

486. Rabbi

487. Rahab

488. Rebekah (Laban's sister, Isaac's wife)

489. Reformation, The

490. Reformation, Five pillars of the (Salvation as taught in the scriptures alone, by Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, to the glory of God alone)

491. Regeneration

492. Rehoboam (Solomon's son)

493. Repentance (Repent)

494. Resurrection (at Second Coming)

495. Revelation 9 (Four Horsemen)

496. Roman Empire

497. Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)

498. Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)

499. Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good)

500. Ruth (wife of Boaz, mother of Obed, grandmother of Jesse, great-grandmother of King David)

501. Ruth follows Naomi (Where you go, I will go. Your people will by my people…)

502. Ruth marries Boaz

503. Sabbath

504. Sacraments

505. Sacrifice (burnt offering)

506. Saints

507. Salvation

508. Salvation, Plan of

509. Samaritans

510. Samson (the twelfth judge)

511. Samson kills one thousand men with a donkey's jawbone

512. Samson removes the doors and doorposts of Gaza

513. Samson deceived by Delilah and loses his strength when his hair is cut by the Philistines

514. Samuel

515. Sanctification (Sanctify)

516. Sarah (Sarai, Abraham's wife and half sister)

517. Sarah laughs when she hears the guests suggest that she would bear a child

518. Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)

519. Satan, Origin of

520. Satan roams the earth seeking to cause spiritual damage to mankind

521. Satan destined for eternal confinement in hell

522. Saul (first king of Israel)

523. Saul (first king of Israel) becomes jealous of David

524. Saul (first king of Israel) is wounded in battle and dies by falling on his own sword; his body is hung on the wall at Beth-shan

525. Scapegoat

526. Scribe (Scribes)

527. Second Coming (End Times)

528. Second Coming (End Times), Timing of

529. Second Coming (End Times), Events surrounding

530. Sermon on the Mount

531. Serpent, The

532. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and the fiery furnace

533. Sheol

534. Shibboleth (Password used by the Israelites because their enemies had difficulty pronouncing it)

535. Silas

536. Simon of Cyrene carries Jesus' cross

537. Sin (Transgression, Trespass)

538. Sin debt

539. Sins, Seven deadly

540. Social Gospel

541. Sodom and Gomorrah

542. Solomon (son of King David)

543. Solomon (son of King David) succeeds David as King of Israel

544. Solomon (son of King David) asks God for wisdom and God grants it

545. Solomon (son of King David) builds the temple in Jerusalem

546. Solomon (son of King David) falls into idol worship

547. Sower, Parable of

548. Spirituality (Spiritual)

549. Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

550. Spiritual warfare

551. Stephen the Martyr

552. Synagogue

553. Tabernacle

554. Tabernacles, Feast of

555. Talents, Parable of the

556. Tarsus

557. Temple, The

558. Temple curtain torn in two after Jesus' death

559. Temptation (Tempt)

560. Ten Commandments

561. Ten Commandments (#1 You shall have no other gods before me)

562. Ten Commandments (#2 You shall not make for yourself an idol)

563. Ten Commandments (#3 You shall not take the name of your Lord God in vain)

564. Ten Commandments (#4 Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy)

565. Ten Commandments (#5 Children obey/honor your parents)

566. Ten Commandments (#6 You shall not murder)

567. Ten Commandments (#7 You shall not commit adultery)

568. Ten Commandments (#8 You shall not steal)

569. Ten Commandments (#9 You shall not bear false witness)

570. Ten Commandments (#10 You shall not covet)

571. Ten Plagues

572. Ten Plagues (#1 The Nile turned to blood confronted the Egyptian god Hapi, the god of the river)

573. Ten Plagues (#2 Frogs confronted the Egyptian god Kekt, whose image was a frog)

574. Ten Plagues (#3 Flies confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)

575. Ten Plagues (#4 Gnats confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)

576. Ten Plagues (#5 Disease among cattle confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)

577. Ten Plagues (#6 Boils)

578. Ten Plagues (#7 Hail)

579. Ten Plagues (#8 Locusts)

580. Ten Plagues (#9 Darkness confronted Re, Ra, or Amon-Ra, the sun god of Egypt)

581. Ten Plagues (#10 Death of firstborn sons)

582. Theologians (Calvin, Luther, Kierkegaard, Moody, Spurgeon, etc.)

583. Thomas (the disciple) doubts Jesus' resurrection

584. Three virtues (Faith, hope, and charity)

585. Timothy

586. Tithe

587. Transfiguration

588. Tree of Life

589. Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

590. Trinity

591. Twelve apostles (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Matthias)

592. Twelve disciples (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas Iscariot)

593. Twelve tribes (Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Levi, Menasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Zebulun)

594. Unleavened bread

595. Virgin birth

596. Weeds, Parable of the

597. World Religions (Hinduism, Islam, etc.)

598. Wrath (Wrath of God)

599. Zacchaeus

600. Zechariah (a prophet of God)

LIST OF ROUND TWO ITEMS

1. 1 Corinthians 10 (Lesson of trusting God)

2. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

3. 1 John 2 (Set free from sin in order to show love)

4. 1 John 2:6 (The one who says he abides in Him must walk as He walked)

5. 1 Peter 2:21 (You have been called to this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps)

6. 2 Corinthians 5:7 (Walk by faith, not by sight)

7. Abortion

8. Abrahamic covenant

9. Acts 2:42ff (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)

10. Adam and Eve

11. Agape (love)

12. Atonement

13. Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

14. Beatitudes (Blessed are those…)

15. Bible (formation of)

16. Bible (Word of God)

17. Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient

18. Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)

19. Bible, Testaments (Old Testament, New Testament)

20. Blood of Christ

21. Body of Christ

22. Calvary (Golgatha)

23. Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)

24. Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)

25. Christology (Study of Christ)

26. Christ's divine activities (Creation, providence, redemption)

27. Church, The (congregation)

28. Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)

29. Communion (Lord's Supper)

30. Condemnation, eternal (eternal damnation; fire and brimstone;

unquenchable fire)

31. Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)

32. Conversion

33. Covenant

34. Creation

35. Creation ex nihilo (Creation out of nothing by God's word)

36. Crucifixion

37. Davidic Covenant

38. Death

39. Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)

40. Disciple

41. Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

42. Ephesians 4:32 (Following Christ's example of forgiving others)

43. Ephesians 1 (Identity in Christ)

44. Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)

45. Eternal life (everlasting life)

46. Evangelism (Witnessing)

47. Evil (Natural Evil, Moral Evil)

48. Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)

49. Fall, the

50. Forgiveness

51. Free will

52. Fruit of the Spirit

53. God (First Person of the Trinity)

54. God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)

55. God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)

56. Golden Rule

57. Gospel (Good News)

58. Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

59. Grace

60. Heaven

61. Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)

62. Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)

63. Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

64. Holy Spirit, Gifts of the

65. Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

66. Image of God, Created in the

67. Incarnation

68. James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead)

69. Jesus

70. Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection in the Upper Room, once with Thomas absent and once with Thomas present

71. Jesus ascends to heaven

72. Jesus baptized by John the Baptist

73. Jesus' birth to the virgin Mary

74. Jesus' blood sacrifice

75. Jesus buried in tomb

76. Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples (cup of wine, loaf of bread)

77. Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)

78. Jesus crucified

79. Jesus gives the Great Commission

80. Jesus' miracles (Turns water into wine, heals the son of the Official, raises Lazarus from the dead, feeds the five thousand, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, walks on water, etc.)

81. Jesus' nature (God, human)

82. Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)

83. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied by Peter, James, and John who all fall asleep

84. Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection

85. Jesus responds to each temptation with "It is written"

86. Jesus' sinlessness

87. Jesus teaches in parables

88. Jesus tempted in the wilderness by Satan

89. Jesus' titles (Alpha and Omega, Bread of Life, Christ, Immanuel, King of the Jews, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Savior, Son of God, Son of Man, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Nazarene, Good Shepherd, etc.)

90. Jesus' trial (before the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, Pontus Pilate, Herod Antipas, Pontus Pilate again)

91. John 1:1 (In the beginning was the Word)

92. John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)

93. John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)

94. John 8:12 (I am the light of the world)

95. Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)

96. Justification (by faith)

97. Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven)

98. Law versus Grace

99. Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39 (Love your neighbor as yourself)

100. Light versus Darkness

101. Lord's Prayer, The

102. Love, Brotherly

103. Matthew 11:28-30 (Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden)

104. Matthew 25:40-45 (To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to me)

105. Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

106. Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the salt of the earth…You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket…Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works)

107. Matthew 5:44 (Love your enemies)

108. Matthew 6:19-20 (Do not store up treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy)

109. Matthew 6:24 (No man can serve two masters…You cannot serve both God and wealth)

110. Matthew 7:14 (The gate is small and the way is narrow)

111. Matthew 7:20 (By their fruits you will know them)

112. Messiah

113. Miracle (Miracles)

114. Moses

115. New Creation

116. New Heaven and New Earth

117. Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

118. Paul (Saul)

119. Paul's use of "in Christ" to denote the specific relationships we have with Christ as believers

120. Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)

121. Philippians 2:12-13 (Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure)

122. Prayer

123. Prophecies, Messianic

124. Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath)

125. Repentance (Repent)

126. Resurrection (at Second Coming)

127. Role of Government

128. Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)

129. Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)

130. Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good)

131. Salvation

132. Salvation, Plan of

133. Sanctification (Sanctify)

134. Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)

135. Second chances (God loves you)

136. Second Coming (End Times)

137. Sermon on the Mount

138. Sin (Transgression, Trespass)

139. Speaking in tongues

140. Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

141. Spiritual warfare

142. Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)

143. Temptation (Tempt)

144. Ten Commandments

145. The "one another" passages (the responsibility to grow and invest in the people around us)

146. Tithe

147. Trinity

148. Virgin birth

LIST OF ROUND THREE ITEMS

1. 1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)

2. 1 Peter 2:21 (You have been called to this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps)

3. Acts 2:42ff (Ecclesiology/the birth and mission of the Church)

4. Atonement

5. Baptism (immersion, New Birth)

6. Bible (Word of God)

7. Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)

8. Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)

9. Blood of Christ

10. Body of Christ

11. Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)

12. Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)

13. Christology (Study of Christ)

14. Church, The (congregation)

15. Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)

16. Communion (Lord's Supper)

17. Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)

18. Creation

19. Crucifixion

20. Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)

21. Discipleship (what it means to be a disciple)

22. Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)

23. Eternal life (everlasting life)

24. Evangelism (Witnessing)

25. Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)

26. Fall, the

27. Forgiveness (remission of sins)

28. Free will

29. Fruit of the Spirit

30. God (First Person of the Trinity)

31. God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)

32. God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)

33. Gospel (Good News)

34. Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

35. Grace

36. Heaven

37. Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)

38. Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)

39. Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)

40. Holy Spirit, Gifts of the

41. Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)

42. Incarnation

43. James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead)

44. Jesus

45. Jesus' blood sacrifice

46. Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)

47. Jesus crucified

48. Jesus gives the Great Commission

49. Jesus' nature (God, human)

50. Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)

51. Jesus' sinlessness

52. John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)

53. John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)

54. Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)

55. Justification (by faith)

56. Law versus Grace

57. Matthew 28:18-20 (Being a disciple-maker)

58. Obedience (Choosing God's ways)

59. Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)

60. Prayer

61. Repentance (Repent)

62. Resurrection (at Second Coming)

63. Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)

64. Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)

65. Salvation

66. Salvation, Plan of

67. Sanctification (Sanctify)

68. Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)

69. Second Coming (End Times)

70. Sermon on the Mount

71. Sin (Transgression, Trespass)

72. Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)

