Brazilian Adventist Women And Their Needs: Toward Theological-Missiological Education With An Initial Curriculum Proposal

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ABSTRACT

BRAZILIAN ADVENTIST WOMEN AND THEIR NEEDS: TOWARD THEOLOGICAL-MISSIOLOGICAL EDUCATION WITH AN INITIAL CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

by

Hanny Brcic Guzman

Adviser: Bruce Bauer
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: BRAZILIAN ADVENTIST WOMEN AND THEIR NEEDS: TOWARD THEOLOGICAL-MISSIOLOGICAL EDUCATION WITH AN INITIAL CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

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Problem

Brazilian Adventist women have had limited access to theological-missiological education, partly because of a hierarchical, male-centered biblical interpretation of gender relations as applied to female teaching and learning experiences within the community of faith. Although the church intends to involve women in a kind of ministry that assumes a hierarchical paradigm, this remediative action is limited to motivation, outreach, and Christian piety.

Method

This theological-missiological non-formal curricular intervention provides access to theological education as well as role models for women in the church. It attempts to transform this restrictive scenario by the interpretation of the perspective and values of the biblical text as it
relates to the church and society. The intervention proposes to enhance the formation of female leadership at the grassroots through a curriculum composed of modules on God and human needs, biblical spirituality, worldview, and leadership.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that an accessible, God-centered, transformative, and comprehensive theological-missiological education may respond to the educational and human needs of women in the SDA Church. This intervention suggests that broad implementation of the proposed curriculum would have a positive impact on the problem of female theological illiteracy through the uncovering of theological, cultural, and sociological assumptions toward the formulation of a biblical and balanced view of human nature, human needs, and the human desire to know God and everything else in relation to Him.
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A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Hanny Breic Guzman
October 2015
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To my husband, Elmer.

To my daughter, Victoria.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANE  Ancient Near East
CA   Capability Approach
ESV  English Standard Version
GAD  Gender and Development
I/C  Income/Consumption
NASB New American Standard Bible
PLP  Personal Life Plan
SAD  South American Division
SDA  Seventh-day Adventist
SE   Social Exclusion
TOSC Theology of Ordination Study Committee
UN   United Nations
WID  Women in Development
WM   Women’s Ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Ministry Context

Even though women make up the majority of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in Brazil, they are underrepresented in leadership roles and ministry. This lacuna may be explained by ecclesiastical theological presuppositions that become explicit in the structure and organization of the church. This reality is partly caused by the fact that the SDA residential seminaries in Brazil, until 2014, not only enrolled few female theology students (G. Araújo, 2014, p. 114), but appointed close to zero female theology-related professors.

Elliston (1996) contends that the equipping of the church may require more diversity and cooperation in missiological education, and says in regard to faculty selection: “If the pattern of selecting faculty from Caucasian men continues, even though they may have the higher academic credentials, the diversity needed among the emerging missiologists will be threatened” (p. 249). His observation could also be applied to the Brazilian state of affairs in theological-missiological education in regard to women as teachers of theological disciplines.

The lack of female theology teachers to serve as role models in Brazil may inhibit female prospective students from seeking formal residential theological education. Other cultural and theological assumptions also may discourage women from becoming
students of theology (BRC South American Division, 2014), since these assumptions inevitably will limit their prospective careers in significant ways compared to their male counterparts.

And yet the study of theology is a privilege not only of the clergy, but also of the members of the church, without distinction in regard to gender. Winter (1996) argues that missiological education for lay people “outranks the strategic importance of training professional missionaries” (p. 169). So, a church’s educational emphasis on lay women is even more important in places where women always function as laity.

**Statement of the Problem**

Due to cultural and theological assumptions, women have had limited access to theological-missiological formal education within the Brazilian SDA Church. This is indicated by the small number of female teachers and students of theology within residential theological seminaries. Since the way forward in theological-missiological education for women finds this contextual hindrance, other venues of access to theological-missiological education should be sought.

**Statement of the Task**

The task of this project is to develop a non-formal theological-missiological educational intervention for Brazilian SDA lay women, by designing an initial curriculum for the purpose of enhancing women’s experience of God, self-improvement, and service. Although non-formal education can be considered less rigorous, it is nonetheless an efficient way to extend access to women who otherwise would be marginalized.
Delimitations of the Project

The scope of this project was limited in several ways. First, the nature of this Doctor of Ministry document does not require the implementation and evaluation of the intervention. However, I provide a handbook that includes an evaluation survey of this non-formal curriculum in the Appendix. Second, the curriculum favors modules that are theological and missiological (i.e., God and Human Needs; Biblical Spirituality; Worldview; Leadership) instead of exegetical and historical. This practical orientation makes the curriculum open-ended for the purpose of responding to local needs. Third, the literature about women in the Brazilian SDA Church is scarce, so I used sources that describe Adventist women in the northern hemisphere. Although inferences from the northern context may not always be relevant in the southern context, many times these parallel studies are useful in assessing the situation of Brazilian Adventist women. Fourth, although DMin projects usually are applied in local church contexts, my proposed curriculum has Brazil as a broader horizon based on the nature of my problem—the lack of access to theological-missiological education for Brazilian SDA women. In this way, generalizations are used to interpret major issues and basic contours that describe Brazilian women in the church and society, from which the curriculum will be designed.

Precedent Curricula Previously Employed

This review of precedent curricula surveys parallel studies referring to similar issues in different contexts, and helps in the elaboration of questions and patterns related to solving the main research problem, namely, Brazilian SDA women’s limited access to theological-missiological education.

Although many theological educational projects exist in a diversified format, the
Theological Education by Extension (TEE) movement attained momentum in the sixties, and still has credibility in some parts of the world. Kinsler (2008) contends that emphasis on access is the key point of the movement, where women and the poor usually do not have access to education in general, and theological education in particular.

Women have traditionally been marginalized from theological education, and they have largely been limited to ministries with women and children, reinforcing sexism and patriarchy in the churches. Decentralized theological education can readily open the doors of theological education and ministry to women as well as men, though the full participation of women often requires a whole range of shifts in orientation, vision, and practice. (Kinsler, 2008, p. 9)

Kinsler suggests that access is the key point to empower church members, and this means decentralization, diversification, and democratization of education to those who have been in the margins. An example of TEE applied in a SDA context is Shepherd’s (1985) MA thesis *A Proposal for Theological Education by Extension for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Malawi*, where he provides access to theological education for ministerial training in that context.

Another study by Douglas (2008, p. 4) proposes a curriculum to equip women’s ministry to fit within the simple church model setting in the North American context. She argues that the need to transition away from a program-based ministry is the most important issue facing women’s ministry in the Baptist denomination. Douglas evaluates the program-based ministry model:

These programs may not be orchestrated to achieve a specific goal or purpose, but rather serve as opportunities for women to experience personal growth, fun, food, and fellowship. Women experience many noble things through these programs. Some will come to know Christ and some will experience spiritual growth, but the traditional women’s ministry lacks intentionality in moving women through the process of discipleship. (p. 23)
She claims that this curriculum can effect a change from a program-based paradigm to a simple church paradigm, and her criticism is directed toward the lack of intentionality and articulation in the process of discipleship of women.

Another study by Fareed-Hardy (2014) proposes the implementation of a curriculum of discipleship, biblical knowledge, and finances for women in a particular African context. She describes discipleship for women in the developing world as critical due to the high rate of church growth and the crucial role that women play in their families in these societies. Fareed-Hardy says, “The women in the Guild [Kenya] began to see themselves in the Bible and applied that to change some societal practices that were harmful, such as circumcision” (p. 128). She suggests that discipleship could enhance other broader aspects of life, such as literacy training.

In a similar way, Coffelt (2006) argues for “transforming” or “rewriting” women’s personal stories through transformational narrative shaping. He uses a non-formal curriculum with techniques from coaching, applied among Caucasian women in the Assemblies of God denomination in North America.

In an evaluation of the theological curriculum and its fitness for women in selected evangelical residential seminaries in the United States, Green’s (2002) study revealed necessary changes to the seminary environment, pedagogical approach, and traditional curriculum design. Her study concludes that although the content aspect of the curriculum should not be changed, the approaches to teaching, learning, and delivery should be modified (Green, 2002, p. 263). Flexible delivery methods through night and weekend courses would make theological education available to women in various stages of life (Green, 2002, p. 268). Together with Sandler, Silverberg, and Hall (1996), Green
advocates for increasing the number of women faculty in residential seminaries for mentoring and as role models for women. This injunction is backed up by Titus 2:3-4.

Bohn’s (1981) dissertation evaluates necessary institutional changes in residential theological education due to the influx of women into seminaries in the 1980s. She verifies that the lack of women professors points to the absence of role models for female seminary students (pp. 178-179).

Another previous curriculum relevant to the present study is Leadership Certification, provided by the Women’s Ministries department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is a four-level program that requires a minimum of 10 hours of training per level. The lessons of the curriculum cover a variety of topics (e.g., leadership, Christian ministry, and Bible classes as they relate to women), and the purpose is to provide information and skills for leading women’s ministries. Nonetheless, although the curriculum often refers to the Bible with a practical orientation, it is not a theological or missiological curriculum for women (“Women’s Ministries Department and Ministerial Association,” 2007, p. 56).

These selected previous studies highlight major issues addressed by these authors: first, a concern for access to theological education through decentralization, diversification, and democratization of learning; second, a tendency toward simplification of women’s ministries by avoiding the program-based paradigm; third, a strong emphasis on discipleship and practical theology; fourth, the need to increase the number of women faculty; and fifth, the need for pedagogical adaptation in order to fit women’s needs.

**Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study is action-research—the application of
theory in a given ministry arena (Elliston, 2011, p. 22), making this an applied missiological study (p. 5).

The proposed project functions as an intervention addressing the observed needs found in the targeted ministry context, interpreted through the theoretical foundation (Vyhmeister, 2008, p. 163). This theoretical foundation is informed by other disciplines as well as theology, for “missiological research depends on a variety of methods and often depends on a multimethodological and/or interdisciplinary approach” (Elliston, 2011, p. xxv).

The validity and complementarity of multidisciplinary research depend on the interaction, articulation, description, and evaluation of three aspects of missiology: the biblical text, the missional or instructional context, and the community of faith (Van Engen, 1996, p. 219; Elliston, 2011, p. 4; Guy, 1999, p. 225).

![Figure 1](image)

*Figure 1*. The three realms of theological-missiological research. Adapted from “Tripartite Nature of Theology of Mission” (Van Engen, 1996, p. 21).
These three realms shown in Figure 1—biblical text (Chapter 2), community of faith (Chapter 3), and instructional context (Chapter 4)—correspond to the foundations of this project. The “biblical text” corresponds to the theological reflection about women and education as it relates to women’s theological-missiological education; the “community of faith” corresponds to the Seventh-day Adventist Church—the inner culture—and its view on Adventist women and how the church has ministered to their needs through women’s ministries; and the “instructional context” corresponds to the theoretical and contextual frameworks of women in society—the broader culture. The theoretical framework intends to address the issues of gender and poverty, whereas the contextual framework addresses the issues faced by women in Brazilian society.

The instructional context serves to profile the targeted audience—Brazilian women—and many aspects of their lives. In this task, I choose to interpret the broader context through the interpretative lenses of poverty and women’s needs. Although this hermeneutic finds a home in liberation theologies (Gutiérrez, 1973), I do not share their assumptions.

After explaining what I mean by these three realms, it is necessary to properly relate them in order to avoid the devaluing of Scriptures (biblical text) when faced by culture (instructional context) and tradition (community of faith). From a SDA perspective, the biblical text should have priority and authority in the interpretation of the context and of the church, instead of a three-polar view of these sources (Guy, 1999). In this way, the text should correspond to the entire canon (Canale, 2001), instead of crediting authority only to a limited aspect of revelation, namely, the gospel (Guy, 1999, 225; Küng, 1988, pp. 166-168).
Research Questions

The guiding questions for this research concern the relationship between the three realms: biblical text, community of faith, and instructional context. I adapted four questions suggested by Elliston (2011, p. 4): “What is the biblical and theological standard about women and education?” (Chapter 2); “What are the SDA perspectives and values on women?” (Chapter 3); “What is the social profile and situation of Brazilian women?” (Chapter 4); and “What is the relationship between the perspective and values of the biblical text as they relate to the church and society?” (Christian evaluation in Chapter 4 and conclusion).

Definition of Terms

Although authors may interpret these terms differently throughout the text, a basic overview of their specialized meanings is provided at the outset.

Educational Terms

Curriculum means a “running course.” In education, it refers to the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course. Depending on how broadly educators employ the term, curriculum can also refer to the knowledge and skills, learning standards, and learning objectives. Although a curriculum is usually part of formal education, it has also been used in non-formal modes.

Development is a systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge to meet specific objectives or requirements. It also can mean an extension of the theoretical or practical aspects of a concept, design, discovery, or invention. Moreover, it is a process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and
environmental factors and their interactions. Although all the definitions above describe development, I will use the term as Kuhn (2005) uses it: “Development is a process that enables a person/community to improve and/or meet their essential and non-essential needs (economic, political, cultural, mental, emotional, physical, social and spiritual)” (p. 3).

*Formal, non-formal, and informal* are possible settings/modes of theological education that refer to the conceptualization of the structure that reflects the identity and scope of the educational program. Young (1996) describes formal education as functioning within an established system, seeking recognition and certification of accomplishments, conforming to external standards, and usually in-residency. Non-formal education exists outside the established social system (accreditation), yet has intentionality and flexibility of methods, curriculum and access time, geography, and environment. Cannell (2006) argues that non-formal education may be certified and successfully appropriated in a church setting (p. 323). Informal education has no constraints from social systems, recognition, or structure, but rather spontaneously occurs in common life situations.

*Program, project, and training.* A *program* is a portfolio comprised of multiple projects that are managed and coordinated as one unit with the objective of achieving (often intangible) outcomes and benefits for an organization. A *project* is a temporary entity established to deliver specific (often tangible) outputs in line with predefined time, cost, and quality constraints. A project should always be defined, executed, and evaluated. *Training* is teaching, or developing in oneself or others, skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies. Training has specific goals of improving one’s
capability, capacity, productivity, and performance. However, in this document these terms are used interchangeably.

Gender Terms

_Egalitarianism_ refers to those who favor equality in some respect. In the discussion about gender, it refers to equality between men and women. Although there are gradations of egalitarianist views on gender relations, the basic contour is that of equality and bilateral mutual subordination and co-dependency, instead of unilateral subordination.

_Female_ is a biological term denoting sex (bearing of child); however, this term is used interchangeably with _woman_ when it refers to humans.

_Feminism_ is a multidisciplinary approach to sex and gender equality understood through social theories and political activism. However, historically, feminism has evolved from the critical examination of inequality between the sexes to a more nuanced focus on the social and performative constructions of gender and sexuality.

_Gender_ is the state of being male or female, and the term is typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is used in this research to refer to the cultural and social differences between men and women.

_Hierarchicalism_, also known as complementarianism, is the view that argues for the subordination of woman to man in society, home, and the church. There are also gradations in this interpretation (e.g., those who believe that women should be subordinated at home and in church, but not in society, etc.).

_Patriarchalism_ and related words refer to the rule of the father over his children, and not necessarily the assumed authority of a husband over his wife. Although some
argue that patriarchalism should be normative for its existence in the Bible, others argue that patriarchalism reflects a sinful reality that is descriptive and not normative (Maddox, 1987). In this document, following R. Davidson (2015), I use patriarchalism in a remediative, non-ideal way; and yet it should be highlighted that the biblical description of the patriarchal narratives point to significant differences as compared with other cultures of Ancient Near East (ANE) cultures.

*Woman* means a female human. The term *woman* is usually reserved for an adult. However, it is also sometimes used to identify a female human, regardless of age. Some definitions may also refer to a person’s gender identity instead of their sex. The term in this research is only applied to female humans.

**Organization of the Study**

This project document was developed in six chapters. The first chapter problematizes and defines the methodological procedures of the task at hand. After describing the ministry context of the problem, it describes the task: to develop a theological-missiological education program with an initial curriculum for women.

The second chapter delineates factors that influence the proposed theological-missiological education of women taught by women. It deals with theological issues of women’s authority in teaching in the church, by assessing hierarchicalism and patriarchy in the Scriptures. Then, it reflects on issues related to teaching in Scripture. It also defines *theological, missiological,* and *education,* generating a conceptual framework to design a curriculum whose values, orientation, and goals are consistent with its nature (Chapter 5 and Appendix).

The third chapter describes the context of the community of faith, which is the
subculture in which the issue of women is interpreted. It examines how the church assesses women in different roles of life (wife, mother, and professional worker). Then, the chapter describes and evaluates how the SDA Church has ministered to women through a survey of the Women’s Ministry Department.

The fourth chapter considers the broader cultural context through the analysis of views on the development of women and their needs. It surveys the major approaches in assessing the struggle of women in society and the major approaches to defining poverty. Then, the chapter documents a socioeconomic profile of Brazilian women. This knowledge of the target audience for the curricular intervention is central to the development of the curriculum, for “learning to know oneself and learning about one’s learners and their social contexts are never-ending tasks for the responsible educator” (Ward, 1996, p. 11).

The fifth chapter proposes an initial theological-missiological curriculum, with its parts and articulation of the process and implementation, functioning as an intervention for the problem at hand—women have had limited access to theological-missiological formal education within the Brazilian SDA Church. This curriculum seeks to develop women, starting with education, with the purpose of enabling them to experience God more fully and increase their personal capabilities and God-given talents in order to become servants in the world. The Appendix contains 20 lessons from the curriculum, including a teacher’s overview, teaching plan, handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and survey evaluation.
The sixth chapter concludes this action-research by reflecting on the need for extending more educational access to women, and makes realistic recommendations that could empower SDA women in Brazil.

The next chapter looks at the theological reflection that functions as one of the three bases for this envisioned theological-missiological education.
CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEOLOGICAL-MISSIOLOGICAL EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Introduction

This proposal for women’s theological-missiological education responds to the basic problem of this research: Brazilian SDA women have limited access to theological-missiological education. With such a limitation, this chapter delineates some factors that may influence the dynamics of theological education of women as taught by women in the church. This chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first part, I provide a theological reflection on issues related to women as teachers in the church and the assumed ideas that may encourage or hinder their ministry. Second, I reflect on teaching through a biblical survey of both testaments, then construct the meaning of theological-missiological education by means of a reflection on theology, missiology, and education.

Issues Related to Women as Teachers in the Church

The interpretation of biblical texts that sustains the subordination of women to men has been often used to limit their involvement, ministry and teaching within the church. The debate, within evangelicalism, is polarized between egalitarians (those who interpret full equality between genders and accept the sole headship of Christ) and hierarchicalists (or complementarians: those who argue that women should not exercise
authority over men based on a series of theological constructs such as the headship principle and gender specification for pastors), but there is a spectrum of alternatives that adopt elements in between these two positions.

The nature of the proposed curriculum that I am envisioning in Chapter 5—theological-missiological education for women taught by women—finds biblical validation, I contend, within both hierarchicalist and egalitarian paradigms. Hierarchicalists, using a literalist hermeneutic, reject the idea that women may teach men (1 Tim 2:12: “But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet”\(^1\)), but in this view nothing prohibits them from teaching other women. This claim is further supported by the pastoral injunction that older women ought to encourage, model, and teach younger women in aspects of family, behavior, and whatever is good (Titus 2:3-4).

However, after valuing arguments from both theological camps, I have constructed this curriculum on a theological foundation that favors major aspects of egalitarianism, which is closer to the divine Edenic ideal, as consistent with the Scriptural trajectory and biblical hermeneutics (Moskala, 2015). In addition, this egalitarian interpretation is consistent with the missionary context that invites new initiatives to educate and minister to women. This theological reflection does not argue for the ordination of women to pastoral ministry (although this claim is a logical corollary), but for the necessary and antecedent step of theological-missiological education for lay women in the church. Therefore, instead of debating the theological dilemma already

\(^1\) All biblical quotations are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB) unless otherwise indicated.
rehearsed to exhaustion during the 2010-15 quinquennium in Adventist venues, I will
document selected factors that may influence the interpretation of women as possessing
ecclesiastical teaching authority.

A Hierarchical View of God, Humanity,
and the World

The absence of female pastors and teachers of theology within some parts of the
SDA Church is usually justified by the adoption of a particular theological construct
regarding God and humans, namely, the subordination or the hierarchization of reality. I
suggest that these hierarchical views on God and humanity fit better into a worldview that
sees all of reality (the world) in a hierarchical manner.

In regard to a hierarchical understanding of the Godhead, some interpreters view
ontological hierarchy within the inner Trinitarian life in which God-Christ-Man-Woman
relate to each other in top-down subordination (1 Cor 11:3). However, this interpretation
(e.g., “eternal generation of the Son”) is rooted in Greek philosophy. Canale (2005)
ascertains that the dynamic of God-Son-Spirit relations does not reflect “statements about
God’s reality but about God’s life and mission” (p. 93). Rodríguez (2014) suggests that
the pre-fall subordination of women backed by the hierarchical view of God is a
misappropriation of evangelical theology introduced into Adventist theology (p. 10).

In regard to humanity, some interpreters view hierarchical structure as tinting the
relationship between man and woman. It is argued that woman is subordinated to man
because of the following elements in Genesis 1-3: (a) order of creation, (b) divine address
to man, (c) woman was created for the sake of man as his helpmate, (d) origin, (e)
naming, and (f) the judgment after the fall (Gen 3:16). Nonetheless, R. Davidson (2015)
persuasively builds a case for full equality as the creation ideal, with the submission of a
woman to her husband (not between men and women in general) as a remediative
element within this sinful world. Yet, the gospel bids the return to the Edenic ideal.

In regards to the world, few Adventist interpreters entertain Platonic arguments
for interpreting reality in a hierarchical way (as found in the Roman Catholic adoption of
neo-Platonism), although some Adventists support hierarchical structures of created
reality (e.g., different types of angels), by inferring an ideal, not remediative hierarchy.
Yet this line of argument is speculative. It seems that a hierarchical view of reality
through a metaphysical neo-Platonism would be the logical trajectory of the hierarchical
interpretation of God and man (Pabst, 2012). This hierarchy of all beings is explicitly
endorsed by the Thomistic pyramid of being, where God as pure spiritual being is located
on the top, while matter as evil stays at the bottom of the pyramid (Bonsor, 2003, p. 67).

Simply put, one’s view on God impacts the interpretation of all elements of reality
(Canale, 2005, p. 75). It seems that Adventism is clearing up all possible hierarchical
interpretations of God; the Fundamental Belief of Seventh-day Adventists Amendment
(2015) stated that “the qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are
also those of the Father” (p. 53), clarifying that there is no necessary hierarchy or
modalism within the trinity. In regard to men, the arguments of servant leadership and
full equality with obvious biological distinctions are more persuasive and theologically
consistent. In regard to the world, Adventists deny the neo-Platonic interpretation of
reality through metaphysics, by replacing the interpretation of reality through the great
controversy, sanctuary, and covenant motifs. Although a majority of Adventist
interpreters view God and the world without the lenses of hierarchy, some still hold to a hierarchical interpretation of humanity.

**Biblical Patriarchy and the Value of Women**

While feminist interpreters tend to discredit any form of patriarchy as a means of female oppression, one must be slow to draw such conclusions. Recently, J. Davidson (2015), among others, proposed “a much-needed corrective to previous perceptions of canonical women” through a close reading of biblical narratives (p. 122). Close attention to the text has produced a new interpretation of patriarchy acknowledging the fact that the biblical narratives include prominent women as matriarchs.

This approach accepts biblical patriarchy as part of revelation instead of rejecting it via the modern criticism of ancient culture. Trible (1973), for example, contends for a hermeneutics of depatriarchalizing. She sustains her claim with literary arguments from Gen 2-3 and Song of Songs, similar to those used by Adventists who are pro-women’s ordination. Trible maintains that although biblical religion affirms patriarchalism, this does not indicate or legitimate the oppression or submission of women in general.

And yet this “depatriarchalization” agenda tends to denigrate the institution of patriarchy with a wrong interpretation of the remediative situation and definition of biblical authority. Unlike Trible, R. Davidson (2015) attempts to transcend egalitarians and hierarchicalists by expanding the meaning of biblical authority to servant-leadership—as an “inverted hierarchy, in which servanthood and submission of the leaders . . . takes place of top-down, ‘chain-of-command leadership’” (p. 168). The task that R. Davidson envisions is neither to depatriarchalize, nor to elevate woman by
reducing the authority of man. Instead, Davidson attempts to elevate both men and women to the task of self-denying servanthood.

Besides this paradigm shift in servanthood authority, R. Davidson contrasts biblical and ANE patriarchy by demonstrating that biblical patriarchy values women. For example, the imperative that “a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife” (Gen 2:24) contrasts with the common practice of patriarchal society that rules that a woman should leave her mother and father. R. Davidson (2015) assesses: “But for the husband to ‘leave’ was revolutionary!” (p. 154). This qualitative differentiation between biblical and ANE patriarchy highlights that mutual submission between man and woman was the divine ideal, instead of the common social practice of domination of woman through male leadership.

