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A Discipleship Model For Youth At The Paradise Adventist Church

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ABSTRACT

A DISCIPLESHIP MODEL FOR YOUTH AT THE

PARADISE ADVENTIST CHURCH

by

Milton Daniel Marquez

Adviser: Jane Thayer

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A DISCIPLESHIP MODEL FOR YOUTH AT THE PARADISE ADVENTIST
CHURCH

Name of researcher: Milton Daniel Marquez

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Jane Thayer, PhD

Date completed: May 2017

Problem

For more than a decade the Paradise Adventist Church had been experiencing a

common problem facing most churches in North America: approximately 60% of the

youth were leaving the church. Rainer and Rainer (2008) argue that one of the factors in

two-thirds of young adults between the ages of 18 and 22 leaving our churches after high

school is the lack of a simple and effective discipleship process. Pastoral observation

concurs that a primary contributing factor to the loss of Adventist youth is that the youth

are not being discipled effectively and thus not rooted in Scripture, connected to the

church, and grounded in a genuine relationship with Jesus. The traditional method for

discipleship and spiritual growth within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a cognitive

Bible-study approach.

Method

To begin my project, I conducted a biblical study on Jesus' method of discipleship which revealed the elements Jesus used to mold his disciples. These elements formed the foundation of the Power Up model. I researched factors that affected youth discipleship and models of discipleship that already existed. This research provided elements that were considered for inclusion in the Power Up model. The Power Up model offered a variety of elements for spiritual growth: biblical reflection, media, journaling, scripture memorization, spiritual practices, small groups, and mentoring. Offering many options gave the students more of a chance to find something to help them grow spiritually.

The Growing Disciples Inventory (GDI) was used to measure spiritual growth. This inventory was taken before and after the students participated in the Power Up model, and the results were compared to see what areas of spiritual growth improved through the model. In addition, an open-ended survey was created to understand how the participants felt about the Power Up model and to see what parts of the model they thought were most effective. Each participant received the survey through email to complete and return to me.

Adults were recruited and trained to serve as mentors to the students who volunteered for the project. They also took the GDI before and after experiencing the Power Up model and answered the open-ended survey.

Results

Both youth and adults showed growth in several areas of spirituality. The Power Up model was organized into seven themes: vision, gospel, surrender, intimacy, witnessing, body of Christ, and service. The themes that showed statistically significant

growth for youth were gospel and body of Christ. For adults, the statistically significant themes were witnessing, surrender, and intimacy. In general, both groups were positive towards the process.

Conclusions

Entering into a discipleship process that focuses on routine reflection on Scripture and having spiritual conversations with peers and mentors fosters spiritual growth in both the student and adult mentor.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A DISCIPLESHIP MODEL FOR YOUTH AT THE

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A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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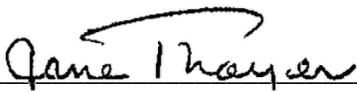
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APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

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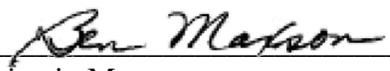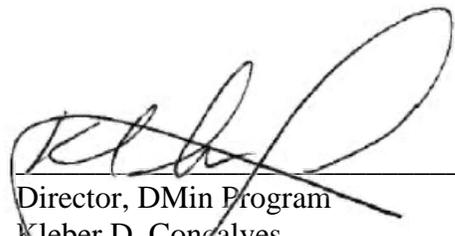
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving wife Denice, and my two beautiful daughters Ariana and Madison, who stood by me through this adventure, and to the Paradise Adventist Church and the Paradise Adventist Academy who supported me and my family for so many years.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the support and direction of my adviser, Jane Thayer.

Without her guidance, I would not have been able to finish the race. Thanks go to Steve Case,

my lead professor, for always encouraging me and opening my mind to new ideas and

possibilities. Special thanks go to Ben Maxson for his friendship and for demonstrating to me

what spiritual leadership is all about.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Personal History

I began ministry in June of 1998 as a youth pastor at the Vienna Seventh-day Adventist Church in Vienna, Virginia. From there, I accepted the call to be an Associate Pastor at the Paradise Adventist Church (PAC) and the Chaplain at Paradise Adventist Academy (PAA), located in Paradise, California, in October of 2003. In March of 2015, I accepted a call to be the Associate Youth Director for the Southern New England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Lancaster, Massachusetts. My 17 years of ministry have been focused on youth and young adults.

During my time in ministry, I have seen that there are aspects of church life that are not designed for certain kinds of people. There are approaches to ministry that are built on a foundation of years of tradition, and I found it difficult to find ways of adjusting those methods to be able to serve a greater number of youth within the church. Many of the youth who left the churches where I pastored felt as if the church did not understand them or relate to them. In general, these were students that did not fit the "Adventist Youth" mold. They did not attend an Adventist Academy but lived in an Adventist home, were more liberal than conservative, and were unfamiliar with cultural Adventist language.

My heart goes out to young people who fall into the previously mentioned categories and, in general, find themselves as outsiders inside the church. I wanted to reach students like this but did not know of a method to do it since most methods available cater more to the traditional Adventist young person. Being a naturally creative person who enjoys change, I made finding creative methods to present the gospel to young people a mission of my ministry.

When I decided to enter the Doctor of Ministry program, I wanted my project to reflect my passion of helping students grow spiritually, and I wanted to research and create a new approach to discipleship for youth.

Context of the Project

The Paradise Adventist Church is a large church in Northern California. It has a membership of over 1,300. It is also the only constituent church of Paradise Adventist Academy. Both the church and school have a long history in Paradise, California, having celebrated their 100-year anniversary in 2012. The school, at the time of this project, had an enrollment just shy of 175 students, with about 75 being high school students.

The youth pastor of PAC serves as the chaplain at PAA. This dynamic allows the church and the school to share spiritual nurture and activities for the youth. The school provides chapel services, weeks of prayer, and Bible classes for its students. The church provides vespers, social outings, service projects, and outreach for the youth of the area. There are many willing parents who are involved both at the school and church.

The students targeted for the project were high school students. They were invited to participate in the project with the goal of experiencing spiritual growth. The adults

who were chosen as mentors were adults who were currently involved in some level of youth ministry or had been involved in the past.

Purpose

The task of this project was to develop and implement a culturally appropriate and biblically faithful discipleship process for high-school age youth of the Paradise Adventist Church in Paradise, California. The discipleship process was evaluated to determine its effectiveness in assisting youth become stronger disciples of Christ.

Statement of the Problem

Rainer and Rainer (2008) argue that one of the factors in two-thirds of young adults between the ages of 18 and 22 leaving our churches after high school is the lack of a simple and effective discipleship process. The traditional method for discipleship and spiritual growth within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a cognitive Bible-study approach. The Paradise Adventist Church was experiencing a common problem facing most churches in North America: approximately 60% of the youth were leaving the church. Pastoral observation suggests that a primary contributing factor is that the youth are not being discipled effectively and thus not rooted in Scripture, connected to the church, and grounded in a genuine relationship with Jesus.

Justification for the Project

My years of experience in youth ministry within the Adventist Church has given me time to evaluate and reflect on how we, as the church, are progressing in youth ministry. There are several observations that led me to decide to pursue this project:

1. The church's traditional method of discipleship is not effective for current youth. It does not consider the unique characteristics of their inner and outer worlds that affect how they approach God and the church.

2. If the church does not reverse the trend of losing youth, it risks becoming irrelevant and not being able to reach today's world with the gospel message.

3. Youth need two connections to become mature disciples: (a) a connection to Christ that leads them to make Him lord of their lives and (b) a connection to the church that gives them the supportive environment that fosters continual spiritual growth.

4. One of the purposes of the church is to provide a process for all its members to grow spiritually, not just the older demographic. The church also needs a discipleship method that is tailored towards its younger constituents.

5. Because all members of a church are unique, any discipleship process needs flexibility in its approach to reach as many people as possible.

Delimitations

As the researcher, I made several decisions to limit the scope of the study. Some of these decisions were made because of circumstances that presented themselves while others were made to simplify the approach for the students participating in the study.

I invited only adults I had worked with in the past to be mentors to the students in the study. I did not want to take a lot of time to screen and train someone with whom I had little or no experience. The adults I chose had many years of ministry experience, especially in the area of youth.

The final survey was done over email, instead of in-person. The final assessment of the Growing Discipleship Inventory (GDI) was done by each participant separately, instead of together as the first one was done. Both of these decisions were made because I moved across the country for my next assignment.

I based the discipleship material that I designed on *Steps to Discipleship*, a discipleship model created by Ben Maxson, because it had the elements I was looking for in study material. I added a mentoring component to the Maxson material.

I molded the discipleship schedule around the academic schedule of PAA because the majority of the students participating in the study were students of that school.

Limitations

The following are limitations I faced as part of my study. These may call for further research in future projects.

Most of the students participating in the study were white. One student was Korean and three were Hispanic.

There were about 75 students to choose from for the study. Of those only 16 volunteered.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used in the paper:

Disciple: Someone who is in the process of becoming a fully surrendered follower of Christ.

Discipling: The process of helping someone grow into a disciple.

Discipleship: The lifelong process of becoming a fully surrendered follower of Christ.

Discipleship Model: A specific process created by an individual to help people become disciples.

Experiential Learning: A method of learning where the student participates in an educational experience where he or she reflects on that experience in an attempt to extract a deeper understanding.

Description of the Project Process

I conducted a biblical study on Jesus' method of discipleship. In this study I discovered the methods Jesus used and the goals Jesus had in His methods. Those methods created a foundation on which to compare other methods I looked at.

I researched factors that affected youth discipleship, internally and externally. I also looked at models of discipleship that already existed. Through this research I discovered elements that are currently being used and proposed by other experts. Some of these techniques were considered to be included in the discipleship model I would use with the students.

I decided to use the GDI to measure spiritual growth. This inventory was taken before and after the discipleship model I designed for the students. An open-ended survey was also created to get qualitative data for the research.

Adults were recruited and trained to serve as mentors to the students who volunteered for the project.

Each participant began the intervention by taking the GDI. At the end of the intervention each participant took the GDI again and the results were compared to see what areas of spiritual growth improved through the model. Each participant received the open- ended survey through email to complete and return to me.

After analysis, general principles were defined and a report was generated that will be available to be shared with other churches.

Overview Summary

Chapter 1 contains my personal history, context of the project, purpose, statement of the problem, justification for the project, delimitations, limitations, definition of terms, description of the project process, and an overview summary.

Chapter 2 contains the theological reflection on Jesus' discipleship method. I looked at Jesus' method of teaching and guiding the formation of the disciples and lessons from Peter's failure as a disciple.

Chapter 3 examines the latest research in the area of youth discipleship by looking at the effects of faith formation, spiritual formation, experiential learning, personality styles, and digital culture and discipleship. The chapter also compares different discipleship models to glean elements of discipleship that can be a part of the Power Up Model created and used for this project.

Chapter 4 contains a description of the intervention plan. The chapter also presents the analysis of the data.

Chapter 5 presents the principles and conclusions from the research analysis. From those conclusions recommendations are given for further research and best practices for youth discipleship. The chapter concludes with a section summarizing my own growth through the Doctor of Ministry experience.

CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON JESUS'

DISCIPLESHIP METHODS

Introduction

When one speaks of youth discipleship in a group, many different ideas of what

that is surface. The Seventh-day Adventist default approach is to help young people grow

by the traditional methods that have been in place for decades, such as Adventist

Christian education and Sabbath School attendance. "The problem for…church is that its

one-size-fits-all environment is adapted only for one or two kinds of spiritual consumers"

(Ward, 2002, p. 64). The statistics of the number of youth who are leaving the church

after high school should open our eyes to the fact that our methods are not having the

success we desire. Something different must be done if young people attending our

churches are to have an intimate relationship with God.

There are several opinions on how best to help young people grow spiritually.

Many of these ideas have been turned into programs and materials that have had some

success. This project is my attempt to do the same. My purpose is to provide a

discipleship process for youth that will help them grow spiritually.

The question is how is it done? What should be included? What should be a part

of the discipleship process? What better place to start than with the one who created

discipleship: Jesus. He introduced to the world the discipleship method that developed

the men who began the movement we call "Christianity." But this method was much more than a passing on of information; it was an experience that had the potential to change not only the mind of the disciple but the heart as well.

For the first century rabbi, the relationship between rabbi and disciple was one of teacher-student. The goal of the rabbi was to pass on information about Torah and its interpretation to the student. Much of the time spent by the rabbi and the student was used to argue Scripture. Usually the lesson ended with the rabbi telling the student how to interpret and apply Scripture.

Jesus had a different goal. In John 15 Jesus describes through the illustration of the vine and the branches His goal in the discipleship process. "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples" (Luke 15:8). The process of discipleship Jesus speaks of begins with the abiding presence of Jesus in the life of the disciple (v. 4). That abiding is one of love (v. 9). And the ultimate result of this discipleship process is the relationship the disciple has with Jesus:

> "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you, Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you." (John 15:11-15)

Jesus' ultimate goal in the discipleship process is to have an intimate relationship with His disciples, one defined by love, surrender and spiritual growth. Jesus had a greater goal in mind for His disciples than just learning. He wanted to transform their lives.

In this chapter I will begin by looking at the elements of the discipleship method Jesus used to shape the disciples: calling, teaching, modeling, discipline, mission, and

vision. Then I will also use Peter as a case study on responding to failure in the discipleship process. All Scripture passages found in this chapter are from the New King James Version.

By looking at Jesus' discipleship method I will build a theological foundation for making a youth discipleship process that will be faithful to scriptural principles and help young people become disciples of Jesus Christ. If this goal is reached it will make a significant impact in reversing the trend we are seeing of young people leaving the church.

Jesus' Discipleship Method

Calling

Mark opens his gospel with an example of Jesus' invitation to become His disciple (Mark 1:16-20). Jesus approached Simon (later renamed Peter) and Andrew, as they were involved in the daily activities of providing for themselves and their families. They were fishermen. One wonders what it was that Jesus saw in these two men. The shore was filled with many other potential disciples. We know this because Jesus walked a bit more after inviting the first two and invited a second set of fishermen to join Him, James and John. What did he see in these men that drew Him to them? In hindsight, some of them were not the best options. Some may say none of them were well chosen. They all wound up abandoning Jesus at a crucial time in His life.

