

TRINITY BIBLE COLLEGE & GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESIS TITLE

**The Kingdom of God and the Church: A Case Study of the Implications of Kingdom
Theology in Freedom House Church, South Africa.**

BY
RYAN OLIVER MATTHEWS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree
Master of Arts: Missional Leadership

To the faculty of
Trinity Bible College and Graduate School

DECEMBER 2023



Noel Sanderson, D.Div.
Thesis Supervisor



Scott Townsend, PhD
Second Reader

ABSTRACT

After nearly 23 years of active church ministry, I have a deepening desire for churches and believers to increasingly reflect the example of Jesus as expressed in his announcement, ministry and mission of the Kingdom. I believe this approach inculcates healthy Christians, leaders and churches where all are given every opportunity to mature and fulfil their God-given mission. Presently, the South African church, is buffeted by a multitude of local and imported socio-religious cultural influences and I long to see a church in South Africa that continuously reflects Christ and his kingdom while contextually fulfilling his mission.

The nature of the kingdom of God as elucidated by the recent emergence of kingdom theology in the last 80 years has had dramatic influence upon the conception, inception and establishing of Freedom House as a local church as well as our mission, vision and values - essentially our ministry philosophy. In light of the desire to see the church at large and believers live a Christ-like Christianity, I believe that Freedom House is a case study worth researching and a contemporary story worth reviewing with the aim of providing insights and possible learnings. Firstly, it is vital for Freedom House's senior leadership team to remain in constant review of the *why* and *how* of the kingdom of God within the church; secondly, in anticipation of the next phase of Freedom House's growth, it is crucial to engage with any required adjustments; and thirdly, this process may possibly provide a working model for other newly planted or growing churches in South Africa or other similar contexts.

The approach to thesis is as follows. Freedom House Church, South Africa, is the case under qualitative investigation. Initially, a thorough literature analysis will be conducted to establish a working understanding of kingdom theology and the nature of the kingdom of God as a result. The essential themes emerging from the literature review (in this instance, 1. The Gospel We Preach, 2. Discipleship and the Kingdom, 3. Kingdom Leadership, 4. A

Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology, and 5. Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology) will be assessed in successive chapters, and will additionally provide the basis of the questionnaire necessary for the case study research.

Thereafter, a thorough analysis of the resultant questionnaire's data pertaining to the respective five themes will permit an honest and rigorous assessment of Freedom House in light of the literature. The questionnaire is aimed at the existing leadership body and the present pastoral team (eldership) of Freedom House to appropriately discover the intentions of the case study. The basis of this selection of these people is due to their working experience and understanding of the beginnings and establishment of the church under investigation as well real-time knowledge of why and how we function as Freedom House.

Each of the five themes will be evaluated along with its implications followed by recommendations for the respective aspects. It is anticipated that there are facets of Freedom House that do reflect a praxis rooted in Kingdom Theology, while others do not, requiring a rigorous re-focus on the *why*, and *how* of the Kingdom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appreciation needs to be extended to the following people for their formational influence, both historic and more recent, in shaping my growing passion for the nature and effect of God's kingdom in and through the church.

First, Cedric Van Duyn, initially my youth pastor, then fellow elder, now colleague in church leadership for many years. You unintentionally introduced me to the genuine words and works of Jesus by your high honour for the Scriptures and thorough preaching while demonstrating the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit during my formative years.

Second, Kings Gate Church and our beloved fellow elders in South West London: It was Melissa and my privilege to lead amongst you from 2008 where we experimented and put to practice our developing view of the kingdom of God and realized that it works. Together we saw God activate his people with power and truth to begin to make a significant impact.

Third, Derek Morpew, whose investment both in writing and developing mentorship in the last number of years has had a remarkable impact on my growing passion for God's kingdom.

Fourth, Alexander Venter. Your gift of friendship, mentorship and life example has inspired a deep hunger in me to live an authentic kingdom life like Jesus.

Fifth, my dear fellow elders and life teamers at Freedom House. We are a powerful learning bunch of brothers and sisters, genuine friends, and kingdom collaborators who long to see Jesus glorified and his kingdom meaningfully come through real, radical, free believers alongside us. You are a joy.

Sixth, Dr Noel and the professors at Trinity. Your influence and academic guidance through this programme is more significant than words can describe.

Finally, my wife, Melissa (best friend and first kingdom conspirator) and my family. Thank you for encouraging me and permitting me the space and time to learn more about Jesus and his glorious kingdom.

KEY WORDS

Kingdom theology, kingdom of God, Jesus Christ, church, enacted inaugurated eschatology, gospel, discipleship, leadership, servant, ministry philosophy, Holy Spirit, holistic mission.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
KEY WORDS	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Purpose.....	1
Key Concepts and Motivation.....	1
Context	5
Methodology and Expectations	5
PART I. THE LITERATURE REVIEW	7
Chapter 1. Kingdom Theology, the Kingdom of God and the Church	8
Chapter 2. The Gospel We Preach	16
Chapter 3. Discipleship and the Kingdom	21
Chapter 4. Kingdom Leadership.....	29
Chapter 5. A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology.....	34
Chapter 6. A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology.....	41
PART II. THE RESEARCH	46
Chapter 7. The Research Background.....	47
Chapter 8. An Analysis of the Data.....	49
Chapter 9. Evaluation, Implications and Recommendations.....	54
CONCLUSION	65
APPENDIX	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY	71

INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE

This thesis is stimulated by three distinct intentions. Firstly, as senior pastor of Freedom House Church, I aim to honestly review the first six years of Freedom House in the light of a theology of the kingdom epitomized in the life and ministry of Jesus. Essentially, it is an assessment of our philosophy of ministry as it reflects the nature and purpose of the kingdom expressed in Jesus. Are we doing church with a kingdom paradigm, purpose and power? Secondly, this thesis equally permits a future-oriented preparation for Freedom House's next ten years. The assessment of the initial six years will undoubtedly illumine areas of necessary adjustment, which will provide target areas of focus for us as a leadership team in reflecting the kingdom of God increasingly. Thirdly, a further intention would be that this research, its process and findings will somehow empower other would-be church planters and leaders taking their church toward a more kingdom-oriented philosophy of ministry.

It has been my experience in conversations with colleagues in the ministry who have planted churches or even transitioned leadership teams of churches that there is a substantial need to learn and grow from living examples of others who have sought to plant and establish churches with a sense of theological conviction and clarity that empowers a well-considered philosophy of ministry in order to equip saints to continue the mission and ministry of Jesus. Hopefully, this thesis is an offering to aid church planters, pastors of growing churches, and any emerging church planters and pastors toward that end. Therefore this research matters to Freedom House's leaders and equally for others beyond who are willing to learn and grow in their leadership.

KEY CONCEPTS AND MOTIVATION

There are two fundamental factors underpinning this research. One is theological and the other, while practical, is an implication of the first. First, with the rigorous work of a

growing number of New Testament scholars post the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, kingdom theology has re-emerged upon the theological stage with particular scholarly attention.¹ The outcome is that it has permitted a dramatic review of the Christian life, especially for a growing number of church movements and local churches globally.² Morpew, in concert with other contemporary scholars such as N.T. Wright, Graeme Goldsworthy, Arthur Glasser and G.K. Beale, argue that the premise of kingdom theology is rooted in the rediscovery of the message, mission and ministry of Jesus in his historical context.³ The argument further proposes that the way Christians perceive Jesus determines how they view God, salvation, the Christian life, mission and society; therefore, this implies significant consequences for all of church life and the lives of believers.⁴ An early adopter of the essence and praxis of the kingdom was John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard movement, who claimed that “once you get the kingdom, you realize that all the books will have to be re-written.”⁵ Under the tutelage of G.E. Ladd, Wimber’s approach to all of church life and ministry was significantly fashioned by his developing view of the kingdom of God epitomized in the mission and ministry of Christ. Similarly, the effect of kingdom theology upon my life, especially the last fifteen years, has had reformatory impact, especially influencing my approach to the multi-faceted nature and purpose of the church and church leadership.

Second, since entering into church leadership and ministry in 1999, I have learned that there is a vast spectrum of influences upon the church - from religious to corporate - all of which have a resultant impact, particularly on each church’s ministry philosophy and praxis. Many of these influences do not reflect the paradigm and purpose of the kingdom of God. For example, McKnight, in *The King Jesus Gospel*, argues that the Western evangelical church

¹ Derek Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation: Rediscover Jesus, Review Everything* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2020), Part 1, Kindle.

² Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

³ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1 & 5.

⁴ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1; Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

⁵ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

has, by and large, reduced the apostolic gospel portrayed in the Scriptures to personal salvation, where the church's accurate designation ought to be "soterian" as opposed to "evangelical".⁶ His argument here is that this reduction towards a personal salvation culture as opposed to an apostolic gospel culture substantially effects the approach of church leadership towards the congregants, namely that the aim is for decisions as conversions only not converts that become Christ-following disciples.⁷ Elsewhere, Wright, in *Surprised by Hope*, outlines the impact of a pervasive Greek dualistic view of the resurrection of Christ within the church at large that has significant impact on the church's approach to mission today.⁸

Equally, but on the other end of the spectrum, Townsend notes in his lectures that this past century has seen the church adopt business concepts as part of church practice.⁹ Again, referencing Bartholomew, Townsend argues that the underlying cause of this is likely due in part to the response of the Western church in its recession from being a guiding moral voice due to the advance of science and reasoning as a result of the Enlightenment.¹⁰ Furthermore, according to Townsend, Porterfield, Grem and Corrigan's position is that during the mid-nineteenth century, churches in America resorted to a matter of selling God as entrepreneurs and increasingly took religion as a commodity that could be pitched to an audience much the way entertainments such as books, theatre, lectures, and other performances were.¹¹

In *Doing Church*, Venter comments on the crucial relationship between convictions of truth and the approach to practically doing church. He writes: "Whether one is conscious of it

⁶ Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2011), chap. 2, Kindle.

⁷ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2.

⁸ N.T. Wright, *Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), chap. 2, Apple Books.

⁹ Scott Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Organizational Development and Strategic Planning Class Notes at Trinity College and Graduate School, Ellendale, ND, October, 2021.

¹⁰ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

¹¹ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

or not, every pastor and every church has a philosophy of ministry—for better or for worse, either intentional or unintentional, either inherited or newly grown, either static or dynamic, either thought-through or not.”¹² He further delineates a philosophy of ministry as the underlying theological assumptions, namely, the approach to the Bible and the theology of the kingdom, which have implications in defining the nature and purpose of the church.¹³ Therefore, how we think about theology and the person of Jesus has a proportional impact on how Christians work out their salvation daily and how pastors lead in the church.

Moreover, Hirsch observes that the Western church prefers the inherited status quo and has very seldom ventured far from the existing entrenched ecclesial paradigm and that only a solution that goes to the very roots of what it means to be Jesus’s people will permit the church to flourish.¹⁴ Hirsch further postulates that church leaders have to recalibrate the church’s theological system and realign it to more perfectly reflect Jesus’ original intention for the ministry of his people.¹⁵ Again, how we think about theology and especially Jesus’ way of life and ministry has significant impact on how a church’s philosophy of ministry is expressed.

With these two underpinning factors in mind, I propose in this thesis that the re-emphasized kingdom theology now permits an opportunity for church planters and church leaders (especially of churches in the foundational phase) to assess, align and adjust their theological framework and praxis for the sake of a church more reflective of Christ and His mission. As church leaders and planters it is incumbent upon us to rigorously consider the essential ministry, message and mission of Jesus defined within a theological framework of the kingdom and its implications for how we approach doing church. Otherwise, a genuine

¹² Alexander Venter, *Doing Church: Building from the Bottom Up* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2000), chap. 2, Kindle.

¹³ Venter, *Doing Church*, chap. 2.

¹⁴ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2016), chap. 1, Kindle.

¹⁵ Alan Hirsch, *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (5Qcentral.com: 5Q Publishing, 2017), Introduction, Kindle.

opportunity exists for churches to either take shape after the personalities of charismatic leaders instead of the person of Jesus, or that well-meaning corporate-like programmes and spiritualized key performance indicators become the agenda for church life and not the fundamental ways of Christ's ministry.

CONTEXT

Freedom House is a church of six and a half years in the peri-urban area of Salt Rock, on the Dolphin Coast of South Africa, a rapidly expanding residential growth node in the nation. This presents remarkable opportunities for the church in reaching longstanding residents in the area with the Good News and those relocating to the region from all over South Africa. Importantly, the peri-urban nature of the area affords opportunities for genuine cross-cultural and inter-class ministry. Matters of diversity and reconciliation are tangible in South Africa and are equally essential aspects of the Gospel of the Kingdom reflected in Jesus' ministry and mission. This provides a context in which the research occurs.

METHODOLOGY AND EXPECTATIONS

The qualitative research of the paper will work in conjunction with a relevant literature review of kingdom theology, which will emphasize notable factors.¹⁶ These notable factors considered in separate chapters will provide a matrix of the case study, namely: 1. The Gospel We Preach, 2. Discipleship and the Kingdom, 3. Kingdom Leadership, 4. A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology, and 5. A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology. Notably, there are several other kingdom theology distinctives beyond these five; however, the scope of this thesis does not permit such exhaustive investigation and are, therefore, excluded. Further study is required. In this research, the case study will take the

¹⁶ Richard R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), chap. 1, Kindle. Osmer describes qualitative research as follows: "Qualitative research seeks to understand the actions and practices in which individuals and groups engage in everyday life and the meanings they ascribe to their experience. Qualitative research is better suited to studying a small number of individuals, groups, or communities in depth."

form of a questionnaire presented to the pastor team and the broader leadership. After that, the feedback from the questionnaire will provide the data essential for the thesis, enabling a well-informed evaluation and implications with recommendations and a conclusion.

An initial expectation is that the research process will highlight areas within Freedom House's ministry philosophy that require greater alignment with what kingdom theology emphasizes. Consequently, I anticipate that this will provide a frame of reference for the next ten years that will permit growth towards an approach to doing church that further reflects the model of ministry epitomized by Jesus. Equally, the hope is that the findings of this thesis will possibly become an insightful encouragement to other church planters and pastors of churches in foundation phase who are similarly interrogating their philosophy of ministry in the light of the kingdom of God.

The intent of the rigorous approach of the research is for more than just academic purposes and to assess progress at Freedom House. Niebuhr remarks that without beginning in loyalty to God and to Jesus Christ, no new beginning of the church's life is possible.¹⁷ Hence, the overarching aim is to review all we do in Freedom House with an earnest loyalty to Jesus that kingdom theology permits for God's continuous life in our midst and the sake of a church more reflective of Christ and His mission.

¹⁷ H. Richard Niebuhr, "Toward the Independence of the Church," in *The Church Against the World*, ed. by H. Richard Niebuhr, Wilhelm Pauck and Francis P. Miller (Chicago: Willet, Clark and Company, 1935), Part III.

PART I.
THE LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 1

KINGDOM THEOLOGY, THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE CHURCH

From the outset, it is pivotal that one provides clarity to several fundamental concepts and their relatedness - it will provide a basis for considering the scope of this thesis. The initial concept that requires attention is kingdom theology itself. What is it, and where does it fit in the landscape of theology? Thereafter, the kingdom of God deserves clarification and its relationship with the church as the vehicle of God's kingdom on earth. This triad of truth provides the landscape wherein the case study of Freedom House's approach to church and ministry finds its locus.