R. Davidson (2015) further clarifies the meaning of *patriarchy*:

The institution of patriarchy (“the rule by the father”) was wisely arranged by God in His condescension to the human fallen condition, as a temporary remedial and redemptive measure to bring about unity and harmony and integrity in the home in the midst of a sinful world. Patriarchy, as intended by God, was not evil in itself but rather one of those God-ordained remedial provisions instituted after the Fall, but not the ultimate divine ideal. (p. 168)

Similar to the remedial interpretation of women’s judgment in Genesis 3:16, patriarchy is also remedial, and not an ideal social structure. This is confined primarily to the rule of the father over his children, instead of the assumed authority of the husband over his wife. The biblical narrative of women often presents them in a positive way as authoritative matriarchs within the pervasive emphasis of a male-dominated society (Dennis, 1994).

Furthermore, R. Davidson (2007) argues that the authority of a man over a woman in Israel is never extrapolated to a mandate for male leadership over women in
public society. The OT has many examples of women in authoritative positions, for example, judges and prophets (pp. 223-288).

In sum, the institution of biblical patriarchalism is remedial and colored by positive features when contrasted with the cultural context of ancient Israel. Women in the Bible are dignified as remarkable matriarchs in such a way that biblical patriarchy should not be rejected, but appreciated, to the extent that the canon points toward a redemptive trajectory and return to the Edenic ideal.

At this point, having reflected on some factors regarding the nature of women, I will turn to some factors regarding “teaching” that will inform my overall vision of a theological-missiological education of women taught by women.

**Theological Reflection on Teaching**

A Comprehensive Extension of Teaching:

The Meaning of *Torah*

The task of women educating other women in the church has to deal not only with the question of gender as delineated above, but also with the biblical view of education.

Fundamental to the nature of Scripture is the authoritative nature of teaching (2 Tim 3:16: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching”). Block (2014) has pointed out that where *torah* has been interpreted as “law” or “legal material” corresponding to the Greek term *nomos* in late Judaism, its definition in ancient Judaism is not necessarily so; there, *torah* is better interpreted as “instruction,” “teaching,” and “way of life.” He raises questions on the interpretation of *torah* as primarily referring to the law, rules, and obligations of Judaism of the period of ancient Israel into the NT (p. 84). Moving away from this legalist and juridical understanding of Israel’s religion,
Block suggests that Israel’s religion is not a law code but a covenantal relational foundation involving a comprehensive view of life.

*Torah* as teaching and instruction informs theological education as relational and involving all aspects of life, unlike interpretations that argue that spirituality and religion should be something interior, mystical, or merely defined in spiritual ways. Rather, religion, to be *biblical* religion, is a concrete thing defined by all aspects of the being and doing of human life.

This religious education includes the personal, domestic, and community levels, as noted in Deuteronomy 6:4-11. The personal is shown in “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (6:5); the domestic is shown in the teaching of children (6:7); and the community aspect is emphasized by the inscriptions on the doorposts of the house (Block, 2014, p. 115).

Block (2014) comments on the pedagogy of spiritual and religious things in ancient Israel:

Rather than relegating instructional worship to the classroom, or compartmentalizing it to ten minutes of family devotions in the morning or evening, or assigning the task to professionals (like Levites), he [Moses] emphasized that true family worship should happen spontaneously, as adults seize opportunities to teach the Torah, refresh the memories of God’s grace, and inculcate sound theological convictions and commitments. It takes a village to teach and model faith before children. In a community of faith, worship and the spiritual nurture of children are everybody’s duty. (p. 115)

This quotation emphasizes that matters related to religion should not be taught using only one controlled domain of schooling or a one-method-fits-all approach, but that it should be a comprehensive experience, including all of life, of the individual in the community of faith.
Teaching in the Ministry of Jesus

Teaching has a central role in the Gospels. The Greek term didasko appears 95 times in the NT, of which two-thirds occur in the Gospels and the first part of Acts. Other forms of the didasko word appear throughout the NT (Rengstorf, 1964, p. 138). Besides proclaiming and healing, teaching was one of the three major functions of Jesus (Matt 4:23). Jesus taught not only in the synagogue (Mark 9:35), but anywhere that he had the opportunity, as in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1).

“The whole teaching of Jesus is with a view to the ordering of life with reference to God and one’s neighbour” (Rengstorf, 1964, p. 140). Jesus did not emphasize only the intellectual capabilities, but focused on all aspects of human will.

Jesus’ assumption is that the act of teaching does not belong only to the teacher-student relation, but comes from God himself. Jesus is only partaking in an activity that is already exercised by the Father (John 8:28) and the Holy Spirit (John 14:26, 1 John 2:27). So, one could rightly infer that to teach is a divine activity, for the Scriptures affirm that all the members of the Trinity engage in teaching activity.

Teaching in the Church

This section is important to the present study, for teaching in the Christian church is the locus that this project calls home. The term doctrine, from the Latin doctrina and the Greek didaskalia, means simply the teaching or instruction of the church; and the church teaches what it lives, worships, and believes (Kapic, 2012, p. 23).

The common problem of the dichotomy between theory and practice makes it almost two different worlds: the realm of theology and the realm of the church; theology and application. Vanhoozer (2014) uses a metaphor of drama and theater in order to point
out that church doctrine is much more than a cognitive system of beliefs. It is something to be performed, acted upon. “Doctrine is a special kind of teaching that instructs the head, orients the heart, and guides the hand. It tells what we should believe (credenda), what we may hope (sperenda), and what we should do (agenda)” (Vanhoozer, 2014, p. 26).

During the life of Jesus and in the Acts of the Apostles, the disciples had already started to teach (Mark 6:30), and it was again mandated by the risen Christ that they continue such activity in the Great Commission (Matt 28:20). Acts emphasizes that Paul continued this activity (Acts 18:11), and that the early church saw the teaching ministry as something that needed dedication (Rom 12:7).

The Pastoral Epistles demonstrate emphasis on teaching, as it reflects the reality of local churches. They qualify: (a) the reliability of the teaching as Paul frequently refers to “other doctrines” (Gr., eterodidaskalein) (1 Tim 1:3, 5; 4:1-5); and (b) the reliability of the teacher (1 Tim 2:9-15; 3:1-7; 2 Tim 2:2; 4:2; Titus 2:4). Paul is concerned that the right teacher speaks the right teaching. His concern and advice to his partners in ministry are modeled on his own example, as he considered himself a teacher to everybody with the goal of making each individual complete in Christ (Col 1:28). Earlier he had already challenged people to be his imitators (1 Cor 4:16). In addition, teaching is a major gift in the NT lists of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:8 [reference to wisdom and knowledge]; Eph 4:11; Rom 12:7), pointing out that the edification of the church depends on the exercising of this office (1 Tim 3:2, “able to teach”; Titus 1:9, “give instruction”), and that the Holy Spirit himself distributes such gifts.

The debate on women exercising the office of teachers often depends on the
interpretation of 1 Timothy. Whereas hierarchicalists (complementarians) find in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 a list of qualifications that may be interpreted as gender-exclusive by using a literalist hermeneutics, others interpret this list of pastoral qualifications as pointing to the importance of the character of the overseer. Cosaert (2015) assesses the context of the Ephesian church as facing a serious heresy (1 Tim 1:3-4), in which women were partaking. These women were disrupting the church service and probably claiming ideas of female superiority and dominance (2:12, 13), and Paul advised Timothy that these women should be quiet (2:11) and spend time learning instead of teaching, not because women should not teach, but because heretics or those who did not have the right doctrine should be students instead of teachers.

As Cosaert (2015) puts it, “They were not fit to teach because they were women, but because they had been deceived by the false teachers, just as Eve had been deceived by the alluring words of the serpent” (italics his) (p. 330). Although Paul refers to the creation account in 1 Timothy 2:13-15 with arguments about the order of creation and the deception of women, the inference for the submission of women is lacking in the text. Rather, v. 15 emphasizes the importance of women in the family bearing children as a way to correct the false doctrines of female elevation.

Whereas 1 Timothy 3:1-7 describes the qualifications of an overseer (Gr. *episkopes*), 3:8-13 describes the qualifications of deacons. Literalist interpreters argue that women should not exercise authority in the church because of three main objections (Cosaert, 2015).

The first objection is the interpretation of the indefinite pronoun *tis* as masculine in the text “If anyone [*tis*] aspires to the office of overseer, [he] desires a noble task” (3:1,
ESV). Cosaert (2015) argues that an exclusivist gender reading is lacking. Paul is commending the value of ministry and not the person.

The second objection concerns the requirement for overseers and deacons to be one-woman men (3:2, 12). Yet the fact that there are biblical precedents for deaconesses (e.g., Junia, Phoebe) demonstrates the gender inclusivity of this requirement for both deacons and overseers. The similar construction in 5:9 (one-man woman) demonstrates that the reading of “one-woman man” is an idiomatic expression instead of a literal reading. Also, this expression can be interpreted in many ways: married, monogamous, non-divorced/remarried, faithful, male. Cosaert (2015) favors the interpretation of “one-woman man” as faithful: “Requiring marital fidelity of church leaders not only affirms the institution of marriage . . . but it also affirms the importance of sexual purity as a prerequisite for those responsible for leading out in the life of the church” (p. 322).

This is further supported by the general emphasis on the qualifications as traits of character (self-controlled, prudent, gentle, not greedy) instead of duties (able to teach and rule their houses well). “The emphasis Paul places on virtue—not gifts and abilities—indicates that character is the most important criterion in the selection of spiritual leaders” (italics his) (Cosaert, 2015, p. 317).

The third objection is that someone must manage a household well (1 Tim 3:4, 5), and that this activity could only be done by a father and husband. Yet, although the article is masculine (v. 3: “he must be one who manages”), the Scriptures describe the management of the house as being for both women and men (Prov 31:10-31; 1 Tim 5:14).

Rather than disqualifying women to teach or to be overseers, the pastoral qualifications described in 1 Tim 3:1-7 point to the importance of the character of the
person, his or her ability to teach, and family management. Any literalist interpretation becomes aberrant, as Cosaert (2015) hypothetically imagines. If one is consistent in literalism, no woman could preach or teach from the pulpit, or teach theology, but also no single man could be a pastor, or one without children, or without believing children could seek the function of a pastor (Titus 1:6).

I have attempted to describe biblical insights about the importance of teaching in OT Israel and the NT church. It has been demonstrated that teaching is central in biblical revelation, and that it is an activity exercised not only by leaders, but by God himself. I have demonstrated that although some interpret the Bible as stating that women cannot teach in some circles, a proper interpretation of the text highlights that the prohibition depends not on gender, but on character and knowledge of the skill or content. After surveying biblical insights that may shed light on the task of teaching, I will seek to define the theological-missiological education that I am envisioning in this curriculum.

The Meaning of Theological-Missiological Education

The phrase *theological-missiological education* assumes the meaning of instruction and learning about God (*theos*) and how he is involved in mission (*missio*). Even before women are granted access to theological education, one has to establish the possibility and validation of access to the knowledge of God itself; otherwise, theological education might be simply education about a myth, a construct, or an ecclesial tradition. So, I will define the tripartite aspects, reflecting on the meaning of theology, missiology, and education as they relate to my overall envisioned curriculum.
What is Theological in Theological-Missiological Education?

**Focus on God as the Goal of Education**

Any theological education has to first address the issue of the meaning of *theological* as it modifies *education*. The term *theology* comprises *Theos* (God) and *logos* (word/reason) in a genitival relation. Fiorenza and Galvin (1991) assert that this genitive could be read as a subjective genitive meaning “God’s own discourse” or an objective genitive meaning “human study about God” (p. 1:5). The later reading is preferred.

However, God may be interpreted differently depending on the assumptions of this conceptualization. Unlike traditional views, SDA theology attempts to build its view of God by means of exploring the inner logic of Scriptural thinking—of how God speaks, acts, and relates with humanity in the Scriptures (Gulley, 2011, p. 2:130). Gulley (2011) portrays God in covenantal relationality with an interactive character. He qualifies his own system: “It can be argued that my system is a qualified Arminian paradigm (issuing from a relational Trinity and not from a timeless God, as did the view of Arminius” (p. 2:550).

Assuming that Gulley’s notion of God—as covenantal relational instead of the immovable and impassible perfect being of classical theology—is right, how does this impact the meaning of the term *theological* in theological education? Some considerations are due.

If God is relational, he cannot be objectified as the subject matter of a discipline. Although *theology* is a “study about God,” that study at the same time affirms accessibility but does not reduce God to an object.
Two extremes must be avoided: at one extreme is emphasis on inaccessibility, as seen in apophatic theology, which contends that God can only be identified with negative language—in other words, what God is not, rather than what God is (Bonsor, 2003). On the other hand, the inaccessibility of liberal theology assumes the fideistic private belief in God, as noted in Scheleimacher and followers, who allow the Kantian metaphysical embargo to reduce the discourse on God to the realm of sentiments and private beliefs.

The strength of the apophatic view on God is the avoidance of conceptual idolatry, where God becomes a projection of man: theology becomes anthropology. Nonetheless, the weakness of apophatic theology is this notion of a distant and static God who is inaccessible and obscure, contrary to the evidence shown in the Scriptures. The strength of God as a private belief is the transference of access to God from the cognitive realm to the affective one, to the realm of values. However, here theology becomes just morality.

On the other extreme, God is accessed in a positivistic way, that is to say, as if God could be approached and understood fully through a literalistic and systematic apprehension of the words of Scripture; this view is common in fundamentalist theological camps. Siver (2003) observes that theology in modernity faces a catch-22. On the one hand, there is the risk of sacrificing the mystery of God through the objectivism found in fundamentalism. On the other hand, there is the risk of sacrificing belief in God through a method free of fideistic and private belief, as found in Scheleimacher (Siver, 2003, pp. 170-185).

My approach to theology affirms that God is accessible through the Scriptures, respecting their diverse genres and forms of communication, but the mode of
understanding is never final, complete, or exhaustive, for God is more than one can conceptualize. At the same time, God reveals enough about himself so that human beings may understand (cognitive realm), relate, and love him (affective realm).

The question, then, is restated: What is the meaning of theological in theological education? Kelsey (1992) poses the question with the answer in his book’s title To Understand God Truly: What’s Theological About a Theological School, and states that the goal of theological education makes it theological, namely, the goal of knowing God truly. Hence, he says that the most important thing is not the content, structure, or movement, but the goal.

Rather than . . . concentrating on questions about content (Which courses ought we to include in the curriculum?), structure (Which courses ought to be considered central and which more peripheral?), and movement (Which courses ought to be in the beginning, middle, and end of the course of study?), it would be more fruitful to concentrate on the question of the overarching goal of the course of study and the interests it generates to guide inquiry. (Kelsey, 1992, p. 211)

Kelsey (1992) argues that God cannot be studied directly, but that a community can try to understand God more truly by way of studying some other thing or things (p. 108). In my evaluation, Kelsey overlooks the witness of Scripture that God is accessed by his words, that whenever God speaks he makes himself present, and that humans can access whatever he spoke. Yet Kelsey’s emphasis on the goal of theology—to understand God truly—as what validates a theological education is correct.

Focus on the Interpretation of all Reality as it Relates to God

The fact that theology is the study of God and all things as they relate to him (Webster, 2009) makes theology an all-inclusive task. Farley (1988) rightly points out that theology is primarily an understanding and secondarily a discipline (pp. 64-65).
Theology involves the interpretation of situations under gospel (Farley, 2003, p. 144).

Broadly speaking, theological education requires the establishment of criteria for interpreting the world and its situations, hence the importance of worldview and interpretative materials (cf. Module 3 in the Appendix). At this point, I will turn to mission in theological-missiological education.

What is Missiological in Theological-Missiological Education?

The missiological aspect of theological education is the broader notion that human mission is part of the mission of God. Winter and Koch (2009) describe three kinds of missiologies: (a) intracultural (church growth), (b) interchurch (cross-cultural or intracultural), and (c) frontier missiology (mission to unreached groups) (p. 538). Although God has commissioned all kinds of efforts to bridge the gap to reach people, unfortunately many theological curricula still ignore missiological studies or make them peripheral, especially interchurch and frontier missiology.

Walls (1996) assesses the situation as the “parochialism of western theological education” (p. 18). Contrary to this parochialism, Rowen (1996) and Bosch (1991) argue that the coherence of theological education is missiology, instead of theology. Missiology assumes that God is revealed only in the task of his own mission. As Bosch (1991) puts it, “we are in need of a missiological agenda for theology, rather than just a theological agenda for mission” (p. 494).

Rowen (1996) further claims, “Missiology cannot be understood only as a subdiscipline within the field of practical theology. It is at the very center of the entire theological education enterprise” (p. 99). Rowen’s radical observation may not become a
reality. He suggests that mission may come from the periphery to the center in the theological map, and yet Rowen forgets that God is much more than the saving agent searching for humankind (*missio Dei*); in fact, he is the Creator. Yet, even if one does not agree with Rowen’s relocation of missiology to the center of theological education, one does not need to leave it on the periphery.

Walls (2002) asserts that this peripheral location of missiology and its lack of theological reflection are negative; he says, “Indeed, one is tempted to suggest that the missionary movement affected every department of scholarship—except theology” (p. 42). He further reflects on the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, which could still be valid, “The missionary failure has not been of the gospel, but of theology” (pp. 65, 256).

Rowen, Bosch, and Walls indicate the need for a theological education that takes into consideration missiology and its situational nature, which may amplify western theological values. Perhaps the awareness of different cultural contexts may empower theological education enough to avoid this so-called “western parochialism” (Walls, 2002). Perhaps Dulles (1985) is correct when he affirms that Seventh-day Adventism is becoming less fundamentalist as it becomes a world church (p. 77).

This survey on missiological education has indicated that missiology should inform the study of theology, and should be moved from the periphery to the center of theological education.

What is *Education* in Theological-Missiological Education?

*Education* is a broad and ambiguous term. Kelsey (1992) argues that the term should be replaced by “schooling,” while Farley (1988) argues for the terms “ordered-
learning” and “interpretation.” So, what is education if it is to be connected to the life of the church, of theology, and of mission? Farley (2003) says in his article “The Tragic Dilemma of Church Education”:

What is meant by an education in the service of faith? Education is itself neither religion nor faith but an undertaking in a community whose aims are the disciplining of various modes of interpretation already occurring in the life of that community. Because it is not faith, education is not itself a term for redemption. We expect too much of church education if we expect it to redeem religion. (pp. 128-129)

And yet, E. White—seminal thinker of the 19th century who influenced the shaping of the philosophy of Adventist education—elevates the status of education to the higher category of religious language, that is, the language of redemption. She says that “in the highest sense the work of education and redemption are one” (E. White, 1952b, p. 30).

Redemption and Transformation

Suárez (2012), a South American Adventist educator, observes that the correlation between education and redemption points to a cluster of biblical metaphors involving freedom, ransom, and exchange. In fact, these salvific metaphors elevate education to the holy of holies of religious discourse.

It seems that E. White (1952b) has a broader notion of education than Farley (1988) and Kelsey (1992) in regards to goals. While Kelsey maintains that theological education aims “to understand God truly,” and Farley maintains the importance of interpreting reality, E. White argues that the goal of education is to restore the image of God in humanity. She emphasizes that education is much more than cognition and interpretation: it is transformation.
Freedom and Autonomy

E. White (1952b) asserts that the image of God secures human freedom to think and do. The work of true education is to develop the power of thinking, by helping the youth to reason and reflect instead of being mere receptors of others’ thought.

Many other educational theorists develop the theme of autonomy and freedom from other points of view. For example, Marxist educator Paulo Freire (1970, p. 11) endorses autonomy based on human dignity and ethics. For him, autonomy is an essential human attribute, necessary for deliverance from oppression.

Freire (1970) argues for a socio-political-pedagogical autonomy that liberates from structures that oppress the person by restricting one’s freedom for self-determination. Release from these oppressive structures can only come by the praxis of and recognition of the need to fight for freedom. Among such oppressive structures, the educational structure is one of the power brokers that continues oppression. Freire’s analogies of education as a bank deposit, passive learning, and unilateral contribution in the teacher-student relationship are meaningful.

Unlike Freire, Knight (2006), an Adventist historian and educator from a theistic viewpoint, argues that the totality of autonomy tends to replace the divine for human standards. The goal of rebellion is life free of any external authority, where each becomes his or her own god. Knight would disagree with Freire’s view on totality of autonomy and freedom from oppressive structures; he considers that the realm of freedom truly exists only where the individual accepts the lordship of Jesus and rejects that of Satan (pp. 206-209).
E. White (1952b) declares that the teaching-learning process should be seen as much more than simple training or mental discipline. The objective of this process is “to send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breath of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions” (E. White, 1952b, p. 18). Suárez (2012) observes that the foundation of autonomy for E. White is the idea of critical thinking; humans become autonomous when they are free to think, without necessarily repeating formed speeches (p. 146). Freire (1970) would also agree with the importance of independent critical thinking.

Knight (2006) contends that humans should be able to think freely in an autonomous way because they are made in the image of God. This is the assumption of any responsible choice and spiritual decision. Similarly, E. White (1977) sustains that humans are created as free moral agents and their obedience is the result of their choice (pp. 331-332).

E. White, Knight, and Freire would agree that freedom and autonomy are necessary elements in the educational process. While E. White and Knight sustain that this libertarian aspect of education is grounded on the fundamental assumption of human nature as interpreted from the viewpoint of the image of God, Freire argues that freedom and autonomy are grounded in a humanistic understanding of life as it is interpreted from the viewpoint of the nature of man, free from the oppressive structures of society. E. White, Knight, and Freire settle in a libertarian theological camp (emphasis on free will) and not in a compatibilist theological camp (emphasis on divine sovereignty). This theological orientation of emphasis on human autonomy and agency colors how education should proceed in terms of interaction and a teacher’s attitude toward students.
Comprehensive Impact on Human Life

E. White (1952b) affirms the wholeness of humanity and the necessity to develop the individual as a whole:

True education means more than the pursual of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. (p. 13)

Knight (2006) argues that “the purpose and goal of Christian education are the restoration of the image of God in each person and the reconciliation of students with God, their fellows, their own selves, and the nature” (p. 210). So, individuals ought to be considered as holistic units; whatever affects one part of an individual affects the whole. The restoration of the image of God has to be social, spiritual, mental, and physical.

E. White (1952b) contends that education should impact the person throughout life’s total circumstances. This impact has a pedagogical praxis beyond the classroom into the realms of the family, school, community, and the church, to name a few. In this perspective, education focuses on the development of all human potentialities instead of emphasizing only the cognitive skills.

Suárez (2012) synthesized 10 specific objectives that he contends were E. White’s understanding of the goals of Christian education: (a) to be loyal to God and to value spiritual things; (b) to develop an integral character; (c) to have emotional balance; (d) to develop healthy relationships; (e) to develop critical and reflective thinking; (f) to develop the ability to make decisions; (g) to obey principles and standards consciously; (h) to apply the laws of health in one’s own life; (i) to engage in activities requiring physical effort; and (j) to cultivate detachment from self and solidarity (p. 105).
Service and Praxis

Freire (2011) contends that any valid educational endeavors lead to praxis, insofar as a person is considered an agent of change in the world. He critiques social structures that attempt to domesticate the student by making of him or her a “thing.” Conversely, the personification of the student assumes his or her part in the educational process as an agent toward liberation. Similarly, E. White points to service as one of the goals of Christian education.

Conclusion

Whereas women are allowed, and even required to teach other women in a hierarchicist paradigm (Titus 2:4), women may teach anyone in an egalitarian paradigm insofar as the teacher—woman or man—teaches the right things (2 Tim 1:13; Titus 2:1), is pedagogically capable (1 Tim 3:2), and possesses integrity of character (1 Tim 3:1-7).

Although patriarchy permeates the social structure throughout Scripture, women are presented in a dignified manner. Also, the theological trajectory points to the return to the Edenic ideal. This view on gender from a biblical perspective values the nature of women, and endorses women as individuals with authority and leadership, fitting the prerequisite for the function of a teacher.

The theological-missiological education of women taught by women led this project to survey insights about teaching in Scripture. In the OT, torah primarily means teaching instead of a juridical understanding. This teaching encompasses all levels of human existence: private, domestic, and social (Deut 6:4-11). The teaching element is also a meaningful part of the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4:15) and of his followers (Matt 28:20). In fact, teaching is a divine activity whose participants are nothing less than God
the Father (John 8:28) and the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 1 John 2:27). Teaching appears in almost all of the lists of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:8; Eph 4:11; Rom 12:7). This elevated function of teaching is performed and mandated by Paul to his associates.

With this biblical foundation of factors that may influence women and teaching, I sought to refine the meaning of theological-missiological education. Put simply: 

theological refers to the goal of theology—to know (obey-love-experience) God and all things in relation to him. This knowledge is neither total nor only subjective. It is sufficiently accessible through revelation. Missiological means the way that one locates oneself in the antecedent mission of God; it is a matter of relocating one’s awareness of activity and the relocation of missiology to the center of theological education. Education refers to the process of transformation and redemption of human beings by assuming that they are active agents with free will, oriented to life by means of praxis and service.