Luke's account of this calling gives details that color the story more (Luke 5:1-11). After getting in Simon's boat, Jesus told them to go out for another catch. Peter reluctantly agreed to Jesus' request, and they caught so many fish that they had to call over other boats to help bring them in. This was such an astonishing event that Peter fell

at Jesus' feet and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (v. 8). We can understand Peter's reaction when we realize how rabbis gained disciples. A rabbi waited to be approached by a potential disciple and then decided whether or not to accept the young man as a disciple. Jesus wanted Peter to understand that he was chosen by God to be His servant. God chooses all men and women. Jesus needed all His disciples to understand that reality. This was more than a calling to have a better grasp of God's word. It was a calling to a new life.

Being invited by a great rabbi to become His disciple was something none of these men had ever seen before. This kind of invitation helps explain the disciples' reaction to the call: leaving everything behind and following Jesus. "At the moment of their greatest material success they abandoned their business" (Nichol, 1956b, p. 739).

The calling of Jesus is a universal call that is above human and managerial standards. Although Jesus calls every person to a new life, the calling needs a response. All must decide if the calling is one they would like to acknowledge and accept. So, the calling goes out to every person, regardless of their value within society. The way the world measures the individual obviously is not God's way (1 Sam 16:7).

> None of the four would have been considered by the learned men of the nation as having sufficient qualifications to become a teacher. They were humble and unlearned, but these very traits were prerequisite to discipleship…Though at times they were slow to learn the lessons Jesus sought to teach them, they were sincerely devoted to Him…Usefulness in the cause of God does not depend so much upon brilliant intellect as upon devotion to Christ and to the task at hand…The all-important thing in service for God is that self be put aside and room be made for the working of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. (Nichol, 1956b, p. 740)

The safest posture for the follower of God is to be one who accepts all people. Jesus chose men and women who were ready to respond favorably to His call.

The approach Jesus used to call the first two disciples is interesting, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19). Jesus used the same simple approach with Philip (John 1:43). As part of His calling, He used words that would make sense to these fishermen. Jesus understood what would grab these men's attention. He knew how to frame the call in a way that would reach deep into their souls and make them see the power of the invitation.

In Luke, we see Jesus inviting Levi, the tax collector by simply saying, "Follow Me" (Luke 5:27). Later on Jesus expanded on what the call to follow means: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). Jesus let one man know that there would be a price to following Him. "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Luke 18:22).

Jesus understood the importance of the calling, a calling that required a great sacrifice. That is why He made sure that the ones receiving it understood the nature of the call, and He did not necessarily call those that the world deemed worthy. Jesus' call was for those that He recognized were ready.

<div align="center">Teaching</div>

One of Jesus' main tools in discipleship was teaching. The word "teaching" brings to many peoples' minds pictures of classrooms, rulers, textbooks, and lectures. This is not what I am referring to when I speak of Jesus' teaching method. Jesus used basic teaching principles and on occasion, traditional direct teaching through parables, but Jesus used another form of teaching that I have labeled *teachable moments*. By this

term I am referring to serendipitous events where a teacher takes advantage of a situation and uses it to instruct his or her pupils, who are ready at that moment to learn.

Teaching Principles

After telling several parables about the kingdom of heaven, Jesus asked His disciples, "Have you understood all these things" (Matt 13:51)? The question gave an opportunity for the disciples to seek clarity about what they heard their Teacher tell them. Jesus used a simple principle of teaching: Asking questions. He took advantage of having their attention, the message of the parable being fresh in their minds, and gave them opportunity to reflect and react.

Jesus knew that not all of His teaching would be understood or accepted (Matt 13:10-16). He even recognized that not every student would understand even the best teacher. Jesus demonstrated another principle of teaching: Not every student will learn at the moment of teaching and sometimes all that can be done is to share the information and hope that something is received, later understood, and incorporated into the student's life.

In the wilderness story (Matt 4:1-11) we get a glimpse of the great knowledge Jesus had of Scripture. Three times Jesus used Scripture passages that He memorized against the attacks of Satan. Scripture memorization has been used so much in spiritual growth pursuits. What Jesus shows us through His experience in the wilderness with Satan is that Jesus did not just have Scripture memorized, He understood it. Satan's manipulation of Scripture did not faze Jesus because He understood what Scripture truly meant. Jesus taught through His example that memorization of Scripture must go hand in hand with application of Scripture.

Jesus took advantage of His times in the synagogue to teach His disciples and the people (Luke 21:37). For the Christian the church replaces the synagogue. The church should not just be a place of worship. It must also be a place of teaching and learning.

Those who heard Jesus were amazed by His command of the Scriptures knowing who He was and His background. That reputation followed Jesus as He continued to teach and people continued to be astonished at Jesus' ability to teach so powerfully and with such great knowledge.

> Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" (Mark 6:1-2)

The people were astonished because Jesus taught as one who had authority (Matt 7:28-29). His authority came from two sources: the knowledge of Scripture that Jesus demonstrated and His relationship to God the Father. Besides His great knowledge of the Scripture, Jesus said His authority came from God.

> And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?" Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority." (John 7:15-18)

Teachers of discipleship must have a solid knowledge of the Scriptures. Displaying that knowledge will place them, in the eyes of the student, as an authority figure, but only if they live out the principles and teachings being directed toward the student. White (1903) puts it this way:

> Not as dry theory were these things to be taught. Those who would impart truth must themselves practice its principles. Only by reflecting the character of God in the uprightness, nobility, and unselfishness of their own lives can they impress others. (p. 42)

Students then will be more apt to listen and receive the instruction the teacher is giving.

Teaching Through Parables

Jesus took advantage of having His disciples gathered around Him and teaching them directly. Sometimes others were around when this teaching was occurring. There are certain themes that Jesus emphasized in His teaching. Jesus used stories to illustrate the reality of grace and God's love for a fallen race. The following parables serve as illustrations of Jesus' use of parables as a teaching method: the lost sheep, the ten virgins, the talents, the sheep and the goats, the sower, and the wheat and the tares. Although all of these stories differ and give unique aspects on God's love, they all share the theme that God loves his children and wants to save them from their sins.

The lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7)

Jesus told this well-known parable to His disciples and others who were listening. Jesus asked those listening how many of them would go after one lost sheep and leave 99 behind. By today's standards this was a ludicrous response to such an issue. It is a matter of economics. If one sheep is missing and there are still 99 left, then protect those that are there and cut one's losses. The economy of heaven is different. God values every soul and will do anything necessary to save a life.

The ten virgins (Matt 25:1-13)

Our connection to God through the Holy Spirit is the only thing that can ensure we will be ready when the Bridegroom arrives. Those without that connection will not survive.

The talents (Matt 25:14-29)

While we are waiting for the arrival of Jesus we must continue to do the ministry God has equipped us to do. The servant who failed to multiply his talent showed a lack of understanding of his calling, and for that reason his talent was given to another.

The sheep and the goats (Matt 25:31-36)

Although we Christians are looking forward to the soon return of Jesus, we must not lose sight of those around us who are in need of compassion and care, the "least of these." They are a representation of Jesus on this earth and should not be forgotten.

The sower (Matt 13:1-9)

In this parable, the disciples learn the reality of the spreading of God's word. There are forces in the world that are working against the seeds that are scattered. Many, if not most, of the efforts put out by the disciples will be defeated, but the ones that take root will blossom and become indestructible.

The wheat and the tares (Matt 13:24-43)

This parable teaches that it will be difficult to distinguish between the good seed and the bad seed, which has been planted by the enemy. In fact, it is so difficult that only God can differentiate between the two, and He will separate the good crop from the bad one on the day of the Lord. The disciples' only concern should be to continue to sow and care for the good seed so that there will be a great harvest at the end.

Teachable Moments

Much of Jesus's teaching was not in the form of a direct approach as most of us are familiar with. A style of teaching that Jesus often used was *teachable moments*. As

Jesus went from place to place, He and the disciples had many experiences. Jesus used these opportunities to teach the disciples spiritual lessons.

The Centurion's faith (Matt 8:5-13)

A centurion came and shared the story of his paralyzed servant. Luke tells us that this servant was very dear to the centurion. Jesus agreed to go to the centurion's home and heal the servant. The centurion had an interesting answer:

> Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it. (v. 8)

Jesus was amazed and recognized a mighty faith within this centurion. Jesus took advantage of this moment to teach the disciples what true faith looks like and how it can be found in an unlikely person.

The Adulteress (John 8:1-12)

In the midst of Jesus' teaching the religious leaders brought a woman to Jesus. "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say" (vv. 4-5)?

This was a trap for Jesus. Jesus had been posed with difficult questions in the past by the religious leaders, and He had responded to them. The disciples waited to hear Jesus' reply but this time Jesus was silent. "But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though he did not hear" (v. 6).

What odd behavior by the master. His only reply to them was, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (v. 7). And slowly the accusers walked away. Jesus then showed the ultimate act of compassion towards a woman who society

decided did not deserve forgiveness. "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more" (v.

11). Jesus did not just offer forgiveness to this woman and set her on the path to healing

but He also took advantage of this moment to teach His followers that forgiveness is

available to all, even an adulteress woman and that everyone, even the religious leaders

are in need of God's forgiveness.

The Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1-11)

Here we see an example of Jesus using role-playing to teach His disciples. On the

day of the triumphal entry Jesus sent two of His disciples to enter the city and obtain a

colt for Him to ride. When they brought the animal back what happened next was more

astounding than the prediction of where the animal would be and how the owner would

respond (Mark 11:1-6). Jesus mounted the colt, and as He entered the city on the animal,

the people rose in a frenzy of submission and praise, laying down their clothes and

branches, declaring Jesus the King they had been waiting for. This experience cemented

in the disciples' mind what they had previously learned:

> His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified,
> then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had
> done these things to Him. (John 12:16)

Although at the moment the disciples did not understand the significance of the

event, later the experience would make an impact on their understanding of who Jesus is

(Nichol, 1956a, p. 1021). On that day Jesus took on the role of a king and the people

responded. Jesus used this moment to engrain in the memories of the disciples an image

of Him as the victorious king. This image would stay with them and later be recalled and

understood.

Jesus' approach to teaching was more than just passing on of information. A rabbi would allow his disciples to argue about Scripture and then the rabbi would give his interpretation and that settled the issue. Jesus wanted more than that for His disciples. He wanted them to reflect and experience the information in action so the information reached their minds and hearts.

As we analyze Jesus' use of teaching in the discipleship process, we realize that Jesus sought to transform the lives of his disciples. When Jesus asked questions, He asked the type of questions that caused the disciples to reflect on the condition of their spiritual lives. When Jesus used parables to teach, He used the kind of illustrations that many could directly apply to their lives because the stories were relatable to their current situations. When Jesus found himself in situations where lessons could be learned, He did not shy away from pointing out deep spiritual truths that the disciples needed to understand. All of these methods Jesus used to open the minds of the disciples to important spiritual truths that would have great transformational impact in their lives in the future.

Modeling

There were times in the ministry of Jesus that speaking the words were not enough to instruct and prepare the disciples. It was at those times that Jesus modeled what He wanted the disciples to learn. His example created a picture for the disciples that would not be soon forgotten.

Jesus' final moments before the crucifixion included a great lesson that the disciples desperately needed. They had expressed their desire for status on several occasions (Matt 18:1; Mark 10:37; Luke 9:46), and there was no reason to expect any less

of them at the moment they gathered together in the upper room to celebrate the

Passover. It was Jesus who took the initiative to model for them the true spirit they

needed if they were to follow in His footsteps. He had tried to teach the lesson of

humility to them before but it had not been learned. Jesus gave them another chance at

integrating that lesson into their lives. With no words Jesus rose from His place at the

table and began to wash their feet, the job of a lowly servant.

This greatly offended some of the disciples causing Peter to refuse the Master's

gesture of servitude. But Jesus' answer caused him to change his mind quickly: "If I do

not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8). The lesson was not just words but

also included a picture. Then when Jesus said, "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have

washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14), they had the

mental picture to go with the lesson from their Teacher.

Again, Jesus modeled a behavior to His disciples for more than just behavior

modification. They did not just walk away having learned that they were now to wash

each other's feet. They were seeing humility in action. They were being challenged to

reflect on their own hearts and to see why they were not willing to serve one another.

Jesus did more than give instruction. He challenged the disciples to search their hearts

and surrender to God and His will. Jesus also took this moment to demonstrate the love

He had for them. To see their Teacher love them to this extent had to have been an

emotional moment for them. Jesus touched their hearts as well as their minds.

Discipline

As all parents know, there is a time in the instruction of a child when discipline is

necessary. This was also the case for Jesus and the disciples. Jesus did not expect His

disciples to be perfect and showed great love to them in their weakest moments. It was at those times that Jesus saw the need to correct the disciples and put them back on the path.

Teaching Through Disappointment

A man came to Jesus distressed because his son was being tormented by a demon. The disciples were unable to cast the demon out. This failure would have been particularly embarrassing after Jesus had already commanded these same disciples as part of their mission to cast out demons (Matt 10:8).

Jesus' expectation was that the disciples would have the ability to handle a situation like this. "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me" (Matt 17:17). Jesus was disappointed in the disciples' inability to cast out this demon. After Jesus cast the demon out of the boy, the disciples came to Him privately to ask why they had been unsuccessful. Jesus told them that their faith was smaller than a mustard seed. Jesus was honest about the reality of their situation but did not leave them without hope. After He gave them the truth, He told them how they could be successful the next time they faced a similar situation, but "…this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt 17:21).

Restoration After Failure

Being part of a discipling relationship gives one the opportunity to influence the spiritual life of another. Although this can be a fulfilling experience, it has the potential to be challenging to both the disciple and the discipler. The spiritual journey is one filled with both successes and failures. The spiritual failures exhibited by both Peter and Judas show that even those involved in a discipling relationship can struggle to respond to the

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influence and teaching of a more mature disciple. Peter was not a total failure like Judas. Lessons in the area of discipleship can be learned from Peter's failure.

Jesus began to open up the reality of His death to the disciples. Peter reacted negatively to what Jesus was telling them. He felt the need to pull Jesus aside and rebuke Him. "Far be it from You Lord; this shall not happen to you" (Matt 16:22)! Peter never anticipated the response Jesus gave him, "Get behind Me, Satan" (Matt 16:23)! In Jesus' estimation Peter's posture was a tool of the enemy to dissuade Jesus from His mission (Nichol, 1956c, p. 434). Peter had not understood completely what Jesus came to earth to do. Jesus had to quickly and forcefully help Peter understand the serious nature of His mission.