Kingdom Theology

The contributors aiding in a thorough grasp of kingdom theology are significant. The fresh discovery of Jesus' message and ministry of the kingdom of God was introduced to American evangelicalism by G.E. Ladd, who drew upon the earlier scholarly works of European theologians such as Oscar Cullman, Joachim Jeremias, and Werner Kummel.¹⁸ Under the tutelage of Ladd, John Wimber (the founder of the Vineyard Movement) fused a theology of the kingdom with church praxis, which consequently became a beacon of church ministry philosophy within the United States and beyond.¹⁹ Today, an increasing array of scholars engage at length with kingdom theology and its implications for the church, namely N.T. Wright, Scot McKnight, Graeme Goldsworthy, James Dunn, Matthew W. Bates, Derek Morpew, G.K. Beale, John H. Walton, Craig Keener, Gregory Boyd, Michael S. Heiser, David Bosch, Alexander Venter, Thomas Lyons, to name a few. However, in this research, Morpew provides the chief academic offering as a foundational reference. Morpew's consideration of kingdom theology synthesizes a vast range of scholarly input and provides a

¹⁸ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

¹⁹ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

detailed corpus.²⁰ His work, *The Kingdom Reformation*, is the prolegomenon to his other two primary works, *Breakthrough* and *Demonstrating the Kingdom*.²¹ His intent is to aid in the wider, ecumenical development of kingdom theology.²² Moreover, it explores and expounds upon Jesus' central mission and message of the kingdom of God and its implications for the church.²³

What is Kingdom Theology

What is kingdom theology, in essence, and where does it fit in the scope of theology? Morphew defines kingdom theology as the rediscovery of the mission, message and ministry of Jesus situated within the historical context of Second Temple Judaism.²⁴ The critical realist Third Quest research has provided the grounding for kingdom theology.²⁵

A significant consensus that emerged from the contributions of the scholars within the Third Quest is that Jesus envisaged his entire mission, message and ministry as enacted, inaugurated eschatology.²⁶ By implication, kingdom theology refers explicitly to Jesus' approach to his ministry in such a manner - as enacted, inaugurated eschatology.²⁷ The term

²⁰ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5. Here, with specific reference to the growing understanding of kingdom theology, Morphew draws upon the scholarly research of theology's leading thinkers from the turn of the 20th Century till today.

²¹ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 4.

²² Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 4.

²³ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Preface.

²⁴ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, part 5; Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Second Temple Judaism," *Oxford Bibliographies* (June 2019): 1, DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195393361-0087. Second Temple Judaism is a common designation for the Jewish traditions that flourished between the return of exiles from Babylon and the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple under Persian patronage from 538 to 515 BCE, and the destruction of the Temple by Roman forces in 70 CE.

²⁵ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5; Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, part 4. In part 4, Morphew clarifies Jesus Research as a whole with the two dominant traditions being the Jesus Seminar and the Third Quest. The Jesus Seminar reduces the discovery of Jesus to a typical modernist world view, like that of the first quest. The historical critical principles of context do not feature well in its methodology resulting in a liberal, politically correct Christ-figure. However, scholars of the Third Quest show commitment to historical critical method and review all previous quests due to a fresh focus on the historical context, placing Jesus firmly in a Second Temple historical environment. Hence, the scholars of the Third Quest provide a cohesive appreciation of the Messiah and his kingdom purpose within the Judaism of the day and this is essential given that Jesus came announcing the inauguration of kingdom expectations within that context. Earlier Morphew states that "without a proper understanding of Jesus as a historical figure within Second Temple Judaism, we cannot really grasp the central message of the New Testament."

²⁶ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

²⁷ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

inaugurated eschatology popularised by Wright in *How God Became King* explains that in the mission and ministry of Jesus, the kingdom of God has been initiated penultimately, in advance of the ultimate consummation of the kingdom in Jesus' return at the end of this age.²⁸ By *enacted, inaugurated eschatology*, Morpew clarifies that Jesus not only announced the coming of the powers of the future age in advance but that he demonstrated that in-breaking kingdom age and enacted it.²⁹ Furthermore, Jesus commissioned his disciples to do the same, and we, too, are mandated to announce and enact the kingdom that Jesus inaugurated.³⁰

According to Morpew, enacted, inaugurated eschatology is a fresh departure from other theological positions where, in *Breakthrough*, he repudiates the doctrinal tenets of three related subjects: cessationism, dispensationalism and restorationism.³¹ All three find their genesis in the teachings of Edward Irving, a Scottish Presbyterian minister and theologian of the early 19th Century.³² In *The Kingdom Reformation*, Morpew affirms Wright's proposed expansion of the Creeds by reviewing how one reads the gospels in the light of kingdom theology.³³ Further, Morpew posits a kingdom theology rebuttal of several reductionisms that have infiltrated church tradition and teaching since before Protestantism.³⁴ Scholars such as

²⁸ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

²⁹ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

³⁰ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

³¹ Derek Morpew, *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom* (Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2019), Part 4, Kindle; Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

³² Morpew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4. Morpew provides a thorough treatment of these three positions in light of kingdom theology.

³³ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

³⁴ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5. Morpew traces the gradual progress of reductionism in the following stages: 1. The Western addition of the Filioque clause, 2. The reduction of the diverse works of the Holy Spirit into the works of justification and sanctification, 3. The loss of the mission and ministry of Jesus from the creedal/orthodox tradition (Wright's "comma" or "empty-cloak Jesus"), 4. The entry and defense of cessationism, 5. The elevation and isolation of the cross from the incarnation, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, 6. The focus on the legal, forensic metaphor of the atonement at the expense of other biblical metaphors, particularly Christus Victor, 7. The elevation and isolation of justification over union with Christ in Christian experience, and, 8. The elevation and isolation of faith as a subjective existential trust over faith as loyalty and commitment to the messianic king and community.

McKnight, Bates and Boardman echo Morphew's necessary repudiation of various reductions through the lens of kingdom theology.³⁵

Similarly, kingdom theology, as enacted, inaugurated eschatology provides a kingdom hermeneutic to interpret both Jesus' mission, message, ministry and the church's.³⁶ Importantly, this fresh kingdom hermeneutic includes theology and praxis because Jesus announced, explained and demonstrated the kingdom while commissioning his disciples to do the same.³⁷ By implication, this kingdom hermeneutic of declaration and demonstration posited by kingdom theology has significant implications for the church and its ministry today as Jesus' disciples - the church would do well to embrace the same approach of word and works as the framework for ministry. It provides the framework for what this thesis examines.

The Kingdom of God

Ladd, furthering the foundational work done by Cullman and Kummel, argued that the kingdom of God is fundamentally the rule and reign of God, expressing his divine sovereignty in action in Christ.³⁸ Moreover, he defines the kingdom of God as God's eschatological act establishing his rule in the universe initiated in Jesus' works and culminating in complete fulfilment on the return of Christ.³⁹ According to Ladd, while the kingdom of God was present

³⁵ Scot McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2014), chap. 5, Kindle.

McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2. In *The King Jesus Gospel*, McKnight expounds on the pervasive effect of what he terms "soterianism" – a reduction of wholistic salvation to conversation alone and its implications. In *Kingdom Conspiracy*, he hones specifically on a reduction of the kingdom toward social justice alone and miracles alone.

Matthew W. Bates, *Salvation By Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works and the Gospel of Jesus the King* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017), chap. 2, Kindle. Bates illuminates the necessary focus on *pistis* being a pledge of allegiance and loyalty to Christ the King as the context in which believing occurs as opposed to mental agreement alone.

George Dana Boardman, *The Kingdom: The Emerging Rule of Christ Among Men* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2008), chap. 5. In this original classic from 1899, Boardman warned against limiting the word "gospel" to Christ's atoning sacrifice alone at the expense of instilling the re-enthronement of God as the deepest sense of the gospel. This is consistent with the premise of kingdom theology proposed by all contemporary scholars.

³⁶ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

³⁷ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

³⁸ George Eldon Ladd, *Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1959), Introduction, Apple Books; Morphew, *Breakthrough*, part 1.

³⁹ George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1974), 7, Kindle.

in the works of Jesus (already), it is also future in complete fulfilment (not yet) on his return while breaking in upon this present order by the works of the Spirit, hence the title of his book, *The Presence of the Future*, in which Ladd defines the kingdom coming in Christ.⁴⁰ As per Ladd, the kingdom of God is the active rule and reign of God in divine tension - already in Christ's incarnate ministry, not yet in Christ's return, and breaking in as the church continues Jesus' mission by the Spirit.

Morphew affirms Ladd's position of the kingdom being God's dynamic rule and reign on earth epitomized in Christ amid the mystery of divine tension.⁴¹ Morphew builds a continuity of understanding the nature of the kingdom by first entrenching the promise of the kingdom in the history of Israel, where the Old Testament perspective of the kingdom is that the Lord is King (through the account of the Exodus). Then, the Lord will become King (through the prophetic proclamations of the prophets anticipating the Messiah to come).⁴² Finally, according to Morphew, the Old Testament promise of the kingdom emerges to find fulfilment, in the person, message, mission and ministry of Christ, the promised and anticipated Messiah.⁴³ Here, Morphew, like Ladd, defines the kingdom of God through the entirety of the works of the ministry of Jesus while acknowledging that the kingdom of God is simultaneously present and future – the kingdom has come, will come, is coming immediately, and is delayed in its ultimate manifestation until Christ's final return.⁴⁴

McKnight upholds the Ladd-Morphew essential definition of the kingdom being the dynamic rule and reign of God in divine tension through Christ's ministry, message and mission; yet, McKnight hones in on the kingdom of God being God's kingly reign among a

⁴⁰ Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, 7; Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1. It was Cullman who first coined the phrase "the already and the not yet" combined with his illustration of the D-Day and V-Day motif of World War II.

⁴¹ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

⁴² Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 1.

⁴³ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

⁴⁴ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

people, namely the church.⁴⁵ Here, he distinctly argues that there is no kingdom of God outside the church.⁴⁶ McKnight highlights this necessary emphasis in rebuttal of two prevalent reductions of the kingdom: first, the kingdom of God is only social justice (Skinny Jeans Kingdom), and second, the kingdom of God is only manifest in supernatural acts of signs, wonders, miracles and healing (Pleated Pants Kingdom). Boardman agrees with McKnight on this.⁴⁷

Therefore, a brief synthesis of the nuanced nature of the kingdom of God reflecting the above might be: i. The kingdom of God is the active and dynamic rule and reign of God breaking in upon the earth, ii. from the future into the present, iii. through the inaugurating life and ministry of Jesus Christ, iv. and continued through the mission and ministry of the church by the power of the Spirit, in anticipation of the consummation of this present age on the return of Christ the king who brings the fullness of the kingdom.⁴⁸

The Place of the Church

Regarding Minear and Watson in *Ecclesiology*, McKnight submits that the three most important words in the Bible alongside words for God (including Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and flowing from and out of that Trinity) are Israel, kingdom and church.⁴⁹ Along with Morphew and Wright, McKnight asserts that to understand the kingdom, one must begin with the kingdom's essence revealed in Israel's history and that the church is the continuation and

⁴⁵ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 5.

⁴⁶ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 6. McKnight's argument for the kingly rule of God being strictly in and through the local church is of greater emphasis than that of Ladd and Morphew. Both Ladd and Morphew state the connection between the kingdom of God and the church; however, McKnight stresses the gravitas of the place of the church even more so.

⁴⁷ Boardman, *The Kingdom*, chap. 5.

⁴⁸ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 7. McKnight nuances the kingdom of God as a complex of king, rule, people, land and law;

Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 1. Morphew provides 7 necessary distinctives in defining the kingdom of God appropriately for us today: 1. Presence of the King, 2. The Event of the Kingdom, 3. Creates Covenant, 4. With an Elect Community, 5. With Covenant stipulations and 6. Covenant benefits, on 7. Mission.

⁴⁹ Scot McKnight, "Ecclesiology," in *The Routledge Companion to Modern Christian Thought (1st ed.)*, ed. by C. Meister & J. Beilby (Routledge: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203387856>, 2013), 445.

expansion of God's purpose with Israel in the New Covenant age.⁵⁰ Crucially, McKnight proposes that God's kingdom rule and reign can only be amongst his people, the church.⁵¹ Although less emphatically, Morphew – who follows Ladd closely – resonates with McKnight in this. He summarizes a biblical view of the connection between the kingdom and the church: 1. The church is not the kingdom, 2. The kingdom creates the church, 3. The church is the structure of human relationships that embodies the presence of the kingdom, 4. The church has been entrusted with the proclamation of the kingdom, 5. The church is thus entrusted with certain powers and prerogatives as the kingdom proclaimer on the earth, and 6. The church must demonstrate the kingdom of God on the earth.⁵²

In *Transforming Mission*, Bosch affirms the direct relationship between the kingdom and the church. He writes that in God's overarching kingdom purpose for humanity, the church is God's mission, his sent one to fulfil the kingdom's salvific purpose.⁵³ Beale resonates similarly and connects the church as God's expanding temple with his worldwide kingdom mandate: "We, as God's people, have already begun to be God's end-time temple where his presence is manifested to the world, and we are to extend the boundaries of the new garden-temple until Christ returns, when, finally, they will be expanded worldwide."⁵⁴ McKnight states it thus: "To be sure, the eschatological nature of the church as the present manifestation of the future dwelling-place of God means that the church today is a manifestation of what it will become, a glimpse of the kingdom to come ... (and it) is the future dwelling-place of God ... that is the church will be the kingdom."⁵⁵ Thus, contemporary scholars affirm apostle Paul's

⁵⁰ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 1; Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, chap. 5; McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 5.

⁵¹ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 6.

⁵² Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4.

⁵³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 2011), chap. 12, Kindle.

⁵⁴ G.K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004), chap. 13, Apple Books.

⁵⁵ McKnight, "Ecclesiology", 445.

seminal injunction that the church is the dwelling place of God on earth through which Christ Jesus establishes his kingdom rule.⁵⁶

In this opening chapter the literature proposes that although kingdom theology is distinct from various theological positions to date, it provides a marked hermeneutic through which to interpret the message, ministry and mission of Jesus as the defining hermeneutic for how the church is to understand the kingdom of God in its fullness. Essentially, scholars posit that the kingdom of God is the dynamic rule and reign of God inaugurated in Christ's mission and epitomized in his ministry - the declaration and demonstration of the Good News. Christ's kingdom ministry is the example for us to follow as his disciples who live between the times in anticipation of the consummation of the kingdom on his return. Moreover, it is argued from the literature that the kingdom of God is expressed through the kingdom people, the church, as God's vehicle embodying the praxis of the kingdom. This is the framework for the church's ministry philosophy today, and it undergirds the church's nature and mission into the world as the focal point of the conflict between good and evil, God and Satan, until the end of the age.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Eph. 2:11-3:11 (NIV).