73. Spiritual warfare

74. Stewardship (Our use of money, resources, time management, social involvement, outreach, etc.)

75. Trinity

76. Worship

APPENDIX E

ROUND ONE FINDINGS

Table 11

Unabridged Round One Frequency Distribution

Response	*N*	%
Jesus	60	95.24
Jesus' physical resurrection (empty tomb)	60	95.24
Forgiveness (Remission of sin)	58	92.06
Baptism (immersion, New Birth)	57	90.48
Holy Spirit (Third Person of the Trinity)	57	90.48
Jesus crucified	57	90.48
Jesus' sinlessness	56	88.89
Bible (Word of God)	54	85.74
Communion (Lord's Supper)	54	85.74
Jesus' nature (God, human)	54	85.74
Body of Christ	53	84.13
Jesus gives the Great Commission	53	84.13
Jesus' blood sacrifice	53	84.13
Spiritual disciplines (Bible, hospitality, prayer, fasting, worship, meditation, stewardship, witnessing, self-control, acts of mercy and justice, etc.)	53	84.13
Church, The purpose of the (Worship, Nurture, Evangelism, and Mercy)	52	82.54
Blood of Christ	51	80.95
Confession (of Christ as Lord and Savior)	51	80.95
God (First Person of the Trinity)	51	80.95
God's attributes (Most High, Sovereign, Almighty, eternal, good, jealous, righteous/just, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, one, holy, love, transcendence, immutable, perfect, self-existent, spirit, true, wise, wrathful)	51	80.95
Grace	51	80.95

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Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jesus claims to be divine (Son of God, Messiah, fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, etc.)	51	80.95
Christ (second Person of the Trinity, the Word)	50	79.37
Repentance (Repent)	50	79.37
Sin (Transgression, Trespass)	50	79.37
Crucifixion	48	76.19
Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples (cup of wine, loaf of bread)	48	76.19
Christian (Born again, believer, etc.)	47	74.60
Evangelism (Witnessing)	47	74.60
Faith, Saving (Belief and Trust)	47	74.60
Holy Spirit, Roles of the (Power to live a holy life, indwelling gift, giver of gifts)	46	73.02
Disciple	45	71.43
Holiness, The attribute of (Be holy)	45	71.43
Romans 6:23 (For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord)	45	71.43
Atonement	44	69.84
John 3:16 (For God so loved the world that he gave his only son)	44	69.84
John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me)	44	69.84
Fruit of the Spirit	43	68.25
God's divine activities (Creation, Providence, Redemption)	43	68.25
Jesus buried in tomb	43	68.25
Justification (by faith)	43	68.25

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Romans 3:23 (All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God)	43	68.25
Bible, Attributes of (Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired, necessary, sufficient)	42	66.67
Christ's divine activities (Creation, providence, redemption)	42	66.67
Ephesians 2:8 (For it is by grace you have been saved through faith)	42	66.67
Gospel (Good News)	42	66.67
Ten Commandments	42	66.67
Heaven	41	65.08
Hell (bottomless pit, lake of fire)	41	65.08
Law versus Grace	41	65.08
Salvation, Plan of	41	65.08
Sermon on the Mount	41	65.08
Free will	40	63.49
Judgment Day (Final Judgment, Last Judgment)	40	63.49
Salvation	40	63.49
Sanctification (Sanctify)	40	63.49
Jesus' miracles (Turns water into wine, heals the son of the Official, raises Lazarus from the dead, feeds the five thousand, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, walks on water, etc.)	38	60.32
Jesus ascends to heaven	38	60.32
Adam and Eve	37	58.73
Conversion	37	58.73
Eternal life (everlasting life)	37	58.73
Holy Spirit, Gifts of the	37	58.73

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jesus' birth to the virgin Mary	37	58.73
Second Coming (End Times)	37	58.73
Virgin birth	36	57.14
Image of God, Created in the	35	55.56
Incarnation	35	55.56
Church, The (congregation)	34	53.97
Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-40 (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might)	34	53.97
Fall, the	34	53.97
John 1:1 (In the beginning was the Word)	34	53.97
Messiah	34	53.97
Resurrection (at Second Coming)	34	53.97
Satan (devil, Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Adversary, Prince of Darkness, Tempter)	34	53.97
Spiritual warfare	34	53.97
1 Corinthians 13 (Love chapter)	33	52.38
Bible, Interpretation (Hermeneutics, exegesis)	33	52.38
Jesus tempted in the wilderness by Satan	33	52.38
Christology (Study of Christ)	32	50.79
Jesus predicts his own death and resurrection	32	50.79
Jesus' titles (Alpha and Omega, Bread of Life, Christ, Immanuel, King of the Jews, King of Kings, Lamb of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Savior, Son of God, Son of Man, Prince of Peace, Advocate, Nazarene, Good Shepherd, etc.)	32	50.79

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the salt of the earth…You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket… Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works)	32	50.79
New Creation	31	49.21
Wrath (Wrath of God)	31	49.21
Jesus baptized by John the Baptist	30	47.62
Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection in the Upper Room, once with Thomas absent and once with Thomas present	30	47.62
Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good)	30	47.62
Tithe	30	47.62
Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; accompanied by Peter, James, and John who all fall asleep	29	46.03
Temptation (Tempt)	29	46.03
Creation	28	44.44
Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)	28	44.44
Trinity	28	44.44
Abrahamic covenant	27	42.86
Evil (Natural Evil, Moral Evil)	27	42.86
Miracle (Miracles)	27	42.86
Death	26	41.27
Lord's Prayer, The	26	41.27
Matthew 5:44 (Love your enemies)	26	41.27
Matthew 6:19-20 (Do not store up treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy)	26	41.27
Propitiation (turning away of God's wrath)	25	39.68

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
2 Corinthians 5:7 (Walk by faith, not by sight)	24	38.10
Covenant	24	38.10
James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead)	24	38.10
Jesus teaches in parables	24	38.10
Matthew 6:24 (No man can serve two masters…You cannot serve both God and wealth)	24	38.10
Matthew 11:28-30 (Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden)	24	38.10
Paul (Saul)	24	38.10
Beatitudes (Blessed are those…)	23	36.51
Love, Brotherly	23	36.51
Matthew 25:40-45 (To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to me)	23	36.51
Bible, Testaments (Old Testament, New Testament)	22	34.92
Jesus responds to each temptation with "It is written"	22	34.92
Jesus' trial (before the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, Pontus Pilate, Herod Antipas, Pontus Pilate again)	22	34.92
Kingdom of God (Kingdom of Heaven)	22	34.92
Perseverance (Through hardship, through persecution, through suffering, etc.)	22	34.92
Condemnation, eternal (eternal damnation; fire and brimstone; unquenchable fire)	21	33.33
Creation ex nihilo (Creation out of nothing by God's word)	21	33.33
Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39 (Love your neighbor as yourself)	21	33.33
Light versus Darkness	21	33.33

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Moses	21	33.33
Calvary (Golgatha)	20	31.75
Golden Rule	20	31.75
Matthew 7:14 (The gate is small and the way is narrow)	20	31.75
Matthew 7:20 (By their fruits you will know them)	20	31.75
Prophecies, Messianic	20	31.75
Fall, the (results in pain, sickness, and death)	19	30.16
John 8:12 (I am the light of the world)	19	30.16
New Heaven and New Earth	19	30.16
Jesus denied by Peter	18	28.57
Jesus appears to two men on the road to Emmaus after the resurrection	18	28.57
Marriage (Matrimony)	18	28.57
Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5 (This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased)	18	28.57
Matthew 7:7 (Ask and it shall be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you)	18	28.57
Passover, The first	18	28.57
Prodigal Son, Parable of	18	28.57
Satan roams the earth seeking to cause spiritual damage to mankind	18	28.57
Doctrine	17	26.98
Elder (pastor, shepherd)	17	26.98
Matthew 7:1 (Judge not, lest you be judged)	17	26.98
Pentecost (post-resurrection)	17	26.98
Regeneration	17	26.98

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Sin debt	17	26.98
Bible, Books of the	16	25.40
Fall, the (results in God's curse)	16	25.40
Flood, The Great	16	25.40
God's titles (Abba, Adonai, El Shaddai, Elohim, Father, Jehovah, Lord, Yahweh)	16	25.40
Jesus' tomb visited by Mary Magdalene and other women	16	25.40
Mankind (Body and spirit/soul)	16	25.40
Matthew 17:20 (If you have faith a small as a mustard seed)	16	25.40
1 Timothy 6:10 (Love of money is the root of all evil)	15	23.81
Genesis 1:1-2 (In the beginning…)	15	23.81
Heaven, Reward in	15	23.81
Jesus calls the disciples	15	23.81
Jesus sentenced to death by Pilate	15	23.81
Jesus' appears to and interaction with Mary Magdalene after the resurrection	15	23.81
Jesus appears to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection	15	23.81
Moses, Law of (Mosaic Law)	15	23.81
Peter (Simon/Cephas)	15	23.81
Bible, Prophecy	14	22.22
Ethics	14	22.22
Exodus, The	14	22.22
Jesus enters Jerusalem (the Triumphal Entry)	14	22.22
Jesus is betrayed by Judas Iscariot with a kiss	14	22.22

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Law, the	14	22.22
Lost sheep, Parable of	14	22.22
Missionary (Missions)	14	22.22
Peter (Simon/Cephas) confesses Jesus as Christ, the Son of God	14	22.22
Peter (Simon/Cephas) preaches at Pentecost and 3,000 are baptized	14	22.22
Sacraments	14	22.22
Three virtues (Faith, hope, and charity)	14	22.22
Christianity	13	20.63
Israelites (Hebrews; Jews; Chosen People)	13	20.63
Jesus speaks to Nicodemus	13	20.63
Jesus flogged by Roman soldiers	13	20.63
Matthew 26:42; Luke 22:42 (Let this cup pass from me. Not my will but your will be done)	13	20.63
Mosaic Covenant	13	20.63
Psalm 23	13	20.63
Spirituality (Spiritual)	13	20.63
Adoption	12	19.05
Day of Atonement	12	19.05
Eternal (eternity)	12	19.05
John the Baptist	12	19.05
Matthew 5:39 (Whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also… Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two)	12	19.05
Matthew 6:28-29 (Consider the lilies of the field)	12	19.05

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Micah 6:8 (O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?)	12	19.05
Abraham (Abram)	11	17.46
Abraham (Abram) willing to sacrifice Isaac	11	17.46
David (son of Jesse, shepherd, future king of Israel)	11	17.46
Good Samaritan, Parable of	11	17.46
Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration; witnessed by Peter, James, and John	11	17.46
Mary (mother of Jesus)	11	17.46
Paul's (Saul) conversion on the road to Damascus	11	17.46
Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil	11	17.46
Twelve apostles (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Matthias)	11	17.46
2 Corinthians 3:6 (For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life)	10	15.87
Apostle	10	15.87
Book of Life	10	15.87
Jesus rebukes the religious leaders	10	15.87
Jesus is plotted against by the religious leaders	10	15.87
Matthew 19:30 (The first will be last and the last will be first)	10	15.87
Original Sin	10	15.87
Parable	10	15.87
Satan destined for eternal confinement in hell	10	15.87
1 Thessalonians 5:2 (The Lord will come just like a thief in the night)	9	14.29

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Depravity	9	14.29
Eschatology	9	14.29
Jesus speaks to the woman at the well	9	14.29
Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (You who are without sin cast the first stone)	9	14.29
Luke 23:34 (Father, forgive them for they know what they do)	9	14.29
Matthew 19:6 (What God has joined together let man not separate)	9	14.29
Matthew 26:41 (Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak)	9	14.29
Minister (pastor, clergy)	9	14.29
Satan, Origin of	9	14.29
Eden, Garden of	8	12.70
Ephesians 4:26 (Don't let the sun go down on your anger)	8	12.70
False prophets (Wolf in sheep's clothing)	8	12.70
Job	8	12.70
Matthew 12:30 (He that is not with me is against me)	8	12.70
Matthew 22:13-14 (Many are called but few are chosen)	8	12.70
Matthew 25:31-46 (Separating the sheep from the goats)	8	12.70
Moses receives the Ten Commandments	8	12.70
Talents, Parable of the	8	12.70
Transfiguration	8	12.70
Tree of Life	8	12.70
Abraham's (Abram) call to Canaan by God	7	11.11
Acts 20:35 (It is more blessed to give than to receive)	7	11.11