The most memorable moment of Peter's time with Jesus is one that I am sure Peter wanted to forget, his denial of Jesus. To make this mistake once could be understood, but what Peter did—denied Christ three times and the third time with curses and swearing—is inexcusable. Imagine what Peter felt at this moment:

> Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' So Peter went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:60-62)

Jesus looked at Peter and recognized what Peter had just done. The look of disappointment in Jesus' face must have broken Peter's heart and all he could do was flee and weep.

After Jesus rose from the tomb, he extended mercy and forgiveness to Peter, and gave him the opportunity to express his love for Jesus three times:

> Three times Peter had openly denied his Lord, and three times Jesus drew from him the assurance of his love and loyalty, pressing home that pointed question, like a barbed arrow to his wounded heart. Before the assembled disciples Jesus revealed the

depth of Peter's repentance, and showed how thoroughly humbled was the once boasting disciple. (White, 1898, p. 812)

At that moment Peter knew that Jesus not only loved him but also had faith in his ability to be His disciple. Here we see a pivotal moment in the discipleship journey between Jesus and Peter. Jesus spent many years with Peter, teaching him how to be a good disciple, and when things got tough Peter failed. But Jesus reinstated him because for Jesus, discipleship is not just passing on information. It was a journey of love and direction and Peter's life changed completely because of the love Jesus demonstrated for him.

Mission

Jesus called the disciples for more than just to learn about God. He also called them to serve God. This calling involved a mission. There were times that Jesus laid out what the mission of the disciples was going to be.

Equipping for Field Experience

After the twelve were selected, they were given a mission to accomplish:

Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, not two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! (Matt 10:5-15)

After the disciples received these orders, Jesus told them what they could expect. He warned them that there would be dangers but God would be with them throughout,

helping them face the difficulties (vv. 16-24). The disciples should only fear God, the

One who has their eternal lives in His hands, the One who loves and values each one of

them (vv. 27-30). Following Christ will bring division and challenges (vv. 34-39). Some

will respond to the message and some will not, but the disciples should never forget that

Jesus would always be with them (vv. 40-42).

The Great Commission

As Jesus was about to return to heaven, He gathered His disciples one last time.

They have all the experiences with Jesus burned into their minds. Many were still not

sure what had just happened and many still doubted who Jesus really was. It is in this

context that Jesus gave the disciples their final command, what we have traditionally

called the Great Commission:

> All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples of
> all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the
> Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I
> am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matt 28:19-20)

The disciples knew that Jesus had the power and authority to command them and

to provide them with everything they needed to accomplish the task. The instructions

were simple; they were to do for others what Jesus had done for them. He made them into

disciples, now they were to help others become disciples. And the promise given by Jesus

sealed the command and brought hope; "I am with you always, even to the end of the

age" (Matt 28:20).

Now the disciples had a mission, something to live and fight for. This is a desire

most people seek out: a purpose to live for. When we have a mission in life, we no longer

need to wonder what to do. We can take the paths in life that contribute to accomplishing

the goals. When we are missing this direction it becomes much easier to be swayed by

the circumstances we may face. When we have no goals, any road will do. "Any path is good enough if you have no destination in mind, and any goal is sufficient if there is no aspiration" (Fiorina, 2007, p. 123). When we have a mission that is from God then that demands that we continue in a strong relationship with the One who commands the mission. The disciples understood that only through God's power were they going to be able to accomplish the mission ahead of them. That is why Jesus' words of encouragement in Matthew 28:20 are so important, "…and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." They brought the disciples hope that the mission would be accomplished through them.

<div align="center">Vision</div>

At crucial moments in the discipling experience, it became necessary for Jesus to give the disciples a clear understanding of what the future held for them as His followers. Jesus needed to cast a realistic picture of what was to come for them. Sometimes that picture was not a positive one.

Death and Resurrection

Several times Jesus shared with the disciples the reality of what the future held for them. His death and resurrection were topics Jesus often mentioned. This message could, and perhaps should, have been a message that brought hope to the disciples but their vision was limited while Jesus' vision had no boundaries. When Jesus told them that He was soon to be betrayed and sacrificed but would rise again the disciples "were exceedingly sorrowful" (Matt 17:23).

Be Prepared

Jesus had a burden that His disciples would be ready for the end. He gave them the signs that they should be looking for (Matt 24:3-31). He urged them to be vigilant and watchful. "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Matt 24:44).

Jesus also prepared the disciples for the opposition that they would face as they served Him after His death. Jesus modeled for them how to deal with the religious leaders as they questioned and persecuted Him. This lesson can be seen clearly in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus rebuked Peter for using the sword and allowed Himself to be arrested (John 18:11).

Jesus needed to change the disciples' interpretation of Scripture. They needed to understand the truth about the Son of God and salvation before they could proclaim it. Jesus appeared to some disciples to help clear up their misunderstanding of what the Messiah would do. He went through the Old Testament prophecies with them, showing them how *He* was the fulfillment of all they had been waiting for (Luke 24:13-27). This understanding about the gospel was what the disciples would now share with all future believers in Christ.

Power Over Evil

When Jesus said the words "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves" (Matt 21:13), it was an eye-opening moment for the disciples. What an experience to see your kind Master take such a violent stance against those in the temple. The words combined with the actions left a permanent impression on the disciples. They learned quickly what the purpose of the house of God was and was

not. This shocking lesson made its point boldly. And Jesus went so far as to instruct the disciples that He was giving them power over evil, and they were instructed to cast out demons (Mark 3:14-15).

Summary

Jesus used many methods of teaching to help his disciples learn and grow. His goal for teaching was more than just passing on information. Jesus wanted his disciples' lives to be changed.

Jesus' methods can form the foundation of a strong discipleship method that can have long-lasting results in the spiritual lives of future disciples. The elements described above will be implemented in the discipleship model used as part of this project to help the youth become committed disciples of Christ.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Spirituality and discipleship are popular topics within Christianity. Church leaders are searching for ways to help members grow spiritually. Howard (2002, p. 46) notices there are more spiritual growth resources than ever—all created by individuals looking for a solution to a dying world that wants change. Youth workers are wanting to see youth grow spiritually. But when young people are involved in spiritual growth processes the church offers, the desired results are not being seen.

The church has traditionally approached discipleship as a one-size-fits-all process. Malphurs (2009, p. 22) states that some churches see discipleship as teaching Scripture. But he has not seen that work in practice. Observing people walking down the street tells you no one is the same. Ortberg (2010, p. 48) believes that it is frustrating for the disciple to follow a generic plan for spiritual growth. And that is what we have: a frustrated youth group that feels the individuality of its members is being ignored. There is a need for a discipleship model that can adapt to the individual.

In this chapter I will look at the contributions to youth discipleship made by (a) faith development and spiritual growth, (b) experiential learning, and (c) personality styles. I will also analyze the effects digital culture has on discipleship. Then I will look

at discipleship models to identify elements that will inform the creation of the Power Up

Model, which will be used for my research project.

Contributions of Faith Development and
Spiritual Growth to Youth Discipleship

Azari and Birnbacher (2004) claim that both emotion and knowledge are part of a

true religious experience. They define it as "thinking that feels like something" (2004, p.

902). Because of this reality I propose the need to understand how youth develop both

emotionally and cognitively.

Children are likely to base decisions on what authority figures, such as parents,

have told them, but Gibson (2004, p. 295) postulates that early adolescents have

developed the capacity to reason at an abstract level. Because of that reality, those

working with youth have an opportunity to share deeper spiritual realities. Faith

development knowledge allows us to understand what we are observing when we work

with youth. Fowler (2004) puts it this way: "Faith development theory…offers a

characterization of faith that combines a phenomenological account of what faith *does*,

with a conceptual model of what faith *is*" (p. 412). But even Fowler agrees that as more is

learned things are not necessarily clearer (p. 413).

It can be argued that to describe spirituality in stages may be impossible or

possibly inappropriate. Religious experiences may be too brief to be able to create a

model of faith development (Edwards & Lowis, 2001, p.217). But there are more

scholars who recognize that even ancient faith descriptions are structured as stages.

Elements of Faith Development

Experience is the starting point in faith development. Edwards and Lowis (2001, p. 226) describe it as the moment when one is faced with a crisis where morality is involved. Reich (2003, p. 240) calls it a "trigger" which can have its source internally or externally.

Experimentation is used as a tool in faith development. Gottlieb (2006, pp. 251-254) presents the "theory-theory" paradigm, which proposes that children experiment with new information and make decisions based on their experimentation. Edwards and Lowis (2001, p. 227) see experimentation as part of the individual's process of changing one's reality.

Gender: Although there is consensus that women and men approach spirituality differently, there is little research in the area of gender differences and faith development. Helm, Berecz, and Nelson (2001) studied the differences between men and women as it relates to shame and guilt. Research indicates that females report more guilt than males. Males tend to blame themselves less than females for their actions. Parents are more likely to use guilt with females in discipline than with males. Females tend to assign responsibility to themselves more than males.

Sinats et al. (2005a) studied the use of writing in women's spirituality. The women in their study used writing as a way of getting answers to tough life issues, as a coping mechanism. The authors do see that women tend to connect well to this form of spiritual expression but admit that it may work for men as well. Although women may seem to be communicating on a shallow level, in the pages of their journals, they are dealing with serious and deep personal and spiritual issues. The pages of a journal are a

means of escape and solitude. In their follow-up article (2005b), the analysis presented the reality that women write to their future self. They believe that the person they will become will have the answers to the questions they are facing now.

Other areas that are considered part of faith development are abstract thinking and consideration of others (Gottleib, 2006), self-denial (Edwards & Lowis, 2001, p. 227), and identity formation (O'Grady, 2006, p. 317). These areas are not held in common in the majority of the faith development models so I have chosen not to expand on them.

Knowing what faith development is will allow those discipling youth to be equipped to guide the young person more effectively through a discipleship process. Knowing that experience is usually the first step, the discipler can decide how to create that experience for the disciple. Will it be through a retreat, church worship service, concert, or some other event? Understanding that a young person needs to experiment as part of the faith development process forces those of us who are tasked to support youth to find multiple ways to go on the discipleship journey with them. Realizing the differences of how male and females approach spirituality helps us to lead each of them in a different way. Knowing faith development gives us the ability to offer each young person a discipleship approach that can be more effective.

Elements of Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth is the results a disciple will experience as they go through the discipleship process. The discipleship process has an effect on the disciple and adjusts his or her thoughts and behaviors. In this section, I look at spiritual growth as a way of

discovering what changes the disciple will experience as they go through the discipleship process.

Vision is how the disciple sees the world as he or she grows spiritually. Gibson (2004, p. 301) sees vision as part of the process of the disciple becoming committed to the Christian worldview. Some scholars describe an even deeper aspect to vision—when it changes to seeing others as well as oneself (Singleton, Mason & Webber, 2004, p. 258; Fortosis, 2001).

Change in behavior is one part of spirituality. Gibson's (2004) model makes morality the theme where a person moves from an initial accommodation of God's law to a complete commitment to God's law in every aspect of life. Singleton et al. (2004, p. 258) describe this reality as influence—how much spirituality shapes the life of the disciple.

Outward focus describes the direction that the disciple takes during spiritual growth. Singleton et al. (2004, p. 256) define outward focus as expressions of spirituality or how the disciple communicates spirituality to the world. For MacDonald (2000, p. 187) spirituality is always expressed outwardly through thought, experience, life, and religious outlets.

Spiritual growth gives us the elements to analyze whether or not we have a successful discipleship process. The young person will experience a change in worldview or vision and he or she will see the world and its citizens differently. There will be changes in behavior, even if they are small at first, moving the young person from a self-centered spirituality to being focused on others. Spiritual growth gives us the basis for evaluating the progress the disciple is making in the discipleship process.

Contributions of Experiential Learning to
Youth Discipleship

Kolb (1984) contributed a theory which has become foundational for the area of experiential learning. He presents four modes of learning that a student can go through: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The most complete learning experience happens when a student goes through the complete process, all four modes.

In the concrete experience mode, the student experiences a new situation or a different interpretation of a previous situation. The reflective observation mode follows as the student takes time to reflect on the experience. In the abstract conceptualization mode, the student forms new ideas and conclusions about the experience. Finally, in the active experimentation mode, the student applies the new concepts in other situations creating new experiences which then allows the cycle to repeat, but on a higher level (See Figure 1).

Kolb added to his experiential learning theory by creating learning styles from combinations of his learning modes. Learning styles are methods of learning that are preferred by individual students. Other scholars have joined Kolb in realizing that people have a preferred way of learning. However, when a teacher or discipler takes the student through the complete learning cycle of the four modes, the student will benefit, even when learning in his or her weaker style. Because there is value in students learning within all learning modes, even their weaker ones, I will consider only Kolb's learning modes but not Kolb's learning styles in this chapter.
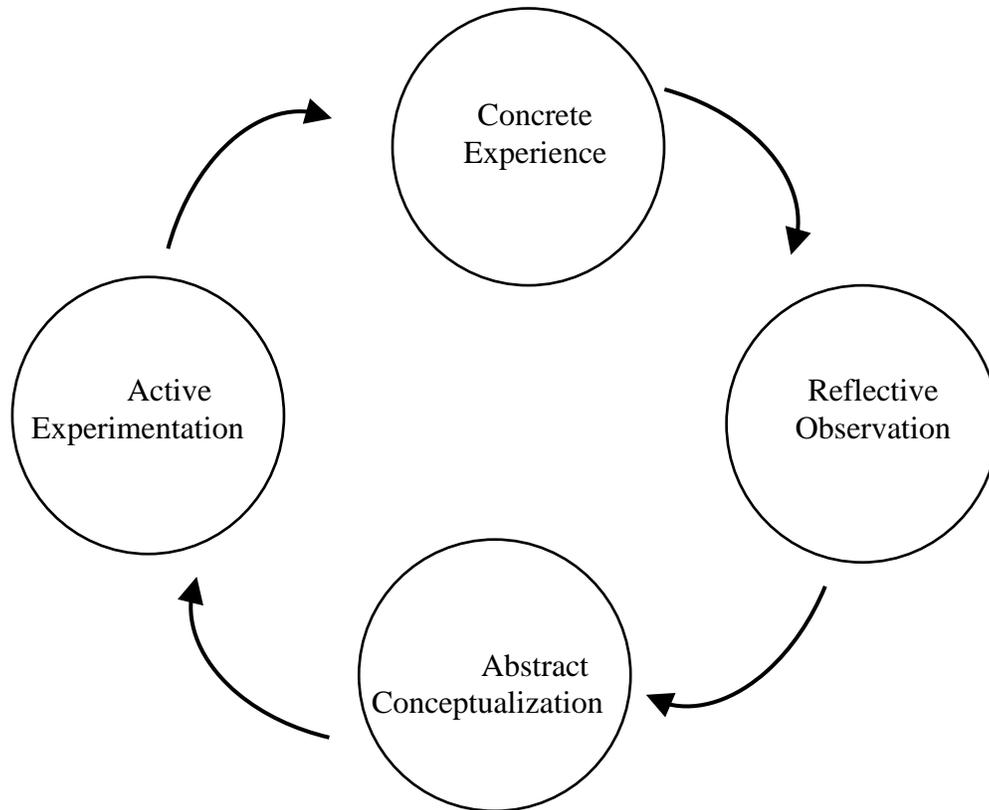
Figure 1. The modes of Kolb's experiential learning theory.