⁵⁷ Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, chap. 14. In Matt. 16:15 – 20 (NIV), Jesus emphasizes the connection between the kingdom and the church, and the church being the vanguard of kingdom advancement on the earth against works of darkness. Paul reiterates Jesus' emphasis in Eph. 3:10 (NIV) that the church is the agency through which darkness is dispelled while engaging with the mission of God.

CHAPTER 2

THE GOSPEL WE PREACH

According to Morpew, a significant correlation exists between the demonstration of the kingdom of God and the preached gospel message within the church.⁵⁸ Other leading New Testament scholars such as Ladd, Keller and Sherman affirm Morpew's position and their contributions follow below. Nevertheless, Morpew asserts that Jesus' great announcement of the kingdom, the gospel, is the church's trigger mechanism that brings the powers of the future age (the kingdom) to bear upon this world.⁵⁹ Elsewhere, Morpew elucidates how preaching the gospel brings about a confrontation of the kingdom against the idolatry latent within the lives of the hearers.⁶⁰ Hence, the correlation between the demonstration of the kingdom and the message preached from pulpits is essential: it either promotes what Jesus has exemplified as the mission and ministry of the kingdom for the church or diminishes it.

Intending to empower the church toward the expression of a whole kingdom mission, Morpew asks the vital question: "Do we, through the gospel we preach, proclaim the whole will of God, or a reduced part of it?"⁶¹ Similarly, Ladd seeks to emphasize the importance of connecting the fundamentals of the kingdom of God with the church's ability to embody the ministry of the gospel. He contends that one must consider the permanent values of the biblical doctrine of the kingdom of God for modern theology and that there are specific abiding values that modern theology must preserve to interpret the essential elements of the gospel to our generation.⁶² Likewise, both Keller and Sherman echo Ladd's agreement with Morpew. They equally advocate that preachers preach Jesus' gospel with the aim of "pushing the button" in

⁵⁸ Morpew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

⁵⁹ Morpew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2. This is consistent with Paul's statement to the church in Rome (Rom. 1:16).

⁶⁰ Morpew, *Breakthrough*, Part 3.

⁶¹ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

⁶² Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, chap. 14.

the hearts of disciples to evoke a kingdom response and lifestyle.⁶³ Thus, what one preaches is vital to the ongoing effective reach and impact of the Great Commission through the church.

The Gospel and Evangelism

At this point, the following factors are worthy of consideration regarding preaching: 1. One's fundamental view of the gospel, and 2. Evangelism. First, one's fundamental view of the gospel. McKnight interrogates the essence of the kingdom of God and the nature of the gospel in *Kingdom Conspiracy* and *The King Jesus Gospel*. In harmony with Morpheus, both publications aim to refute selected reductions of the kingdom and its consequences for the church. *Kingdom Conspiracy* reframes the kingdom of God and the gospel within a kingdom story that orbits the centrality of Christ Jesus (A-B-A') instead of an individual's redemption (C-F-R-C).⁶⁴ McKnight proposes that because the focus of the C-F-R-C narrative is personal salvation, it emphasizes the individual. While this is good, it reduces the Bible's story to a redemption story, which misses the significant meaning of the arc from Creation to Consummation. Within McKnight's preferred A-B-A' kingdom narrative, he contends, regarding 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, that the gospel order is Jesus first, people second, where Jesus the Messiah and King is the prominent figure, and redemption is consequent.⁶⁵ Wright concurs with McKnight's theme proffering that the gospel emphasis of the Gospel writers is that, in Jesus, God has become King of the world and that this theme is the interpretive hermeneutic for all church life.⁶⁶

⁶³ Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2010), chap. 5, 6, Kindle;

Amy L. Sherman, *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 28-29, Apple Books.

⁶⁴ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 3. The C-F-R-C narrative stands for Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation. A-B-A' McKnight describes as God's Plan A for humankind, forestalled by Plan B, and reinstated as Plan A revisited in Christ Jesus. McKnight proposes that A-B-A' is the driving story of the kingdom wherein C-F-R-C is a theme. He states that the A-B-A' emphasis leads to a gospel declaration that Jesus is Messiah, Lord and Savior.

⁶⁵ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 3.

⁶⁶ N.T. Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels* (New York: Harper Collins, 2012), chap. 11, Kindle.

In *The King Jesus Gospel*, McKnight asks the fundamental question: what is the gospel?⁶⁷ As in *Conspiracy*, McKnight contends that a pervasive “salvation culture” has reduced the gospel of the kingdom to ministers merely preaching for converts and implementing ministry philosophies with an orientation towards nurturing church members (“the decided”) attending meetings alone.⁶⁸ McKnight proposes that salvation culture is not the Bible’s “gospel culture”, and this gospel culture ought to be at the centre of the church where discipleship is the aim and not conversions.⁶⁹ Hence, McKnight contends that the gospel, at its essence, is that Jesus is King (Messiah), and he, and his mission, is the pinnacle pursuit, not personal salvation. This emphasis on the primacy of King Jesus and his mission is what McKnight calls *gospel culture* and the that the mission of a gospel culture is establishing the kingdom of God on earth.⁷⁰ Once more, in concert with Morpheu and Wright, McKnight confronts the reduction of an individualist personal salvation culture to expand the gospel to its rightful biblical focus of Christ being King over all the earth. According to McKnight *et al*, this is the gospel and the church’s mission.

Furthermore, the emphasis on discipleship within a gospel culture has implications for the second factor: evangelism. Here, Bates makes a necessary contribution. He integrates evangelism within the discipleship mandate of the Great Commission. This research will interrogate the essential nature of discipleship as the praxis for the church within a kingdom paradigm in a later chapter; however, Bates asserts:

Discipleship and salvation are not separable categories. Why is this of practical import for the church? The church must not think of evangelism or mission (traditionally, “getting people saved”) and discipleship (traditionally, “growing people in Christ”) as separate or even separable tasks—and church programming needs to be reconfigured accordingly. Evangelism programs are only accurate and compelling when they are not merely an invitation to forgiveness but an invitation to full-orbed discipleship. Programs for discipleship are only

⁶⁷ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 1.

⁶⁸ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2.

⁶⁹ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2.

⁷⁰ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chaps. 6, 7.

accurate and compelling when discipleship is understood to be absolutely required for the allegiant outworking of salvation.⁷¹

McKnight affirms Bates' position on evangelism. He writes:

Most of evangelism today is obsessed with getting someone to make a decision; the apostles, however, were obsessed with making disciples... Evangelism that focuses on decisions short circuits and — yes, the word is appropriate — aborts the design of the gospel, while evangelism that aims at disciples slows down to offer the full gospel of Jesus and the apostles.⁷²

Therefore, the literature establishes that evangelism and discipleship are inextricably linked with a person's discipleship as the focus and not a momentary response of conversion to an evangelistic message.

While Bates and McKnight emphasize the integration of evangelism within the scope of discipleship, Morpew illumines the vital role of evangelism in the practical advancement of the kingdom of God that, in turn, permits discipleship and confronts and dislodges local and regional powers through people coming to faith in Christ.⁷³ In support of this, Morpew cites the examples of Wimber and Blount as luminaries.⁷⁴ Both nuances — discipleship and pioneering the advancement of the kingdom — are indispensable facets of evangelism that deserve consideration for the minister who seeks to meaningfully engage in God's kingdom coming in power and sustainable discipleship growth through the church today.

This chapter has proposed that thought leaders on the nature of the kingdom, the gospel and the ministry of the church would have the reader consider the following: The gospel the church understands from the pulpit determines the gospel that is embraced and embodied by the believer, and this has an effect on the church's living out of the Great Commission. As Morpew has proposed, the gospel issued from pulpits is inextricably linked to the evidence

⁷¹ Matthew W. Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works, and the Gospel of Jesus the King* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017), chap. 9, Kindle.

⁷² McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, Introduction.

⁷³ Morpew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 8.

⁷⁴ Morpew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 8.

of the kingdom demonstrated by the church. Consequently, he and others argue for a portrayal of a complete gospel, not a reduction. A pervasive reduction within the church, as asserted by McKnight and Bates, is that the kingdom's story is essentially about personal redemption, a salvation gospel, as opposed to the centrality of Christ as King. This has a substantial effect on the emphasis of sermons from the pulpit and the goal and approach to evangelism advocated by the church. However, scholars argue that the kingship of Christ, discipleship and forceful kingdom advancement appear to be the critical theme and praxis of the gospel informed by the kingdom. Wright advises that ministers allow the Gospels and the gospel to speak their message anew, where preachers and teachers face the challenge of communicating the entire gospel so that hearers are led both into fresh worship and an eagerness to live the gospel of the kingdom for themselves.⁷⁵ The preached gospel reflects the theology one adheres to, which ultimately informs the philosophy of ministry undergirding each church. The next chapter will consider discipleship – a distinct emphasis that has emerged here – as the praxis of the kingdom evidenced in the church by every believer.

⁷⁵ Wright, *How God Became King*, chap. 11.

CHAPTER 3

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE KINGDOM

The significance of discipleship is self-evident in the ministry of Jesus and his Great Commission to all believers throughout the ages.⁷⁶ The previous chapter highlighted, amongst other matters, the significance of discipleship within the framework of the preached gospel delivered from the pulpits today. This chapter devotes attention to discipleship as the means through which the kingdom of God substantially and sustainably manifests in and through the church in advancing the kingdom of God today. Furthermore, it hones in on the impact that discipleship has upon the church's approach to ministry as a result of its prominence within the mission and mandate of the kingdom of God. In particular this chapter will aim to establish the relationship between discipleship and the coming of the kingdom of God, offer necessary definitions, and thereafter contextualize discipleship within the already, not yet framework of kingdom theology.⁷⁷ Consequently, the prominence of discipleship amid the mission of the kingdom of God on earth impacts substantially upon the church's approach to ministry. In this regard, contributions of notable scholars will be considered.

The Kingdom of God: an Uncompromising Call to Discipleship

In assessment of the state of the Western church's spirituality, Willard offers a discerning critique. He writes: "More often than not, faith has failed, sadly, to transform the human character of the (church) masses, because it is usually unaccompanied by discipleship and by an overall discipline of life such as Christ himself practiced."⁷⁸ In his observation, Willard notably connects the purposeful process of discipleship with the believer's transformed life in God's kingdom. Morphew affirms Willard's promotion of discipleship. He establishes

⁷⁶ Mk. 1:14-18 (NIV) and Matt. 28:18-20 (NIV) encompass the ministry of Jesus and emphasize his attention to discipleship.

⁷⁷ In chapter one, the already and not yet nature of the kingdom of God was described.

⁷⁸ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York: HarperCollins e-Books, 1988), chap. 11, Kindle.

the special connection between the kingdom's announcement and its intervention in a believer's life as the "uncompromising call to discipleship".⁷⁹ Morphew, furthermore, fundamentally roots the spiritual formation of a kingdom citizen's identity within the scope of the spiritual disciplines of discipleship and points the believer to the contribution of Venter here.⁸⁰ In *Doing Spirituality*, Venter provides a textbook on Christian spirituality and discipleship embedded in a theology of the kingdom.⁸¹ Venter describes the formation of the kingdom of God within each believer as follows:

How does this happen? Through interactive relationship and purposeful training by his indwelling Spirit. Apprenticeship to a master is to arrange one's life to become like the master – to learn their way of life, their vocation and trade – in a disciplined and structured life formation. To be an apprentice of Jesus, the Master of God's kingdom, is to be fully committed to, live interactively with, diligently learn from, to purposefully become like him. In so doing, we incrementally live the life and vocation of God's kingdom in the Spirit's power and character, just as Jesus did. This is (ought to be) our whole-life, life-long pursuit, in all dimensions of our personhood.⁸²

In concert with Morphew, Venter directly bridges the impact of the manifestation and mission of God's kingdom in the Christian's life with the individual's purposeful decision to be formed after the likeness of Jesus. Hirsch agrees and delineates discipleship as the "most critical element" (after the kingship of Jesus) in infusing the evidence of the kingdom of God within the DNA of the church because the task of discipleship is to embody the character, message and mission of Jesus, the founder of the church.⁸³

Bates resonates with the above and provides a unique perspective on the priority of discipleship. He positions discipleship as allegiance to Jesus, the king. Bates argues that "a true gospel invitation must summon the hearer toward a confession of allegiance to Jesus as the king or cosmic Lord."⁸⁴ He then proposes that the present-tense moment of choice in a

⁷⁹ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 3.

⁸⁰ Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 2.

⁸¹ Alexander F. Venter, *Doing Spirituality: The Journey of Character Formation toward Christlikeness* (Durban, South Africa: Alexander F. Venter – Kingdom Treasure, 2019), Kindle.

⁸² Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 10.

⁸³ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

⁸⁴ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9.

gospel invitation should always be understood to be a response to the present-tense reality of Jesus's kingly rule.⁸⁵ This allegiance to Jesus as king manifests through obedient discipleship which permits total transformation to Christlikeness.⁸⁶ Thus, Bates further demonstrates the relationship between the priority of discipleship (allegiance to Jesus) in spiritual transformation and the practical impact of the kingdom of God on earth through the church.

Discipleship Defined

Hirsch and Bates may be counted among those scholars who agree that the kingdom of God is meaningfully expressed in and through a believer's life via the uncompromising call to discipleship. Hirsch adds further gravitas to discipleship's vital role: "When dealing with discipleship and the related capacity to generate authentic followers of Jesus, we are dealing with that single most crucial factor that will in the end determine the quality of the whole."⁸⁷ He asserts elsewhere that Jesus focused his efforts and invested most of his time and energy upon the high purpose of discipleship is cardinal in demonstrating the kingdom in this life.⁸⁸ Furthermore, Hirsch contends that for the follower of Jesus, discipleship must not be viewed as the first step toward a promising religious career but rather the fulfillment of his or her destiny, never graduating beyond being a disciple.⁸⁹ Likewise, Bates submits that the invitation to begin the journey of salvation can never be anything less than a call to discipleship.⁹⁰ Therefore, the prominence of discipleship within the kingdom life is noteworthy.

However, what is discipleship, given its significance? Here are several nuances deserving of consideration as a basic understanding of discipleship. Firstly, Bates argues that discipleship is synonymous with salvation: "We are only and ever (past, present, and future) saved by discipleship to Jesus, for to be a disciple is to have declared and enacted pistis unto

⁸⁵ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9.

⁸⁶ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9.

⁸⁷ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

⁸⁸ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

⁸⁹ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

⁹⁰ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9.

Jesus the king.”⁹¹ Bates’ standpoint is that the believing loyalty of a disciple is grounded within the fundamental nature of faith, which is the pledge and practice of allegiance to King Jesus.⁹² Heiser concurs with Bates, simply stating that salvation for the believer means believing loyalty to Christ.⁹³

Secondly, Venter provides several additional facets in the definition of discipleship. He states: “To be a disciple of Jesus is to live in relational interaction with him daily, learning moment by moment from him how to live your life as he would if he were you. It is learning from him how to live life in the kingdom of the heavens, in the already – and the not yet – of God’s rule and reign.”⁹⁴ Furthermore, Venter delineates three essential elements necessary in a basic definition of discipleship: “Following – ‘Come, follow me’; forming – ‘and I will make you’; and fishing – ‘fishers of people’. Discipleship to Jesus in his kingdom means following God in Messiah, being formed in his community, to fish his world for the kingdom.”⁹⁵ Therefore, essentially discipleship has the following: i. It begins with a pledge of allegiance to King Jesus, ii. It is practiced in the personal and intimate following of Jesus as a disciplined learner, iii. Which, in turn, permits a disciples’ kingdom character formation into the likeness of Jesus, iv. It is expressed in the mission of Jesus continued in the disciple’s life, v. All within an already not yet framework of the Christian life.