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Angel (Angels)	7	11.11
Bible, Old Testament sections (Pentateuch, Torah, etc.)	7	11.11
Bible, Translations of the (NASB, NIV, KJV, etc.)	7	11.11
Eve is tempted/deceived by the serpent in the Garden of Eden	7	11.11
Exodus 3:13-14 (I AM who I AM)	7	11.11
Genesis 1:27 (Creation of male and female)	7	11.11
Glorification (Glorified Body)	7	11.11
Isaiah prophecies about the coming Messiah (Isaiah 9; Isaiah 53, etc.)	7	11.11
Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:14-15 (Let the children come to me)	7	11.11
Noah's Ark, Story of (ark, animals, flood, raven, dove, olive branch, etc.)	7	11.11
Philosophies/Worldviews (Atheism, Agnosticism, Deism, Calvinism, Darwinianism, Arminianism, Monotheism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Pluralism, Creationism, Secular Humanism, New Age, Theistic Evolution, etc.)	7	11.11
Sower, Parable of	7	11.11
Temple, The	7	11.11
Antichrist	6	9.52
Authors (C.S. Lewis, John Milton, Thomas Merton, Charles Darwin, Kurt Vonnegut, etc.)	6	9.52
Bible, Original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek)	6	9.52
Blessings and curses	6	9.52
Gentile	6	9.52
Jesus mocked by Herod and Roman soldiers	6	9.52

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
John the Baptist preaches and baptizes in the wilderness, declaring Jesus to be the Messiah (Lamb of God)	6	9.52
Matthew 27:46 (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)	6	9.52
Paradise	6	9.52
Philip (the evangelist) shares the Gospel with the Ethiopian	6	9.52
Prophet	6	9.52
Saints	6	9.52
Serpent, The	6	9.52
Temple curtain torn in two after Jesus' death	6	9.52
David accepts Goliath's challenge and kills him	5	7.94
Demon (Demons)	5	7.94
Foreknowledge	5	7.94
Glory, shekinah (manifestation of God's glory)	5	7.94
Jesus visits Mary and Martha	5	7.94
Mary births Jesus, wraps him in swaddling cloths, and places him in a manger	5	7.94
Matthew 7:6 (Do not give what is holy to dogs, do not cast your pearls to the swine)	5	7.94
Noah	5	7.94
Paul (Saul) preaches on Mars Hill in Athens	5	7.94
Tabernacle	5	7.94
Adultery	4	6.35
Ark of the Covenant	4	6.35
Canon (Makeup, development, etc.)	4	6.35
Election	4	6.35

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Israelites become slaves to Egypt	4	6.35
Israelites cross the Red Sea	4	6.35
Jesus clears the money changers from the temple	4	6.35
Jesus kept in custody while Barabbas is released by Pilate	4	6.35
Job remains faithful to God	4	6.35
Mark 12:17 (Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's)	4	6.35
Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33 (Get behind me Satan)	4	6.35
Noachic Covenant	4	6.35
Predestination	4	6.35
Reformation, The	4	6.35
Sabbath	4	6.35
Scapegoat	4	6.35
Timothy	4	6.35
Twelve disciples (Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas Iscariot)	4	6.35
Twelve tribes (Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Levi, Menasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Zebulun)	4	6.35
Unleavened bread	4	6.35
1 Corinthians 9:22 (All things to all people)	3	4.76
Altar	3	4.76
Apocalypse (Greek meaning revelation)	3	4.76
Babel, Tower of (Dispersion and language confusion)	3	4.76
Babylonian exile (captivity)	3	4.76
Bible, Geography of the	3	4.76

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Blasphemy	3	4.76
David described by God as a Man after God's own heart	3	4.76
Elijah experiences the presence of God in a gentle wind	3	4.76
Homosexuality	3	4.76
Idol (graven image)	3	4.76
Israel, Land of (Canaan, Holy Land, Land flowing with milk and honey, Palestine, Promised Land)	3	4.76
Israelites wander in the wilderness for forty years	3	4.76
Jacob (also called Israel; son of Isaac)	3	4.76
Jerusalem	3	4.76
Jesus dedicated at the temple	3	4.76
Jesus teaches in the temple at the age of twelve	3	4.76
Job tested by Satan with God's permission	3	4.76
Mary (mother of Jesus) told by Gabriel (the angel) that he will have a son	3	4.76
New Jerusalem	3	4.76
Paul (Saul) and Silas witness to the Philippian jailer	3	4.76
Pharisees and Sadducees	3	4.76
Protestantism (Protestant)	3	4.76
Proverbs 11:2; 16:18 (When pride comes, then comes disgrace; Pride goes before destruction)	3	4.76
Reformation, Five pillars of the (Salvation as taught in the scriptures alone, by Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, to the glory of God alone)	3	4.76
Sacrifice (burnt offering)	3	4.76
Saul (first king of Israel)	3	4.76
Second Coming (End Times), Events surrounding	3	4.76

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Sins, Seven deadly	3	4.76
Ananias and Sapphira die after lying to the Holy Spirit	2	3.17
Barnabus	2	3.17
Cornelius	2	3.17
Daniel and the lion's den	2	3.17
Elijah (a prophet of Israel)	2	3.17
Faith Traditions (Denominations; Church groups)	2	3.17
Forbidden fruit	2	3.17
Fundamentalism	2	3.17
Glory	2	3.17
Hypoctrite	2	3.17
Intertestamental Period: The Apocrypha (Fourteen books written during the Intertestamental Period were accepted as scripture by Catholics though none were accepted into the Protestant canon)	2	3.17
Isaac (son of Abraham and Sarah)	2	3.17
Israelites receive provisions from God after the Exodus (Guidance from a pillar of fire and pillar of cloud, purified water at Marah, manna from heaven, water from the rock)	2	3.17
Israelites construct the Tabernacle	2	3.17
Israelites cross the Jordan River into Canaan led by Joshua	2	3.17
Jesus acknowledged by Simeon and Anna when Joseph and Mary present Jesus at the temple	2	3.17
Job restored by God	2	3.17
Jonah (a prophet of God)	2	3.17
Joseph (father of Jesus)	2	3.17
Judaism	2	3.17

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Martyr (Martyrdom)	2	3.17
Mary (mother of Jesus) births Jesus in a Bethlehem stable because there was no room in the inn	2	3.17
Matthew 8:22 (Let the dead bury their own dead)	2	3.17
Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39 (Blind leading the blind)	2	3.17
Moses and the burning bush	2	3.17
Mustard Seed, Parable of the	2	3.17
Paul (Saul) persecutes Christians	2	3.17
Pentecost, Feast	2	3.17
Roman Empire	2	3.17
Scribe (Scribes)	2	3.17
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and the fiery furnace	2	3.17
Social Gospel	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#1 You shall have no other gods before me)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#2 You shall not make for yourself an idol)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#3 You shall not take the name of your Lord God in vain)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#4 Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#5 Children obey/honor your parents)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#6 You shall not murder)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#7 You shall not commit adultery)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#8 You shall not steal)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#9 You shall not bear false witness)	2	3.17
Ten Commandments (#10 You shall not covet)	2	3.17

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Ten Plagues	2	3.17
Theologians (Calvin, Luther, Kierkegaard, Moody, Spurgeon, etc.)	2	3.17
Thomas (the disciple) doubts Jesus' resurrection	2	3.17
Weeds, Parable of the	2	3.17
Abraham's (Abram) and Lot separate	1	1.59
Aquila and Priscilla (tentmakers in Corinth)	1	1.59
Bethlehem	1	1.59
Bible, Ancient Translations the (Vulgate and Septuagint)	1	1.59
Cains sacrifice rejected by God	1	1.59
Caleb (a good spy)	1	1.59
Circumcision (Physical and spiritual)	1	1.59
Crown of thorns	1	1.59
David commits adultery with Bathsheba	1	1.59
Dispensationalism	1	1.59
Ecclesiastes 1:9 (There is nothing new under the sun)	1	1.59
Elijah (a prophet of Israel) defeats the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel and executes them	1	1.59
Esther saves the Jews in Persia from destruction	1	1.59
Genesis 1:3 (Let there be light)	1	1.59
Genesis 1:28 (Be fruitful and multiply)	1	1.59
Genesis 3:19 (For you are dust, and to dust you will return)	1	1.59
Hades	1	1.59
Intertestamental Period: The Talmud (a commentary on the law of Moses compiled by Jewish religious leaders over a period of approximately 800 years, between 300 B.C. and A.D. 500)	1	1.59

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Isaiah (a prophet of God)	1	1.59
Israelites witness God's presence with thunder, lightning, and a dense cloud at Mt. Sinai and are told to not approach the mountain	1	1.59
Israelites worship the golden calf	1	1.59
Israelites send twelve spies into Canaan (giants in the land)	1	1.59
Israelites demand a King	1	1.59
Jericho	1	1.59
Jerusalem destroyed (AD 70)	1	1.59
Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes	1	1.59
Job's comforters (friends)	1	1.59
John the Baptist eats locusts and wild honey	1	1.59
Joseph (son of Jacob and Rachel)	1	1.59
Joseph (son of Jacob) is kind to his brothers	1	1.59
Joshua (Moses' successor)	1	1.59
Judas Iscariot commits suicide by hanging	1	1.59
Leper (Leprosy)	1	1.59
Lot's wife turns into a pillar of salt	1	1.59
Luke the physician (author of the Gospel of Luke)	1	1.59
Mark of the Beast (666)	1	1.59
Mary (mother of Jesus) travel to Bethlehem with Joseph for the census	1	1.59
Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes shepherds visiting baby Jesus	1	1.59
Mary (mother of Jesus) welcomes wise men who bring gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus	1	1.59

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Matthew 19:23-26 (It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven)	1	1.59
Mount of Olives	1	1.59
Mount Sinai	1	1.59
Nehemiah (leader of a group who went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall)	1	1.59
Ordain (Ordination)	1	1.59
Passover, the Festival	1	1.59
Paul (Saul) and Barnabus go on first missionary journey;	1	1.59
Mark (John Mark) accompanies them	1	1.59
Paul (Saul) goes on second missionary journey; Silas accompanies him	1	1.59
Paul (Saul) goes on third missionary journey	1	1.59
Peter (Simon/Cephas) and John heal a crippled man	1	1.59
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life)	1	1.59
Proverbs 15:1 (A soft word turns away anger)	1	1.59
Ruth follows Naomi (Where you go, I will go. Your people will by my people…)	1	1.59
Ruth marries Boaz	1	1.59
Samaritans	1	1.59
Samuel	1	1.59
Sheol	1	1.59
Solomon (son of King David)	1	1.59
Solomon (son of King David) asks God for wisdom and God grants it	1	1.59
Stephen the Martyr	1	1.59
Synagogue	1	1.59