Hickox (2002) gives some suggestions of approaches one can take within Kolb's

(1984) experiential learning model to facilitate learning. In concrete experience, the

teacher brings an experience that is related to the teaching goal. In reflecting on those

experiences, the teacher asks students to think about the experience, replaying it in their

minds. This can be done through many means (thinking, writing, speaking, etc.) In

conceptualizing the experience, the teacher uses knowledge from the discipline (in

discipleship that would mostly come from Scripture) to understand the experience. When

we get to testing the model or theory, we make a practical application of what was

learned.

Oldstone-Moore (2009) believes that experiential learning is crucial in religious

teaching:

> The experience and practice of religion involves a combination of mind and body; it is intellectual, affective, and sensory. It is not easy to recreate or present in the classroom the transformative potency of religious practice which is often a concatenation of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste interacting with the prepared mind and heart, and the body in motion. (p. 110)

She describes experiential learning as leading to "reconstructed knowledge." In

other words, religious material is learned cognitively and it is experienced through the

senses. At that moment knowledge is complete.

Jarvis (2008) states the goal of experiential learning is the

> whole person learning rather than just learning in the cognitive domain or in learning a skill and because it is whole person learning, it must necessarily be the whole person experiencing the world and all of these experiences are potentially learning ones. (p. 553)

In relating experiential learning to religious experiences, Jarvis identifies three

theories: we all learn from experience; we all have experiences that are difficult to

explain empirically; and some of these experiences can be explained within the church's

belief system.

Hickcox's (2002, p. 127) case studies showed students who excel in experiential

learning environments typically come from middle to upper socioeconomic backgrounds

where they are exposed more to experiential learning. Those students could help others

by becoming mentors to students who would be challenged by experiential learning.

Because experiential learning relies on what the student brings to the table, it may be

difficult for youth to be comfortable in this setting. Being open with students about this

teaching style at the start helps put some of them at ease.

Henderson (2009) uses a transformative learning paradigm to teach discipleship through mission service. He uses eight methods from Dalton and Crosby for transformative learning: identity formation is at the heart of learning; learning is multi-centric—putting experience and class work at the same level; teachers and other adults are equal partners in the education process; curriculum includes in and out-of-class learning; learning occurs best in the context of personal meaning and mattering; the most important outcome of learning is a transformed student; transformational learning requires integration and coordination of many learning opportunities; and the best learning experiences involve challenge, motivation and inspiration.

Examples of Experiential Learning

Pike (2000) has studied the use of poetry and its effect on spirituality. He believes that poetry "has the power to move adolescents in a remarkable way, for it is not an exclusively academic discipline but one where an affective as well as cognitive response should be evoked" (p. 179). His conclusion after analysis is that students who participated in the study were challenged both spiritually and morally and "gained new direction" (p. 189). This study shows there is value in using other forms of literature besides Scripture for spiritual development. The challenge is that poetry is not one that is enjoyed universally but is good to have as an option for those who are open to it in their discipleship process.

At the beginning of religious education classes, O'Grady (2006) experimented with a time capsule. Students wrote themselves notes that they would reread in three years. They wrote about what was learned in class and their beliefs in relation to what they learned. Then they were instructed to write another letter to themselves about how

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they had changed. The results of the study showed that no matter what the response to religious education was (theistic, atheistic or agnostic) there was still a maturing of the pupils caused in part by reflecting on religious issues and the pupil's confidence in their beliefs grew.

Wangerin (2004) uses stories as the major point of his discipleship process with children. The first year he tells the critical stories from the Old and New Testament. In the second year he uses those stories as the backdrop for deeper studies into church beliefs.

The Environment of Experiential Learning

In experiential learning, the teacher takes on a different role than what is commonplace. Avery-Wall (2007, p. 37) considers the teacher to be a facilitator. In this role, the success of the session does not fall solely on the teacher since much of the information comes from the student. The teacher is responsible for creating a safe environment free of judgment and manages the group process. This creates a challenge for the teacher who is used to being in control in the teaching environment. An important part of the experiential learning process is to be able to look at one self in a particular context and then to look at others as well. The teacher then helps the students engage in healthy dialogue. Trust is necessary for the dialogue to happen. The other challenge for the teacher in a discipling context is the danger of students going down a path contrary to the direction of Scripture, which is the ultimate guide for the discipleship process. Along with the safe environment, every teacher will need a knowledge of Scripture to properly disciple the student.

When students connect what they are learning to real-life experiences there is not always a positive outcome. Drummond (2009, p. 78) found in her case study that many students, through the process of experiential learning, became disillusioned when they saw what theoretically could happen and what realistically was happening in the church. The challenge is to help youth who experience this disillusionment to see it as an opportunity for reform.

Pearmain (2005) conducted a qualitative study of youth in summer school events. The importance of a "safe haven" was clear from analyzing the responses. What contributed to creating a safe haven were acceptance and inclusion. Even youth who did not want to participate found themselves more open once they felt there was an accepting atmosphere. Because there was a safe haven, "transforming processes" were free to happen. Pearmain lists them as follows:

1. A good place to come to terms about yourself;

2. a deeper understanding of who you are and who you can be;

3. change in values and actions over time: letting your life speak;

4. time for reflection and connection: not your average silence;

5. living fully as a human being;

6. becoming who we are without masks;

7. relational consciousness: practical application in living life.

Because the goal of discipleship is life transformation, the process needs to involve more than the passing of information from discipler to disciple. Experiential learning gives us the opportunity to teach in a way that engages both mind and heart. Spiritual experiences are better understood when the cognitive and sensory are engaged.

The challenge of experiential learning is that each student comes with his or her own experiences that mold the experiential learning process. Previous experiences can lead a student to going in a direction that the discipler may feel is counterproductive to discipleship. For this reason, experiential learning should never be completely disconnected from the guidance of the information. In the case of discipleship, that is Scripture. The strength of experiential learning in discipleship is that it opens the door for the discipler to seek out new and creative ways to disciple the young person. Service projects, poetry, journaling and story-telling are just some of the examples of experiential learning that can be used in discipleship. If experiential learning is guided by Scripture, the discipler can feel free to explore other areas of experiential learning to help the young person. Another strength of experiential learning is that it forces those discipling students to create an environment of trust, which will make the process of discipleship even more effective. The challenge will be for those teachers who find it difficult to take on the role of facilitator. The teacher needs to allow the process to occur organically which is risky since the student can go in several directions, even ones the teacher may not feel is best.

Contributions of Personality Types to
Youth Discipleship

Williamson and Watson (2007, p. 70) believe the learning experience is more effective if one is aware of his or her personality style. "Individual differences in religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices are supposed to reflect individual differences in personality" (Saroglou & Munoz-Garcia, 2008, p. 84). Unfortunately, there is not a consensus among scholars about the effect personality types have on faith development.

Although it has been criticized by some in the Christian church, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is being widely used within churches (Francis, 2001, p. 32).

Using personality types is an attempt to try and understand how people best receive information and view the world. Mawditt (2007) believes that in preaching the preacher is asked to "offer the material in a way that can meet the needs of all" (p. 236). In discipleship we are seeking the same outcome, to lead the disciple in a way that meets his or her specific needs. While preaching has limited avenues to accomplish Mawditt's goal, discipleship can pull from many resources to help different personality types grow spiritually. For this reason, we look at the MBTI and at how the discovery of a disciple's personality type can contribute to discipleship.

Francis (2001, pp. 35-36) explains that the MBTI places personality within four general "constructs" (orientation, perceiving, judging process, and attitude toward the outer world), with each one containing two preferences. Orientation is how a person prefers to focus their attention. Within orientation there are extroversion and introversion, where extroverts prefer to focus their attention on the outer world (people and things) while introverts focus their attention on the inner world (ideas). Perceiving is how a person receives information. Within perceiving there are sensing and intuition. Those who prefer sensing understand the information as they receive it through the senses, while those who prefer intuition connect more with the larger meaning of a situation that goes beyond senses. Judging process is how the individual makes decisions. Within the judging process one finds thinking and feeling. Those who are thinkers make decisions by logical analysis, while those who are feelers make decisions based on how others are affected. Attitude toward the outer world is the final construct. Within that construct are judging and perceiving. Those who prefer judging have an organized approach to life while those who prefer perceiving are more spontaneous.

As we look at these four constructs, they form 16 unique personality types, each one with its own approach to attention, receiving of information, decision-making, and relationships. For the disciple and discipler, knowing what personality type the disciple may be can inform both of them on what approaches to discipleship will have a greater impact on the disciple. But Francis (2001) warns, "The MBTI should be regarded as a reliable psychological tool when employed to rate individuals on personality continua. The instrument is less reliable when employed to assign individuals to discrete personality types" (p. 43). The MBTI can be used to guide the discipleship process but may not be definitive in labeling the disciple's personality.

The MBTI is being used in Christian churches to understand how personality styles may be connected to spirituality, but Saroglou and Munoz-Garcia (2008) present a challenge to that idea. In their research, they attempted to discover if personality or values have more to do with religiosity. They did their research with 256 Spanish students. The results of their research showed that values affect spirituality more than personality. To add to the discussion of alternative ideas on personality, Beck (1999) informs us that studies have shown that genetics has more to do with personality than environment.

Thomas (2009) expresses how individuals come to God in different ways based on their personalities. What he posits in his book comes from his research of "spiritual temperaments." He researched "biblical figures, who lived out these temperaments on the pages of Scripture, and…historical movements within the Christian church" (p. 17). The naturalist finds God in nature; the ascetic in spiritual disciplines; the traditionalist in historical liturgies; the activist in great causes; the caregiver in serving; the sensate by

using the senses; the enthusiast in people; the contemplative in solitary reflection and prayer; the intellectual by learning.

Personality types can make the process of discipling youth more complicated than expected. One challenge that we will face is our limitations in determining what personalities each young person has. Some of the examinations are quite involved, comprehensive, and costly. The ones that are free to do online will give the individual results but those results are questionable at best. Ideally, if there were a way to get accurate results on personality types of our youth, adjustments could be made to the discipleship process that could help create a more successful discipleship experience. However, realistically, it may not be practical to have every disciple go through a MBTI before discipleship begins. What can make a difference is for disciplers to educate themselves on the different personality types that exist and find different methods that can help different personality types in the discipleship process. Through observation of the disciple, experimentation, and even trial and error, discoveries into the personality type of the disciple can be noticed and sensible adjustments can be made to support the disciple in their spiritual walk.

Digital Culture and Discipleship

Today's digital culture offers unique challenges to discipleship. Although discipleship has answers to some of these challenges, the need for adjustment in current approaches to discipleship is undeniable.

Mahan, Warren, and White (2008) lists what many youth leaders would agree are important social and spiritual opportunities that the digital culture is enticing youth away from: social roles, networks of care, attention to the common good, families and local

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authorities, innate passions and sensibilities, expectation to fully attend to the call of God, faith communities, and their own powers as agents of God in history. The lack of such opportunities has led to a generation of youth who are merely invited to salvation but are alienated and disconnected from the call of God and the body of Christ.

However, Derr (2010, p. 179) goes against the grain in saying that "popular culture" is not necessarily evil. Instead he challenges traditional ecclesiastical thinking and proposes that today's culture is more prophetic, pointing us to our new reality as disciples of Christ. Meadows (2012) would add that what truly is happening is that there is a "convergence" of "old and new, of digital and more traditional media, and that they will interact in more complex ways" (p. 164).

Influence of Digital Media on Discipleship

Relationships in a digital culture have brought on new realities that the church must face. Elmore (2012, p. 35) informs us that compassion is declining in digital culture. This decline may be due to the fact that there are fewer face-to-face interactions than before. Along with a decline in compassion, there is a rise in narcissism (p. 35). What is also being seen is a growing sense of entitlement (p. 37). To solve these problems, Elmore (2012, p. 43) recommends that adults become mentors for young people in the digital culture, that is, young people immersed in the digital culture. Mahan et al. (2008) put it this way:

> Adolescence is still further destabilized by the decline in the number of adult mentors and sponsors—a void now filled by the entertainment media that ushers young people into a specious adulthood. Relegating youth to media-driven peer culture and isolating them from adult relationships and centers of adult influence leaves youth with a vague yearning for more influence or social agency, but without the opportunities or skills that come through experience in negotiating complex practical and social problems. Without opportunity as agents and without adult mentors, young

people often lack a sense of loyalty to social institutions characteristic of their parents and grandparents. (Chapter 1: The Social Construction of Adolescence, para. 29)

In the area of social media and communities, Meadows (2012) observes that human interactions are now expressed through both digital and physical contacts (p. 164). He goes even further to say that all social institutions are being reorganized around networking technologies (p. 165), which has implications for how relationships are formed. Although Meadows sees that media can enhance aspects of relationships if they do not replace them, there is a danger if our digital selves become greater than our real selves:

> Unconfined by the realities of physical embodiment, however, this process means that our avatars may, or may not, mirror the givenness of our age, sex, interests or employment. Although such freedom can be celebrated as an extension of the normal process of identity formation, there are also concerns about the inadequacy of 'constructed identities.' (pp. 168-169)

Meadows (2012) continues this discussion by introducing us to "telepresence." This is the idea that one can reproduce the feeling of face-to-face contact in digital spaces. Although this seems to be growing in digital culture, it is recognized as falling short "for the embodied presence of friendship that can be 'tasted,' 'smelled' and 'touched' (p. 168). Hall (2008) adds:

> In overdeveloped cultures and contexts, people simply cannot imagine living without electronic media but experience the world through media images and impressions in a way not readily distinguished from immediate experience. At the same time, a range of everyday virtualizations shape our sense of the world, and this is a process accelerated in recent decades by the rapid evolution of television culture, followed by a more rapid evolution of the internet. (p. 10)

Those in the digital culture are settling for an illusion that our online selves experience, rather than the reality of lives that may be experiencing pain and suffering (Hall, 2008, p. 16). Discipleship points us to a life grounded in the realities of Scripture and that life, although not ignoring the realities of sin and pain, is filled with hope, not

just for the disciple's current reality but also looking forward to an eternal reality. For many in the digital culture the desire is to be accepted, but Meadows (2012) reminds us that the battle found within the digital culture is fought on two fronts: "On the one hand, it matters to us that virtual appearances should be truthful re-presentations of embodied selves; and on the other hand, there is no substitute for being accepted as we are, in body and soul" (p. 169).

