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BETHEL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
BETHEL UNIVERSITY

HAPPINESS GROUPS AS A STRATEGY FOR TRANSFORMING A CHINESE
CHURCH FROM ATTRACTIVE TO MISSIONAL

A THESIS PROJECT REPORT
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY
PAUL MINGSHENG QIN
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
MAY 2021

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABS: Attract-Believe-Serve evangelism model

APEPT: Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher

CBCSD: Chinese Bible Church of San Diego

CTM: Congregational Transform Model

FELP: Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

HDTS: Happiness Disciples Training System

HG: Happiness Groups

KBBC: Kaohsiung Blessed and Blessing Church

MCM: Missional Change Mode

STK: Seven Transformational Keys

TCM: Transformational Change Model

TIMS: Threefold Impact Ministry System

VIP: Very Important People

ABSTRACT

This project established that the love of God is the foundation of mission and evangelism. God loves people and calls Christians to participate in His redemptive mission. God calls Christians to bless them and make them a blessing to others. The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God. The nature of the church is missional. A missional church engages every believer to participate in the Great Commission. The incarnation of God demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of mission and evangelism. The incarnational approach is entering other people's worlds as Jesus Christ entered the world to identify with them without compromising biblical convictions, values, or standards.

This project introduced a new evangelism approach, the "Happiness Groups" (HG) strategy. HG is a love-based incarnational group evangelism strategy developed to send Christians to their community to demonstrate God's love to nonbelievers by loving them in their real-life settings and telling the gospel in their understandings. HG is the central ministry of the church to align the rest of the ministries toward fulfilling the Great Commission. It also is an on-the-job training platform that trains ordinary Christians to become effective gospel messengers to accomplish the extraordinary for God.

Finally, this project adapted HG to transform the attractional evangelism strategy of a Chinese immigrant church in Southern California to an incarnational, missional strategy. This project conducted three rounds of HG (two rounds in person and one round in virtual). The data were analyzed, discussed, and evaluated. The result indicated that the HG strategy is effective in the North American Chinese church cultural context both in person and in virtual settings. The conversion, baptism, and coworker's involvement were all improved significantly. The transformation successfully solved the low-

effectiveness and low-involvement problems of the church. Recommendations and suggestions were provided.

CHAPTER ONE: THE NEED FOR MISSIONAL CHANGE

Statement of the Problem

This project addressed the problem of transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of the Chinese Bible Church of San Diego (CBCSD), a Chinese immigrant congregation, to the incarnational, missional strategy of “Happiness Groups” (HG) as modeled by Kaohsiung Blessed & Blessing Church in Taiwan (KBBC). In response to this problem, the researcher studied biblical teachings about mission and evangelism with particular attention to the call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-5) and the Great Commission (Matt.28:18-19) and surveyed the methods of the Apostle Paul. Following this, the researcher reviewed relevant literature about missional churches and strategies in postmodern and post-Christendom contexts, with particular attention paid to the incarnational approach, missional leadership, HG evangelism strategy, and transformational process models. The researcher then, over a two-year period, evaluated the evangelism program at CBCSD, interviewed the senior pastor of CBCSD, visited KBBC to study the HG evangelism strategy, and adapted HG at CBCSD to spread the gospel to Chinese immigrants in San Diego, California. Finally, the researcher evaluated and discussed the effectiveness of the HG in transforming the evangelism ministry from its attractional (“come to see”) state to missional (“go to love”) state in CBCSD’s cultural context.

Delimitations of the Problem

This research was a limited case study at CBCSD and KBBC. Its HG transformation data was limited to mainly those of the 4S campus of CBCSD, where the researcher served as an executive pastor, though other campuses of CBCSD also started adapting HG evangelism. The focus was on transforming local evangelism ministry from attractional to missional, not the transformation of the whole church into a missional church, though it may serve as a starting point for a future whole church transformation.

Assumptions

This research assumed that every Christian has unique resources and gifts to function in the church that others cannot replace. A Christian's own story of experiencing God can be a powerful tool to draw others to God. The research further assumed that many Christians do not participate in evangelism due to lack of training, lack of a platform to perform, lack of confidence to share the gospel by oneself, and lack of understanding of what God has called them to. The third assumption was that the love of God needs to be expressed by Christians through their acts of love. The love of God needs to be experienced and felt rather than just told or taught. The fourth assumption was that the church culture could be changed and transformed by church leaders' intentional efforts through clear vision sharing, fervent prayer, risk-taking, and hard work. The fifth assumption was that failure is valuable. It is a learning experience. With encouragement from the church leadership, the congregation is willing to try new things without fear of failure. Finally, this research assumed that methods to carry out the Great Commission need to be evaluated and modified from time to time in order to keep it effective. As such, HG could be an effective strategy to reach out to both modern and postmodern generations in CBCSD's cultural context.

Subproblems

This study began with an examination of biblical teaching regarding mission and evangelism, including the love of God as the foundation of mission and evangelism, the call of the church as to be blessed and be a blessing, the Great Commission as a mandate for the church, and a brief survey of the Apostle Paul's methods. Following the biblical study, the researcher reviewed the relevant literature about the responses of churches to change of the world in a postmodern, post-Christendom era, paying particular attention to effective evangelism, missional church movement, HG strategy, and transformational process models. Then this study briefly reviewed and evaluated the evangelism program at CBCSD to identify the cause of low-involvement and low-effectiveness, interviewed the senior pastor about challenges in transforming the evangelism strategy, and visited KBBC to explore how the HG evangelism strategy transformed KBBC into a missional church. Furthermore, this study adapted and implemented HG at the 4S campus of CBCSD to transform local evangelism through vision sharing, core team building, mobilization, and execution. Finally, this study evaluated and discussed the effectiveness of HG in the transformation of the evangelism ministry from its attractional ("come to see") to missional ("go to love") state in the cultural context of CBCSD.

The Setting of the Project

CBCSD is a non-denominational independent church established in 1987. Under the leadership of the senior pastor, Albert Lam, the church had dramatic growth in her first twenty-five years. As a result, CBCSD was able to plant six campuses, five in San Diego and one in Temecula.

However, church growth has slowed significantly and plateaued for the last seven years. The church made significant efforts in hopes of reaching out to the community and

helping the church grow. For example, the church hosted community spring fairs during Easter weekend, had Christmas concerts, organized Chinese New Year (Spring Festival) and Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations, as well as offered various Saturday night seminars on career, health, parenting, marriage, financial management, and time management. Even though these attractional outreach events successfully reached the community and attracted many attendees, they did not necessarily translate into church growth. Therefore, the researcher, the leading pastor of the outreach programs during that time, concluded that these attractional-based events were not very effective in leading people to be followers of Jesus. In addition, the researcher noticed with alarm that these events gradually became the burden of only a few passionate coworkers rather than a concerted endeavor of the whole congregation. The congregation pastor assigned fellowships and small groups to support the outreach events, but the situation did not improve much. The low-effectiveness of the attractional based evangelism program and the low-involvement of the congregation became two stumbling blocks for church growth.

CBCSD leaders, therefore, started to look for a revolutionary way to transform the evangelism program. They were very excited upon hearing that KBBC, a very missional church, had seen rapid growth since the church started HG evangelism seven years ago. CBCSD sent 44 leaders, including the senior pastor and all Chinese-speaking pastors, to attend KBBC's HG international conference in Taiwan to learn about HG and evaluate if HG could be a solution for CBCSD. After a lot of debriefing, discussion, and prayer, CBCSD leaders decided to adapt KBBC's HG evangelism strategy. CBCSD became the first North American Chinese church to officially adapt HG and implement it church-

wide in North American Chinese cultural settings. Under the leadership of the senior pastor and his wife, Pastor Wanda, every Chinese congregation in CBCSD has started doing HG since January 2019.

In order to understand HG better and make it effective at CBCSD, the researcher used his sabbatical time to visit KBBC for a month and observed their HG operation firsthand and in-depth. During his stay with KBBC, the researcher interviewed the church leaders and participated in their HG meetings and “Happiness Disciples Training System” (HDTs) classes. The researcher explored KBBC senior pastor’s ministry philosophy and church management practices, such as leading by example, multi-layer shepherding, and HG as the centerpiece of the church ministry.

This research project reported the transformation of HG at the 4S campus of CBCSD, where the researcher serves as an executive pastor and the main driving force for the transformation. The 4S campus is located in the 4S Ranch community, a newly developed community in the northern inland area of San Diego, CA 92127. The average Sunday morning worship attendance is around 180 people, including men, women, youth, and children.

The Importance of the Project

The Importance of the Project to the Researcher

The researcher believes that God is doing new things in every generation and leads His church to do missions and evangelism effectively. While pastoring a church in a postmodern and post-Christian era, the researcher felt the need to be further educated so that he can lead the church to face continuous change and discontinuous change of the world and minister effectively to people inside or outside the church. This project helped the researcher examine God’s calling for churches today and why traditional churches in

North America and Western Europe are experiencing decline while some missional churches are experiencing dramatic growth. It also helped the researcher gain more understanding of the missional church movement, particularly HG, and practice what he has learned of the missional effectiveness from the Doctor of Ministry program.

The researcher believes that the return of the Lord is imminent, and there is not much time for churches to waste doing unimportant and ineffective things. The most important mission of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission that Jesus commanded two thousand years ago. A pastor must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading in this ever-changing world and be equipped to lead the church in carrying out the Great Commission effectively. This project helped the researcher develop a solid base to lead the church in transforming their evangelism strategy and start a life-transforming process to make reproducible disciples.

The Importance of the Project to the Immediate Ministry Context

The researcher's local church mainly consists of first-generation immigrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China. The church has been blessed in many ways through good attractional programs in the past. However, growth has plateaued for the last seven years despite the significant population growth of local Chinese immigrants. The church has organized many attractional outreach events designed to be more "attractive" or "seeker-friendly." But church growth is still slow, and the congregation is aging from a lack of effective ways to reach out to the younger generation.

Furthermore, the researcher noticed that more and more new immigrants are hesitant to come to church to attend Sunday services for various reasons. Still, they are open to Christianity in other settings, such as attending a Christian's home party. When

they have genuinely experienced the love of God, they embrace the gospel with a grateful heart and want to be used by God to bless others.

This project was seeking a fundamental change in order to find a way of doing evangelism ministry effectively. The result of this project indicated that HG is a very effective evangelism strategy in CBCSD's cultural context. It not only successfully solved the low-effectiveness and low-involvement problems but also provided an opportunity for church growth and a platform for every Christian to carry out the Great Commission. It created a culture with many Christians opening their homes to host HG meetings, making it possible for the church to go into the communities.

The Importance of the Project to the Church at Large

In North America, the world is undergoing the process of discontinuous social change. Society tends to be more postmodern and post-Christian. Many churches are on a plateau or, worse, in decline. A traditional attractional evangelism program that worked well in the past is not very effective today and may not work in the future. Church leaders need to explore new ways to do ministry effectively without compromising the gospel message. The church needs to go back to the basics — doing ministry as Jesus did, not only inviting people to “come to see” and telling them that “Jesus loves them,” but, more importantly, going out to show them the love of Jesus by serving people out of a heart of love. Christians need to go outside of the church walls into the community to love people and bring salvation to them in their cultural context. The missional church movement has provided many insightful theological strategies for effective mission and evangelism. This project put the missional strategy to practice with the introduction of HG to North American churches, providing an effective method to spread the gospel in their cultural contexts. The result of using the *Zoom* meetings app to host HG meetings during the

Covid-19 pandemic provided some information for churches to do evangelism in virtual settings.

Research Methodology

This project was qualitative in nature. The case study methodology of research was used to deal with multiple sources of information and data analysis and interpretation. The primary tools used were personal interviews, field observation notes, ministry documents, reports, and transformational models.

Primary data was generated during the transformation process at CBCSD, including the interview result with the senior pastor of CBCSD. The primary data was also obtained through on-site interviews with the senior pastor and other church leaders of KBBC and personal observations recorded in field notes at KBBC. Data of CBCSD's evangelism program and ministry documents and reports were also included.

Secondary data was obtained through a biblical and theological study about the love of God in mission and evangelism with particular attention paid to the call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-5), the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-19), and Apostle Paul's teamwork strategy in Acts. Also included was research in relevant literature about the missional church movement in postmodern and post-Christendom contexts, with particular attention paid to the effectiveness of local evangelism strategy development, HG strategy, and transformational process models.

CHAPTER TWO: A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR MISSION AND EVANGELISM

This project proposed to transform the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to an incarnational, missional HG strategy to address low-effectiveness and low-involvement problems.

The HG strategy is based on the biblical teaching that the love of God is the foundation of mission and evangelism. God loves people and calls Christians to participate in His redemptive mission. Just as God called Abraham to leave to receive God's blessings and be a blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:1-3), God calls Christians to bless them and make them a blessing for others. God calls Christians not only to have them meet together in a church building to have fellowship and worship God but also to send them out to make disciples of Jesus Christ. The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God.

Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission to His disciples. The most important and valuable task of Christians is to fulfill the Great Commission (to make disciples of Jesus) in their lifetime. The Great Commission relies on every Christian in every church to be missional and work together to accomplish it. The HG strategy is such an application. It promotes that Christians' calling is to spread the gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ in their lifetimes. It has been proved that HG is a useful model for churches to carry out the Great Commission in the East Asian cultural context.

Furthermore, the incarnation of God demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of doing mission and evangelism. The incarnational approach is entering other

people's worlds as Jesus Christ entered the world to identify with them without compromising biblical values. The HG strategy is such a love-based incarnational group evangelism strategy. It teams up Christians and sends them into the community to demonstrate the love of God to nonbelievers by loving them and loving each other in their real-life settings. Instead of just telling people "God loves you," HG aims for people to experience the love of God through the believer's acts, treating nonbelievers as their "best friends," letting them feel accepted rather than condemned, and communicating in their language and culture. The primary goal of HG is to let nonbelievers understand the gospel in their language and let them feel God's love through Christians' acts of love.

The Love of God: Foundation of Missions and Evangelism

The Bible reveals that God is love (1 John 4:16). Love is the very nature of God. God is the triune God, one God in three persons with love and a harmonious relationship. The mission is the triune God's loving action to bring salvation to humanity. The Father sends the Son, then the Father and the Son send the Spirit, and finally, the triune God sends the church into the world to be missionaries. It is the teamwork of God and God's people (the church) that brings the gospel to the lost world (John 3:16; 14:16, 16:7; 20:21). For the church to effectively carry out the mission, it is crucial to understand the love of the Trinity. Dana Hicks points out that understanding the doctrine of the Trinity is crucial to an understanding of the mission. He said:

As one understands the being of the Trinity, one begins to get a picture of one's relationship with others. This eternal love between the members of the Trinity becomes a model of one's relationship with the world. The love of the Trinity is

what drives every authentic community of God to move beyond themselves to love the world.¹

The Bible reveals that all human beings are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). The love and harmonious relationship among the three persons of the triune God reflects in humanity. Human beings are therefore expected to love God and to love each other. But the fall of Adam brought sin into the world and distorted human nature. The Apostle Paul explains, “Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12).²

Since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23), human beings can no longer fully express and enjoy the love of God. Sin has separated every human being from God, but the love of God drives every member of the Trinity to save His people.

God started His mission to look for His people right after the fall of humanity. Humankind fell because the serpent deceived Eve, and Adam, who was with her, did not intervene (Gen. 3). The Bible records, “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Gen. 3:6).

The fall broke their love and harmonious relationship with God. Yet, God came to visit them though they had sinned. Claus Westermann observes that God takes the

¹Dana Robert Hicks, “The Core Value of Evangelism in Effective Churches” (D. Min. diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2008), 38, accessed March 17, 2020, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/304816600>.

² Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture citations are from *The Holy Bible*, New International Version, (Colorado Springs, CO: International Bible Society, 1984).

initiative to the couple in hiding. The God who punishes people for their sin is the God who also cares for people.³ The Bible records, “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’” (Gen. 3:8-9) Mark Miller points out that the question “Where are you?” illustrates God’s desire to reconcile and redeem fallen humanity to Himself.⁴ Andrew Kwong argues that “where are you” here mainly reflects the love of God toward humankind. Though the couple sinned against God, God did not give up on them; rather, God reached out to them proactively.⁵

Love is the center of the gospel. The greatest evidence of God’s love for humankind is the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the second person of the triune God, who took human form to die for humanity in order to save them from death. Paul wrote that “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). The redemptive work of Jesus Christ provides a way to reconcile fallen humanity to God so that they can enjoy His love.

Missio Dei, the mission of God, is God’s action based on His being and His love. It expresses both the heart of God and the call of the church, the body of Christ. The love of God makes every person of the Trinity act to bring salvation to humanity. The Bible

³ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 254

⁴ Mark Miller, “Narratives Church: A Missional Church Planting Path for Cultivating a Unified Theological Vision” (D. Min. diss., Bethel Seminary, 2019), 19, accessed June 5, 2020, <https://cdm16120.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16120coll4/id/1348/rec/2>.

⁵ Andrew P. Kwong, *Genesis (I)*, Tien Dao Bible Commentary, ed. John H. Y. Pao (Kowloon, Hong Kong: Tien Dao Publishing House, 1997), 303.

reveals that God so loved humankind that the Father sent the Son, then the Son and the Father sent the Spirit, and then the triune God sent the church into the world to save them (John 3:16; 14:16, 16:7; 20:21). Jesus declared, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son as another Advocate to the disciples (John 14:6 and 16:7). And then the disciples were sent the same way as Jesus was sent. Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). So, the people of God were sent into the world in an incarnational way as Jesus came into the world.

The purpose of *Missio Dei* is to let humanity have the love of God, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14). This love relationship is secured in Jesus Christ (John 10:28), and nothing can separate it. The Apostle Paul wrote,

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).

The gospel can be shared in many different ways to communicate the love of God in various cultural contexts. People can come to Jesus in many ways, but Jesus is the only way for every human being to go back to the Father to enjoy His love. Jesus claimed, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). The Apostle Peter proclaimed, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). These verses clearly indicate that there is no other way for humanity to reunite with God except through Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christians are obligated to spread the gospel with

all wisdom (Col. 1:28) in a culturally sensitive way so that people can understand the gospel and embrace the love of God.

Jesus Christ commands His disciples to love one another, which characterizes Christians. After washing the feet of His disciples, Jesus taught them to serve each other with a servant's humble heart (John 13:15-17). Then Jesus commanded, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:34-35). This new command requires Christians to love one another and demonstrate this godly love toward each other in front of nonbelievers. It is a way to draw people close to God.

Love requires action. Loving the Lord means acting to keep His commands and to show His love to others. Jesus clearly stated, "Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them" (John 14:21). Jesus promised eternal life to those who believe in Him (John 3:16) and assurance of remaining in God's love to those who keep His commands (John 15:10). Further, He said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:40).

The action of Abraham, the father of faith, sets an excellent example for Christians to follow. The call of Abraham demonstrates God's love and desire for the church.

The Call of the Church: To Be Blessed and Be a Blessing

God calls His people to bless them so they can be a blessing to others, leading others to come to God. These two aspects are shown in the call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). This divine call of Abraham opens the page of God's salvation plan for all people on the earth. To better understand the call of Abraham, the researcher outlined the structure of Genesis 12:1-5 based on Allen Ross's work.⁶

Outline of Genesis 12:1-5

- A. The Divine Call (12:1-3)
 - 12:1 God's Call: The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your Father's household to the land I will show you.
 - a) 12:2a God's Promises
 - 1) I will make you into a great nation,
 - 2) and I will bless you; I will make your name great,
 - b) 12:2b God's First Declaration: you will be a blessing. (also a promise)
 - a) 12:3a God's Promises
 - 1) I will bless those who bless you,
 - 2) and whoever curses you I will curse;
 - b) 12:3b God's Second Declaration: all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (also a promise)
- B. Abraham's Response (12:4-5) So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

The structure shows that God's promise of blessings is divided into two sets with a declaration (to be a blessing) in between and another one at the end (all people will be blessed through you). This passage reveals that the intention of God's call is to bless

⁶ Allen P Ross, *Genesis*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2008), 95.

Abraham so that he can be a blessing to others. Jeong Koo Jeon thinks that calling out and making a covenant with Abraham was one of the most important turning points of redemptive history.⁷ Thomas Edward McComiskey comments that this “secured a bright future for the progeny of the patriarchs in a land in which they could grow to become a great nation and affirmed that the offspring would become a blessing to Gentiles.”⁸

S. D. Snyman observes that God commanded Abraham to leave his country but with a promise of a promised land; to leave his people and his father’s household but with a promise of progeny and, in addition to that, a promise that he would be a blessing even to the extent that “all peoples on earth will be blessed.”⁹ John Stott sums up that God chose Abraham to be blessed, and through him to bless humanity as a whole.¹⁰

The Call to Be Blessed

The Call to Leave

God called Abraham to “Go from your country, your people, and your father’s household to the land I will show you.” In the call, God asked Abraham to leave his homeland, friends, and relatives to an unknown land that God would show him. The three things that Abraham was asked to leave are interrelated and should not be made too distinct. They indicate that God wanted Abraham to leave without anything to hold him

⁷ Jeong Koo Jeon, “The Abrahamic Covenant and the Kingdom of God,” *The Confessional Presbyterian* 7 (2011), 126.

⁸ Thomas Edward McComiskey, *The Covenants of Promise* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 40.

⁹ S. D. Snyman, “Abraham in Galatians and in Genesis,” *Acta Theologica* 33, no. 2 (2013): 153.

¹⁰ John R.W. Stott, “The Living God is a Missionary God,” in *Perspective on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 4.

back. Martin Prudký suggests that Abraham had to go forth from his prototypical certainties, from his safe homeland and the secure base he had established.¹¹

God called Abraham to leave indicates that to leave was an essential step to receive God's blessing. Besides leaving his comfort zone, it must have to do with leaving false religious practices. John Deehan argues that Abraham's father's family was influenced by the society that tried to build the Babel tower. Abraham's call was an invitation by God to break out of this vicious spiral.¹² Keith H. Essex points out that the Lord called Abraham to renounce his identifications with the nations who were in rebellion against God.¹³ John Walton suggests,

It has to do with the deity of the land as well as the influence of the people in Abraham's hometown who settled and wanted to make a name for themselves. His cutting of ties with the country, people, and household also created a divine void in the typical personal religious practice of the day. Blessing has to do with being in favor with God and under his protection and care.¹⁴

Be Blessed to Have a Promised Land

God promised Abraham a land. John P. Davis analyzes that land was always important to the original purpose of God for man. At creation, this land included the entire earth and all its resources. The man was given dominion over this land (Gen. 1:26-

¹¹ Martin Prudký, "Called to Become a Blessing," *International Journal of Public Theology* 9, no. 4 (2015): 405.

¹² John Deehan, "Tower of Babel, the Call of Abraham, and the Year of Faith," *The Pastoral Review* 8, no. 6 (2012): 19.

¹³ Keith H. Essex, "The Abrahamic Covenant," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 10, no. 2 (1999): 197.

¹⁴ John H. Walton, *Genesis*, NIV Application Commentary Series, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 392.

28). In the fall, man lost this dominion.¹⁵ God called Abraham to go “to the land I will show you” (12:1b), indicating that God had land and a plan for Abraham but would not show him the whole picture at once. The promise was to show the land only after Abraham left his homeland. It suggests that faith and obedience are conditions of experiencing God. Essex indicates that the promises of God to Abraham were contingent on Abraham’s obedience to the Lord’s command.¹⁶

It also implies that Abraham needed to seek direction from God consistently during the journey. He had to believe that God would lead him to the promised land no matter how far away and how difficult the journey. Prudký illustrates that Abraham had to set forth without knowing exactly where he would be going. “This is part of Abraham’s constitutive typological gear as the father of the faith; he sets forth on his journey with trust, in responsive obedience, with a vigorous response to what God has said.”¹⁷

As people start to walk with God faithfully, they begin to experience God and understand God’s plan more clearly and spiritually. Abraham gradually realized that the promised land not only referred to a geographic place on the earth but also implied a heavenly country. The Book of Hebrews records, “If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had the opportunity to return. Instead, they were

¹⁵ John P. Davis, “Who are the Heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant?” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29, no. 2 (2005): 157.

¹⁶ Essex, 197.

¹⁷ Prudký, 405.

longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them” (Heb. 11:15-16).

Be Blessed to Have a Great Nation

God promised Abraham, “I will make you into a great nation” (12:2a). This promise of making Abraham into a great nation implies a blessing of both a great land and many descendants. The promised great nation would be unique and distinct from pagan nations. This great nation would be composed of Abraham’s descendants, who would dwell in the promised land. Jeon explains that this nation would be ruled by God and is a holy theocratic kingdom, a type of the everlasting kingdom of God in heaven, which will only be fully realized after the final redemptive judgment when Jesus returns.¹⁸

Davis argues that the promise was given to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 12:1- 3,7; 15; 17:1-22; 22:15-18), i.e., both to Isaac (27:27-29) and to Jacob (28:10- 15). The New Testament clearly tells that not all of the physical seeds of Abraham inherit the promise. Only those in the Covenant of Abraham inherit the promise. He further points out that the seed of Abraham is those who, by faith, engage the Seed, whether physically related or not. Jesus Christ is the Seed who blesses the earth in a final sense.¹⁹

The Apostle Paul explains, “It is not the children by physical descent who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring” (Rom. 8:9), “the promises were spoken to Abraham and his Seed. Scripture

¹⁸ Jeon, 125.

¹⁹ Davis, 154-155.

does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ” (Gal. 3:16), and “If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29).

The Apostle Peter makes it very clear that Jesus is the descendant who brings salvation to all nations. He says in his sermon to the Jews,

You are the descendants of the prophets and of the Covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, “And in your descendants, all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways (Acts 3:25-26).