Willard, thirdly, provides a simple definition of discipleship and does so with a comparative explanation of a non-disciple. He argues that “the disciple is one who, intent upon becoming Christlike and so dwelling in his ‘faith and practice,’ systematically and

⁹¹ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9.

⁹² Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 4. Here, Bates argues extensively for *pistis* as a loyalty that frames up intellectual agreement. Hence, his emphasis on believing loyalty.

⁹³ Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), chap. 21, Kindle.

⁹⁴ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5.

⁹⁵ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5. Beyond these defining statements, this chapter of *Doing Spirituality* extensively delineates a biblical understanding of discipleship grounded in its Greek meaning, *mathetes*, meaning learner, student or apprentice to the learning environment and practices of disciples that arose within the Second Temple period.

progressively rearranges his affairs to that end. By these actions, even today, one enrolls in Christ's training, becomes his pupil or disciple. There is no other way."⁹⁶ Whereas, in contrast, Willard further states that the non-disciple has something more important to do than be pre-occupied with becoming like Jesus. Willard's simple emphasis is that discipleship is about prioritizing Jesus above all else as a believer.⁹⁷

However, Ferguson and Bird take a discipleship definition from Acts 2:42-47 with emphasis on 3C's arguing that the simplest way of describing a disciple is to consider three primary, growing relationships: Celebrating, Connecting and Contributing.⁹⁸ Yet, regardless of the varied nuances there seems to be a consistent fundamental emphasis throughout: To follow and become like Jesus purposefully as priority, while participating within the community of the saints - a local church, with the aim of making an impact upon the surrounding society as part of the Great Commission.

The Already and the Not Yet

The New Testament teaches that the Christian's lived experience occurs within the tension between the kingdom already now and the kingdom not yet.⁹⁹ While the kingdom tension of the already and not yet has been outlined in chapter one, it provides a necessary framework for understanding biblical discipleship. Morphew argues that Christians ought to become accustomed to this already and not yet reality, one that contextualizes the disciple's life: "We should get used to it. It will not go away. The entire age of grace, from the coming of the kingdom to the final consummation of the kingdom is lived 'between the times'".¹⁰⁰ Venter concurs with Morphew here. He states the following:

⁹⁶ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, appendix II.

⁹⁷ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, appendix II.

⁹⁸ Dave Ferguson and Warren Bird, *Hero Maker: Five Essential Practices For Leaders To Multiply Leaders* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2018), chap. 9, Kindle.

According to Ferguson, celebrating focuses on ones relationship with God, connecting emphasizes developing fellowship relationships within the church, and contributing highlights ones impact upon society.

⁹⁹ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4.

¹⁰⁰ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4.

The mystery is that we live between the times, in the overlapping or co-existence of two ages – a unique ontological and existential reality. Theologians call it the ‘already’ and ‘not yet’ of God’s kingdom. Understanding this revealed mystery is crucial. It explains much of our daily reality as Christians.¹⁰¹

According to kingdom theology, this is the environment into which the church is birthed and the worldview which undergirds the life of the New Testament believer.¹⁰² It has subsequent implications for discipleship, of which two are: 1. Discipleship before glorification, and 2. The high value of discipleship in advancing the kingdom. First, Morphew initially establishes the following as the vital state for the disciple:

The New Testament is very clear that our true identity, our true self, is the regenerate person with a new nature, living in the kingdom of God. I am not essentially a sinner saved by grace. I am essentially a new person, saved by grace and transformed by the power of the risen Christ living in me. I live from that identity into obedience.¹⁰³

Then, he further positions the believers’ new creation identity into obedience within the honest reality of this present age where one awaits the glorified body. This is a stark contrast between two equal biblical truths: we are already ascended with Christ, yet we still struggle with our old humanity.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, Morphew’s proposed posture for discipleship is, as a result, to wait patiently in confident hope while actively pressing on towards full glorification from a position of strength.¹⁰⁵

Second, Venter provides a four-fold matrix of the implications of the mission of the kingdom of God: Power Encounter, Personal Transformation, Social Transformation and World Mission, where Personal Transformation is kingdom discipleship.¹⁰⁶ Here, Venter emphasizes the vital role of personal transformation into Christlikeness as the fulcrum around

¹⁰¹ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 4.

¹⁰² Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4.

¹⁰³ Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 2.

¹⁰⁴ Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 4.

which all the missional implications of the kingdom of God hinges, arguing that discipleship provides the why and how of each dimension of the coming of God's kingdom.¹⁰⁷

Discipleship and the Church

As this chapter proposes, the literature concerning the scope of the kingdom of God and discipleship illumines the biblical significance of discipleship's role in meaningfully participating with and grounding out God's kingdom as a believer. Historically, the likes of Dallas Willard, Richard Foster and Eugene Peterson have substantially written for the prominence of discipleship as the means and method of kingdom life. Today, Venter earnestly continues to advocate for discipleship's vital kingdom function. In summation, it is necessary to consider the place of discipleship within the church. Nevertheless, the scope of this thesis is not specifically discipleship as the kingdom practice and is a topic worthy of further extensive attention.

Hirsch notes the seminal role of discipleship in his assessment of lasting church missional movements since Pentecost. He states: "They never appear to get beyond disciple making as a core practice. This is the case because discipleship is at once the starting point, the abiding strategic practice, and the key to all lasting missional impact in and through movements."¹⁰⁸ His survey of the church in history identifies that the "movement-killer" catalyzing the decline of Methodism due to discipleship moving from a core practice to merely "an optional extra."¹⁰⁹ Willard calls this "The Great Omission": we omit to make disciples as in not teaching and training believers "to obey everything I have commanded you".¹¹⁰ It is this that leads Venter to call for a response from church leaders: "What sustainable plan does your church have to train and enable its members to do all that Jesus commanded? Think about it.

¹⁰⁷ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 4.

¹⁰⁸ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

¹⁰⁹ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

¹¹⁰ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5.

Seriously. Do you personally have such a plan?"¹¹¹ The nature of God's kingdom calls for several considerations within the church, as this research paper investigates. However, discipleship is an influential factor and receives weighted evaluation in this case study.

¹¹¹ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5.

CHAPTER 4

KINGDOM LEADERSHIP

The relationship between leadership and the implementation of the kingdom of God is vital, therefore this chapter focuses on kingdom leadership. Many nuances of kingdom leadership deserve attention; however, in light of the literature on the topic and the limit of this thesis, this chapter will consider the following selected aspects: 1. Jesus, the model of kingdom leadership, and 2. Servant leadership. The scope here is not an extensive treatment of leadership itself, but rather the relatedness of leadership and the kingdom of God expressed within and from the church.

Kingdom Leadership is Rooted in Discipleship

Before attending to Jesus as the model of kingdom leadership and servant leadership, it is worth noting kingdom leadership's roots in discipleship first. Chapter three noted the indispensable place of discipleship in practically and sustainably implementing the kingdom of God in and through the church. Consequently, in prioritizing discipleship within the nature and praxis of the kingdom, Venter proposed well-considered discipleship plans in the church, a critical role of leadership.¹¹² In addition, Hirsch acknowledges the inextricable relationship between discipleship and leadership. He describes leadership as an extension of biblical discipleship: "Let me say it more explicitly: the quality of the church's leadership is directly proportional to the quality of discipleship. If we fail in the area of making disciples, we should not be surprised if we fail in the area of leadership development."¹¹³ Hence, Hirsch's rightful prioritizing of discipleship as a leadership focus.

Further to this, Damazio argues that the function of leadership is the catalyst for the full spectrum of kingdom life expressed in and beyond the church: "After more than four decades

¹¹² Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5.

¹¹³ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

of being a leader, I am convinced that leadership is the determining factor for most everything achieved in God’s kingdom.”¹¹⁴ Similarly, Willard makes comment on the significant need for reassessment of the church leadership’s approach to Christianity, particularly in the West: “For at least several decades the churches of the Western world have not made discipleship a condition of being a Christian. One is not required to be, or to intend to be, a disciple in order to become a Christian, and one may remain a Christian without any signs of progress toward or in discipleship.”¹¹⁵ He later states that a consequence of such an approach by church leadership results in a great omission from the Great Commission – the omission of making disciples of all nations has become “make converts (to a particular faith and practice) and baptize them into church membership.”¹¹⁶ Consequently, it seems evident that church leadership steeped in an extensive discipleship culture is necessary for inculcating a Christianity that participates with Jesus’ command to the church throughout the ages to make disciples of all nations.

Jesus, the Model of Kingdom Leadership

Chapter one established that a fundamental premise of kingdom theology is that the epitome of the kingdom of God is expressed in the mission, message and ministry of Jesus Christ. It is this that provides the hermeneutic which informs all kingdom life.¹¹⁷ Therefore, Jesus’ leadership is the model for leadership reflective of the kingdom. Townsend affirms this leadership approach. Amid the vast competing secular organizational approaches impinging upon the church and its leadership today, he advocates for “renewal leadership” – a leadership approach informed by the redemptive ministry of Christ, aligned to the standard of the New

¹¹⁴ Frank Damazio, *Life Changing Leadership* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2013), Introduction, Kindle.

¹¹⁵ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, appendix II.

¹¹⁶ Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, appendix II.

¹¹⁷ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

Creation.¹¹⁸ Townsend further asserts that renewal leadership is more than a leadership style; instead, it represents Christ and his Kingdom through the demonstration of leadership.¹¹⁹

Blanchard, Hodges and Hendry echo Townsend. In their approach to corporate leadership, they argue that the world is in desperate need of a new leadership role model and state that while the world continues to throw solutions at us that are built on self-empowerment, self-reliance, competition, peer pressure, and performance, Jesus is the only one who offers a model of leadership built on freedom and complete security.¹²⁰ In addition, Nouwen's reflections on Christian leadership similarly endorse Christo-centric leadership. After his extensive academic career as a teacher in pastoral theology, psychology and Christian spirituality and twenty-five years in the priesthood, Nouwen came face to face with the simple question, "Did becoming older bring me closer to Jesus?"¹²¹ This self-reflection birthed a reformatory assessment of his leadership influence upon others, reflected in *In the Name of Jesus*, undergirded by Jesus' desert temptation and our approach to influencing others.¹²² From Townsend to Nouwen, literature suggests an ever-increasing emphasis on Christo-centric leadership in the church. This emphasis reflects the essence of a kingdom-oriented leadership approach.

Servant Leadership

The kingdom-oriented Christo-centric leadership proffered by the growing number of thought leaders on the topic highlight a particular leadership application: servant leadership. Several other characteristics of servant leadership, such as character, emotional intelligence

¹¹⁸ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

¹¹⁹ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

¹²⁰ Ken Blanchard, Phil Hodges and Phyllis Hendry, *Lead Like Jesus Revisited: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time* (Nashville, TN: W Publishing, 2016), Introduction, Kindle.

¹²¹ Henri J.M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1989), Introduction, Apple Books.

¹²² Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*, Introduction.

and leadership competence, are worthy of consideration here; however, servant leadership receives the prominent focus in this research and is consistent with Christ's definition of influence as being the servant of all.¹²³

Within the literature focusing on church polity, servant leadership is considered a non-negotiable option for the leader. Mitchell states it as follows:

Servanthood, then, is to be our essence, our orientation, our "poise"; our cost-free investment in living a life of love, imitating the attitude and lifestyle of Jesus. In the context of the Church and the Kingdom of God, servanthood is not a choice of one between many styles of leadership. It is the only way we should be.¹²⁴

Damazio agrees:

The key to any ministry is leaders who are like Jesus. Jesus was, above all else, a servant. We are all called to servanthood—to follow Jesus' example of washing His disciples' feet. Servant leadership is always popular with God, and it is always anointed by God. You might not have all the gifts you want, but if you have a servant's heart, you will have the power you need. Servanthood is at the heart of Jesus' kind of leadership.¹²⁵

Both Mitchell and Damazio underscore the primary essence of leadership in the church as that of servant. However, the mandate of servant leadership has received equal focus in the public square, initially under the tutelage of Greenleaf, although Greenleaf developed his servant leadership theory not only with businesses in mind but also with religious organizations, such as churches.¹²⁶ Greenleaf argues:

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?¹²⁷

¹²³ Matt. 20:25-28; Mk. 10:42-45; Lk. 22:25-27; Jhn. 13:1-17 (NIV).

¹²⁴ Costa Mitchell, *Giving Leadership: Taking Others with You on a Journey to Destiny* (Ladysmith, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2017), chap. 5, Kindle.

¹²⁵ Damazio, *Life Changing Leadership*, chap. 8.

¹²⁶ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

¹²⁷ Larry Spears, *The Power of Servant Leadership: Essays by Robert K. Greenleaf* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998), Introduction, Apple Books.

Moreover, servant leadership is subsequently asserted by Wheatley, Du Pree, Spears, Blanchard, Hodges, Sipe and Frick within all organizations, most especially within the church, with Jesus as the luminary standard.¹²⁸

With Christ setting the standard of all kingdom leadership, Townsend proposes several practical notable factors essential in implementing servant-like church leadership. He highlights the need for such leaders to address the following: 1. Culture and trust, 2. Accountability, 3. Listening and understanding, 4. Self-leadership, 5. Embracing growth through conflict, 6. Strategy and planning through developing a mission and vision, through 7. Ministry and context scanning, and permitting regular 8. Evaluation of the mission and ministry of the church.¹²⁹ Thus, Townsend's proposed factors offers a measurable matrix for leaders assessing kingdom leadership.

Kingdom leadership embraces two vital facets: First, it is located in the person of Christ as the example of life and leadership in the kingdom of God. As the literature suggests, Christ-like leadership is vastly emphasized across the organizational spectrum, especially in the church. However, there is a second aspect – kingdom leadership is servanthood, and it is equally practical. To this end, Townsend has delineated several considerations for kingdom leaders seeking to establish a kingdom expression within the church. The particular aim of kingdom leadership is to infuse discipleship within the church. This second aspect is a thoughtful and robust implementation of the first and draws attention to the ministry philosophy kingdom leaders engage with. It is this that will be the subject of the next chapter.

¹²⁸ Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming your Heart, Head, Hands and Habits* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), Introduction, Apple Books. Blanchard posits a telling insight regarding leadership in all spheres: "As my perspective on faith changed, so did my views on leadership. I realized that Christians have more in Jesus than just a great spiritual leader; we have a practical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations."

¹²⁹ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

CHAPTER 5

A MINISTRY PHILOSOPHY INFORMED BY KINGDOM THEOLOGY

The practical and regular implementation of a senior leader's theological convictions and beliefs (along with that of the highest governing leadership in the church) reflects the intrinsic approach to how the leader strategically positions the church in its context. Positioning the church in such a manner is considered the church's specific ministry philosophy or strategy and has a marked influence on the outcomes of the church's purpose. This chapter briefly considers the importance of a ministry philosophy within the church and the influence of kingdom theology upon its design, primarily regarding a Holy Spirit hermeneutic in approaching directing the church.¹³⁰ It is important to note that this chapter does not consider the vast spectrum of ministry philosophies, such as traditional or seeker-friendly; instead, its focus is on the implications of a theology of the kingdom of God upon a church ministry philosophy, particularly with its engagement with the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. It is vital to note that this chapter focuses on the important place and role of the Holy Spirit within a ministry philosophy in principle rather than an exhaustive discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, signs, wonders and miracles, or style of worship.