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
World Religions (Hinduism, Islam, etc.)	1	1.59
Aaron (brother of Moses)	0	0.00
Absalom (son of King David)	0	0.00
Absalom (son of King David) leads a revolt against	0	0.00
David with the help of Ahithophel and is defeated and dies at the hand of Joab after being caught by his hair in an oak tree	0	0.00
Adam and Eve's first three children (Cain, Abel, Seth)	0	0.00
Ahab (an evil king of Israel)	0	0.00
Ahasuerus (another name for Xerxes, Esther's husband and Persian king)	0	0.00
Angels, Types of (Cherubim, Seraphim, Archangels, etc.)	0	0.00
Angels, Named (Archangels Gabriel and Michael)	0	0.00
Armageddon	0	0.00
Assyria	0	0.00
Baal (The name of many heathen gods; generally credited with controlling rain, crops, fertility, fruit, and cattle)	0	0.00
Babylon	0	0.00
Balaam	0	0.00
Balaam's donkey	0	0.00
Belshazzar (the last Babylonian king)	0	0.00
Bethany	0	0.00
Bible, Geography of the: Regions (Canaan, Galatia, Galilee, Judea, Samaria)	0	0.00
Bible, Geography of the: Rivers (Euphrates, Jordan, Nile, Tigris)	0	0.00
Bible, Geography of the: Seas (Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea,	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Mediterranean Sea)		
Caesar Augustus	0	0.00
Cain kills Abel	0	0.00
Centurion	0	0.00
Concubine	0	0.00
Creeds (Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed)	0	0.00
Cults (Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, etc.)	0	0.00
Cyrus (also called Cyrus the Great; head of Persian Empire)	0	0.00
Daniel (member of the Judean royal family)	0	0.00
Darius the Mede (conquered Babylon and made Cyrus king; the name of several Medo-Persian rulers)	0	0.00
David crowned king of Judah	0	0.00
David orders Uriah be placed in the most dangerous part of the battle so he is killed	0	0.00
Dead Sea Scrolls	0	0.00
Deborah (the fourth judge)	0	0.00
Ecclesiastes 1:2 (Vanity of vanities! All is vanity)	0	0.00
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (For everything there is a season)	0	0.00
Ecclesiastes 8:15; Luke 12:19 (Eat, drink, be merry)	0	0.00
Ecclesiastes 11:1 (Cast your bread upon the waters)	0	0.00
Egypt	0	0.00
Eli (Israel's high priest)	0	0.00
Elijah (a prophet of Israel) is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire	0	0.00
Elisha (a prophet of Israel, and Elijah's successor)	0	0.00
Elisha succeeds Elijah	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist)	0	0.00
Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist) told by Gabriel (the angel) that she will have a son)	0	0.00
Elizabeth's (mother of John the Baptist) baby leaps within her when Mary visits	0	0.00
Enoch	0	0.00
Ephraim (son of Joseph and Asenath)	0	0.00
Epiphany	0	0.00
Epistle	0	0.00
Esau (son of Isaac and Rebekah)	0	0.00
Esau sells his birthright to Jacob	0	0.00
Esther (also called Hadassah, queen of the Persian Empire; wife of Xerxes [Ahasuerus])	0	0.00
Evangelicalism	0	0.00
Exodus 21:23-24; Leviticus 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 19:21; Matthew 5:38 (Eye for an eye)	0	0.00
Ezra (author of biblical books Ezra and Esther; led a group back to Israel to reinitiate worship there)	0	0.00
Gideon (the fifth judge)	0	0.00
Gideon tests God with a fleece	0	0.00
Gideon defeats the Midianites	0	0.00
Goliath (Philistine warrior giant who was killed by David)	0	0.00
Hagar (Sarah's maid)	0	0.00
Haggai (a prophet of God)	0	0.00
Hannah (Samuel's mother)	0	0.00
Hanukkah (Chanukah)	0	0.00
Hebron	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Herod Agrippa II (ruler of Palestine; before whom Paul appeared)	0	0.00
Herod Antipas (ruler of Palestine) has John the Baptist beheaded at the request of Salome	0	0.00
Herod the Great (ruler of Palestine; ruled at the time of Jesus' birth)	0	0.00
Herod the Great kills all male infants in Bethlehem	0	0.00
Herodias (wife of Herod Antipas)	0	0.00
Hezekiah (a king of Judah)	0	0.00
Hosanna	0	0.00
Isaac marries Rebekah	0	0.00
Isaiah 2:4; also Micah 4:3 (Swords into plowshares)	0	0.00
Isaiah 11:6 (The lion will lay down with the lamb)	0	0.00
Ishmael (son of Abraham and Sarah's maid Hagar)	0	0.00
Israelites experience military victories (Jericho, Canaanites, etc.)	0	0.00
Jacob steals Isaac's blessing from Esau	0	0.00
Jacob's dream (Jacob's ladder)	0	0.00
Jacob's meets Rachel at a well	0	0.00
Jacob marries Leah and then Rachel	0	0.00
Jacob wrestles with God	0	0.00
Jacob and his sons move to Egypt	0	0.00
James (half-brother of Jesus)	0	0.00
Jeremiah (a prophet of God)	0	0.00
Jeremiah 13:23 (Can a leopard change its spots?)	0	0.00
Jeroboam I (the first king of the Northern Kingdom)	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jezebel (the evil wife of Ahab)	0	0.00
Joab (David's general)	0	0.00
Job 19:20 (Skin of my teeth)	0	0.00
Jonah (a prophet of God) is thrown overboard by the sailors during a great storm and swallowed by a big fish	0	0.00
Jonathan (King Saul's son)	0	0.00
Joppa	0	0.00
Joseph (father of Jesus) worked as a carpenter	0	0.00
Joseph (father of Jesus) instructed by the angel to wed Mary	0	0.00
Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary escape to Egypt	0	0.00
Joseph (father of Jesus) and Mary return from Egypt to Nazareth	0	0.00
Joseph (son of Jacob), the favored son receives a coat of many colors from his father	0	0.00
Joseph's (son of Jacob) dreams	0	0.00
Joseph (son of Jacob) sold by brothers	0	0.00
Joseph (son of Jacob) thrown in jail after the unsuccessful advances by Potiphar's wife	0	0.00
Joseph (son of Jacob) interprets Pharaoh's dreams	0	0.00
Josephus	0	0.00
Judah (son of Jacob and Leah)	0	0.00
Kingdom, Divided (Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom)	0	0.00
Laban (Rebekah's brother; Jacob's father-in-law and uncle)	0	0.00
Lazarus	0	0.00
Leaven	0	0.00
Leviathan	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Liturgy	0	0.00
Lot (Abraham's nephew)	0	0.00
Maccabees, 1 & 2	0	0.00
Malachi (prophet of God)	0	0.00
Manasseh (son of Joseph and Asenath)	0	0.00
Martha	0	0.00
Mary Magdalene	0	0.00
Matthew 13:57 (A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household)	0	0.00
Matthias selected to replace Judas Iscariot as apostle	0	0.00
Methuselah	0	0.00
Methuselah dies at the age of 969	0	0.00
Miriam (Moses' sister)	0	0.00
Mordecai (Esther's cousin; eventual prime minister of the Persian Empire)	0	0.00
Moses is born and saved by being hidden in a floating basket	0	0.00
Moses kills an Egyptian and flees Egypt	0	0.00
Moses breaks the original tablets and receives replacements	0	0.00
Moses makes a bronze serpent to save the Israelites	0	0.00
Mount Ararat	0	0.00
Nahum (a prophet of God)	0	0.00
Nazareth	0	0.00
Nebuchadnezzar II	0	0.00
Nero	0	0.00
Ninety-five theses	0	0.00
Noah curses Ham after he sees his father naked	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Noah's family (Unnamed wife, Shem and unnamed wife, Ham and unnamed wife, and Japheth and unnamed wife)	0	0.00
Orthodox (Orthodoxy)	0	0.00
Patriarchs	0	0.00
Pearl of Great Price, Parable of	0	0.00
Persia	0	0.00
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) commands that all Hebrew boys be killed	0	0.00
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) refuses to let the Israelites go	0	0.00
Pharaoh (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) relents and allows the Israelites to leave though changes his mind and pursues them	0	0.00
Pharaoh's (Ruler of Egypt during Moses' life) army destroyed in the Red Sea	0	0.00
Philistines	0	0.00
Pontius Pilate	0	0.00
Pontius Pilate attempts to convince the leaders to release Jesus; he washes his hands to demonstrate that Jesus' fate was no longer his responsibility	0	0.00
Potiphar	0	0.00
Queen of Sheba visits King Solomon	0	0.00
Rabbi	0	0.00
Rahab	0	0.00
Rebekah (Laban's sister, Isaac's wife)	0	0.00
Rehoboam (Solomon's son)	0	0.00
Revelation 9 (Four Horsemen)	0	0.00
Ruth (wife of Boaz, mother of Obed, grandmother of	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Jesse, great-grandmother of King David)	0	0.00
Samson (the twelfth judge)	0	0.00
Samson kills one thousand men with a donkey's jawbone	0	0.00
Samson removes the doors and doorposts of Gaza	0	0.00
Samson deceived by Delilah and loses his strength when his hair is cut by the Philistines	0	0.00
Sarah (Sarai, Abraham's wife and half sister)	0	0.00
Sarah laughs when she hears the guests suggest that she would bear a child	0	0.00
Saul (first king of Israel) becomes jealous of David	0	0.00
Saul (first king of Israel) is wounded in battle and dies by falling on his own sword; his body is hung on the wall at Beth-shan	0	0.00
Second Coming (End Times), Timing of	0	0.00
Shibboleth (Password used by the Israelites because their enemies had difficulty pronouncing it)	0	0.00
Silas	0	0.00
Simon of Cyrene carries Jesus' cross	0	0.00
Sodom and Gomorrah	0	0.00
Solomon (son of King David) succeeds David as King of Israel	0	0.00
Solomon (son of King David) builds the temple in Jerusalem	0	0.00
Solomon (son of King David) falls into idol worship	0	0.00
Tabernacles, Feast of	0	0.00
Tarsus	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#1 The Nile turned to blood confronted the Egyptian god Hapi, the god of the river)	0	0.00

Table 11—*Continued.*

Response	N	%
Ten Plagues (#2 Frogs confronted the Egyptian god Kekt, whose image was a frog)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#3 Flies confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#4 Gnats confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#5 Disease among cattle confronted the Egyptian goddess Hathor, the cow deity)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#6 Boils)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#7 Hail)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#8 Locusts)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#9 Darkness confronted Re, Ra, or Amon-Ra, the sun god of Egypt)	0	0.00
Ten Plagues (#10 Death of firstborn sons)	0	0.00
Zacchaeus	0	0.00
Zechariah (a prophet of God)	0	0.00

APPENDIX F

ROUND THREE NARRATIVE RESPONSES

LIST OF RESPONSES: DISCIPLESHIP (WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A DISCIPLE)

1. Again, I must know what it means to follow Jesus.

2. An 'old' word that Christians today need to understand in order to grow closer to God and each other.

3. Being a Christian is more than a title it is a lifestyle. Growth is becoming more of a disciple each day and each hour of that day. Disciple is a follower, and we have to grow into that each day.

4. cost, obedience, openness to Holy Spirit, building others

5. Disciple means to be a follower of Jesus. If I am to follow Jesus I need to know what is expected than do it and that is what a disciple is.

6. Discipleship is an essential and missing part of many believers lives. Learning the importance and how too's of discipleship will allow believers to become more effective in their witness and service

7. Following Christ is by definition discipleship - we must know what we are striving for.

8. Following Christ means we'll grow to be more like Him (growing spiritually)

9. Following Jesus is about learning to follow his teaching and life better each day. we are his students who must apply his teaching, because his teaching will save us.

10. Important because it's the life of the Christian from conversion til death/Christ's return

11. Important for understand who we have become in Christ and how we serve Him.

12. Jesus commissioned that disciples be made, and we who follow Him must learn from Him first and foremost. If we are not taught what it means to be a disciple, then are left without a spiritual identity.

13. Jesus was clear about wanting this to be known upfront- unless you give up everything you cannot be a disciple... if it mattered to Jesus it is important for us

14. Learners of the way - always seeking, helping, and demonstrating love.

15. Many Christians are unaware of what it really means to be a disciple. It's more than attending a worship service once a week and giving a little money. To gain a greater knowledge of what a disciple is will allow the person to evaluate where they are in their walk with the Lord and make necessary changes to advance that walk.

16. Once a disciple always a disciple

17. The concept of lifestyle must be stressed if one is to consistently grow in Kingdom living.

18. The process of sanctification is a journey that every Christ-follower is on. We need to undersetand what a disciple looks like and define who they are (a fully-devoted lifelong followe of Christ). In doing so, it wil spur believers on to pursue true followership with God.