In synthesis, the important task of teaching is an all-encompassing activity where God, in partnership with men and women, participates in shaping human life in accord with the original plan. In this noble activity, all are welcome to come as students and teachers.

At this point, after presenting the biblical and theological standards about women as teachers in the church, I now turn to focus on values and perspectives regarding SDA ministry initiatives for women and their manifold needs.
CHAPTER 3

PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN AND WOMEN’S MINISTRIES
IN THE SDA COMMUNITY OF FAITH

Introduction

This chapter provides selected perspectives on issues pertaining to women in the community of faith, and responses to these issues by the Women’s Ministries Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (WM).

A disclaimer is due at the beginning of this chapter: although Adventism has a coherent belief system that provides unity for its message and mission (Rodríguez, 2013), there are many kinds of Adventism with diversified theological and cultural flavors (Canale, 2004). The acknowledgement of this fact makes it impossible to profile the church within a broader territory (or even within a smaller one) due to the existence of different versions of Adventism at the same place and time. Therefore, the goal of this chapter is simply to locate issues and responses without the further claim of generalization and stereotyping of certain regions of the Adventist church.

Perspectives on Women

Attitudes toward women in the church and in society have often run parallel, yet society is not governed by biblical principles and values. For this reason, the Adventist
Church must decide how to critically respond to the changes and cultural agenda of society.

Bull and Lockhart (2007) portray the position of SDA women within religious America as a minority group when contrasted toward a dominant group, despite the fact that the female-to-male membership ratio of 3 to 2 is “unusually high” for a Christian denomination (p. 259). Similarly, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2010) recorded that women comprised 54.87% of the total SDA membership in Brazil (p. 143). Even so, Bull and Lockhart contend that this advantage is only numerical within a patriarchal church, for women continue to be excluded from the centers of power and are confined to the margins of society without the possibility of self-definition. In this way, women’s ability to control and occupy positions and roles is limited by the boundaries established by men.

Although more sociological and ethnographic descriptive studies are needed on Adventist women in Brazil, I have documented a few issues that are meaningful for this segment of the community of faith.

Women as Wives

Married life is a significant aspect of women’s experience. In this section, I point out three critical issues in marriage that may hinder women’s well-being: submission, domestic violence, and inequality.

First, the issue of submission of a wife to her husband has been used at times to oppress women’s full potentialities (Kuzma, 1992). This situation is caused by the interpretation of biblical patriarchy as normative and prescriptive to male-female relations. According to this paradigm, Neall (1992) writes, “a wife should put herself
under her husband’s umbrella even if it leaked” (p. 13). This hierarchicalist interpretation devalues women by taking an overly elevated view of men.

Second, the issue of spouse abuse—also known as intimate partner violence (IPV), domestic violence, or partner abuse—has been documented within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Incidences of spouse abuse within the church are similar to or even higher than rates in general population samples (Enditnow, 2009). One study (Drumm, Popescu, & Cooper, 2015) found that often spouse abuse does not have a proper intervention, and they attempted to equip the church to recognize and address the problem. Often theological assumptions—submission, male headship, the sanctity of marriage, and conservative practices of religion—perpetuate the victimization by removing the responsibility from the abuser (Drumm et al., 2015, p. 540).

Third, the issue of inequality. Bull and Lockhart (2007) point to the fact that early Adventism regarded women highly based on the charismatic view of authority; they illustrate by mentioning that the first article on the family to appear in the *Review* “did not differentiate the roles of husbands and wives, presupposing . . . their joint and equal purpose” (p. 261). However, they observed that by 1900, the idea of role differentiation was hardened by stereotyping of domestic duties and motherhood as the ultimate aspirations of womanhood. This was partly a consequence of the attitude of distancing the church from the wider society (Bull & Lockhart, 2007).

**Women as Mothers**

Motherhood is also a significant aspect of women’s experience. In this section, I point out two issues in regard to women as mothers: children’s education and children’s care.
First, the issue of children’s education. E. White (1952a) was fundamental in influencing the Adventist ethos that values the mother in the education of children; she says, “The mother is queen of her household. She has in her power the molding of her children’s characters that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life” (p. 231). Since this education may have eternal consequences, attention should be given to this task.

Second, the issue of children’s care. Although the ideal for the family would be that both parents were involved in primary caregiving, the reality is that often both parents are required to work in order to provide financial means for the maintenance of the family. Kuzma (1992) observed that this phenomenon was also occurring with Adventist women. Some segments within Adventism give strong support to homeschooling, while other segments try to remediate this non-ideal situation by providing Adventist daycare centers or Adventist schools that accept children under the age of formal education.

Women as Professionals

Professional life is also a significant aspect of women’s experience. In this section, I point out three critical issues in regard to women as professionals: financial needs, professional fulfillment, and women as employees of the church.

First, the issue of financial needs. Kuzma (1992) argues that leading the list of difficulties of Adventist families are financial pressures and a lack of time to spend with their children (p. 119). Indeed, poverty is a key issue that impacts many Brazilian Adventist families and women. Whereas some women can choose not to work, or even work for personal fulfillment, others do not have this option, for they are forced to work for survival.
Kuzma’s (1992) advice—to accommodate the roles of wife, mother, and professional worker—may not be an option in the majority of certain regions of the world, when she says, “I’d start by encouraging them [women] to choose a career that will allow them maximum flexibility during the various stages of a family’s life cycles” (p. 120). This advice assumes that women have the option to avoid working and to choose a career. Both assumptions are not warranted in underdeveloped situations where women have no other option than to work: where the ideal is overcome by survival needs.

Second, the issue of professional fulfillment. Although some may find fulfillment in the sole task of nurturing their families, others need a cause outside their homes that gives meaning to their lives. A professional life for Christian women should not be limited to single and childless women; women can add meaning and purpose to their lives beyond the family.

Third, the issue of women as employees of the church. Women have limited employment conditions, justified by the fact that in some parts of the world women are neither ordained nor commissioned into pastoral ministry.

In addition, since within the Adventist administrative system the different levels of church administration are mainly staffed by men (Dwyer, 2015), this likely discourages women from leadership roles in the church despite affirmative action to include women in leadership positions (Banks, 1992).

In sum, although many other critical aspects of women’s experience could be highlighted, those indicated in this text are the most visible issues demanding a response by the church: submission, violence, inequality, children’s education, children’s care, financial needs, lack of meaning and fulfillment in life, and woman as church employees.
Perspectives on Women’s Ministries

The Women’s Ministries Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (WM) has been fundamental in enriching and supporting women at different levels as an ecclesiastical response to their human needs (Greenidge, 2000). This section addresses WM’s history, philosophy, and mission, training framework, and selected implemented projects in Brazil.

A Brief Historical Background of SDA Women’s Ministries

The creation of WM was a response to the battles and advances of women inside the SDA Church. In 1874, Mrs. Henry started to give specialized attention to women by creating a Christian women’s group to promote temperance (Women’s Ministries Department and Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2007).

In 1898, Mrs. Henry, with the help of Ellen White, developed and outlined “women’s ministries” with the goal to emphasize the role of the mother in education. Mrs. Henry presented lectures on this topic from coast to coast of the United States and Canada.

That same year, Mrs. Henry saw the potential of women and started to devote herself full time to mobilize Adventist women to the work of God. She believed that properly organized, trained, and oriented Adventist women could have a broad impact in society, not only through motherhood, but also through preaching the gospel to the world. However, after her death this ministry lost strength.
After the death of Ellen White—the church’s first prominent female leader—in 1915, the church was slow to recognize female leadership for a period. Not until 1973 did a committee gather to discuss the “the role of women in the church” in Camp Mohaven, Ohio. It was a turning point to call attention to the necessity of re-envisioning the ministry of women (similar official studies about the role of women in the church occurred later on in 1985, 1989, and 2013-2014).

In 1980, the General Conference president, Neil C. Wilson, appealed to the church to find new avenues to value women’s potential and talent, and in 1985 it was voted to establish “affirmative action” for women’s involvement in church work as a priority plan for the church leadership. Leaders were asked to use their executive influence to recognize women in all aspects of ministry that did not require ordination.

Although the 1995 General Conference session denied a request from the North America Division that each division be given the right to ordain women in their territories, the session voted full departmental status to WM, with the goal of increasing opportunities for women to apply their gifts in God’s work. Once again, although the 2015 General Conference session denied the motion to allow each division to make provision for the ordination of women, the church decided to empower and to rethink new ways to include women in its mission, other than as ordained pastors (General Conference Annual Council Committee, 2014).

In synthesis, WM was established to address the spiritual, emotional, physical, and social needs of women in the church through encouragement, support, mentorship, and recognition. Yet it was not intended as a platform for women’s ordination or women’s rights.
Philosophy and Mission

The WM philosophy is stated as follows:

The Department of Women’s Ministries is committed to encouraging, challenging, equipping, and nurturing Seventh-day Adventist women as they do their part in carrying the Gospel message to the world. “The Lord has a work for women as well as for men. They may take their places in His work at this crisis, and He will work through them. . . . They can do in families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches the inner life. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed.”—Welfare Ministry, p. 145. (Women’s Ministries Department and Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2007, p. 8)

This department seeks to minister to women in a comprehensive fashion in varied ways, such as training programs, outreach, friendship evangelism, plant-a-seed ministry, public evangelism, and small group ministry.

The mission of the General Conference Women’s Ministries is stated as “uplifting Christ in the church and in the world,” which is achieved through various actions: elevating the value of women; enabling women to deepen their faith and experience spiritual renewal; building networks; mentoring young Adventist women; addressing the concerns of women in a global context; bringing woman’s perspectives to the world; expanding avenues to Christian service for women; and challenging Adventist women’s potential (“Women’s Ministries Department and Ministerial Association,” 2007, pp. 9-10).

The broad scope of the WM mission—that it attempts to minister to women in a comprehensive way, addressing so many specific areas of women’s lives—means there is a challenge in providing specialized assistance in all the areas of need.

The Pastor’s and Elder’s Handbook for Women’s Ministries also delineates six critical challenges for women around the world: illiteracy, poverty, health, workload,
abuse, and a lack of leadership training and mentoring ("Women’s Ministries Department and Ministerial Association," 2007, pp. 17-20). My theological-missiological curriculum helps address the sixth critical challenge—the lack of training and mentoring. Although the proposed curriculum (cf. Chapter 5) responds directly to this challenge, I contend that it also indirectly impacts other areas, such as poverty.

In sum, although the WM’s philosophy and mission comprehensively address women’s needs in terms of practical training, there are still opportunities to develop further tools for the theological and missiological empowerment of women through more specialized training.

Selected Projects of Women’s Ministries in the South American Division

WM of the South American Division (SAD) has implemented a plethora of projects in this region. I limited my evaluation to the projects sponsored by the division, excluding other regional projects implemented by the lower administrative levels. Fourteen explicitly promoted projects\(^2\) are assessed from a religious-theological educational perspective (Ministério da Mulher, 2012-2013).

First, the majority of projects emphasize outreach (mission) instead of teaching (message). The projects are more motivational than educational. This means that often projects are isolated initiatives without a “running course” (sequence, accumulation of

\(^2\) Projects of the WM department of SAD: (a) Missionary Women’s Sabbath (calendar activity); (b) Reception Ministry (greeting); (c) 10 Days of Prayer and 10 Hours of Fasting; (d) Color and Flavor in the Bible (a plan to color-code Scriptures); (e) Wednesday of Power (i.e., a woman preaching about other biblical women at Wednesday night worship); (f) Intercessory Prayer; (g) Prayer That Sustains; (h) The Presence of God in My Life (women’s retreat); (i) Breaking the Silence (awareness about abuse and domestic violence); (j) Educational Scholarship Project; (k) Devotional Book; (l) Ministry of Service (guide for deaconesses); (m) Tips for a Healthy Life; (n) Loving for Eternity (the influence of the woman on her family).
knowledge, systematic construction). Consequently, the projects are more oriented to specific needs, problems, and special events of the church calendar.

Second, the projects tend to focus on the piety aspects of Christian living, such as prayer and spirituality, instead of the study of the Bible. These projects assume either that Adventist women already have a theological foundation or that friendship evangelism has priority over other more cognitive approaches to ministry. Neither assumption is warranted.

Although I contend that these two evaluative judgments apply to the majority of projects, the WM department of the General Conference has a leadership certificate curriculum that fits the necessary educational elements, yet the project does not appear in the portfolio of SAD projects. Another project that could fit the educational criteria is *Enditnow*, which provides educational awareness and advocacy against abuse and domestic violence.

**Conclusion**

This chapter surveyed women’s issues in the church context, such as submission, domestic violence, inequality, children’s education and care, financial needs, personal meaning and fulfillment, and women as church employees. Then, it discussed the official response by the Adventist Church through the department of Women’s Ministries and its projects. I now turn to the broader context of women and their needs through a socioeconomic description of the issues of gender and poverty.
CHAPTER 4

BRAZILIAN WOMEN AND THEIR NEEDS: THEORY AND CONTEXT OF CRITICAL ISSUES

Introduction

After the theological assessment of issues related to women and education (Chapter 2), followed by a survey of how the community of faith has ministered to women’s manifold needs (Chapter 3), the present chapter surveys theoretical frameworks for an interpretation of gender and poverty, then presents the broader context of the needs of Brazilian women.

In regard to the theoretical framework, I address conceptual approaches to women as they relate to issues of gender and poverty. I describe and evaluate two theoretical approaches—Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD)—from a Christian viewpoint.

Then, I describe and evaluate from a Christian viewpoint women’s needs through descriptions of how some of the major theorists approached poverty: the income/consumption approach, capability approach, social exclusion approach, participatory assessment approach, and feminization of poverty approach.

In regards to the contextual framework, I describe the broader social context of women in Brazilian society by surveying the following issues: power, violence, advocacy, education, work, equality, rural life, assistentialism, and women’s bodies.
Theoretical Framework

Women’s Development Through Gender Awareness

The conceptualization on gender and development is necessary to understand the two main competing feminist development frameworks: WID and GAD. These frameworks shape and guide how nonprofit and for-profit institutions deal with women and their needs. Understanding these models does not seek to establish the best option, but to survey the terrain—both of them have their value in the history of the development of women.

These two approaches have been concerned at various times with meeting women’s practical gender needs and their strategic gender interests. Practical gender needs relate to women’s care for themselves and their children, whereas strategic gender interests relate to the task of changing gender relations and challenging women’s subordinate position (Connelly, Li Murray, MacDonald, & Parpart, 2000, p. 147).

Women in Development

WID addresses the oppression of women from the vantage point of transforming economic and social relationships in society. The tools used by WID for social change are mainly educational efforts focusing on the acquisition of skills and facilitating access to credit (Martinez, 2009).

This approach originated from the liberal feminist movement and gained strength from the mobilization of feminist organizations in the North and the declaration of the United Nations Decade for Women. The movement for the emancipation of women and the right to vote started a new generation of feminism that fought against the patriarchal system that placed women under the authority of fathers and husbands. Feminist groups
also argued that women should be recognized not only for their reproductive role but as full citizens and complete individuals (Martinez, 2009, p. 88).

The goals of the WID approach are equality for women in political, economic, and legal dimensions as well as full recognition of women’s rights to study, work, divorce, control their own property, and express their sexuality (Martinez, 2009).

These goals were further refined in 1975, the International Women’s Year, when the UN General Assembly adopted a World Plan of Action to be implemented during that decade with three main goals: complete equality between men and women and the elimination of sex-based discrimination; integration and full participation of women in development; and a growing contribution by women to the quest for international peace (Martinez, 2009).

However, these goals received criticism from women around the world, for the various regions of the world had different priorities based on context. For example, women from the Soviet bloc prioritized the issue of peace; women from the West focused on equality between the sexes; and women from the South argued for developmental processes. In spite of these criticisms, the General Assembly managed to implement its plan of action. It established new measures to ensure that the recommendations would be implemented and progress evaluated, and it pushed governments to create new institutions and other mechanisms to promote women and their presence in development.

Still, women from the South believed that WID would not achieve its purpose unless it addressed the exploitation of women that created much of the poverty in the third world. WID focused on issues experienced by women from the North, whereas women from the South argued that WID approach neglected real needs such as the
integration of women in the domestic environment in regards to work and child care. Furthermore, women from the South noticed that this approach added more work and roles for women instead of contributing to women’s well-being. The WID approach failed to embrace the broader structures of development, as well as differences in class, caste, and ethnicity.

**Gender and Development**

Dissatisfaction with some of the explanations proposed by the WID paradigm in the late 1970s caused the emergence of the GAD approach, which focuses on issues of gender, power relations, and conflict.

The agenda of the GAD approach addressed the distinction between biological sex and social gender. Feminist anthropology gave increasing attention to the cultural representation of the sexes and its influence on the positions of men and women in society. The concepts of maleness and femaleness were understood as the outcome of cultural ideologies, rather than of inherent physiological qualities. Consequently, gender was to be understood as a social construct, reinforced and defined by society (Moore, 1988, pp. 15-16). So, particular occupations and activities were no longer supposed to be differentiated between the genders.

And yet, despite the fact that the GAD approach asserts that gender is a social construct defined in human relations, the main focus is not on gender identity, but on gender equality. This emphasis on equality hinders gender subordination as constructed by the rules and practices of different aspects of life, such as the household, market, state, and community (Cornwall, Harrison, & Whitehead, 2008).
In this way, the GAD approach was launched as a holistic analytical tool that provided a comprehensive overview of the social, economic, and political realities of development (Martinez, 2009).

The GAD goals were further refined at the 1980 Copenhagen conference that evaluated three areas deemed necessary for promoting equality of the sexes: education, employment, and health. The goal of GAD became the explicit demonstration that unequal gender relations hinder development and female participation in it. It also sought to transform the structures of power—overlooked by WID—with the long-term goal of an equal partnership between the sexes in which both become participants in decision-making and beneficiaries of development (Razavi & Miller, 1995).

Other areas of improvement caused by the GAD approach are advancements in marriage practices, property rights, and the rules governing inheritance. These legal advancements directly impact inequality of access to economic, technological, social, and human endowments, including education and health.

It is difficult to generalize about the range of approaches to women and development that have evolved after GAD. Gender has become a panacea for those working in the field, yet there are few analyses concerning the way in which gender is being applied as a policy-making and planning tool. In fact, the term gender itself is often used in a number of different ways.

A Christian Evaluation: Toward a Balanced View on Gender

Both WID and GAD approaches to development rightly emphasize such values of modern societies as equality, civil rights, and alleviation of oppression. Although these
advancements of modern societies are appreciated, a proper evaluation ought to be made from the perspective of scriptural values and standards (Chapter 2).

The first issue that I address is the reaction of these approaches to subordination and patriarchal systems. Whereas these approaches assume a view of top-down, hierarchical power that uses coercion and oppression, biblical patriarchy highlights servant leadership or an inverted chain of power (R. Davidson, 2015). Yet there is no doubt that societies have used misinterpretations of scriptural patriarchalism to perpetuate oppression against women.

The second issue is the claim that gender is socially constructed (GAD). While postmodern and nihilist philosophers contend that all realities are relative and culturally and socially constructed, others contend that not all realities are constructed and that some are received. The Scriptures describe gender and gender relations with distinct male and female identities (Gen 1) that are received and not constructed. Moreover, the biblical egalitarian interpretation attributes full equality between the genders as the divine ideal.

Despite this biblical response to WID and GAD, these tools when modified could be useful in policy making for the purposes of this present study.

Women’s Development Through a Comprehensive View of Human Needs

Poverty is a universal phenomenon difficult to define. This section describes selected approaches to interpreting poverty, which is a step necessary to create categories for understanding the context of Brazilian women.
Income/Consumption Approach

The income/consumption (I/C) approach measures the severity of needs through the creation of a poverty line. Rowntree—the creator of this approach—determined that a family of four needed 15 shillings a week for food and 11 for other necessities, or a total of 26 shillings a week. A family that made this much could not be considered below the poverty line in 1910 (Morrison, 2009, p. 208). Although the basic needs and country situations vary, this concept is still used to measure financial indicators.

The gross national income per capita used by most countries, for example, assumes an imaginable line for generating data. However, this indicator says nothing about real poverty because it is an average of incomes in which poor and rich, women and men, rural and urban are categorized at the same level. It takes no account of how equally or unequally incomes are distributed (H. White, 2002).

Another example of the usage of the I/C approach is the World Bank categorization of poverty. It attempted to respond to the I/C creation of an imaginary poverty line, for this approach is not capable of calculating how far people fall below it (H. White, 2002). So, the World Bank categorizes poverty into two groups: absolute poverty, defined as US$1 per day, a minimum level of income necessary to survive; and moderate poverty, defined as US$2 per day, a minimum of income necessary to meet basic needs without survival at risk. However, the World Bank’s dollar-a-day standard is based on household surveys that do not consider the distribution of money between household members, which means that it is also not an accurate way to rate poverty (Haslam, Schafer, & Beaudet, 2009, p. 14).
Despite the current usage of this approach, criticism abounds (Streeten, 1998; H. White, 2002; Sender, 2003; Milanović, 2005). Different aspects of the I/C approach have been criticized, such as the manner of poverty measurement and the establishment of the poverty line. Critics have also noted that it does not consider countrywide poverty or living expenses in each country or region, and that it does not calculate self-employment incomes or subsistence production.

Streeten (1998) contends that I/C is inefficient for the assessment of consumption patterns among the poor. He suggests that the state should provide basic needs (e.g., education and health) in such a way that personal income would be available for goods. Besides the highlighted problems on income, Streeten pointed out five additional problems with the I/C measuring of consumption: first, different groups do not pay the same prices for the same goods; second, different groups consume different goods and the same goods in different proportions; third, as prices change in different proportions, consumers will substitute expensive goods for cheaper ones; fourth, certain items may be substituted for expensive ones; and fifth, some goods and services are provided for free to the poor, but are rationed (pp. 8, 17-18).

**Capability Approach**

Amartya Sen (1999)—the seminal thinker for the capability approach (CA)—describes poverty as a kind of *unfreedom* or deprivation of the freedom to improve one’s life. Unfreedom includes a lack of access to health care and services, gender or ethnic discrimination, and limits on basic political, civic, and economic rights.
Development happens to the extent that human progress occurs in terms of capabilities and freedom:

A person’s “capability” refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for her to achieve. Capability is thus a kind of freedom: the substantive freedom to achieve... various lifestyles. For example, an affluent person who fasts may have the same functioning achievement in terms of eating or nourishment as a destitute person who is forced to starve, but the first person does have a different “capability set” than the second. (Sen, 1999, p. 75)

Freedom is related to the opportunity an individual has to choose what is necessary. The key point of this approach is the assumption that an individual is capable of judging what is good or not for herself.

The assessment of the CA involves five components: first, the importance of real freedoms in the assessment of a person’s advantage; second, the personal ability to transform resources into valuable activities; third, the multivariate nature of activities giving rise to happiness; fourth, a balanced evaluation of human welfare between materialistic and non-materialistic factors; and fifth, the interest for proper distribution of opportunities for individuals in society (Sen, 1999).

Conversely, the absence of capability leads to premature mortality, notable undernourishment, persistent morbidity, deep illiteracy, and the “missing women” phenomenon. It can be noted by demographic, medical, and social information, but not by income data, which is also an instrumental factor but not adequate to analyze capability deprivation (Sen, 1999, pp. 20-21, 87-90).

The CA approach influenced the Human Development Index (HDI), which uses more precise information about literacy rates, life expectancy, and power distribution, which means that the HDI can be considered more accurate than indexes based on income data alone. Although the principle of HDI came from Sen’s idea of capability,
many critics argued that a gap in the rates happened because there are vast differences between a woman and a man, a boy and a girl, rural and urban, rich and poor, and different ethnic groups and cultures, which are not relevant for HDI. Also, the HDI does not include the more general or abstract needs considered by Sen, such as freedom, justice, security, and human rights (Morrison, 2009, pp. 242-243).

Despite the benefits of this approach, criticism contends that capability depends on social and cultural presuppositions. Morrison (2009) claims that this approach’s notion of deprivation and capability fails to characterize the individual, for these characteristics are formed by social dynamics in the household and community. Since social formations depend on pre-judgmental roles concerning gender, age, and other social differences, the CA approach could be considered a narrow diagnostic of human needs, for it does not address erroneous cultural acceptable practices from a larger viewpoint (Morrison, 2009, p. 243).

**Social Exclusion Approach**

The social exclusion (SE) approach focuses on the social and political aspects of poverty, with the goals of eradicating discrimination and promoting affirmative action. Morrison (2009) contends that people are considered poor if they are excluded from any context in society, for any motive beyond their control, and if they cannot participate in normal activities as they would like (p. 243). This idea is based on cultural and social structures. This approach includes women, elders, physically and psychologically impaired people, and individuals with issues not necessarily related to income (Streeten, 1998, p. 24).
The SE approach contends that poverty goes beyond the income level and that poverty is relative. This relative poverty does not threaten daily survival, but prevents the individual’s full participation in society (Thomas, 2000). Kang (2008) argues that although poverty corresponds to the lack of financial resources, poverty also has social, political, and psychological elements that can damage individuals even more seriously than material poverty.