The Vital Role of a Ministry Philosophy

Sell highlights the vital role of a ministry philosophy within the church. He posits the following observation in this regard:

A philosophy and strategy of ministry should provide a path to embody in ministry structures the ministry agency's deepest-held theological convictions. It should provide focus for ministry and criteria for decision-making both among governing bodies and among those in the trenches of ministry practice. It should make both ministry activities and evaluative practices more intentional. In effect, a philosophy and strategy of ministry is a rudder for ministry.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Craig S. Keener and Amos Young, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016). Keener and Young coin the phrase "Spirit hermeneutic" to define the lens by which we are to interpret the primitive and present day church, namely the person, presence and power of the Spirit.

¹³¹ Phillip W. Sell, "A Map for Ministry: Constructing a Philosophy and Strategy of Ministry", *Christian Education Journal*, Vol. 7. Issue. 1 (2003): 67-85, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/07f66f3de9fc94a83c042b6dc6aaa477/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=38112>.

Sell clarifies that a ministry philosophy, or strategy for doing church, is the factor that connects the church's essential theological convictions to the implementation of the church's mission and vision. A ministry philosophy is essentially how the church does what it believes in to pursue its mission and vision, and it provides a framework for decision-making for the leadership and ministries of the church to that end. Similarly, Venter states that a philosophy of ministry encompasses the church's shared purpose, values, priorities, personnel and program that determines their common life and endeavours, the way of doing church.¹³²

However, Sell argues that there need to be more adequate maps for constructing a ministry philosophy due to the need for more suitable approaches.¹³³ Roxburgh agrees with Sell here, asserting that the contemporary church leaders' approach to ministry philosophy design is, by and large, undergirded by a pragmatic, cause-and-effect, modernist approach to ministry influenced by business thinking without any critical reflection on the biblical narrative offered in the Scriptures.¹³⁴

A Ministry Philosophy that Engages with Scripture

Roxburgh argues that contemporary church leaders too often formulate their approach to the decisions and direction of the church according to their organizational strategic investigation without consulting with the defining narrative of the Scriptures: "Churches simply take these data and enfold them in a series of Bible studies about the nature and purpose of the church, as if the data will tell the church what it ought to do to reach this community. The plans are really shaped by the data; the Bible themes are used to back up and reinforce the plan."¹³⁵ Roxburgh further asserts that leaders readily accept models and programs from areas

¹³² Venter, *Doing Church*, chap. 2.

¹³³ Sell, "A Map for Ministry", 67.

¹³⁴ Alan J. Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making: Skills for Leading in Times of Transition* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010), chap. 4, Kindle.

¹³⁵ Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 4.

such as business and use them in the church context without any critical reflection on their relationship to or implications for the biblical narrative.¹³⁶ Townsend affirms the influence of corporate society upon the church's praxis today and argues that it has left many in Evangelical circles yearning for a deeper understanding of God and its resultant implications on the organizational development of the church.¹³⁷

Subsequently, Roxburgh calls for an approach to church ministry philosophy that emerges through engagement with the biblical narrative where the Spirit of God invites church leadership to rediscover the biblical stories to reshape their imagination and, thereby, the unfolding future of the church.¹³⁸ Venter agrees and advocates for a ministry philosophy founded upon rigorously considered theological convictions that inform the church leaders doing of church and decision-making.¹³⁹ Concerning Palmer, Roxburgh argues that what and how we know epistemologically determines what we deem necessary and valuable and guides our actions, values, and ethics, hence the need for a ministry philosophy informed by a theological conviction rooted in the biblical narrative.¹⁴⁰

A Spirit Hermeneutic and Empowerment for Mission

A significant emphasis proffered within the narrative of kingdom theology that determines how one approaches a ministry philosophy is the dynamic and continuous involvement of the Holy Spirit as the very presence of God within the church and the empowering agency of God's people toward fulfilling its mission.¹⁴¹ Here, one is to begin with

¹³⁶ Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 4.

¹³⁷ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

¹³⁸ Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 3.

¹³⁹ Venter, *Doing Church*, chap. 2. Venter promotes a ministry philosophy embedded in kingdom theology.

¹⁴⁰ Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 3. Roxburgh writes: "Why do we believe that this is truth and something else isn't? How do we come to know that something is true? What distinguishes true knowledge from false knowledge, and how do we arrive at these distinctions? Epistemology is about the frameworks that shape how we know—the maps we use to interpret the world."

¹⁴¹ Derek J. Morpew, *The Implications of the Kingdom* (Bergvliet, South Africa: Derek Morpew Publications, 2009), chap. 5, Kindle.

the example of Jesus' ministry by the Holy Spirit expressed within the narrative of the Gospels, where Jesus' example informs the church's praxis, as Jesus' present body is led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴² This starting point, with attention given to Jesus as the exemplar, is consistent with the premise of kingdom theology.¹⁴³

Furthermore, Keener, along with Pentecostal and other scholars, posits his "Spirit hermeneutics", offering that Acts is a model to shape the ministry philosophy and praxis of church life today.¹⁴⁴ Keener argues that by embracing the biblical narrative of Acts, we become part of the extension of that narrative which he describes in the following: "So long as the mission remains to be completed, we continue to need the Spirit's power to fulfill it (Acts 1:8), and the same power is promised to us (Acts 2:39) ... Likewise, we who continue this mission remain part of the narrative of salvation history, a narrative to which Acts points."¹⁴⁵ Hence, a rigorous view of the biblical narrative points to a church praxis today informed by the dynamic and continuous involvement of the Holy Spirit, consistent with kingdom theology.

One such Pentecostal scholar, Fee, affirms this approach. In his thorough assessment of Paul's pneumatology informing the praxis of the primitive and contemporary church, he argues that with Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit has a threefold role amid God's people: the Holy Spirit is the very person of God, the very presence of God tabernacling amid his people, and the empowering presence of the church toward mission.¹⁴⁶ Fee emphasizes that Paul's approach is not merely theoretical for the church but a lived and experienced dimension of church life.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

¹⁴³ Morphew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

¹⁴⁴ Craig S. Keener and Amos Young, *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016), 189.

¹⁴⁵ Keener and Amos, *Spirit Hermeneutics*, 190.

¹⁴⁶ Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), Introduction.

¹⁴⁷ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, Introduction.

Other conservative scholars agree. Dunn denotes a striking feature of the church as being a charismatic community where its praxis (acting, activity, function – what some may describe as “doing church”) is of a “diversity of charisms” expressing the “manifestation (phanerosis) of the Spirit”, which is for the “benefit of others and as enabled by divine power”.¹⁴⁸ Similarly, Beale and Kim assert that the church is the new temple of God on earth with the mandate of continuing the Edenic mission of expanding Eden throughout the earth until Christ’s return.¹⁴⁹ Later they argue that after Christ’s resurrection and ascension, “God’s tabernacling presence descended in the form of the Spirit, so that those identified with Christ are included as part of the temple ... Therefore, the temple’s center of gravity during the church age is located in the heavenly realm, but it has begun to invade the earthly through the Spirit in the church.”¹⁵⁰ As per Fee, the Holy Spirit is God’s personal presence in the midst of the church permitting the power to fulfill the church’s mission.

Further to the emphasized role of the Holy Spirit as the defining presence of God within the church today, Morphew specifically underscores the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit toward the Great Commission mandate of the church: “Clearly Jesus did not envision the church being able to fulfil its missional task without this Holy Spirit empowering.”¹⁵¹ Lyons agrees with this focus on the presence of the Spirit in the church. In his dissertation on Spirit reception in the church, he concludes that regardless of the various theological backgrounds, including Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutherans, Baptists, indigenous SIB evangelical, as well as American Methodists, the scope of Spirit reception reveals a picture of

¹⁴⁸ James D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), chap. 7.

¹⁴⁹ G.K. Beale and Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, 2014), chap. 7.

¹⁵⁰ Beale and Kim, *God Dwells Among Us*, chap. 8.

¹⁵¹ Morphew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 3.

“empowerment for mission” that is not an outcome of Pentecostal or charismatic interpretation, but rather a cross-section of the global witness of historic Christianity.¹⁵²

Leading by the Holy Spirit

This chapter is not an exhaustive excursus on the ministry of the Holy Spirit within the church in its broadest sense – that deserves further consideration elsewhere. Instead, this chapter acknowledges that a church’s ministry philosophy informed by kingdom theology is to be steered, fundamentally, by the biblical narrative and that the narrative of Jesus’ example in the Gospels with that of the early church promotes, among others, the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit in all of church life. Roxburgh offers a reminder that the two theological emphases that form our ministry maps are: 1. The ways God is revealed to us in Jesus Christ and 2. The giving of the Holy Spirit wherein we see God as a dynamic social community manifest in and through the church fulfilling Christ’s mission.¹⁵³ Roxburgh’s position appears to be well aligned with kingdom theology.

Significantly, the aim has been to reinforce the need for ministers who take directive decisions within the church to submit such decision-making to the biblical narrative. As the literature suggests, this highlights the example of Jesus’ ministry, who was, himself, filled and led by the Holy Spirit in his mandate to fulfill his incarnate mission on earth, as the example for both the primitive church (Acts and Pauline instruction) and the present day church. While it is tempting to discuss miracles and the operation of gifts of the Holy Spirit in church meetings, the approach to and length of worship, the specific reflection here is: Referencing the biblical narrative, do leaders earnestly approach doing church by the Holy Spirit, in submission to the Holy Spirit’s guiding presence and power intending to fulfill Christ’s

¹⁵² Thomas Lyons, “Revisiting the Riddle in Samaria: A Social Scientific Investigation of Spirit Reception in Luke-Acts in Historical Perspective.” A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY, February 2020, 318.

¹⁵³ Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 5.

mission? The focus of the next chapter is to consider this mission, by the power of the Spirit of God, reflective of kingdom theology.

CHAPTER 6

A CHURCH MISSION SHAPED BY KINGDOM THEOLOGY

The previous chapter concluded that a significant role of God, the Holy Spirit, in personally presencing himself within the church is to empower the people of God toward mission. This chapter aims to assess this Spirit-empowered church mission distinctly informed by kingdom theology. Firstly, it is crucial to reconsider the fundamental premises of kingdom theology and its role in the church's mission. Secondly, it is vital to recall the church's place in advancing the mission of God. Thirdly, a holistic mission will be reviewed as a distinctive that emerges from kingdom theology literature and, subsequently, what the resultant implications are for the church in embracing mission shaped by kingdom theology. This topic deserves further deliberation; however, the limits of this research prevents such extensive investigation. Crucially, the foci above outlined in this chapter provide a significant matrix in reviewing Freedom House Church's mission reflective of the kingdom to date.

The Fundamental Premise of Kingdom Theology

Firstly, according to consensus among its leading scholars, kingdom theology considers the message, mission and ministry of Jesus Christ as the defining hermeneutic to interpret and inform the Christian life, inclusive of the essence and intent of the church.¹⁵⁴ The agreed emphasis of kingdom theology reflective of Jesus' seminal ministry is encapsulated in the phrase *enacted, inaugurated eschatology* which means that the powers of the future age (end of the world) have broken into the present in advance in the ministry of Jesus (inclusive of his death, resurrection and ascension) and that Jesus has put the power of the kingdom on display in his ministry, in both word and deed, declaration and demonstration.¹⁵⁵ Thus, as church leaders meaningfully consider mission informed by the kingdom epitomized in Christ, it is

¹⁵⁴ Mophew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

¹⁵⁵ Mophew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

incumbent upon them to rigorously assess and embrace the extent of Christ's ministry as the standard to aim for in seeking to advance God's kingdom today as mission's priority.

Secondly, it is vital to note that Jesus' Great Commission mandate rests upon the church. McKnight makes this argument emphatically in his writing: "Kingdom mission is church mission, church mission is kingdom mission, and there is no kingdom mission that is not church mission."¹⁵⁶ Therefore, McKnight's kingdom mission is about creating and sustaining that kingdom community, the church, as the spearhead of kingdom advancement.¹⁵⁷ Regarding Wingren, Boyd agrees with McKnight that the church is at the forefront of executing the victory of Christ until his return:

Gustaf Wingren expresses this "already/not yet" dynamic well when he argues that with Christ's resurrection the war of the Lord is finished and the great blow is struck ... Jesus is now Lord, Conqueror. But the war is not finished, a conflict does not cease with the striking of the decisive blow. The enemy remains with the scattered remnants of his army, and in pockets here and there a strong resistance may continue. That is the position of the church.¹⁵⁸

Wingren, promoted by Boyd in emphasizing the importance of the role of the church in spearheading the mission of God, echoes Cullman here, who was the first to coin the phrase "the already and the not yet" and used the D Day and V Day motif of the Second World War to explain and contextualize the present-day mission of the church.¹⁵⁹ Bosch adds further gravitas to the church's vital role and emphasizes that the church is, in fact, the missional thrust of the Trinitarian God.¹⁶⁰ Hence, it is the singular mandate of the church (both in its modality and sodality) to continue Christ's ministry example and spearhead kingdom mission on the earth, which is vital for church leaders to consider.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 6.

¹⁵⁷ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 7. This would resonate with Pauline ecclesiology in Ephesians 3:10 reflective of Christ's mandate for the church in Matthew 16:13-20.

¹⁵⁸ Gregory A. Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1997), chap. 7.

¹⁵⁹ Morpheu, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

¹⁶⁰ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, chap. 12.

¹⁶¹ Ralph D. Winter, *The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission*, (Pasadena, CA: Institute of International Studies, 2009), 223. Winter provides a rigorous treatment of the twofold expressions of the church in stewarding church mission. He defines this twofold mission expression as missional modality and sodality: "In order to speak conveniently about the continuing similarities in function, let us now call the synagogue and diocese *modalities*, and the missionary band and monastery *sodalities*."

The Holistic Mission of the Kingdom

Thirdly, the kingdom of God-shaped mission focus posited by kingdom theology is holistic – it stands against the reductionist missions emphases undergirded by the pervasive effect of soterian theology (particularly within churches in the global West) that promotes seeking converts at all costs at the expense of the Great Commission priority of discipleship.¹⁶² Bosch argues that mission is a multifaceted focus “in respect of witness, service, justice, healing, reconciliation, liberation, peace, evangelism, fellowship, church planting, ... and much, much more.”¹⁶³ Wright affirms this approach stating that the church’s mission is to redeem and renew creation through impacting areas such as justice, arts and evangelism because salvation is about transforming the whole person not merely the soul.¹⁶⁴ Boyd agrees although from a different angle: “Prayer is only one form of spiritual warfare. We resist the anticreational forces that oppose God whenever we do anything that restores creation to the place where God originally planned it to be.”¹⁶⁵ Boyd’s emphasis is spiritual warfare; however, he equally promotes the holistic nature of the church’s mission.