Peter’s point is that God’s blessing is not to be assumed by Jews automatically. Instead, Jesus Christ is the true descendant of Abraham through whom all of the nations (including the Jews) will be blessed. Davis concludes that the New Testament unequivocally affirms that the promises of this covenant belong to all those who have faith in Jesus Christ.²⁰

Be Blessed to Have a Great Name

God promises Abraham, “I will bless you; I will make your name great” (12:2a). To make Abraham’s name great is more than a promise of renown or acclaim. Kenneth Mathews indicates that one with a great name given by God in the Hebrew Scriptures is to be viewed as a royal figure. It also anticipates the change in Abram’s name to Abraham, which is conferred by God, who will make him a father of nations and kings.²¹ Essex argues that it means Abraham would have an exalted status and authority.²²

²⁰ Davis, 159.

²¹ Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, The New American Commentary, vol. 1B, ed. Ray Clendenen (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 114.

²² Essex, 197.

McComiskey explains that it is the promise of an enhanced reputation for Abraham. Because of Abraham's faithfulness, his name still lives today.²³

Be Blessed to Have Protections

God promised Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse" (12:3a). These promises hint that God watches how people treat Abraham very closely, and God will treat people based on how they treated Abraham, to bless those who were friendly or to curse those who were unfriendly towards Abraham.

McComiskey offers helpful insight into "cursing" as:

The word "curse in" the statement of the promise clearly denotes the expression of an unfavorable attitude toward Abraham. Its emphasis on treating contemptuously or regarding as unimportant defines an attitude. It is an attitude toward Abraham that deems him unworthy of attention. It regards his example of faith as not important enough to emulate.²⁴

Blessing rather than cursing indeed is what God intends to give all people on the earth. Snyman points out that "it is remarkable that the blessing to all nations of the earth is made directly after Gen. 1-11, where the nations are described as moving further and further away from God."²⁵

James McKeown observes that the Hebrew root conveying the idea of blessing appears five times in the call of Abraham, and cursing occurs five times in Genesis 1-11 as well.²⁶ The underlying message in this passage is that God now counters the power of

²³ McComiskey, 40.

²⁴ McComiskey, 41.

²⁵ Snyman, 154.

²⁶ James McKeown, *Genesis*, Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary, ed. J. Gordon McConville and Craig Bartholomew (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 74.

cursing with blessing. Cursing began with Adam's disobedience, and blessings started with Abraham's obedience and faith. The promise of "whoever curses you, I will curse" is not saying that God likes to curse people, but instead, it is God's assurance of protection upon Abraham. God promises to protect Abraham among all people so that all of humanity can receive the blessing.

The Call to be a Blessing to Others

God promises to bless Abraham in many aspects. The passage shows that God's plan is not merely to bless Abraham for his sake, nor just for his family's sake, but to make Abraham a mediator to bless the world.²⁷ The two declarations, "you will be a blessing" (12:2b) and "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (12:3b), reveal that the ultimate goal of the call of Abraham is a worldwide blessing.

However, scholars have not agreed on how "all peoples on the earth" receive the blessing. The blessing certainly involves Abraham, but in what precise way is ambiguous in the original Hebrew language. The reason is that the verb (*nibreku*, *niphal*) permits the passive ("will be blessed") or reflexive voice ("will bless themselves") grammatically. For this reason, some interpreters understand the verb as passive, which could be translated as "will be blessed through you, in you, or because of you" (e.g., LXX, GNT, MGS, NASB, NKJV, NCV, NIV, NLT, CEB, and CEV, and NRSV). This passive translation suggests that Abraham is the channel of the divine blessing. Along with many, Kenneth Mathews argues strongly that passive translation probably suits the context of

²⁷ Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 133.

the passage best since God is the source of blessing and Abraham is the channel.²⁸ But still, others treat it as reflexive, which translates as “will bless themselves by you” (e.g., NET, RSV, NJB, NEB, REB, and NJPS). This reflexive translation describes future nations who call for blessing in the name of Abraham. Furthermore, the NAB version takes the middle voice by translating it as “shall find blessing in you,” which focuses on blessing rather than Abraham. The researcher agrees with L. E. P. Erith that whether the passive or reflexive should be retained here is not of material importance since, in any case, the significance of the promise is clear: that is, through Abraham, all humankind shall be brought to seek and to find salvation in the true God.²⁹

God’s promise to bless all people on earth requires Abraham to be a good witness of God and provide the model of faith for people to imitate in order to receive God’s blessing. The Seed of Abraham is the blessing to all the nations on the earth.

The Call Requires Faith and Obedience

God called Abraham to bless him and make him a blessing for others. The call requires Abraham’s faith and obedience to deal with the sin of Adam’s disobedience. Through Abraham’s obedience and faithful actions, God’s blessings and salvation come upon all peoples of the earth.

“So, Abraham went as the Lord had told him” (12:4a) clearly tells that Abraham obeyed God’s command immediately and followed God’s instruction completely.

²⁸ Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary, ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1967), 114; Mathews, 117; Arnold, 133.

²⁹ L. E. P. Erith, “Genesis,” in *A New Commentary on Holy Scripture: Including the Apocrypha*, ed. Charles Gore, Henry Leighton Goudge, and Alfred Guillaume, vol. 1 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), 49.

Though the call of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 was not God's first call to him, it is clear that Abraham responded to God's call in faith and obedience thoroughly. Stephen explains that God called Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia and how he answered the call. He said:

Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our Father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Harran. 'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.' So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Harran. After the death of his Father, God sent him to this land where you are now living (Acts 7:2-4).

Kidner points out that if Abraham delayed going to Canaan, it is reasonable to think that he was biding God's time until his family ties could be honorably loosened. To wait on without surrendering the vision can be an exacting task.³⁰ Essex insists that Genesis 12:4-5 clearly describes the obedience of Abraham to God's command. The Lord had said "go" (12:1), and Abraham "went" as the Lord had told him to (12:4).³¹

The author of Hebrews affirms that Abraham responded to God's call by faith,

By faith, Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith, he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise (Heb. 11:8-9).

In summary, God called Abraham to leave his country, his people, and his father's household in order to bless him and make him a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. "To leave" implies the nature of the call is missional rather than attractional. Abraham had to trust in God and respond in faith to make all these blessings happen. It is not just

³⁰ Kidner, 114.

³¹ Essex, 199.

Abraham's obedience but rather his faith that made him righteous. In Galatians, Paul argues that Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (Gal. 3:6). Christopher J. H. Wright points out that Abraham's response of faith and obedience not only moves God to count him as righteous but also enables God's promise to move toward its universal horizon.³² God blessed Abraham so that all the people on the earth will be blessed through him, in him, and because of him.

The call of Abraham is not only to Abraham himself but applies to his descendants as well. Abraham is the father of all people who believe in Christ (Gal. 3:29). Christians, therefore, are spiritual descendants of Abraham and his call applies to them. The call of the church is to be blessed and to be a blessing to others. In the same way, as in the call of Abraham, God calls Christians to leave their comfort zones to bless them so that all of humanity will be blessed through them. If Christians applied this passage, they would leave their comfort zones as Abraham did in obedience to God's call to get involved in His mission to bring salvation to people. No participation or low-involvement in evangelism is not a good response to God's call.

Therefore, transforming a church's evangelism strategy to lead the congregation to leave their comfort zones to participate in God's redemptive mission is the right thing to do. The primary function of a church is not to attract people to attend the church but bring salvation to the people and make them the disciples of Jesus. Transforming CBCSD's evangelism strategy from an attractional model to a missional one is a good move to fulfill the Great Commission.

³² Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2006), 206.

The Great Commission: A Mandate for the Church

The New Testament reveals that God's promises to Abraham are all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The historical account of Jesus' genealogy in the Gospel of Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38) demonstrates that the Seed of Abraham is Jesus. Jesus is the Messiah who came to bring God's salvation to all humankind. He came to the earth to save humanity by giving His life as a ransom for them (Mark 10:45). After Jesus completed the redemption work through His crucifixion to bear the sins of humanity and resurrection to conquer death for humankind, He gave the Great Commission to His followers to bring God's salvation to the world.

Though there are variations on the theme of commissioning in the Bible, all four Gospels and the Book of Acts recount a direct expression of this commissioning mandate.

In John 20:21-23, Jesus says, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'" Jesus indicates that the disciples have the Holy Spirit in them and are sent the same way as the Father has sent the Son, having the power to forgive sins.

In Luke 24:46-49, Jesus tells His disciples,

This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

This passage indicates that the disciples are to be the witnesses of the gospel to all nations after receiving power from God.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus instructs, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,

and to the ends of the earth.” This passage promises that the Holy Spirit is coming upon the disciples to empower them to be witnesses of Jesus Christ locally and globally.

In Mark 16:15-16, Jesus commands, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” This passage directly commands the disciples to spread the gospel to every person in every place to save them.

Matthew 28:18-20, commonly known as “the Great Commission,” is the most explicit expression of Jesus Christ’s mandate for missions and evangelism. The Bible records,

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

This passage can be divided into three parts: Jesus has all authority (28:18), Jesus commands His followers to make disciples of all nations (28:19, 20a), and Jesus promises to be with them to the end (28:20b). Mookgo S. Kgatle uses a grammatical-historical approach to demonstrate that Jesus’ authority in heaven and on earth is a global authority, the commissioning of Jesus’ disciples to go and make disciples of all the nations is a global mission, and Jesus’ promise to be with them is an assurance of a global victory.³³

All Authority

When the disciples saw the risen Jesus, they worshiped Him, but some doubted (28:17). The reason some disciples still doubted is not clear and may be different for each

³³ Mookgo S. Kgatle, “Globalisation of Missions: An Exegesis on the Great Commission (Mt 28:18–20)” *In Die Skriflig* 52, no. 1 (2018): 1-7.

person. Some may have struggled to accept Jesus' death and resurrection; others may have doubted their ability to be good witnesses of Jesus; perhaps they might just not have fully grasped the meaning of what they experienced. Regardless of the disciples' states, ready or not, Jesus gave that command to all of His disciples, including Peter, who ran away from an opportunity to witness for Jesus three times, and Thomas, who was slow to believe and needed to put his fingers on Jesus' nail prints.³⁴ In the mixed state of worship and doubt, Jesus comes close to them to declare His all-inclusive authority, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (28:18). These words are an essential foundation for the disciples' personal security and the commission to follow.³⁵ It is a declaration that Jesus Christ has defeated the devil and has claimed all authority so that He can send disciples to all nations to harvest all the fruit of His victory. Steven C. Hawthorne points out that Jesus Christ had triumphed over evil at the cross. Because of that victory, the Father had exalted and honored His Son as the head of all humankind. He had been given divine authority to bring forth the fullness of the kingdom of God.³⁶

This verse implies that Jesus not only expects His followers to go to make disciples in every place but, more importantly, He expects that they rely on His authority while carrying out the Great Commission. Kgatele argues that authority refers to the power

³⁴ John W. Ott, "Developing and Evaluating a Program of Evangelism for the Local Church" (D. Min. diss., Liberty University, 2001), 18, accessed March 17, 2020, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/227>.

³⁵ Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew*, NIV Application Commentary Series, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 950.

³⁶ Steven C Hawthorne, "Mandate on the Mountain," in *Perspective on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 109.

of deity assumed by Jesus at His resurrection and ascension. And Jesus expects His disciples to count on His authority to fulfill the Great Commission and obey all His commands as He did in obedience to the Father.³⁷

Jesus has triumphed over the devil at the cross and has paid the price with His blood to repurchase His people. All authority has been given to Jesus. The disciples' job is merely applying Jesus's authority to make disciples of all nations.

Make Disciples of All Nations

In verses 19 and 20a, Jesus commands, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." To make disciples is the core part of the Great Commission. Benjamin L. Merkle points out that this passage has only one main verb in the Greek, the imperative "make disciples" (μαθητεύσατε). Thus, the heart of the Great Commission is to make disciples. The three other verbs are all subordinate to this main idea.³⁸ Robert E. Coleman observes that the Great Commission is summed up in the command to "make disciples of all nations," and "Go, baptize, and teach" are all participles which derive their force from the one controlling verb "make disciples."³⁹

The Great Commission not only gives an evangelistic mandate but also provides general instructions for implementation. The order of steps is critical here: to make

³⁷ Kgatle, 3.

³⁸ Benjamin L. Merkle, "Why the Great Commission should be Translated 'Go!' and Not 'As You Go'," *Southeastern Theological Review* 9, no. 2 (2018): 31.

³⁹ Robert Emerson Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1972), 108.

disciples by baptizing them first, then teaching them to obey all Jesus' commands, that is, "to believe" before "to obey." The goal is to make disciples of Jesus. The first step of making disciples is going out. Aubrey Malphurs says, "The going means that the church must be proactive in its attempts to reach people."⁴⁰ The second step of making disciples is baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The third step of making disciples is teaching them to obey everything Jesus has commanded, including fulfilling the Great Commission, which means to make reproducible disciples. David R. Bauer observes the connection between the eleven disciples (μαθηταί in 28:16) and to make disciples (μαθητεύω in 28:19). He concludes that the disciples are to make disciples of others in the same way that Jesus made disciples of them throughout the gospel. Jesus models what the work of discipline is to look like.⁴¹

The object of making disciples is "all the nations" at all times. People of every nation are subject to receive the opportunity to become Jesus' disciples. Michael J. Wilkins comments that though some suggest that "all the nations" means only Gentiles, not Jews, most scholars recognize that Jesus' overall intention includes Jews.⁴² Kgatle insists that the Great Commission is a commission to reach all people regardless of race, religion, color, and class. The gospel now must be preached to the whole lost world. The Great Commission includes all the geographic and cultural contexts of the world.⁴³

⁴⁰ Aubrey Malphurs, *A New Kind of Church: Understanding Models of Ministry for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 122.

⁴¹ David R. Bauer, "The Theme of Mission in Matthew's Gospel from the Perspective of the Great Commission," *The Asbury Journal* 74, no. 2 (2019): 251.

⁴² Wilkins, 954.

⁴³ Kgatle, 4.

Apostle Paul clearly demonstrates that both Jews and Gentiles are sinners who need the salvation of Jesus Christ. He wrote:

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:22-24).

The Great Commission applies all the time. David J. Bosch notices that some church leaders in history, including reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, used to hold that the Great Commission was for the disciples in the early church.⁴⁴ However, after William Carey wrote the booklet *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*⁴⁵, the Christian community generally agrees that the Great Commission is a mandate for every local church for all time.

Michael A. Ogunewu argues that the Great Commission is a mandate which the church has no option but to fulfill.⁴⁶ Kgatle insists that the Great Commission is an eschatological mandate given in a period between the resurrection and the end of human history.⁴⁷

The Assurance

At the end of the Great Commission, Jesus said, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” That is to say, Jesus promised to be with the disciples

⁴⁴ David J. Bosch, "The Structure of Mission: An Exposition of Matthew 28:16- 20," in *Exploring Church Growth*, ed. William R. Shenk (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 218.

⁴⁵ William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, accessed May 30, 2020. <https://www.wmcarey.edu/carey/enquiry/anenquiry.pdf>

⁴⁶ Michael A. Ogunewu, "The Church and Effective Evangelization in the 21st Century: Contemporary Challenges and New Approaches," *AAMM*, Vol. 9 (2014): 88.

⁴⁷ Kgatle, 7.

all the time to lead them, protect them, and work with them during the process of finishing the Great Commission. It is amazing that Jesus came into the world with the name “Immanuel,” which means “God with us” (Matt. 1:23), and gave the assurance of His constant presence with His disciples to the end. The abiding presence of Jesus guarantees the great outcome of the Great Commission and brings great comfort to the disciples. Michael J. Wilkens comments that both those who obey the commission and those who respond are comforted by the awareness that the risen Jesus is with them to the end.⁴⁸

Jesus’ promise to be with His disciples to the end means that the disciples have the assurance to be with Jesus to the end. Both their work and salvation are secure in Jesus. Jesus is with them to accomplish the Great Commission but also secures their salvation at the end. Jesus values the disciples’ being more than their doing. Luke records how Jesus see disciples and the achievement of their ministry,

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven (Luke 10:17-20).

Jesus’ message is clear: their achievement in carrying out the commission is much less important than their own salvation.

Jesus’ promise to be with the disciples to the end, along with the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples (Acts 1:8), guarantee the successful completion of the Great Commission.

⁴⁸ Wilkins, 958.

In summary, the Great Commission is a mandate for the church to fulfill and an invitation to participate in the redemptive mission of the triune God. The phrase “you will be my witnesses” is a direct command of Jesus Christ to all His disciples to go into the world to be His witnesses. The Great Commission is not a suggestion but a command. This command gives the disciples no choice but to take action to engage in a lifestyle of evangelism. Low involvement is not a faithful response. Lack of commitment is disobedience. The Great Commission relies on every Christian in every church to get involved and work together to accomplish it effectively.

Christians are called to take the message of salvation to the entire world because there is no other way to save them. Phrases, such as “Go and make disciples” (Matt. 28:19), “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15), “will be preached in his name to all nations” (Luke 24:47), “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21), and “be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8) indicate that the nature of the Great Commission is missional rather than attractional.

Therefore, Christians should be missional disciples who are prepared to spread the gospel in season and out of season, as Paul instructed Timothy (2 Tim. 4:2). Spreading the gospel to make disciples is the responsibility of every Christian, which means that Christians are required to do it regardless of their situation, giftedness, personality, and cultural background. Christians are obligated to spread the gospel to make disciples of Jesus in every place.

Teamwork: Apostle Paul’s Corporate Evangelism in Acts

Christians are the body of Christ; each Christian is a part of the body and plays a role in the church. Just like a body needs every part to function well and work together to

be healthy, a church requires every Christian to play their role and serve together to make the church function effectively (1 Cor. 12:12-31). Teamwork is an effective model to do evangelism and mission. Mark 2:1-12 records an example of teamwork to bring a person in front of Jesus: the four men made a great effort to overcome many obstacles to get their friend in front of Jesus so that their friend could be healed and saved. When Jesus saw their faith, He healed the paralyzed man and forgave his sins. This story gives an example of teamwork that requires everyone's faith and participation.

The Book of Acts indicates that the principle of teamwork was established from the start in Paul's ministry.⁴⁹ The Apostle Paul traveled with others on all his mission trips. This teamwork helped Paul plant churches and advanced God's kingdom very effectively.

George W. Murray surveyed Paul's group evangelism.⁵⁰ Murray points out that a chronological survey of Acts makes Paul's emphasis on togetherness clear. Paul went out on his first missionary journey with Barnabas and John Mark (13:2-5). On his second missionary journey, Paul set out with Silas (15:40) and recruited Timothy in Lystra to join their team (16:3). In Troas, Luke joined the team, and all four of them went to Philippi together (16:12-18). From Philippi, Paul, Silas, and Timothy went together to Thessalonica, leaving Luke in Philippi (17:1-15). On Paul's third missionary journey, Timothy and Erastus were with Paul in Ephesus and ministered to him (19:22). Gaius and Aristarchus were also with Paul in Ephesus and were called his "traveling companions"

⁴⁹ I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary, vol. 5, ed. Leon Morris (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008 reprinted), 34.

⁵⁰ George W. Murray, "Paul's Corporate Evangelism in the Book of Acts," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155, no. 618 (1998): 189-200.

(19:29). When Paul went from Greece to Macedonia, he was accompanied by seven men (20:4). Luke joined Paul again at Philippi (20:5-6) and stayed with him on the trip to Jerusalem (21:15) and to Rome (27:1; 28:16).⁵¹

Acts records that Paul often evangelized together with others. They worked together to advance the kingdom of God. This research briefly surveyed Paul's approach and mainly followed George W. Murray's work.

Acts 13:1-5

The call of Barnabas and Saul reveals the importance of group evangelism.

Now in the church at Antioch, there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me, Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off (Acts 13:1-3).

Murray points out that they were called to do evangelism together. Paul, Barnabas, and John went to Cyprus to preach the word of God. "The two of them sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper" (Acts 13:4-5). This passage tells that they were sent to proclaim the gospel as a team and started from a familiar place. Cyprus is an island where Barnabas came from (Acts 4:36).

Acts 13:14-52

This passage tells the team's strategy of proclaiming the gospel. They went on to Pisidian Antioch and entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and sat down, waiting for the

⁵¹ Murray, 191-193.

opportunity to speak. “After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the leaders of the synagogue asked them, “Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, please speak” (13:15). Then Paul stood up in the synagogue and preached an evangelistic message to Jews and God-fearing Gentiles by reviewing Jewish history to connect with them first, then proclaiming that Jesus is the Savior who was dead but risen. Through Him, everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification they could not obtain under the law of Moses (13:39). Though Paul was the only one who spoke, it is clear that Barnabas was present to support him (13:42).

Acts 14:1-28

“At Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed” (14:1). In Lystra, they performed a miracle to heal a lame man; that miracle caused the crowd to worship them. Paul said, “Friends, why are you doing this? We, too, are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them” (14:15). In Derbe, Paul and Barnabas preached the good news and won a large number of disciples (14:21). Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch for a ministry of edification.

Acts 15:40-16:12

On his second missionary journey, Paul took Silas with him to strengthen churches in Syria and Cilicia (15:40-41). Later, Paul took Timothy with them (16:1-3), and Luke probably joined the team at Troas. After Paul had seen the Macedonia vision,

they got ready at once to leave for Macedonia to preach the gospel to the Macedonians (16:9-10).

Acts 16:13-40

Three incidents in Philippi demonstrate Paul's corporate evangelistic work. Though Paul played the primary role, others all participated in the evangelistic work. They all witnessed Lydia's conversion, baptized her and her house members, and were invited to stay in her house (16:13-15). When the jailer rushed in and asked how to be saved after the earthquake broke the jail cell holding Paul and Silas, they replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house (16:31-32). In the end, they worked together to baptize the jailer and his family members.

Acts 17

In Thessalonica, though it is only recorded that Paul went into the synagogue to proclaim that Jesus is the Messiah (17:2-3), it does not mean Paul went just by himself. It was apparent they went as a team: "Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women" (17:4). In Berea, they went to the synagogue to preach the gospel. "As a result, many of them believed, as also did a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men" (17:12). In Athens, Paul preached the good news about Jesus and the resurrection to a meeting of the Areopagus while he was waiting for his team to join him in Athens. "Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others" (17:34).

Acts 18:1-8

In Corinth, Paul teamed up with Aquila and his wife, Priscilla. Paul went to see them, stayed, and worked with them. “Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks” (18:4). “When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching” (18:5). This passage suggests that Silas and Timothy took over Paul’s other duties.

In summary, all these passages reveal that Paul often evangelized with other Christians as a team. Each person played a different role in evangelizing. This teamwork approach was very effective in spreading the gospel and planting churches regardless of persecution from the Jews. Paul lived and worked closely with others. He seldom ministered alone but engaged in group evangelism. Paul was burdened to share the good news of salvation through Christ with as many people as he could reach. And the divine initiative was behind the apostle’s corporate witness activities.⁵²

Conclusion

This biblical review affirms that the love of God is the foundation of mission and evangelism. God loves people and calls Christians to participate in His redemptive mission. The mission is the triune God’s loving action to bring salvation to humanity. The Father sends the Son, then the Father and the Son send the Spirit, and finally, the triune God sends the church into the world to be missionaries. It is the teamwork of God and God’s people to bring the gospel to the lost world. *Missio Dei* is God’s action based on His being and His love. The heart of God is to love everyone and to save as many as

⁵² Murray, 199.

possible. Thus, it expresses both the heart of God and the call of the church. Love is the center of the gospel. The greatest evidence of God's love for humankind is the incarnation of God. The second person of the triune God took human form to demonstrate His love and die for humanity to save them from death (Rom. 5:8). The incarnation demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of doing mission and evangelism.

The call of the church is to be blessed and be a blessing to others. God called Abraham to leave his country, his people, and his father's household in order to bless him and make him a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. The call of Abraham is not only to Abraham himself but applies to his descendants as well. In the same way, as in the call of Abraham, God calls Christians to leave their worldly lifestyle to bless them so that all people on earth will be blessed through them. Application of the call of Abraham in the lives of Christians involves leaving their comfort zones as Abraham did in obedience to God's call to bring salvation to people.

Jesus Christ gave the Great Commission to His disciples. The central task of the Great Commission is to make disciples of Jesus. It relies on the power of God and requires all Christians to work together to accomplish it. God sends Christians into the world to spread the gospel and make disciples of Jesus. Christians who love God must follow God's heart and submit to God's will to fulfill the Great Commission with teamwork as Paul did in the first century. Low involvement is not a faithful response and significantly delays the process. Lack of commitment is disobedience and loses the opportunity to participate in the redemptive mission of *Missio Dei*.

The call of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke: 24:46-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8), and Paul's ministry all indicate the nature of the church is missional rather than attractional. The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God. The HG is a love-based evangelism strategy. It provides a platform for Christians to go into their community to spread the gospel incarnationally and love people as Jesus would.

This biblical review strongly supports the proposal of transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnationally, missional HG strategy modeled by KBBC. If the transformation is successful, it will solve the low-effectiveness and low-involvement problems. A literature review about the changing of the world, the missional church movement, HG evangelism strategy, and transformational process models is needed to ensure a successful transformation.

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND HAPPINESS GROUP EVANGELISM INTRODUCTION

God loves all human beings and has a mission to save them. In every generation, God calls His people to leave their worldly life to bless them and make them a blessing to others. The Great Commission is a mandate for the church of Jesus Christ to fulfill, and its goal is to make disciples in every people group at all times.

Christians are required to spread the gospel in season and out of season (2 Tim, 4:2). Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, Christians are called to trust in God and make disciples through all available means. John Piper points out that pandemics can serve to complete the Great Commission. He writes, “In the coronavirus, God is loosening the roots of settled Christians, all over the world, to make them free for something new and radical and to send them with the gospel of Christ to the unreached peoples of the world.”⁵³

The low-effectiveness and low-involvement of the attractional CBCSD evangelism strategy indicated that a drastic change was needed. To transform CBCSD’s attractional evangelism strategy to the incarnational and missional HG strategy, the researcher reviewed the relevant literature about the changing of the world and the response of the church, missional church movement, HG evangelism strategy, and transformational process models.