19.   This is the most important of all. So few disciples really exist. A disciple is continually picking up their cross on a daily basis and following in the footsteps of Jesus. This requires a death to self. There is no real discipleship without it.

20.   This point needs to be emphasized because people need to know that a disciple is a FOLLOWER of Jesus, not just a proclaimer.

21.   To be a disciple, one must understand what it means to be a disciple.

22.   To mature in Christ is a process. The New Testament clearly defines this process and helps believers build a framework of how to pursue Him.

23.   We are called not to be converts, but to be disciples. Understanding what that means and how it is accomplished is vital.

24.   We are called to be disciples and make disciples not just to talk about forgiveness - while forgiveness must occur it is not the end game.

25.   We are called to follow and be like Jesus. A disciple is a learner - one who is determined to follow.

26.   We have to know how to personally teach the gospel in way that people can teach it to someone else

LIST OF RESPONSES: BAPTISM (IMMERSION,
NEW BIRTH)

1.   Accepting Christ as Lord and Savior is first step in Discipleship. In Baptism
we join in Christs death and rise to a new life in him.

2.   As a part of God's plan of salvation, and much misunderstanding in the
church - this is important.

3.   Baptism is a picture of the gospel--it is an identification with the death and
burial of Christ. It is of vital imporantce for an individual to die to self and follow God's
command to be baptized.

4.   Baptism is looked upon in many parts of Christianity as "something
Chrisitians do". I believe it is important in Christian growth that people know the real
meaning and importance of immersion baptism.

5.   Essential for becoming a disciple in the first place, also for helping others
become disciples

6.   Essential to salvation and has been muddled by the church universal

7.   Far from being a ritual, for Paul baptism was the literal joining with Christ in
his death, burial and ressurection, and the initial incorporation of the new believer into
the body of Christ

8.   Growth has many levels, and our spiritual birth is the beginning of our
growth, and sets us on the right spiritual path.

9.   I am sorry that I do not have time this week to comment on each of these. I do say that when I selected "Jesus" that I include everything about Jesus Christ--His life, teaching, death, burial, ressurection, etc.   The same holds true of "God", the "Church", the "Holy Spirit".   All of these are involved in our growth as disciples.

10.   I believe it is essential to present the full gospel message of conversion especially the teaching about baptisms purpose in washing away sin and making the heart ready for the holy spirit.

11.   Im a Christian church pastor, c'mon man!

12.   In regards to doctrine and faced with limited options, the most important issues regard man, God (the Trinity), their relationship (or lack of), and God's plan for redeemed humanity. The Bible is necessary, church, worship, baptism and prayer for the continuation of that redeemed relationship. Get them started on this and trust the Holy Spirit and God's word to do the rest.

13.   Initiation into the Kingdom, and a public decision entering us into accountability within the Church body.

14.   It's importance, purpose, old man (self) crucified

15.   Must understand what happens, why it happens and the subsequent actions that must take place afterward.

16.   Pictures the transformation of the life change by the power of the Holy Spirit

17.   The Bible teaches that a person receives the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit at baptism...without the Holy Spirit's work there can be no real spiritual growth. Man's work is not sufficient.

18. The meaning and symbolism represented in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ in baptism can be a significant motivator for people to continue to grow in Christ after experiencing baptism and being reminded what Christ has done for us.

19. The psychological benefits of baptism have been ignored in many present day denominations.

20. This is important because it is not properly taught in many churches and people need to know what PART it plays in the plan of salvation.

21. This is our confession publicly

22. to join Christ in his death burrieal and ressurection (Rom 6:3-6) is one of the most preciaous and powerful images which God has given us, especially as it is directly connected to the gift of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

23. We all need to know that we can have a new life and baptism is the start of that new life in Christ

24. We need to know about our response to God's gift through Jesus Christ.

LIST OF RESPONSES: CHURCH, THE PURPOSE OF THE
(WORSHIP, NURTURE, EVANGELISM, AND MERCY

1. Again, this is key to understanding one's place in the Body of Christ.

2. Christian growth comes by knowing that the church has a purpose. We are given gifts to use in various ministries of the church and each must do their part in order to make the church what God meant it to be

3. Have to know our purpose and understand it.

4. Important for one's understanding of their role in the Kingdom of God both individually and corporately

5. In order to grow in Christ a person needs to understand that worship is more than just "going to church." Understanding what nurture is about will help them move closer in their relationship with Christ.

6. It is important for a beleiver in Christ to understand the on-going purpose of the church to make disciples and not to sit around and have their needs met.

7. Need understanding of the role of the church and our need for it, and our role in it

8. See notes on the Body of Christ.

9. SG takes place only in the context of the body of Christ. Otherwise all the "one another" scriptures could not be obeyed.

10. So many "one anothers" within the NT remind us of our responsibility within the church.

11. The church has purpose and knowing the purpose is essential to achieving the purpose

12. The encouragement and accountability within the church is essential.

13. The gathering place of broken people who have been changed through the mercy, grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ

14. The living, breathing community of Christ. The Church is God's best plan for people to be introduced to Him. It is the "family" that Christ-followers journey with. It is essential.

15. The plan of Scripture is for the Christian life to be communal, not to be lived out in isolation. An understanding of the church essential.

16. There is a great need to understand and get back to the work of the true Church

17. These items fairly well describe what the church looks like in real life.

18. They are members of a new family. Should know what is expected and how that makes them unique.

19. We are called to worship and be ovedient to our Lord. This is our purpose. We are not called to exist. We are called to serve. Eph 2:8-10 states that we are saved by grace so that we can serve others in the name of God. In fact, we have been appointed for this purpose.

20. We grow in the context of fellow disciples, we are a part of something greater. As we grow we will need help, and need to offer help.

21. We need to know about and become a part of the community of faith.

22. We need to know that we are the church not just a building. If I know I am the church or at least a part of the church it makes me have a little bit of ownership. If I know what is expected of me I'm more likely to do it than have to guess.

23. Without a clear purpose we will just wander around aimlessly.

LIST OF RESPONSES: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES (BIBLE, HOSPITALITY, PRAYER, FASTING, WORSHIP, MEDITATION, STEWARDSHIP, WITNESSING, SELF-CONTROL, ACTS OF MERCY AND JUSTICE, ETC.)

1.   We need to understand and apply these tools to help us grow in our walk with Christ.

2.   This category is way too broad, it encompasses so much! But all of these, and more, are just practical ways in which our discipleship is demonstrated in the real world.

3.   These elements, when taught well, help to deepen people in incredible ways. When taught in an environment of legalism they lapse into hollow outward practices by which people can create a checklist.

4.   These are the activities of spiritual growth.

5.   These activites can help us bring our lives more into line with God's will for our lives.

6.   The spiritual disciplines covers so many things associated with our spiritual formation that its difficult to sum up thier importance. They keep us connected to our Lord, learning from Him, and following His ways.

7.   The life patterns of spiritual transformation. These disciplines are the tools and habits that the Spirit of God uses to form and mold us into His image.

8.   The disciplines give us regular patterns of life that allow us to be formed to God's design.

9. The disciplines are things Christians do, not things one does to BE a Christian. These are Discipleship.

10. Studying the spiritual disciplines will grow a Christian as they perform the "duties" of growing believers through all of the facets listed above. These disciplines are time-tested ways that Christians grow in their relationship with Christ.

11. Spiritual disciplines are not the goal of spiritual growth, but they can be agents by which we grow. Christlikeness is the goal; the disciplines will support that goal.

12. Spiritual disciplines are good practices to employ in your life.

13. Our renewed relationship with Christ is a growing experience that requires direction and focus. We can only do what we have been taught and and can only achieve what we have studied and practiced.

14. Our part in learning and discerning God's ways is through spiritual disciplines. Just as spiritual gifts are unique to each Christian, the disciplines that guide each Christian vary.

15. Once we receive Christ we don't get on the white horse and ride into the sunset happily ever after.

16. Must be intentional daily to continue to grow spiritually

17. Living for Christ is more than head knowledge. It is practicing basic spiritual disciplines and living out a transformed life.

18. Learning how to position oursleves for growth is vital.

19. Just as we need food and exercise for our physical welll being we need food and exercise for our spiritual, these disciplines provide that well being

20. In our daily walk and our growth process we need to know that we are going to have certain responsibilities. Each of these will give us help and direction in how to grow. What are the things we need to understand and work at to become different than the world

21. Important for sanctification, evangelism, and overall discipleship.

22. How can we grow without some spiritual disciplines?

23. critical for real growth. as Jesus said, "when you fast"

24. Bring discipleship to reality.

25. Actions that help us become more like God

26. a disciple is a life long learner and follower of Christ. It takes self sacrifice and disipline

LIST OF RESPONSES: GRACE

1. You are saved by grace... seems important

2. We need to know our God is gift giver that gives without reserve or condition

3. We cannot approach God without this.

4. Understanding that grace is getting a free gift that we don't deserve will motivate Christian to grow. Also will grow them through applying grace and sharing it wth others.

5. The distinguishing characteristic of Christianity vs. all other world religions.

6. See notes on Ephesians 2:8

7. Saved by grace, it's as simple as that!

8. One of the hardest things to understand, no body gives anything for nothing.

9. It's not about what we can do -it's about what He has done - and nothing that we could ever earn or deserve.

10. It is the cental message of our salvation and our lives as Christians.

11. It is essential to understand we merit nothing; what we can not achieve God freely gives.

12. I would be no where if GRACE was not part of the equation

13. Human grace accepts or tolerates sin. Godly grace deals with sin in a way that is both just and merciful.

14. Grace is the bottom line in the salvation process. It's all about what God is willing to do. Among our own RM churches, we have struggled for years in finally

understanding that grace doesn't eliminate the need for obedience. It is unfortunate, however, that so many of our congregations still do not understand grace

15. God's multicolored grace is sufficient, touching every aspect of our lives.

16. God has always operated with mankind through grace, we need to embrace this as central teaching.

17. For God so loved the world that He gave.... God's grace is the only cause we have to come to Him. Thus the importance of knowing about His grace and living to show that grace is of the utmost of importance.

18. Explains the nature of God.

19. A true understanding of grace recognize the high cost associated with it. This understanding helps one not take advantage of grace and use it in a cheap context.

20. A right understanding of Grace helps us realize God's love for us and also quiets the legalism that can easily rear its head

21. A proper understanding of Grace keeps us from believing in the false teaching that we are saved by our works.

LIST OF RESPONSES: PRAYER

1. WE need to know that God wants us to talk to Him.

2. We need to know how to communicate with God.

3. We have a great heavenly Father and He wishes for His children to talk to him. Our prayers are important to us as we can feel God's presence. Prayer is essential to our spiritual growth. Trusting God as we talk to Him is necessary for us to continue each day. Also talking to God is a comfort and strength

4. This is my connection to a Holy God...it is a discipline that becomes a thrill

5. The practice of prayer brings us closer to God, gives us strength and fills our hearts with hope. Can't miss out on this one!

6. Talking with our heavenly Father is essential to spiritual growth. As someone said, "a Christian without prayer is like a fish without water."