The criticism of this approach focuses on the relative definition of poverty that does not seek to define its causes. If everything may be a cause of poverty, then there are no clear indicators for policy making and action plans.

**Participatory Assessment Approach**

The participatory assessment (PA) approach prioritized the participation of poor individuals in determining the meaning of their poverty. It uses techniques such as social maps, participatory diagrams, modeling and scoring, and open meetings that encourage people’s participation (Streeten, 1998, p. 23). Chambers (1983), the pioneer of this approach, has a high view of the analytical abilities of poor people, who have the capability to rate maps and diagrams, rank, and score better than professionals, because the decisions concern their own lives.

Criticism of the PA approach focuses on the areas of subjective and relative measurement criteria. Shaffer (2002) argues that this approach does not determine poverty through acceptable measurements, but allows people to function as subjects in the process of measuring poverty and deprivation. The perspective of poor individuals, as understood by themselves, points out that this group is socially excluded and politically isolated.
The subjectivism of depending on people’s own criteria for self-definition adds volatility to the measurements of the survey in many aspects. This volatility is avoided by other approaches due to their more objective criteria for measuring poverty (Morrison, 2009, p. 245). This approach also begins with its own definition of who is poor, because it needs to determine who will be part of the research. Moreover, since it is not possible to involve all people in the community, the PA approach takes just a sample that perhaps does not reflect the big picture.

**Feminization of Poverty Approach**

The feminization of poverty approach refers not only to a lack of income among women, but also to a deprivation of capabilities and gender discrimination present in society and government. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) describes it as “the burn of poverty borne by women, especially in developing countries” (Chen et al., 2005, p. 39).

According to Chant (2006), a focus on income does not adequately describe reality. It is important to notice that from a gender perspective, broader concepts of poverty are more helpful than a focus on household income levels because it allows a better grasp of the multi-dimensional aspects of gender differences, such as a lack of power and control.

The criticism of the feminization of poverty approach present two main issues: the overemphasis on income and overemphasis on female-headed households. The first issue is that household income may bear no relation to women’s poverty because they may not have access to that income. Poverty is as much about a life compromised by abuse, stress, fatigue, and voicelessness as it is about lack of resources (Moore, 1988). In this way,
women’s personal control of their lives is more important than economic freedom.

The second issue is the overemphasis on female-headed households. Unequal domestic relations between men and women constitute the major cause of poverty among women, but the widespread stereotyping of female-headed households as the poorest of the poor suggests that when women are without men, their lives are worse. Some processes that lead women to head households are positive choices made by them (Chant, 2006).

And yet, the feminization of poverty approach cannot be ignored, for women do represent a disproportionate percentage of the world’s poor, and this trend is deepening. In most cases the increase in poverty is linked with a rising incidence of female household headship.

A Christian Evaluation: Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Human Needs

After surveying these approaches to poverty, it became apparent that there is no specific approach that successfully defines and measures the manifold aspects of poverty. Each one is limited by its own criteria, and therefore, a comprehensive approach appropriates elements from the various proposals. However, this appropriation is dependent on biblical values that inform and criticize the values of the approaches. I selected two values: freedom and egalitarianism.

Freedom is a libertarian biblical paradigm that acknowledges human free will, without a compatibilistic view of reality. This can be seen in the CA approach, based on its emphasis on freedom and transformation in the social process. It is also compatible with the view of humanity in the PA approach, which assumes that the individual is able
to participate on the process of alleviating suffering and responding to human needs.

Egalitarianism values the principle of equality, in contrast to a hierarchical view of subordination between the genders, and contends for mutual submission and servant leadership as the divine ideal. This biblical value can be seen in the feminization of poverty approach, for concentrating the intervention on the group that historically was oppressed.

Although other biblical values can be integrated with these approaches, it is clear that human needs transcend the realm of scientific measurements. Ultimately, poverty is not only a scientific phenomenon, but an evil and sinful reality. Myers (2011) contends that poverty is fundamentally relational and spiritual, and that humans have a multiplicity of needs. This holistic definition of poverty invites a holistic response that appropriates elements of all scientific approaches, with the assumption that the real problem of humanity is its separation from God.

Brazilian Contextual Framework

After surveying the conceptual approaches to poverty, it is imperative to describe the female Brazilian population and its many needs and social circumstances. Although other areas could be added to this list, I selected areas that are strategic for the educational implementation of this project.

Women and Power

The symbolic election of national president Dilma Rousseff—the first woman elected in Brazil’s history—improved the role of women in society. C. Araújo (2011) asserts that the election of Rousseff was a milestone for Brazilian women, and Rousseff’s
appointed nine women ministers out of her 27 ministers in 2010. As president, she has spoken many times about economic empowerment of women and violence based on gender (Rousseff, 2012). Influenced by this effect, the National Congress analyzed a proposal to reform policy to ensure that more women represent the population in public office. The commitment to women’s rights also increased, as noted by the Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention of Belém do Pará.

Women and Violence

The Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres—Secretary of State for Women’s Rights—approved the law Lei Maria da Penha in 2006, ensuring protection against domestic violence. This was considered a milestone in the implementation of international guarantees and the constitutional rights of women to fight violence. However, gender-based violence is still not taken seriously enough and remains highly underrecorded, especially in cases of domestic violence. There is still a great need for improvement in the collection and analysis of data and for mechanisms to ensure that the law is applied in accordance with frameworks such as the Belém do Pará Convention.

Despite advances, Brazil has failed to improve the situation of most women, especially poor, rural, black, and indigenous women, who continue to experience social exclusion and violence. Barsted and Pitanguy’s (2011) United Nations report O progresso das mulheres no Brasil 2003-2010 analyzed the dimensions of these forms of exclusion and violence and proposed a wide range of public policy and advocacy to promote the empowerment of women that would transform their future.
Many authors have pointed out that the reality of Brazilian women is still far below the normative ideal and the constitutional framework adopted by the state. Even when the protections and legal safeguards are present, the state’s reach is not long enough to counteract the deep cultural traditions that relegate the concerns of women to the private sphere. The traditional roles of women and men are still so ingrained in society that they hinder the implementation of laws challenging the intrinsic culturally assumed subordination of women (Barsted & Pitanguy, 2011).

Pitanguy (2011) argues that in order to eliminate violence against women, women should fight for their human, sexual, and reproductive rights. This fight should bring social visibility to the issues and result in major public policy changes. Brazilian women have strengthened and mobilized national and international movements for women’s development. However, sustaining these achievements requires constant vigilance, especially by monitoring the public budget at the federal, state, and local levels. A great distance still separates the law from reality—inequality based on gender, class, race, and ethnicity still permeates Brazilian society. Building awareness of the legal mechanisms, policies, and available programs is the first step toward the actualization of women’s rights. This great challenge is in harmony with international commitments, but still faces cultural and religious value systems that often slow down the process.

**Women and Advocacy**

Pelegrino (2006) argues that women’s advocacy is the only way forward. She discusses the situation of women in the cities and the impact of poor urban infrastructure, transport, and housing, which mainly affect women, especially those who are poor and black. While the Constitution of 1988 consolidated the bases of individual rights for
women, as the product of activism, gender inequalities will only be overcome when public policies really ensure women’s rights. This appropriation of rights starts by claiming them through advocacy.

**Women and Education**

Bruschini, Lombardi, Mercado, and Ricoldi (2011, pp. 143-175) observe that the educational level of Brazilian women is rising. They enter into the labor market and prestigious careers at a steady pace, and assume decision-making positions. On the other hand, women continue to receive lower wages than men in almost all occupations, and most of them work in the informal market, in a vulnerable manner, with a great number working in domestic jobs.

Rosemberg and Madsen (2011) document the increase of Brazilian women in undergraduate and graduate schools as students, researchers, and teachers, and the greater access women have to programs for research support. Rosemberg and Madsen foresee that educational performance by women will continue to improve, although there are still indications that the “gender gap” that benefits women is running out of steam. In 2009, more than half of the people who could not read were women; among these illiterate women, almost all were over 25 years old and almost half lived in the northeast region. Moreover, governmental studies covering 2004-2009 attested to the educational progress of women in general, but other areas influencing education lack special attention, such as educational opportunity for the aged, ethnic-racial exclusion, racism, and regional and socioeconomic margins.
**Women and Work**

A critical challenge for women is the issue of reconciling work and family responsibilities. It is not only necessary to implement measures to eliminate inequality and discrimination in the workplace; the debate should also include access to affordable childcare facilities and an extension of paternity leave.

**Women and Equality**

Piovesan (2011) argues that despite advances in the implementation of women’s human rights, the distance between the law and social practice remains. The *Global Gender Gap Report 2010* ranked Brazil at 81 based on a series of social indicators. Although the neighboring countries had weaker economies, they were ranked higher in terms of the value of women: Argentina 31 and Peru 45. This points to a long journey ahead for equality and initiatives targeting this gap. For reference, on women’s access to health and education, Brazil is ranked at 114, while Argentina is 14, Chile 26, and Peru 33 (Schawab, 2010). Although the Brazilian regulatory framework is favorable, cultural transformations and political reform remain necessary (Piovesan, 2011).

**Women and Ethnicity**

The history of women in Brazil points to the fact that black and indigenous women suffer more violence than white women. These groups also suffer more abuse, harassment, and discrimination during childhood at home. Black women were enslaved from the colonial period to the 19th century, and continue to experience economic and sexual exploitation. Indigenous women have been not only invisible, but also subjected to trafficking, violence, and child labor. Black and indigenous women continue to be treated
as subordinate, undervalued in the labor market, subject to sex work, and excluded from access to adequate health and education services (Heringer & Silva, 2011).

Brazil has a history of black and indigenous struggles, but the problem is deeper among women. The way toward change demands the strengthening of the integration of social agendas. Heringer and Silva (2011) suggest a way forward by enhancing social policies to include protection against violence, quality education, and access to health services, especially among women who are the targets of discrimination. These policies should confront ethnic and racial prejudices by making use of creative communication and cultural approaches.

**Women and Rural Life**

Rural women do not have access to the same employment opportunities, income, and infrastructure as those in the cities. The creation of the *Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres e de seus Planos Nacionais de Políticas para as Mulheres I e II* allowed rural women to organize themselves and demanded specific benefits, such as personal documents, access to land, credit, and technical assistance, and new forms of productive organization. These women advocate against environmental degradation and violence. As a result, they achieve benefits from policies that recognize their rights (Cintrão & Siliprandi, 2011).

**Women and Assistentialism**

Of all the people in Brazil, 100 million are considered poor, which means that half of the population receives assistentialist benefits from the government (Fellet, 2013). This framework of aid forms a paternalistic structure where half of the population pays
high taxes in order to subsidize the other half of the population. Da Costa (2000) contends that there is a relationship between paternalist and patriarchal societies. Hence, this assistentialist paternalism broadly influences the status of women.

**Women and Their Bodies**

Barsted (2011) considers that necessary progress has been made toward the decriminalization of abortion. Feminists understand that there was a significant delay in gender equality rights and women’s empowerment during 2000-2010 due to legislation biased toward the male perspective. In addition, more institutions have gathered around these ideals, such as *Delegacias Especializadas em Atendimento à Mulher* and *Centros de Referências*. They provide more resources to address violence against the bodies and personhood of women.

**Conclusion**

This chapter surveyed approaches to the development of women. Although the WID approach pioneered this developmental progress by emphasizing the struggle against the patriarchal system, it was later considered to be too narrow in its diagnosis of the reality of women. The GAD approach attempted to entertain a more comprehensive approach, especially in regard to social, economic, and political situations. A Christian evaluation of the WID and GAD approaches suggests a balanced view on gender by means of incorporating the values and standards of Scripture. The divine ideal for human relations is symmetrical egalitarian relations where servant leadership nuances the meaning of authority. I also respond to the modern claims of gender as a social construct
by affirming the existence of both constructed and received realities; Scripture suggests that gender definitions are a received reality from a divine design.

Next, theoretical approaches to poverty were discussed. All approaches are limited by specific aspects. The I/C approach is limited by a narrow and artificial definition of poverty; the CA approach is based on freedom and volition; PA appears to be subjective; the SE approach is based on relationality; and the feminization of poverty approach is based on issues related to women. A Christian evaluation suggested that some aspects of these approaches are in harmony with biblical values, such as freedom and egalitarianism. Yet human needs transcend what scientific measurements can assess, for the root problem of human needs belongs to the spiritual realm in a biblical view.

This survey on women and poverty is intended to contextualize the situation found in Brazil and the difficulties that women face in their lives.

At this point, after surveying and evaluating this project’s targeted audience (women) and immediate circumstances (poverty and needs in Brazil), let us turn to the description of the theological-missiological curriculum.
CHAPTER 5

DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A THEOLOGICAL-MISSIOLOGICAL CURRICULUM FOR WOMEN

Introduction

This project has addressed three areas of methodological concern about women’s theological-missiological education: the biblical text (Chapter 2), the community of faith context (Chapter 3), and the instructional context (Chapter 4). This chapter focuses on the description and implementation of a curriculum for SDA Women.

Description of the Intervention

Valuative Considerations for the Curriculum

Curriculum is a metaphor for a running course that progresses in a determined topic (Harris & Moran, 1998, p. 15). It is cumulative, directed, intentional, toward ends. This teleological element of curriculum makes it future-oriented. As Ward puts it:

*Every curriculum reflects an image of the future.* More precisely, in every educational plan there is some sort of assumption about the *value* of the learning experience. This notion of value has its roots in the future of the learner or the context in which the learning will be of use and will make a positive difference. (1996, p. 14)

Ward is correct in assessing that the design of a curriculum involves a judgment of value by those who decide on, select, and exclude or include material. The adoption of values is necessary for any educational enterprise. Values are arbitrarily based on the
criteria and situation in which the education will be operative. Elliston comments in regard to values:

> The range of methodological concerns facing the missiological educator then includes values both from a biblical perspective and the existing values in the local situation. When the values and local situation are known, one can identify what changes need to be made through an educational process. (2011, p. 121)

Elliston suggests that any missiological intervention should be framed by two questions: “Where is the community now?” and “Where it should be?” The intervention is the bridge between these two states of affairs, and the establishment of operative values will guide the intervention and assess its efficiency. Nonetheless, the intervention has to be calibrated by knowledge of the situation and values.

The discussion of facts and values comes in handy for this conceptualization. Whereas facts are descriptive (of attitudes, behaviors, rules, and motives embodied in culture), values are normative (prescriptive, guiding actions, attitude, and motives) (Moreland & Craig, 2003, p. 396).

A fact is what it is, a description of the situation, while a value is what ought to be, a prescription for the situation. So the intervention—the theological-missiological education for lay women—has to observe the factual and valuative contextual situation of women in the church and in Brazilian society.

When Elliston raises the questions “Where is the community now?” and “Where should it be?” he implies that movement from point X to point Y depends on the intervention’s precise assessment of the contextual factual and valuative situation. Then, through a judgment of value informed by biblical reasoning, the intervention begins to bridge the gap between the *is* and the *ought*.
Although this document could select many noble values already surveyed (e.g., freedom, equality, empowerment), I have selected “access” as a master value guiding all the other values in responding to my initial research problem—women have had limited access to theological-missiological formal education within the Brazilian SDA Church.

Although some charismatic churches are criticized for forming their clergy without proper training, their accessibility itself should be commended. Mulholland (1996) contends that access is “one of the main secrets of the Pentecostals” (p. 176). Winter (1996) corroborates this by affirming that a characteristic of the “Bible institutes” is providing lay people with access to theological education.

In the Brazilian SDA instructional context, I contend that more access should be given to both residential and non-formal theological education. The evidence is presented by G. Araújo’s (2014) doctoral dissertation, which verified dominant characteristics and predictive factors that motivate a theology career choice at Centro Universitário Adventista-EG (UNASP). His research documents that students at one Adventist residential seminary are usually younger than 35 years old, male, non-divorced, non-Asiatic, and from lower-income families.

The biggest gap in the statistics in G. Araújo’s (2014) study is gender: theology students surveyed were 96.4% male and 3.6% female, while other degrees at the same school have a 42.4% male and 57.6% female distribution, and the national average is 45.5% male and 55.5% female (p. 105). Although residential seminary education in the Brazilian Adventist context is legally open to women, based on the percentage of female students it can be inferred that there are serious limitations.
Thus, the present intervention seeks to provide accessible theological-missiological education by adopting access as a master value. It creates an open-door, non-hierarchical, symmetrical frame of learning where all are welcomed to learn and love God truly and to take part in his mission.

At this time, based on my valuative considerations I will put forward statements concerning mission, purpose and goal.

Mission Statement

Recognize the value of women and provide new avenues to meet their needs through accessible theological-missiological education.

Purpose Statement

Create new ways for women to experience God, improve themselves through education, and serve others.

Goal

Complete Form: Experience God. Improve myself. Serve the world.


Ten Objectives

This intervention seeks to consider the following objectives in order to ensure that the curriculum facilitates women’s self-development and lifelong transformational outcomes.

1. Develop deeper biblical spirituality.

2. Experience enrichment of personal and family life.
3. Intensify commitment to service.

4. Develop a broad worldview.

5. Recognize values and standards of society.

6. Articulate a response to human needs.

7. Understand the biblical model of servant leadership.

8. Develop a lifestyle based on biblical standards.

9. Develop habits of study that contribute to lifelong learning.

10. Articulate theological and missiological understandings.

Implementation of the Intervention

Handbook

The *SDA Women* curriculum includes a handbook and CD with the following materials for the implementation (see Appendix):

1. Basic template for teaching lessons.

2. Creating your Personal Life Plan (PLP).

4. 20 overviews and lesson plans—five for each module.
5. 20 lesson handouts—assignments and further readings.
6. 19 PowerPoint presentations.

Participants

The curriculum is designed for, but not limited to, Brazilian women who are interested in theological-missiological learning. Participation is open to all, regardless of gender orientation, age, literacy, or socioeconomic factors.

Non-Formal Setting

This curriculum adopts a non-formal setting, which usually has the following general characteristics: private funding, absence of accreditation, practical orientation, voluntary participation, happens in an alternative place understood not to be for the primary purpose of education (Sefton-Green, 2013).

Although some dismiss non-formal education as lacking rigor and accreditation, other studies (Ward, 1977; Cannell, 2006) contend that this method can create effective educational initiatives that could provide certification. Also, this setting could enhance the democratization of theological education by benefiting the church at large.

This choice was selected over a formal or “school” setting due to its potential for providing access to the target audience and creating an opportunity to train lay women within a short period of time with minimum resources and educational bureaucracy. This makes lifelong and life-wide education possible.
Four Modules of the Curriculum

The theological-missiological curriculum is designed in four modules with the intent to educate and empower women in their many roles in society, such as mother, wife, professional, and church leaders. The modules’ inner logic starts with a comprehensive view on God and humanity and their needs (Module 1), followed by the connection between God and man through spirituality (Module 2). After one has established the meaning of God, humans, and the connection, the curriculum moves to the interpretation of the world and reality through lessons on the topic of worldview (Module 3). This section is significant for the “missiological” part of the “theological-missiological curriculum.” The last module is on leadership, which concerns the horizontal connection among human beings (Module 4).

Although these modules are set in a logical sequence, this model is an initial and open curriculum. Other modules may be designed based on local contextual needs.

Partnership and Personal Life Plans

Each module has a specific focus, but there are two elements that will be common throughout the curriculum. Instructors should ensure that these elements are embraced to make the experience meaningful, attractive, and challenging.

First, partnership. At the beginning of each module, each participant will choose a friend who will be their partner for the duration of the module. They will meet during each session to encourage and support each other in their roles. This builds the concept of interdependence and accountability into their experience.

Second, a Personal Life Plan (PLP). At the beginning of every module, each participant will make a simple plan of how they would like to grow and acquire practical
competency in the area of the upcoming module. Their partner will be there throughout the module to help and encourage them to accomplish their plan. The PLP helps to emphasize the continuing nature of development and that learning is a continual part of life. Linking partners together for this work stresses the need to rely on each other as people learn, grow, and work for God.

Venue

*SDA Women* is a curriculum designed to initially cover four modules composed of five classes each, lasting one and a half hours per class. The curriculum can be implemented in different ways depending on the contextual situation. Here are four examples:

First, intensive classes, presenting each module over one week (five classes), and covering the four modules (20 classes) in one month.

Second, weekend workshops. Here, one module (five classes) is spread over a weekend. To complete the four modules as workshops will require four weekends, not necessarily consecutive.

Third, a Sabbath school class. This can be set up as a special Sabbath school class designed for women that meets at the local church; with one class each Sabbath, it will take 5 months to complete the four modules.

Fourth, a small-group focused study. Participants decide the time and place for the group study, and meetings occur once a week for five months.
Instructor

The instructors of this curriculum are intended to be women with formal theological education. This choice is based on the need for role models in spiritual leadership positions (Sandler et al., 1996). One study (Murrell & Zazenczyk, 2006, p. 126) points out that role models are one of the most influential factors in career choices. Although I am not necessarily arguing for women seeking pastoral careers, female role models in church-based theological education can emphasize and motivate women’s involvement in theological and missiological studies and action.

Cost

The cost of SDA Women implementation should be affordable so that local churches can sponsor as many women as are interested to attend. The program also has different costs depending on how it is implemented. However, the main costs of the program would include the following:

1. Teaching tools (pens, papers, Bibles, whiteboard)
2. Technology for PowerPoint presentations
3. Handouts for each participant
4. Transportation from the instructor’s home to the program site and back

Assessment and Evaluation

The program evaluation serves two specific purposes in the realm of program planning. First, it helps the organization assess how well the program is working. Second, it provides insights into ways in which the program can be improved (Kowalski, 1988).
Kirkpatrick (1975) identifies four levels of evaluations: first, reaction—did they like it? Second, learning—did they learn? Third, behavior—did they use it? Fourth, results—did it make a difference? These kinds of evaluations follow a hierarchical and increasing complexity. The *SDA Women* curriculum provides an evaluation that follows Kirkpatrick’s model; to answer all the questions, the evaluation has not only multiple choices but also descriptive answers. I suggest that the evaluation should be done after every module in order to get feedback for the next modules.

Sources and Materials

The structure of this curriculum is based on that of Ambassadors, a youth ministry department project of the SDA General Conference. Also, the contents of the lessons in *SDA Women* are adapted from personal studies and class materials from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University and from the Mission Institute Handbook.

How to get Started

The implementation has three steps: preparation, intervention, and evaluation. The first step is for the selected instructor to obtain the core material (see the Appendix, which contains lesson outlines, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations) and study the topics.

The second step is the intervention or teaching-learning experience. The non-formal setting emphasizes interaction between all the parts. It is necessary to provide a safe environment where trust and access are valued.
The third stage is evaluation; the evaluation survey may be answered anonymously and distributed by a participant in the curriculum.

Table 1

Outline of SDA Women Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modules</th>
<th>Lesson titles</th>
<th>Module main focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 The Glasses Through Which You See the World</td>
<td>1. What is worldview? 2. The world is not Christian 3. Let’s contextualize 4. Holistic themes in the OT 5. Whole gospel: Toward a biblical model of holistic ministry</td>
<td>Interpret everything, including the world and myself, through the lenses of Scripture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

This chapter has described the content and implementation of the *SDA Women* curriculum as an intervention to address SDA women’s lack of access to theological-missiological education. Access is the value through which all the other values of the program are interpreted, with the broader intent to value women and enhance their experience of God, self, and service.

In regard to the implementation, I have designed a non-formal curriculum open to all women without restriction. The curriculum includes four modules: (a) God and human needs, (b) spirituality, (c) worldview, and (d) leadership. However, this curriculum is an initial effort, and ought to be contextualized in order to respond to local needs. Four possible ways of implementing the curriculum were suggested to make it flexible and accessible to women in terms of time and costs.

At this point, let us turn to the final conclusions and recommendations from this study.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I have claimed, in a nutshell, that Brazilian women have had limited access to theological-missiological education, partly because of a hierarchical, male-centered biblical interpretation of gender relations as applied to female teaching and learning experiences within the community of faith. Although the church intends to involve women in a kind of ministry that assumes a hierarchical paradigm, this remediative action is mainly focused on motivation, outreach, and Christian piety. This DMin project intervention contends that women teaching women in the church may be one way to provide access and role models, as well as transforming this restrictive scenario, enabling the formation and motivation of female leadership at the grassroots.

This final chapter is divided into three parts: answers to the introductory questions, conclusions, and recommendations.

Answers to the Introductory Research Questions

Biblical and Theological Standards About Women and Education

There can be two main interpretations of the biblical and theological standards regarding women and education. The first interpretation contends that God created human relations in a hierarchical, asymmetrical, subordinative position. Argumentation for this view comes from a reading of Gen 1-2 through the lenses of previous Pauline
interpretations (1 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 3:1-7). Although the hierarchical paradigm argues that a woman may not exercise pastoral or teaching authority over a man, she may teach another woman (Titus 2:4). Nonetheless, the alternative egalitarian interpretation allows full participation of women in the teaching ministry.

In regard to education, the Scriptures express a view of teaching as honorable from the concept of torah to the teaching ministry of Jesus and the church. To teach is a command given to the church, and figures among the charismatic gifts.