⁵³ John Piper, *Coronavirus and Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 95, accessed on August 26, 2020, <https://www.crossway.org/books/coronavirus-and-christ-ebook/>.

The Changing of the World and the Response of the Church

Many changes in the world today are impacting the church. Fast transportation allows people to go anywhere on earth in a short time. High-speed internet and multimedia technology innovations enable people to connect much more than ever before. Globalization makes the world into a global village and the community into multicultural societies. It has created a people movement that brings international migration. In big cities, one can find people of any nationality.⁵⁴ Globalization has now impacted every place in this world.

Another significant change is that the Western world's worldview has shifted from Modernism to postmodernism and from Christendom to post-Christendom. The majority of people no longer embrace Christianity as a worldview. Russell York observes that the Western world has become a post-Christian world in the 21st century. He wrote:

Christendom maintains influence among those with deep roots in the church. Remnants of modernism's influence are also still alive. The church tried in vain to keep a hold on its place in culture and to turn the tide of Modernism and Postmodernism. However, by the end of the twentieth century, much of the Western world, and in particular America, was no longer predominantly Christian; the Postmodern mindset was well established. In many places, the Western world has become a post-Christian world where pluralism reigns.⁵⁵

Mike McDaniel notices that cultural shifts in the Western world are deep and wide. These shifts include the economic change from local living to a global community, the sociological shift from mono-ethnic to multi-ethnic, the philosophical shift from

⁵⁴ Jonathan Kangwa, "The Impact of Globalization on Church Mission in Zambia," *International Review of Mission* Vol. 105, no. 1 (2016): 134.

⁵⁵ Russell York, "The Nature of Evangelism in Missional Churches" (D. Min. diss., George Fox University, 2011), 46, accessed March 17, 2020. <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/156>.

modern to postmodern, and the theological shift from Christendom to post-Christendom.⁵⁶

These changes brought crises for churches to face but also provided Christians with excellent opportunities to fulfill the Great Commission. A church could be in danger of extinction if she refuses to adapt to changes in the world; however, the crises also brought the church an opportunity to grow if she makes the right changes. Globalization has brought people closer and provided an excellent opportunity for Christians to meet others. Geographical distance is no longer a significant barrier for Christians to reach out to people who live far away. International migration brings people from different cultures into communities where a local church can reach out to them across the street. Postmodern people reject organized religion but long for “the spiritual milk” and like to hear stories, giving Christians opportunities to tell “the big story” of God’s salvation. McDaniel observes, “While post-Christendom has led to fewer churches and fewer church attenders, it does not mean that America is less spiritual. Spirituality is blossoming. It has a much more open and tolerant appeal; thus, it is becoming mainstream in post-Christendom.”⁵⁷

Gil Pyo Lee notices that every place has become a mission field because of globalization. He wrote:

Through the impact of globalization, every place where there is no Lordship of Christ has become a mission field. An interesting situation in our neighborhood is that people who used to live in a mission field (in the traditional sense) are now

⁵⁶ Mike McDaniel, “Case Studies of Selected Missional Churches that Examine Strategies Used to Engage the Unchurched in Post-Christendom Context” (D. Min. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010), 17-33, accessed June 18, 2020. <https://www.dts.edu/download/dmin/dissertations/DTS-DMin-McDaniel, Mike-Case-Studies-of-Selected-Missional-Churches.pdf>.

⁵⁷ McDaniel, 31.

the neighbors living next door to us. It seems that God's mission in the world is so urgent that He has made our society multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multicultural by mixing different people to live together. And God invites churches to participate in His mission as missionaries. We are all living in a mission field where God is at work in the midst of the world.⁵⁸

McDaniel points out, "How the church can effectively adapt to these changes while maintaining a biblical and Christo-centric core is foundational to the Christian faith."⁵⁹ He observes that post-Christendom has made the church change from static ecclesiology to dynamic ecclesiology, from denominations to networks, and from pastoral to missional.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, many churches do not do well in adapting to the changes in this world. Alan Hirsch observes that many churches in the West have suffered a rapid decline in membership and vitality.⁶¹ In a church growth workshop video, Eric Bryant points out, "We live in an ever-changing world in which the church seems to be struggling to keep up. Our churches are aging and losing their relevance in our post-Christian, postmodern, and pluralistic world. Churches are moving away from the cities because they cannot connect with the new neighbors, and some churches are closing their doors."⁶²

⁵⁸ Gil Pyo Lee, "From Traditional to Missional Church: Describing a Contextual Model of Change for Ingrown Korean Diaspora Church in North America" (D. Min. diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2010), 92-93, accessed March 17, 2020. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/734425196>.

⁵⁹ McDaniel, 12.

⁶⁰ McDaniel, 34-38.

⁶¹ Alan Hirsch, "Reawakening a Potent Missional Ethos in the Twenty-First Century Church," *Missiology* 38, no. 1 (January 2010): 8.

⁶² Eric Bryant, Church Growth Workshop Introduction video, class material, accessed June 12, 2020. <https://www.udemy.com/course/church-growth/>

To effectively adapt to these changes, church leaders need to recognize the type of change they are experiencing. There are two types of change: continuous change and discontinuous change. Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk illustrated the difference between these two types of change. *Continuous change* “develops out of what has gone before.”⁶³ It is a change that occurs within a paradigm. It is a type of change that one could expect within an individual or organization’s typical life cycle. This type of change can be managed with existing skills and strategies. *Discontinuous change* “is disruptive and unanticipated; it creates situations that challenge our assumptions.”⁶⁴ It requires one to respond in a new way because the existing skills and strategies are no longer adequate for the task.

One can adjust or optimize the current program to make it effective in dealing with continuous change. However, this approach does not work for discontinuous change. The existing strategies are no longer effective for the new situation. A new ministry model is needed to deal with discontinuous change. Ogunewu points out that an approach might be successful for some time and then become obsolete. If an approach is no longer working, one should not cling to it simply because it was successful in the past.⁶⁵

Discontinuous change requires a new understanding of the church. The biblical review indicated that the call of the church, the Great Commission, and the Apostle Paul’s ministry all indicate the nature of the church is missional. Lee argues, “the church

⁶³ Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 7.

⁶⁴ Roxburgh, *The Missional Leader*, 7.

⁶⁵ Ogunewu, 89.

in the postmodern era cannot avoid missional understanding because the context keeps changing. Unless the church recovers its original identity, it will hardly survive as the triune God intends the church to be.”⁶⁶

This world is in both continuous and discontinuous change today. The church is in a modern, postmodern, Christian, and post-Christian mixed culture, which requires churches to keep transforming their ministry strategy to reach people in specific cultural contexts effectively.

When making changes to minister to the congregation and effectively reach out to the community, church leaders need to know what can be changed and what should hold steady without compromising. Malphurs has developed a practical 3F (Function, Form, and Freedom) framework for a theology of change:

Functions are the timeless, unchanging, and non-negotiable precepts that are based on Scripture.

Forms are the temporal, changing methods that are sensitive to cultural dynamics and realities. A form would describe *how* a function is experienced in the life of the church. However, forms or methods need to be consistent with Scripture and must be engaged to accomplish the absolute functions of the church.

Freedom refers to how under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, a church has freedom in discerning what forms are necessary to fulfill the absolute functions of the church.⁶⁷

The goal of the Great Commission is the unchangeable *Function*, and it must be fulfilled regardless of how the world changes. The content of the Great Commission cannot be modified. However, the methods and strategies employed to carry it out are changeable *Forms*. Rather, to achieve the goal effectively, Christians need to continually

⁶⁶ Lee, 80.

⁶⁷ Malphurs, 85-93.

adjust the way of communication or create new forms from time to time so that the target people can understand the gospel in their cultural contexts. Phillip Vaden Faig suggests that church leaders “would be wise to ground the congregation in the theology of change that allows them to distinguish the critical difference between absolute functions and negotiable forms.”⁶⁸

Though there are risks to changing, timely transformation is needed. Alan J. Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren urge, “Churches must struggle to find various ways of being mission agencies as a true church corresponding to the changing culture among their neighborhoods and communities.”⁶⁹

The good news is that some churches have started to make drastic changes and enjoy a successful transformation in response to postmodernism and post-Christendom. For example, Grace Community Church in Chicago has successfully transformed into a mission-focused congregation. Michael Kooy reports, “While many may have felt threatened and anxious about these changes and subsequent challenges to their congregational identity, the shift in ministry focus from an internal, member-only focus to an external, neighborhood-ministry focus has given renewed purpose and energy to most within the congregation.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Phillip Vaden Faig, “Extending the Table: A Strategic Guide of Missional Renewal for a Declining Congregation” (D. Min. diss., George Fox University, 2016), 58, accessed March 17, 2020. <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/206/>.

⁶⁹ Alan J. Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What It Is, Why It Matters, How to Become One*, ed. Mark Priddy (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 68.

⁷⁰ Michael Kooy, “A Strategy to Transform Grace Community Church into a Mission-Focused Congregation” (D. Min. diss., Fuller Seminary, 2011), 155, accessed June 4, 2020. <https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1044&context=dmin>

Allen Hirsch reminds Christians that Christendom is not the original biblical model of the early church. To understand the church model's changes in the past, Hirsch compared the essential modes of the church in history. In the early church period, during the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Mode (AD 32-313), the church was a missional, incarnational, transformational, sending church. This movement dynamic continued in various forms until Constantine's time when the church changed to Christendom Mode (AD 313-Current). The church perceived herself as central to society and the surrounding culture and operated in the attractional model. A Missional Mode emerged 40 years ago. The church started to transform from the attractional mode to the missional mode to respond to post-Christendom challenges. The church is in missional and incarnational impulse.⁷¹

The Missional Church Movement

The missional church movement is a direct response to the reality of the post-Christendom context. It emphasizes the incarnational ministry model rather than the traditional attractional model.

Attractional to Missional

Many modern churches primarily use an attractional evangelistic method to reach out to their communities. This attractional evangelism approach has lost its effectiveness in the postmodern and post-Christendom context. Frost and Hirsch observe that traditional churches are “fundamentally attractional,” which is a “come-to-us” rather than a “go-to-them” approach for mission and evangelism. They argue that churches

⁷¹ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 58-62.

nowadays should be incarnational, meaning that the church moves into and lives among society, carrying the gospel.⁷²

Samuel F. Thigpen points out, “While attractional churches will often have considerable ambitions to reach people, the mindset of these churches is to build the community within the church rather than build the church out of the community.”⁷³

Richard Greene summarizes the attractional evangelistic model’s weaknesses:

It does not make disciples but attracts consumers.
It is not easily reproducible.
It creates a weak “point of connection” between the target people and the church.⁷⁴

Hirsch explains the reasons for the attractional model is outmoded and calls a fundamental change to be missional. “In the Christendom era, the church perceived itself as central to society and operated almost exclusively in the attractional model. In this situation, people come to church to hear the gospel, be taught in the faith, and partake in the sacraments.”⁷⁵ However, this attractional model is *outmoded* because of drastically changed conditions. He argues that the attractional model “is not sufficient for the challenge of the twenty-first century. It is no use simply rearranging aspects of the same model without going to the roots of paradigm.” Christians “must not simply abandon

⁷² Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission of the 21st Century Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 166-223.

⁷³ Samuel F. Thigpen, “Attractional to Missional: A strategic transition plan for Anastasia Baptist Church” (D. Min. diss., Liberty University 2019), 6, accessed May 19, 2020. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3101&context=doctoral>.

⁷⁴ Richard Greene, “The Problem of Attractional Evangelism,” The Keystone Project, accessed June 25, 2020, <https://keystoneproject.org/the-problem-with-attractional-evangelism/>

⁷⁵ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 61.

Christendom” but “need to make a fundamental change to become the genuinely missional movement that Jesus intended us to be in the first place.”⁷⁶

Since the missional church movement arose at the end of the last century, many churches have started to realize that the nature of the church is missional rather than attractional. Rick Richardson observes that the missional movements focus on evangelism in the mission of God with an emphasis on every Christian being a missionary to his or her social circle:

While conservative evangelicals emphasize attractional strategies for evangelism, they are becoming more focused on how to extend evangelism through their members into the world as a result of the missional conversation. Nevertheless, their focus remains firmly on the priority of evangelism in the mission of God. And church-growth-oriented evangelicals integrate their emphasis on church growth with an emphasis on every member being a missionary, and every social and geographic location and the network is a mission field.⁷⁷

Alan Hirsch and Dave Ferguson encourage churches to transform from attractional to missional. They argue that if one can capture the heart and vitality of the reborn global missional impetus, one will see high-impact congregations transforming their wider communities.⁷⁸ Reggie McNeal says, “The missional development goes to the very heart of what the church is, not just what it does. It redefines the church’s role in the world in a way that breaks sharply with prevailing church notions.”⁷⁹ Thigpen points out,

⁷⁶ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 61.

⁷⁷ Rick Richardson, “Emerging Missional Movements: An Overview and Assessment of Some Implications for Mission(s),” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37, no. 3 (2013): 132.

⁷⁸ Alan Hirsch and Dave Ferguson, *On the Verge: A Journey into the Apostolic Future of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 11.

⁷⁹ Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009), xiv.

“the missional model provides a basis for the sustainability of the church in the West and represents a plan for the growth of the kingdom.”⁸⁰

Missional Church

The missional church focuses on evangelism in a diverse cultural context. A missional church sees that the church is sent to the culture and identifies with it by understanding the people’s worldview. The term “missional” is widely used with different meanings in different places. The definition of the missional church is still very ambiguous and varies in the Christian community.

For clarification, Roxburgh and Boren point out eight trends of the misunderstandings in the missional conversation. Missional Church is not:

- (1) a label to describe churches that emphasize cross-cultural missions,
- (2) a label to describe churches that are using outreach programs to be externally focused,
- (3) a label for church growth and church effectiveness,
- (4) a label for churches that are effective at evangelism,
- (5) a label to describe churches that have developed a clear mission statement with a vision and purpose for their existence,
- (6) a way of turning around ineffective and outdated church forms so that they can display relevance in the wider culture,
- (7) a label that points to a primitive or ancient way of being the church, and
- (8) a label to describe new formats of the church that reach people who have no interests in traditional churches.⁸¹

Jesse Wilson observes three core characteristics agreed upon in general: the missional church is about the missionary status of God and His church, the missional church is about incarnational ministry, and the missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*, the mission of God.⁸²

⁸⁰ Thigpen, 52.

⁸¹ Roxburgh, *Introducing the Missional Church*, 31-33.

⁸² Jesse Wilson, “Missional versus attractional: An argument the church cannot afford,” Ministry Blog. August, 2018, accessed June 14, 2020, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2018/08/Missional-versus-attractional-An-argument-the-church-cannot-afford>.

Thigpen finds the similarity between the missional church and the early church of the first century:

The missional church, in its simplest form, takes the strategies and model for church growth described in the book of Acts and used by the first-century church and reemploys those methods to be used in the 21st-century Church. This model in and of itself is what some might consider an organic and simple model for growing the kingdom of God. The missional model sees homes and families as the strongest means for taking the Gospel across cities, states, and nations. The early church met in many homes where families shared a sense of community and a deep relationship in which the Gospel could be shared and taught.⁸³

Richard W. Rouse and Craig Van Gelder insist that the missional church is about participating more fully in God's mission. It focuses on how well people are living out their faith in daily discipleship. Its ministry centers on "empowering the laity for their ministry in everyday life."⁸⁴ Hirsch argues that a missional church is "a community of God's people that defines itself and organizes its life around its real purpose as an agent of God's mission to the world."⁸⁵

McDaniel points out, "A missional church is intricately and strategically involved in global missions." "Every member of the church is considered 'sent' in the missional church."⁸⁶ He defines the missional church as "a dynamic, transformative, spiritual community of authentic Christ-followers who intentionally serve their local communities through incarnational living, move beyond themselves to plant churches nationally, and

⁸³ Thigpen, 49.

⁸⁴ Richard W. Rouse and Craig Van Gelder, *A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), location 180, Kindle.

⁸⁵ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 88.

⁸⁶ McDaniel, 39.

mobilize globally to the under-resourced and unreached people with the gospel.”⁸⁷ The North American Baptist Conference states: “Becoming missional church means having a renewed theological vision of the church on mission with God, serving as a sign, servant, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.”⁸⁸

Ronald Kent Wise observes the importance of the fluidity of the relationships in the missional church. He writes, “The fluidity of the relationships created in the missional church allows individuals to come into proximity to God’s presence in the work of the church.”⁸⁹

Ed Stetzer summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the missional church. The strengths of missional churches are that they are relational and authentic. They embrace a holistic mission and give their love for relationships, authenticity, community, and biblical (missional) holism. They do discipleship well. The weaknesses include missional leaders who are reactionary against the established church, missional churches potentially having an unbalanced view that places demonstration (or service) over proclamation, and less orthodox practitioners as they have allowed their context to shape theology.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ McDaniel, 16-17.

⁸⁸ North American Baptist Conference, “Becoming Missional,” accessed on October 5, 2020. <https://nABSonference.org/north-american-missions/becoming-missional/>

⁸⁹ Ronald Kent Wise, “Transformational Leadership: Equipping Small Churches to Make Disciples by Integrating Wesleyan Principals” (D. Min. diss., Liberty University, 2020), 36, accessed June 4, 2020. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3507&context=doctoral>.

⁹⁰ Ed Stetzer, “Finding the Right Church Planting Model Part 4: The Missional-Incarnational Approach,” *Christianity Today*, August 17, 2015, accessed June 21, 2020. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/august/finding-right-church-planting-model-part-4-missional-incarn.html>

Missio Dei

The original form of the missional church movement is strongly connected to the concept of *Missio Dei*. Ed Stetzer points out that the concept of *Missio Dei* is to recognize that God is a sending God and the church is sent into the world to participate in the divine mission to manifest and advance God's kingdom on earth through the means of sharing and showing the gospel of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ.⁹¹ Therefore, "the mission is the natural working of the triune God. It is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God."⁹² In other words, "it is not so much that God has a mission for his church in the world, but that God has a church for his mission in the world."⁹³

The church is God's people sent into the world to participate in His redemptive mission. The missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*, and all activities of the church need to be organized around the *Missio Dei*. Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile point out that God is a missionary God who sent the church into the world. The missional church is an incarnational ministry sent to engage a postmodern, post-Christendom, and globalized context. The internal life of the missional church focuses on every believer living as a disciple engaging in a mission.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches That Multiply* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 19.

⁹² David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 390.

⁹³ Christopher J. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity, 2006), 62.

⁹⁴ Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 4.

Hirsch explains that this “sending” is embodied in the “missional-incarnational impulse,” where the word “missional” expresses the sending nature of the church, while “incarnational” represents the “embedding” of the gospel into a local context. In other words, “missional” speaks to the direction, or where to go, while being “incarnational” is more about how to go and what to do. Therefore, a genuine missional impulse is a sending rather than an attractional one.⁹⁵

Incarnational Approach

The incarnation of God demonstrates God’s love and reveals the model of doing mission and evangelism. McDaniel points out,

Jesus is the missional God-man who modeled the faith to the world. He modeled a lifestyle for His disciples, who would set the foundation of His Church and be examples of missional living as well. Jesus is the best example of missional living. His model helps the church gain a perspective on how to thrive in establishing a movement that can still penetrate the culture of the twenty-first century as Jesus did the first century.⁹⁶

Hirsch argues that the incarnation not only qualifies God’s acts in the world but must qualify Christians’ acts. Christians should follow Jesus’ steps and examples in reaching out to the world incarnationally. He observes that the incarnation of God has six dimensions: presence, proximity, prevenience, powerlessness, passion, and proclamation.⁹⁷ The central verse is “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The application of this verse would be that

⁹⁵ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 138.

⁹⁶ McDaniel, 2.

⁹⁷ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 141.

Christians follow Jesus Christ in reaching out to the world incarnationally. Hirsch insists that the six dimensions of the incarnation should be applied to the mission of God's people. The central passage is 1 Corinthians 9:22-23. Incarnational ministry essentially means "taking the church to the people rather than bringing people to the church."⁹⁸ "Jesus did not expect people to come to where He was, but rather, went to them."⁹⁹

Ott outlines five effective soul-winning approaches that Jesus used: lifestyle evangelism, friendship evangelism, situational evangelism, mass evangelism, and program evangelism.¹⁰⁰

"A new incarnational approach is required today: living life with great intentionality and earning the right one's faith in relationship."¹⁰¹ McNeal points out that both truth and love must reflect the whole heart of God for people. The demonstration of love and service intrigues people to pursue knowing the God who inspires such service. People need the truth of God in order to be fully blessed.¹⁰²

Paul set an excellent example of spreading the gospel incarnationally. He encourages Christians to preach the Word in season and out of season (2 Tim. 2:4). He tells how he spread the gospel in his letter to Corinthians:

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews, I became like a Jew to win the Jews. To those under the law, I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law, I

⁹⁸ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 145.

⁹⁹ Alan Hirsch and Debra Hirsch, *Untamed: Reactivating a Missional Form of Discipleship*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 237.

¹⁰⁰ Ott, 22.

¹⁰¹ McDaniel, 39.

¹⁰² McNeal, 32.

became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak, I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means, I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I may share in its blessings (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

This passage shows Paul's adaptability and flexibility in mission and evangelism. He used different approaches to build a bridge for diverse people groups for the sake of the gospel, through coming alongside and getting to know them and valuing them as God's creatures who have God's image.¹⁰³ Richard A. Krause points out that Paul's message is contextual and conciliatory, but not compromising. "No compromise is ever to be found in any of the mission messages of the Apostle Paul."¹⁰⁴ James Ha Tun Aung thinks that Paul shares his unlimited service and flexibility with different people.¹⁰⁵

This passage is a model for Christians to win people from different backgrounds. Michael G. Vanlaningham comments that Paul spread the gospel incarnationally, "never changing the contents of the gospel but adapting its communication to the culture of his audience. This remains the model for missions and evangelism today."¹⁰⁶

Missional Leadership

Leadership plays a key role in transforming a church from a traditional attractional model to a missional strategy. James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

¹⁰³ Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary Series, ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 158.

¹⁰⁴ Richard A. Krause, "All Things to all Men: Where is the Limit? an Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 93, no. 2 (1996): 91.

¹⁰⁵ James Ha Tun Aung, "The Role of Christians in a Conflict Society in Myanmar: A Reading of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23," *Colloquium* 49, no. 1 (2017): 65-66.

¹⁰⁶ Michael G. Vanlaningham, *1 Corinthians*, The Moody Bible Commentary, ed. Michael Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), page 3825, Kindle.

introduced a practical leadership model for leaders to bring a successful transformation. The model is called “Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership” (FPEL), which includes Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Practice, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. These five leadership practices provide an operating system for leaders to bring a successful change.¹⁰⁷ Kouzes and Posner insist that credibility is the foundation of leadership. Titles are granted, but it’s a leader’s behavior that earns respect.¹⁰⁸ People first follow the person, then the plan. Good leaders are leading by example. Say what you mean and do what you say. “Leaders must set the example.” “Words and deeds and must be consistent.”¹⁰⁹ One can't command commitment but inspire it. Leaders “have to enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.”¹¹⁰ Transformation requires the leaders to have a clear vision and be able to gain consensus on the common cause. A shared vision intensifies commitment and brings a significant difference in work attitudes and performance.

Transformation starts from the leadership. Frost and Hirsch point out that the traditional church’s hierarchical leadership system needs to be changed most. Seeing the hierarchical system as neither biblical nor effective, they proposed that the church adopt the “APEPT” (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher) system of leadership based on Ephesians 4:11-13.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ James M Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2017), location 815, Kindle.

¹⁰⁸ Kouzes, location 687.

¹⁰⁹ Kouzes, location 708.

¹¹⁰ Kouzes, location 720.

¹¹¹ Frost, 166-223.

Similarly, Timothy Van Aarde argues that the Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher of Ephesians 4:11 are missional functions. The first three (Apostle, Prophet, and Evangelist) serve the outward structure, and the other two (Pastor and Teacher) serve the inward structure of the church. The inward and outward structures of the church dynamically function together in unity to be a missional church.¹¹²

Darrell Guder observes that the missional leadership concept is similar to New Testament ministry patterns. There are three patterns of missional leadership. The first pattern is the importance of using the Scripture to equip the saints. The second is that the collegial and relational character of missional leadership with the modeling and mentoring role of missional leaders are pivotal. The third one is the connection between missional leadership and the personal apostolate as well as between the gathered and scattered church. Guder concludes that the test of missional leadership is how to prepare the congregation to live missional lives where God is sending them.¹¹³

Craig Van Gelder points out that the church is called, gathered, and sent into the world to participate fully in God's mission. Missional church seeks to participate fully in God's mission in its particular context.¹¹⁴ "A Spirit-led congregation will learn to adapt and recontextualize its ministry to address the challenges and opportunities that it faces

¹¹² Timothy Van Aarde, "The Missional Church Structure and the Priesthood of all Believers (Ephesians 4:7-16) in the Light of the Inward and Outward Function of the Church," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 38, no. 1 (2017):6-9, accessed April 12, 2021. <https://verbumeteclesia.org.za/index.php/ve/article/view/1709/3160>.

¹¹³ Darrell L. Guder, "Walking Worthily: Missional Leadership after Christendom," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 28, no. 3 (2007): 278-291.