7. Speaking to and listening to the Father

8. So basic to the life of Christ! Prayer is the power behind all the great Biblical leaders, and movements of God.

9. See baptism

10. Prayer is key to understanding spiritual growth--it aligns our will with God's will.

11. Prayer is key to growing in Christ. If we dont' communicate with God, we can't grow in the ways He wants us to.

12. Our means of communication with our Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer

13. Our daily communication with God is how we grow as Christians.

14. Much needed... a broad understanding of prayer helps us...there is much more available and much more power than most basic Christians know

15. Life-line to God, conversation, connection to Him

16. It's like breathing for spiritual life.

17. It's important for us to pray for strength, guidance, and understanding.

18. How we communicate with the source of our salvation and power to live as disciples.

19. How do I grow closer to someone without talking with them? Enough said!

20. Foundation of walking in faith. Never about the answers, always about who we are praying to.

21. Communication with God is essential to develop a relationship with Him. This is a two-way line of communication.

22. Communication is key to any relationship. Learning to talk to and with God is not only vital, it is lifegiving.

23. Another vital intimacy along w communion that deepens communication with God.

LIST OF RESPONSES: GOD'S ATTRIBUTES (MOST HIGH, SOVEREIGN, ALMIGHTY, ETERNAL, GOOD, JEALOUS, RIGHTEOUS/JUST, OMNISCIENT, OMNIPOTENT, OMNIPRESENT, ONE, HOLY, LOVE, TRANSCENDENCE, IMMUTABLE, PERFECT, SELF-EXISTENT, SPIRIT, TRUE, WISE, WRATHFUL)

1. A huge topic to mine for incredible spiritual truths. We must know the object of our affections.

2. for spiritual growth, understanding who (what) God is helps our decisions and obedience

3. God desires relationship and a believer needs to understand and live out a life that is in awe of God. One must celebrate the power and majesty of God

4. God is different than any being we know. The attributes listed are important for us to know about God. It is powerful and perection. He is our example, and it is important for us to know Him as He is   rfection

5. If you're going to worship God, it would make sense to discover what God says about himself. Sometimes all we do in SG is worship our own understanding or projection of what "God" should be. Might want to take the time to meet the real God.

6. In order to know what He expects, we must know Him!

7. It all begins with knowing God.

8. It helps to know Who we are to be growing like, if spiritual growth is growing to become like God

9. It's important that we understand the nature of the Father. Not only does it help us to understand him but also helps us to understand ourselves - we are made in his image.

10. Knowing God is the whole point (eternal life is walking with God).

11. Need a return to more teaching on ALL of God's attributes, esp wrath in our time of great sinfulness

12. One needs exposure to the nature of God, to get it in our head I am unqualified to be my own god.

13. Our concept of God is formed by recognizing His attributes.

14. Since life is about bringing God glory, it's important we know who He is

15. The doctrine of God and His attributes stand at the very center of Christianity. How we view the Lord often determines how we interpret His word, how we response (or cannot respond) to salvation, how we tolerate our sins, how we are intolerant of other people's sins against us, etc. This all arises from how we view the Lord.

16. The more we know about God the more we are able to experience the fullness of God's presence.

17. To grow in our spiritual walk it's important for us to understand how God can impact every area of our lives. Understand His attributes allows us to more confidently abide in Him and thus advance our growth process.

18. We are a people in trouble whom our God can help in every way. The more we learn of Him, the more we can extend our devotion and dependance.

19. We are called to be Christ-like in our Christian life. Learning and living God's attributes is a process of growing closer to Him by striving to be like Him.

20. We make God...God. Either HE is God or HE isn't. Living in the reality HE is GOD changes everything I do, I am, I say, I think

21. What better way to grow in Him than to get to know Him better and better

LIST OF RESPONSES: BIBLE (WORD OF GOD)

1.   A workable knowledge of the scripture is essential for any person's spiritual growth. The ability to search the scripture and follow through with a logical study of any subject.

2.   Cannot know God, His plan for us, or how to live for Him without his word

3.   Explains how we grow in Christ

4.   If an individual is to grow spiritually then they must understand the importance of God's Word and its role in their life. This is the one and only road map for their life.

5.   If the Bible is not our true north - we will never know where we are going.

6.   If you can't understand the Bible, you can't understand who God is and what He thinks. Growing Christians have to look into the "mirror" of God's Word (James 1:23-ff) to see where and how they need to change to please God.

7.   Important to understand source of God's primary communication with man

8.   It is our insturction book. It is God breathed and if we have question about what God wants us to do and to know this is the book of authority

9.   It is the handbook for God's activity in history interacting with mankind and entering the human world to bring life change.

10. It is the source of all God has specifically revealed of Himself- it is alive, active, powerful

11. Our primary source for knowledge, inspiration, and guidance.

12. See first response

13. The Bible is God's written word to us and foundational in understanding God, his plan, an our role.

14. The Bible is the inspired word of God that must be handled with reverential awe. It came to the church via the providence and protection of the Lord. Christians must allow it to form their walk with the Lord.

15. The Bible is the inspired, authoritative story of God. It is the easiest and most accessible way for man to know God.

16. The importance of the Word of God cannot be overstated. It is where we learn about God, it is what we feed on in order to grow Spiritually and has people.

17. The inspired Word of God tells the story of God's plan for mankind and gives the blueprint for spiritual growth.

18. The word of God is truth. It is the foundation for right and wrong. It is the way to know what Jesus wants from us. It is the truth in a world that chooses to not have a truth that is eternal.

19. This generation tends to be experience oriented. Against many today who say we need to refine or revise the role of the bible today, I believe that it must become an authority in the lifes of all new believers. When the bible does not become the authority, something else will.

20. This is the only means of truly determining the will of God

21. This is the Word of God. If you are not going to study the manual, how do you expect to learn how to grow closer to Christ.

22. We need to know the Bible as our source of truth and life.

LIST OF RESPONSES: FORGIVENESS (REMISSION OF SINS)

1. A person cannot rid themselves of sin. Only God can forgive them through a perfect sacrifice. Sin has price and it was paid.

2. Another huge part of the salvation process

3. forgiveness is necessary for a relationship with God, we need to see how we receive that initially and after we have been baptized into Christ

4. Forgiveness is not a one time thing: It is an ongoing project. To grow in Christ we must strive to forgive like Christ.

5. God's forgiveness transforms our lives; and in turn we become people who forgive those around us. One of the greatest spiritual challenges is extending forgiveness.

6. I can forgive myself, but I need the forgiveness of the God who created me

7. In order to move forward in discipleship one must understand that they have been freed from past.

8. Jesus says if we cannot forgive others, He cannot forgive us either. God forgives us and forgiveness is one of the core components to the faith.

9. Models and helps grow our faith

10. reason for hope.

11. The great gift of salvation that allows us to access the great promise!

12. The starting point of discipleship.

13. This is the one thing some new believers need to understand more that many others. My sins are gone, God has forgiven me, I can forgive myself!

14. To both receive and give forgiveness is central to the message of Christ.

15. To know this is to bring thanskgiving and praise inot one's life toward God and His Son

16. We all need the forgiveness which Christ sacrifice made possible.

17. We need to accept Christ's forgiveness to be able to move ahead in the faith. A growing Christian understands forgiveness, accepts it for themselves, offers it to others, and lives it out in everyday life.

18. We need to know the benefit of grace.

19. When I miss the mark I need to know that I can try again. That is what forgiveness is all about a second chance to make things right with God and people. We need to know if we don't forgive God won't forgive us and that's a powerful truth to absorb.

20. Without forgiveness, we are lost to our sins and to our sinful nature. There would no hope.

LIST OF RESPONSES: OBEDIENCE (CHOOSING GOD'S WAYS)

1. A must if we truly Love God

2. Christians that obey God grow more mature in their faith and please God with their actions.

3. Faith without works is dead.

4. How can we claim to be followers of God and not be obedient - even when it leads to suffering or hardship. A disciple learns obedience first. Jesus showed us this quality in the garden of Gethsemane

5. I can talk a good game, but the reality is living that good game and that is wrapped up in obedience

6. I will never grow close to someone that I am in rebellion against. Thus; to grow in Christ I have to learn about and practice obedience to what He wants from me. I have a free will and thus the choice is mine. But if I choose to grow closer to God I have to choose to do what He asks of me.

7. If you love me, you'll obey me. Jesus' words say it all on the importance of obedience.

8. Key word here is choice. We choose to serve and obey because of love.

9. Necessary for slavation and pleasing and glorifying God

10. Obedience is a choice...God has given us direction in following him...we must be obedient to that or we are not disciples.

11.   Obedience is our response to God's free gift of grace. Grace without obedience is universalism. Obedience without grace is legalism. SG, discipleship, has to understand that grace is through faith, esp as faith is understood as our beliefs put into practice

12.   Our faith, our spiritual growth, is evidenced in our choosing God's way. To say that we love God, that we know Him, and to choose a different way is to decieve ourselves.

13.   Our obedience is rewarded in many ways, and is pleasing to God.

14.   Showing faith by what I do. Can't earn it, but if we love Him we will obey Him

15.   Spiritual gorwth comes when we strive to be like Him. It all comes down to obedience. Choosing His Way

16.   Submission to God and following is completely defined by this act of obedience- it is also the key description of love which is the greatest commandment

17.   This goes to the issue of love and understanding that without obedience there is no blessing. It also shows God we love Him.

18.   This is the nuts and bolts of walking the talk.

19.   Though we are saved by Grace, God still demands us to be obedient,

20.   Understanding the critical action to be taken towards God's Word.

21.   We cannot grow in our spiritual walk without a knowledge of God's ways and a willingness to be obedient to Him.

LIST OF RESPONSES: BIBLE, ATTRIBUTES OF
(AUTHORITATIVE, INERRANT, INFALLIBLE,
INSPIRED, NECESSARY, SUFFICIENT)

1. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and other passages teach that the Bible is sufficient and gives us the guidance we need to follow in God's ways. No other record gives us this understanding.

2. Again - a broad topic that covers several of the sub-topics. The subject needs a solid understanding of the nature and value of Scripture to build upon.

3. An understanding of the importance of the Bible is key.

4. Basic understanding of the Bible's attributes aids understanding.

5. God breathed, living, a MUST for spiritual growth

6. God's Word is God-breathed. It is true. It is trustworthy. It is relevant. It is needed to understand what God desires from us and it provides us the example of Jesus.

7. If the whole of the Bible is not the authoritative, inerrant, infallible, inspired Word of God, then we might as well read Harry Potter. If these facts are not part of a Christian's life as much as breath itself, how are we going to learn the truth about God.

8. If we are going to believe in the vibe we need to know that it is just not another book among many. We need to know that it was God inspired so it's words are truth.

9. II Timothy 3:16 tells us that the Word is God breathed. It is inspired by Him and it is use for in teaching, rebuking, training. This is God's Word to His Children

10. Important to answer the fundamental questions about the nature of God's communication

11. In order to make it a part of their daily lives, they must trust and rely on His Book.

12. It is important to have full confidence in the Bible.

13. It's very important for Christians to understand and except the infallibility of the Word. Being able to make a defense of this would be a step in the right direction for a person's spiritual growth.

14. needed in a world that discounts the Word (apologetic and faith building)

15. Provides confidence in this necessary objective source for truth

16. Something has to be the marker. The Bible provides that point of absolute reference. Without it we are left to our own devices. With it we have a true compass.

17. The Bible needs to be respected and taught as the Word of God

18. These lessons would help give a respect and the place of scripture as a good foundation

19. Without this understanding Christianity will become a series of negotiables from a human perspectives. But salvation is not negotiable. Jesus is the way truth and life. God set the path which we must follow to experience His grace.

LIST OF RESPONSES: HOLY SPIRIT, ROLES OF THE
(POWER TO LIVE A HOLY LIFE, INDWELLING GIFT,
GIVER OF GIFTS)

1.   A person's growth depends a great deal on his or her reliance on the work and power of the Holy Spirit. Understanding who He is and how he lives and works within us is a valuable tool in our growth.

2.   Acts 2:38 tells us that when repent and are baptized that we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit is life - abundant and eternal. He works in us in as many ways as their are people on the earth - each unique and speacially endued with the power of God.

3.   An amazing powerful gift of God, real and living within us, so important to claim this

4.   Encouragement to live holy lives knowing that Holy SPirit is at work and we are not left to our own abilities.

5.   Essential to understanding what distinguishes us from non-believers.

6.   God's presence in our lives was given to help us; our understanding of that help, while not imperative is greatly beneficial. He would help us if we remained ignorant, but we'd be less likely to quench His efforts with some understanding.