SDA Perspectives and Values on Women

SDA values regarding women depend on the theological assumptions of the local context. The 2015 General Conference Session vote on women’s ordination does not make certain doctrinal aspects—male headship, ontological hierarchical relations in the doctrine of God, and restrictive distribution of spiritual gifts—right. On the contrary, theology has become further separated from practice. All in all, the missiological part of this curriculum implies the need for contextualization and accommodation to the culture, even if this culture is distant from the biblical ideal. This contextualization is critical, refining in an accumulative way the practices of the context according to the biblical view.

Social Profile and Situation of Brazilian Women

Although the prospects for Brazilian women are positive in the areas of health, education, and opportunity, there are many factors that put women in a position of risk, such as domestic abuse, discrimination based on ethnicity, inequality, and poverty. I have interpreted the social situation of Brazilian women through the conceptual lens of
poverty, which I contend is the dominant risk factor among Brazilian women. The survey of approaches to measuring poverty documented that poverty and human needs cannot be adequately measured by sociological tools because all approaches have limitations. Therefore, the social profile of Brazilian women must be approached through a comprehensive measurement or view of human needs.

**Perspective and Values of the Biblical Text as They Relate to the Church and Society**

The relationship between perspective and values is one of ambiguity, depending on the interpretation of the biblical text. For example, a biblical interpretation may infer that patriarchalism and male headship are ideal and God-ordained. This may be interpreted in a chauvinist church and society as acceptable, whereas the same interpretation may be deemed as primitive and problematic by an egalitarian community. The example of patriarchalism is fit. Whereas some sociological approaches see patriarchalism as a sign of female oppression, egalitarian biblical interpreters argue that patriarchalism does not necessarily mean the rule of the husband over his wife, but the “rule of a father”; moreover, they find matriarchs and a dignified view of women in the biblical narratives. Therefore, rather than rejecting biblical patriarchalism, it should be interpreted as remedial in a society tainted by sin, and yet the Edenic ideal should be pursued by those transformed by Christ and shaped by the biblical worldview.

This example shows that biblical, ecclesiastical, and social values depend on those interpreting the issues. When applied to this curriculum, it demonstrates the need to recognize that factors other than theological values influence decisions and attitudes toward women’s needs and women’s theological education.
Conclusions

This section lists six conclusions that are important for the understanding of theological-missiological education of Brazilian Adventist women.

1. Theological-missiological education is focused on God and everything in relation to God in a redemptive, transformative, and comprehensive way.

2. Teaching has a central role in the Scriptures and should have an elevated appreciation in pastoral ministry. Teaching involves a sequence, accumulation of knowledge, and systematic construction.

3. This curriculum of women teaching women may function in both egalitarian and hierarchicalist paradigms, although its conceptual framework agrees with an egalitarian view on gender relations. This curriculum endorses neither a patriarchal nor a feminist interpretation of women.

4. This curriculum takes human needs into consideration through a comprehensive interpretation of the needs of Brazilian women. It assumes that humans are active, moral, and capable of finding the solutions to their own problems. Yet at the same time, human needs reach into the spiritual dimensions, making the solutions external and God-dependent.

5. Previous ministries for Brazilian women have focused on motivation, outreach, and prayer, while neglecting theological and missiological training.

6. Access has been adopted as a master value based on the documented limitations of theological and missiological education for women. Access is in harmony with egalitarianism. Whereas hierarchy separates people, equality levels relations between individuals, creating access.
Recommendations

This section lists five recommendations that are important to promote access to theological and missiological education for women in Brazil.

1. Facilitate other avenues of theological-missiological education for women. The problem of this study is women’s lack of access to theological education; thus, more should be provided. I list three suggestions. First, a distance learning program for women in theological education could be established with flexibility and reduced costs (e.g., Logos Mobile Education and eTeacher). Second, a strategic plan should be made to motivate more women to seek residential theological education and employment in the church. Third, leaders of the Women’s Ministries department without theological backgrounds should be directed to a MA cohort in pastoral ministry.

2. Engage qualified women in church leadership positions that do not require ordination, with the goal of providing encouragement, role models, and representation to the female membership (Banks, 1992).

3. Following the 2015 update to the church manual, church communications should use gender-neutral language.

4. The survey of SDA women in Brazil indicated a lack of sociological and ethnographic research examining Brazilian SDA women. The need for more study on this segment of the church is evident; examples are Sahlin’s (2004) *Understanding Your Community* and Maier’s (2015) *Church and Society*.

5. The creation of new modules in the curriculum *SDA Women*. This is an initial curriculum that is open to contextual needs; new modules can be added based on the immediate circumstances and needs of the community being served.
A Final Word

Why should theological-missiological education for women be considered an essential part of church life? Simply, because theological education is not only obtained in a school setting, but in multiple ways in lifelong and life-wide situations. Theological and missiological empowerment is commonly lacking in churches, yet this deficiency is still more severe among women.

The solution to female theological illiteracy begins with the acknowledgement and uncovering of theological, cultural, and sociological assumptions toward the formulation of a biblical and balanced view of human nature, human needs, and the human desire to know God and everything else in relation to Him.
HANDBOOK MANUAL

HANNY GUZMAN
The structural framework of this handbook was adapted from the handbook *Ambassadors* by the Youth Ministries department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (2013). Also, the content of the lessons was designed based on personal studies, class materials from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, the Mission Institute handbook (2008), and the *Ambassadors* handbook.
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This template will be used during most in-house teaching lessons. There will be variations in the format depending on the focus for the day.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2+ minutes | **Welcome & activity**  
1. General welcome and opening prayer.  
2. An activity that introduces the theme for the day or a short getting-to-know-you activity. |
| 40 minutes | **Did you know?**  
The theme presentation, via PowerPoint, video, whiteboard, or any material that can help to visualize the subject. The sources for the material and further material for their own research should be provided. |
| 10 minutes | **Mission briefing**  
A simple Bible study that gives the biblical foundation for the theme, done in groups of two or three. It will be helpful for leaders to circulate around the room in order to listen to conversations, see participants' involvement, and answer questions. |
| 5 minutes | **Thinking it through**  
A time of personal reflection where each participant writes down what they have personally learned from the study and how it applies to their own lives. To be shared briefly with their partner, who will be a spiritual encourager during the module. |
| 13 minutes | **Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**  
An activity that expands on the main theme for the lesson. This section is called "Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom" because each woman's main task is to be empowered in order to empower others. |
| 15 minutes | **Next steps**  
An empowered woman will grow spiritually, learn, and witness in lifelong and life-wide situations. Each participant will develop a personal life plan (PLP) that will guide their personal journey during the module and focus on its theme. "Next steps" is a time for participants to reflect on how their PLPs are working and to pray for each other in what they aim to do next. This will be done with their partner. A partner is a friend who prays and offers mutual encouragement for a set period of time. |
| 5 minutes | **Summary**  
This is an opportunity to summarize what participants have learned during the session. The instructor reviews what has been done and asks for volunteers to briefly share what they have learned. |
CREATING YOUR PERSONAL LIFE PLAN (PLP)

As a human being with a nature that naturally tends to move away from God, your growing to reflect Jesus will rarely happen by chance or without much thought. That’s why, for each module, you will be creating your own PLP. The focus of each PLP will relate to the theme of your current module and last for the duration of that module.

1. **PLP module name:**

2. **Partner:** Who is the spiritual partner who will encourage and support you in the next stage of your spiritual journey of growing? They will remain your spiritual partner throughout the current module.

3. **Personal vision statement:** This includes two parts: (a) What do you see in your life today that you would like to change in order to become more effective as a leader? (b) Describe how you would like to see yourself in the future.

4. **Expected evidence of change:** After looking at your personal vision statement, list the evidence you might expect to see that reveals you are growing.

5. **Next steps:** List the practical steps you will take to accomplish your personal discipleship vision. Think about how these steps will also shape your daily devotions with God.

6. **Reflection: How did I do?** This is completed at the end of the module. It gives you a chance to reflect on what worked well and what you would like to improve in the future. You can compare your expected evidence of change to what actually happened.
Please circle the appropriate response

Not at all | Somewhat | Completely
---|---|---
Stated outcomes were achieved during the module. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
Module content was relevant and challenging. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
Support materials (e.g., handouts) were helpful. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
The presenter was effective. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
This module has improved my understanding of the topic. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
This module has equipped me with information and skills that I can use immediately. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |
The time allowed for the module lessons was... | Too much | About right | Too little |
Overall module evaluation. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 |

Highlights – what parts of this module were most interesting and useful for you?

Low Spots – what parts of this module were of little or no value for you?

Leadership – comment on the presenter’s effectiveness (e.g., rapport with group, presentation, methods and models used).

Other comments:
Module 1

GOD & HUMAN NEEDS
# LESSON 1 | THE ALPHA OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

## Overview

**Presenter notes**
1. This lesson emphasizes that theology starts with an experience, life, and cognitive relation with God.
2. One has to access God by looking at how God presents Himself, mainly in Scripture.
3. God as He reveals Himself in Scripture is the starting point of theology.

**Materials**
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. PLP handout
3. Pens and note cards
4. PowerPoint presentation
5. Bibles for all participants if possible
6. YouTube video "So God Made a Missionary": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZ_JxhK4cLw

## Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Participants will... | 1. Understand that God is in search of humanity  
2. Understand that access through nature, philosophy, science, culture, and tradition is ambiguous  
3. Understand that the Scriptures present a clear, unambiguous, and sufficient means to inform our relationship to Him | 1. Written list of biblical passages on God and access to knowledge of Him (Mission briefing) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Facilitate access to God through a missionary mindset based on the divine initiative</td>
<td>1. Reflection on Missio Dei and the consequences into a missionary mindset (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Value Christ and the Scriptures in my relationship to God</td>
<td>1. Reflection on the appropriation of biblical values (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Teaching plan

**Welcome**
- Welcome participants to the SDA Women curriculum and offer an overview of the curriculum.
- Opening prayer (2 min).
- Introduce the PLP and the concept of a partner.
- This lesson will focus on the starting point of theological education: intellectual, affective, and relational access to God.

**Did you know?**
- PowerPoint presentation “The Alpha of Theological Education.”
- Rationale: Theology starts with being found by God, and continues with understanding and relating to Him. Access to Him is mainly by means of Christ and the Scriptures.

**Mission briefing**
- Complete the “mission briefing” handout (12 min).
- Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants are going in the right direction.

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**
- Complete the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
- The participants are encouraged to look at their own attitudes after watching the video.

**Next steps**
- Discuss with your partner the following question:
  - What are some practical ways to saturate the mind with the Scriptures and the things of God?

**Summary**
- Wisdom is the end product of theological education.
- Salvation is much more than cognitive apprehension: it is also related to the hands and heart.
Scripture reports that God acts and communicates with humanity. Communication involves access. Respond to the following questions based on the biblical texts.

1. If God is all-powerful, why is He still “in search of man”? What does this tell us about how God values freedom? Reflect on Gen 3:9 within the Adam and Eve narrative.

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2. Read the following passages and describe the prerequisites to understand God. Job 32:8; 1 Cor 2:14.

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4. Despite the fact that nature is one of God’s books, why is nature not a completely reliable means of access to God? (Ps 19:1; Rom 1:18-21)

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
1. Watch the YouTube video “So God Made a Missionary”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZ_IxhK4cLw

Reflect on how the divine search for humanity affects your view on how you may be used by God as a missionary to your realm of influence.

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Overview

Presenter notes
1. This lesson is about the goal of studying God.
2. The goal of studying God is a character-life-affective-valuative formation.
3. The goal is the attaining of wisdom.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Whiteboard
5. Dry erase marker
6. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand what theological-missiological education is and is not</td>
<td>1. Written answer about attaining wisdom as the goal of theological education (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Understand what a student of theology should target for her education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to become a mature Christian</td>
<td>1. Personal reflection on Christian maturity (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Learn how to acknowledge the need to grow spiritually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Make judgments on the daily circumstances of life based on God's thoughts</td>
<td>1. Written answers on the PLP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Develop their own character in areas where they have to grow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
7 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 min).

Did you know?
35 minutes
1. PowerPoint presentation on biblical role of a leader.
**Mission briefing**  
15 minutes  
1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).  
2. Participants can answer this handout in groups or by themselves.  
3. Make sure answers are written in full sentences.

**Thinking it through**  
5 minutes  
1. Ask the following question: Why there are so many immature Christians even though they attend church their entire lives?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**  
10 minutes  
1. Ask the following questions and get their feedback: How can you “think God’s thoughts after Him”? How might an appropriation of a correct vision of God be the best ingredient to fire up mission?  
2. If you have a whiteboard, write down the participants’ insights.

**Next steps**  
15 minutes  
1. Spend time on their PLPs.  
2. Encourage them to reflect on their goals and actions based on the biblical roles of a leader.  
3. Pray with partners for spiritual growth.

**Summary**  
1. Theological education intends to form the character-life-affective-valuative aspects of human life.  
2. The product of theological education is wisdom.
The goal of theological education is to form wise human beings who live their lives with a vision of God. This vision is more than intellectual understanding; it is an appropriation of heart and hand. How may this wisdom become possible?

How is this process toward wisdom? Prov 1:7; 3:6; 31:30; 1 Kings 3:5-14

How does a wise life affect all aspects of humanity (e.g., health, emotions, family)?

Why is intellectual knowledge without theological education worse than plain ignorance? Comment on the following quotation: “If our theology does not quicken the conscience and soften the heart, it actually hardens both; if it does not encourage the commitment of faith, it reinforces the detachment of unbelief; it fails to promote humility, it inevitably feeds pride” (J. I. Packer, A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life, p. 15).
How can you “think God’s thoughts after Him”? How might an appropriation of a correct vision of God be the best ingredient to fire up mission?
LESSON 3 | LIFE & THEOLOGY

Overview

Presenter notes
1. Explore the connection of life and theology.
2. Introduce ethics in Scripture.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Know criteria for morality according to the Bible</td>
<td>1. Reflection on criteria for revealed morality (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to embody ethical principles in daily life</td>
<td>1. Discussion with partner about ways to integrate ethical principles into life (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Value the importance of self-government under God</td>
<td>1. Reflection on self-government based on what is good (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2 minutes

Did you know?
1. PowerPoint presentation about life, theology, and ethics.
2. Highlight that humans are moral beings.
35 minutes

Mission briefing
1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
2. Instructors can move around the room and participate with the participants’ answers.
10 minutes

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom
1. Ask the following question: How would you decide what is good in relation to values?
2. Introduce the concepts of values: intrinsic, extrinsic, utility.
3. Give time for participants to write their answers.
4. They should share their answers with the whole group.
15 minutes
**Next steps**

1. Discuss with your partner the following question: How can I improve my self-government under God?

**Summary**

1. Christian ethics is revealed morality.
2. Humans are moral beings.
3. The role of ethics is to make us understand our real situation.
Who defines what is good? There are systems of ethics that start from human nature. They have a realistic view of human nature. For example, Immanuel Kant defines the basis of human nature as “categorical imperative,” which means that inside all of us, there is a sense of right and wrong. This is the basic presupposition of morality. However, there are other systems of ethics, such as Marxist ethics, that contend human beings live under inhuman conditions. If one resolves the social problems, humans will be good. For Marxism, equality is the beginning of happiness. Nonetheless, during the communist regime in the USSR, 46 million people died as enemies of the state.

From where does the Bible say ethics come? Micah 6:6-8; Deut 32:4; 1 Tim 4:3-5; John 14:6

Discuss the importance of developing self-government under God (Eph 4:13,14). If the Scriptures describe immoral behavior as suicidal, why does humanity still pursue it (Rom 6:23; Gen 2:17)?
Good is something that enhances quality of life. Yet slavery was something that enhanced the human life of some, while dehumanizing others. How would you decide what is good in relation to values? Consider the following definitions of values: *Intrinsic value* is something that has value by itself; *Extrinsic value* is value that we predicate on something (e.g. money bills); *Useful value* is the attribution of value to its utility (e.g., slaves).
LESSON 4 | FROM THEOLOGY TO MORAL LIFE

Overview

Presenter notes

1. Moral life in a Christian paradigm starts with the identification of morality in Scripture.
2. This lesson reflects on the nature of biblical moral content.
3. This lesson provides guidelines for the interpretation of ethical principles and a virtuous life.

Materials

1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong></td>
<td>1. Understand the nature of morality in Scripture</td>
<td>1. Written assignment on nature of biblical moral content (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>2. Know standards of moral conduct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Understand the formation of a virtuous life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong></td>
<td>1. Learn how to make moral decisions in daily life</td>
<td>1. Personal reflection on 21-day challenge to change for creating virtuous habits (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Value the importance of thoughts and desires as the beginning of the chain of character formation</td>
<td>1. Written assignment (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong></td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
7 minutes

1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 min).

Did you know?

20 minutes

1. PowerPoint presentation “From Theology to Moral Life.”
**Mission briefing**  
15 minutes  
1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).  
2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants are going in the right direction.

**Thinking it through**  
5 minutes  
1. Ask the following question for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.  
   - How can we be moral in an immoral society? How should we live by principles and at the same time face our circumstances and context in order to function well?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**  
10 minutes  
1. Pray with the participants before they start this section.  
2. Remind them that this part is called "Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom" and the best way to reflect Jesus is to ask Him for help. God is the only one who can help us and set us free!

**Next steps**  
15 minutes  
1. Discuss the following with your partner and pray:  
   - Which habit of your life would you like to change? Take the 21-day challenge and find someone to be accountable to (e.g., sugar-free, food, a vice, physical exercise, a mood, a mindset).

**Summary**  
1. God has revealed a moral way of life as something possible and not distant or impossible.  
2. A virtuous life is possible through the personal commitment of an active free will with the promised divine empowerment.
Scripture does not inform the believer like a manual of propositional knowledge, as if a journalist wrote it. Rather, the Scriptures are written in many genres, and moral content should be extracted in different ways. Reflect on these seven points about the nature of biblical moral content:

1. Preventive activity (narratives): God has used preventive standards to protect people (Gen 3:3; Prov 3:5-7)

2. Moral responses to a specific event/case (1 Cor 5:1)

3. Didactical aspect: teaching (Matt 5:3-11)

4. Direct prohibitions (Gen 2:16,17; Exod 20; Deut 30:11ff.)

5. Catalog of virtues and vices (Gal 5:16-25)

6. Parables and stories (2 Sam 12)

7. Real reports with a judgment of value (Gal 2)
Based on the PowerPoint presentation, reflect on the difference between principles and moral rules. Why is knowledge of the principles important in the application of rules?

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Reflect on this sequence. Think about the story of Joseph (Gen 29:11). When Potiphar’s wife called him to commit adultery with the opportunity for action, what was the reason for his faithfulness? How can we nurture good habits and have a strong character?

Thought
Desire
Action
Repeated action = Habit (vice or virtue)
Character

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Think about your life and the habits that you have formed throughout the years. If character is formed in the sequence Thought-Desire-Action-Habit-Character, what about the creation of new virtues? Try to challenge yourself by doing a positive circle of 21 days. Choose an area of your life where you need further growth, and start with daily affirmative thoughts, desires, and action. Record your progress on a calendar.

Day 1
Day 2
Day 3
Day 4
Day 5
Day 6
Day 7
Day 8
Day 9
Day 10
Day 11
Day 12
Day 13
Day 14
Day 15
Day 16
Day 17
Day 18
Day 19
Day 20
Day 21
LESSON 5 | HOW TO FACE SUFFERING AND THE MEANING OF LIFE

Overview

**Presenter notes**
1. Introduce theodicy as necessary for the interpretation of the meaning of life.
2. Value the cosmic conflict worldview.

**Materials**
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
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<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand different models of interpretation of suffering 2. Know the basic elements of theodicy</td>
<td>1. Written answer about interpretation of models of theodicy (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to face their own suffering and how to support someone who needs to interpret her suffering</td>
<td>1. Reflect on the interpretation of suffering (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Value the cosmic conflict worldview as a paradigm for situating meaning</td>
<td>1. Sharing of personal suffering experience within a cosmic conflict paradigm (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching plan**

**Welcome**
1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2. Introduce this class by sharing a brief personal suffering experience, and then ask, “If God is perfectly good and powerful, why does He allow evil?”
3. Let them know that this class will help us to better understand ourselves, for suffering is a universal experience.

**Did you know?**
1. PowerPoint presentation.
2. It would be helpful to hear what the participants have to say regarding the three options for interpreting suffering and the meaning of life. Assure them that there may be other models.  
3. Try to get some participants to share the principles of each theodicy. |
| Thinking it through | 1. Discuss with your partner how you have experienced suffering, and which model of theodicy you have used to interpret your suffering. |
| Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom | 1. Discuss with your partner the following two questions:  
   - How would you communicate the cosmic conflict theodicy to a friend that has a scientific mindset and rejects any devil-supernatural explanation?  
   - Discuss the following two phrases: Suffering is "the gift that nobody wants" (Yancey) and "He who has a why to live can bear almost any how" (Nietzsche). How may suffering become a meaningful experience? |
| Next steps | 1. Discuss the following with your partner:  
   - How the cosmic conflict informs us about human existence and its many circumstances  
   - How the Great Controversy helps us to form a right view of the character of God |
| Summary | 1. Suffering is a universal experience, and humans may make it meaningful despite the pain.  
2. Suffering is neither ideal nor necessary.  
3. God is near to those who suffer, listening and responding to prayers. |
Suffering is a universal phenomenon and may be interpreted in different ways. Theodicy is the theological study that responds to the question of why a good God permits the manifestation of evil. The following questions will survey three ways to interpret suffering as it connects to the meaning of life and God.

Read the following biblical texts and identify the principles for the following models of theodicy:

1. God is in control of all things theodicy: Ps 23:1; Matt 10:29; Rom 8:28

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2. No pain, no gain theodicy: 1 Peter 1:7, 11; 2:21-25; Rom 5:3-4; Heb 12:7-11; 2 Cor 12:8-10

   _______________________________________________________________________________________
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3. Cosmic conflict theodicy: Job 1-2; Matt 4; Eph 6:12-13; Rev 12:7-8; Matt 13:28

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________________________________________________________________________________________
How would you communicate the cosmic conflict theodicy to a friend that has a scientific mindset and rejects any devil-supernatural explanation?

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Discuss with your partner the following two phrases: Suffering is “the gift that nobody wants” (Yancey) and “He who has a why to live can bear almost any how” (Nietzsche). How may suffering become a meaningful experience?

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BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY
LESSON 1 | WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

Overview

Presenter notes
1. Before the beginning of class, introduce the PLP concept for this module.
2. Introduce the partner concept for this module.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. PLP handouts
3. Pens and note cards
4. PowerPoint presentation
5. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand that the foundations of spirituality must be based on Scripture</td>
<td>1. Written answers to the questions on biblical spirituality according to Andrews SDATS Seminary statement on biblical spirituality (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Identify biblical spirituality</td>
<td>2. Written answers (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>1. Practice biblical disciplines</td>
<td>1. Discussion and case study on biblical spirituality instead of other sources (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be</td>
<td>2. Learn how to argue in favor of biblical spirituality instead of other sources of spiritual formation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able to...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>1. Commit to the sola scriptura principle</td>
<td>1. Discussion with partner about sola scriptura issues (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Prayer (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able to...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2. Introduce the PLP and the concept of a partner.
3. Introduce this class by asking: “What is spirituality for you?”
4. Let them know that this class will help us to understand what biblical spirituality is.

Did you know?
1. PowerPoint presentation on “What Is Spirituality?”
Mission briefing
10 minutes
1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout.
2. It would be helpful to hear what all the participants have to say regarding the biblical texts.
3. Ask some participants to read their answers aloud to the whole group.

Thinking it through
10 minutes
1. Ask the question on the “Thinking it through” handout for personal reflection.
2. Make general comments regarding the following questions that should be answered in a negative way, since Adventists believe in a biblical spirituality.
   - We deny that all study of the Word of God, all prayer, and all behaviors of service and devotion are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Sinful humanity has the ability outwardly to do some of these good things, but for the wrong motives or sometimes in a routine fashion devoid of meaning.
   - We reject methods of seeking to “experience” God by an emptying of the mind or an altered state of consciousness.
   - We deny that humans have a soul which connects with God apart from our physical brains and bodies.

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom
20 minutes
1. Each participant should be close to their partner in order to reflect on the following case study.
2. In a hypothetical example, imagine a very good friend who is looking for spirituality from other sources instead of the Bible. Which arguments can you use to convince your friend to find her spirituality in the Bible?
3. They should create their own answers and share with their mentors.
4. Then they can discuss and compose an answer together.
5. Encourage some partners to share their answers with the whole group.

Next steps
15 minutes
1. Discuss the following with your partner:
   - How does the Bible nurture your beliefs?
   - Do you believe that the church is clearly dealing with sola scriptura issues going against the current traditional religious trend and ecumenism?
   - What can you do to help the church, since we are the church?

Summary
1. Spirituality is a broad concept referring to the ways in which people seek, make, celebrate, and apply meaning to their lives.
2. Spirituality means different things to various people.
Adventists have a biblical spirituality, which means that we build our creative thinking from the *sola scriptura* principle. With this understanding in mind, answer the following questions.