¹¹⁴ Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2007), location 2892-2895, Kindle.

with such changes — always forming and reforming.”¹¹⁵ The activity of leadership is “shaping and reshaping the organizational culture through (a) identifying and promoting core values, (b) clarifying and focusing the mission/purpose, and (c) developing and casting a shared vision of the future.”¹¹⁶

To help missional leaders equipping their churches to reach a changing world, Roxburgh and Romanuk propose a missional leadership model different from the traditional hierarchical entrepreneurship and pastoral caretaking leadership. This model of missional leadership is a leadership that cultivates the practice of indwelling Scripture and discovers places for experiment and risk as people find that the Spirit of God’s life-giving future in Jesus is amongst them. They suggest four critical elements for the process of cultivation:

1. *Cultivating Awareness and Understanding.* The leader seeks to cultivate an awareness of what God is doing among the people and leads the congregation to imagine being at the center of God’s activities in the world.
2. *Cultivating Co-Learning Networks.* The leader seeks to create an environment in which people can experiment and discover new ways of engaging Scripture and mission together. The emphasis is on the leader to help cultivate and inspire but not to impose strategies.
3. *Cultivating Fresh Ways to Engage Scripture.* The leader helps people connect with the story of God and find their place in the Kingdom narrative. Scripture is seen more like a story to be entered into and less of a toolbox of principles and precepts to memorize.
4. *Cultivating New Practices, Habits, and Norms.* The leader cultivates among the people new ways of connecting to various habits and practices of spiritual formation.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Van Gelder, location 2027.

¹¹⁶ Van Gelder, location 2224.

¹¹⁷ Roxburgh, *The Missional Leader*, 27-35.

In the last twenty years, some churches applied missional leadership practices and experienced rapid church growth. Stephanie Spellers reports:

Many episcopal churches used a method that could unlock the church's potential to serve and embody the mission of God in diverse locations. Through relational organizing, people are equipped for six essential leadership practices as (1) building a relational culture, (2) practicing facilitative leadership, (3) getting rooted in context and incarnational reality, (4) recalling dangerous memories and envisioning the world-as-it-should-be, (5) moving into action around people's passions and gifts, and (6) embracing transformation.¹¹⁸

The Happiness Groups Evangelism Strategy

No literature is available regarding "Happiness Groups" (HG) evangelism research at this point. This section was mainly based on the information in the booklet *Happiness Groups Introduction*,¹¹⁹ distributed by KBBC during the 2018 international HG conference. It is also based on the researcher's understanding of conversations with KBBC's senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang, and an unpublished evangelism study report of KBBC's community ministry director, Joseph Lin.

HG was developed at KBBC based on the Two-Wings Ministry of Korea Poongsunghan Church in South Korea. One wing is evangelism, which carries the absolute power of the gospel. The other wing is discipleship, which carries the world vision of fostering disciples.¹²⁰ HG has created an evangelism movement among Chinese churches in East Asia since 2017.

¹¹⁸ Stephanie Spellers, "The Church Awake: Becoming the Missional People of God," *Anglican Theological Review* 92:1 (winter 2010): 29-44, accessed April 12, 2021. https://www.anglicantheologicalreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/spellers_92.1.pdf.

¹¹⁹ Jinni Chen, *Happiness Groups Introduction* (Taipei: China Sunday School Association, 2018), 4-25.

¹²⁰ Joseph Lin, "Study Report: Evangelism at KBBC", 26.

The HG strategy modeled by KBBC is a missional, incarnational evangelism ministry to make everyone in the church participate in fulfilling the Great Commission. It is also a disciple training platform to make missional disciples. HG is a love-based group evangelism approach that enables Christians to spread the gospel together in their real-life settings and be trained while doing it on the field.

HG is a missional church movement practice. It enables churches to participate in the *Missio Dei* actively. HG is a missional movement product of realizing that the nature of the church is missional rather than attractional. The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God.

HG is a practice similar to Hirsch's "missional-incarnational impulse," where the word "missional" expresses the sending nature of the church, while "incarnational" represents the "embedding" of the gospel into a local context.¹²¹ HG sends believers into their community as a team to spread the gospel incarnationally. Just as Jesus was sent into the world to love people and bring salvation to them in their cultural context, Christians are sent into other people's world to spread the gospel and love them as Jesus would. It emphasizes targeting people's hearts first and then addressing their minds in the postmodern cultural context.

HG treats every nonbeliever as "the best friend" (Best). All Bests who attend the HG receive the best treatment as very important people, honoring them and focusing on their needs to touch their hearts by showing God's love through actions. HG encourages coworkers to speak the Best's language, tell stories, avoid preaching, debating, arguing

¹²¹ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 135-158.

with the Best, and intentionally building up friendly relationships with the Best through various means.

HG also honors coworkers to enable the ordinary to accomplish the extraordinary. It emphasizes that Christians' calling is to spread the gospel effectively in their lifetime. This approach is an application of that "the internal life of the missional church focuses on every believer living as a disciple engaging in a mission."¹²²

KBBC uses slogans to encourage the congregation to participate in HG and push forward. Some slogans are:

The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God!

Evangelism is not one of the church ministries but the driven engine!

Ordinary people can do extraordinary things!

HG enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things for God!

Spreading the gospel is a lifetime mission!

No price cannot be paid, but the value that has yet to be seen!

Heavenly value is the result of proactive pursuit!

To know is mere knowledge; to pay the price requires effort!

You don't need to be an expert to start, but you need to start to be an expert!

HG Operation at KBBC

HG is a driving engine to lead the rest of the church ministries at KBBC. All the other church ministries are planned around HG. This operation is based on the understanding that the missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*.

¹²² Van Gelder, *The Missional Church in Perspective*, 4.

All activities of the church need to be organized around the *Missio Dei*. The church is sent into the world to participate in the divine mission to manifest and advance God's kingdom on earth through the means of sharing and showing the gospel of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ.¹²³ HG includes three systems: the HG evangelism system, the multi-level shepherding system, and the happiness disciples training system.

Happiness Groups Evangelism System

The HG Evangelism System is a production system to give birth to Christians at HG. KBBC emphasizes incarnational evangelism. They believe that the church needs intentionally and strategically to send believers to their communities, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods to spread the gospel in their cultural contexts. Ideally, every small group forms at least one HG team. Each HG team consists of one leader and several coworkers. The church sends all HG teams out to spread the gospel to their nonbelieving friends, relatives, and family members incarnationally. It creates a culture and momentum of evangelism since the majority of the congregations are involved in spreading the gospel through HG in three months.

KBBC conducts two HG rounds each year. Each round of HG lasts fourteen weeks, including two weeks of preparation, eight weeks of HG meetings, three weeks of special seminars, and one week of celebration (see Appendix A for details).

Multi-Level Shepherding System

The Multi-Level Shepherding System is a nurturing system to raise a new Christian. KBBC raises Christians in small groups. While the HG team is evangelizing, the small group serves as the HG team's home base, like an aircraft carrier to the fighter

¹²³ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, 19.

planes, to support the HG. Newly-baptized Bests are invited to join the small group. The small group becomes their home base and spiritual family, and they are nurtured and raised in the small group. The HG leader and the small group leader are the spiritual parents to nurture the Bests by caring for their needs and shepherding them. It is a multi-level three-generation shepherding system. If the new believer leads others to Christ, the leaders are also responsible to shepherd them. All the small group members embrace the Bests as family members and accompany them to grow into missional disciples.

Happiness Disciples Training System

The Happiness Disciples Training System (HDTs) is an education system to train Christians to become good soldiers of Jesus so that they go out to fight to win souls for Christ. KBBC offers HG coworkers training classes at four levels of courses in the classroom and provides an on-the-job training field for coworkers to practice what they learned in the classroom. Coworkers usually have more Christ-like behaviors in front of the Bests. They try to put their best foot forward by intentionally practicing Jesus' new command: to love one another. The coworker's love capacity is tested, stretched, and increased in HG. As a result, coworkers grow quickly and mature fast.

The Characteristics of HG

HG has at least five characteristics: high-involvement group evangelism through loving and honoring the Best, high-effectiveness belt evangelism through continuity of messages and accumulating love impacts, incarnational evangelism through proactive approaches and actions, hands-on training platform for discipleship, and central ministry as a driving engine of other ministries of the church.

High-Involvement Group Evangelism

The missional church is about participating more fully in God’s mission. It focuses on how well people are living out their faith in daily discipleship. Its ministry centers on “empowering the laity for their ministry in daily life.”¹²⁴ HG encourages congregations to live out a Christian life in front of the Bests. It is group evangelism and emphasizes teamwork, similar to the Apostle Paul’s teamwork in the book of Acts. HG consists of a leader and several coworkers in cooperation and is sent out periodically to spread the gospel. The team members play a different role, help each other, and work together to love nonbelieving friends as their best friends with godly love and lead them to Christ. For each HG round, the whole church is geared toward spreading the gospel through HG in three months. During these three months, each HG team spends significant time with their Bests, opens their homes to host HG meetings to spread the gospel for eight weeks, and cares for the Bests in their daily lives.

HG is a laypeople evangelism movement that the congregation can join and start quickly. Every Christian is encouraged to participate regardless of their spiritual maturity and training status. The concept is that one does not have to be fully equipped to start but needs to start in order to be fully equipped. More than 85 percent of the congregation are actively involved in HG at KBBC.

High-Effectiveness Belt Evangelism

The HG strategy is to send believers to spread the gospel in their homes, neighborhood, workplaces, schools, and so on. It is belt evangelism (which means an

¹²⁴ Rouse, location 180.

intensive three-month church-wide evangelism movement, the majority of congregations consistently make efforts to spread the gospel continuously in a long period), not a once-in-a-while evangelism approach that many traditional churches do. “The missional model sees homes and families as the strongest means for taking the gospel across cities, states, and nations. The early church met in many homes where families shared a sense of community and a deep relationship in which the gospel could be shared and taught.”¹²⁵

HG emphasizes on loving and honoring the Best. It is designed to meet the Best’s individual needs and circumstances so that the gospel message can speak to their heart. In HG, Bests are treated like VIPs (very important person). Warm greetings at the front door, big hugs, delicious food, and meaningful gifts are just some of the examples. Before or after the HG meeting, the team members would set aside some special time to spend with the Bests, asking them out for a special luncheon or some good quality coffee or tea, giving them heart-touching cards or small gifts, and so on. The goal is to build up a good relationship with the Bests, let them feel the love of Jesus, and see their value. These acts of love acuminated impacts to touch the heart of the Best.

Through this accumulating love impacts and continuity of messages, the Bests can clearly understand the gospel and be touched by the love of God. It thus most likely will open their heart to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. At KBBC, each HG can lead to 1.5 baptisms on average. More than 5000 people have been baptized since 2012, when the church officially launched HG. The church has consistently baptized over one thousand people each year since 2017.

¹²⁵ Thigpen, 49.

Proactive Incarnational Evangelism

This incarnational approach is “living life with great intentionality and earning the right to share one’s faith in a relationship.”¹²⁶ HG requires every Christian to make friends and go into their life incarnationally to love them like Jesus. While it holds that the function of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission, HG allows the freedom for each team to choose forms and operations. HG emphasizes loving the Bests in their love language and telling the gospel to their understanding, such as intentionally avoiding Christian jargon and presenting the gospel with real-life storytelling and sharing. HG targets the heart of the Best first, letting them feel the love of God and accepting them as they are, and then leads the Bests to understand the gospel clearly. The demonstration of love and service “intrigues people to pursue knowing the God who inspires such service. People need the truth of God in order to be fully blessed.”¹²⁷

HG intentionally keeps the order of the Great Commission that Jesus gave in Matthew 28:18-20: to let the Bests feel the love of God first, invite them to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey all Jesus’ commands so that they can experience the presence of the Lord.

Hands-On Training Platform for Discipleship

HG provides a platform for hands-on learning. Just as chefs learn to cook in the kitchen and drivers learn to drive on the road, Christians learn to spread the gospel through doing HG. With proper training and a platform to practice, ordinary Christians

¹²⁶ McDaniel, 39.

¹²⁷ McNeal, 32.

can learn how to evangelize by doing HG together. Eventually, they can develop a habit of living an evangelical life and become an “expert” on spreading the gospel to lead people to Jesus Christ. HG functions as an incubator for making missional disciples and a system to develop missional leaders at KBBC. It is to “prepare the congregation to live missional lives where God is sending them,”¹²⁸ “with an emphasis on every Christian being a missionary.”¹²⁹

All KBBC leaders, from small group leaders to congregation pastors, are raised in HG. They are leaders who have demonstrated spiritual maturity and led others to spread the gospel by example. KBBC uses two years to train new HG leaders and requests new believers to be coworkers in HG. KBBC emphasizes that new believers are obligated to invite others to HG so that they can have God’s blessing as well. The first step of discipleship for new believers is to invite their nonbelieving family members, relatives, and friends to attend HG and tell their stories to the Bests in HG. The new believers’ testimony is powerful and relatable to the Bests. The church uses HG as the “laypeople edifying system” to make every Christian a participant in the Great Commission. They are all evangelists and candidates for future leaders. To them, spreading the gospel is not done in spare time or a part-time job, but a full-time career.

The Central Ministries of the Church

The missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*. All activities of the church need to be organized around the *Missio Dei*. KBBC applied this missional concept to make HG a central ministry to lead the rest of the church ministries.

¹²⁸ Guder, “Walking Worthily: Missional Leadership after Christendom”, 278-291.

¹²⁹ Richardson, 132.

Like the locomotive of a train, HG drives all other church ministries. At KBBC, they see the heavenly value of evangelism, which worth a lifetime of pursuit. Not only do they value evangelism, but they evangelize consistently and effectively.

The Benefit of HG

HG brings many benefits at the personal level, small group level, and church level.

The Personal Level

Christians who participated in HG can directly experience the power of the gospel (Rom. 1:16), enjoy teamwork with others, feel the Lord's presence, and have the joy of fulfilling the Great Commission. It also helps to build up spiritual character and overcome the fear of spreading the gospel. Christians in HG are developed much faster than those who are not in HG.

The Small Group Level

When the Bests join the small group, the need to care for the Bests and be a good witness to them becomes the driving force for the group to move forward, and the group atmosphere is more joyful. Secondly, the spiritual gifts and abilities of many group members can be discovered because of these needs. Thirdly, the small group members have the same mind and heart to spread the gospel. This outward focus and evangelical spirit united the group members, making it easier for the small group leader to shepherd the members.

The Church Level

First, HG evangelism is a practical approach that helps the church grow fast in every aspect. Secondly, it creates a spiritual revival, makes evangelism a church culture,

and is full of vitality. Thirdly, it cultivates new leaders and coworkers, thus establishing spiritual heritage.

The Transformational Process Models

This project was about transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the HG strategy. To ensure a smooth and successful transformation process, the researcher reviewed transformational process models to find a suitable one to guide the HG transformation. The researcher found that several transformational process models have been developed in the past 20 years. They are valuable tools to navigate a transformation smoothly in a specific cultural context. Lee did a review of these transformation models. This section mainly followed his work.¹³⁰

Transformational Change Model (TCM)

To stabilize a new culture in an organization's existing culture through a transformational change is not an easy task. John P. Kotter wrote a book, *Leading Change*¹³¹, that aims to help an organization manage its change during the transformation process from a hierarchical change-resistant organization into a change-embracing organization. Kotter points out, "Managing change is important because, without competent management, the transformation can get out of control. But the much bigger challenge is leading change."¹³² Kotter's Transformation Process involves eight steps as follows:

- Step One: Establishing a sense of urgency
- Step Two: Creating the guiding coalition

¹³⁰ Lee, 99-115.

¹³¹ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996).

¹³² Kotter, 30.

Step Three: Developing a vision and strategy
 Step Four: Communicating the change vision
 Step Five: Empowering broad-based action
 Step Six: Generating short-term action
 Step Seven: Consolidating gains and producing more change
 Step Eight: Anchoring new approaches in the culture.¹³³

TCM was developed for a secular organization rather than for a church, which is an organic spiritual community led by God. Therefore, TCM is not an ideal transformational change model for this project.

The Congregational Transformation Model (CTM)

James Furr, Mike Bonem, and Jim Herrington developed the Congregational Transform Model (CTM) to help the church transformation. The process is very similar to TCM, but CTM is specifically designed to transform churches and Christian organizations. Their book, *Leading Congregational Change Workbook*, introduces three components of CTM: spiritual and relational vitality, four learning disciplines, and an eight-stage process for change. The spiritual and relational vitality is the heart and energy source of the transformation process. The four learning disciplines are essential for leading transformation. The eight-stage change process is the sequential composition of the model that gives form and direction to the transformation.¹³⁴

The eight stages of CTM are:

Stage One: Making Personal Preparation means “carving out the time and space to discern God’s voice and direction for the leader’s own ministry and for the congregation, and living with the tension that this creates.”

¹³³ Kotter, 35.

¹³⁴ James Furr, Mike Bonem, and Jim Herrington. *Leading Congregational Change Workbook* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), xii-xiii.

Stage Two: Creating Urgency means “generating energy for change by contrasting God’s ideal for the church with an accurate perception of current reality.”

Stage Three: Establishing the Vision Community means “a diverse group of key members who become a committed and trusting community to lead the church in discerning and implementing God’s vision.”

Stage Four: Discerning the Vision and Determining the Vision Path means “understanding God’s preferred future for the congregation and the implications for congregational life.”

Stage Five: Communicating the Vision means “a comprehensive, intentional, and ongoing set of activities that are undertaken to make the vision clear to the congregation.”

Stage Six: Empowering Change Leaders means “cultivating a broader base of committed leaders and removing barriers that would prevent them from serving effectively.”

Stage Seven: Implementing the Vision requires “a specific set of coordinated, high-leverage actions that move the congregation toward realizing God’s vision.”

Stage Eight: Reinforcing Momentum Through Alignment means “creating an environment in which commitment to God’s vision is increasingly evident in all aspects of the congregation.”¹³⁵

CTM was developed for congregational transformation rather than a missional transformation. Therefore, CTM is probably not usable for this project.

¹³⁵ Furr, 29-67.

The Seven Transformational Keys (STK)

Rick Rouse and Craig Van Gelder developed Seven Transformational Keys (STK) to help the missional church discern how God works within congregations and through congregations within the world and then start to transform into a missional congregation.¹³⁶ The foundational ethos for the STK is based on the missional understanding of the church and *Missio Dei*. The goal of STK is to make a missional congregation “healthy and effective in their efforts to reach out to others with the love of God in Christ.”¹³⁷

The first transformational key: Develop a Vision for God’s Mission, means “Congregations that have a clear vision for ministry are more likely to move forward together than those who seem to lack a common purpose.” The missional congregations need to be clear about their vision for ministry and have an openness to change in order to be faithful to carry out God's mission. Two important questions, “What is God's purpose for our ministry?” and “What do we need to do to be effective for God's work in this place?”, can help a congregation to explore three aspects pertinent to ministry: missional identity, common purpose, and shared vision.¹³⁸

The second transformational key: Focus on God’s Mission and Discipleship, means “Congregations that focus on becoming a discipling community as they deeply engage their context are more likely to develop a healthy life that moves beyond

¹³⁶ Richard W. Rouse, and Craig Van Gelder. *A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2008), location 95, Kindle.

¹³⁷ Rouse, location 180.

¹³⁸ Rouse, location 376- 380.

institutional survival or just serving the needs of its members.” The focus is on building responsible disciples who make life-changing commitments to discovering the will of God in daily lives. The missional congregation finds its purpose grounded in God's mission-living for the sake of the world as it participates in God's redemptive ministry of reconciliation for all creation.¹³⁹

The third transformational key: Cultivate a Healthy Climate, means “Developing healthy, Spirit-led leadership can help cultivate a positive climate change within the faith community.” It is crucial to understand that the Spirit has created the missional church to “be both reforming (reclaiming essential biblical and theological truths) and forming (responding to new and changing contexts).”¹⁴⁰

The fourth transformational key: Build a Supportive Team of Staff and Lay, means “It is imperative that care and intentionality be taken to build a supportive, missional leadership team that is comprised of both staff and lay leaders.” They need to be persons who understand the importance of supporting each other as they carry out their mutual ministry in the church, the broader community, and the world.¹⁴¹

The fifth transformational key: Stay the Course when Facing Conflict, means “It is important for healthy, Spirit-led leadership to stay the course when facing conflict by practicing truth-telling as an opportunity for learning and growing together.” People have different responses to change. In the missional transformation, conflict is expected, and the congregation should increase the capacity to engage in conflicts. The leadership of the

¹³⁹ Rouse, location 496-548.

¹⁴⁰ Rouse, location 650.

¹⁴¹ Rouse, location 735-738.

missional congregation must respond to rumors and conflicts by telling the truth in love.¹⁴²

The sixth transformational key: Practice Stewardship to Build Financial Viability, means “A congregation that wants to move forward in the mission will find it necessary to practice stewardship as it builds financial viability.”¹⁴³

The seventh transformational key: Celebrate Successes and the Contributions of All, means: “It is important to celebrate our successes along the way and, especially, the accomplishments of others.”¹⁴⁴

STK was designed to make a missional congregation healthy and effective in their efforts to reach out to others with the love of God in Christ. It can be used to guide the transformation process of this project.

Threefold Impact Ministry System (TIMS)

Lee proposed a “Threefold Impact Ministry System” (TIMS) for the Korean diaspora church, which has a heavy dependency upon the senior pastor, a critical role in the church’s existence. This TIMS approach would simultaneously impact the Korean diaspora church at three levels (the congregational level, the small group level, and the personal level). Critical characteristics of TIMS are repetition, intimate personal coaching and guidance, and persistent embodiment. It would be a gradual, systemic one, guided by the senior pastor.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Rouse, locations 864-936.

¹⁴³ Rouse, location 982.

¹⁴⁴ Rouse, location 1081-1082.

¹⁴⁵ Lee, 185-199.

TIMS was developed for a Korean diaspora church in North America. The cultural context of TIMS is close to the situation of CBCSD. Unfortunately, TIMS did not provide much transformational guidance.

The Missional Change Mode (MCM)

Unlike the “top-down process” from the strategies above, Roxburgh and Boren insist a “bottom-up process” is necessary. They argue that culture change happens as people are empowered to name their realities and develop experiments to test out new habits and practices.¹⁴⁶ They developed the five elements of the Missional Change Model (MCM):

The first stage is Awareness. This initial stage is about “creating the space, giving the time, and creating the safe, welcoming table where these feelings can be expressed.” The goal is to create a space and give time to help people voice out their thoughts, concerns, and dreams.

The second stage is Understanding. The goal is to “invite each other to go deeper with the issues, exploring the meaning of what they are learning through their interactive engagement with one another.”

The third stage is Evaluation. The goal is to “invite each other to bring the kind of dialogue and sense of safety we developed into conversation with the current practices, values, programs, and overall life of the local church.”

¹⁴⁶ Roxburgh, *Introducing the Missional Church*, 13.

The fourth stage is Experimentation. The goal is to “invite people to take the initiative to “create some simple, limited experiments that venture into the neighborhood.”

The fifth stage is Commitment. At this stage, “people realize that they have discovered for themselves a way of being the Church that is not dependent on outside programs, gurus, or even ordained clergy.”¹⁴⁷

MCM is a “bottom-up” transformational process model. It is not feasible at CBCSD, which has a heavy dependency on the decision of the senior pastor.

In summary of the transformation models, TCM was developed for a secular organization rather than for a church. CTM is similar to TCM but was developed for any church and Christian organization, not specifically for missional transformation. TIMS was designed for a hierarchy culture church, or the Korean diaspora church, which heavily depends upon the senior pastor, but TIMS did not provide much transformational guidance. STK and MCM are specific for missional transformation with two different processes. STK is a “top-down process,” while MCM is a “bottom-up process.”

This project chose STK to guide the transformational process because the foundational ethos for the STK is based on the missional understanding of the church and *Missio Dei*. The goal of STK is to make a missional congregation healthy and effective in their efforts to reach out to others with the love of God in Christ. This goal fits this project very well.

¹⁴⁷ Roxburgh, *Introducing the Missional Church*, 141-145.

Conclusion

This literature review demonstrates that the traditional attractional evangelism approach is no longer effective in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. The church is facing drastic discontinuous change in this world. Church leaders need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and make any necessary changes to minister to people inside and outside the church.

Rouse and Van Gelder remind churches:

U.S. culture has changed drastically over the past several decades. Congregations must open their eyes to our changing context. The Bible teaches us that the living God through the Spirit is present in the midst of what is currently taking place. God's active presence in congregations and their larger contexts invites congregations to rethink their identity and to reframe their approach to ministry in order to more faithfully participate in God's mission.¹⁴⁸

When making changes to minister to the congregation and effectively reaching out to the community, it is crucial for the church leaders to be clear about what can be changed and what must hold steady without any compromise. The goal of the Great Commission is unchangeable. It must be fulfilled regardless of how the world changes. The content of the Great Commission cannot be modified. However, the methods employed to carry it out are not unchangeable. Actually, it is necessary for the church to keep up with the changes of the world so that the Great Commission can be carried out effectively. Sometimes, it may require creating new forms to allow the target people to understand the gospel in their cultural contexts better.

The nature of the church is missional, not attractional. The missional church movement is a direct response to the drastic discontinuous change of the world. The

¹⁴⁸ Rouse, location 147.

original form of the missional church movement is strongly connected to the concept of *Missio Dei*. It is to recognize that God is a sending God, and the church is sent into the world to participate in the divine mission to save people. The missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*. All activities of the church need to be organized around the *Missio Dei*. KBBC applied this missional concept to make HG a driving engine to lead the rest of the church ministries. All the other church ministries are planned around the HG evangelism. HG is love-based evangelism, sending believers into their community to demonstrate the love of God to their non-believing friends and lead them to believe in Jesus Christ. It also provides an on-the-job training platform to train Christians to become effective gospel messengers and helps ordinary people accomplish extraordinary things for God.

The incarnation of God demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of doing mission and evangelism. The incarnational ministry is a practical and effective approach to reach out to the people outside of the church in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. It is entering other people's worlds as Jesus Christ entered the world without compromising biblical convictions, values, or standards. It is living life with great intentionality and earning the right to share the faith in a relationship. HG is a practical model to apply the missional, incarnational concept. It is a practice similar to Hirsch's "missional-incarnational impulse," where the word "missional" expresses the sending nature of the church, while "incarnational" represents the "embedding" of the gospel into a local context.

Missional leadership is to prepare the congregation to live missional lives where God is sending them. Leadership plays a vital role in the transformation. FPEL of Kouzes

and Posner and the four cultivation process elements of Roxburgh and Romanuk provided operating systems to help leaders bring a successful transformation. In addition, several transformational process models have been developed. Some of them, particularly STK, can be used to guide the transformational process in this project.