7.   God's Spirit resides in the life of a believer. A person will not grow spiritually without the Holy Spirit serving as teacher.

8.   Spiritual growth is impossible with out the person and the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

9. Teach the true role of the Spirit, to make us holy

10. The Holy Spirit is way more than the "third person of the Trinity." Careful of excesses we still walk in His Power

11. The 'interactive' side of God. Perhaps the most challenging part of growing as a Christ follower is become sensitive to the movement of the Spirit.

12. The Spirit is God's/Christ's presence in the believer today. SG is not even possible without the indwelling of the Spirit. We are IN Christ, and Christ is IN us

13. The Spirit is the life force of the church. Christ poured his Spirit onto the church. Knowing the indwelling reality of the Presence of the Lord creates power and vibrancy in the life of the believer.

14. There is so much confusion over this subject it's important to take the time to establish what the word of the lord says about his spirit. The spirit should become the driving force in every Christians life!

15. There were several selections about the Holy Spirit and I thought this was most comprehensive.

16. This 3rd part of the Godhead is so under taught that most people are unaware of the importance of Him in their lives. This is God indwelling us to help us get through a sin filled world. Yes, it is God and Jesus living inside us

17. Understanding how the Person of God changes us and uses us.

18. Understanding we have a Spirit of power, not timidity. God is one

19. We must understand Him more since He is living inside us

LIST OF RESPONSES: WORSHIP

1.   A life of transformation is a life of worship. Worship is the full-life response to God's grace in your life. It is the ongoing product of spiritual growth.

2.   A part of our lives that so many have just not understood. This is not a religious ceremony that we go through each week but a daily time of closeness with God. This is the essence of growth, that daily time of lifting God up and feeling His closeness

3.   Focusing on God

4.   God alone is worthy of our adoration. Anything else is idolatry.

5.   Growing in Christ is a process and a part of that process is learning to worship our Lord. Understanding that worship is con confined to a worship center on Sunday morning, but worship is our expression of love and praise and gratitude to our Lord.

6.   It's all about Him - anything less is not worship and is not discipleship.

7.   It's the expression of the value we place on God. It appears that is what we will do forever, so if a human was to chose one activity for himself it seems like it should be worship.

8.   Once we know Jesus we will worship HIM

9.   Our response to God, both individually and corperately, needs no order to be "authentic," but without proper order it can become less than beneficial. When directed our intuative responses are alaigned with that of others to form an encrouaging spiritual expereince.

10. See baptism.

11. The adoration of God through all circumstances and situations.

12. the full aspect of worship. Our life is worship, corporate worship. etc.. helps us fulfill our purpose before God

13. The motivation for all a Christian is to do and be 24/7.

14. The way we express our love and devotion to God

15. We are going to be practicing this for all eternity; it is essential we understand it and practice it down here. Know that it is more than 'going to church.'

16. We need to understand and grow in our loving response to God through worship.

17. When we praise and honor God it deepens that relationship with Him

18. worship is obviously more than a rocking band on Sunday morning. A life where one sees the presence of God in nature, and beauty, and in the mundane and frustrations and sorrows of life is a life that is beginning to understand growth spiritually

19. Worship is the practice of remembering and proclaiming how awesome God is and what He has done for me. As a Christian, the very act of worship draws me closer to Him.

LIST OF RESPONSES: REPENTANCE (REPENT)

1. A daily observance lends one to mature in the faith. But must first understand the reality of the word and what it really means.

2. A growing Christian needs to understand that repentance is not a one time process when they accept Christ. Repentance is a constant part of our growth process.

3. Can be a thermometer and thermostat of our spiritual maturity

4. Important to know in handling sin that pursues us throughout earthly life.

5. Keeps us in Christ....many people need to know that in our struggle against sin that there is always a way of escape that there is always time to turn and that it is not over until we cannot feel sorrow any more or we do not desire to come back.... i think we ought to teach people to cry for their sins and to cry out to God for forgiveness

6. No grace, no forgiveness, no hopw with out repentance before and after conversion

7. Our response to truth is to turn from the sin and to the life in Christ.

8. Repentance is the act of replacing self centered life with a Christ oriented love centered life. To truly change the heart you must also change the focus of life.

9. Repentance must accompany the spiritual journey. It is the reaction to God's grace by the repelling of our sinful nature. It is the essence of transformational living.

10. The concept of life and mind change through repentance is often missed. We are to be a new creation the man of sin put to death, and Christ should reign in our lives.

11. The disciple must learn the healthy practice of turning from sin and toward Christ.

12. The past needs to be in the past.

13. This is a key missing ingredient in believer's life. Our salvation is connected to us recognizing how our sin affected God and how Jesus paid for our sin with his life. Repentance is godly sorrow for missing up. It is remorse for a life that served a selfish purpose.

14. To change our minds in such a way that we see ourselves from God's perspective is humbling. It leads us to desire the kinds of changes that move us further into the flow God's grace and blessings.

15. we have to turn away from the sinful nature and turn toward God

16. We must learn to repent and to teach anad preach to others about repentance.

17. We need to know what it means to turn away from our sins.

18. What Jesus asks of us

LIST OF RESPONSES: STEWARDSHIP (OUR USE OF
MONEY, RESOURCES, TIME MANAGEMENT,
SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT, OUTREACH, ETC.)

1. A part of maturing in Christ is understanding the "who owns it all" and what our role is supposed to be in handling everything.

2. A right attitude toward the things of this world is necessary for us to fix our eyes on our relationship with God and the world to come

3. Acts 2:42 displays the church sharing resources with each other, and with those in need. Our willingness to give and share fuels the church and Kingdom.

4. All our possessions are owned by God. We are managers of all we have. If we are truly sanctified (wholly his) then all we possess is dedicated to serving him by serving others.

5. As disciples we are to be like Jesus - he was sacrificial - we need to follow that example.

6. Basic knowledge that guides all Christians into the foundational principle of give, give, give.... which is wha God is all about and which is so different from everything we have learned culturally

7. Directly connected to discipleship and to the original creation commission.

8. God has blessed us so that we may be a conduit through which He can bless others. our wealth is just one area where God intends this

9. How to live under God's blessing and be a blessing!

10. huge component of Spiritual growth. Trusting God with everything.

11. Jesus said our heart is reflected in the use of money. This is a unique one of a kind statement that in Matthew that our treasure reflects our spiritual heart. When people put their money to the Kingdom they generally put the rest of themselves in place.

12. Making the best use of the resources placed in our care because we understand that God has blessed us with them for His purposes and not our own will mold your life in a way that it reflects His character.

13. Obedience

14. One of the surest indicators of our maturity in Christ

15. Stewardship is central/absolutely essential to discipleship/SG. Say whatever you like, our use of money reveals where our heart is, and for whom we are living. I question whether SG can even begin without a biblical understanding of stewardship

16. The love of money haunts so much in our world. When a believer understand that it's not their money, that it's all God's, it can really stretch and grow them as they try to spend it His way.

17. This element of practice tends to reveal how our hearts are yielded to the kingdom, how we view the "sowing the seeds of the gospel," and give toward God's kingdom agenda.

18. Where your heart is that is where your interests will rest and be utilized

19. Without a basic understanding of stewardship we will never be the mangers of Gods gifts that we ought, and the work of the Church will struggle to move forward.

LIST OF RESPONSES: EVANGELISM (WITNESSING)

1.   A Christian needs to understand that as we grow in Christ we have been commissioned to be His "Ambassadors" and in that we have to be able to at least give testimony to our own faith walk.

2.   Commanded by God

3.   Helps others become disciples and strengthens our faith in action

4.   I had a teacher tell me, "The best way to learn something is to teach it." When we witness we are teaching others thus what better way to learn more about Christ than to share Him with others.

5.   In that the scriptures reveal the human response to the gospel (vs. determinism) one who imitates Christ and the disciples must share the message of salvation to those around them.

6.   In the great commission, Jesus commanded us to "make disciples". He told us to go, baptize them and teach them to obey everything that Christ commanded. When we are evangelizing as Christ commanded we will be growing in the faith.

7.   Isn't this about the only reason we don't go straight to heaven after conversion? :0)

8.   It is clear that we do not fully understand all we have in Christ until we lead someone to Christ-- this act seems to make everything real and dynamic in us

9. Most Christians, young and old, fail to grow in this area of their relationship with the Lord. We have allows our thinking to be centered around this being just the leadership responsibility. We need to grow people to witness each day.

10. My faith is deepened and strengthened when I share the Good News of Jesus

11. Perhaps the most difficult practice in one's life, but alos one that is essential and commanded.

12. prepared to give a reason for the Hope they have in Christ

13. Someone evangelized the one you are teaching so they need to know that God expects them to do the same for others.

14. The great commission (Matt 28:18-20) charged the disciple to spread the good news to all who would listen. We have the same charge.

15. The great commission calls us all to it, however and minuet number of Christians are actively involved in sharing their faith.

16. The main thing we as disciples are to do is to be His witnesses so that we may introduce others to the one who can save them

17. The word may be a bit archaic, but when you really become a follower of Jesus, you WANT to talk about him. Call it witnessing, or evangelism if you must but anyone who is excited about anything, takes about their excitement

18. This is how the church grows when we share our story. this is exactly what the Lord wants from us just share our story about how we met Christ. It can be done any number of ways and we need to know that.

LIST OF RESPONSES: COMMUNION (LORD'S SUPPER)

1. A necessary intimacy to remember what God did about sin and what God is going to do for us

2. A time of Christian growth and forgiveness. This is a time each week when we are to examine ourselves and see just where we are and what we are doing

3. Again for John and Paul, communion is a literal connection to the body and blood of Jesus. In that sense, in communion, we come into actual contact with Jesus and his grace

4. An understanding of the Lord's Supper enables the believer to continue to remember the Savior's body and blood as it was sacrificed on the cross. The cross leads us to humility and our knee-jerk reaction is a desire to lay our own lives down for Christ's sake.

5. Being a member of a Christian Church taking this on a weekly basis, it is imperative for their growth to understand its meaning and purpose.

6. Christ's word, "Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood" are quite repulsive to the modern ear (as the NT ear) but among the central actions within the historic church is the importance of the intimate gathering of the church around the Lord's Communion.

7. I vital link to the remembrance of Jesus Christ without whom we have nothing

8. It can be argued communion is the central aspect of our worship. It helps to keep us focused upon what the faith is all about.

9. Jesus asks us to do this in rememberance of Him

10. Jesus instituted this method of remembering the source and cost of grace. Without remembering we slip back into ourselves.

11. Jesus instituted this time of remembrance. Understanding the meaning behind communion helps an individual live out a life of devotion to the one who died in their place.

12. Paul made it clear in 1 Cor 11 that we are to remember, renew, and proclaim our faith in Jesus through the observance of the Lord's Supper.

13. Remembering and reviewing Salvation

14. The most important remembrance for every Christian must be understood.

15. The regular reminder of our Lord's sacrifice was not only requested of us, but keeps us focused upon Him.

16. The way we connect with Christ on a regular basis

17. This is such an important part of the Christian's life that in Acts 20:7 we see that is why they met on the first day of the week. Paul happened to be there and preach; but the met to have Communion. To grow closer to God through Christ we must recognize the importance of why we were given this act of remembrance.

18. This is the commemoration Jesus left us

19. We need constant reminders of what Jesus did so we can have a growing relationship with him.

LIST OF RESPONSES: ACTS 2:42FF (ECCLESIOLOGY/
THE BIRTH AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH)

1. Christians must understand the pure, foundational description of the early church if they are to be a pure church today.