Response of the Church

Need for Change

Although some may feel uncomfortable with changing methodologies, Song (2006, p. 253) feels that it is imperative that discipleship be put in the language of the culture, dealing with current cultural issues. He adds:

> The text (the Bible) teaches us *who* to follow while the context teaches us *how* to follow Jesus. Needless to say, when we use transferable or generic discipleship material, we miss out the important issues of a particular context that stand in the way of discipleship. (p. 254)

Derr (2010, p. 177) promotes contextualization as the way to deal with digital culture when he says, "Like mission workers in a foreign land, we must learn the language and customs of a new culture and risk being changed by it for the sake of the Good News." Based on his experience in the Philippines, Song (2006) also recognized the failings of discipleship when it was being brought into the country simply by translating discipleship material from the United States. The failure came in that the material was not dealing with real issues the Philippine people were facing, making the discipleship process weak. He quotes Bevans in his article to make his point: doing theology contextually is necessary (p. 249). Although both these men seem to agree,

Song (2006) gives the church the responsibility to take the elements of culture and

interact with them in such a way as to "bring these under the lordship of Christ" (p. 250).

Song still leaves control in the hands of the church, and Febus-Paris (2014) takes the

conversation even further by suggesting the church consider changes to its

methodologies:

> To reach and have an impact on the current generation, the church must develop an awareness of the cultures and subcultures of the emerging generations and be willing to redefine and reinvent its methodologies with the aim of impacting the youth culture with the gospel of Jesus Christ. (p. 119)

Song's (2006) approach of contextualization in discipleship has merit but

Meadows (2012) brings to light a reality that complicates this process in the culture of the

church. Meadows identified three distinct groups that exist within today's culture and that

are found in the church. First, we have digital aliens which are those that feel the need to

"resist an uncritical relationship to technology, which has the potential to undermine the

heart of biblical Christianity" (p. 171). Second, we have digital pioneers who highlight

"the potential of digital spaces for exploring evangelism, discipleship and community"

(p. 173). Third, we have digital natives. "If digital aliens stress the importance of

embodied community, and digital pioneers emphasize the possibilities of virtual

community, digital natives are more likely to speak of belonging to networks of spiritual

friendships that are expressed in both kinds" (p. 174). Song's desire for contextualization

would be a challenge for Meadow's digital aliens, since they are fighting the digital

culture, while being embraced by the pioneers and natives.

Methods for Change

Reflecting on the challenges of digital culture forces us to consider methods for change. The changes suggested by the researchers do not redirect discipleship from the ultimate goal which is to help young people become disciples of Christ. What these changes can do is place those leading young people in discipleship in a stronger position to have success.

Mentoring/Relationships

Discipleship can become the place where digital disciples can find life-changing relationships through the discipleship process where the discipler serves as a spiritual mentor. Elmore (2012) and Mahan et al. (2008) remind us that mentoring is very important to today's digital culture and that connection is still a great need of this generation. Meadows (2012) sees the church bringing that connection as relationships are formed between disciples experiencing church together, and this can happen both physically and virtually, though there is the danger of relationships becoming more virtual than physical:

> So, the danger of our digital culture is not that we will become less personal, but that we become hyperpersonal, living a kind of perpetual 'out of body experience' in the midst of everyday life; having one face for our neighbours and another for our 'always on' relationships. (pp. 175-176)

In Jesus, this culture will value the "self-giving and self-emptying spirit of Christ and the partnership of equals that emerged between Jesus and his disciples." This kind of partnership is a reality that discipleship can recreate for this generation that is interested in "connection, sharing, openness, and interdependency" (Derr, 2010, p. 185).

What becomes difficult for the digital disciple is the idea that the church seeks homogeneity and dependence from its members when he or she seeks heterogeneity and

interdependence (Derr, 2010, p. 181). Incorporating digital disciples into a church's

hierarchy and asking them to produce within it can be a challenge. What Derr helps us

understand is that digital culture desires everyone "to become co-creators of emerging

culture—and of philosophy, theology, and spirituality as well" (p. 182). But he sees a

problem for the church:

> Without authority of some kind that can give opinions and viewpoints a trustworthy
> stamp of approval, how does one decide to which of the hundreds and thousands of
> nodes to give credence? If there are no longer easily identifiable authorities—political
> or religious—then doesn't the church lose its capacity to speak with power on topics
> of moral importance as befits its prophetic role? On the other hand, can the church
> only be prophetic if convinced that she alone has a right to name, teach, and proclaim
> true doctrines, ideas, and practices? (pp. 182-183)

With digital relationships each individual is part of a community of production

where each "can make larger, deeper, wider, and more finely granulated contributions

than top-down structures that rely on authority, control, and experts" (p. 181). Meadows

(2012) finds the answer to authority in what he calls "convergent fellowship" where

fellowship is experienced on and off-line:

> When two or more people gather with the explicit purpose of sharing life deeply, they
> can help one another discern the presence and leading of the Spirit…These bonds of
> spiritual friendship are the centre of any community that seeks to make and grow
> mission-shaped disciples. Convergent fellowship, therefore, is rooted in the
> experience that this kind of 'Christian conferencing'—mutual accountability and
> spiritual direction—can be found in both embodied and virtual relationships,
> especially among small groups of people. (p. 179)

A process of discipleship that encourages the digital disciple to seek "convergent

fellowship" both on line and in the "mutual accountability and spiritual direction" found

in a discipling relationship with a mentor or group of digital disciples maintains the

authority, but not the direct hierarchy, of the church.

Discipleship that connects disciples to the fellowship and mission of the church will have a greater impact in helping disciples find the more interdependent connection that the digital disciple is looking for.

Contextualization

Discipleship material and teaching must be in a language that can be understood and embraced by the disciple. It must be contextualized. Song (2006, p. 265) gives us four steps for contextualizing discipleship: (a) "State the supra-contextual message of the Bible." Here, the message of the Bible, that is above culture, is identified. (b) "Identify the needs and issues of the context." Here, the culture is observed and the needs to be addressed are identified. (c) "Create one's own discipleship material." Taking into consideration the message and the needs of one's own community, one creates his or her own discipleship material. (d) "Determine the best pedagogical approach to the context." After the material is created, the discipler must now decide the best teaching approach to effectively lead digital disciples.

Although digital culture is presenting challenges that are calling for changes in discipleship approaches, there are still traditional methods of discipleship that are valuable. Derr (2010, p. 185) recognizes that a culture that is always plugged-in will need times to retreat "in order to pray, seek, meditate, serve, and listen to the Word of God." A comprehensive discipleship process can offer these options.

Technology

Any discipleship model that is focused on digital disciples needs to take advantage of the current technological advances to make the model most effective. Derr (2010) challenges the church to engage digital culture for the purpose of utilizing

"emerging technology to leverage conversation and connections to empower people to do ministry" (p. 186). Meadows (2012) sees value in the use of technology for discipleship:

> There are stories that affirm the power of digital media to enhance the spiritual practices of prayer and searching the scriptures, as personal and corporate disciplines. Virtual relationships can also become a means of spiritual formation: with accounts of people renewing their faith, or growing in intimacy with God, and developing greater confidence in everyday life. (p. 173)

It is obvious that discipleship will face many challenges in the current digital culture but with proper adjustments discipleship can provide many of the answers digital disciples are looking for.

Discipleship Models and Their Key Elements

Different discipleship models have been created to assist individuals in their spiritual growth. The ones presented in this section are organized into three different groups: (a) theoretical models, (b) practical models, and (c) youth models. From these models I will identify what elements they have in common in an attempt to create a comprehensive model for youth discipleship.

Theoretical Models

Theoretical models are models that are based on observation, research, and biblical reflection but have not been placed into practice in a ministry setting.

Shirley's (2008) model was created from a dissatisfaction with a discipleship process that is not giving the results desired by the church. He feels that the church has an essential role in discipling its members. His purpose is "to call the local church to renew her commitment to growing authentic disciples, and to reform a discipleship process that we have been using for too long with lackluster results" (p. 208). Collinson (2005) took a biblical study of the word disciple and the practices of Jesus and the early church and

compared them to educational models to discover a discipleship model of teaching. Cloud and Towsend (2001) propose a spiritual growth model based on psychology. Myers and Jackson (2008) use a service model, based on Luther's doctrine of vocation, for youth as a tool for personal growth. Canales (2006) analyzes eight models of youth ministry which includes the Christian Discipleship Model that will be looked at in this section. Rainer and Geiger (2006) present a model of discipleship based on surveying over 400 churches. Below I will identity different elements that are found within the theoretical models described above.

Experience with God is the beginning of discipleship. Canales (2006, p. 220) recognizes that an encounter with God is crucial if one is to become a disciple. Shirley (2008, p. 218) claims that the experience with God comes through worship, both congregational and personal. Myers and Jackson (2008) state that the experience with God comes through service learning "with clearly-stated objectives and intentional use of reflection activities" (p. 334).

Community is an important part of discipleship. Shirley (2008, p. 220) uses the term "production" to describe the areas in which discipleship happens: family, personal relationships, groups and church ministries. Disciples have the need for relationship with God and others, which happens in life and at church gatherings (Collinson, 2005, p. 241; Bradfield, 2008, p. 2). Rainer and Geiger (2006) will not disconnect the discipleship process from the church community. Cloud and Townsend (2001, p. 194) indicate that a relationship with God and others is necessary to grow both spiritually and emotionally.

Teaching and learning has historically been a part of most discipleship processes. Collinson (2005, p. 241) sees teaching as the purpose of discipling relationships. Shirley

(2008, p. 218) sees the task of the church teaching on two levels: scripturally and experientially. Although Canales (2006, p. 221) would agree that there is a need for teaching within discipleship, he admits that it is a challenge to incorporate discipleship with modern teaching techniques and be effective. For Cloud and Townsend (2001, p. 195) teaching is essential in the spiritual growth process but the foundation of that teaching and growth is the Bible.

Change in worldview that leads to service is part of the disciple's transformation. Canales (2006, p. 220) calls this a change of horizon, where the disciple begins to see a larger picture of the world. Collinson (2005, p. 241) states that the disciple's focus is centrifugal, that spiritual growth leads to the disciple looking outward and serving others. Myers and Jackson (2008, pp. 327-328) see young people accepting the truth of their salvation but wanting to see their faith lived out in works of service.

Change in lifestyle is the natural result of a discipleship journey. Canales (2006, p. 220) sees the call to holiness as the final piece of the discipleship puzzle. Cloud and Townsend (2001) state that disciples "put off the old ways of doing things and turn to the ways that God does things" (p. 238). Shirley (2008, p. 215) expresses that a disciple shows proof of growth through love for others, especially in the body. For Myers and Jackson (2008), with a model that emphasizes service, "we are set free from our anxious attempts to justify ourselves through our good works, and are therefore set free for works that are done in response to our neighbors' actual needs rather than our need for self justification" (p. 332).

Practical Models

Practical Models are those that have been put into practice and have been used by churches or individuals in an attempt to grow spiritually.

Barna's "Super Model." Barna (2001) studied five discipleship models that were being used in local churches: competencies, missional, neighborhood, worldview, and the lecture-lab. He analyzed and presented the pros and cons of each. At the end of his analysis he took the best of all the models and created a "super model" (p. 124). Here is what he identified: The senior pastor advocates discipleship; people become members when they agree to be part of the discipleship process; all ministries are tied to discipleship; ministries are minimized so the church can focus on discipleship; all teaching in the church is coordinated substantively; the church mission statement identifies ministry outcomes and goals. Barna believes that these serve as essential parts of a discipleship process that need to be included in any model.

Ogden's Small Group Model. Ogden (2003, 2007) presents a model based on a discipleship small group that covenant with each other and go through a 25-step discipleship process. The discipleship areas (growing up in Christ, understanding the message of Christ, becoming like Christ, and serving Christ) are taught through the use of core truths, memory verses, inductive Bible study, and contemporary readings.

Maxson's Steps to Discipleship Model. Maxson (2009) developed a discipleship model called Steps to Discipleship. It is a seven-week discipleship journey that consists of eight Sabbath sermons and seven weeks of biblical studies and training in devotional skills and spiritual disciplines. The process goes through stages that build on each other: watching—looking at Jesus; following—choosing to follow in the steps of Jesus;

abiding—becoming a friend and companion of Jesus; indwelling—allowing Christ to dwell in us; and living out—the natural obedience that is produced through our relationship with God.

By comparing the above models, we will be able to discover the areas they have in common and how they differ. Barna's model deals with how a discipleship emphasis functions within the church while Ogden's and Maxson's models deal with what is happening with the individual. This makes comparing Barna's model to the other two unnecessary. There are aspects of the other two models that are common.

Biblical teaching is a critical portion of these two models. For Ogden and Maxson, teachings from the life of Jesus are essential. For the individual to make a spiritual connection is a goal of both models. Having a true transformation is desired by both Ogden and Maxson. Ogden sees this transformation as service while Maxson sees it as obedience. Although Ogden's model sees the small group as foundational, Maxson's model, while having a small group option, does not require a small group component.

<center>Youth Models</center>

Youth models are models that are specifically designed to help youth grow spiritually and are being used by individuals or a church.

Hunneshagen (2002) presents a confirmation ministry that is being used by the Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Depew, NY. Luce (2006) has written what he calls A Self-Discipleship Mission for youth. Both Hunneshagen's and Luce's models see the need to have an experience with God. Hunneshagen (p. 191) sees the responsibility of the experience with God falling on the church as they share the gospel. Luce (p. 7) uses a weekend retreat to create this experience. Both models see the study of Scripture as an

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essential part of the discipleship process. Since Luce's model is self-guided, the study of Scripture is foundational while for Hunneshagen (p.192) it is part of a larger approach and the study of Scripture happens both personally and corporately.