This literature review suggests that the low-effectiveness of CBCSD's evangelism ministry was due to the church not keeping up with the discontinuous change of the world. A transformation of CBCSD's attractional evangelism strategy to the incarnational, missional strategy is urgently needed. HG has produced promising results in Taiwan's Chinese cultural context since 2012. For CBCSD, which has a similar cultural background, using the HG strategy to transform CBCSD's attractional evangelism program into an incarnational, missional HG strategy is a sound choice.

CHAPTER FOUR: PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH METHODS

The biblical study and literature review indicated that the low-effectiveness and the low-involvement problems of CBCSD could be addressed by transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnational, missional HG strategy as modeled by KBBC. To make a successful transformation, the researcher identified research methods, reviewed the CBCSD attractional evangelism model, and visited KBBC to have an in-depth understanding of HG. Following this, the researcher interviewed the senior pastor of CBCSD about the greatest challenges in transforming the congregation's evangelism approach, adapted HG in CBCSD cultural context, and executed the transformation.

Research Methods

This project was qualitative in nature. The researcher chose qualitative research for two reasons. First, the qualitative approach allows this research to better understand CBCSD's evangelism situation, explore the HG strategy, and make changes during the transformation. Qualitative research is a more holistic approach to focus on the HG evangelical phenomenon. It gives the researcher a feasible method to handle multiple forms of data generated in the project. Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod point out, "the qualitative researchers seek a better understanding of complex situations. Their work is sometimes exploratory in nature." "The qualitative research process is more holistic

and ‘emergent’, with the specific focus, design, measurement instruments, and interpretations developing and possibly changing along the way.”¹⁴⁹ They wrote:

All qualitative approaches have two things in common. First, they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings—that is, in the “real world.” And second, they involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity. Qualitative researchers rarely try to simplify what they observe. Instead, they recognize that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers, and so they try to portray the issue in its multifaceted form.¹⁵⁰

John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth acknowledge that “qualitative researchers typically gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, rather than rely on a single data source. Then they review all of the data and make sense of it, organizing it into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources.”¹⁵¹

The second reason the researcher chose the qualitative approach was to provide a reliable method to “discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon,”¹⁵² make assumptions, and “provide a means through which the researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular practices or innovations.”¹⁵³ It can guide the project interviews and observations as well as the interpretation and evaluation of transformation. Creswell and Poth define, “qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing

¹⁴⁹ Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 9th ed. (New York, NY: Pearson, 2010), 95.

¹⁵⁰ Leedy, 135.

¹⁵¹ John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018), 43.

¹⁵² Leedy, 136.

¹⁵³ Leedy, 137.

the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”¹⁵⁴ And Leedy and Ormrod point out, “qualitative researchers believe that the researcher’s ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon. In this sense, the researcher is an instrument in much the same way that a sociogram, rating scale, or intelligence test is an instrument.”¹⁵⁵

A case study methodology was used within the qualitative approach to deal with multiple sources of information and data analysis and interpretation. Creswell and Poth wrote:

Case study research is defined as a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case themes.¹⁵⁶

The case study approach allows the researcher to focus on the attractional evangelism approach of CBCSD and the HG strategy cases to “make comparisons and build theory.”¹⁵⁷ Creswell and Poth point out, “A case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases.”¹⁵⁸ A case study is a good approach for this project to provide an in-depth understanding of the HG strategy. It is

¹⁵⁴ Creswell, 8.

¹⁵⁵ Leedy, 135.

¹⁵⁶ Creswell, 96-97.

¹⁵⁷ Leedy, 137.

¹⁵⁸ Creswell, 100.

also the right approach to investigate how the CBCSD evangelism program changes over time, generates preliminary support for the transformation, conducts HG rounds, performs the data analysis and discussion, compares several cases, and provides several recommendations.

The primary tools used were personal interviews, field observations, ministry documents, reports, and so on. This study interview began with one individual, the senior pastor of KBBC, and then expanded to other church leaders of KBBC.

The researcher chose STK to guide the transformational process because STK is designed to help the church discern how God works within congregations and through congregations within the world and then transform into a missional congregation.¹⁵⁹ The foundational ethos for STK is based on the missional understanding of the church and *Missio Dei*. The goal of STK is to make a missional congregation “healthy and effective in their efforts to reach out to others with the love of God in Christ.”¹⁶⁰ This goal is the same as the project; therefore, it can be used to guide the transformation smoothly. STK helps a congregation explore missional identity, common purpose, and shared vision. “Congregations that have a clear vision for ministry are more likely to move forward together than those who seem to lack a common purpose.”¹⁶¹ The focus of STK is on building responsible disciples who make life-changing commitments to discover the will of God in their daily lives. STK emphasizes building “a supportive, missional leadership

¹⁵⁹ Rouse, location 95.

¹⁶⁰ Rouse, location 180.

¹⁶¹ Rouse, location 376.

team comprised of both staff and lay leaders.”¹⁶² STK tells how to respond to conflicts encountered in the transformation, practices stewardship, and embraces the celebration of successes and contributions of all people.

This project also adopted the first element of the missional change of MCM, *Awareness*, to create a space and give time to help people voice out their thoughts, concerns, and dreams.¹⁶³ The researcher was aware that this bottom-up approach is not feasible at CBCSD, which has a heavy dependency on the decision of the senior pastor. Still, the researcher valued the idea of the early-stage involvement of the congregation. As a result, this project was designed to have the congregation involved as early as possible, including having clear communication at the congregation level and small group level.

In addition, this research employed leadership practices from FPEL of Kouzes and Posner and the four cultivation process elements of Roxburgh and Romanuk to help the researcher lead the transformation. The practices, such as cultivating awareness and understanding, building trust between leaders and followers, and leading by example, were employed during the transformation. This project emphasized leading by example and required the pastor to participate in HG actively and lead at least one HG team.

Primary data were obtained through on-site personal interviews with the senior pastors of CBCSD and KBBC, interviews with other leaders of KBBC, and the researcher’s observations recorded in personal notes while at KBBC. The primary data

¹⁶² Rouse, location 735.

¹⁶³ Roxburgh, *Introducing the Missional Church*, 141.

also included CBCSD's evangelism program and other ministry documents and reports generated during the transformation process at CBCSD.

Secondary data were obtained through biblical and theological studies about the love of God in mission and evangelism, with particular attention paid to the call of Abraham in Genesis 12:1-5, the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-19, and the teamwork method of Paul in Acts. Also included was research in relevant literature about the missional church movement in the postmodern and post-Christendom context, with particular attention paid to the effectiveness of local evangelism strategy development and transformation strategy.

CBCSD Evangelism Strategy in the Past

This project reviewed the CBCSD evangelism ministry model and explored the cause of the low-effectiveness and low-involvement briefly. The goal was not to criticize the old model but to create an awareness of change and embrace transforming the evangelism program from an attractional model into a missional model by adapting the HG strategy to fulfill the Great Commission effectively.

Interview of the Senior Pastor of CBCSD

The researcher interviewed the senior pastor of CBCSD, Albert Lam, about the greatest challenges in transforming the congregation's evangelism approach. The senior pastor agreed for the interview to be used in this Doctor of Ministry thesis. The interview was conducted on December 26, 2020 in a *Zoom* meeting because the pandemic made travel and face-to-face meetings inadvisable. The interview was video recorded with the consensus of the senior pastor. The language used in the interview was mainly English, but a small portion was in mixed English and Mandarin for convenience and clarity. The researcher translated the Mandarin part into English.

Interviews and Observation at KBBC

During the D. Min. study of Missional Effectiveness, the researcher looked for a project that could make CBCSD's evangelism effective and be used for thesis research. The "Missional Contextualization" and "Missional Innovation" projects helped the researcher identify the thesis research as transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnational, missional HG strategy. With this thesis project in mind, the researcher used his sabbatical time to visit KBBC for a month (March 6 to April 5, 2019) and observed firsthand and in-depth their HG ministry. During his stay with KBBC, the researcher interviewed the senior pastor and other church leaders. The researcher explored the senior pastor's ministry philosophy and church management practices.

The researcher also participated in KBBC's HG meetings and attended HDTS classes at every level. The goal was to observe how KBBC operates the HG in the church's cultural context.

The researcher had the consensus of the leadership of KBBC to use the interviews and observations. They clearly understood that the purpose of the researcher's visit was for his Doctor of Ministry thesis project, and the data generated would be used in the dissertation. Except for the two pastors interviewed, all names of individuals and groups are pseudonyms.

Interviews

For interviews, the researcher first asked for the interviewee's permission to conduct the interview and then clearly explained that the interview information would be used as a source for data in a Doctor of Ministry dissertation. All the interviews were conducted as informal conversations. The interviews with the senior pastor and five

church leaders were formal face-to-face interviews of one to two hours each. The others were conversations with eight KBBC pastors and ministers during a month-long visitation. Formal interviews were voice recorded with the permission of the interviewees. The conversations were not recorded. The researcher took notes after each conversation.

During the interview, the researcher followed the suggestion of Leedy and Ormrod: “A typical interview looks more like an informal conversation, with the participant doing most of the talking and the researcher doing most of the listening.”¹⁶⁴ All interviewees were encouraged to tell their personal stories or add details about their experiences. All interviews were conducted in Mandarin, a common language used in the church. The researcher translated useful information into English with the help of a friend, Joyce Yu.

The questions below served as a guideline to obtain the needed information. They were not intended to be used as a “western-style” survey: ask a question and get an answer.

Interviewing KBBC’s Senior Pastor

The following four questions were designed to interview the senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang:

1. What is your ministry philosophy, and how do you build up KBBC as an HG-centered missional church?
2. How do you inspire the congregation to keep doing HG for many years, and how do you shepherd the flocks while doing HG?
3. How do you make missional disciples at KBBC?

¹⁶⁴ Leedy, 146.

4. Why do you often criticize traditional seminary education or Sunday school education programs at a church? In your opinion, what about these traditional educations need to be transformed?

Interviewing KBBC's Other Leaders

The following four questions were designed to interview other church leaders:

5. What is the church's strategy to mobilize congregation members to do HG?
6. Why are you so excited and energetic about doing HG?
7. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of HG and the health of the church?
8. What is the driving force for KBBC to keep doing HG?

Interviewing KBBC's HG Coworkers

The following three questions were designed to interview HG coworkers:

9. How long have you been a Christian, and did you become a Christian through HG?
10. How many rounds of HG have you led or participated in as a coworker?
11. Are you going to keep doing HG in the future? What keeps you going?

Observations

All the observations conducted were approved by the senior pastor of KBBC and had the permission of the group members. Most of the time, the researcher acted as an HG coworker in HG meetings and a student in HDTS classes. The researcher took advantage of flexibility during observation as Leedy and Ormrod suggested:

“Observations in a qualitative study are intentionally unstructured and free-flowing: the researcher shifts focus from one thing to another as new and potentially significant objects and events present themselves. The primary advantage of conducting observations in this manner is flexibility: the researcher can take advantage of unforeseen data sources as they surface.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Leedy, 147.

However, the researcher set up four questions to guide the observation in four areas: ethos, interactions, prayers, and personal stories. The following four questions were served as the observation guideline:

1. Are the church members happy and energetic? Pay attention to KBBC's ethos, culture, spirit, and mold of the congregation.
2. What is the group interaction in HG meetings? How do they treat each other?
3. What is their prayer life at home and church? How do they arrange their daily life?
4. What are their personal stories about experiencing God in doing HG?

Adaptation and Transformation

The adaptation and transformation were processed in three stages.

The First Stage: Vision Sharing and Preparation of Changing

This stage included the first three STK keys: developing a clear vision, focusing on God's mission to imprint the heavenly value of HG, and cultivating a healthy climate change.

The first step in this stage was developing an awareness for changing CBCSD evangelism and introducing the HG strategy. CBCSD sent church leaders to attend the HG international conference hosted from July 24-26, 2018, in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. The purpose was to study HG at KBBC and explore if it was feasible in CBCSD's cultural context. At the end of the conference, a meeting was immediately hosted to collect the conference attendees' responses and their feelings about HG on the evening of July 26, 2018. Then the CBCSD pastors met to have an "open heart, open talk" meeting and prayed for the Holy Spirit's guidance on July 27, 2018.

After returning from the conference, CBCSD hosted a reporting and vision sharing meeting to hear the conference attendees' reports and responses. A question-and-answer session provided two-way communication. It was an intentional effort to get the

congregation involved from the beginning. The meeting was open to all congregations and hosted on August 19, 2018, at the main campus of CBCSD. This vision sharing meeting also served as a gauge to measure the evangelistic passion of CBCSD congregations, meaning it gauged the degree of the congregation's willingness to participate in evangelism. Following this, the church encouraged the congregation to pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and organized a 40-day fasting and prayer chain among all the congregations from September 17 to October 26, 2018.

The second step was to lead the congregation to understand God's mission and the value of HG by preaching a series of six sermons in Sunday services from September to December 2018. Six sermons were preached at the 4S campus to prepare the congregation to see the heart of God and the heavenly value of evangelism. The six sermons were:

1. *Experience the Power of God*. Based on Romans 1:16-17. The researcher preached it on September 16, 2018.
2. *The Glorious Calling*. Based on Genesis 12:1-5. The researcher preached it on September 2, 2018.
3. *Fulfill the Great Commission*. Based on Matthew 28:16-20. The researcher preached it on October 14, 2018.
4. *Work Together for the Gospel*. Based on Philippians 1:27. The researcher preached it on October 21, 2018.
5. *Rely on the Power of the Spirit*. Based on Acts 1:8 and Ephesians 3:20. The researcher preached it on November 11, 2018.
6. *Missional Life*. Based on 1 Corinthians 9:16-23. The researcher preached it on December 9, 2018.

The third step was to cultivate a positive climate of change by hosting an HG training conference at CBCSD from October 26 to 28, 2018. CBCSD invited KBBC pastors and coworkers to lead the three-day conference. The goal was to create an HG momentum at CBCSD and provide HG training to CBCSD people. KBBC's senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang, was the keynote speaker; other KBBC coworkers, pastor Pei Feng

and missionary Ying Kao, led the training workshops. The conference and training workshops were conducted at the main campus and streamed to other campuses and churches.

After the conference, in order to address some concerns and worries of CBCSD people, a CBCSD pastors' response meeting was conducted at the main campus of CBCSD on November 6, 2018. Eight CBCSD Chinese-speaking pastors worked as a discussion panel to answer questions, affirm the HG strategy, and clarify CBCSD's theological position.

The Second Stage: Core Leadership Team and HG Adaptation

This stage was to create a core HG leadership team. The core team was designed as a driving force and decision-making group for the HG transformation. The team was responsible for leading the transformation process and identified platforms for CBCSD to adapt to HG. To make the core team function effectively, the team members must be the church leaders who could make decisions and push them through. Every core team member was required to lead one HG to gain hands-on experience and set a good example for the congregations to follow.

During the transformation, the core leadership team met weekly for good communication, coordination, planning, and execution. The core team also spent lots of time praying to seek a suitable way to adapt HG in the cultural context of CBCSD. Then, the team created the HG adaptation guidelines and made the budget.

The Third Stage: HG Implementation

This stage was to implement HG at CBCSD. Three HG rounds were carried out in this project. The first two rounds were conducted in person at several homes of the congregation members or at the church. The third round was conducted virtually through

Zoom Cloud meetings on the Internet because of the Covid-19 pandemic. An HG coworkers training class was offered to all congregations before each round. The training class also served as a platform for HG leaders to recruit coworkers to form their HG teams.

After an HG team was formed, the team hosted two preparation meetings to build up synergy and unity, generate a potential Bests list, and pray fervently for the Bests and each other. The source of Bests mainly came from each HG coworker's contacts. Following this, the HG team started outreach to the Bests by organizing a party, such as a tea party, a birthday party, a Labor Day party, a Christmas party, or a New Year party. Each HG team had the freedom to decide how to host the party and when to have it.

All HG teams were sent together in a sending ceremony, and each HG team started to have a weekly meeting with the Bests. Each HG team chose a meeting time that was convenient for their Bests. The HG meeting was hosted like a potluck party (except the virtual HG in the third round). The Bests and coworkers enjoyed delicious food together, built up friendships, and shared life stories. Debating or arguing was strongly discouraged. HG was designed to target the Best's heart first and then address their mind. To touch the Best's heart, HG coworkers showed love to them in many ways, such as greeting them at the front door warmly, hugging them, preparing very delicious food, and giving meaningful gifts. To address the Best's mind, HG coworkers purposely led them to think about problems of the chaotic world, the meaning of life, the sinful nature of humanity, and the goodness of God's salvation. HG leaders logically delivered the gospel message.

During the eight-week-long HG meeting, each HG meeting had a theme of the gospel, but it was presented in a Best-friendly way. The gospel message was intentionally delivered as telling a story rather than preaching a sermon.

The themes of the gospel for the eight meetings were:

1. True Happiness
2. The Truth
3. The All-Time Super Star
4. The Happiness Connection
5. God Knocks on Your Door
6. The Victory on the Cross
7. Deliverance and Freedom
8. The Happiness Church

In the HG meetings, all Bests were given several opportunities to decide if they wanted to accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord. A baptism invitation card was passed to all Bests in the last few HG meetings. Following these eight weeks of HG meetings, three Happiness Sunday services were conducted. The church invited famous or influential Chinese Christians to tell their story of experiencing God. A celebration Sunday service was conducted to celebrate the HG achievements, welcome the Bests to join the church, and introduce them to the whole congregation. These special Sunday services were designed to introduce CBCSD to the Bests and connect them to the big church family.

A baptism course was offered to all baptism candidates before the baptism ceremony. The purpose was to let them understand the meaning of baptism clearly and confirm that they had sincerely accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

After an HG round, an honoring ceremony was held to appreciate all HG coworkers regardless of their achievement. All the participants were worthy of being appreciated. The purpose was to honor HG frontline coworkers. The ceremony also

served as a promotion of HG and recruiting more HG coworkers for the next round. It aimed to let uninvolved people see the exciting result and be motivated to join HG.

This project carried out three HG rounds. The first two rounds met in person at several homes of the congregation members. The third round used *Zoom* Cloud meetings because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Table 1 summarizes the schedule and activities of the three HG rounds.

Table 1: HG Implementation Schedule

	The First Round (January to April 2019)	The Second Round (September-December 2019)	The Third Round (September-December 2020)
HG Coworkers Training	October 26-28, 2018, at the Main Campus	August 2 and 24, 2019, at the Main Campus	June 27, July 25, August 22 in <i>Zoom</i> meetings
HG Team Formation	December 2018	August 2019	August 2020
Preparations	December 21, 2018- January 11, 2019	August 25-September 20, 2019	August 23-September 19, 2020
HG Sending Ceremony	January 12, 2019, at the Main Campus	September 21, 2019, at the Main Campus	September 20, 2020, in <i>Zoom</i> meetings
Eight HG Meetings	January 13-March 10, 2019, at HG coworkers' homes	September 21- November 15, 2019 at HG coworkers' homes and church	September 21- November 15, 2020, in <i>Zoom</i> meetings
Happiness Sundays	March 10-31, 2019, at the 4S Campus	November 10- December 1, 2019, at the 4S Campus	November 15- 29, 2020, in <i>Zoom</i> meetings
Baptism Classes	April 7-20 at 4S Campus and the Main Campus	December 8-21, 2019, at the 4S Campus and the Main Campus	November 29- December 12, 2020, in <i>Zoom</i> meetings
Baptism	April 21, 2019, at the Main Campus	December 22, 2019, at the Main Campus	December 20, 2020, at the Main Campus
Honoring Ceremony	May 26, 2019, at the Main Campus	January 12, 2020, at the 4S Campus	January 10, 2021, in <i>Zoom</i> meetings

The First Round

The first round of HG was conducted in January-April 2019. Six HG teams were formed at the 4S campus.

The six HG teams and their meeting place and time were:

1. Yongfu HG met at Ed's home every Saturday evening from January 19 to March 9, 2019.

2. Jane HG met at Jenny's home every Saturday evening from January 19 to March 9, 2019.
3. Becky HG met at Becky's home every Friday evening from January 18 to March 8, 2019.
4. Joy HG met at Lucy's home every Saturday afternoon from January 19 to March 9, 2019.
5. Steve HG met at Steve's home every Saturday afternoon from January 19 to March 9, 2019.
6. Daniel HG met at Daniel's home Friday evening based on the Bests' availability from January 24 to March 15, 2019.

The Happiness Sunday services were conducted as:

1. *Happiness Sunday 1*: "Searching for the Meaning of Life" was presented by doctor Chun-Wai Chan on March 10, 2019.
2. *Happiness Sunday 2*: "Jump out the Well, Embrace the Light" was given by sister Han-Qing Lie on March 17, 2019.
3. *Happiness Sunday 3*: "Grace as the Crown of a Happy Life" was presented by elder George Chu on March 24, 2019.
4. *Celebration Sunday*: "Welcome Home" was hosted on March 31, 2019, at the 4S campus to celebrate the HG achievements, welcome the Bests to join the church, and introduce them to the whole congregation.

A four-lesson baptism course was offered to the baptism candidates and taught by the campus pastor before the baptism ceremony. The four baptism lessons and instructed dates were:

1. *The Nature of Faith*. The researcher taught it on April 7, 2019, at the 4S campus
2. *The Assurance of Salvation*. The researcher taught it on April 14, 2019, at the 4S campus.
3. *Baptism and Communion*. Pastor Donald taught it on April 20, 2019, at the main campus.
4. *Fellowship with the Lord*. Pastor Wanda taught it on April 20, 2019, at the main campus.

The baptism ceremony was conducted at the main campus on the afternoon of April 21, 2019. To conclude the first HG round, a ceremony was held on May 26, 2019, at the main campus to appreciate all HG coworkers regardless of their achievement.

The Second Round

The second round was conducted in September-December, 2019. It was designed to repeat the first round to confirm HG's effectiveness in the CBCSD cultural context and test the involvement of the congregation. The procedure and the process of the second round were the same as the first round. The 4S campus formed eight HG teams. All HG meetings were hosted at several congregations' homes except the youth group, Huaqing HG, which was hosted at the church facility because it has a large space for youth activity. The eight HG teams and their meeting places and times were:

1. Yongfu HG met at Ed's home every Saturday evening from September 21 to November 9, 2019.
2. Hannah HG met at Hannah's home every Sunday evening from September 22 to November 10, 2019.
3. Joy HG met at Lucy's home every Saturday afternoon from September 21 to November 9, 2019.
4. Steve HG met at Steve's home every Saturday morning from September 21 to November 9, 2019.
5. Yongzhen HG 1 met at Meihui's home every Friday morning from September 27 to November 15, 2019.
6. Yongzhen HG 2 met at Judy's home every Friday morning from September 27 to November 15, 2019.
7. Huaqing Youth HG met at the church's new wing building every Friday evening from September 27 to November 15, 2019.
8. Jiayuzhan HG met at Jenny's home every Friday morning from September 27 to November 15, 2019.

The special HG Sunday services were conducted as:

1. *Happiness Sunday 1*: "Three-Steps to Happiness" was presented by brother Runfeng Tian on November 10, 2019.
2. *Happiness Sunday 2*: "Be Still in Jesus" was given by sister Xin-Ru Liu on November 17, 2019.
3. *Happiness Sunday 3*: "You, Me, and HIM" was presented by brother Scott Yeh on November 24, 2019.
4. *Celebration Sunday*: "Welcome Home" was hosted on December 1, 2019, at the 4S campus to celebrate the HG achievements, welcome the Bests to join the church, and introduce them to the whole congregation.

A baptism course was offered to the baptism candidates and taught by the campus pastor before the baptism ceremony. The three baptism lessons and dates taught were:

1. *The Nature of Faith*. The researcher taught it on December 8, 2019, at the 4S campus
2. *The Assurance of Salvation*. The researcher taught it on December 15, 2019, at the 4S campus.
3. *Baptism and Communion*. Pastor Wanda taught it on December 21, 2019, at the main campus.

The fourth lesson was eliminated to give the baptism candidates more time to share their testimonies. The baptism ceremony was conducted on the afternoon of December 22, 2019, at the main campus. To conclude the second round, a ceremony was held on January 12, 2020 at the 4S campus to appreciate all HG coworkers regardless of their achievement.

The Third Round

The design of HG was to spread the gospel by letting the Bests feel the love of God through Christians' acts of love, so physically meeting was essential for HG. But the social distance requirement during the Covid-19 pandemic made it impossible to run a physical HG. It is not easy to express love to the Bests in virtual settings.

However, Christians are commissioned to spread the gospel regardless of the situation. Some social apps developed recently provided Christians a platform to spread the gospel in virtual settings. The third HG round was designed to test the effectiveness of HG during the Covid-19 pandemic setting. All HG meetings and training were conducted virtually by using the *Zoom* Cloud meetings app on the Internet.

The third round was operated in September-December, 2020. To prepare the congregations to continue spreading the gospel during the pandemic, this project conducted three online internet training sessions about how to use *Zoom* Cloud meetings

to do virtual HG. On June 27, July 25, and August 22, 2020, the three training sessions were hosted in the *Zoom* meetings app. The first training aimed to encourage congregations to spread the gospel during the pandemic and use the *Zoom* Cloud meeting app to host an HG meeting. The second training focused on forming HG teams and being a good *Zoom* HG meeting host to create a warm, inviting, and loving atmosphere. The third one was how to invite Bests to join the virtual HG and clearly deliver the gospel message in a *Zoom* meeting.

The 4S campus formed four virtual HG teams:

1. Yongfu HG met on *Zoom* every Saturday evening from September 26 to November 14, 2020.
2. Hannah HG met on *Zoom* every Sunday evening from September 27 to November 15, 2020.
3. Joy HG met on *Zoom* every Sunday afternoon from September 27 to November 15, 2020.
4. Becky HG met on *Zoom* every Tuesday evening from September 22 to November 10, 2020.