Similarly, McKnight states that the kingdom’s mission aims to establish hope, is incarnational, and brings holistic, redemptive justice by establishing local churches that prioritize disciple-making.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, Morphew argues equally that the event of the breakthrough of the kingdom through the ministry of the church has spiritual, social, philosophical, economic and political implications.¹⁶⁷ Hence, a resonating theme emerges amid kingdom theology scholars that elevates holistic church mission due to understanding the kingdom’s nature epitomized in Christ’s ministry.

¹⁶² McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2; Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9; Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, chap. 12, 13. Scholars such as McKnight, Bates and Wright have written extensively on the impact of the emphasis of conversion at the expense of discipleship (soterian theology) within the church and on its mission. In part, this matter was previously given attention in the chapter “The Gospel We Preach”.

¹⁶³ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, chap. 13.

¹⁶⁴ Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, chap. 12, 13.

¹⁶⁵ Boyd, *God at War*, chap. 2.

¹⁶⁶ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 9, 10.

¹⁶⁷ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

In addition to the above, Venter provides a distilled four-fold matrix that are essential missional implications of the vision of the kingdom, in its fulfilment in Jesus and his church:

1. Power encounter – the kingdom of God comes in power through signs, wonders, miracles and prophetic charismata of the Holy Spirit to defeat the works of Satan, enable salvation, and bring healing, deliverance and new creation.

2. Personal transformation – the kingdom of God comes in new creation power to transform people and communities from darkness to light to become born again, children of God who are transformed from the inside out by the Holy Spirit and his sanctifying work of discipleship into the likeness of Christ.

3. Social transformation – the kingdom of God comes to transform individuals and, through them, society, which includes racial, cultural, political, economic, gender, generational and ecological implications.

4. World mission – the kingdom of God comes to transform people and society to reach all nations through planting churches, evangelism and diverse Christian missions.¹⁶⁸

This summarized framework provides an accessible benchmark for church leaders to assess the extent of the effect of the kingdom of God on church mission.

More Than Sinners Saved

A brief review of the arguments of the leading scholars on the matter suggests that church mission informed by kingdom theology is significantly more than sinners being saved from eternal damnation. While it crucially includes individuals being born again, the scope of kingdom mission embraces signs, wonders and miracles as demonstrations of power, salvation for discipleship, the impact of the public square with the gospel and reaching all nations through church planting and all manner of related evangelism and mission. Here, it is vital to note that the church is God's chosen vessel through which to incarnate and steward this great

¹⁶⁸ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 4.

mission, and it is equally critical that churches and its leaders embrace a church mission review reflective of the holistic nature of the kingdom delineated in this chapter. This chapter's content provides a framework suitable for a rigorous mission assessment in Freedom House and provides that last aspect necessary for the case study research in this thesis.

As a reminder, the following notable themes emerging from kingdom theology literature have been addressed in the previous chapters: 1. The Gospel We Preach, 2. Discipleship and the Kingdom, 3. Kingdom Leadership, 4. A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology, and 5. A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology. They provide the matrix for the case study which is the focus of the thesis in the subsequent chapters.

PART II.
THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 7

THE RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In anticipation of the research itself, it is necessary to recall that a case study approach to assessing a context is a constructive process for any organization seeking to strengthen its position, investigate existing weaknesses and reposition itself for greater efficiency. Regarding Baxter *et al.*, de Vries posits that the case study approach as a qualitative methodology is considered practically valuable when approaching contemporary phenomena in a given real-life context.¹⁶⁹ Again, de Vries states that the case study, as an assessment of the social sciences, provides beneficial insights as it permits the exploration and understanding of the experiences of individuals within a real-life context.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, as per Vyhmeister, such descriptive research aims to assess individuals' experiences, assimilate conclusions and make future-oriented decisions.¹⁷¹ Hence, the qualitative case study methodology provides the selected basis for the practical analysis of the implications of kingdom theology upon Freedom House's context to date to assess resultant conclusions and consider appropriate adjustments that may require action by the pastoral leadership.

The framework of analysis is a questionnaire comprising thirteen questions to evaluate the respondents' honest reflections and understanding of the content under consideration. These questions find their origin in the five most significant themes that emerged from the reviewed literature: 1. The Gospel We Preach, 2. Discipleship and the Kingdom, 3. Kingdom Leadership, 4. A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology, and 5. A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Kay de Vries, "Case study methodology," in *Critical Qualitative Health Research: Exploring Philosophies, Politics and Practices*, ed. Kay Aranda (London: Routledge, 2020), Chapter 2, Kindle.

¹⁷⁰ de Vries, *Critical Qualitative Health Research*, chap. 2.

¹⁷¹ N.J. Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers: for Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 126.

¹⁷² Each theme formed specific chapters in part one of the thesis.

To generate robust and applicable data, the Freedom House leadership (All Leadership Team) body was selected as the target audience, comprising both long-standing members and more recent congregants who lead small groups and areas of ministry within the church.¹⁷³ These leaders have a unique grasp of the church's nearly seven-year history, and their diverse tenures of membership provide a sufficiently broad reflection of experience and understanding of the church without the need to assess the entire congregation..¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Please note: 1. The All Leadership Team serves alongside the Eldership and Life Team and comprises sixty-four church members altogether. 2. Long-standing members serving as leaders are those from the church's inception in April of 2017. 3. The more recent members serving as leaders are those who have joined the church within the last 12 months, but who show the necessary biblical qualifications to serve in this capacity. 4. Small groups is the term used to specifically describe connect groups - also referred to as home groups in other churches - and discipleship groups in Freedom House.

¹⁷⁴ At present, Freedom House has seven elders on the pastoral team. A team of gifted Freedom House members, who are not distinctly called to be pastors but who are either graced according to the Ephesians 4:11-16 ministry giftings or have weighted experience in ministry, serve alongside the elder team as advisors.

CHAPTER 8

AN ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The questionnaire was formulated on Google Forms and sent via WhatsApp to each leader. Of the sixty-four leaders who received the questionnaire, only thirty-one responded (48,4 % response rate). Each of the five kingdom theology themes reflected in the literature review had carefully crafted questions to investigate the respondents' honest understanding of each aspect of kingdom theology and its implications for the life and operation of Freedom House.¹⁷⁵ Here follows an analysis of the data.¹⁷⁶

Theme 1: The Gospel We Preach

First, in response to the first question, the data revealed that the gospel is a distinct emphasis in Freedom House's preaching. All 31 respondents unanimously affirmed this.¹⁷⁷ Second, in response to what the perceived gospel emphasis is in the general preaching in the church, the data suggests the following insights: 1. 58% of the responses indicate that Christ Jesus is the central focus of the gospel emphasis. 18 of the 31 responses highlight who Christ is and what he has sufficiently done as the focal point of the gospel attention from the pulpit. 2. 32% of the responses specifically mention "saviour", "forgiveness of sins", "sacrifice", and "grace". That is, 10 of the 31 distinctly give attention to the gospel's salvation-oriented nature, purpose, means and outcome. 3. 29% suggest that the kingdom established on earth is a marked emphasis in the gospel preached in the church. 9 of the 31 responses give attention to the kingdom coming motif. 4. 25,8% of the proposed gospel emphasis is given to the believers' new creation identity. Eight times, this theme finds focus within the responses. 5. 22,5% of the responses refer to Jesus' mission and our partnership with it as a theme in the gospel emphasis. Seven times, this emerges in the 31 replies. 6. 19% of the responses give attention

¹⁷⁵ See Appendix 1.

¹⁷⁶ The analysis was achieved with the aid of Quirkos, a qualitative data analysis software. See www.quirkos.com for further reference.

¹⁷⁷ See Appendix 1.

to Christ's kingship as a significant theme in Freedom House's gospel. Only six times is Christ's kingship or lordship.

Third, in response to whom Jesus is generally revealed as in the scope of preaching, the data offers the following insights: 1. Jesus as king - highlighted 61% of the time, receiving 19 mentions in the 31 responses. 2. Jesus as saviour or redeemer - 58% emphasis with 16 specific references in the 31 responses. 3. 45% of the responses emphasize Jesus as the Son of God, Son of Man, fully God, fully man (14 of 31 responses). 4. 35% offer other references to Jesus as friend, healer, brother, lover, Trinity, priest, or suffering servant (11 references).

Theme 2: Discipleship and the Kingdom

First, the data emerging from the questionnaire suggests that discipleship is a significant emphasis in church practice. This is evident in that 25 of the 31 (80,6%) responded *yes* to the question: Is discipleship a priority in Freedom House? Five were *unsure* (16,1%), and one responded *no* (3,2%).¹⁷⁸

The above was followed by how discipleship is prioritized for those who responded positively. Here follows an analysis: 1. Connect groups received 13 references as a distinct means of discipleship in the church.¹⁷⁹ That is an emphasis of 52% of the 25 positive responses. 2. Meetings received 13 remarks as a vital means of discipleship, equal to connect groups.¹⁸⁰ 3. Training such as specific courses, SOLT and regular leadership equipping received 12 references as a reflection of the priority of discipleship (a 48% emphasis).¹⁸¹ 4. Discipleship groups received nine mentions as a means of the church's approach to effectively discipling (a 36% emphasis). 5. Other methods such as one-on-one discipling (5), various ministries (4), serve teams (3), and missions (3), received 15 accumulative responses comprising 60%.

¹⁷⁸ See Appendix 1.

¹⁷⁹ Connect groups are also referred to as home groups or home cells in other church contexts.

¹⁸⁰ Meetings include Sunday meetings, Friday Night church, and prayer meetings.

¹⁸¹ SOLT stands for the School of Leadership and Theology, an online platform Freedom House uses to equip willing participant within the church. See www.solt.co.za.

Theme 3: Kingdom Leadership

First, in the 31 responses to the question of what the expectation is for excellent and authentic leadership in the church at large, the data suggests the following: 1. Servant or servant-hearted was referenced 15 times in the 31 responses (a 48% emphasis). 2. Character received 13 remarks in the feedback (a 42% emphasis).¹⁸² 3. The need for leaders to follow and emulate Jesus as the example of leadership received 12 references within the 31 responses (a 38,7% emphasis). 4. Gifting was alluded to 6 times in 31 responses (a 19% emphasis)¹⁸³. 5. Other remarks related to shepherding and leading in team received three specific mentions (a 9,6% emphasis).

Second, there were 30 responses to the question as to how the leadership emulates Jesus' leadership example. The data suggests the following: 1. 17 references were made to the leadership reflecting Jesus-like character (a 56,6% emphasis).¹⁸⁴ 2. Empowering leadership received 13 remarks (a 43% emphasis). This includes a leadership approach that points to Jesus, and that equips and disciples the church. 3. Servant and similar variations were alluded to 7 times in the 31 responses (a 23% emphasis). 4. Of the 31 responses, word-based, Spirit-led and submitted to God collectively received six mentions (an emphasis of 20%). 5. Other responses explicitly referring to leading in team and leading with a mission focus amassed only three remarks (a 10% emphasis).

Theme 4: A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology

First, of the 31 responses, 24 remarked that Freedom House's mission and vision were clear for the church (a 77,4% emphasis). Six replied that they were unsure about the clarity of the church's mission and vision (19,4%), and one responded no (3,2%).¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Character includes the following in the feedback: humility, selflessness, gentleness, wisdom, honesty, accountability, setting a good example, and similar character attributes.

¹⁸³ Gifting includes the ability to teach and minister.

¹⁸⁴ This specifically included humbleness.

¹⁸⁵ See Appendix 1.

Second, 27 of the 31 respondents said the senior leadership of Freedom House do not lead the church in a business-like manner (an emphasis of 87,1%). Three respondents replied that they were unsure (9,7%), and one respondent said that the church was led like a business (3,2%).¹⁸⁶

Third, in response to how the leadership demonstrates a leadership submitted to Jesus and led by the Holy Spirit, the data proposes the following: 1. The leadership aim to follow Jesus' example in all they do and in a Bible-based manner. This reflected 24 times within the 31 responses (an emphasis of 77,4%). 2. Church direction, pastoral counsel, and meetings are submitted to the leading and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Of the 31 responses, this received 20 remarks (a 64,5% emphasis). 3. Prayerful leaders. Fourteen times, the leadership was described as prayerful (a 45,1% emphasis). 4. Collaboration and accountability.¹⁸⁷ Thirteen times, it was mentioned that the church's leadership exhibited submission to Jesus and the Holy Spirit by describing mutual accountability (a 41,9% emphasis).

Theme 5: A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology

First, the respondents reflected the following data in expressing their estimation of how God's mission is effectively advanced: 1. Through mission (this includes evangelism and church planting). Mission was referenced 20 times in the 31 responses (a 64,5% emphasis). 2. Through Discipleship. Discipleship, as a compelling mission means, received 17 remarks (a 54,8% emphasis). 3. Holy Spirit demonstrations and encounters.¹⁸⁸ This received seven mentions (a 22,5% emphasis). 4. Strengthening the local church received six remarks (an emphasis of 19,3%). 5. Effectively preaching and teaching the gospel from the pulpit received five references as an effective means of advancing mission (a 16% emphasis).

¹⁸⁶ See Appendix 1.

¹⁸⁷ In the report this includes other internal leaders in Freedom House and apostolic partners outside of the church.

¹⁸⁸ This includes experiencing the power of God's love, healing, deliverance, and a display of signs and wonders in the feedback.

Second, the following data offers insights into how the respondents consider Freedom House fulfilling God's mission: 1. By equipping disciples through meetings to make disciples, including preaching. This received 22 remarks out of 31 (a 70,9% emphasis). 2. Mission, including evangelism, church planting or sending on mission. Mission received 12 references (a 38,7% emphasis). 3. Strengthening the local church, specifically, as God's mission station was alluded to 6 times (an emphasis of 19,3%).

CHAPTER 9

EVALUATION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Theme 1: The Gospel We Preach

Chapter two's literature review illuminated several essential factors necessary as one evaluates the findings requisite to consider implications and propose required recommendations for Freedom House. There is a crucial correlation between the kingdom of God at work in and through a church community and the gospel message preached from the pulpit.¹⁸⁹ Also, the literature review expresses that the gospel ought to inculcate a gospel culture over a salvation culture: the former promotes that Christ is king over all the earth and deserves loyalty and obedience from his disciples who aim to make further disciples as per the Great Commission mandate, and the latter reduces salvation to convert-making alone to escape this wicked earth in pursuit of heaven.¹⁹⁰

Evaluation

An evaluation of the data reveals that the gospel has been a distinct emphasis in Freedom House's preaching since its inception.¹⁹¹ The literature asks a critical question: what is the gospel?¹⁹² In Freedom House, the data suggests that the preeminent gospel focus is Jesus.¹⁹³ Here, the analysis specifically offers that Jesus is described as saviour (32%), with his kingship significantly less (19%).¹⁹⁴ However, this is in contrast to the near equal perception that Jesus is revealed as king (61%) and saviour (58%) in the church generally in the pulpit.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 2.

¹⁹⁰ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 3; McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 2; Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*, chap. 11; Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9. Please refer to chapter 2.

¹⁹¹ See Appendix 1.

¹⁹² McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 1.