1. Read the following biblical texts and identify the principles for biblical spirituality:
   Gen 1:27; Gen 3:9; 1 Cor 2:12-13; Gal 2:20; Eph 3:14-20.
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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   ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Ellen White, in the book *Testimonies for the Church*, wrote: “Train your thoughts so that it will be easy for them to dwell upon pure and holy things. Cultivate a love for spirituality and true godliness.” (vol. 2, p. 315). How does this statement impact your spirituality?
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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   ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Answer the following questions.

- Be sincere with yourself.
- You do not need to share your answers!

**I Affirm…**

The priority of Scripture to guide my life  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The love of God for a lost world  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The preeminence of Christ  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

That all study of the Word of God, all prayers, and all behaviors of service and devotion are performed under the influence of the Holy Spirit  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The substitutionary atonement of Christ  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The work of the Holy Spirit  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

That communion with God takes place at His initiation through His revelation to us in Jesus Christ  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The role of the human mind in Christian spirituality  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

That humans have a soul which connects with God apart from our physical brains and bodies  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

Methods of seeking to “experience” God by an emptying of the mind or an altered state of consciousness  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The role of the physical human body  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The positive role of human feelings and experience in biblical spirituality as represented in the fruit of the Spirit  (   ) Yes   (   ) No

The proper appreciation of the good things in nature that God has given to us as witnesses of His kindness and other attributes  (   ) Yes   (   ) No
The healing power of Christ from sin and the results of sin  ( ) Yes  ( ) No
LESSON 2 | A MODEL OF SPIRITUALITY

Overview

Presenter notes 1. This lesson emphasizes biblical spirituality and a model to construct a healthy relationship with God, themselves, resources, and others.
2. This lesson features thoughts and exercises on seeing spirituality as something that should be planned and how it is much more than meditation.
3. As you consider the learning outcomes in the table below, you will notice that the objective of this lesson is to enable women to pay careful attention to their own needs to develop a healthy spiritual life.

Materials 1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible
5. Scissors
6. Glue
7. Cardstock paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Recognize the human need to connect with God, others, ourselves, and our resources for a healthy spirituality 2. Identify the need to grow</td>
<td>1. Analyses of biblical passages regarding the four arenas of relationship (Mission briefing and Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom: Exercise 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Create a plan for their spiritual growth</td>
<td>1. Preparation of a bookmark with areas where they need to grow (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom: Exercise 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Desire to improve their spirituality</td>
<td>1. Reflection on the model of spirituality emphasizing the four relationship arenas (Thinking it through: Question 3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

**Welcome** 7 minutes 1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 min).
2. This lesson is a continuation of lesson 1 (What Is Spirituality?).
3. Start the lesson by asking: “Are you spiritually healthy or just spiritually busy?”

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4. This lesson will focus on the practice of a healthy spirituality based on the biblical model mentioned in the previous lesson.

**Did you know?**

1. PowerPoint presentation “A Model of Spirituality.”
2. It is important to be clear in the PowerPoint presentation focusing on the four relationships to create this model of spirituality.
3. Slides 9-10 will also be used in "Next steps."

**Mission briefing**

1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).
2. Instructor can move around the room and make sure participants are going in the right direction.

**Thinking it through**

1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time for them to write their answers.
   - What did you learn from the model of spirituality proposed in the PowerPoint presentation?
     In this model we should have discipline in our spiritual life. It is better to start with 10 min worship and increase to 1 hour than to start with 1 hour and decrease to 10 min.
     All three parts of this model are based on relationships.
   - Do you follow this model? What can you do to improve your spirituality?
2. Encourage at least one participant to share her answer with the whole group.

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**

1. Complete the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. The passages are related to the four arenas where all Christians should focus in order to have a healthy spiritual life.
3. The participants are encouraged to look at biblical passages and the application for their lives.
4. A symbolic bookmark commitment will help them to visualize and remember the areas where they should grow.
5. Use the scissors, glue, and cardstock paper to create more permanent bookmarks.

**Next steps**

1. Discuss the following aspects with your partner:
   - What do you think about the roadblocks presented in the PowerPoint? Do you experience other kinds of roadblocks?
2. Pray for the removal of the roadblocks; also pray for growth in the four relationship arenas.
3. Encourage them to complete their PLPs.

**Summary**

1. A healthy spiritual life is not easy to obtain and demands daily discipleship. Each relationship is important for holistic growth.
2. The ways we relate to God, others, resources, and ourselves should always reflect Jesus, who is the focal point of our life.
For those who believe in God and consider themselves converted Christians, mature thinking and acting is a daily struggle. They want to act more like Jesus, yet have little if any idea how to reach this lofty goal.

1. Read Acts 2:42-47 and list all of the daily practices of the early church. Do you as a Christian follow the practices cited in this passage?
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2. Read the following passages and describe what it means to be a spiritually mature person: Rom 5:5; 1Cor 13:4-7; Eph 3:16-19; 5:1-2; 1 Thess 5:17.
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3. Many people who think they have reached maturity in faith act more like little spiritual children. What reasons do people use to justify that they are more grown up and "spiritual" than others?
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Do not forget:

*The goal of our spirituality is to live with a passion for the presence of God.*
1. The following passages are about relationships. Read and categorize each one of them according to the four arenas of relationships where we should grow.


Our relationship with God

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Our relationship with others

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Our relationship with ourselves

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Our relationship with our resources

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2. On the following bookmark, write a commitment to God to develop ways to grow in the four relationship arenas above. Cut it out and place it in your Bible to remind you about your commitment!
LESSON 3 | THE BIBLICAL ROLE OF A LEADER

Overview

Presenter notes
1. This lesson is a self-reflection on the life and role of spiritual leadership.
2. The leader concept will be better explained in module 4, which is dedicated to leadership.
3. This class attempts to focus on the biblical role of a spiritual leader.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Whiteboard
5. Dry erase marker
6. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand the biblical role of a leader</td>
<td>1. Written comments on biblical passages regarding the role of a leader (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Recognize the areas where they need growth</td>
<td>1. Written answer and discussion with partner on the PLP objectives (PLP handout)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Judge their own spiritual life growth</td>
<td>1. Reflection on their personal calling and spiritual growth (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
7 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 min).

Did you know?
35 minutes
1. PowerPoint presentation on the biblical role of a leader.

Mission briefing
15 minutes
1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
2. Participants can answer this handout in groups or by themselves.
3. Make sure that they have written full sentences.
4. If the time is not enough, encourage them to finish this assignment at home.

Thinking it through 5 minutes
1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - Is my calling sure?
   - Is my vision clear?
   - Is my passion hot?
   - Am I developing my gifts?
   - Is my character submitted to Christ?

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom 10 minutes
1. Ask the following question and get their feedback.
   - How can you implement passionate spirituality in your family, community, and church?
2. Presenter is responsible to conduct participants’ discussion on this topic.
3. If you have a whiteboard, write down the participants' insights.

Next steps 15 minutes
1. Spend time on the PLP.
2. Encourage them to reflect on their goals and actions based on the biblical roles of a leader.
3. Pray with partners for spiritual growth.

Summary
1. The role of a leader should be based on Scripture. Each person has been called by God and received spiritual gifts to be used in the work of His kingdom.
2. Biblical leaders should be more like Jesus instead of being managers or dictatorial leaders. The emphasis of a biblical leader is on guiding her followers to the kingdom of God.
There is no better way to discover the biblical role of a leader than by looking in the Scriptures. Here you will find some biblical passages regarding spiritual roles. For each passage, write a full sentence regarding the spiritual role of a leader.

Titus 2:4-5
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2 Tim 3:16-17
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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Gal 3:28
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Jas 1:27
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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Titus 1:9
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Eph 6:4
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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1 Cor 15:58
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Overview

Presenter notes
1. This lesson is on the theme of worship.
2. This lesson features thoughts and exercises on seeing worship as a way of communication between God and humanity.
3. As you consider the learning outcomes in the table below, you will notice that the objective of this lesson is to enable women to pay careful attention to how we worship God and the inspired principles, wisdom, and guidance that the world reveals about this subject.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Distinguish acceptable ways to worship God</td>
<td>1. Written list and analyses of biblical passages regarding worship, reverence, prayer, and music (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to integrate worshiping God and contextualization</td>
<td>1. Discussion with partner about ways to integrate worship into the context (Next steps: Question 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Judge their own way of worshiping God 2. Desire to worship God not only with feelings but also with their minds</td>
<td>1. Reflection on worship as exaltation of God the Creator instead of a religion based only on feelings (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2. Introduce this class by saying: “Let’s pray together to start our worship of God.” Prayer is part of worship!
| Did you know? | 1. PowerPoint presentation about worship and its characteristics.  
     2. It is important to highlight the point that God does not accept every kind of worship. When we worship God, He is the One who should be happy with the worship, not us. |
| --- | --- |
| Mission briefing | 1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).  
     2. The participants do not need to complete the full handout; however, it is important to give answers for at least a few biblical texts in each section (worship, reverence, music, and prayer).  
     3. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants divide up the passages and complete the handout using few words.  
     4. It would be helpful to hear participants' answers to this question: What does this (different ways to approach God) suggest to us as a world church, as we deal with the culturally different ways in which people today express their reverence, praise, and joy as they come into God’s presence? |
| Thinking it through | 1. Ask the following question for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.  
     - Is my worship real worship of God, or do I worship Him by doing what is good for me? |
     - Ask the following question: How can you reflect Jesus and His kingdom during the worship experience?  
     2. The participants can discuss the question in small groups.  
     3. Give time to write the answers.  
     4. Some participants can share their answers with the whole group. |
| Next steps | 1. Discuss the following with your partner:  
     - How can I make my worship experience closer to God's desire instead of my own feelings?  
     - How can I help the church to be closer to the biblical worship of God without losing the contextualization aspect? |
| Summary | 1. The focus of worship is not on the worshiper, but on God.  
     2. There are many ways to worship God that He may accept, yet we should be aware that God does not accept anthropocentric worship, for this does not exalt Him, but ourselves. |
As Adventist Christians, we believe that the Bible is God’s revealed Word. Although the events and messages recorded there happened in various cultural settings, it still contains inspired principles, wisdom, and guidance for all peoples, all cultures, and all languages throughout the world for all time. Below are four topics that deal specifically with the ways we approach God: worship, prayer, reverence, and music. Look up the texts for each topic. Your initial goal is to read the text without “theologizing” it, just taking it at face value unless the context indicates a more symbolic meaning.

Worship

In the right-hand column, summarize what the text says about worship—where, how, etc.

“Come into his presence and worship Him…”

Gen 22:5  
John 4:24  
Ps 138:2  
Ps 134:2  
1 Cor 14:26-33  
1 Tim 2:8  
1 Chr 16:29  
Ps 99:5

Reverence

In the right-hand column, summarize what the text says about how reverence is shown.

“Show reverence for Him…”

1 Chr 29:20  
Ps 46:10  
Exod 3:5  
Lev 16:24  
Josh 5:14  
2 Chr 29:28  
Ps 5:7
Music

In the right-hand column, summarize what the text says about music—what kinds, how, etc.

"Make music to the Lord..."

Ps 100:2
Ps 98:4
Ps 150:3
Ps 150:4
Ps 150:5
1 Cor 14:15

Prayer

In the right-hand column, summarize what the text suggests about prayer—where, when, how.

"Let people everywhere pray..."

1 Kgs 8:35,44, 48
Job 42:8
Matt 6:6
Luke 5:33
Luke 6:12
Acts 16:13
Acts 10:9
1 Cor 11:13
1 Cor 14:15
Phil 1:4
Jas 5:14
Exod 9:29
Dan 9:3
1 Tim 2:8
Ps 95:6
Luke 18:13
1 Cor 11:4

We have looked briefly at some of the ways the Bible records people approaching God in different places and times. What does this suggest to us—a world church—as we deal with the culturally different ways in which people today express their reverence, praise, and joy as they come into God’s presence?
How can you reflect Jesus and His kingdom during the worship experience?

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LESSON 5 | THE ART OF FORGIVENESS

Overview

Presenter notes 1. Giving and receiving forgiveness are important for everybody.
2. This lesson prioritizes the need for everybody to deal with this subject and how forgiveness can change lives. Forgiveness is good for everybody, especially for the ones who forgive!
3. It is not easy to measure how people grasp this concept because forgiveness is a process. The instructor should emphasize divine aid in this process.
4. The instructor is advised to facilitate a communion service during the same week as this lesson; this will reaffirm the aspects explained in this lesson.

Materials 1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Recognize that forgiveness comes from God 2. Know how to ask God’s forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Presentation on forgiveness (Did you know?) 2. Written analysis on biblical forgiveness (Mission briefing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Become agents of forgiveness 2. Practice the experience of forgiveness in their own lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussion and written answers (Mission briefing: Question 3) 2. Written letter to somebody who should receive your forgiveness or someone you should ask for it 3. Pray for it (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Check which roadblocks they should eliminate in order to grow with Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Reflection on their spirituality (Thinking it through)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome 1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 min).
7 minutes

Did you know? 1. PowerPoint presentation on forgiveness theme.
35 minutes

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Mission briefing 15 minutes
1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
2. Instructor can move around the room to certify that participants are going in the right direction, answering questions from the handout.
3. Pay attention to the answers on the last question. Do you think that it is possible to forgive others like Jesus does?
4. Everybody should understand that Christians should forgive others because God also forgave us.
5. Instructors can move directly to the following step, “Thinking it through.”

Thinking it through 5 minutes
1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
2. What do you learn from this model of spirituality?
   • In this model we should have discipline in our spiritual life. It is better to start with 10 min worship and jump to 1 hour than start with 1 hour and change to 10 min.
   • All three parts of this model are based on relationships.
3. What do you think about the roadblocks presented in the PowerPoint? Are there some others you experience?

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom 10 minutes
1. Pray with the participants before they start this section.
2. Remind them that this part is called “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” and the best way to reflect Jesus is to ask Him for help. God is the only one who can help us and set us free!
3. If there is time, read Matt 18:15 together before they start to write.
4. Have each participant write a letter to someone she should forgive and pray for it.
5. Encourage them to give the letters to the people that they decided to forgive and pray with those people.

Next steps 15 minutes
1. Discuss the following with your partner, then pray:
   • Do you think that God has forgiven you? Pray for acceptance of forgiveness.
   • What should you do to receive divine forgiveness? God loves us like a Father. We just should ask for his forgiveness. Pray for it!
2. Pray also for individuals who struggle to receive divine forgiveness.

Summary
1. Forgiveness comes from God; the closer humans are to Him, the easier will be the process of forgiveness.
2. Pray! Pray! Pray! God will set you free and you will feel peace.
3. Ask for some feedback from participants on what they learned from the lesson.
1. Matt 18:22 says that we should forgive seventy times seven; that is what we were taught, that is what the Bible says, and that is what we have to do, although it is not easy. What is your reaction when somebody makes a mistake against you and it hurts your feelings? Is it easy to forgive?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Which “process” do you use to forgive others? Which “process” do you use to ask for forgiveness from others?

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3. Forgiveness is not only about others, but also about our own spiritual growth. Love and forgiveness cannot be separated. If we choose to live out the love of God as the purpose of our life, then forgiving is an option that cannot be avoided. Because we are sinners, we should forgive others. Do you think that it is possible to forgive others like Jesus does?


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139
“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother” (Matt 18:15).

Write a letter to someone whom you should forgive or ask for forgiveness. Pray for it!
THE GLASSES THROUGH WHICH YOU SEE THE WORLD
Overview

Presenter notes  1. This lesson on worldview has a Christian perspective. The Bible is filled with principles for an effective Christian worldview as well as thoughtful insights about how to understand others according to their worldviews.
   2. This lesson features thoughts and exercises on seeing the world through the Christian lenses given by God in Scripture. This will enable the understanding of other viewpoints, for without understanding there is no transformation!
   3. As you consider the learning outcomes in the table below, you will notice that the objective of this lesson is to enable women to pay careful attention to how they see the world.

Materials  1. Lesson handout for each participant
   2. PLP handout
   3. Pens and note cards
   4. Bibles for all participants if possible
   5. YouTube video: “Why Oprah Says We All Lead Spiritual Lives | Oprah’s Lifeclass | Oprah Winfrey Network”
   6. Pair of glasses and/or sunglasses as a visual aid
   7. PowerPoint presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand that worldview influences everything that we do and think  2. Understand the biblical worldview concept</td>
<td>1. Written list of sources that may influence their worldview (Thinking it through)  2. Written list of biblical passages on biblical worldview (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to be aware of other worldviews that are not biblically based</td>
<td>1. Discussion with partner about ways to avoid non-biblical worldview influence (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Sense God’s desire for them to see the world they live in through biblical lenses  2. Sense of respect for different worldviews</td>
<td>1. Write a friendly letter to a person with a non-biblical worldview (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Teaching plan

**Welcome**  
10 minutes

1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 minutes).
2. Introduce the PLP and the concept of a partner.
3. Introduce this class with the activity of drawing a figure in the dots (handout).
4. Compare the results! How many different figures did we come up with? What does this activity teach us about how we think? What can we learn from it?

**Did you know?**  
35 minutes

1. PowerPoint presentation about worldview, its meanings, and its implications.

**Mission briefing**  
15 minutes

1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants divide up the passages and share their responses to the questions.
3. It would be helpful to hear some of the participants’ answers to this question: What should be the basic ingredients for a biblical worldview? Invite members to share their ideas with the rest of the group (3 min).

**Thinking it through**  
5 minutes

1. Ask the following question for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - What is my religious background? Does it influence my worldview?
   - Does my culture influence my worldview?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**  
13 minutes

1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. The participants do not need to complete the whole handout; however, encourage them to take it home.
3. Describe the following case study to the participants:
   - Your child is attending a public college/university. During her studies, she has been influenced by Eastern religions and New Age teachings. During one of her short vacations at home, she revealed to you that she has found “higher truths.”
   - Write a letter as a mother, not only helping her to understand that you care for her (in a loving way), but also helping her to understand that she is on slippery ground and you want to help her find her footing again.
4. After you show the video “Why Oprah Says We All Lead Spiritual Lives | Oprah's Lifeclass | Oprah Winfrey Network,” describe the following situation:
   - Your friend is an avid watcher of the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. He/she has heard Oprah talk about spirituality. This friend wants you to help her/him understand how Oprah is wrong in her position.
   - You are asked to write an “open” letter to Oprah, explaining to her...
why you think she is wrong (use biblical arguments) and why her message is deceptive.

**Next steps**

15 minutes

1. Discuss the following questions with your partner and pray:
   - In what ways do you feel like you are growing as a Christian?
   - In what areas do you feel like you are struggling?
   - What would you like me to pray for this week regarding your values?
   - Establish a specific time to pray for each other as well as for one other person whom you both can encourage to change their worldview.

**Summary**

1. Christians have a biblical worldview. They also are aware of external values that can damage this biblical worldview. Christians also have compassion for others who may not share this worldview.

2. The biblical worldview will change our thinking, expectations, and actions. With these perspectives in mind, we can influence others in a kindly way.
Draw a figure in the dots.
Everyone has a worldview, whether they realize it or not. Your response to news about an abortion clinic is based upon your worldview. Your response to a school shooting is based upon your worldview. Your response to evolution is based on your worldview. Your response to issues of life and death is based upon your worldview. Everyone has developed a “system of beliefs” and core values that they operate from. The goal is to be sure that your “system of beliefs” is based totally on the Word of God!

1. Use the following Bible verses to understand the biblical worldview. In addition, write using your own words what each text emphasizes. You can use only a few words for each verse. Make it very visual!

Rom 12:2; Col 3:17; Eph 4:17-21; 1 Pet 1:14-15; Jas 1:22; John 18:37

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2. Now you are aware of what worldview is and how it influences your life. Using your own words, describe the basic ingredients for a biblical worldview.

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________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Your child is attending a public college/university. During her studies, she has been influenced by Eastern religions and New Age teachings. During one of her short vacations at home, she revealed to you that she has found “higher truths.”

1. Write a letter as a mother, not only helping her to understand that you care for her (in a loving way), but also helping her to understand that she is on slippery ground and you want to help her find her footing again.

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2. Your friend is an avid watcher of the Oprah Winfrey Show. He/she has heard Oprah talk about spirituality. This friend wants you to help her/him understand how Oprah is wrong in her position. You are asked to write an “open” letter to Oprah, explaining to her why you think she is wrong (use biblical arguments) and why her message is deceptive.

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Different Types of Contextualization

1. The contextualized life (adapting the life)
   - Missionary identification
   - Incarnational life
   - Learning culture

2. The contextualized approach (adapting the ways we reach people meaningfully within their context)
   - Witnessing and evangelism methods that work
   - Methods of dealing with conflict

3. The contextualized message (adapting our message to the questions and needs of the people)
   - Prioritizing and sequencing of the message
   - Adding as needed—beyond “the 28”
   - Focusing—emphasis
   - Waiting—John 16:12, 13 “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.”

4. Contextualized worship (adapting the ways we worship)
   - Buildings—architecture
   - Music
   - Prayer modes
   - Styles of teaching
   - Ways of showing reverence
   - Types of service

5. Contextualization of the old culture (evaluation of elements from the old culture—what do we keep? What do we discard? How? How do we avoid syncretism?)
   - Uncritical acceptance
   - Uncritical rejection
   - Critical contextualization
LESSON 2 | THE WORLD IS NOT CHRISTIAN

Overview

Presenter notes
1. This presentation is a continuation of the previous class.
2. Lesson 2 is an overview of major religions in the world.
3. In Brazil, 86.8% of the population is Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical), but this lesson attempts to show participants that Brazil is not the totality of the world and there are other major religions in the rest of the world that also need to know about Christ.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Gain a brief overview of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam 2. Identify differences and similarities between Adventism and other religions</td>
<td>1. Analysis of the chart comparing six major world religions (Did you know?) 2. Written answers regarding Christianity and Adventism (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Learn how to answer common questions about Christianity</td>
<td>1. Written answers and reflection on biblical passages (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Desire to be a missionary and reach other religions</td>
<td>1. Discussion with partner on the topic of mission to the world (Next steps) 2. Reflection on questions about missionary life and how to reach others (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
2 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer. Start the presentation by asking: “What are the five major religions in the world?”

Did you know?
35 minutes
1. YouTube video: “The five major world religions—John Bellaimey” (12 min)
2. Distribute the “Did you know?” handout and read the chart with the participants.
3. Distribute the “Further reading” handout and encourage them to read it at home.

**Mission briefing**

1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (10 min).
2. It would be helpful to hear what all the participants have to say in answer to the questions (5 min).

**Thinking it through**

1. Ask the following question for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - Are you ready to go and preach the Good News to people who worship other gods instead of our Jesus Christ?
   - Are you willing to do that?
   - Which changes do you need to make in your life to be open to preaching in another context that is not Christian?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**

1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. It is better to have the participants answer these questions by themselves and then discuss it with others.
3. The participants do not need to finish the handout, but encourage them to finish at home.
4. Make sure that all participants at least answer questions 1 and 2.
5. Encourage them to share their answers with the whole group.

**Next steps**

1. Discuss the following question with your partner and pray.
   - Matt 10:5-6 says: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
   - After this presentation, what does this Bible text mean to you?

**Summary**

1. Although the majority of the Brazilian population is Christian, there are other major religions and worldviews represented in the territory that are usually not reached by traditional evangelistic initiatives. Reaching the unreached has to be a priority.
2. In addition, this presentation provided enough material to the participants to identify the differences between religions and how to approach their adherents.
### Did You Know?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Followers Worldwide (estimated 2001 figures)</th>
<th>Name of Deity</th>
<th>Founder</th>
<th>Holy Book</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Basic Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>362 million</td>
<td>The Buddha did not teach a personal deity.</td>
<td>The Buddha</td>
<td>No one book—sacred texts, including the Dhammapada</td>
<td>Buddhist monks and nuns</td>
<td>• Persons achieve complete peace and happiness (nirvana) by eliminating their attachment to worldly things. • Nirvana is reached by following the Noble Eightfold Path: Right views; Right resolve; Right speech; Right conduct; Right livelihood; Right effort; Right mindfulness; Right concentration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>2 billion</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>Jesus Christ</td>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Priests, ministers, monks, and nuns</td>
<td>• There is only one God, who watches over and cares for his people. • Jesus Christ was the son of God. He died to save humanity from sin. His death and resurrection made eternal life possible for others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>820 million</td>
<td>Three main gods: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva</td>
<td>No one founder</td>
<td>No one book—sacred texts, including the Vedas, the Puranas</td>
<td>Guru, holy man, Brahmin priest</td>
<td>• The soul never dies, but is continually reborn. • Persons achieve happiness and enlightenment after they free themselves from their earthly desires. • Freedom from earthly desires comes from a lifetime of worship, knowledge, and virtuous acts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>1.2 billion</td>
<td>God (Allah)</td>
<td>Muhammad</td>
<td>Qur'an</td>
<td>No clergy but a scholar class called the ulama and the imam, who may lead prayers</td>
<td>• Persons achieve salvation by following the Five Pillars of Islam and living a just life. These pillars are: faith; prayer; almsgiving, or charity to the poor; fasting, which Muslims perform during Ramadan; pilgrimage to Mecca.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>14.5 million</td>
<td>God (Yahweh)</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Hebrew Bible, including the Torah</td>
<td>Rabbis</td>
<td>• There is only one God, who watches over and cares for his people. • God loves and protects his people, but also holds people accountable for their sins and shortcomings. • Persons serve God by studying the Torah and living by its teachings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucianism</td>
<td>6.3 million</td>
<td>Confucius (viewed by many as a god)</td>
<td>Confucius</td>
<td>the Analects, the Five Classics</td>
<td>No clergy</td>
<td>• Social order, harmony, and good government should be based on strong family relationships. • Respect for parents and elders is important to a well-ordered society. • Education is important both to the welfare of the individual and to society.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What are some of the things that are common to all religions?