An electronic baptism invitation card was passed to all Bests during the last two HG meetings. Following these eight weeks of HG, two Happiness Sunday services and a celebration Sunday service were conducted in *Zoom* meetings and streamed to all campuses.

These special Sunday services were:

1. *Happiness Sunday 1*: “The Journey with God” was presented by brother Mingxi Fan on November 15, 2020.
2. *Happiness Sunday 2*: “I Have Changed, So Can You” was given by pastor Kaofang Yeh on November 22, 2020.
3. *Celebration Sunday*: “Welcome Home” was hosted by pastor Joseph Gong on November 29, 2020.

A baptism course was offered to the baptism candidates and taught by the campus pastors in *Zoom* meetings.

The four baptism lessons and dates taught were:

1. *The Nature of Faith*. The researcher taught it on November 29, 2020, in a *Zoom* meeting.
2. *The Assurance of Salvation*. Pastor Joseph taught it on December 5, 2020, in a *Zoom* meeting.
3. *Baptism and Communion*. Pastor Wanda taught it on December 12, 2020, in a *Zoom* meeting.
4. *Encountering God*. Pastor Angela taught it on December 12, 2020, in a *Zoom* meeting.

The baptism ceremony was conducted on the afternoon of December 20, 2020, at the main campus parking lot because of the California government's pandemic regulations. To conclude the third round, a ceremony was held on January 10, 2021, in *Zoom* meetings.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In this chapter, the researcher briefly reviewed the evangelism program at CBCSD to explore the cause of low-effectiveness and low-involvement to create an awareness of change. Following this, the researcher reported the interview results and the findings of the transformation. The transformation data were analyzed.

CBCSD Evangelism Ministry Review

Attractional Evangelism Model

CBCSD's evangelism program was based on an Attract-Believe-Serve (ABS) model in the past. The researcher, the leader of the outreach programs during that time, developed this model 12 years ago based on the three-step discipleship (Attract-Stay-Commit) system introduced by Saimond Ip in the book *The Hong Kong Local Church 101*.¹⁶⁶

The ABS model was designed as a three-step attractional evangelism strategy. It was based on the understanding and experiences of the Modern and Christian era. *Attract* means to use community service as pre-evangelical tools to attract nonbelievers and channel them to small groups or fellowships that match their backgrounds. *Believe* means to lead them to believe in Jesus through various means, such as using James Kennedy's *Evangelism Explosion* and Bill Bright's *Four Spiritual Laws* personal evangelism

¹⁶⁶ Saimond Ip, *The Hong Kong Church 101*, (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers and Christian Times, 2004), 28-36.

approaches, quarterly gospel Sundays, or annual evangelical conferences. *Serve* means to train them to become faithful coworkers to serve in the church and eventually be sent out to proclaim the gospel.

During that time, the researcher assumed that the success of the ABS model would heavily rely on the church's ability to attract outside people to come and the capacity to retain them. So to attract nonbelievers with different backgrounds and interests, CBCSD hosted many kinds of community events such as spring fairs during the Easter weekend, Christmas concerts, and Chinese New Year (Spring Festival) and Mid-Autumn celebrations, and offered various seminars (career, health, parenting, marriage, financial management, time management) at the church and the 4S Ranch Library. To make these events more attractive, the church invited influential speakers, provided free food and childcare. CBCSD advertised and announced these community events in local community newspapers and distributed flyers in local Chinese restaurants and supermarkets. Through the tremendous efforts of an outreach team, these pre-evangelical events were very successful at the beginning. The church could attract hundreds of people to attend the seminars and thousands to the community events each year.

However, even though these attractional outreach programs were successful initially, they were not effective in leading people to believe in Jesus Christ. The yearly baptism number at the 4S campus was seven or fewer in the last few years. The researcher further noticed with alarm that these outreach events gradually became the burden of only a few passionate coworkers rather than a concerted endeavor of the whole church. The congregation pastor assigned fellowships and small groups to support these outreach events, but the situation did not improve much.

Eventually, these outreach programs lost momentum because of the decline in attendance and the exhaustion of the coworkers. The researcher was convinced that the ABS model was no longer an effective evangelism platform for CBCSD to fulfill the Great Commission. The low-effectiveness of the evangelism program and the low-involvement of the congregation had become the two stumbling blocks for the church's growth.

In summary, CBCSD's ABS evangelism model is an attractional model based on the understanding and experiences of the Modern and Christian era. Changes that the church made were modifications to make it more "attractive" or "seeker-friendly." These changes only worked to deal with continuous change, not discontinuous change. The causes of the low-effectiveness and low-involvement were identified as follows:

The Cause of Low-Effectiveness

No longer attractive. The attractional programs hosted at the church facility were no longer attractive. The seminar attendees thought that they had gotten what they wanted and were less motivated to continue attending. CBCSD did not keep up with the discontinuous change of the world in the post-Christendom era. People have less desire to attend events hosted at the church facility.

Less attendance directly affected the conversions. The fewer the attendees, the less opportunity to spread the gospel. Therefore, a drop in conversion number is inevitable.

Not relational. The retention rate of seminar attendees was low. It was because no real relationship had been built. The connection was weak because the nonbelievers who attended seminars usually hesitated to participate in regular small group meetings.

The Cause of Low-Involvement

Not seeing a good result. The majority of the congregation had not been convinced that the ABS model was an effective evangelical approach because of the low baptism number produced.

Not seeing the heavenly value of evangelism. The majority of the congregation had not seen the heavenly value of evangelism. They were engaged in doing other inwardly focused ministries.

Lacking training and platform. The church failed to train the congregation to become effective gospel messengers and provide a platform for them to practice.

Serving as an obligation, not a calling. Some small groups came to serve only because the church leaders assigned them. They did it to fulfill their duty rather than a calling.

In conclusion, CBCSD is undoubtedly facing challenges due to the discontinuous change of the world. The attractional-based ABS model is no longer an effective approach in leading people to be followers of Jesus in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. An effective platform is required in order to get the majority of the congregation involved. CBCSD needs a new evangelism strategy to respond to the world's changes better.

The solution is to have an incarnational and missional evangelism strategy: training congregations to be missional disciples and providing a platform for them to go into their community to spread the gospel incarnationally. HG offers a perfect model to transform CBCSD's evangelism strategy from attractional to missional and incarnational. That is having the congregation open their house to invite their nonbeliever friends and love them so that they can taste the love of God and embrace the gospel.

Interview of the Senior Pastor of CBCSD

The researcher interviewed the senior pastor of CBCSD, Albert Lam, about the greatest challenges in transforming evangelism strategy. Lam pointed out that understanding CBCSD's attractional historical background and the current ministry situation are essential for a successful transformation. The following were his answers:

The Greatest Challenges

The first greatest challenge was to change the mindset of some coworkers. Some CBCSD coworkers had a strong attractional mindset. The attractional evangelism approach was rooted in CBCSD at her early stages. CBCSD was the only Chinese church in the north inland area of San Diego in her first ten years. The church naturally attracted people to come. Many people rushed into CBCSD, and coworkers were occupied with welcoming them and taking care of these newcomers. However, this attractional model made some coworkers develop a passive habit or mindset about evangelism. They did not proactively reach out to more people.

The second greatest challenge was to change the evangelism ministry to a central ministry. CBCSD has established many good ministries, and evangelism was only one of them. It has not been a driving force nor a leading ministry in the past. To make this change requires a lot of preparation, prayer, and communication.

The third challenge was to change the mind-oriented evangelism tradition. CBCSD congregations had used the mind-oriented evangelism approach for many years, which targets people's minds to persuade them to believe in Jesus. To change it to a relational, missional, and incarnational strategy requires time and patience.

The fourth challenge was the lack of Bests. Most CBCSD people had not intentionally built relationships with nonbelievers in many years. They had gradually lost

their nonbeliever friends. Many people hesitated to do HG because they worried about the lack of Bests.

The fifth challenge was the commitment of the majority of the congregation. The congregation got used to participating in evangelism by only inviting their friends to attend the church's evangelical events. These evangelical events involved only a small portion of the congregation in planning, serving as ushers, and singing songs on stage. HG requires much more commitment from the congregation. The church needs to help the congregation overcome fears of not doing a good job, competition, comparison among HG teams, the shame of failure, and so on. HG is a big project for turning around the whole church, and it impacts every ministry of the church. Because the impact is so significant, it is necessary to spend time talking to people who do not believe in this approach or have concerns. To persuade people to change their minds to be in line with the church is a big challenge.

The sixth challenge was the contextualization of the gospel message. CBCSD's attractional evangelism was lacking creativity. The church was repeatedly doing the same thing in the past, like inviting good music groups to make the evangelical events attractive and having very famous speakers to persuade nonbelievers that they need the salvation of Jesus. To clearly present the gospel in relational HG strategy is another big challenge in the North American context.

General Concerns About the HG Strategy

During the interview, Lam mentioned his general concerns about HG before adapting it.

Lam was concerned about the cultural difference. HG was developed in South Korea and transferred and modified in Taiwan to fit Taiwanese culture. They were all in

an East Asian cultural context. Some church leaders were not sure if it is effective in the North American Asian cultural context.

Lam was also concerned about the target people's differences. The target people at KBBC were mostly blue-collar people, but CBCSD's target people are mostly intellectuals and professionals. They are smart and like to reason. Usually, they do not believe it unless it makes sense to them. They need to be persuaded in mind and convinced with knowledge. Therefore, a persuasive presentation is important to them. People in America are brilliant in mind, and they must believe through their understanding.

The third concern Lam mentioned was HG's high demand for commitment. People here are very occupied and have lots of responsibility. HG is very heavy. The coworkers may not have time to make such a big commitment.

The fourth concern was gospel message clarity. KBBC's HG emphasizes the relational, targeting people's hearts rather than their minds. This approach made some people wonder if it is too shallow or too humanistic, spreading a man-centered rather than a God-centered gospel. Some worried that HG is a wealth theology that waters down the gospel or lowers the salvation standard.

The final concern Lam had was potential conflicts. HG is a church-wide program and involves a lot of coworkers. It may cause conflict with other ongoing programs if they are not reconciled or aligned well.

The Strengths of HG

The strengths of HG that Lam mentioned were:

1. HG aligns all the church ministries in the Great Commission. It makes all ministries work in one direction and creates synergy.

2. HG leads the whole church into a spiritual battle to fight the “real enemy,” not to fight with each other, which reduces internal conflict among congregations.
3. There are a lot of capable and gifted Christians in North America. HG helps to turn their attention and energy outward and use their strengths to fulfill the Great Commission.
4. HG involves the majority of people. Everyone can participate and make contributions. The sense of belonging is increased in HG.
5. HG creates an evangelism culture. When many people get involved and do one thing together, church culture can be transformed.
6. HG clarifies the church’s mission statement and simplifies the ministries. Every ministry is aligned outwardly to fulfill the Great Commission.

KBBC Visit Reports

With the Lord’s blessing and the KBBC senior pastor’s thoughtful arrangements, the researcher was able to visit KBBC and be fully immersed in the church for about a month, observing freely and learning firsthand from the brothers and sisters there. The researcher interviewed the senior pastor and other church leaders, attended their HDTs classes at every level, observed the operations of several HG teams, exchanged ideas with several pastors, and came home with an in-depth understanding of HG and full appreciation of KBBC.

KBBC is an evangelism-oriented church. The church was founded in 1999 by Pastor Si-Ru Yang, his wife, and seven other coworkers. The church’s vision was to build a church in the community and act as a community service center to transform the local culture and lead people to Christ. With this vision, they all moved into a newly developing community in Kaohsiung city, the Riverbank community, to plant KBBC. They made the church available to the residents six days a week, from 8:30 am to 10:30 pm every day except Monday. Hundreds of people visited the church daily.

To spread the gospel effectively, KBBC explored many evangelism strategies from the church’s early times. They found out that the strategies that worked well in other

churches were not effective in their church. They concluded that it was neither wise nor resourceful if one only copies a successful method without adapting to the local culture. Therefore, they paid attention to their local culture and educated coworkers to speak the language of seekers.

They learned a Two-Wings ministry from the Korea Poongsunghan Church in South Korea (One wing is evangelism, which carries the absolute power of the gospel. The other wing is discipleship, which carries the world vision of fostering disciples). By modifying the Two-Wings ministry in KBBC's cultural context, they developed a love-based HG evangelism approach. They applied the HG program to their church twice a year. KBBC has experienced rapid growth since then. More than 5000 people have been baptized since 2012, and about 85% of KBBC members actively participate in HG.

Interview Results

The following were interview results from hours-long conversations:

Interview of KBBC's Senior Pastor, Si-Ru Yang

The researcher interviewed KBBC's senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang, four times. Each session lasted for about two hours. All interviews were like free conversations between the senior pastor and the researcher. The senior pastor was doing most of the talking, and the researcher was doing most of the listening. The results are under each question.

1. What is your ministry philosophy, and how do you build up KBBC as an HG-centered missional church?

The first ministry philosophy Yang mentioned was leading by example. Yang said, "My ministry philosophy is leading by example and submitting to the Bible's teachings all the time. I lead by example to follow Jesus and request other KBBC leaders to do the same. That is my way of leading the church and making disciples of Jesus."

Another philosophy Yang mentioned was multi-level shepherding. Yang said that a pastor's main job is not shepherding the flock but rather making disciples who can reproduce disciples and leading ordinary Christians to do extraordinary things for God. At KBBC, every Christian has the clear responsibility and privilege to lead and shepherd people under him or her, as Moses's father-in-law suggested in Exodus 18:19-23. KBBC empowers lay people to lead at various levels and encourages them to work out their salvation while leading others. Pastors shepherd HG directors, the directors shepherd small group leaders, and the small group leaders shepherd the members. KBBC uses a three-generation shepherding system to nurture new believers. HG leaders who lead a new believer to believe in Jesus are the spiritual parents of the newborn Christian. If the new believer leads others to Christ, the HG leaders are also responsible to shepherd them, nurturing and raising them to become mature Christians who can make more disciples. In this spiritual parenting process, lots of sinful human nature is dealt with, and godly characters are built.

The third philosophy Yang emphasized was effectiveness. He said that an effective operation system is vital for the church. An influential church needs three effective systems to make her function well: an evangelism system to lead people to Christ, a shepherding system to nurture new Christians, and an education system to train Christians to become good soldiers of Jesus so that they go out to fight to win souls for Jesus Christ.

2. *How do you inspire the congregation to keep doing HG for many years, and how do you shepherd the flocks while doing HG?*

Yang answered that HG had become a culture at KBBC. HG is not one of many ministries but the central ministry to drive all other ministries. KBBC leaders have

developed a habit of planning church ministry and arranging their family life around HG. HG has become the first priority of their life. Because the heavenly value of HG evangelism has been imprinted in their heart, they can pay the price; they use their time, money, and other resources to spread the gospel through HG.

Yang gave four tips to inspire congregations to continue doing HG. First, pastors need to let the congregation see HG's heavenly value. Christians do not actively spread the gospel because they have not seen the heavenly value of evangelism yet. KBBC often uses the Sunday service to deliver God's glorious calling and the value of doing HG. Second, pastors should have an unwavering commitment to drive HG and be transparent to share their experiences (especially struggles). KBBC intentionally creates a culture of not being afraid of failure. Often, an HG team led by a layperson is more productive than a pastor-led HG team. The pastors need to be humble and persistent in doing HG regardless of the result. Failure is the tuition to pay for learning. KBBC believes that Christians can be "experts" of evangelism when they start doing HG and learning from their mistakes. Third, pastors should honor HG coworkers regardless of their achievements. They are overcomers as long as they are doing HG. KBBC intentionally arranges baptism ceremonies in the small group and lets all HG team members see their achievements. KBBC also intentionally invites Bests to share their baptism testimony and honor coworkers during the Sunday service. Fourth, pastors need to set up an effective disciple training system. KBBC uses HDTS to produce new HG workers. The church invites every congregation, particularly new believers, to take HDTS courses that train them step by step to become effective HG coworkers and leaders.

KBBC uses a multi-level shepherd system to care for the flocks in terms of shepherding, as reported under the ministry philosophy question.

3. How do you make missional disciples at KBBC?

Yang replied that KBBC trains missional disciples through HDTS and HG. HDTS provides classroom learning, and HG offers hands-on training for missional discipleship. This approach allows the students to learn while doing and doing while learning. HDTS is a student-oriented system that aims to produce influential HG leaders and small group leaders in the likeness of Jesus (Matt. 11:29). It helps students see the heavenly value of HG and build a passion for spreading the gospel and equips them with a parents' heart to nurture newborn Christians. All students are required to memorize some key Bible verses, read assigned spiritual materials, and write personal testimonies. Most importantly, the students are prepared to deliver personalized gospel message through practicing in the classroom and applying in the HG meeting.

Operation wise, KBBC intentionally starts HDTS classes a week before HG kicks off so that the students can apply what they learned in the classroom in HG the following week. Since it is relevant, the students are very motivated to attend HDTS classes. This real-life on-the-job training interlocking approach is very effective and has produced many faithful and capable coworkers at KBBC. They not only have biblical knowledge but also have the ability to fight to win spiritual battles.

HDTS begins with a renewal camp for all new believers. The camp helps the students to have a clear cut with their past and experience the Holy Spirit. KBBC offers four levels of courses during the weekdays. Each course has 12 lessons. Level One, "Disciple School Part I," is for new believers. The goal is to build a foundation of faith.

Level Two, “Disciple School Part II,” is for the students who have completed level one. The goal is to train them to become HG coworkers. Level Three, “Leader School Part I,” is for those who have finished level two and have been HG coworkers two times. The goal is to prepare them to become effective HG leaders. Level Four, “Leader School Part II,” is for those who have completed level three and have been HG leaders. The goal is to train them to become productive small group leaders and good shepherds.

4. Why do you often criticize traditional seminary education or the Sunday school program at a church? In your opinion, what about these traditional educations need to be transformed?

Yang pointed out that discipleship is the process, not the goal. The goal must determine the process. Discipleship is the process of training Christians to be like Jesus. The goal is to make Christians have Jesus’ likeness. Therefore, discipleship is the process of imitating Jesus, having Jesus’ character, and doing things as Jesus did. Discipleship is not merely studying the Bible. Knowledge without application is useless.

Yang then pointed out that the reason many churches’ discipleship fails is the lack of clear goals. Many churches do not have a clear goal for their discipleship program. Therefore, having a discipleship program becomes a goal. Teaching Bible books becomes the goal of Sunday school in some churches. In the end, the church produces many Christians who have a lot of knowledge about the Bible but do not know how to make reproducible disciples. Yang argued that the goal of Bible study is not studying Bible books to gain biblical knowledge. The Bible is not the truth but contains knowledge about the truth (John 5:39-40). Jesus is the truth, the way, and the life (John 14:6). Biblical knowledge is essential to build a foundation of faith, but it is not faith. It cannot transform into the faith without practice. Studying the Bible makes one know Jesus, but

one must practice living like Jesus (1 John 1:1-2, Luke 6:46-49). Bible study must result in coming to Jesus and having His life and His likeness.

While clearly stated that he is not anti-knowledge, Yang strongly argued that the traditional seminary education system is too focused on knowledge and academics. Seminarians are trained as theologians in many seminaries. Yang sensed that it is time for seminaries to recalibrate their over-emphasis on knowledge and academic research. In his opinion, seminary graduates must be equipped to be pastors or missionaries who can effectively lead God's people to carry out the Great Commission.

Interviewing KBBC's Other Leaders

The researcher interviewed Max Liu (HG district director), Yi Zhen (HG leader), Joseph Lin (community ministry director), Zhaowang Hwang (senior ministry pastor), and Fengyu Hsu (church staff and social worker). The researcher also had conversations with pastors Chiyi Lee, Pei Feng, and Lichen Lin, and ministers Bingling Chu, Wanchi Chiu, Lingfang Lu, Yuanchung Lee, and Wenfeng Cheng. Their answers were as follows.

5. What is the church's strategy to mobilize congregation members to do HG?

All interviewees mentioned that their senior pastor set an excellent model for all congregations, including the congregational pastors, to follow. At KBBC, every pastor must lead at least one HG team every round to set examples for the congregations to follow.

Max Liu said that KBBC used all means possible to create a culture of using HG to spread the gospel. Yi Zhen mentioned that KBBC pastors preached the heavenly value of HG frequently and emphasized God's calling to the congregation. The congregations were well prepared to do HG. They understood that HG is the most important thing to do in their lives.

Joseph Lin answered that KBBC intentionally invited new believers to tell their stories during the Sunday services. KBBC also made efforts to honor the HG coworkers by recognizing their contributions, such as arranging their Bests' baptism ceremony during the Sunday service. When the congregation saw the work of God among them, they were encouraged and further motivated to do HG. They had more energy to keep ongoing. HG coworkers' satisfaction and happiness levels were high at KBBC.

Zhaowang Hwang replied that HG enabled people to see their value. As a result, adult, youth, and senior congregations were all participating in HG. Youths no longer saw themselves as too young and inexperienced but valued themselves as disciples of Jesus. They were motivated to do HG in their schools. For example, a 14-year-old student had formed an HG team in her middle school and has led more than twenty schoolmates to believe in Jesus and be baptized.

Hwang continued, the senior people no longer view themselves as useless older people; instead, they see them as gospel messengers to other seniors. They find their value. That is, God wants to use them in HG to bless other seniors. The seniors at KBBC were happy and energetic when they found their calling in doing HG. In Taiwan, the physical needs of the seniors usually were well taken care of in the senior houses, but their mental and spiritual health needs were ignored. Many seniors thought they were no longer useful but waited to die. This useless feeling and hopeless mindset caused many seniors to pass away in 1-2 years after moving into a senior house. But in KBBC, the seniors see their value and live out a different life. For example, a 101-year-old sister was inspired and decided to travel with her daughter and grandchildren on a family reunion trip to spread the gospel to her relatives. All the seniors in her group prayed for her daily.

When she returned, she brought back exciting news about how God used her to lead many relatives to believe in Jesus; everyone was encouraged and motivated to spread the gospel.

Fengyu Hsu mentioned that seniors at KBBC live happy life because they can spread the gospel in HG. Many miracles happened among them. Some can walk again and said goodbye to their wheelchairs. Some regained memories and are able to remember the way walk to church after suffering from Alzheimer's disease for years. These positive improvements encouraged other seniors to join KBBC with festive spirits. The changes of these seniors impact their family members and draw them to come to the church.

6. *Why are you so excited and energetic about doing HG?*

The researcher asked Max Liu (the HG director) and Zhen Yi (the HG leader) this question. Their top five reasons were:

- 1) It is my calling.
- 2) I see an excellent example from the senior pastor.
- 3) I see good results.
- 4) I enjoy doing it and feel happy to be used by God.
- 5) I experienced God's blessings.

7. *How do you evaluate the effectiveness of HG and the health of the church?*

The researcher asked Joseph Lin this question. He answered that each HG team could lead 1.5 Bests baptized on average in the past. However, KBBC does not just evaluate HG's effectiveness by the number of baptisms but also how many new leaders were raised and how many new groups were formed. KBBC collects the number of people baptized for each round and follows how many joined the small group and attended HDTs classes. KBBC also encourages the small group to invite the Bests to

attend the Sunday service and sit together to worship God. Therefore, if HG is doing well, then the small group is proliferating, and the church is growing. Lin claimed, “KBBC is a very healthy missional church because we are not just talking about the mission; we are doing it.”

8. *What is the driving force for KBBC to keep doing HG?*

The researcher asked pastors Chiyi Lee, Pei Feng, and Lichen Lin, ministers Bingling Chu, Wanchi Chiu, Lingfang Lu, Yuanchung Lee, and Wenfeng Cheng, this question. They all answered that the driving force for KBBC to keep doing HG is the Holy Spirit.

Interview HG Coworkers

The researcher asked 50 HG coworkers the following questions while attending HG meetings and HDTS classes, all of them were aware that their responses were part of the research project. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. KBBC HG Coworkers Responses

Number of years in Christ	Less than a year	1-2 years	3-7 years	More than 7 years
The number of people asked	17	12	14	7
Did you become a Christian through HG?	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 Yes 3 No
How many rounds of HG have you led or participated in as a coworker?	First time	2-3 times	4 times or more	4 times or more
Are you going to keep doing HG in the future?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
What keeps you going?	The top three answers: The church’s program; church leaders are doing HG; the peer pressure.		The top three answers: It’s God’s calling; it’s an obligation; experiencing God and very rewarding.	

Observations at KBBC

The researcher observed KBBC on every occasion available, including but not limited to Sunday services, HG meetings, HDTS classes, seniors’ enrichment classes, and

other daily activities at the church. Observation key points were ethos, interactions, prayers, and personal stories.

1. Are the church members happy and energetic? Pay attention to KBBC's ethos, culture, spirit, and mold of the congregation.

Yes, KBBC members are happy and energetic. KBBC is located in the basement of a community building. The main sanctuary can hold about three hundred people, and the first fellowship hall can hold 150 people. The facility is not an attractive or ideal place for worship because of several big pillars inside rooms, which block many people from seeing the stage (they have to watch TV screens). However, congregations are very happy and energetic. Coworkers are very busy but are filled with high spirits. It is a thriving church with a lot of energy.

KBBC serves as a community center. It opens every day except Monday, from 8:30 am to 10:30 pm. Hundreds of people come to the church during the weekdays from morning to evening. Many people go to the church to attend HDTS classes during the weekdays, and many seniors come to the church to do exercises, dancing, art, and other activities. KBBC is a real community church where people like to go. The church hosts five worship services on Saturday and Sunday.

The researcher strongly felt the HG culture in KBBC. Every congregation the researcher met was talking about HG. HG has been deeply rooted in their daily life. The congregations are very committed and energetic to do HG. In everything they do, they think about spreading the gospel. The following are a few examples:

A sister was hit by a car and sent to an emergency center to have surgery. While recovering in the rehabilitation center, she invited the driver who hit her as a Best to attend her husband's HG team meetings.