2. Discloses the purpose and place of the church in God's plan.

3. Good display of the new purpose and calling for Christ-followers.

4. If we are to be the church we need to see how the first church functioned

5. Member must know the importance of the Church since they are a part of it; its goals and mission.

6. See first response

7. The church is not the building, but the lived out expression of God's love as the body of belivers care for one another.

8. The church is the body of Christ, so it formation and purpose are critical.

9. The pattern of the early church is foundational as to the intentions of "upon this rock I will build my church."

10. The purpose and practice of the church fosters growth.

11. The spiritual growth of the early church was in part due to their devotion, and the same is true of our own growth

12. This is the example of the way the Church is suppose to work. This is important because when people learn to live like this they set the example of how much better the Christian life is than the ways of the world and this will draw new people to Christ.

13.   This passage is seen immediately after the birth of the church. In this verse and following we see what the early church saw as important they showed it by being steadfast in these. Also, I believe this verse shows us an instruction in what should be in a worship observance

14.   This passage models the practices of the early church and is a good example of what and why we should follow their lead.

15.   Understanding the process of the early church will help keep us on target in 21st century church.

16.   WE need to understand the mission that God has called the church to do

17.   Without knowing the mission of the church how can you try to accomplish it?

LIST OF RESPONSES: 1 CORINTHIANS 13
(LOVE CHAPTER)

1. Describes the behavior of love, the actions of God-quality love.

2. Explains how we treat others, part of the discipline of our actions

3. Faith, Hope, Love, are key and important virtues to the believer

4. I beleive that without the understanding of the importance of our love in Christ we misunderstand Christ's love for us and thus can not grow in our love for Him or our fellow man.

5. I can teach all the doctrine I want to, but nothing surpasses the power of God's word. A Catholic I once worked with was asking me about Bible college and what I believe. My response to her was couched in some sort of Bible story, I don't remember the specific story, but her ignorance and response has stayed with me these many years later, "You have to remember Rick that I'm Catholic. We know plenty of doctrine, but we don't know much about the Bible. This is why I am preaching verse by verse through the New Testament in a chronology of Christ's life, and next year we will focus on families getting through "The Story" by Zondervan. God gave us the ability to reason, and His word. If limited in what to teach - Scripture is enough. My answer will be the same for all other passages listed below.

6. Love is a part of growth because of the need in a changing world. God is love, I John 4:8, and He must have wanted us to understand this subject because he dedicated an entire chapter to its teachings. He greatly wants us to love each other, as brothers and sister in the Lord

7. Love is essential for worship of god and glorifying relationship with others.

8. Love is the fundamental mark of Christians

9. Since God is love, and Jesus said love is the distinguishing feature of his followers, a practical working definition of real love must be the basis for any type SG (spiritual growth)

10. The expression of agape love is an imitation of Christ

11. The understanding of what love is in the biblical perspective is vital. This chapter is vital for how do we put love into action.

12. This form of love is so essential yet so rare, even within the Church.

13. To grow spiritually, you must learn to love, not as the world loves, but in a new way. Paul's definition provides a wonderful goal.

14. WE are told that we will be know by how we love one another this gives an excellent description of love

15. WE need to understand that love should motivate us to act, live and serve. Actions without love mean nothing to God.

LIST OF RESPONSES: HOLY SPIRIT (THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY)

1. An understanding of the Person of God who empowered creation!

2. Essential to understand if we are to be like Him

3. See baptsim

4. The 'hidden' personality that resides within us who gives us power to overcome and claim vistory in life.

5. The Holy Spirit is how we know and hear from God as Christians.

6. The Holy Spirit is the change agent in our spiritual development. We cannot grow on our own merit. It is dependant upon His power and transforming work.

7. The Spirit guides, leads, and changes us, brings us spiritual gifts.

8. There is no possible way to live out a life in Christ Jesus without the help of the Holy Spirit- intercedes for us, strengthens us, reminds us of scriptures, directs what we should say, directs us into truth, ...He is the one who makes us know that we are not alone and He guarantees what is to come

9. Understanding the power and purpose of the Holy Spirit is vital.

10. we have to understand each part of the trinity to understnad God and have a balanced view of him

11. We need to know about God's Spirit indwelling us and empowering us.

12. We will not grow with out the Holy Spirit. Jesus had to go away to fulfill the plan God presented and Jesus left us part of Himself and God to help us grow, and know and to go

13. While this is an often shortchanged topic in our teaching - the power to be disciples comes from the Holy Spirit.

14. With so many misconceptions with understanding the Holy Spirit, it's important that we share the truth about the Holy Spirit, who He is and what He has to offer us. Then we will grow in allowing God's Spirit to be active in our lives.

LIST OF RESPONSES: MATTHEW 28:18-20 (BEING A DISCIPLE-MAKER)

1. After all it is the Great Commission, Jesus final words to the believers.

2. Another command given to Christians

3. Jesus' commission to make disciples directs not only us individually, but us collectively. If our spiritual growth does not have His commission in view, we are growing in a wrong direction.

4. Learning what we are called to do is vital. We are called to make disciples of Christ.

5. Our call of duty.

6. See first response

7. The call to growth and making other disciples

8. The Great Commission. We are charged with evangelism and teaching. He is Lord. That is enough.

9. These final words of Christ are a good reminder of what one of our greatest calls is as disciples...we are to reproduce our faith in others...we are fishers of men.

10. This is our main mission as Christ-followers. People who put an emphasis on this tend to grow more than others that consider it only a suggestion.

11. This passage reflects the key instruction to make more disciples.

12. To be a growing Christian one must understand what it means to be a disciple, work at that in his own life and then begin to replicate that in others - that's growth.

13. We have a God given job, believers need to understand that and do it.

LIST OF RESPONSES: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

1. As we grow, the Spirit will transform us and the evidence of growth is Fruit.

2. Displays the Spirit working in our life, a mark of spiritual growth

3. Galatians 5:22 begins a list of fruit that comes by the Spirit of God in our lives. While this list is not all-inclusive it gives a good idea of what happens inside a person when they follow Jesus and begin to be like him. The Spirit of God works in us

4. Great example of the blossoming Kingdom and its impact upon our character.

5. How do we know if the Spirit is opporating in our lives if not through the fruit?

6. Important so that we can gauge our progress in growing in Him

7. It's important for believes to realize that if the Spirit if active in your life,these are the things your life should be producing.

8. Key...i think it is the most succinct description of our attitudes and what we ought to be like in Christ

9. measure of our growth

10. Reveals the qualities of the redeemed life God makes possible in us.

11. The Fruit of the Spirit is a clear, practical package of ideals that a person can study and begin to put in practice in their lives resulting in spiritual growth.

12. The product of a life of spiritual growth. The Fruits of the Spirit are tangible measures of a life surrendered to Christ.

13.   This fruit is essential for us to be a what God wants us to be. The fruit is an opposite of what the world teaches. Love, Joy, Peace... these need to affect our lives and it will influence our growth in a dynamic way

14.   Understanding the evidences of the Holy Spirit being allowed to work in our lives. Will help us strive for more fruit to grow.

LIST OF RESPONSES: JESUS

1. Learning about our Savior will make us love Him and grow in Him more. If we dont' know the Savior, we'll never grow in anything.

2. See baptism

3. See Gospels. See Christology. See any and everything related to being a follower of Christ in the Bible ..

4. SG that is not based on Jesus, with Jesus at the center, is just some kind of religious behavior that could be associated with any world religion or philosophical belief

5. The attributes of Christ - preeminent, predestine, the divine logos, the wisdom of God, his supremacy, the King of kings and Lord of lords, that he loves, cares for, and nurtures his bride are so central to the church.

6. The central figure of the Bible and of history

7. The embodiment of God's Grace and the one we are to follow.

8. The fulfillment of spiritual maturity in mankind

9. The Gospels show Jesus full of love and compassion, meeting faith with mercy.

10. The life of God in human form who shows us what God is like and who completed the mission of salvation for mankind.

11. We need to come to know Jesus as the One who gave His life for us.

12. with His divine claims, His life, Purpose, and model need to be understood

13. Wow. Without Jesus we have nothing.

LIST OF RESPONSES: PERSEVERANCE (THROUGH
HARDSHIP, THROUGH PERSECUTION, THROUGH
SUFFERING, ETC.)

1. All people experience hardships and pain - for the Christ follower,

perseverance helps us to cling to God and give hope to others.

2. Every Christian, new or old, will face life's problems and to continue our

growth process we must persevere. Knowing ahead of time that difficult times will come

and the Christian are certainly not exempt from those will help a person develop the

perseverance needed.

3. Following Jesus is not a spring...it is a marathon

4. He says we WILL suffer, this is He we become Christ-like and grow

spiritually

5. It is a reality that must be addressed so that disciples aren't disallusioned or

confused with wrong expectations.

6. James says that "When trials come..." thus I need to recognize that in order to

grow closer to Christ I must go through those hardships and sufferings. Perseverance in

those times strenghtens me in my dependancy on God to get me through those times and

thus brings me closer to Him.

7. Life isn't always easy but God calls us to persevere, and enables us to do so

through the power of the holy spirit

8. Living for Christ is a marathon not a sprint. Followers of Christ are not promised problem-free lives. A believer grows through hardships and difficulties. They should be taught to expect it.

9. Only those faithful to the end... as I age this rises up my scale of importance... I have watched too many not finish well... endurance, resilience, ability to cross the finish line are not to be taken lightly

10. The essential attitude that keeps us following, trusting, and serving God.

11. We all must persevere hardship in life. Doing this will grow us in areas like patience and teach us endurance in life.

12. We are called to follow even when it is hard and difficult. 1 Peter teaches us to obey when there are times of suffering is important as it reveals the qualtiy of faith.

13. We often makes grow spiritually by leaps and bounds in the mides of hardships. Without perseverance many have given up on God.

14. We will make it ande our God is faithful tothe end

LIST OF RESPONSES: SALVATION, PLAN OF

1.   As a growing Christian a person needs to have a grasp of the plan of salvation in order to be able to share that knowledge.

2.   Basic knowledge that keeps us assured of God's love and His mercy

3.   Broad topic that allows us to understand sin, freewill, belief, confession, repentance, etc.

4.   How it all works so they can participate in it and share it with others

5.   In that every believer is a minister/priest - disciples of Jesus should be equipped to take a person who does not know Jesus to the Lordship of Christ.

6.   It begins here, if we just tell people to ASK JESUS INTO THEIR HEART, we are not being biblical in our approach to adding them to God's kingdom.

7.   Know the plan of salvation is essential to have that journey with God. But once we become a Christian we can not forget that others need to know this plan. Understanding the true teachings on the plan are essential because there are so many different teaching today.

8.   Needed to share the good news with others

9.   Since a right relationship with God is vital, we must know how we get into that right relationship and be able to tell others as well

10. The entry point to a life of faith. Needed for one's own assurance, and needed for one's effective evangelism.

11. There is only one way to God - we must know and share that information.

12. We help people to the best of our understanding how to come into right relationship with Jesus Christ

13. WE must understand the process in accepting Christ.

LIST OF RESPONSES: SATAN (DEVIL, LUCIFER, ACCUSER, BEELZEBUB, ADVERSARY, PRINCE OF DARKNESS, TEMPTER)

1. Got to know your enemy

2. He is alive, working very hard and having great success right now in the church

3. He wants us to fail We need to know that the devil is alive and well and doing all he can to destroy our walk with the Lord. If we don't know him and his strengths we will be sucked into his way before we know it

4. It is important to acknowledge and know something about the enemy. Our battle is not against flesh and blood.

5. Need to know the enemy

6. Satan is opposed to our spiritual growth, and understanding his opposisiton will help us understand many of the obstacles that are place in our path.

7. Satan's work on the earth is to prevent spiritual growth. A good understanding of who He is will help us know how to fight him as we grow.

8. The enemy must be clearly identified and understood before we can be ready for any spiritual battle to follow.

9. We have an enemy and knowing who he is and what he does is helpful.

10. We need to know our adversary

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