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2. What is unique to Christianity?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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3. What is common among all Christians?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What is unique about Adventism?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
1. In John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; No one comes to the Father but through me." What does this verse mean?
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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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2. How can we have hope to see our beloved ones who died without knowing Jesus Christ before they died?
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3. Isn't it arrogant and intolerant to claim that Christianity is the only true religion?
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4. Hasn't the idea that Christianity is the only true religion led to wars of persecution against other religions?
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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Evangelism

The following are some general principles to keep in mind when sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a friend who has little understanding of Christianity.

Our approach should be gradual. We should not try to move our friend from, say, his or her denial of God’s existence to signing his or her name at the end of the Four Spiritual Laws booklet in one evening. Take it a step at a time. The primary issue should be, who is God? All other issues are, at this point, secondary. As we have seen, humanity has a tendency to push God away. We are trying to move our friend’s thinking toward the truth that God is personal, and because He is personal He can make himself known, which He has done through Jesus Christ.

We must be holistic in our approach rather than reductionistic. By that I mean that we must resist reducing a person to a single level of their being, the intellect being the level that is usually singled out. Instead, we should see each individual as a whole person, as someone who is motivated not just by rational arguments but also by needs and emotions. The following suggestions show how to approach a person on each level of his or her being.

1. **The intellectual level**

   The many variations of world religions can be summarized into three basic worldviews:

   - **Naturalism (atheism):**
     Ultimate reality is physical matter.
     The physical universe is eternal in some form or another, closed (no supernatural influence), and operates according to natural laws.
     Humanity is a physical being that is the result of only evolutionary forces.

   - **Monism:**
     Ultimate reality is spiritual, or immaterial, and usually characterized as being impersonal and undifferentiated.
     The universe is an emanation from the spiritual and in some sense less real (illusory).
     Humanity is identical in its nature to that of ultimate reality.

   - **Theism:**
     Ultimate reality is an eternal, infinite, and personal God.
     The universe was created by God out of nothing and is both material and immaterial.
     Humanity was created by God in His image and is both material and immaterial.

   How can a person tell which worldview is true? By testing them against three criteria for truth:
1. Logical consistency: A true worldview will not contradict itself.
2. Factuality: A true worldview will fit the facts.
3. Viability: One can live consistently with a worldview that is true.

How do the three worldviews measure up to the above tests?

**Naturalism**

**Logical Consistency:** It is inconsistent for a naturalist to argue that the evidence for Naturalism is convincing and that one ought to choose it. Why? Because a naturalist says that only matter exists. If that is true, then our thoughts are determined by biological stimuli, not by the evidence or by principles of reason. In addition, there is no “enduring ‘I’” that is doing the reasoning or the arguing (Moreland, 96).

**Factuality:** If matter (or energy) is all there is, which is the assumption of Naturalism, then the implication that follows from the fact that something exists is that the universe has existed in some form or another forever. Astronomers, however, have found evidence that indicates the universe had a beginning. The second law of thermodynamics, for example, which says that energy becomes increasingly inaccessible, indicates that the universe began at a certain finite point in time, otherwise all the available energy would have dissipated long ago. In other words, an infinite amount of time would already have outlasted a finite amount of energy.

**Viability:** Most people attach unique value to human life—at least to their own human life. But such sense of value is inconsistent with Naturalism because in Naturalism there is no foundation for considering human life to be uniquely valuable compared to animal life. That is because Naturalism says humanity is nothing more than an advanced form of animal.

Also, as witnessed by the fact that people judge the immoral actions of other people and of various cultures, they live as though morality is based on some standard that is external to themselves and to culture. But Naturalism cannot provide such an objective moral standard.

**Monism**

**Logical Consistency:** Monism—the belief that ultimate reality is beyond all differentiation—leads one to say that there is no absolute truth. Why? Because truth implies a distinction between truth and non-truth. Monism, however, being undifferentiated, does not allow for such distinctions. It, therefore, includes and absorbs all concepts of truth.

But the statement that there is no absolute truth is itself an absolute truth, and thereby self-refuting, which is a logical inconsistency.

**Factuality:** Monism, again, says that ultimate reality is without differentiation or separation. It is thus not a form of intelligence, because intelligence makes distinctions between things. Such an undifferentiated source is inadequate as a First Cause for a reality that manifests distinctions and for a humanity that exhibits intelligence.

**Viability:** Most monistic worldviews say that one should act non-violently toward all life. But one cannot do so and also eat food, for even vegetarians kill plants, which is a form of life.
Theism

**Logical Consistency**: Humanity lives with the sense that we have value as persons, that life has a purpose, and that morality has meaning. Such things are sufficiently founded only on the Creator-God who is personal (therefore we have value), who created us to be in fellowship with Him (therefore life has an ultimate meaning), and who is holy (therefore morality has a sufficient foundation).

**Factuality**: The theory that the universe was created by an intelligent Cause is consistent with the principle of causality, which says that every effect requires a sufficient cause.

**Viability**: Since we are made in the image of a personal God, it is natural for us to live consistently with the understanding that persons have value and that morality has meaning.

2. **The needs level**

As we have seen, the non-Christian world religions make God out to be distant, abstract, unknowable, and inconceivable. In the other hand, the God of Christianity is unique in that He is inherently personal, and therefore knowable at the core of His Being.

Take a moment and imagine what it would be like to live in a world where we could not be in a relationship with God. What kinds of spiritual needs would be left unfulfilled in our lives?

First, life would lack significance, knowing that it is so fleeting.

Second, there would be a feeling of being unfulfilled, sensing that the beauty around us must mean there is something out there to relate to, but not being able to connect with it.

Third, we might also experience a sense of frustration at the failure to improve ourselves morally, not only as individuals but as the human race in general. After all, wars have been a constant in human history.

Fourth, we would be anxious about death, not knowing what happens after we die.

The following is a discussion of those spiritual needs as they are met through the God of the Bible. Note how each Person of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is involved in a specific way in meeting these common needs.

A. **The need for significance.** Significance, or meaning, in life is best founded in that which is eternal.

We can strive for wealth or accolades or political change, but such things are temporary and fleeting. We can leave a legacy for others, but there is no guarantee that it will last. The writer of Ecclesiastes bemoaned this fact.

I hated all things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless (Ecclesiastes 2:18-19).

The phrase “under the sun” (used twice above and twenty-nine times altogether in Ecclesiastes) refers to the idea of being earthbound, confined to the limitations of what this world has to offer apart from God (Wright, 1152).

Only as our lives are grounded in the eternal God will we have a sense that this life has significance and that it is not mired in futility.
B. The need for emotional and relational fulfillment. We are by nature social creatures, which means we are most fulfilled when in loving relationships with other people. You can take away the accolades, the riches, and the education, and life will go on. Without loving relationships, though, life becomes empty, void of meaning.

What we as Christians are saying is that just as we find fulfillment in relationship on a human level, so we can find even greater fulfillment as we relate to a personal and loving God on the spiritual level.

The truth that God is personal—possesses the characteristics of a person—is something that we as Christians often take for granted, but it is significant nevertheless. Consider, for example, the implications that flow from the fact that God, by His very nature, is personal.

Only if God is personal...
- Can we have a relationship with Him.
- Can He communicate with us.
- Can He hear our prayers.
- Can He love us.
- Can He forgive us.
- Can He empathize with our suffering.
- Can there be a sufficient foundation for our value as persons.
- Can there be a sufficient foundation for our moral sensitivities.
- Can there be a sufficient foundation for meaning in life.
- Can there be a sufficient foundation for hope.

Love, empathy, value, meaning, and hope are essential to life. They are what fulfill us. We could not experience them, however, if God were anything less than a personal Being.

Speaking of love in particular, we are fulfilled in love, and we can be especially fulfilled knowing that God loves us. And we know that He loves us because He has demonstrated His love in history through His Son (Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:8-10).

In addition, we can go beyond knowing about God’s love to having fellowship with Him through the Holy Spirit, who gives us “access to the Father” (Ephesians 2:18; Galatians 4:4-6).

C. The need for the power to change. We fail morally because we know the good that we want to do but are often unable to it (Romans 7:18).

Humankind has made myriads of attempts to transform itself. But the real problem goes much deeper than anything humankind can come up with, because it goes to the nature of the human heart itself.

Only a holy God can change the human heart, and He has done so through the indwelling and transforming Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 8:5-17; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

D. The need for hope and assurance. That which lies beyond death is both unknown and fearful, causing anxiety and despair.
As Christians, we are assured of what will happen after death, because Jesus Christ demonstrated in history His victory over death. The historical fact of Jesus’ resurrection gives us hope in this life and the assurance of being accepted with God in the life to come.

The Holy Spirit has a role in this too, because God has “set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (2 Corinthians 1:22; emphasis added).

3. The emotional level

“People need facts to know what decision to make,” wrote one evangelist, “but emotion to get them to make the decision” (Innes, 125). The way to touch a person deeply is by touching him or her on the emotional level. And the way to do that is through an image or word picture, such as a testimony, a story, or an illustration.

The following story illustrates how much God cares for us and how He demonstrated that care by suffering on our behalf through Jesus Christ.

Author Bob Stromberg tells of the time he broke his arm as a young boy. As his dad drove him to the hospital, the numbness wore off and the pain suddenly shot through his newly injured arm. Bob pleaded, “Oh, please, Dad, can’t you do something?” His dad responded, “Son, I wish I could take the pain of that broken arm right out of your body and into my own.”

Bob questioned that his dad would really want to do that, but his dad responded, “Someday, Bob, you’ll understand.”

Years later, on a fall day, Bob watched helplessly as his son, distracted by his effort to launch a kite, tripped into a pile of burning leaves and sticks, severely burning his hands. As Bob drove him to the hospital, his son said “Oh, Dad, it hurts so bad.” At that moment Bob remembered and understood what his dad had told him years before, and he responded, “Son, if I could, I would take the pain in your hands and put it right into my own.”

Then it occurred to Bob that is precisely what God had done through Jesus when Jesus took our sins upon himself and paid the penalty of that sin on our behalf (Stromberg, chapter 4).

Such a story will stick in the mind of a student and stimulate his or her thinking.

We’ve covered a lot of ground! We’ve gone all the way from discussing the patterns within the spectrum of world religions, to talking about the motivations behind our religious urge, to articulating the six distinctives of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and finally to suggesting some principles to keep in mind for sharing the good news of Christ with a friend. I hope that as a result you have gained a greater appreciation for the uniqueness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Overview

Presenter notes
1. This lesson is on the theme of contextualization vs. principles.
2. This lesson features thoughts and exercises that see culture not necessarily as bad in reference to the Gospel, but as an instrument to connect the message to the people.
3. As you consider the learning outcomes in the table below, you will notice that the objective of this lesson is to enable women to pay careful attention to how culture can influence biblical teachings, but NEVER biblical principles.

Materials
1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible
5. “Culture’s role in writing Scripture” handout for further reading

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand that contextualization is not wrong for the church, but necessary 2. Understand what contextualization and biblical principles are</td>
<td>1. Identification of biblical example on the contextualization subject (Mission briefing) 2. Analysis of biblical passages on biblical contextualization (Mission briefing: Question 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how to integrate and value the gospel and the contextual culture 2. Learn how to deal with syncretism</td>
<td>1. Written answers regarding gospel and culture (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom) 2. Discussion with partner about ways to integrate the gospel and culture in everyday life (Next steps) 3. Reflection on syncretism (Did you know?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Sense of respect for other cultures</td>
<td>1. Analysis of their own cultural characteristics (Thinking it through) 2. Reflection upon cultural influence in their lives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching plan

Welcome
2 minutes

1. Welcome and opening prayer.

Did you know?
35 minutes

1. PowerPoint presentation about contextualization and the importance of contextualizing some biblical teachings without affecting the biblical principles.
2. Spend time on the syncretism section and ask the following questions.
3. What are the reasons behind these behaviors? (pictures on PowerPoint)
4. Think of examples of different types of syncretism (Christian and non-Christian)
   • What are the major causes of syncretism?
   • How can we avoid syncretism?
5. Use this time to distribute the handout “Culture’s role in writing Scripture” for further reading.

Mission briefing
15 minutes

1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants share their responses to the questions.
3. It would be helpful to hear what all the participants have to say in answer to this question: How did biblical figures deal with contextualization? Invite members to share their ideas with the rest of the group (3 min).

Thinking it through
5 minutes

1. Ask the following question for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   • Why does this topic have particular importance for the church at this time in history?
   • Why is this topic important for my personal life?

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom
15 minutes

1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. The participants do not need to complete the whole handout; however, encourage them to take it home.
3. The questions are part of a critical contextualization experience. The participants should be able to think about culture and create their own responses on the contextualization issue.
4. All questions try to affirm the participants’ faith based on biblical principles without losing an incarnational ministry.

Next steps
15 minutes

1. Discuss the following questions with your partner and pray: Which aspects of my culture, the church (remember, we are the church) should be more flexible to reach others? Which aspects of my culture should I avoid because it goes against my principles?

Summary

1. We all live under a cultural influence, but we should be able to
distinguish what is acceptable and what is not. Principles never change and they are rooted in Scripture, although interpretations of principles may differ.

2. Contextualization is an instrument to spread the message in a more receptive and understandable way, but context can never be disconnected from Scripture.
1. Look up the assigned Scripture texts below to find examples of contextualization or adaptation in the Bible. In each case, what was contextualized or adapted? How? With what effect?


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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. In 1 Cor 9:19-23 Paul summarizes his approach to people of other cultures and religious beliefs. How does this approach relate to contextualization?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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3. In Acts 15, Paul worked hard to convince the church to have different requirements for Jewish and Gentile Christians in regard to many of the Jewish laws (including circumcision). He felt this was necessary because of the context from which the Gentiles were coming. Then, just a few verses later (Acts 16:1-3), he insists on circumcising Timothy before taking him on his next missionary journey. Why did he do that? What principle is there for us in the story (“case”)?

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4. Read Paul’s advice to the Corinthians in 1 Cor 10:23-33 in regard to foods offered to idols in the temple. What principle can we learn from his advice?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
People will understand the gospel in the terms of their own language and culture. This is not an option. So, it is the obligation of every Christian to assist new believers to integrate gospel and culture.

- To understand the gospel message
- To find appropriate ways to express the gospel
- To understand what the gospel condemns and affirms in their culture

1. Give three responses to culture:

Wholesale acceptance (uncritical contextualization)
- Uncritical acceptance of local customs
- Often based on a deep respect for culture
- Inherent weaknesses

Wholesale rejection (denial of the old)
- Virtually all cultural forms are thought to be linked to traditional religions
- Often ethnocentric at heart
- Inherent weaknesses

Critical contextualization is “the capacity to respond meaningfully to the gospel within the framework of one’s own situation. It is the process by which a local community integrates the gospel message with the real life context, blending text and context into the single, God intended reality called Christian living.” Mikha Joedhiswara, quoted in Bridging the Gap by Bruce Brashaw, p. 53.

Steps to critical contextualization:

Step One:

Step Two:
Step Three:
Probable outcomes

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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Step Four:

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Theological foundations

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LESSON 4 | HOLISTIC PRINCIPLES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Overview

Presenter notes 1. This class is an introduction to holistic ministry. It attempts to explain the subject more biblically, highlighting the principles of the Sabbath and Year of Jubilee and the concept of Shalom.
2. The following class (lesson 5) will examine the historical and practical concepts of holistic ministry.

Materials 1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1. Understand the holistic principles in the Old Testament | 1. Carry out biblical principles of holism in their ministry
2. Implement holistic principles in their lives |
| **Heart** Participants will be able to... | 1. Desire to be involved in the mission of God
2. Sense of necessity of a holistic ministry |
| 1. Written assignment on biblical principles that shows the holistic concept of ministry (Mission briefing) | 1. Personal reflection on holistic ministry (Thinking it through)
2. Reflection on how to use these principles in everyday life (Thinking it through and Reflecting Jesus and His kingdom: Question 3) |
| 1. Discussion with partner regarding motivation (Next steps) | 2. Written answers (Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom) |

Teaching plan

**Welcome** 1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2 minutes

**Did you know?** 1. PowerPoint presentation about holistic principles: Sabbath, Year of Jubilee, Shalom, and Messianic Hope.
35 minutes

**Mission briefing** 1. Complete the “Mission briefing” handout (12 min).
15 minutes 2. Participants can complete the handout by themselves or in a group.
3. Make sure that everybody reads at least one passage for each concept in order to complete the handout.
4. Leaders can move around to hear the participants’ answers regarding the principles and themes in the Old Testament.
5. Highlight that all passages should be read with the holistic development concept in mind.

**Thinking it through**

5 minutes

1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - Are you willing to have a holistic ministry?
   - Which aspects of your life do you need to change in order to better serve others?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**

15 minutes

1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. Participants can use the “Mission briefing” handout to help them answer the questions on this handout.
3. Question 1 will make the biblical passages from the “Mission briefing” handout more practical and personal for each participant and their context.
4. Question 2 deals with the New Testament concept of holistic ministry in Jesus’ ministry, which should be our major example of holistic ministry.
5. Questions 2 and 3 are an integration of biblical (question 2) and personal (question 3). The participants should evaluate their own ministry and compare it with Jesus’ ministry on this earth.

**Next steps**

15 minutes

1. Discuss the following question with your partner and pray: The hope of the Messianic coming was a motive for many Israelites to serve God and help others. This hope should also be our motivation as we live in God’s kingdom and in the hope of His second coming. Are you motivated by this idea, or are there some other motivations involved?
2. Pray to have the right motivation!

**Summary**

1. The Sabbath, Year of Jubilee, and concept of Shalom are principles of holistic development in the Old Testament. The holistic themes in the OT should also be part of our ministry.
2. We are part of God’s kingdom and we transform individuals and communities with His holistic gospel as we announce His kingdom to come.
The Sabbath, the Year of Jubilee, and the concept of Shalom are the three principles and themes in the Old Testament that most integrally encompass holistic development (Kuhn, 2005). Thus, in order to expand these ideas, use the following Bible texts to get some concepts that are linked to holistic development.

**Sabbath**
Gen 2:1-3; Exod 20:8-11; 31:12-17

**Year of Jubilee**
Exod 20; 23; Lev 25:1-7; Deut 15:1-3; 31:10

**Shalom**
Isa 32:17; 11:6; Prov 16:7; Ps 4:8
1. Which concepts from the Sabbath, Year of Jubilee, and Shalom can you integrate more in your everyday life in order to improve your holistic ministry?
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2. As we see in this lesson, the principles of holistic ministry were established in the Old Testament, but continued in the New Testament with the ministry of Jesus. Can you remember any examples of Jesus’ holistic ministry? Try to avoid answers like “Jesus demonstrated love to others” or “Jesus healed the sick.”
Some verses that may be helpful: Luke 4:18-19; 7:16; Mark 1:14-15.
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3. Could you have a holistic ministry like Jesus had on this earth? Why?
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4. Does this presentation change your view of holistic ministry? Why?
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LESSON 5 | WHOLE GOSPEL: TOWARD A BIBLICAL MODEL OF HOLISTIC

MINISTRY

Overview

Presenter notes

1. This presentation attempts to historically describe the whole gospel and how we may be part of it.
2. The PowerPoint presentation focuses on history, pointing to the roots of a holistic approach to humanity.
3. The lesson activities try to address the whole gospel in a more practical way. Instructors also can bring new insights and fresh examples.

Materials

1. Lesson handout for each participant
2. Pens and note cards
3. PowerPoint presentation
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Know what the whole gospel is</td>
<td>1. Reflection on presentation (Did you know?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Gain a brief overview of Jesus’ ministry to others on this earth</td>
<td>2. List of biblical principles (Mission briefing: Question 2)</td>
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<td>3. Written answer (Mission briefing)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Learn how the SDA Church can be involved in holistic ministry</td>
<td>1. Discussion with the whole group (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Discussion with partner about finding ways to implement holistic ministry in their lives (Next steps)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Sense of being part of holistic ministry to others</td>
<td>1. Reflection on how to integrate holistic ministry in their everyday life (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Identify their personal mission as part of the mission of the church</td>
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</table>
# Teaching plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Welcome</strong></th>
<th>1. Welcome and opening prayer.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 minutes</strong></td>
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</table>

| **Did you know?** | 1. PowerPoint presentation about holistic ministry.  
2. Presentation is an overview of the whole gospel and its theological shift. |
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<td><strong>35 minutes</strong></td>
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| **Mission briefing** | 1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).  
2. Participants can complete the handout by themselves or in a group.  
3. Instructors can move around to hear participants’ answers and then make some comments on the discussion. |
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>15 minutes</strong></td>
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| **Thinking it through** | 1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.  
• Which programs and projects do you know of that emphasize holistic ministry? Are you involved in any of these projects/programs? |
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 minutes</strong></td>
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</table>

| **Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom** | 1. Work through the "Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom" handout.  
2. Question 1 points to the responsibility to have a personal holistic ministry instead of leaving the ministry.  
3. Questions 2 and 3 try to connect the participant to the SDA Church goal and also incorporate them to the mission of the church.  
4. Participants will answer by themselves, but it will be helpful to hear some answers aloud for the whole group. |
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<tr>
<td><strong>15 minutes</strong></td>
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</table>

| **Next steps** | 1. Discuss the following question with your partner: how can your ministry be more holistic? Pray with your partner to find ways to help others develop in a holistic way.  
2. This answer should explore individual projects to help others develop in a holistic way, instead of church projects. |
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<td><strong>15 minutes</strong></td>
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</table>

| **Summary** | 1. History shows that the need to care for others is not something new for us: it is part of Jesus Christ's ministry. If Christ came to this earth and helped others to develop themselves, it is also our obligation to help others develop themselves in a holistic way.  
2. This lesson sought to show that holistic ministry should be part of our lifestyle, not only in the church sphere. |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

170
1. Based on the problems of suffering, poverty, oppression, and death as indicated in the Bible, please provide some reasons why you think Jesus came to this earth.

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2. List biblical examples providing clear biblical principles that must guide our ministries of compassion toward the poor, sick, and needy.

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
1. How should you proclaim and live out the whole gospel?
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2. What are the implications for the ministry and mission of the SDA Church?
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3. How should you and your church be involved?
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YOU ARE A LEADER
**Overview**

- **Presenter notes**
  1. This lesson contends that a woman may be a leader in her house, work, church, community, or any other environment. She can play a leadership role!
  2. Leadership for women is a way to empower every woman to have the desire to develop herself in many areas.
  3. Woman have great characteristics that improve their leadership skills.
  4. Since women in leadership positions is a delicate topic in the Adventist community, this lesson is an opportunity to develop women’s general skills for leadership, without the further claim of ordination.

- **Materials**
  1. PowerPoint presentation
  2. Handouts for each participant
  3. PLP handout
  4. Bibles for all participants if possible
  5. Whiteboard
  6. Dry erase marker

### Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head</strong> Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Know about women’s skills and the leadership roles of biblical women</td>
<td>1. Analysis of biblical examples of women’s leadership (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Develop leadership attitudes toward the immediate context</td>
<td>1. Discussion and partnership interaction on their leadership growth (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heart</strong> Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Judge the role of women in leadership positions 2. Desire to be a better leader</td>
<td>1. Discussion with the whole group regarding biblical text discordances (Mission briefing) 2. Reflection on their leadership roles (Welcome activity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching plan**

**Welcome**

1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 minutes).
2. Introduce the PLP and the concept of a partner.
3. Introduce this class by asking: “Which roles do you play in your life?”
4. Write on a whiteboard all the roles that each woman plays in everyday life.
5. Ask: “Which role described on this whiteboard do you play as a leader?” Then follow up by saying: “Today we will discover the leader behind each one of you!”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did you know?</th>
<th>1. PowerPoint presentation on leadership for women.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35 minutes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission briefing</th>
<th>1. Complete the &quot;Mission briefing&quot; handout (12 min).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants share their responses to the questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. It would be helpful to hear what some participants have to say in answer to the two questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Invite members to share their answers with the rest of the group (3 min).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. If you have time, help participants to understand the problematic nature of these two questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Attention: this lesson is not an apology for women’s ordination in places where this practice is not welcomed, but an initiative to empower and value many approaches to women’s ministry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking it through</th>
<th>1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>• Do you consider yourself a leader? Are you ready to play the leadership role in your life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Which areas of your life do you think you should improve in order to play the leadership role efficiently?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom</th>
<th>1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom” handout.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 minutes</td>
<td>2. The participants do not need to complete the whole handout; however, encourage them to take it home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The questions in these sections combine biblical texts with their experience as women to reflect Jesus &amp; His kingdom.</td>
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<td>4. Question 1 and 3 are designed to reflect on women’s roles in the Bible as leaders.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Question 2 refers to biblical passages that deal with women’s leadership. It will explore the participants’ knowledge of biblical interpretation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Question 4 is a personal reflection on a more changeable sphere. They should reflect on the leadership role and on God’s kingdom.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next steps</th>
<th>1. Discuss the following questions with your partner and pray:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>• In what ways do you feel like you are growing as a leader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In what areas do you feel like you are struggling?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What may we pray this week in regard to leadership development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

1. Women have many leadership skills that should be valuable. The Bible also has many examples of women’s leadership and their influence on others in the OT and NT. Although there is no doubt that women have valuable skills and can make contributions to the ministry of the church, there are still some who argue from the Bible that women should not have leadership roles in the church.
1. In the midst of the violent and turbulent aftermath of Joshua’s conquest of Canaan, “the Lord raised up judges” to provide leadership for the kingless people (Judg 2:16). One such leader was Deborah. At the beginning of Judges 4, the text reports that “Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time” (NIV). As both prophet and judge, Deborah exercised complete religious, political, judicial, and militaristic authority over the people of Israel. She was essentially Israel’s commander-in-chief, said to issue her rulings from beneath a palm in the hills of Ephraim. Can you describe more examples of women leaders in the Bible? Why did these women have leadership positions?