One HG leader had late-stage cancer and was hospitalized for treatment. While staying in the hospital, she moved the HG meeting place from her home to the patient room. She finished HG in the hospital, and all the Bests in her HG team were baptized at her bedside.

A professor used his office as an HG meeting place during lunch breaks. He invited his colleagues and students to attend the HG meeting and has led several people to believe in Jesus.

An army officer who was baptized less than one year spent her own money to rent a farmer's grocery store to do HG.

A Christian wife teamed up with her teenage daughter and mother-in-law to form an HG team. Their goal was to treat her nonbelieving husband as their Best to spread the gospel to him.

A restaurant owner used her restaurant to do HG to spread the gospel to her employees and neighbors during off-hours.

2. What is the group interaction in HG meetings? How do they treat each other?

During the researcher's visit, it was the fifteenth round of HG at KBBC. The church formed about four hundred HG teams. The researcher was able to observe eight HG teams during his stay. The HG meeting size was between five to fifteen people. Regardless of the meeting size, the HG coworkers were very committed and supportive, and they loved each other. They expressed love and care for each other in front of their Bests. The researcher noticed that several HG coworkers attended more than one HG team. They were HG leaders to lead in one team and HG coworkers to support in the other HG teams.

3. *What's their prayer life like at home and church? How do they arrange their daily life?*

KBBC is a missional church with various prayers coming from the congregational and personal levels. Joseph Lin told the researcher that KBBC hosted prayer walks every year to encourage congregations to pray and bless the community. The impact was evident that the spiritual environment of the Riverbank community (which has about 44 buildings and nearly twenty thousand people) is very good. Many residents have become Christians. There are seven churches in the Riverside community today. There are no religious temples in the community, which is a miracle because the temple culture (false god religious) is popular in other parts of the city.

The researcher attended a KBBC morning prayer meeting. It started at 6 am, before dawn. About 200 people were attending. The prayer meeting was powerful. However, the researcher noticed that some of them were a little uncomfortable. After the meeting, the researcher found out that KBBC intentionally invites newly baptized Christians to attend that prayer meeting. About half of the attendees were new believers who participated in the prayer meeting for the first time.

The researcher stayed in brother Max's home for a few days and observed his prayer life. Max is a district leader who oversees several HG teams and leads all Pingtung HG teams. While staying at his home, the researcher noticed that he and his wife each led a *Line* (a popular social app in Taiwan) prayer meeting every morning from 7 to 8 am.

The Pingtung district formed six HG teams, and their prayer meeting was hosted on Wednesday evening at Max's place. All coworkers, about 20 people, attended and prayed for each HG team and their Bests. The researcher sensed the presence of the Holy

Spirit with them. These powerful and lively prayers are their power source for an energetic and enduring passion of HG.

4. What are their personal stories about experiencing God in doing HG?

These KBBC Christians love God and are energetic to do HG because they genuinely experience God. They have encountered God and experienced His goodness. The researcher heard many heart-touching stories but briefly reported one here.

Sister Yi is a Christian for only two years but has grown into an effective gospel messenger. She has participated in HG four times (as an HG leader two times) and led more than twenty people to Christ since becoming a Christian. Now she is a small group leader who oversees two HG teams. The researcher attended her HG meeting several times and observed her leadership closely. She is a very gifted and experienced HG leader. When her team members were frustrated because the Best they invited failed to show up, she encouraged them by telling her similar experience and encourage them to keep inviting their Bests. When delivering the message, she explained the gospel clearly and skillfully used her story to make the Bests resonate with her. Her story touched the hearts of the Bests and made them thirst to meet God. She honestly told the Bests that the reason she is so diligent in spreading the gospel is that she has encountered God. God is so real and good to her. She wants her friends to encounter God as well.

Yi's heart-touching conversion story is that she was at her low point when she met Jesus. Her longtime boyfriend left her without any reasonable explanation. To make things more unacceptable was that he wanted to take away the house they bought together (most of the money to buy the house was hers). Because she trusted him naïvely, she agreed to register him as the sole owner of the house. When he broke up with her, Yi was

so shocked and tried to get her money back. Unfortunately, she could not find any proof that she gave him the money to buy the house. In the end, Yi felt that she had lost everything and it was the end of the world. She suffered severe pain from the shoulder to the lower back. During that time, a friend invited her to HG, where she found the love of God and opened her heart to accept Jesus. She trusted that God would give the final judgment and be fair to her. On the day before her baptism, she accidentally found the bank transaction receipt, which showed that she transferred a lot of money to her ex-boyfriend to buy the house. She was so excited and thought that God revealed this evidence so she could start a court fight to get her money back. However, when she asked God how to fight, she felt that God wanted her to give up the fight and believe in God only.

After much struggling, she finally submitted and decided not to fight at the court, so she ripped up the receipt. At that moment, she felt a lot of peace come into her heart, and she had the love from God she never felt before. She was released, no longer having any anger, hatred, or bitterness. She prayed to forgive him. Instantly, her back pain, which she had suffered for months, was gone. She knew that a new day had begun. She decided to live for Jesus. After being baptized, she started to share the gospel with her family and her friends. She has become a blessing for many people.

The Impact of HG on Other Chinese Churches

KBBC used the HG strategy to spread the gospel with all wisdom vigorously in many places of Taiwan. The number of believers has multiplied since then, not just within the Riverbank community in Kaohsiung but also across other parts of Taiwan. KBBC has planted five churches in Kaohsiung, Tainan, Yunlin, Hsinchu, and Taipei, with every single one of them bearing HG DNA.

The considerable success of HG in KBBC has attracted many Chinese church leaders to travel to Kaohsiung to learn from them. While staying at KBBC, the researcher noticed that many Chinese church leaders from Hong Kong, Singapore, Europe, Canada, the U.S., and other places visited KBBC to learn about HG. Since 2016, KBBC has hosted several conferences in Taiwan to help hundreds of Chinese churches. More than thirty thousand Chinese Christians from everywhere have attended their conferences. HG has created an evangelical movement among Chinese churches.

Summary

In summary, Christians at KBBC are missional disciples. The Holy Spirit blesses the HG coworkers and empowers them to keep doing HG. The senior pastor and the other church leaders lead by example to do HG persistently, and KBBC people follow their lead. The three HG systems (evangelism, shepherding, discipleship) work synergistically to produce new blood, which keeps HG ongoing. Doing HG is the culture of the church and has become the habit of congregations. The congregations have seen the heavenly value of HG and committed to the calling to make disciples of Jesus through HG. They proclaimed what they believed (the gospel) and experienced what they proclaimed. They have received God's abundant blessings and want to be blessings to others. Many miracles happen among them.

Besides the work of the Holy Spirit, based on the researcher's observation, the successful keys of KBBC's HG are:

1. *Leading by Example.* The senior pastor's commitment to do HG and his love for God set an excellent example for other pastors and congregations.
2. *Imprinting the Heavenly Value.* KBBC consistently reminds the congregations of the precious value of their work in doing HG.
3. *Inspiring a Shared Vision.* Congregations have grasped the HG vision and actively participated in HG to spread the gospel incarnationally.

4. *Effective Operation System.* HG drives other ministries. The HG evangelism system, HDTS, and the multi-level shepherding system are synchronized.
5. *Integrated Student-Oriented HDTS.* The disciples learn biblical truths and technical skills of evangelism in HDTS and apply what they've learned in HG. Leaders are developed with on-the-job training.
6. *Powerful Prayer Support.* KBBC has a robust prayer support system and has various prayer meetings throughout the church.
7. *Pursuing Healthy Charismatics.* Congregations are encouraged to pursue a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. Newly baptized Bests are required to cut off their spiritual ties with the false gods and submit to the Holy Spirit to live out their new lives. Praying in tongues is encouraged.

The success of KBBC demonstrates that HG is a high-effective and high-involvement evangelism strategy to lead people to Jesus Christ and train them to become reproducible disciples in Taiwan's cultural context. Making HG the central ministry to drive all other ministries made KBBC a very healthy and robust church.

HG Adaptation and Implementation at CBCSD

This project set three stages to transform the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the missional, incarnational HG strategy modeled by KBBC. Stage one focused on vision sharing and preparation for change. Stage two emphasized leadership and guidelines. Stage three carried out three rounds of HG.

Stage One: Vision Sharing and Preparation for Changing

This stage was to develop a clear vision, imprint the heavenly value of HG, and cultivate a healthy climate of change.

Develop a Clear Vision

CBCSD sent 44 leaders, including the senior pastor and all Chinese-speaking pastors, to attend the HG international conference hosted from July 24-26, 2018 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. At the end of the conference, a meeting was hosted to collect the 44 conference attendees' responses and their feelings about HG on the evening of July 26,

2018. All of the attendees were fired up and expressed a strong desire to do HG at CBCSD. CBCSD pastors were encouraged and excited about this positive response. Then the CBCSD pastors met to have an “open heart, open talk” meeting and prayed for the Holy Spirit’s guidance the following day. All pastors strongly felt that God was leading CBCSD to do HG. With this consensus, the pastors decided to host a church-wide vision-sharing meeting with all CBCSD people.

After returning from the conference, CBCSD hosted a reporting and vision-sharing meeting on August 19, 2018. To intentionally create a warm, loving, and happy atmosphere, the HG conference attendees served as ushers to warmly greet everyone at the church entries. The congregations’ response was very encouraging. About 350 brothers and sisters from every Chinese-speaking congregation attended the meeting. The meeting was very successful. Heart-touching song singing, emotional testimonies, passionate prayers, and an inspirational message made it a spiritual revival. The senior pastor of CBCSD, Albert Lam, delivered a clear message. He pointed out that compared to KBBC, CBCSD was not doing enough to spread the gospel in response to cultural changes outside the church. CBCSD was not proactive enough, not persistent enough, not consistent enough, not focused enough, and not putting evangelism as the church’s driving engine. Lam then cast out a vision of change by adapting HG. All attendees positively responded to the call of changing to spread the gospel effectively.

With this momentum, the church encouraged all congregations to pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance and organized a 40-day fasting and prayer chain from September 17 to October 26, 2018. More than 300 people participated and prayed for one hour at breakfast, lunch, and dinner time.

A vision of transforming CBCSD evangelism from the attractional ABS model to incarnational, missional HG strategy was shared through these efforts. The majority of congregations embraced the vision of change.

Imprint the Heavenly Value of HG

To lead the congregation to focus on God's mission and understand the heavenly value of HG, the researcher preached six sermons (Experience the Power of God, The Glorious Calling, Fulfill the Great Commission, Work Together for the Gospel, Rely on the Power of the Spirit, and Missional Life) to the congregation at the 4S campus in the Sunday services from September to December 2018. The congregation received the messages very well. Through these six sermons, the congregation saw the value of mission and evangelism. Many were fired up and committed to doing HG. They were aligned with God's mission and committed to fulfilling the Great Commission.

Cultivate a Healthy Climate of Change

To cultivate a positive climate of change, CBCSD invited KBBC pastors and coworkers to lead a three-day conference from October 26 to 28, 2018. KBBC's senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang, was the keynote speaker; other KBBC coworkers, pastor Pei Feng and missionary Ying Kao, led the training workshops. The conference was very successful. About 650 Christians from CBCSD and other local Chinese churches attended the conference. Some Chinese churches in Northern California, Michigan, Atlanta, and Brazil also sent their leaders to participate in the conference. The HG message was very clearly delivered and received well by the attendees in general. The training workshops provided step-by-step instructions and examples to form and run HG.

However, some conference attendees felt that a few comments of Pastor Yang were "anti-seminary education, anti-knowledge," which made them worried about

whether the HG strategy was able to spread the “pure and right” gospel. Still, a few were concerned about HG’s charismatic tendency, such as promoting speaking in tongues.

In order to address these concerns and worries, the church hosted a CBCSD pastors’ response meeting on November 6, 2018. About 350 CBCSD brothers and sisters attended the meeting. Eight CBCSD Chinese-speaking pastors worked as a discussion panel to answer the questions raised, affirm the HG strategy, and clarify CBCSD’s theological position. This response meeting went very smoothly and constructively. Brothers and sisters realized the importance of understanding the speaker’s cultural background. They got the real meaning and intention of Pastor Yang. CBCSD congregations embraced HG and prepared to change. Many of them were very excited about using HG to spread the gospel to more people.

Still, there were a couple of lay leaders at the 4S campus who worried that the HG focused too much on honoring the Bests, which may fail to convince the Bests that “they are sinners who need Jesus.” The researcher reached out to them to hear their concerns, suggested praying for CBCSD to spread the correct gospel, and asked them to give HG a chance to prove itself. The couple listened and followed the suggestion. A healthy climate was cultivated.

Stage Two: A Core Leadership Team and HG Adaptation

At this stage, the goal was to create a core leadership team to lead the transformation process, identify a feasible adaptation strategy, and provide guidelines and a budget.

Build a Core Leadership Team

The core team was designed as the driving force and decision-making group for the whole CBCSD HG ministry. A ten-people core leadership team was formed. It

consisted of the senior pastor, the cross-campus ministry pastor, six campus pastors, and two fellowship deacons. The core leadership team was led by a cross-campus ministry pastor, Wanda Lam. All team members were energized and excited for the opportunity to spread the gospel by means of HG. The spirit and dynamic of the team were excellent. According to pastor Wanda, the team members' unity, energy, and commitment were at a level that she never saw in her 40+ years of ministry experience.

The core team spent lots of time praying and discussing, then decided to use existing fellowships and small groups to adapt to HG. The core team then developed the HG adaptation guidelines and made the budget.

HG Adaptation Guidelines

The following were the guidelines developed by the core team:

1. Each small group and fellowship have the freedom to decide whether to join HG or not and how many HG teams they want to form.
2. Each HG team has the flexibility to determine their meeting place and time.
3. All CBCSD campuses are encouraged but not required to participate. In general, the HG team should be formed within the current fellowship and small group.
4. The campus pastor has the authority to adjust HG teams according to the needs of the campus and cultural settings.
5. Cross-campus HG is discouraged but not forbidden.
6. Core team members must set a good example for the rest of the HG coworkers.

HG Budget

The core team agreed that a financial budget was needed to support the HG ministry. The church budget guideline was:

1. \$300 per HG if the HG has less than five Bests attending regularly.
2. \$450 per HG if the HG has five to ten Bests attending regularly.
3. \$600 per HG if the HG has more than 10 Bests attending regularly.

The budget only covered the basic cost. The actual spending was much higher. It just served as the church's determination to do HG and support the ministry financially. The core team intentionally kept the budget low to mobilize the congregations who really had the heart to do HG evangelism and allow them to pay the price for this heavenly valued ministry by spending their time and money on HG.

Stage Three: HG Implementation

Three HG rounds were carried out in this project. The first two rounds met in person at several homes of the congregation members. The third round used *Zoom* Cloud meetings because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The following are the HG data generated at the 4S campus.

The First Round

The first round of HG was launched in January-April 2019. Two fellowships and one small group participated in this round. Six HG teams were formed. Spring fellowship formed two teams, Grace fellowship formed one team, and Joy small group formed three teams. HG leaders or coworkers opened their homes to host the meeting. The first round of HG data is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. First Round HG Result at 4S Campus of CBCSD

HG Name	Fellowship Small Group Name	Coworkers Number	Outreached Number	Attended Number	Believed Number	Baptized Number
Yongfu	Spring	7	20	14	4	4
Jane	Spring	7	14	8	5	0
Becky	Grace	12	10	10	2	1
Joy	Joy	8	14	7	1	1
Steve	Joy	6	18	16	3	0
Daniel	Joy	7	6	6	0	0
Total		47	82	61	15	6

Forty-seven brothers and sisters were frontline HG coworkers. Eighty-two Bests were outreached. Sixty-one attended the HG meeting at least once; most of them attended

regularly. Fifteen Bests believed in Jesus, and six of them were baptized at the end of the first round at the 4S campus. A couple of them were baptized at other churches later.

The Second Run

The second round was hosted in September-December, 2019. Eight HG teams were formed from three fellowships, one small group, one youths' group, and one mothers' group. Spring fellowship, Joy small group, and Yongzhen fellowship formed two teams each; Huaqing and Mama Jiayouzhuan each formed one team. Grace fellowship did not form any HG team because of a lack of Bests, but the fellowship sent four coworkers to help Yongzhen HG teams. All HG teams were hosted at the HG coworkers' homes except the youth group, Huaqing HG team, which was hosted at the church facility because it has more space for youth activity. The second round of HG data is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. The Second Round HG Result at 4S Campus of CBCSD

HG Name	Fellowship Small Group Name	Coworkers Number	Outreached Number	Attended Number	Believed Number	Baptized Number
Yongfu	Spring	10	23	17	4	2
Hannah	Spring	11	35	27	13	3
Joy	Joy	8	7	6	1	0
Steve	Joy	7	15	12	4	3
Yongzhen1	Yongzhen	9	15	12	5	2
Yongzhen2	Yongzhen	8	12	11	3	2
Huaqing	Huaqing Youth	10	15	8	6	2
Jiayouzhuan	Mama Jiayouzhuan	9	17	9	6	1
Total		72	139	102	42	15

Seventy-two brothers and sisters were frontline HG coworkers. One hundred and thirty-nine Bests were outreached. One hundred and two attended the HG meeting at least once; most of them attended regularly. Forty-two Bests believed in Jesus, and fifteen of them were baptized at the end of the second round at the 4S campus. Three were baptized at other churches.

The Third Run

The third round was conducted in September-December, 2020. Two fellowships and one small group formed four HG teams. Spring fellowship formed two teams, Joy small group and Grace fellowship each formed one team. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, all four teams hosted the HG meetings virtually by using *Zoom* Cloud meetings on the Internet. The third round of HG data is summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. The Third Round HG Result at 4S Campus of CBCSD

HG Name	Fellowship Small Group Name	Coworkers Number	Outreached Number	Attended Number	Believed Number	Baptized Number
Yongfu	Spring	11	13	12	4	2
Hannah	Spring	10	25	8	1	1
Joy	Joy	6	7	6	1	0
Becky	Grace	8	20	5	4	2
Total		35	65	31	10	5

Thirty-five brothers and sisters were frontline HG coworkers. Sixty-five Bests were outreached. Thirty-one attended the HG meeting at least once, most of them attended regularly. Ten Bests believed in Jesus, and five of them were baptized at the 4S campus.

Data Summary

The three rounds of HG data are summarized to see the participation of the congregation and the productivity of HG.

The Participation of the Congregation

The first round involved about 39 percent of the congregation in the HG frontlines. The congregation's involvement increased to 60 percent in the second round. However, the frontline coworkers dropped to 29 percent of the congregation in the third round due to the pandemic. The average number of coworkers was about 8 to 9 per HG in the three rounds. Table 6 outlines the involvement of the congregation.

Table 6. CBCSD 4S Campus HG Coworkers Participation Profile

Round	Congregation Size	Number of HG Teams	Number of HG Frontline Coworker	The Average Number of Coworker per HG	% Participation of Congregation
First	120	6	47	8	39
Second	120	8	72	9	60
Third	120	4	35	9	29

All 4S campus fellowships and small groups participated at least once in the three rounds. Three of six fellowships and small groups participated in the first round. Five of six fellowships and small groups formed an HG team in the second round. Three of six fellowships and small groups formed an HG team in the third round. Table 7 reports the participation of fellowships and small groups.

Table 7. HG Team Distribution at the 4S Campus

Round	Spring Fellowship	Joy Small Group	Grace Fellowship	Yongzhen Fellowship	Jiayouzhan Group	Huaqing Group	Total HG Teams
First	2	3	1	0	0	0	6
Second	2	2	0	2	1	1	8
Third	2	1	1	0	0	0	4

Spring fellowship and Joy small group participated in all three rounds. Spring fellowship formed two HG teams consistently in each round. Joy small group formed three teams in the first round, two teams in the second, and one team in the third. The declining phenomenon was because the group went too aggressive in the first round (more discussion in Chapter Six). Grace fellowship participated in the first and third rounds. The rest of the fellowships and small groups participated in the second round.

The Productivity of HG

A total of 18 HG teams were formed in the three rounds. The ratio of Best to coworker was about 1.3 on average for the three rounds. Two hundred eighty-six Bests were outreached, and 194 attended the HG meetings. Sixty-seven accepted Jesus as their

Savior and Lord, and 26 were baptized at the 4S campus. Table 8 summarizes the HG evangelism results in three rounds.

Table 8. CBCSD 4S Campus HG Evangelism Result Summary

Round	Number of HG	Outreached Number	Attended Number (% *)	Best and Coworker Ratio	Believed Number (**%)	Baptized Number (***)	Average Baptized per HG
First	6	82	61 (74%)	1.3	15 (25%)	6 (10%)	1.0
Second	8	139	102 (73%)	1.7	42 (41%)	15 (15%)	1.9
Third	4	65	31 (46%)	0.9	10 (32%)	5 (16%)	1.3
Total	18	286	194 (68%)	1.3	67 (35%)	26 (13%)	1.4

*%Attended/Outreached. **%Believed/Attended. ***%Baptized/Attended.

On average, 68 percent of outreached Bests attended the HG meetings (74 percent in the first round and 73 percent in the second, 46 percent in the third), 35 percent of attendees accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and 13 percent was baptized. Each HG was able to generate 1.4 baptisms at the 4S campus in the three rounds.

The percentage of believed and baptized increased significantly in the second round, suggesting that HG coworkers were doing a better job to lead Bests to believe in Jesus and invite them to be baptized.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was divided into two parts. The first part compared virtual HG with physical HG for an evaluation of virtual HG. The second part evaluated the HG effectiveness by comparing the average number of the two physical HG rounds with the average data generated in the last four years of the ABS program since the ABS data were generated in physical meetings.

Physical HG and Virtual HG

This project compared data generated in the virtual HG (third round) with the data generated in physical HG (the first two rounds) to evaluate virtual HG. The data was

presented in the percentage to make it comparable. The virtual HG data and the physical HG data were compared in Table 9.

Table 9. Virtual and Physical HG Comparison

	Outreached Number	Attended % *	Believed % **	Baptized %***	Fellowship & Small Group Participated	Congregation Participation %
Physical HG	221	74	35	13	6	50
Virtual HG	65	46	32	16	3	29

*%Attended/Outreached. **%Believed/Attended. ***%Baptized/ Attended.

Table 9 shows that the believed and baptized percentage was similar (believed: 35 vs. 32; baptized: 13 vs. 16) between the two settings, suggesting similar effectiveness of HG whether meeting in person or virtual. However, the virtual HG Best attended percentage dropped from 74 to 46 percent. The number of participated fellowships and small groups also dropped from six to three for virtual HG. The percentage of the congregation's participation declined from 50 to 29. These data suggest that the biggest challenges of virtual HG were to mobilize more coworkers to participate and find a more effective way to invite Bests to attend.

Though numbers dropped in some virtual HG categories, the researcher observed that HG coworkers' spirits remained high. The drop was because some coworkers were not familiar with *Zoom* meetings or lacked the confidence to host virtual meetings. For example, Yongzhen (the seniors' fellowship) coworkers were slow to learn the *Zoom* meetings app and felt uncomfortable forming a virtual HG team. Therefore, the fellowship did not participate in the third round. The youth group and the mother group did not participate because they were uncomfortable leading virtual HG meetings. A few of them have expressed the desire to do physical HG when the pandemic is over. However, since the data sample was small, more virtual HG rounds are needed to make a meaningful comparison between the two settings.

Advantages of Virtual HG

Though there were challenges to recruit coworkers and invite Bests to attend virtual HG meetings, the third round's results indicated that virtual HG has some advantages. Virtual HG was not limited by geographic location. The HG coworkers were able to invite friends outside of San Diego in the third round. Some Bests were from Northern California, New York, and China. Be able to spread the gospel to people far away is a huge advantage of virtual HG. It enables Christians to spread the gospel to people everywhere through the Internet. Another advantage was less workload for the coworkers because they did not need to open their house and prepare food.

Disadvantages of Virtual HG

The disadvantage was that some Bests in San Diego were reluctant to attend. Some of them expressed that they felt “unreal” and “not close” compared to physical HG meetings. The attended and outreached ratio dropped significantly from physical HG meetings. Another disadvantage was that some Bests did not want to turn on the video camera, making it hard to connect with them. The third one was that virtual HG required more creativity to host the meeting in a lively and exciting manner. Finally, virtual HG meetings required people to have access to the Internet and learn how to use the app, which limited the participation of some coworkers and Bests. Regardless of these disadvantages, virtual HG did show its effectiveness. The virtual HG provided a platform for churches to spread the gospel through the Internet.

The HG Effectiveness

To evaluate the effectiveness of HG in CBCSD's cultural context, this research compared the ABS data average numbers for the last four years (2013-2016) with the first year of HG data (2019, the first two rounds) in Table 10. It shows that the HG strategy

was a much more effective model than the attractional ABS model in CBCSD's current cultural context. On average, one HG generated 1.5 baptisms (21 baptisms/14 HG teams) for the first two rounds, which was the same as HG production at KBBC.

Table 10. Comparison of ABS and HG Result

	Outreached	Attended (% *)	Believed (% **)	Baptized (%***)
ABS (2013-2016)	unknown	133	11 (8%)	7 (5%)
HG (2019)	221	163 (74%)	57 (35%)	21 (13%)
HG Increased%		23	418	200

*%Attended/Outreached. **%Believed/Attended. ***%Baptized/Attended.

One hundred sixty-three Bests attended the HG meetings versus the 133 who attended ABS seminars, indicating that with HG, attendance increased 23 percent. Thirty-five percent of attendants believed in Jesus in HG compared to eight percent in ABS, indicating that HG is more effective than ABS. Fifty-seven Bests accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord in HG, which was more than a 400 percent increase. Twenty-one were baptized in HG, which was a 200 percent increase.

In addition, five more Bests were baptized in other churches because they had attended these churches before joining CBCSD's HG meetings. The campus pastor encouraged them to be baptized in those churches. It was an intentional effort to bless other churches in this way.