A transformed life that leads to service is another common element of these two models. Hunneshagen (2002, p. 191) completes the discipleship circle by the church's call to serve the church and the world. Luce (2006) uses the complete seven weeks of his discipleship model to move youth to change their worldview and change the way they live. Both models see the sharing of the gospel with others as part of the transformed life.

One element that is emphasized by Luce (2006) is what he calls "The Buddy System" (p. 9) which is the idea that you have a partner whom you can talk to and rely on while you are on this discipleship journey to support you. Although other models mention accountability partners none of the models present mentoring as an important part of discipleship, although I would guess that if you asked the scholars they would say that mentoring is assumed as part of discipleship.

Model Elements That Informed the
Power Up Model

The model that I am creating is called the Power Up Model. It is a youth discipleship model designed to help youth become disciples of Jesus Christ. After reviewing the literature presented in this chapter, I have identified elements that will be included in the Power Up Model.

Experience. Almost all models try to create an experience as the start of the discipleship process. Some look to do that externally while others try to create it internally.

Studying the Scriptures. The foundation of the discipleship journey is the reading, studying, and reflecting on Scripture. The study of Scripture will guide the discipleship process and many important truths that are necessary for spiritual growth will be emphasized.

Community. The need for connection with others on the discipleship journey is important. The disciple must feel a connection with God but also a connection with a group of people who are supportive and present.

Focus on ministry. It is important that the disciple have an outward focus. A life focused on ministry gives purpose and meaning while helping the disciple connect with the church, where ministry and sharing of the Gospel are organized and executed.

Summary, Implications, and Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to understand what the factors are that influence youth discipleship. The factors I looked at were faith development and spiritual growth, experiential learning, personality types, and digital culture. Then I looked at different discipleship models that have been created for discipleship to discover important elements that should be included in a youth discipleship model.

For a complete discipleship model there may be an initial experience to begin the journey. No matter which model you look at the goal is to have a transformation, both of lifestyle and worldview. The majority of scholars see a teaching element as part of the transformation process. Models that are part of the church structure are by far the most popular.

Knowledge of faith development and spiritual growth will help make a discipleship model more effective. When the faith models are compared we see that

experience, once again, becomes important in spiritual growth. An element that most scholars agreed was important in faith development was experimentation. Once the experimentation happens it leads to a new vision. That change in vision leads to a change in behavior that is in large part directed outwardly in service to the church and the world.

Personality types were looked at in an attempt to find ways to make the discipleship process more effective for the individual. Although there is controversy about the use of personality types it may be valuable for the disciple and discipler to know what are the personality tendencies of the disciple, even though one study showed that values affect spirituality more than personality and genetics may play a role as well.

Knowing how a student learns gives tools to the teacher that can help the teacher be more effective in discipleship. In experiential learning, the most complete approach to learning is taking the student through the complete learning experience. This begins with an experience that is reflected on by the student followed by changes in ideas which are then placed into practice, creating a new experience. This happens best in an environment of trust, and in the discipleship context it is necessary for this process to be guided by scripture. Creativity is necessary in this process and several examples of creative approaches to learning were given in this chapter.

Although gender differences were looked at, there was not much information to add to the discipleship conversation. One study did identify writing as a possible spiritual tool for girls although the study was small and did not involve any males for comparison. Another study postulated that females in more fundamental environments struggle with shame more than other females. Again, the information in this study is very limited and there needs to be more research in this area.

Digital culture presents several challenges to discipleship. The greatest challenges are found in relationships with others and the church. But discipleship does offer solutions to these challenges through mentoring, contextualization, and the use of technology. A comprehensive discipleship process is still the best tool that can be offered to youth for their continued spiritual growth.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

OF THE POWER UP MODEL

Introduction

This chapter describes the steps taken to develop and implement the Power Up

discipleship model for teenagers from Paradise Adventist Academy (Paradise Academy),

Paradise Adventist Church (Paradise Church), and Chico Seventh-day Adventist Church

(Chico Church). Two students from Southern California were also included in the study.

Pre-discipleship Process

Before the students entered the discipleship process, there were many preliminary

tasks that were accomplished.

Developing the Power Up Material

Pastor Ben Maxson, Senior Pastor of the Paradise Church, developed discipleship

material entitled Steps to Discipleship. It had been used for several years at the Paradise

Church. I rewrote the material so it would be more practical for a high school student and

gave it the title Power Up.

I kept the original seven-week structure of Steps to Discipleship and the themes

for each week:

1. begin to discover what God is like and commit to try a relationship with Him

2. understand the plan of salvation

3. make God the lord of your life,

4. open up your life so Jesus can live in you,

5. sharing what God has done in your life,

6. being part of the church, and

7. discover how God wants you to serve Him.

I made the material simpler, included media elements to add to the themes for each week, and added a mentorship component.

Each theme had goals that I hoped to achieve with the participants. The first theme had two goals: (a) for the participant to make a commitment to go through the entire discipleship process and (b) to begin to explore God's character. The goal for the second theme was for participants to have a better understanding of the gospel. The goal for the third theme was for participants to explore and accept the concept of God being the Lord of their lives. The goal for the fourth theme was for participants to understand the concept of Jesus living within them through the Holy Spirit. The fifth theme had two goals: (a) for the participants to understand the importance of sharing their testimony, and (b) to begin to learn how to share their testimony. The goal for the sixth theme was for participants to understand the importance of the church in the spiritual life. The goal for the seventh theme was for the participants to understand the importance of service as part of the spiritual journey.

The Power Up model introduced the students each week to the theme as described previously. The material I developed was organized into a manual for the students. Inside the manual, each week students were taught a devotional tool, such as prayer or meditation, and given a memory verse to learn.

The Power Up manual contained a daily biblical passage that they were to reflect on. Where appropriate for the day's reflection, a video that could be accessed through a smart phone or computer was suggested. It built on the reflection for that day. At the end of the week, the students also had a small group session and a meeting with their mentor. I led the small group; the mentor meeting happened separately, according to the schedule of both the mentor and the student. The goal of both of these meetings was for the students to have a chance to share about their own spiritual lives and their thoughts on the material they were going through, although the mentors were encouraged to deviate from the material if they felt it was appropriate for the present situation. Throughout the week the manual contained suggested questions for the students that could help them get conversations started with their mentor. There were blank pages in the manual for students to write down any reflections or notes from their small group and mentor meetings. A sample from the manual can be found in Appendix A.

My goal in developing discipleship material was to design a discipleship process that was flexible and not one-size-fits-all. The way I attempted to provide flexibility was to include as many methods as possible to the Power Up model: devotional tools, memory verses, daily Bible reflection, small groups, and media content. Students were encouraged to try all of the options, and my hope was that in all the options each student would find something to help them connect spiritually. But where the most flexibility

would be found would be in the involvement of the mentors. It would be in the mentoring relationship where the true spiritual needs of the students could be individually addressed in each meeting. This was the best option for introducing flexibility in the discipleship process.

Selecting an Instrument to Measure Change

One of the great challenges for this project was finding a way to assess how effective the discipling strategies of the Power Up model were for promoting spiritual growth. I was introduced to Glynis Bradfield who created the Growing Disciples Inventory (GDI) (2011), an online instrument that measures participants' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors related to being a disciple. She explained how the GDI could be a tool to use as part of my project.

The GDI has discipleship statements that are rated by those taking the inventory. These statements fall under four categories: connecting, understanding, serving, and living in community. Table 1 lists the subcategories included in each category.

Each of the categories in the GDI is measured by having respondents complete an online inventory of 84 statements, which they must rate on a scale. Depending on the type of statement, items are rated on a scale from never true to always true, or never to always or daily [do], or, as true or false.

There are also statements for gathering demographic information about respondents. Respondents identify these statements by checking "all that apply." The GDI inventory is designed to "help individual Christ-followers better understand their Christian spiritual development, and provide Christian educators with information to

improve discipling and teaching in any setting" (Bradfield, 2011). The website address for the GDI is www.growingfruitfuldisciples.com.

Table 1

GDI Categories and Subcategories

Connecting	Understanding	Serving	Living in Community
with God	spiritual growth	personal vocation	connecting
with self	nature of God	friendships	understanding
with family	sin and suffering	community service	ministering
with church	redemption	stewardship	helping others*
with others	restoration	evangelism	

*Helping others connect, understand, and minister

Recruiting Mentors

For several months, prior to starting the discipleship intervention, I began to approach adults within the school and church about becoming mentors for the Power Up model. I described to them the general requirements: (a) meet with a student a minimum of once a week for seven weeks, (b) be familiar with the material the student would be going through, and (c) be willing to support their student spiritually throughout the process.

About six weeks before starting the discipleship intervention, I created a list of potential mentors and sent out a mass email inviting them to be a part of the study and letting them know when the mentor orientation would begin. I had 28 adults who agreed to serve as mentors. Several others expressed an interest but were unable to participate for various reasons.

Parent and Student Consent

I visited every Bible class at the Paradise Academy to invite every student to participate in the discipleship process. Each student received a packet of information. The packet contained a letter and two permission slips. The letter described in detail what each activity would be, what the time commitment was, and that either parent had the right to remove their child from the discipleship process at any time. The student could also choose to leave the discipleship process for any reason, without explanation. Students were given time to ask questions. I instructed them to take the information home and show it to their parents and if they wanted to participate, they needed to bring the forms back signed by both themselves and at least one parent. A sample of the consent form contained in the packet can be found in Appendix B. Those who did not want to participate in the discipleship process were instructed to also bring the forms back. Eighteen students agreed to be part of the discipleship process. Two participants were not students at Paradise Academy. These students were members of a family who were looking for something spiritual to do at home and heard about my project and were interested in participating.

Discipleship Process

Mentor Orientation

I gathered all the mentors in the fellowship center of the Paradise Church to introduce them to the Power Up model. The areas of each week were explained. I gave them basic orientation on how to best serve as mentors to the students. I also had to explain that even though they had chosen to be a mentor, there was still the possibility that they would not be able to serve since there were only 16 students who had agreed to be part of the study. I encouraged the adults to be flexible in going through the material. The point of the mentoring was to be a spiritual support to the student, so if there was a need to deviate the conversation because of a spiritual reality happening in the life of the student at the time, they could feel free to set the material aside temporarily and deal with the issue at hand.

Youth Orientation

After the adult orientation, all the adult mentors walked over to the computer lab at the Paradise Academy to meet with the students. There the students were introduced to the Power Up model. After they understood the model, all the adults and students were given instructions on how to complete the GDI and logged onto a computer and completed it. Students then took the time to look at the list of available mentors and chose a mentor. I informed each mentor who they were partnered with and encouraged them to make their first appointment with their student.

Working Through the Power Up Material

The next day the participants began using the Power Up model. Since I was not chosen as a mentor by any of the students, I decided that my contribution to the process, other than running the small groups, would be to pray for each adult and student participating in the intervention. Each morning, before going through the Power Up manual, I prayed specifically for each student and adult. It was important for me to go through the material as well since I was running the small groups but also to be able to direct the mentors if they felt they needed any support or encouragement. I periodically sent the mentors emails to encourage and remind them to meet with their students.

Since most of the students participating were students of the Paradise Academy, many of the mentoring sessions happened at school. I observed adults coming to the school on their lunch breaks to meet with the students once a week. Some of the mentors were teachers at the Paradise Academy so they would meet at lunch or right after school. Since it was springtime, many of the meetings were outdoors on park benches but other teachers took advantage of their classrooms to meet with the students.

When it was time for the small group weekly meetings, I would usually meet with the students in the area where the school meets to have chapel services each week, during the period they usually had Bible. At times, the students would request to meet outside and I would usually grant that request. There were two small groups. One was for freshmen and sophomores and the other was for juniors and seniors. The goal of the small group was for students to share with each other their thoughts on the previous week's material.

For the most part, the discipleship process went well; however, three issues came up during the seven weeks. First, one student decided to drop out of the process for personal reasons. I felt that the reasons did not disqualify the student from participating but ultimately the student still felt the need to drop out. Second, I was not available to meet with the students for their small group one week. I informed them the week before about my absence and offered them the chance to either cancel the meeting or have the meeting on their own. Each group agreed to continue to have the meeting without me. Third, one of the mentors was concerned that the student assigned to the mentor would not go through the material. The student loved to meet with the mentor and share about issues and concerns but did not want to read the material. The mentor asked me what should be done in this case. I told the mentor not to insist the student go through the material and to keep meeting with the student. The time they spent together talking about spiritual issues was still valuable and could help the student. This kind of adjustment fit the concept of flexibility that the Power Up model was designed to provide.

Post-discipleship Process

Shortly after the discipling of the Power Up model was completed, I left California and headed to Massachusetts for a new professional assignment. There were still two more pieces to be completed to finish the study of the effectiveness of the Power Up model: (a) Each student and adult needed to take the GDI again as a post-test, and (b) each student and adult needed to complete an open-ended survey. I decided to administer the five-question open-ended survey through email.

The GDI was completed the second time on line as it had been the first time. At the recommendation of Bradfield, I asked the adults to complete the youth GDI and the

youth to complete the adult GDI. Taking the different version of the GDI would give each person a parallel set of statements, worded a little differently, to respond to.

Conclusion

The information related in this chapter tells the story of developing and implementing the Power Up model that involved students and adult mentors. This model was an attempt to have a discipleship process that was flexible enough to adjust to the needs of the students. In general, the Power Up model seemed positive although some issues did arise during the process.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS, EVALUATION, AND LEARNINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to implement a discipleship process for youth that caters to the individual through mentoring, small group dynamics, personal Bible study, and spiritual practices. I developed a discipleship process that used these methodologies and called the process the Power Up model. The Growing Disciples Inventory (GDI) and an open-ended survey were used to determine the short-term effectiveness of the model. Follow-up research should be considered to determine what long-term spiritual effects the process may have on those who participated, both adolescents and adults.

Sample

Seventeen students volunteered for the discipleship process (two freshmen, seven sophomores, two juniors and six seniors). Each student volunteered and had permission from parent(s) to participate in the program (See Table 2). Seventeen adults volunteered to be mentors to the students (eight males and nine females).

Assessment of the Intervention

One of the challenges of this project was finding a way to measure spirituality.

Using the GDI gave us a tool that attempted to do just that. Both the students and the

mentors took the GDI before and after going through the Power Up model.