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2. 1 Tim 2:12 says: “But I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.” However, the Bible also gives examples of women in leadership positions, such as Miriam, who seems to have held special responsibilities in leading the Israelites in worship (Mic 6:4); Huldah, who was chosen by Josiah to interpret and authorize a document that would become the core of Jewish and Christian Scripture (2 Kgs 22); and Priscilla and Aquila, whom Paul always spoke affectionately about, calling them his “co-workers in Christ Jesus” (Rom 16:3-4). Why doesn’t 1 Tim 2:12 agree with other passages? Is there a mistake in the Scripture? How should we interpret these texts?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
1. There are many biblical examples of women who played leadership roles in history, such as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Tamar, Leah, Abigail, and Bathsheba. Which biblical figure do you think is a good example of leadership that inspires you? Why?
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2. When the Holy Spirit descended upon the first Christians at Pentecost, Peter drew from the words of the prophet Joel to describe what had happened, saying, “Your sons and daughters will prophesy...Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy” (Acts 2:17–18, NIV). What do you think Peter was saying in this passage? If the Pentecost happened today, what words would Peter use to describe the ministry of men and women?
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3. Read Prov 31:10-31 and write down the characteristics a virtuous woman should have. Can you identify any characteristics related to leadership skills?
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4. How can you be a leader for the kingdom of God?
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LESSON 2 | LEADING LIKE JESUS

Overview

Presenter notes
1. The idea of “servant leadership” emerged when it became clear that those who lead are not necessarily operating from a moral framework given by God.
2. This lesson begins with Christ setting the example of what servant leaders think and do.

Materials
1. PowerPoint presentation
2. Handouts for each participant
3. Bibles for all participants if possible

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Know the basic principles of servant leadership 2. Understand that servant leadership is Christ’s method of leadership</td>
<td>1. Discuss the personal choices that will need to happen in order to practice being a servant (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom) 2. Written answer on biblical passages on Christ’s ministry (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Discuss and make plans to be specifically “other-focused” (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Discover what leading through serving others might look like in their own lives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Discussion with the partner about shifting from simply serving to acquiring a servant’s heart (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Experience the ultimate joy of placing others first</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
10 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 minutes).
2. Introduce this class with a transition from how all women are called to be leaders to a servant leadership model.
3. Start with the question: What is the fundamental difference between doing service and being a servant? Anyone can “do a service,” but being a servant requires you to examine your purpose, motivation, and rationale behind leadership.

Did you know?
35 minutes
1. PowerPoint presentation about servant leadership and its implications.
Mission briefing  
15 minutes
1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).
2. Instructors can move around the room and engage with participants.
3. It would be helpful to hear what all the participants have to say in answer to the question: “What can we do to have the mind of Christ?” Invite members to share their ideas with the rest of the group (3 min).

Thinking it through  
5 minutes
1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - Consider the cost of being a servant leader. What will you have to change/give up to become a servant leader?
   - What scenarios come to your mind as immediate opportunities to practice the mind of Christ as a servant leader?

Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom  
13 minutes
1. Work through the “Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom” handout.
2. The participants do not need to complete the whole handout; however, encourage them to take it home.
3. There is a brief descriptive paragraph followed by a journey through several passages where Christ either models servant leadership or calls His disciples to embrace it.
4. Questions 1 through 4 unpack the way Jesus washed His disciples’ feet and called them to follow Him.
5. Question 5 addresses the two different roads of leadership where James and John are absorbed with selfish pursuits. Again, invite the participants to paraphrase this story, which means avoiding using the words that are written. They need to find new ones to convey the meaning of the story (of course, the small words like if, the, and, to, etc. are needed).
6. Question 6 is designed to get participants to recalibrate their expectations of leadership based on Christ’s example. First, they are to devise their own brief list of qualities, then discuss and come to consensus, and finally share with the rest of the participants at large.

Next steps  
15 minutes
1. Have the partners discuss the following questions with each other and pray:
   - In what ways do you feel like you are growing as a servant leader?
   - In what areas do you feel like you are struggling?
   - What would you like me to pray for this week regarding your leadership development?
   - Servant leadership begins with caring about the needs of others first. Establish a specific time to pray for each other as well as one other person whom you both can encourage.

Summary
1. Servant leaders take their example from Christ. Servant leaders pay attention to others and their needs, listen carefully, work to bring healing and growth, inspire others with encouragement, and do many other good works. This way of leading is not easy, nor is it common. To take the servant leader path requires a choice.
2. It is likely that the people who make some of the greatest changes in
the world are those who quietly and selflessly move others to experience God’s power and grace.
1. Read Phil 2:1-8 and respond to the following questions. 1. In verse 1 the apostle makes an if/then argument. Make a short list of the “ifs” and a short list of the “thens” and examine the text to see what God is trying to say through Paul. 2. What do you think it means to have the same mindset as Christ? How does a genuine Christian woman imitate Christ? How is “imitating” different from “pretending”?  

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  

2. Whom do you know that has a “servant’s heart and mind”? What are some ways you have observed their leadership making a difference?  

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  

3. In Phil 2:3, 4, the apostle Paul urges believers to “do nothing out of selfish ambition” and to “look to the interests of others instead of your own.” How does this challenge become the bedrock of a whole new way of looking at leaders/leadership? What are the advantages of this approach? What might be the disadvantages some would claim?  

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  

4. If you were to define servant leadership by this passage in Philippians, who are some Bible characters that emerge in your mind as good examples?  

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________  
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
1. Some people are unmistakably impressive and overpowering, and they are typically called upon to lead. Others are extremely passionate about their own ideas and can sell and persuade others to follow. In Romans 16:1, 1 Timothy 3:8, and 3:12, someone who is described as a leader is called *diakonos*. This word appears frequently in the New Testament and is usually translated as “deacon,” but it actually refers to someone who performs practical service for another from the heart. When have you had someone else put your interests first before their own? How did you feel about yourself? How did their service shape your view of them?

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Read the story in John 13:1-17 a couple of times through alone and make notes of facts, ideas, and insights that you may not have thought of before.

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. In the first few verses of this story, Jesus washed His disciples’ feet. How common was it for a rabbi or master to do this? How would this kind of behavior be perceived today? Share analogies or scenarios of what this would look like today and how it might be perceived.

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. Why do you think Jesus asked the question “Do you understand what I have done for you”?

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. In Mark 10:35-45, James and John ambitiously longed for the honor of leadership. Jesus asked, “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” As individuals, paraphrase this story and don’t use any of the key words that are used in the Bible. Your Paraphrase:

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
6. Compare your paraphrase with others in your group and discuss the following question: Can you think of any Old Testament stories where leaders put others before their own interests?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________

7. What qualities do you think are the most important attributes of a servant leader? Individually, make a list of five qualities and rank them in order of what you think is most important. (Be specific and avoid clichés like “someone who puts Jesus first.”)

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________
LESSON 3 | TRUST & ACCOUNTABILITY

Overview

Presenter notes
1. Trust and accountability is a topic well known in the business field and also in the church community.
2. Accountability also is part of many divergences and unpleasantness between church members.
3. Try to create a peaceful atmosphere to present the theme, but also reinforce the seriousness of this topic and how God want accountable people for His kingdom.
4. The layout for this class does not follow the template. The Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom part is an activity instead of a handout.

Materials
1. PowerPoint presentation
2. Handouts for each participant
3. Bibles for all participants if possible
4. Whiteboard
5. Dry erase marker
6. Timer
7. 4 tennis balls

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Recognize that accountability and trust must be part of Christian leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Analysis on biblical examples of accountability (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Practice some accountability skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Activity on accountable teams (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Value accountability and trust as qualities in their lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Discuss with partner ways to be accountable to God and others (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
10 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 minutes).
2. Introduce this class.

Did you know?
25 minutes
1. PowerPoint presentation on trust & accountability topic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission briefing</th>
<th>1. Complete the &quot;Mission briefing&quot; handout (12 min).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants share their responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Participants do not need to finish this handout in class, but encourage them to do it at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Move directly to the next section.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking it through</th>
<th>1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are you accountable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do you have a friend to whom you can go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Will that person hold you accountable in your spiritual walk?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are you the type of person that people can come to when they need accountability?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom</th>
<th>1. To reflect Jesus and His kingdom, we should be accountable leaders that also develop accountable team members.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ask for 7 participants to go into the front of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Help them to create a circle and give one ball to the group. Give instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Say: “What we’re going to do here is make a process. Pass the ball to someone in the circle. Remember whom you passed it to. Pass it to someone who hasn’t had it yet, and keep doing that. Remember who passed it to you and whom you’re passing it to. The last person in the chain should be the one who started it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After the first try, say: “Great—now try to remember that sequence and do it again.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Then, you can introduce the other three balls, but remind the participants: “You must follow the order, and each person must touch each ball.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start to time how long they take to complete the sequence (don’t allow the participants to see you timing them!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After they complete the sequence, you can say: “I timed that last one, you guys got XX seconds, not bad.” Then, start to write times on the board for the following cycles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remind them: “You must follow the order, and each person must touch each ball.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue encouraging them to keep trying, but never say that they can do better!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage them to come up with solutions to improve their time (get participants closer, arrange the participants in order, touch the balls simultaneously) but don’t tell them your ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After a while, ask them: “Do you want to know what the best time I ever got was?” Wait for their reaction and say: “A quarter of a second.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give them a hint: line up the participants in order, each with a hand stretched out and thumbs pointed up, grab all four balls, hold them in a line, and sweep them across the participants’ thumbs. It will be faster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
than 0.25 seconds!

4. Take some learnings from this activity:
   - As a team leader, you want your team to take ownership over an issue; give the team some basic needs and let them establish a process. Make sure you are clear about those needs, because the team is inevitably going to think there are some hidden boundaries. When the team eventually runs into those boundaries and tries to overstep them, in other words, plays the game differently than you initially set them up with, let them—keep in mind your needs (everyone touches the ball and it follows the order). If you need to step in and shut down something the team is doing, you didn’t realize you had other needs.
   - Provide the team some metrics, but don’t force them down their throats. Pick a metric the team actually can influence, and just present it to them. They’ll work out the implications of it and motivate themselves, pushing to make that metric the best it can be. During the activity, you don’t act on individual data; they are worthless by themselves. Even three or four metrics aren’t valuable. Keep in mind that a trend only truly emerges over a period of time, which means you need lots of data points! By not reacting to points, the participants felt comfortable experimenting with ideas, knowing that would lead them down a better path.
   - Don’t set goals! A goal only leads to let-down and ends up freezing them from acting. Probably when you said someone had gotten to 0.25 seconds, everyone on the team tried things and started talking. As a team leader, if you want your team to actively improve, give them the freedom and information to try new things and iterate.

Next steps
15 minutes

1. Discuss the following topics with your partner and pray:
   - Ways to be more accountable to God’s kingdom
   - Ways to be more accountable to others
   - Pray for each other

Summary

1. Accountable leaders are trustworthy people who help others to achieve a team’s goal without pressure or rudeness. Everyone is accountable to others and primarily to God, who is the Creator and Savior.

2. Accountable leaders should follow biblical principles to guide their lives and help others to become accountable and trustworthy.
1. Accountability is essential for any society to function, and Christian accountability is no different. We all are held accountable in one way or another. In order to establish Christian accountability, there needs to be trust. Developing trust is a slow process and it takes time to develop and grow. As people meet to share, they begin to establish a rapport with one another. How is this accomplished? To answer this question, read Jas 1:19; Matt 7:1-2; 1 John 4:21.

2. Rom 14:12 says, “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.” This is personal accountability. Christians are also accountable to one another. In 1 Cor 12, we read that Christians are all part of the same body—the body of Christ—and each member needs or belongs to the others. Scripture suggests the importance of strong accountability between believers. Read the following Bible verses and answer: How can we be accountable with one another?
Gal 1:2; Heb 10:24; 1 Thess 5:11.

3. Effective accountability has the emphasis on building quality and deep relationships that will help us to improve some areas of our lives. Read the following verses and describe how accountability helps us to create deep relationships:
1 Thess 5:14; Col 3:16; Heb 3:13; Prov 25:12, 27:17
LESSON 4 | MANAGING CONFLICT

Overview

**Presenter notes**

1. Managing conflict is a familiar subject in work environments. Most companies want to have employees that know how to deal with issues.
2. The church community also ensures friendship and fellowship between “brothers” and “sisters.”
3. This lesson will emphasize the biblical model of managing conflict.
4. Remind the participants that next meeting they should bring their PLPs.

**Materials**

1. PowerPoint presentation
2. Handouts for each participant
3. Handout: “What to Do When Conflicts Arise” for further reading
4. Bibles for all participants if possible

**Learning outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will...</td>
<td>1. Understand models of conflict management&lt;br&gt;2. Know biblical model of conflict resolution</td>
<td>1. Presentation on models of conflict management (Did you know?)&lt;br&gt;2. Analysis on biblical passages and conflict situations (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Identify the elements of contextualization that affect their ways of dealing with conflict&lt;br&gt;2. Learn how to deal with their conflicts</td>
<td>1. Written answer on environment and conflict resolution (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom: Questions 1 and 2)&lt;br&gt;2. Discussion with partner (Next steps)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be able to...</td>
<td>1. Evaluate their understanding of the biblical model for conflict management&lt;br&gt;2. Desire to develop a Christian way to manage conflicts</td>
<td>1. Reflection on case study using the biblical model (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom: Question 4)&lt;br&gt;2. Personal reflection on their own lives (thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching plan**

**Welcome**

1. Welcome and opening prayer.
2. Introduce this class by saying: “Did you have any conflict situations in the past month?” Everybody has conflicts, but today we will discuss how to manage them.
| Did you know?                     | 1. PowerPoint presentation on the theme of managing conflict. |
|                                 | 2. Distribute the handout “What to Do When Conflicts Arise” for further reading. |
| Mission briefing                | 1. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min). |
|                                | 2. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants divide up the passages and share their findings. |
|                                | 3. There are many Bible texts. Make sure that they go through some for each part. |
|                                | 4. Encourage them to finish it at home. |
|                                | 5. Try to get some feedback on their findings and share with the whole group. |
| Thinking it through             | 1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers. |
|                                | • Consider that you are a leader. What will you have to change/give up to better manage conflicts in your environment—house, church, work, or neighborhood? |
|                                | • What scenarios come to your mind as immediate opportunities to practice a biblical model for managing conflicts? |
| Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom  | 1. Work through the "Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom" handout. |
|                                | 2. The participants do not need to complete the whole handout; however, encourage them to take it home. |
|                                | 3. If it is possible, take extra time to finish this handout with them. The questions follow a sequence that will help the participants better internalize the concept of managing conflicts in a biblical way. |
|                                | 4. Question 1 reflects how individuals manage conflict. |
|                                | 5. The answer for question 1 will link to question 2 and help them assess the changes that they should make in order to deal with conflict in a biblical model. |
|                                | • The biblical model focuses on preservation of unity; shows acceptance and validates worth; brings glory to God; and is culturally appropriate. |
|                                | 6. Finally, in question 4 they will apply their knowledge from this lesson to a case study. |
| Next steps                     | 1. Discuss the following questions with your partner and pray: |
|                                | • Which aspects do you feel you need to change to manage conflicts in a better way? |
|                                | • After this presentation and reflection, what will be your strategies to manage conflict? |
|                                | 2. If either of the partners are in a conflict, pray for it. |
|                                | 3. Dealing with conflict is not easy and demands discipline and effort. Pray for intentional growth in this area. |
Summary

1. Conflict is part of everybody’s life and we should learn how to deal with it. Christians should follow a biblical model, which presents unity, shows acceptance, validates worth, and brings glory to God.
1. Read some of the biblical examples and describe the various ways that conflicts or “sinful” situations were dealt with in Scripture. In addition to the ones suggested, try to think of other conflict situations and how they were dealt with.

- God, Adam, and Eve (Gen 3)
- Abraham and Lot (Gen 13:3-13)
- Nathan and David (2 Sam 12:1-23)
- Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11)
- Jesus and the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-46)
- Jesus’ advice (Matt 18:15-17)
- Jesus and Judas (John 13:18-30)
- Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41)

2. Read the following texts and summarize some of the principles they teach us about dealing with conflict and differences. What is important to God?

- 2 Cor 13:11
- Eph 4:2,3
- Rom 15:5,6
- Rom 15: 7,9
- Rom 14:1
- John 17:11, 20, 21, 24
- 1 Cor 1:10-13
Principle: We are told that if a person uses a particular strategy 40% of the time, people perceive it to be 100%.

Two dimensions in conflict management: When approaching a conflict situation, there are two types of behaviors we usually engage in to deal with our own concerns and the concerns of others:
1. Assertive behavior—meeting your own concerns
2. Cooperative behavior—meeting the concerns of others
These two dimensions can be plotted on two continuums to identify five typical conflict resolution styles people use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Management Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assertive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I win – You lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I win – You win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Win a little – Lose a little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lose – You lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lose – You win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncooperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

193
1. Look at the conflict management styles. Decide which strategy is most common in the environment where you live. What about for you? What effect may your preferred method have on the people you work with?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Which of the methods cited on the conflict management styles diagram is more Scriptural? Why?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. What happens if people with a more assertive style solve conflicts in the win–lose style? How does this style affect people in a less assertive/more cooperative environment? What resulting emotions and behaviors could you expect among the people with the less assertive style?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Read the following case study and decide how the situation could be best settled. Remember: You are a Christian woman leader!

“But it is not what we agreed upon!”
Joanna organized a party for her daughter at a local restaurant. The event was a happy and sweet first birthday party with some friends and family. Joanna and the restaurant manager had orally agreed on a total package price for the meal. After a delightful party, the waiter brought Joanna the bill, which turned out to be considerably more than they had agreed upon. Joanna had a conflict.

4. What are the different aspects of Joanna’s conflict? What were her choices? What should she do? Why?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
What to Do When Conflicts Arise by Pat Gustin

1. Pray: problems are insurmountable and humanly unsolvable.
2. Don’t be surprised. It’s inevitable even when good people live closely together (Paul and Barnabas). You will experience frustration, irritations, and conflicts.
4. Remember: conflict itself is not a sin. It’s what we DO with the conflict that can lead to sin—backbiting, hate, gossip, anger, etc.
5. Pray some more.
6. Assume the best about each other—especially about their motives.
7. Continue praying.
8. Be kind ... with yourself ... with your neighbors ... with your fellow workers ... with your boss.
10. Practice unconditional love—with yourself first of all, and then with others.
11. Pray.
12. Learn to back down gracefully—“I’m sorry,” “I was wrong,” “I don’t know,” etc. are powerful (practice in front of a mirror).
13. Pray more.
14. Find someone to talk to who is relatively neutral.
15. Pray in the morning.
16. When the stress level rises too high, withdraw temporarily.
17. Pray at noon.
18. Take a good, objective look at yourself. Are you getting enough sleep? Have you been sick recently? Are you overworked, and therefore less objective? Have you been eating properly? Are you getting exercise and/or recreation? (“All work and no play...”)
19. Pray at night.
20. Ask yourself if you’re taking on stresses, burdens, and worries you don’t need to—mountain vs. molehill.
22. Tackle the conflicts immediately before they grow (Abraham and Lot).
23. Pray some more.
24. Tackle conflict when you’re feeling calm (not in the midst of the fray). Allow a cooling-off time.
26. Tackle conflict tactfully with a spirit of willingness to collaborate and even compromise, if necessary.
27. Pray in solitude.
28. Tackle conflict taking culture into account (Jerusalem Council)—work styles, leadership styles, conflict management styles, and planning styles.
29. Pray out loud.
30. Tackle conflict taking all the differences—personality, age, temperament, language, etc.—into account.
31. Pray again.
32. Set up joint rules you can agree upon.
33. Pray.
34. Learn to laugh ... at yourself ... at situations, and to keep from screaming and crying.
35. Pray again.
36. Remember: nothing is impossible with God.
37. Never quit praying.
38. Remember: adaptability, adaptability.
39. Pray, pray, pray!
LESSON 5 | ORGANIZING & LEADING MINISTRY TEAMS

Overview

Presenter notes
1. This is the last class for the leadership module; it intends to help women put together the previous learning in a practical way to organize and lead ministry teams.
2. New concepts will be shown in this presentation, but be prepared to close this class by summarizing all the previous classes.
3. Save a few minutes to get some feedback from their PLPs.

Materials
1. PowerPoint presentation
2. Handouts for each participant
3. Bibles for all participants if possible
4. Paper and pens
5. Magazines
6. Scissors and glue

Learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence of learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head Participants will…</td>
<td>1. Written assignment on biblical passages (Mission briefing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Recognize biblical examples of team leaders</td>
<td>2. Discussion with the whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understand the necessity of cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands Participants will be able to…</td>
<td>1. Prepare a vision statement for the team (Reflecting Jesus &amp; His kingdom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Apply the concepts for Christian team building</td>
<td>2. Discussion with the whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Find commonality of purpose and be willing to cooperate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Participants will be able to…</td>
<td>1. Personal reflection on their own team leader actions (Thinking it through)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Desire to cooperate with others</td>
<td>2. Integration of team-building elements in their PLP (Handout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Evaluate the usage of Christian elements to create a team</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Teaching plan

Welcome
5 minutes
1. Welcome and opening prayer (2 minutes).

Did you know?
35 minutes
1. PowerPoint presentation on the theme of organizing and leading team-building.

Mission briefing
15 minutes
1. The “Mission briefing” handout focuses on finding biblical examples of team leaders.
2. Complete the "Mission briefing" handout (12 min).
3. Instructors can move around the room and make sure that participants divide up the passages and share their findings.
4. Try to get some feedback on their findings and share with the whole group.

**Thinking it through**

1. Ask the following questions for personal reflection. Give time to write the answers.
   - Are you a good team builder?
   - Which characteristics of a good team builder do you have and which ones should you develop?
   - Do you have a good example of a team-building leader? Why did you choose this person? Which characteristics does this person have?

**Reflecting Jesus & His kingdom**

1. In order to reflect Jesus & His kingdom, we should have a team with a clear statement and also the same goal.
2. Distribute papers, pens, magazines, scissors, and glue. These materials can be used to answer the following question.
3. Each participant should finish the sentence, "My vision of a team that works is..." (10 min)
4. The entire team now creates one statement or visual that represents the total of these vision statements.

**Next steps**

1. Discuss the following questions with your partner and pray:
   - How can I implement team-building elements in my leadership role?
   - After this module, which aspects of your PLP are the most important?
2. Try to incorporate the same team-building elements in your PLP.

**Summary**

1. During the last four meetings, we discussed some aspects regarding leadership and a woman’s leadership in any role that she plays.
2. Some topics discussed were women in leadership positions, servant leadership following Jesus’ example, how to deal with conflicts with a Christian perspective in mind, the value of trust and accountability to be a leader, and finally, how to put everything together leading and organizing ministry teams.
3. The team’s performance depends on motivation to attain shared objectives. Mission, goals, and objectives must be clear.
1. What does the Bible have to say about teamwork? Look at the following passages:
   - 1 Cor 3:6-9
   - 1 Cor 12:12-19
   - 1 Cor 12:20-27

What does each passage have to say about being a part of a team?
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. One of the best known biblical examples of leadership and team-building is Moses. Read Exod 18 and analyze which principles we should take from Moses’ example and how it is related to team-building and leadership guidance.
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Your attitude should reflect Christ at all times. Your words will often be validated or cancelled by your attitudes. Following this, what advice can you find in the following biblical verses?

_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________


Greenidge, N. (2000). The church as a social support for women: Perspectives of female members of selected Seventh-day Adventist churches (Doctoral dissertation). Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.


Rodriguez, Á. M. (2014). *Evaluation of the arguments used by those opposing the ordination of women to the ministry*. Columbia, MD: TOSC.


VITA

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