¹⁹³ Question 2 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

¹⁹⁴ Question 2 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

¹⁹⁵ Question 3 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

The analysis further divulges that establishing the kingdom on earth and co-labouring to fulfil the Great Commission is a marked gospel emphasis at 51,6% and that new creation identity expressing qualities specifically of discipleship is a lesser preached emphasis at 25,8%.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, analysis suggests that the perception of the church's gospel preaching promotes Jesus primarily as saviour, who happens to be king. Significant focus is given to the Great Commission mandate in the preaching and the minor emphasis on discipleship identity.

Implications

The conclusions drawn from the evaluation, in direct comparison to the research's literature review, are as follows. First, Christ alone is the fulcrum of the gospel. However, as per the research, it is vital to consider who Jesus is revealed as in delivering the gospel as it has fundamental implications on the kingdom mission through the church.¹⁹⁷ Contextually, there is a perceived greater emphasis on Christ as saviour than his kingship in the gospel emphasis. This could indicate the effects of a latent salvation culture in the preachers, the residual lenses of salvation culture in the congregants, or a combination of both. However, considering there is a 61% emphasis on Jesus as king in the church overall, this proposes that the latent impact of a salvation culture is possibly inhibiting the ability of people to grasp the kingship emphasis posited by a kingdom theology gospel culture.¹⁹⁸ Second, there seems to be substantial positive attention given to establishing the kingdom on earth through commitment to the Great Commission. This is congruent with a gospel culture.¹⁹⁹ Third, discipleship – a necessary emphasis in a gospel culture – appears to be the hallmark of the believers' new creation identity advocated in the church.

¹⁹⁶ Question 2 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

¹⁹⁷ Morphey, *Breakthrough*, Part 2; McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chaps. 1, 7.

¹⁹⁸ Question 3 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023. Bates, *Allegiance*, chap. 9; McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 6.

¹⁹⁹ McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, chap. 6, 7.

Recommendations

The gospel preaching in Freedom House is consistent with a gospel culture in the following: It shows signs of significantly emphasizing making Christ king through advocating the Great Commission, and, to a lesser extent, emphasizing that believers are disciples and not converts. However, the significant recommendation is for the preachers to enhance a gospel culture: First, preachers must investigate a possible propensity toward a latent salvation culture in the sermon preparation and adjust accordingly. Second, it is vital to be aware of the lingering salvation culture that persists in the minds of the church's congregants and dismantle such impact through sustained prayer and deliberate, accurate preaching in subsequent years.

Theme 2: Discipleship and the Kingdom

The literature review proposes that the gospel culture posited by kingdom theology strongly emphasizes an uncompromising call to discipleship - the most critical aspect after Christ's kingship as evidence of the kingdom in and through the church.²⁰⁰ Similarly, it proposes that discipleship is the emphasis of salvation and that all churches have a discipleship strategy.²⁰¹ Here follows the evaluation, implications and recommendations of discipleship in Freedom House.

Evaluation

The data submits that discipleship is a priority in the church.²⁰² However, it is to be noted that two respondents commented that although it is a priority at heart, it needs to be emphasized more and that while it is spoken of at length by the leaders, its definition still needs to be clarified.²⁰³ The feedback indicates that discipleship's priority is most crucially expressed in and through focus groups beyond traditional meetings, namely connect groups (52%),

²⁰⁰ Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 3; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5.

²⁰¹ Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9; Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5.

²⁰² Question 4 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023. 80,6 % agree. See Appendix 1.

²⁰³ Question 4 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

training events (48%), and specific discipleship groups (36%).²⁰⁴ However, the data proposes that traditional meetings do remain a significant aspect of the discipleship intent in the church (52%).²⁰⁵ Other areas of lesser discipleship impact emerging from the report are one-on-ones (20%), church ministries (16%), serve teams and mission opportunities (both 12%).²⁰⁶ These are worth noting.

Implications

The following inferences emerge from the evaluation of the data. The weekly smaller gatherings carry the bulk of the discipleship emphasis in the church. However, Freedom House seems to utilize their main gatherings – the traditional meetings – as vital opportunities to equip people for discipleship. Therefore, one can deduct from the feedback that all areas of the church seem to carry a discipleship tendency or underpinning value.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that person-to-person discipleship needs to be more utilized and suggests an area of weakness. This may be a result of a general lifestyle of busyness. Furthermore, it possibly reveals that while leaders may grasp the high value of discipleship in broad terms, a genuine lack of discipleship conviction exists that circumvents the obstacle of busyness. Additionally, while some ministries, such as The Market Place Ministry, serve teams and missionary opportunities are lesser areas of discipleship emphasis, they offer significant opportunities for discipleship growth.

Recommendations

An assessment of the feedback shows that a broad spectrum of Freedom House exhibits an underpinning discipleship priority. Both traditional Sunday meetings and prayer meetings are expressions of discipleship's emphasis. Similarly, the week provides continued

²⁰⁴ Question 5 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²⁰⁵ Question 5 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²⁰⁶ Question 5 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

discipleship attention in the various smaller groups. The Sunday-type and weekly meetings need to remain hubs of discipleship. However, marked opportunities exist:

1. There needs to be more personal one-on-one discipleship despite busyness or lack of ownership, or conviction. This invites a leadership response and offers the opportunity to seek strategy to unlock this aspect of discipleship.
2. Promoting serve teams is a noteworthy opportunity to develop people in their discipleship. Servanthood is a discipleship distinctive.²⁰⁷
3. While only receiving two comments, it is vital to note that a respondent called for greater discipleship priority and another for a more precise discipleship definition. This illuminates that although there seems to be a growing culture of discipleship within the church, there is a continued need to massage discipleship's meaning at regular intervals throughout church life.
4. While discipleship seems to be an evident culture in Freedom House, there is always opportunity to consider fresh systems and strategies, such as spiritual formation retreats in the years to come, given discipleships' importance within kingdom theology and its implications for kingdom life in the church.

Theme 3: Kingdom Leadership

In the broad discussion of leadership in the church, two factors emerge in the literature when considering the impact of kingdom theology upon church leadership. They are 1. Jesus as the model of leadership, and 2. Jesus' example of servant leadership.²⁰⁸ These provide the reference in the subsequent evaluation, implications and recommendations in Freedom House given the case study data.

²⁰⁷ Jhn. 13:1-17 (NIV).

²⁰⁸ Blanchard, *Lead Like Jesus Revisited*, Introduction; Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture; Mitchell, *Giving Leadership*, chap. 5; Damazio, *Life Changing Leadership*, chap. 8.

Evaluation

The respondents described healthy leadership in the church at large in the following categories and characteristics: 1. Servant, 2. Character, 3. Follow and Emulate Jesus, 4. Gifting, and 5. Other.²⁰⁹ With reflection on the literature's emphasis, it is to be noted that servant listed first with a 48% emphasis and follow and emulate Jesus listed third with 38,7%. The respondents have a high value for these leadership characteristics in the church. Crucially, the data suggests that the perceived manner of leadership in Freedom House is, first, a leadership reflecting Jesus' character with a 56,6% emphasis. Second, empowering (pointing to Jesus, equipping and discipling) with 43%, and third, like a servant with a 23% emphasis. It is worth noting that empowering leadership is an expression of the model of Jesus' leadership.²¹⁰

Implications

The feedback submits that the chief desire is that leaders lead in a manner that embodies Christ's leadership model reflected in the Gospels, particularly his character and servant-heartedness. Equally, the data suggests that the style of church leadership that the people experience in Freedom House is one that endeavors to lead in a Christ-like manner, consistently pointing to Christ through discipleship, and with the posture of a servant. This approach indicates the influence of a kingdom theology oriented leadership. Such hallmarks seem to provide the foundation for the other aspects of Freedom House's leadership approach, such as being Word-based, submitted to God and led by the Holy Spirit, operating in team, gifting and being mission-focused.

Recommendations

The characteristics of kingdom theology-informed leadership are emerging in Freedom House. However, it worth noting that a respondent's comment suggested the need for a strategy

²⁰⁹ Details of these are available in the data analysis in chapter 8.

²¹⁰ Mitchell, *Giving Leadership*, chap. 9; Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*, Introduction.

of systematic training toward healthy leadership in the church.²¹¹ Therefore, along with the constant encouragement toward Christ-like, servant-hearted leadership, an outstanding recommendation for Freedom House's foreseeable future is to formulate a defined leadership development programme for existing church leaders as well as for emerging leadership who exhibit the call to serve as a leader in the church.

Theme 4: A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology

The following outstanding characteristics are evident in the literature review that typifies a church ministry philosophy informed by kingdom theology. They provide a framework for the subsequent evaluation, implications and recommendations. They are as follows: 1. A ministry philosophy is a vital overall strategy to steer the church, keep it within its mandate and connect it to its core theological convictions; 2. A ministry philosophy primarily reflects the biblical narrative of Scripture and not the cultural norms, and 3. A ministry philosophy is to be empowered by the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling its mission.²¹²

Evaluation

The feedback proposed that the church's mission and vision are generally clear – there was a 77,4% affirmation.²¹³ However, in one comment, there was a request for better structures to support the mission and vision, from training to communication.²¹⁴ Moreover, the data offered that the leaders did not lead in a business-like manner; however, it is to be noted that not all corporate leadership is considered unhelpful, as per one respondent's comment.²¹⁵

Compared with a corporatized church leadership approach, the report suggests that the church is led: 1. In a Bible-based manner which reflects Jesus' approach (a 77,4% emphasis).

²¹¹ Question 10 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²¹² Roxburgh, *Missional Map-Making*, chap. 3; Venter, *Doing Church*, chap. 2; Morpew, *The Implications of the Kingdom*, chap. 5.

²¹³ Question 8 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023. See Appendix 1.

²¹⁴ Question 10 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²¹⁵ Question 10 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

2. In the presence, power, wisdom and leading of the Holy Spirit across the spectrum of the church (a 64,5% emphasis), and 3. With a prayerful approach (45,1%).

Implications

Several conclusions can be drawn from the analysis and evaluation. First, the leadership seem to be making every effort to communicate the church mission and vision to nurture the overall direction of the church. Second, the leadership are doing so to reflect the biblical mission and vision exhibited by the Gospel narrative and in prayerful dependence upon the Holy Spirit's power and guidance. Both preceding aspects are consistent with the distinctives of kingdom theology literature. 3. However, there seems to be a need to connect the clarity of the mission and vision with practical outworking, either through training and communication oriented toward specific aspects of the church mission and vision. As per one respondent, a specific area of focus seems to be the Market Place Ministry, which is healthy and growing but requires more focus from the pulpit.²¹⁶

Recommendations

In light of the insights of kingdom theology, several recommendations are worth considering. 1. It is essential that the governing leadership constantly ask questions of how the church's mission and vision reflect Jesus' mission and vision exhibited in the Gospel narrative and that of the early church.²¹⁷ This can be done annually or bi-annually. Hence, is the ministry philosophy of Freedom House the ministry philosophy of Jesus and the early church? 2. Moreover, it is recommended that the leaders constantly implement a regular communication strategy to clarify the mission and vision. This can be done during an annual sermon series, a regular course for new members, and purposeful mention from the pulpit by the meeting host,

²¹⁶ Question 12 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²¹⁷ See <https://freedomhouseballito.co.za/vision-mission-2/>. The mission statement is as follows: To be God's family on earth that lives and imparts the freedom of the gospel of the kingdom as it is in heaven. The vision statement is: To become a resource church, an Antioch base, discipling people in the Father-defined identity, Christ-given authority, and Holy Spirit empowered mission to transform society.

the preacher, or during announcements. 3. A yearly SWOT-type analysis by the leaders to assess how the church is achieving its mission and vision, both in clarity of communication and activation of such mission. 4. By constantly assessing the evidence of the leading and working of the Holy Spirit in all church aspects. Is there evidence of the Holy Spirit's gifts in meetings and through peoples' lives beyond meetings? Do the leaders prayerfully seek the Holy Spirit's power, refreshing and wisdom in all areas of decision-making?

Theme 5: A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology

The literature posits the following factors as vital in this assessment. 1. Jesus' ministry is the fundamental example of church mission today.²¹⁸ 2. A Holy Spirit-empowered church mission.²¹⁹ 3. The church is God's mission vehicle.²²⁰ 4. Church mission is to be holistic.²²¹

Evaluation

The data proposes that the respondents consider mission (64%) and discipleship in the church (54,8%) as the most significant way of advancing God's kingdom. Demonstrations of Holy Spirit power (22,5%), strengthening the local church (19,3%) and effective preaching and teaching of the gospel from the pulpit (16%) are minor.

Furthermore, the feedback submits that Freedom House is perceived to be advancing God's mission primarily by equipping disciple-makers (who in-turn make disciples) through church meetings and effective preaching (70,9%). This is followed by mission at 38,7% and strengthening the local church as God's mission station (19,3%).²²² It is to be noted that the

²¹⁸ Morpew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 5.

²¹⁹ Morpew, *Demonstrating the Kingdom*, chap. 3; Lyons, "Revisiting the Riddle in Samaria." 318.

²²⁰ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 6; McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 7; Boyd, *God at War*, chap. 7.

²²¹ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap.4. Venter provides a four-fold matrix to describe kingdom mission. It is this matrix that is referenced throughout this research. It is: 1. Power Encounter, 2. Personal Transformation, 3. Social Transformation, and 4. World Mission. Please see chapter 6 in this thesis for a full description.

²²² Mission includes evangelism, church planting, and sending people on mission.

majority of evangelistic mission occurs outside of a Sunday meeting and not in the meeting itself. Hence, there are few salvations in meetings.²²³

Implications

If one is to use Venter's four-fold matrix to assess the evidence of God's kingdom, the data suggests the following. 1. Personal transformation is the overwhelming emphasis in church mission within Freedom House.²²⁴ The making of disciples to impact society is the overwhelming means of mission in Freedom House; yet, the prevailing conviction amongst the people is that mission ought to be the primary means of advancing the kingdom. This infers a disconnect between conviction and action, between teaching and demonstration, between Sunday and Monday onwards. 2. Mission beyond the Sunday meeting is evident but requires further activation. 3. Besides equipping believers to impact their spheres of influence, social transformation bears little mention. 4. While the respondents believe in demonstrations of power in advancing God's mission, there seems to be little expression of this in the general meetings.

Recommendations

The honest implications of the evaluation permit the following recommendations for Freedom House in the years ahead. Again, Venter's four-fold matrix provides guidance. 1. There is outstanding opportunity to activate the church in the gifts and demonstrations of the Holy Spirit in the years ahead through designated training modules. Learning in the relative safety of in-house church meetings will permit growing confidence to demonstrate the gifts in everyday life. 2. Personal transformation and discipleship seem to be in a healthy and growing facet which needs to be maintained as the foundation of kingdom mission. 3. Permitting awareness of and seeking to impact contextual South African social issues presents a

²²³ Question 13 of Case Study Questionnaire, August 2023.