Table 2

Youth Discipleship Participants by Gender and by Grade Level

Grade	Female	Male	Total
9th	1	1	2
10th	5	2	7
11th	0	2	2
12th	4	2	6
Total	10	7	17

The GDI uses 84 statements, which respondents rate, to measure their spirituality

in four areas: connecting, understanding, serving, and living in community.

To match the GDI to the themes of the Power Up model, I identified which GDI

items matched the different themes of the model. The themes were vision (understanding

God), gospel (understanding salvation), surrender (making God Lord of your life),

intimacy (Jesus living in us), witnessing (sharing your testimony), body of Christ (being

part of the church), and service (serving others). For vision I selected five statements, for gospel eight, for surrender five, for intimacy five, for witnessing nine, for body of Christ four, and for service four. To see each theme and their corresponding statements see Appendix C.

Both the students and the adults were surveyed after the seven-week process about the experience of going through the discipleship process. They answered five open-ended questions related to the discipleship process. The questions were used to gauge whether both students and adults felt they experienced spiritual growth during the seven weeks. Here is the list of the questions they were asked:

1. Do you feel your relationship with God improved through the discipleship process? (If answer is "Yes" go to question 2. If answer is "No" skip to question 4.)

2. What are some of the ways your relationship with God improved over the past seven weeks?

3. What parts of the discipleship process helped you the most grow in your relationship with God?

4. What parts of the discipleship process helped you the least in your relationship with God?

5. For how long have you known your mentor/student?

Assessment Results

The quantitative data indicated that all themes showed a trend toward growth. Because of the small number of participants, it was difficult for the growth to reach statistical significance in all of the themes.

Youth Data

Among the youth, two themes were statistically significant: body of Christ and witnessing. See Table 3. The greatest change in growth was seen in the body of Christ theme.

Table 3

Growth in Youth by Themes

Area	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	Significance
Vision	3.94	4.23	+0.29	0.328
Gospel	4.05	4.51	+0.46	0.019*
Surrender	2.96	3.12	+0.16	0.425
Intimacy	3.43	3.74	+0.31	0.500
Witnessing	2.46	3.23	+0.77	0.058
Body of Christ	3.07	3.96	+0.89	0.003*
Service	2.89	3.46	+0.57	0.079

N=7
*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

Youth Responses to Open-ended Survey

All the youth responded that their relationship with God had improved through the discipleship process.

Six students reported that they had seen an improvement in their habit of daily devotions. Most of these students stated that they found themselves spending more time with God. One student put it this way, "It (Power Up model) has made me more faithful in my studying and searching after God. I have even gotten into an everyday worship on my own after doing this project." But one student realized that this was not an easy task, "Also, it takes a lot of discipline to set aside other things to give time to God, but once you do it for a while, it becomes easier and becomes a normal thing…"

Two students stated that their interest in spending time with God and Scripture increased. "I feel that through constant practice of daily devotions I began to seek that time with God instead of putting it off." Three students stated that they feel their ability to gain insight from the Bible improved. Five students identified the value in reading and reflecting on Scripture. "I think reading the Scripture and writing my thoughts down helped a lot." One student saw the value in it being a daily activity, "The fact that it was an everyday thing really forced me to stay up on it."

Two students stated that they felt God had become more real in their lives. "Not only have I gained greater insight from God's Word and experienced the Holy Spirit touching my heart through Bible study, but overall, I just feel like I have a deeper connection with Jesus." Two students stated that they saw an increase in their prayer life. Two students found that they were able to focus more on God. "I have been spending more time with God and my mind seems to be more focused on Him throughout the day." One mentioned a "deeper understanding of how much Jesus loves me."

Engaging in spiritual conversations was found to be valuable by almost all the

youth who participated. Some specifically identified sharing in the small group with their

peers as an activity that they appreciated:

> One of the most valuable parts of the research process was meeting with students
> weekly to discuss the week and devotions. I always was surprised at what they had to
> say and how important it was to me. It's helpful to discuss these things with other
> people who can relate.

But for some the small group dynamic was not as positive. "Sometimes in groups

I don't always feel heard."

Eight students identified the mentoring aspect of the Power Up model to be

instrumental in their spiritual growth:

> This is also why I valued meeting with a mentor to discuss anything and everything.
> This helps you share some of your feelings and thoughts which can help you clarify
> them as well. I like feeling that there are others who can relate and are supporting my
> walk with God.

For one of the students the mentor was preferred to the small group:

> I think it was a nice idea to have a mentor because it is a one-on-one conversation,
> which was more comfortable for me than in a group, and we get to share our
> experiences with God, our struggles, and encourage each other, and we noticed that
> we weren't alone.

Of the16 mentoring relationships that were created through the Power Up model,

four have continued after the project was completed.

Two of the students identified the videos to be a valuable part of the process. One

student said, "I learn better by someone explaining and telling stories. The video of the

man on the walk was very interesting to me."

With the youth who participated in the Power Up model, two elements of the

model seemed to have the greatest impact: the daily reflecting on Scripture and spiritual

conversations. Through the daily routine of reading Scripture, many youth developed the

habit and desire to continue making Bible study a part of their daily spiritual walk. The spiritual conversations students had, both with mentors and with peers, were appreciated by most of the youth and helped in their spiritual growth process.

Adult Data

Among the adults three themes were statistically significant: witnessing, surrender, and intimacy (See Table 4). The greatest change in growth was seen in the witnessing theme, followed by surrender, then intimacy.

Adult Responses to Survey

All the adults responded that their relationship with God had improved through the discipleship process.

Three adults felt the pressure of mentoring and saw it as a positive in their own spiritual lives. "I felt the need for myself, but also because I was meeting with (the student) on a regular basis, I know I wanted to be prepared…and represent God well. I also wanted to truly be a mentor and help to (the student)."

Three adults connected increased growth in the relationship with the student to increased growth in their relationship with God. "Many times after our time together my heart would just burn within me over the excitement of what we had studied and talked about.

Table 4

Growth in Adults by Themes

Area	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	Significance
Vision	4.56	4.71	+0.15	0.402
Gospel	4.63	4.84	+0.21	0.154
Surrender	3.67	4.07	+0.40	0.013*
Intimacy	4.23	4.56	+0.33	0.049*
Witnessing	3.10	3.71	+0.61	0.002*
Body of Christ	4.00	4.42	+0.42	0.086
Service	2.98	3.40	+0.42	0.133

N=9
*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

One adult came to the realization that relationships with God can be different from person to person. "[My] understanding of the Gospel was increased by our time together—as I listened to (the student) express (his or her) understanding of the gospel."

For one adult prayer became an important tool in the discipleship process. "I was praying for my student and her needs and special prayer requests. I think lifting other people in prayer draws us to Christ as we surrender to him our thoughts and concerns about others."

Two adults did not feel that they had any significant growth through the discipleship process. One of the adults connected the lack of growth to a particularly busy

time while the other adult felt as if the material did not go deep enough to have a great spiritual impact.

Nine of the mentors connected their meeting with the student as the part of the model that helped the most in their spiritual growth:

Having someone to keep me accountable on my daily scripture reading helped me the most. I wanted to make sure that I was caught up and knew the information before we had our meetings. Continual and daily reading of the Scripture kept me connected or at least thinking about spiritual things.

One mentor put it this way, "The one thing that did improve in the relationship with God was the burning drive to communicate the unadulterated gospel more completely to the kids."

Six of the mentors saw the daily focus on Scripture to be helpful in their spiritual growth:

Also just spending time each day reflecting on the text and write (sic) out my thoughts…I was inspired by the lessons to just share my story about what Jesus is doing in my life. I don't have to do a deep Bible study to help people grow.

The adults who participated in the Power Up model showed growth and attributed most of the growth to the mentoring relationship they had with the students. The pressure of helping a student grow spiritually drove most of them to deeper Bible study which in turn led to their own spiritual growth. One could conclude that discipling someone will lead to reciprocal growth, both disciple and discipler growing together.

When the results of both youth and adults are placed together, six of the seven themes are statistically significant: vision, gospel, surrender, witnessing, body of Christ, and service. This increase in statistical significance is probably due to the added number of respondents (See Table 5).

The data indicate that the greatest growth happened in the witnessing and body of Christ themes. Witnessing is the ability to share one's testimony with someone else. Body of Christ is a disciple's positive connection to the church. The structure of the model may have contributed to the growth in witnessing and body of Christ. I will give reasons for these results in my conclusions.

The two areas that did not show statistical significance were vision and intimacy. Vision is the disciple's true view and understanding of who God is. Intimacy is the disciple's understanding and experience of Jesus' presence in his or her life through the Holy Spirit. I will give reasons for these results in my conclusions.

Conclusions

My desire in this project was to create a discipleship model that could be tailored to the needs of the individual being discipled. Although I think this was a noble cause, I quickly realized that it would be much harder than I anticipated.

In looking at the latest research, I found that there are many factors in play when one tries to understand spiritual growth. Culture, learning styles, personalities, and faith development are just some of the elements woven into spirituality. Seeking a way to consider all these realities when discipling someone can be overwhelming but a general knowledge of these elements can be useful when discipling someone.

Trying to understand how Jesus discipled the men he chose was the first task in creating this discipleship model. Seeing how Jesus called the disciples, then taught them, and modeled the life of service to God informed the creation of the Power Up model.

Table 5

Pre-test and Post-test Growth in Youth and Adults by Themes

Theme	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	Significance
Vision	4.29	4.50	+0.21	0.174
Gospel	4.38	4.70	+0.32	0.006*
Surrender	3.36	3.66	+0.30	0.016*
Intimacy	3.88	4.20	+0.32	0.129
Witnessing	2.82	3.50	+0.68	0.001*
Body of Christ	3.59	4.22	+0.63	0.001*
Service	2.94	3.43	+0.49	0.016*

N=16
*Indicates statistical significance at the .05 level.

The Steps to Discipleship Model, created by Ben Maxson, was the foundation for the Power Up model. It is a simple, yet comprehensive approach, offered an excellent framework on which to build a discipleship model for high school students. I was blessed by the Steps to Discipleship material personally and am thankful to Ben Maxson for the opportunity to use it as part of my project.

The experience of creating and implementing the Power Up model was challenging and rewarding. Creativity was necessary to develop a model that would connect and engage with high school students. Finding willing adults to be mentors was, surprisingly, easier than I expected. It was challenging, however, to get a great number of

teenagers to participate in this type of research. The reason for this challenge is that at Paradise Academy, most of the students are involved in a majority of the school's activities as well as having responsibilities with academics, home, and church. All these activities make it difficult for students to commit to another activity in addition to everything else they are involved in.

After having gone through the process of developing and implementing the Power Up model, I have identified a few changes I would make to the process.

When a person completes the GDI they receive a printout with their results. These results give the individual a "score" in the four areas that the GDI evaluates (connecting, understanding, serving, and living in community). With this report the individual can know what areas are their strongest and weakest and focus on the areas that need the most attention. I would have the students make the GDI report a greater part of the mentoring sessions so that the mentors would be able to focus on specific areas of spiritual growth that the students needed or wanted to see improve. Taking this approach demands that I train the mentors on ways they could use to help students grow in these four areas.

More of the model needs to be virtual since the demographic trying to be reached is one that connects well with technology. I would like to have developed a website or app where a video introduction could be made for each theme and the lessons could be done online or downloaded from the website. It would also be an asset to connect the GDI interface with the interface of the Power Up website so that both can work seamlessly.

When starting the Power Up process I would have liked to have taken the students on a retreat as a starting point. This would have created a great atmosphere of

connectivity between the adults and the students. I believe this would have jump-started the spiritual growth process for all. Also, ending the process with another retreat would have capped the experience off well. This kind of a retreat would have focused on testimonies of how the process helped the participants grow spiritually. I would have encouraged them to continue the discipleship process with others moving forward.

After considering all the research and data there are several conclusions that I have made:

The act of helping someone in a discipleship experience helps both the disciple and the discipler grow spiritually. Both the qualitative and quantitative data show that through the Power Up model both the youth and the adult showed spiritual growth.

The Power Up model seems to help both youth and adults to grow in witnessing. I believe that the reason for this growth is that there are many opportunities in this model to honestly share one's own spiritual experience in a safe environment through both the small group and meeting with a mentor. Practicing sharing over and over helps someone to be able to witness much easier with others.

Another area of growth for youth was in the body of Christ theme. I believe the reason for this growth is that the model connected students with members of the church. As they had more positive spiritual experiences with church members that created a more positive attitude toward the church in general. This leads me to the conclusion that a great tool in changing negative attitudes that youth have about the church is to create positive spiritual experiences with people within the church. This also leads me to reflect on the inverse, that the quickest way to create negative attitudes from youth about the church is

to expose them to negative spiritual experiences within the church. My own pastoral observation supports this conclusion.

Two themes that showed growth for adults were surrender and intimacy. These two themes are generally thought to be more advanced spiritual themes. The Power Up model may have created an environment where adults were forced to consider these areas as they went through the material with their student. The adults knew the students would have questions about these themes and the adults needed to take time to reflect and consider these areas of spirituality. These mentors were already past the foundational areas of spiritual growth and were ready for the next phase, and the Power up model gave them the opportunity to grow in those areas.

The Power Up model facilitated the least growth in the vision and intimacy themes. Having a retreat could have helped more students grow in the vision theme. Starting out the process with a retreat, where each of us could have focused on our own personal vision of God and where we could have begun to focus on who God is in Scripture, would have helped create that important foundation that the rest of the themes in the Power Up model are built upon. The intimacy theme is one that takes a great deal of spiritual maturity to embrace and practice for both youth and adults. It may be too much to expect a teenager to show significant growth in an area that many lifelong Christians continue to struggle with.

Adults are willing to participate in spiritually mentoring young people. They just need to be asked and given clear instructions and expectations. When I asked adults to become mentors to students, I had more adults than I needed. Part of the reason for their

willingness could be that the Paradise Church does have a discipleship focus as part of their ministry.

The data from the open-ended survey show that youth appreciate adults who are willing to share their own spiritual lives with them, including the struggles. Youth want to know that they are not alone and that someone can relate to what they are going through, whether that is a peer or an adult.

Recommendations

Completing this research and reflecting on the results has generated several recommendations for both the church and for further research.

Recommendations for the Church

One of the most powerful tools for spiritual growth is to be involved in discipleship. This process helps grow both the disciple and the discipler.

1. Churches must make discipleship a large part of their ministry approach. The church should especially train adults to disciple youth. This type of mentoring will not only help in spiritual growth but may have a positive effect on youth's attitude toward the church.

2. The church must take advantage of technology and use it positively for ministry. More training needs to be provided for members of the church who are gifted in technology to learn the newest technological methods to use in ministry. Money needs to be invested to create modern websites to attract and reach the youth of the church. Social media can and should be used by the leaders of the church to connect to teenagers in and out of the church.

3. The problem of youth retention is more than a local church problem. It extends to virtually all of first world Christianity, including the Adventist denomination. It is systemic and complex. The best solution is one that involves all areas of church leadership. Recognizing that the problem of youth retention involves the system, I recommend that at the highest levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church all the research available be used to develop resources and strategies to disciple youth, adults, and pastors at all levels of denominational leadership.

4. More youth discipleship material should be created and provided by the church to young people to guide them through an intense, yet age-appropriate, discipleship process that will help them develop as disciples of Jesus Christ. Most of the material that is available tends to be for adults. More youth-friendly material is needed.

5. The church needs to become more educated about current youth culture. The church needs to present the gospel to our youth in a language that they can understand. The church also needs to deal with real issues that youth are struggling with. Knowing our youth culture, especially through first-hand knowledge that comes from a mentoring relationship, will help the church be more effective in supporting the spiritual lives of the youth.

6. Having spiritual conversations and reflecting on Scripture were identified as important parts of the spiritual growth process. The church needs to create opportunities for these kinds of activities to happen. Small groups and mentoring can be good approaches to accomplish these but also families need to be trained and encouraged to seek out these kinds of activities in the home.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. The Power Up model needs to be used in a more diverse setting to truly see if the results can be replicated with other youth. The youth in this intervention were mostly from an upper middle class, white cultural and socio-economic group. If this model would be used conference-wide, then we would have a better idea if this model is successful with other ethnic and socio-economic groups.

2. Personality traits and learning styles can be a powerful piece of information when in a discipleship process. More research into this area should be done to discover how best to use those elements to enhance discipleship with youth and adults.

3. The Power Up model lasts for seven weeks. Further study should be done to see what the long-term effects of the discipleship process were. Also, discipleship needs to be an everyday process within the church. More models and/or approaches need to be developed to help churches make discipleship a constant part of ministry.

Professional Transformation

Completing the Doctor of Ministry program has been both fulfilling and challenging. I entered the program without knowing what to expect. I was confident that I would be able to get through the program without too many issues. I was mistaken.

I quickly realized, as I experienced the first class in Orlando, Florida, that it would take a lot of dedication, time, and organization to be successful in the program. Organization and time management are not natural for me, but the program forced me to develop habits in these areas. I used all the tools available to me to set timelines and plan out all the work that was required. Developing organizational skills in the Doctor of

Ministry program has helped me extend those skills out into my ministry, and I have been able to accomplish much more in ministry than ever before.

The Doctor of Ministry program has taught me a lot about humility. I realized quickly how much I still needed to learn and that I am not as smart as I think I am. I have always tended to be self-sufficient but going through this experience has taught me how much I need to rely on the support of others to be successful. I would not have been able to complete this journey without the help of my advisor, professors, mentors, family, classmates, and colleagues. I am so thankful to God for each one of them.

This experience has given me a greater passion for ministry than I had before. I felt myself becoming very cynical about pastoring but now I have a renewed vision and an interest in contributing to the growth of youth ministry within our denomination.

The level of experience I have gained through this process is immeasurable. I feel I have gained knowledge and wisdom that I have been able to put into practice both in my ministry and personal life. Just the fact that I have been able to persevere and reach a goal shows that I have grown through this process, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF POWER UP MATERIAL

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Power Up! This material will attempt to provide you with the spiritual boost you are seeking. I hope that at the end of this experience you will have grown in your relationship with God and be inspired to go even deeper with our Almighty Father.

Each week of this process will give you different tools to help you understand and experience God on a deeper level. I am confident that if you commit to the whole experience you will grow spiritually. Here are the tools you will use during the next 50 days:

1. Power Up Tool: Each week you will be taught a devotional tool. Practice it everyday to enhance the spiritual experience.
2. Text for the Memory Banks: Each week you will be given a text to memorize. Use whatever method you believe will work best.
3. Meet Up: Each week you will schedule a time with your mentor. This person will be available to you for prayer support, a listening ear, answering questions and any other spiritual support you will need.
4. Daily Reflection: Each day you will be given a text to read and a question to answer and reflect on. This should take you no more than 15 minutes per day.
5. Group session: Each week you will be meeting with your peers to share what you have learned and discovered through your reading and reflecting. This will happen during your Bible Class.
6. Bonus content: You will be invited to experience media related to the material you are reading. If you have time enjoy this content and reflect on it.

Chapter 1

GO FOR IT!

This chapter is all about giving God a chance. You may have thought about making a commitment and trying God out so now is as good a time as any. This week we will try and discover what God is like and hopefully when you make that discovery, you will see that it will be worth it to go for it with God.

Power Up Tool

This week you will practice *Relational Bible Reading*. This is when you read the Bible, not to get information, but to feed your spiritual life. Whenever you read a text ask yourself these questions:

1. What does this text tell me about God?
2. What does this text tell me about my relationship with God?

This should help you get more from the text that will help you on your spiritual journey.

Text for the Memory Banks

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." Jeremiah 31:3

Meet-up

Share with your mentor something that may be getting in the way of you going for it with God and ask him or her to pray about that with you.

day 1

Daily Reflection

Read Jeremiah 29:13.

What does this passage tell you about God?

bonus content
Scan code or use link to check out *AVB: Meeting God*:

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR
PARENTS OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN STUDY

Andrews University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN STUDY

I am conducting a reseach study as part of my Doctor of Ministry project, in partial fullment for my Doctor of Ministry at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.   Your participation in this study is greatly a appreciated.

Research Title: Discipleship Model for Youth at the Paradise Adventist Church

Purpose of Study: The task of this project is to develop and implement a discipleship process for high-school students in Paradise, California. The discipleship process will be evaluated to determine how effective it is in helping students grow spiritually.

Duration of participation in study: I understand that my child will be required to complete two surveys which will take apprisimately 30 minutes of his or her time and an interview which will take approximately one hour of his or her time and participate in the discipleship model which will take seven weeks and he or she will spend an average of 5 hours per week in activities related to the discipleship process. I also understand that I may be interviewed as my child's parent as part of the study.

Mentoring Process: I understand that my child will be assigned an adult mentor as part of the study. I understand that the mentor assigned to my child will be of the same gender as my child. I understand that my child will meet with the mentor once a week to discuss áreas related to the material given to him or her as part of the study. I understand that the mentor assigned to him or her will have a background check done on him or her before participating in the study. Any potential mentor with a questionable background will not be allowed to particiapte in the study. I understand that the meeting with the mentor will be in a public place or on the phone and will be scheduled at a time that is appropriate for the mentor and my child.

Benefits: None

Risks: The risks of participating in this research is minimal.

Voluntary Participation: I have been informed that my and my child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. I am aware that there will be no penalty or loss of benefits my child is entitled to if he or she or I decide to cancel his or her participation in this study. And that there will be no cost to me for my child particpating in this study

Confidentiality: All records obtained as part of the research will be kept anonymous in a safe only accesible to the researcher. Records will be in the form of statistical information and/or áudio or vídeo recorded interviews. I understand that my and my child's identity in this study will not be disclosed in any published document. And that researcher will keep the records in the safe at the Paradise Adventist Academy.

Contact: I am aware that I can contact the supervisor of Milton Marquez (Jane Thayer, thayerja@andrews.edu, 269-473-2516) or myself at 530 966-4875 for answers to questions related to this study. I can also contact the Institutional Review Board at Andrews University at (269) 471-6361 or irb@andrews.edu.

I have read the contents of this Consent and received verbal explanations to questions I had. My questions concerning this study have been answered satisfactorily. I hereby give my voluntary consent to participate in this study. I am fully aware that if I have any additional questions I can contact Milton Marquez, or advisor Jane Thayer.

_____   _____

Signature   (Subject)   Date

_____   _____   _____

Researcher Signature   Phone   Date

APPENDIX C

GDI STATEMENTS ORGANIZED BY POWER UP THEMES

Vision

Y3: One way I love to learn about God is by studying the Bible

Y49: God designed marriage and families to help me understand His love.

Y50: God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three eternal Persons.

Y54: God, our Heavenly Father, still cares for all He created on this earth and throughout the universe.

Y59: The Ten Commandments reveal Gods character and design for my health and happiness.

A2: One way I love to learn about God is by studying the Bible.

A8: God designed marriage and families to help me understand His love.

A20: God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three eternal Persons.

A88: God, the all-powerful source of life, still cares for all He created on this earth and throughout the universe.

A92: The Ten Commandments reveal God's character and design for my health and happiness.

Gospel

Y7: The Holy Spirit prompts me to confess my sins and to make things right

Y44: God has provided everything needed to restore people to His image when Jesus comes again.

Y47: Even if I don't choose to follow Jesus, God still loves me and does everything possible to save me.

Y51: There is a great controversy taking place between God and Satan. It began in heaven with the rebellion of Lucifer and will continue until the end of time.

Y52: Before God created this earth, He made a plan to rescue people if they chose to sin.

Y55: The first man and woman, created as free beings in the image of God, chose to rebel against God. I have inherited their fallen nature along with all its consequences.

Y56: God the Son, Jesus, became truly human so He could save me from my sin.

Y60: Jesus' death defeated Satan; He give me victory over sin.

A6: The Holy Spirit prompts me to confess my sins and to make things right.

A90: There is a great controversy between God and Satan. It began in heaven with the rebellion of Lucifer and will continue until the end of this earth's history.

A91: The first man and woman, created as free beings in the image of God, chose to rebel against God. I have inherited their fallen nature along with all its consequences. All of nature was affected by sin.

A93: Before God created this earth, He made a plan to rescue people if they chose to sin.

A94: Even if I don't choose to follow Jesus, God still loves me and does everything possible to save me.

A95: God the Son, Jesus, became truly human so He could save me from my sins. Jesus' death defeated Satan; He give me victory over sin.

A96: God has provided everything needed to restore people to His image when Jesus comes again.

Surrender

Y10: I am sure that whatever God asks me to do can be accomplished through His strength
Y21: After I ask the Holy Spirit to lead me, I wait to hear or see what God wants me to do
Y29: I enjoy humbly doing my best for God in ordinary daily activities.
Y32: I support Gods work by paying tithe on what I earn or am given.
Y34: What I watch and listen to shows others that God is important to me.
Y37: I enjoy giving my time to help people through my church's ministries.
Y41: I prayerfully obey what I learn through Bible study even when it is difficult.

A4: I am sure that whatever God asks me to do can be accomplished with His help.
A17: My words and actions show my commitment to obey what I learn through Bible study, even when it is difficult.
A32: What I watch and listen to shows others that God is important to me.
A33: I enjoy humbly doing my best for God in ordinary daily activities.
A34: After I ask the Holy Spirit to lead me, I wait to hear or see what God wants me to do.
A101: I support God's work by paying tithe on what I earn or am given.
A102: I enjoy giving my time or money to help people through my church's ministries.

Intimacy

Y8: By God's grace, I am able to forgive others who hurt me
Y13: Spending time with Jesus helps me understand who I am and why I'm here.
Y30: I pray for those I love, asking God to help them grow spiritually
Y46: My faith in God shapes what is important to me.
Y62: God created the weekly seventh-day Sabbath as a time to reconnect with Him.

A7: Spending time with God helps me understand who I am and why I'm here.
A14: By God's grace, I am able to forgive others who hurt me.
A19: My faith in God shapes what is important to me.
A35: I pray for those I love asking God to help them grow spiritually.
A89: God created the weekly seventh-day Sabbath as a time to deepen my relationship with Him.

Witnessing

Y14: I enjoy talking with one or more of my friends about spiritual things.
Y17: I pray for people who don't know God yet
Y18: I have helped one or more of my friends understand what God is like.
Y19: When I discover how God is working somewhere, I enjoy telling my friends about it.
Y16: I am using my spiritual gifts to help tell others the story of Jesus
Y26: I have helped one or more people to grow stronger in their faith in God.
Y27: I encourage my friends to join me in doing what the Bible teaches, wherever we are.
Y35: I invite friends to attend church or school religious activities with me.

Y40: I am willing to talk with people outside of my church family about my faith.
Y45: I am comfortable explaining what I believe about God if/when asked.

A13: I enjoy talking with one or more of my friends about spiritual things.
A16: I pray for people who don't know God yet.
A36: I invite friends to attend worship services or evangelistic meetings with me.
A103: I am willing to talk with people outside of my church family about my faith.
A104: I am comfortable explaining what I believe about God if/when asked.
A105: I am using my spiritual gifts to help tell others the story of Jesus.
A151: I help my friends understand what God is like.
A152: I help Christian colleagues to grow stronger in their faith in God.
A156: I encourage friends to join me in doing what the Bible teaches, wherever we are.
A157: When I discover how God is working somewhere, I enjoy telling my friends about it.

Body of Christ

Y6: I enjoy worshipping with others in my church
Y42: I encourage my friends to use their spiritual gifts to serve God.
Y43: The more I learn about Christ's mission, the more I want to be a part of God's family and work.
Y53: The church is God's family on earth, a community of faith in which many members, all equal in Jesus, join for worship, instruction and service.

A11: I enjoy worshipping with others in my church.
A18: The more I learn about Christ's character and mission, the more I want to be a part of God's family and work.
A97: The church is God's family on earth, a community of faith in which many members, all equal in Jesus, join for worship, instruction and service.
A159: I encourage or help church members to use their spiritual gifts to serve God.

Service

Y5: I show my love for my family by helping at home without being asked
Y12: I am kind to neighbors regardless of their age, culture, or religion
Y24: I willingly share what God gives me with others
Y36: I participate in activities that promote social justice or respectful care of people who are mistreated.
Y38: I try to help people who are unable to care for themselves, regardless of their age, culture, religion, or status.

A9: I show my love for my family by unselfishly seeking to meet their needs.
A15: I am kind to neighbors regardless of their age, culture, or religion.
A38: I participate in activities that promote social justice or respectful care of those who are mistreated.

A99: I try to help people who are unable to care for themselves, regardless of their age, culture, religion, or status.
A100: I choose to share what God has given me with those in need.

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