²²⁴ Venter, *Doing Spirituality*, chap. 5; Bates, *Salvation by Allegiance Alone*, chap. 9; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, chap. 5. The kingdom mission established in and through discipleship is consistent with what kingdom theology proposes.

remarkable opportunity in the following years. Race reconciliation, classism, and poverty alleviation are a few contextual matters. The opportunity lies in the church exhibiting kingdom transformation from within to speak to society.²²⁵ 4. Activating people in evangelism through gifted ministers via active mission opportunities is required.²²⁶ Moreover, the purposed training of church planters is a necessary focus in the coming years.²²⁷

²²⁵ McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 7. McKnight refers to Yoder who advocates for a kingdom politic that speaks to society: “If in society we believe in the rights of employees, then the church should be first employer to deal with workers fairly. If in the wider society we call for the overcoming of racism or sexism or materialism, then the church should be the place where that possibility first becomes real.”

²²⁶ The biblical pattern of Eph. 4:11-16 is to be employed where recognized, gifted ministers – in this case, the evangelist – are permitted the opportunity to equip the church through preaching and activation ministry by specific in-house training to effectively continue the ministry of Jesus in all of life.

²²⁷ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, chap. 13; McKnight, “Ecclesiology”, 445; McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, chap. 6; Morphew, *Breakthrough*, Part 4. As per the literature, the church is at the forefront of advancing the kingdom as God’s effective missions vehicle. Therefore it is necessary to initiate new churches where the Holy Spirit leads, and this requires trained and equipped church planters.

CONCLUSION

As a church planter and senior pastor, research such as this permits a remarkable opportunity to assess the efficacy of the church's preceding formative years and adjust its praxis accordingly where necessary with future effectiveness in mind. To that end, Venter encourages pastors to annually assess the scope of the church to modify and calibrate where required.²²⁸ Additionally, this thesis provides possible encouragement and instructive lessons for others called to the same task. These have been the underpinning intentions throughout. However, against what does one assess the church? Who or what is the benchmark?

It has been my experience to date that many fellow pastors and church planters do not lead from a clear theological conviction that informs the purpose, practices, and priorities of their respective churches. As Townsend argues, it seems many take their approach from successful business practices, others draw on the theology of various popular churches, and others lead from sheer force of personality.²²⁹ The accumulative effect is that churches appear to reflect the cultural practices of the day or the personalities of popular leaders instead of the person and ministry of Jesus as head of the church.²³⁰

The opportunity of engaging with kingdom theology, now recently at our disposal, is that we, as church planters and pastors, have a fresh, academically rigorous and historically attested insight into the life and ministry of Christ as the benchmark against which to assess, and ultimately fashion, the convictions and practices of our respective churches in the image of Christ.²³¹ Again, this thesis aims to inspire others to do the same as we all seek to advance his kingdom effectively. This research has illuminated five essential considerations emerging from kingdom theology literature as a matrix of assessment for Freedom House's foundational

²²⁸ Venter, *Doing Church*, chap. 9.

²²⁹ Townsend, "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Lecture.

²³⁰ Eph. 1:22-23 (NIV).

²³¹ Mophew, *The Kingdom Reformation*, Part 1.

six and a half years. There are other considerations, but this research honed on 1. The Gospel We Preach, 2. Discipleship and the Kingdom, 3. Kingdom Leadership, 4. A Ministry Philosophy Informed by Kingdom Theology, and 5. A Church Mission Shaped by Kingdom Theology. This process allowed a rigorous investigation of how we honestly reflect the kingdom's implications proposed by kingdom theology. It has been surprising and insightful, revealing where extra focus is required in the church's subsequent years.

Here are several outstanding considerations for Freedom House. First, we diligently preach a gospel reflective of kingdom theology and pursue McKnight's gospel culture. However, while people are embracing the gospel culture of Christ as king and his kingdom mission, there is a lingering personal salvation paradigm that requires attention, both in the leaders and the congregants. Second, we are seeing the impact of eagerly nurturing discipleship in the people, which requires constant focus; yet, there is a need to instill supplementary defined discipleship programs in the unfolding years to ground this approach out further. Third, it is humbling to note that the people perceive our leadership style as Christ-like, both in character and servant-heartedness. May this always be the intent for many years to come. However, there is a need to instill a definite leadership development system to nurture this leadership approach further, both for emerging leaders and the congregants who lead in the public square. Fourth, the leadership is endeavouring to lead with a biblically-informed, Holy Spirit-empowered ministry philosophy that grounds the mission of Jesus. While the church mission is clear, opportunities for activation amongst the people are required through purposeful communication, invitation and participation. Fifth, in the following years, we need to educate and activate people in the gifts of the Spirit applicable in all of life. The data indicated a distinct need here. Admittedly, this was a surprising discovery as I anticipated that we were more vital in this aspect.

Crucially, we also need to focus on social transformation. The data highlighted a marked opportunity in this regard. We are emphasizing the impact of the public square in our preaching, discipleship focus and various ministries, such as the Market Place Ministry. However, we must engage with the significant contextual South African issues such as reconciliation, diversity, classism and poverty more purposefully. This calls for attention, especially considering our position within the peri-urban context of Salt Rock on KwaZulu Natal's Dolphin Coast.

Lastly, it is essential to note that there are aspects of this research paper that I would have liked to have interrogated further, namely church planting as a specific mission focus and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in effectively advancing mission through Freedom House. I feel as if I have only scratched the surface of the significance of this thesis and it certainly deserves more consideration.

Nevertheless, as senior pastor of Freedom House, I have been inspired and remarkably challenged by engaging with kingdom theology and its implications in Freedom House throughout the thesis. My prayer is that through my role, I would continue to grow in my grasp of God's kingdom to permit Freedom House to truly emulate Jesus' life and ministry in everything we do in the years to come and that the church would live, think, engage and act like Christ, by his Holy Spirit, in word and deed as we seek to advance his kingdom until his return. Hopefully, this thesis will encourage other church planters and senior pastors to do the same.

APPENDIX

GOOGLE FORMS QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions: <https://forms.gle/DRHZ9WHR3sQb6hPb6>

Responses in Excel spreadsheet format:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S9ebMcD-SEfuMtGfWZrsZok13AafIXwaGU3vZHrNomA/edit?usp=sharing>

1. In your experience, does FH emphasize the Gospel in its sermons?
 Yes
 No
 Unsure
2. In a short description, what would that Gospel emphasis be?
3. In the scope of preaching at FH, please briefly describe who Jesus is generally revealed as.
4. Is discipleship a priority at FH?
 Yes
 No
 Unsure
5. If the answer to question 4 is yes, please provide up to three examples of how FH prioritizes discipleship.
6. Briefly describe how the FH leadership emulates Jesus' leadership, if at all.
7. Briefly describe true leadership in the church.
8. Is FH's mission and vision clear?
 Yes
 No
 Unsure
9. Do the senior leaders of FH lead in a corporate business-like manner?
 Yes
 No
 Unsure
10. If the answer to question 9 is yes, please provide up to three examples.

11. In less than 50 words, describe ways in which you believe the leadership of FH demonstrates a leadership submitted to Jesus and led by his Holy Spirit.

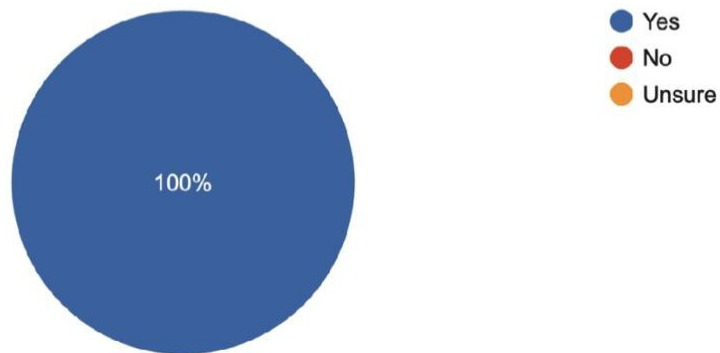
12. How is God’s mission effectively advanced in your estimation? List up to three examples.

13. How is FH fulfilling God’s mission? List up to three examples.

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 1, 4, 8 AND 9

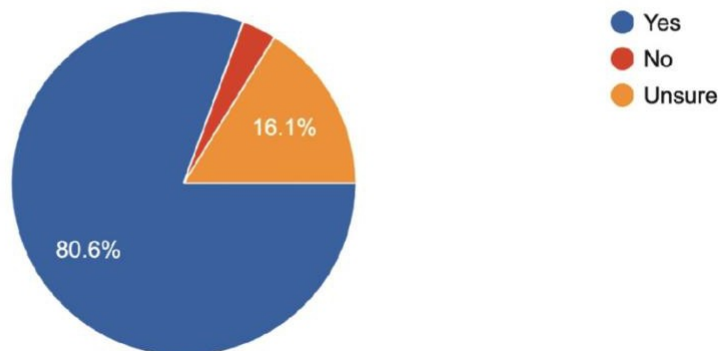
1. In your experience, does FH emphasise the Gospel in its sermons?

31 responses



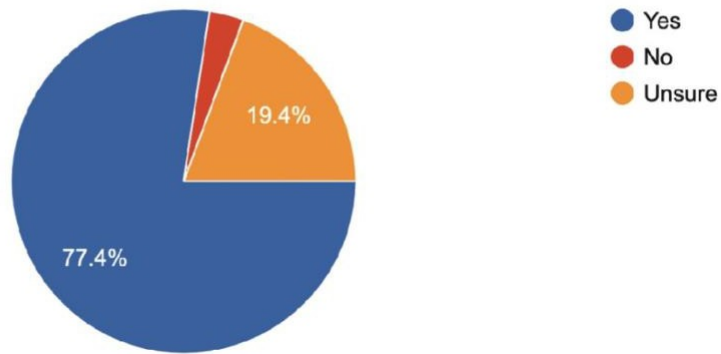
4. Is discipleship a priority at FH?

31 responses



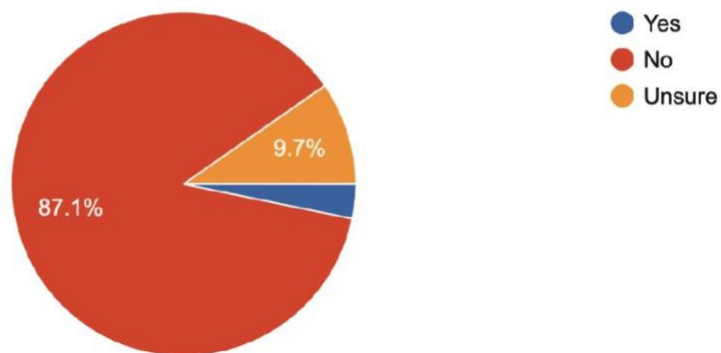
8. Is FH's mission and vision clear?

31 responses



9. Do the senior leaders of FH lead in a corporate business-like manner?

31 responses



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bates, Matthew W. *Salvation by Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works, and the Gospel of Jesus the King*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017. Kindle.
- Beale, G.K. *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004. Apple Books.
- Beale, G.K. and Mitchell Kim. *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, 2014.
- Blanchard, Ken and Phil Hodges. *The Servant Leader: Transforming your Heart, Head, Hands and Habits*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003. Apple Books.
- Blanchard, Ken, Phil Hodges and Phyllis Hendry. *Lead Like Jesus Revisited: Lessons from the Greatest Leadership Role Model of All Time*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing, 2016. Kindle.
- Boardman, George Dana. *The Kingdom: The Emerging Rule of Christ Among Men*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2008.
- Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission*. New York: Orbis Books, 2011. Kindle.
- Boyd, Gregory A. *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1997.
- Damazio, Frank. *Life Changing Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2013. Kindle.
- de Vries, Kay. "Case study methodology," in *Critical Qualitative Health Research: Exploring Philosophies, Politics and Practices*, ed. Kay Aranda. London: Routledge, 2020. Kindle.
- Dunn, James D.G. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006.

- Fee, Gordon D. *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005.
- Ferguson, Dave and Warren Bird. *Hero Maker: Five Essential Practices For Leaders To Multiply Leaders*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2018. Kindle.
- Heiser, Michael S. *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*. Bellingham, Washington: Lexham Press, 2015. Kindle.
- Hirsch, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2016. Kindle.
- _____. *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ*. 5Qcentral.com: 5Q Publishing, 2017. Kindle.
- Keener, Craig S. and Amos Young. *Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016.
- Keller, Timothy. *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2010. Kindle.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1959. Apple Books.
- _____. *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1974. Kindle.
- Lyons, Thomas. "Revisiting the Riddle in Samaria: A Social Scientific Investigation of Spirit Reception in Luke-Acts in Historical Perspective." A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY, February 2020.
- McKnight, Scot. "Ecclesiology," in *The Routledge Companion to Modern Christian Thought (1st ed.)*, ed. by C. Meister & J. Beilby, 445 - 456. Routledge: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203387856>, 2013.
- _____. *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2014. Kindle.

_____. *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2011. Kindle.

Mitchell, Costa. *Giving Leadership: Taking Others with You on a Journey to Destiny*. Ladysmith, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2017. Kindle.

Morphew, Derek. *Breakthrough: Discovering the Kingdom*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2019. Kindle.

_____. *Demonstrating the Kingdom: Tools for Christian Ministry*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2019. Kindle.

_____. *The Implications of the Kingdom*. Bergvliet, South Africa: Derek Morphew Publications, 2009. Kindle.

_____. *The Kingdom Reformation: Rediscover Jesus, Review Everything*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2020. Kindle.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. "Toward the Independence of the Church," in *The Church Against the World*, ed. by H. Richard Niebuhr Wilhelm Pauck and Francis P. Miller, Part III. Chicago: Willet, Clark and Company, 1935.

Nouwen, Henri J.M. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1989. Apple Books.

Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008. Kindle.

Reed, Annette Yoshiko. "Second Temple Judaism," *Oxford Bibliographies* (June 2019): 1, DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195393361-0087.

Roxburgh, Alan J. *Missional Map-Making: Skills for Leading in Times of Transition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010. Kindle.

Sell, Phillip W. "A Map for Ministry: Constructing a Philosophy and Strategy of Ministry" *Christian Education Journal*, Vol. 7. Issue. 1 (2003): 67-85, <https://www.proquest.com/openview/07f66f3de9fc94a83c042b6dc6aaa477/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=38112>.

- Sherman, Amy L. *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2011. Apple Books.
- Spears, Larry. *The Power of Servant Leadership: Essays by Robert K. Greenleaf*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998. Apple Books.
- Townsend, Scott. "Renewal Leadership: An Organizational Development Model for the Christian Organization." Organizational Development and Strategic Planning Class Notes at Trinity College and Graduate School, Ellendale, ND, October, 2021.
- Venter, Alexander F. *Doing Church: Building from the Bottom Up*. Cape Town, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing, 2000. Kindle.
- _____. *Doing Spirituality: The Journey of Character Formation Toward Christlikeness*. Durban, South Africa: Alexander F. Venter – Kingdom Treasures, 2019. Kindle.
- Vyhmeister, N.J. *Quality Research Papers: for Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: How God Changes Lives*. New York: Harper Collins, 1988. Kindle.
- Winter, Ralph D. *The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission*. Pasadena, CA: Institute of International Studies, 2009.
- Wright, N.T. *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*. New York: Harper Collins, 2012. Kindle.
- _____. *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*. New York: Harper Collins, 2008. Apple Books.