The Huaqing youth group outreached to 15 youth, and 12 attended the meeting. Six accepted Jesus, and two were baptized (see Table 4). Though this data is preliminary, it suggests that HG was effective in the CBCSD youth cultural context.

In summary, all this data indicates that HG is an effective evangelism strategy in the CBCSD context, suggesting that the transformation of CBCSD's attractional evangelism strategy into a missional, incarnational strategy was successful in both physical and virtual HG settings.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Discussion

Believed and Baptized Number

On average, only 37 percent (21 of 57) of Bests who accepted Jesus were baptized at the end of the HG rounds in the first two rounds compared to 64 percent (7 of 11) in ABS (Table 10). Though five were baptized in other churches, 31 were still not baptized. This number suggests that some Bests wanted to receive the salvation of God but were not ready to commit to baptism in such a short and intensive period. They needed more time to process it carefully.

It is a typical Chinese intellectuals' behavior pattern. They like to think carefully to minimize the risk before making an "official" commitment. The good part is that these Bests take baptism seriously. The negative side is that they might walk away from the faith because of a lack of commitment. Therefore, following up is vital to help them stay in the faith and be baptized someday later. All HG teams were strongly encouraged to keep in touch with all their Bests and invite them to join the next round of HG if possible. These returning Bests can choose to attend any HG team they prefer.

Belonging Before Believing in HG

It is worthy to note that the Bests were not receivers or takers alone. Some Bests were eager to contribute to HG meetings. They wanted to be treated as part of the family rather than honored guests. To help them feel included and reduce the load of HG coworkers, some HG leaders adjusted the operation by inviting Bests to participate in

preparing food, making the HG meeting a potluck-style dinner party. The result of this adjustment was very positive. Bests' participation not only took burdens away from coworkers who prepared food but also hooked the Bests to HG tightly. All Bests who participated in service attended HG regularly. They felt accepted when they were treated as family members rather than guests. A trust relationship was built up when their contribution was appreciated.

This experience suggests that creating a belonging before believing culture is essential in spreading the gospel in the CBCSD cultural context. Even though the Bests are not believers yet, involving them in service such as preparing food and making gifts is an excellent way to make them committed to attending HG meetings.

The Congregation's Involvement at CBCSD

The congregation's involvement was very encouraging. The increased number of HG teams and frontline coworkers in the second round indicated that the transformation was moving in the right direction. Sixty percent of the congregation were frontline HG coworkers in round two (Table 6), plus many prayer partners and supporting coworkers, suggesting that the majority of the congregation was involved in HG, and the transformation was successful. All fellowships and small groups of the 4S campus participated in HG at least once. The Spring fellowship and Joy small group participated in every round.

Spring fellowship is an evangelism-oriented group. It consists of about 20 families with youths and young kids. The fellowship consistently formed two HG teams in all three rounds and led 31 Bests to accept Jesus. The fellowship leaders, along with the congregation pastor, actively led the HG teams. Their examples mobilized the rest to follow. Ed, the fellowship president, co-led an HG with the researcher in the first round.

He opened his home to host the HG meetings and planned his family vacation to accommodate the HG schedule. His wife and their three kids helped to take care of the Bests' kids. They did such an excellent job that HG became a happy time for kids. Some Bests attended the HG meeting consistently because their kids wanted to attend the children's program. Ed continued to lead an HG team in rounds two and three.

The HG coworkers' spirits were high and very committed. Though some HG coworkers faced some challenges during the HG transformation, they stepped up to pray to fight the spiritual battle together and became overcomers. For example, Wenzhong and Jenny, the deacon and the Spring fellowship's former president, overcame adversity. During the first round of HG, all their four cars were involved in different traffic accidents, but they prayed and saw the Lord's protection in all four accidents. They had peace and continued service in HG as coworkers and became HG leaders in rounds two and three.

Joy small group changed the most among all the groups. It consists of about 25 members who earned degrees and worked in the States for many years. Most of them are retired or close to retirement age. The group members are very close and have enjoyed good fellowship among themselves. The group leader used to consider breaking them into two sub-groups because the size was big. But the group members liked to stick together; therefore, the growth was limited. However, the group members grasped the HG vision and were fired up for evangelism. Every member accepted the challenge to be transformed as a missional disciple. They decided to cancel the small group meeting to let everyone participate in HG. The group formed three HG teams in the first round.

It was a significant change for them. For example, Daniel has been a Christian for 40 years, but he never thought he was called and had a gift to spread the gospel, so he barely attended mission conferences or evangelical events. HG brought a big excitement to his small group, and everyone was fired up to join an HG team. When he saw the small group had formed two HG teams, he decided to form the third group so that the rest of the small group members could participate in HG. This spirit of embracing the HG transformation was very encouraging though some were burned out in the first round and did not participate in the second and third rounds.

The other fellowships and small groups did not form HG teams in every round for various reasons. But they made efforts to participate in HG. For example, Grace fellowship did not form a team in the second round because of a lack of Bests. But they sent four coworkers to support two Yongzhen HG teams. The rest of the fellowship members spent time reconnecting with their non-believing friends and building up the Best database. They formed an HG team in the third round.

Another encouraging sign was that coworkers were transforming while doing HG. For example, Mindy did not like to cook food. She joined the researcher's HG team in the first round and noticed a need to make food. Mindy felt that God called her to contribute some food and responded by doing some cooking. With this new meaning of cooking, she started to enjoy cooking for HG and her family. Mindy joined two HG teams in the second round to provide delicious food.

Through these three rounds, the coworkers enjoyed the benefit of HG. HG created a close and loving relationship among coworkers. The HG coworkers came together with one single purpose: loving the Bests and spreading the gospel to them. They were

encouraged because their strengths and gifts were mutually complementary. They felt valued and honored for being used by God. Many HG leaders mentioned that they felt more comfortable spreading the gospel and lead people to believe in Jesus in HG.

Challenges in the Transformation Process

Any transformation faces some challenges. CBCSD senior pastor, Albert Lam, pointed out that one of the greatest challenges in this transformation was to change the mindset of some coworkers. Some CBCSD coworkers had a strong attractional mindset. Because the attractional evangelism approach was rooted in CBCSD from the beginning of the church and CBCSD congregations were used to the mind-oriented evangelism approach to persuade people to believe in Jesus, the transformation required time, patience, and practice.

In general, CBCSD coworkers embraced the relation-oriented HG strategy, but HG leaders struggled to apply it in practice. Changing the habit of using a mind-oriented evangelism approach was a challenge to every HG coworker at CBCSD, particularly in the first round. All HG leaders reported that the biggest challenge was to share the message by telling a story rather than preaching or teaching. Some HG leaders struggled to balance the gospel message because of a lack of experience or a tendency to teach knowledge. They either told too little of the gospel or spoke too long about the salvation doctrine. CBCSD pastors outlined the eight messages and recorded demo video samples for HG leaders in the following rounds to respond to this challenge.

Regardless of human performance, the Holy Spirit worked in the hearts of the Best and convinced many of them to accept Jesus. HG coworkers experienced that it is the Holy Spirit to make the Bests say, “Jesus is Lord” (1 Cor. 12:3). “It is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). It was not merely a

human effort and ability to make them believe. The HG coworkers' responsibility was to make themselves available to evangelize so that God can use them to complete His work. With this understanding, the HG coworkers were more relaxed and trusted God more in the second and third rounds.

In addition, some coworkers have started to see the world through the perspective of missional evangelism. For example, Tony testified how HG changed his perspective on interacting with people. He used to think that to be a good witness was to be a friendly neighbor and a helpful colleague. HG transformed his perspective. He started to view his neighbors and colleagues as his potential Bests and outreached to them proactively. Tony's story indicates that it is possible to change people's minds and habits through HG. When doing it persistently, the congregation's mind and behavior can be changed. They see things differently, view every nonbeliever as a potential Best, and intentionally make nonbeliever friends. An evangelical movement can be expected.

Impact of HG on the Current Ministries

CBCSD has many good ministries, and evangelism was one of the ministries. Evangelism ministry was not a driving force nor a leading ministry in the past. All these ministries require resources and coworkers. Lam pointed out that HG was a big project for turning around the whole church and impacting every church ministry. This project found that the impact of HG on the church was huge. It not only challenged congregations to participate in the evangelism transformation but also impacted other ongoing ministries significantly.

The tension between running the ongoing ministry and doing HG was evident at the beginning of the adaptation. During the vision sharing of adapting HG to serve as a driving engine to other ministries, some lay leaders questioned the importance of their

ministries and were reluctant to participate in the transformation. A couple of lay leaders openly expressed their objection to the HG, which brought some tension. All these reactions were because these lay leaders felt insecure about their ministries or had not seen the heavenly value of HG yet. This issue was addressed through prayer, vision sharing, preaching on God's mission and body of Christ, and patiently communicating.

The visit to KBBC convinced the researcher that HG as the central ministry to drive all other ministries is the right approach and achievable. This strategy simplifies the church operation. HG evangelism system, HDTS, and the multi-level shepherding system worked synergistically to make KBBC a very practical, energetic, and healthy missional church. More time is needed to allow CBCSD to be fully transformed into a missional church.

The Importance of Sustainability

Transformation is a process that takes a long time to complete. Sustainability is the key to ensure a successful HG transformation. Though the first three rounds of HG went smoothly and the results were encouraging, the heavy workload made some HG coworkers feel exhausted and want to take a break. This kind of mentality and attitude would bring more challenges to recruit new coworkers for future HG.

The sustainability of HG relies on the congregation pastors' unwavering leadership, the HG coworkers' continuous commitment, and recruiting new coworkers to join. In the long run, it is essential to train newly believed Bests to become HG coworkers. It also requires using coworkers' time wisely, such as releasing them from unnecessary administration meetings to give them time to do HG. There is a danger of falling back to make HG one of the ministries to satisfy unhappy "customers." The people-pleasing tendency needs to be avoided during the transformation.

The Function of HG in Discipleship

Though discipleship was not the main focus of this project, the result indicated that HG is an on-the-job training discipleship program. Many HG coworkers were first-timers in evangelism and were a little scared and nervous at the beginning. But as they walked out of their comfort zone to take this challenge in faith, they started to experience that God is with them. While proclaiming what they have believed, they experienced what they just proclaimed. Some experienced God's protection and supernatural healings; others witnessed the almighty power of God in changing people's hearts. No matter how many Bests believed in Jesus in each HG team, the coworkers were built up in the faith.

HG strategy offered a platform to train Christians to become effective gospel messengers in CBCSD's cultural context. Like many traditional evangelical churches, the discipleship program at CBCSD focused on teaching the Bible books and the right doctrine in Sunday School for years. The teachers were good at teaching biblical knowledge in the classrooms but struggled to make applications because there was no viable practice platform. HG offered an on-the-job training platform with a clear goal to equip students to be good gospel messengers. It also created a common cause for the congregation to learn and to serve together. In the HG team, everyone played a role and needed to help each other. As a result, their teamwork, faith, and character were built up.

This project found that the characters of spiritual parents were developed in some coworkers. HG leaders started to take care of their spiritual children. For example, Chuck and Jan, and Charlie and Lucy were all fired up to lead HG and used by God greatly to lead several Bests to believe in Jesus. Having the heavy burdens of these newborn Christians, they put away their other responsibilities to accompany the newly believed Bests to attend baptism classes and lead them in Happiness disciple training classes.

Their efforts built a strong connection with the newly believed Christians, making them good spiritual parents to these spiritual babies. Most of these new Christians grew fast and became HG coworkers in the third round.

Recommendations

Project Review

This project addressed the problem of transforming the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnational, missional strategy of HG as modeled by KBBC. This study began with an examination of the biblical teaching regarding mission and evangelism, including the love of God as the foundation of mission and evangelism, the call of the church to be blessed and be a blessing, the Great Commission as a mandate for the church, and a brief survey of Apostle Paul's methods. The result of this biblical study concluded that the nature of the church is missional rather than attractional. Following the biblical study, the researcher reviewed the relevant literature about the responses of churches to changes in a postmodern, post-Christendom era, paying particular attention to missional church movement, HG strategy, and transformational process models. The literature review result demonstrated that the traditional attractional evangelism approach is no longer effective, and the incarnational, missional strategy is a practical approach in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. Then this study briefly reviewed and evaluated the attractional ABS program at CBCSD to identify the cause of low-involvement and low-effectiveness, interviewed the senior pastor of CBCSD about challenges in transforming the evangelism strategy, and visited KBBC to gain firsthand information and an in-depth understanding of their HG operation. Furthermore, this study adapted and implemented HG at the 4S campus of CBCSD to transform local evangelism through inspiring a shared vision, imprinting the heavenly value of HG evangelism, and

leading by example. The results and data analysis indicated that the transformation went smoothly and was successful. Finally, this study discussed the HG transformation in the first half of this chapter.

Based on the project results, the researcher gave seven recommendations as follows:

Recommendation 1: Engage Leadership

Leadership plays a crucial role in the transformation. Transformation starts from the leadership. To transform a congregation to be missional, the leadership must be missional first. The missional leadership is to prepare the congregation to live missional lives where God is sending them.¹⁶⁷

This project found that leading by example, imprinting a heavenly value, and inspiring a shared vision were the three keys for a successful transformation.

The Importance of Leading by Example

People respect their leaders and follow them, not because of their positions but their actions. Kouzes and Posner point out that titles are granted, but it's a leader's behavior that earns respect. People first follow the person, then the plan. Good leaders lead by example. Say what you mean and do what you say. "Words and Deeds must be consistent."¹⁶⁸

The success of HG relies on the congregation's participation. The degree of the congregation's involvement depends on how they see their leaders doing HG. Therefore,

¹⁶⁷ Guder, "Walking Worthily: Missional Leadership after Christendom", 278-291.

¹⁶⁸ Kouzes, location 708.

it is crucial for the pastor to lead HG actively and set an excellent example for the congregation to follow.

While the researcher visited KBBC, Yang stated that his ministry philosophy is “leading by example” and emphasized its importance. The researcher strongly sensed that KBBC’s success was an excellent model of leading by example. Many interviewees mentioned that they committed to do HG because they saw the commitment of their senior pastor, Si-Ru Yang. Yang set a high standard for himself to submit to the call of God (to lead congregations to spread the gospel through HG) and live a faithful life. The rest of the pastors and church leaders followed Yang’s leadership and committed to spreading the gospel through HG. When congregations saw that their pastors prioritized HG and were fully committed, they followed the pastors’ example with joyful hearts.

To encourage the congregation to keep doing HG, it is crucial that the church leaders, especially pastors, lead the HG in the frontline each time. This project requested pastors to set good examples for the congregation to follow. Pastors’ unwavering commitment to lead or drive HG and be transparent to share their experiences (especially struggles) are significant for the congregation to follow. This leading by example principle had successfully mobilized the majority congregation to do HG in three rounds at CBCSD.

The Importance of Imprinting the Heavenly Value of Evangelism

One of the most critical factors of KBBC’s success was consistently imprinting the HG value. Yang and other KBBC leaders all emphasized its importance to inspire and mobilize congregations to keep doing HG. Therefore, it is crucial for pastors to lead the congregation to see the heavenly value of HG. People make efforts for things they value. No price cannot be paid, but the value has to be seen!

To imprint the value of HG evangelism in the congregation, this project established that the love of God is the foundation of evangelism. The call of the church is to be blessed and be a blessing to others. It is essential to let the congregation see that HG is to participate in the redemptive mission of *Missio Dei*. It is the teamwork of God and God's people to bring the gospel to the lost world. Salvation is found in no one else, and there is no other way people can be saved (Acts 4:12). The central task of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission. It requires every Christian in every church to work together to complete it effectively.

In this study, through the biblical review, HG conference, workshops, and six inspirational sermons preached by the researcher, the congregation grasped the heavenly value of evangelism and embraced the HG strategy. When the congregation saw the value, they eagerly paid the price by investing their time and money in doing HG. For example, Amanda was a deacon and had committed to several ministries. She saw the value of the HG and realized that it is the most important thing to do. Amanda joined the first two HG rounds and encouraged her husband, a computer engineer, to join the virtual HG. She paid the price because she saw the value.

The Importance of Inspiring a Shared Vision

Transformation requires the leaders to have a clear vision and be able to gain consensus on the common cause. A shared vision intensifies commitment and causes a significant difference in work attitudes and performance. Vision is critical for any church to unite the congregation and make the commitment to move forward. It provides powerful energy to a transformation. However, vision is not a blueprint from heaven, providing detailed plans. It provides the direction of God's leading and requires faithful obedience of God's people. Abraham's faithful obedience to the call of God is an

example. God did not give Abraham a blueprint when God called him to leave. God had promises for him (Gen. 12:1-3). When Abraham responded to the call faithfully, God's promises were delivered. Abraham experienced God, and his life was transformed.

This project shared the HG vision through vision sharing meetings, praying meetings, and Sunday services. These intentional efforts opened many ways for the congregation to learn the calling of God and see the value of HG and understand CBCSD's evangelism transformation strategy. When the congregation grasped the value and the vision, they committed to move forward.

Recommendation 2: Adapt and Embrace the Incarnational Strategy

The incarnational strategy is "living life with great intentionality and earning the right to share one's faith in a relationship."¹⁶⁹ HG applied the "missional-incarnational impulse," where the word "missional" expresses the sending nature of the church, while "incarnational" represents the "embedding" of the gospel into a local context.¹⁷⁰

KBBC leaders found out that a strategy that worked well in other churches was not effective in their church. They concluded that it is neither wise nor resourceful if one only copies a successful method without adapting to the local culture. They developed the HG strategy and emphasized relational methodology by targeting people's hearts rather than their minds in KBBC's cultural context.

Before the HG transformation, Lam was concerned that this relational approach might not be suitable in the CBCSD context because the target people at KBBC were mostly blue-collar people, but mostly intellectuals and professionals in the CBCSD

¹⁶⁹ McDaniel, 39.

¹⁷⁰ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 135-158.

context. The target people in the CBCSD context were smart and liked to reason. Usually, they would not believe the gospel unless it made sense to them. They needed to be persuaded in mind and convinced with knowledge. Therefore, a persuasive presentation is essential to them.

This target people difference required CBCSD HG leaders to adjust the gospel sharing approach to target both people's hearts and minds. This project found that food, gifts, and other acts of love can be used to target the Bests' hearts, while logical and clear gospel presentations are needed to target the Bests' minds.

“A Spirit-led congregation will learn to adapt and recontextualize its ministry to address the challenges and opportunities that it faces with such changes—always forming and reforming.”¹⁷¹ It is crucial that the church leaders adapt HG to fit in their specific context and make necessary modifications of HG to deliver the gospel message clearly and incarnationally.

The Central Message of the Gospel

The gospel content is “the timeless, unchanging, and non-negotiable” function. The delivery methods are the changing forms that should be “sensitive to cultural dynamics and realities.”¹⁷² The core of the gospel is “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3-4) and “that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). The core of the gospel cannot be changed in any situation, but it must be delivered incarnationally.

¹⁷¹ Van Gelder, location 2027.

¹⁷² Malphurs, 85-93.

The Incarnational Strategy

The incarnation of God demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of spreading the gospel. "Jesus did not expect people to come to where he was but rather went to them."¹⁷³ Therefore, incarnational strategy essentially means "taking the church to the people rather than bringing people to the church."¹⁷⁴ Christians are sent into other people's world to spread the gospel and love them as Jesus would. It is entering other people's worlds as Jesus Christ entered the world without compromising biblical convictions, values, or standards.

The incarnational strategy is a practical and effective approach to reach out to the people outside of the church in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. Paul set an excellent example of spreading the gospel incarnationally. He said, "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor. 9:22-23). This passage is a model for Christians to win people from different backgrounds. Paul spread the gospel incarnationally, "never changing the contents of the gospel but adapting its communication to the culture of his audience. This remains the model for missions and evangelism today."¹⁷⁵

Recommendation 3: Prayer as a Priority in the Transformation

Jesus taught disciples to pray to the Father, "your kingdom come, you will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Evangelism is a spiritual war to expand the

¹⁷³ Hirsch, *Untamed*, 237.

¹⁷⁴ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* 145.

¹⁷⁵ Vanlaningham, page 3825.

kingdom of God on the earth. The importance of prayer is never overemphasized in any context.

Fervent prayers were the powerhouse of HG at KBBC. Though the senior pastor did not mention the importance of the prayer during the interviews, it was apparent that prayer was a common practice and had become the congregation's habit at KBBC. All the interviewees mentioned that the driving force for KBBC to keep doing HG was the Holy Spirit. This answer is absolutely right in any ministry of any church. In addition to the work of the Holy Spirit, powerful prayer was actually the engine to drive HG at KBBC. The powerful and lively prayer life was their power source for an energetic and enduring passion for doing HG.

This project encouraged all congregations to pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and organized a 40-day fasting and prayer chain among all the congregations in the early stage. Every HG frontline coworker at the 4S campus was encouraged to find two prayer partners. The HG coworkers shared their prayer needs with their prayer partners and prayed with them once a week. During each HG round, the 4S campus prayer warriors consistently prayed for each HG coworker and every Best in Wednesday night and Sunday morning prayer meetings. The pastor also led the congregation to pray and empower HG coworkers during Sunday services. These prayers united the congregation and prepared the way for a successful transformation.

Recommendation 4: Make HG the Central Ministry

The existence of a church is to fulfill the Great Commission, so a church must be an evangelism-oriented church. The evangelism ministry must be the central ministry to drive other ministries. However, that is not to say that other ministries are not important. It is to use outward HG ministry to align other inward ministries to make disciples of

Jesus. Van Aarde points out that a healthy church has balanced the outward (Apostle, Prophet, and Evangelist) and inward (Pastor and Teacher) functions, in which structures of the church dynamically function together in unity to be a missional church (Eph. 4:11-13).¹⁷⁶ Inward ministries, such as shepherding the congregations, teaching the word of God, and training disciples, are critical to keeping the sustainability of the HG transformation.

To make HG a central ministry, all ministry leaders should not compare their ministry's importance but see each one playing a different function of the church, not competing for resources but cooperating to have a synergistic effect. To create a harmonious atmosphere, it is essential to guide the congregations to seek what God wants them to do through creating a safe environment for coworkers to freely decide to join HG or not and discouraging any comparison and competition. Meanwhile, it is good to reduce administration meetings so that coworkers have time to do HG.

CBCSD's ministries have started to align toward fulfilling the Great Commission after the three HG rounds. Though it is still in the early stages, to make HG the central ministry makes all ministries work in one direction, creating a synergy, clarifying the church mission statement, and simplifying the ministries.

Recommendation 5: Involve Nonbelievers in Service

This project found that the Bests were not receivers or takers alone. Some Bests were eager to contribute to HG meetings. They wanted to be treated as part of the family rather than honored guests. Bests' participation in preparing food took burdens away

¹⁷⁶ Van Aarde, 6-9.

from coworkers and hooked the Bests to HG tightly. All Bests who participated in service attended HG regularly. They felt accepted when they were treated as family members rather than guests. A trust relationship was built up when their contribution was appreciated.

In postmodern culture, “Many people want to belong to a place that they can call home and identify with.”¹⁷⁷ To create a belonging before believing culture is an essential step in spreading the gospel. Involving nonbelievers in service, such as preparing food and making gifts, is an excellent way to make them committed to attending the HG meetings. “Serving increases a sense of belonging.” “When people serve, they have an increased sense of belonging to the organization in which they serve.”¹⁷⁸ Involving nonbelievers in service is an effective way to let them commit to coming to hear the story of Jesus Christ. And then they can believe in Jesus and truly belong to God’s family.

Recommendation 6: Congregational Commitment to Evangelism

Missional leadership is to prepare the congregation to live missional lives where God is sending them. This project result indicated that congregations could make a significant commitment to do HG when they grasped the heavenly value of evangelism. HG provided an on-the-job training discipleship platform for learning while doing and doing while learning. One does not have to be fully equipped to start but needs to start in order to be fully equipped. Many HG coworkers were first-timers in evangelism and were

¹⁷⁷ Miroslav Pujic, “Re-Imagining Evangelism in a Postmodern Culture,” *Ministry*, May 2013, accessed January 19, 2021, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2013/05/re-imagining-evangelism-in-a-postmodern-culture>

¹⁷⁸ Brian Mowrey, “Unity in Diversity: An Intentional Plan to Move from Inclusion to Belonging to Becoming,” (D. Min. diss., Bethel Seminary, 2018), 131, accessed June 5, 2020. <https://cdm16120.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16120coll4/id/1217/rec/1>

a little scared and nervous at the beginning. But as they walked out of their comfort zone to take the challenge in faith, they started to experience that God is with them.

Regardless of the human performance, the Holy Spirit worked in the heart of the Best and convinced many of them to accept Jesus. HG coworkers experienced that it is not merely a human effort and ability to make people believe Jesus, but the power of God at work to save people who believe (Rom 1:16). Their responsibility is to make themselves available to evangelize so that God can use them to complete His work. HG coworkers were more relaxed and trusted God more in the second and third rounds. They learned to rely on the power of God rather than their strength. When they participate in the redemptive mission with God and keep evangelizing in HG, ordinary Christians can become effective gospel messengers to accomplish extraordinary things for God.

Recommendation 7: Love People and Be a Missional Church

This project demonstrated that the love of God is the foundation of evangelism. Love is the center of the gospel. The greatest evidence of God's love for humankind is the incarnation of God. The second person of the triune God took human form to demonstrate His love and die for humanity to save them from death (Rom. 5:8). God loves people and calls Christians to participate in His redemptive mission. It is the triune God's loving action to bring salvation to humanity. The Father sends the Son, then the Father and the Son send the Spirit, and finally, the triune God sends the church into the world to be missionaries. The heart of God is to love everyone and to save as many as possible. In every generation, God calls His people to bless them so that they can love God and be a blessing to others.

Love requires action. Loving God means acting to keep His commands and to show His love to others. The new command Jesus gave to His disciples (John 13:34-35)

requires Christians to love one another and demonstrate this godly love toward each other in front of nonbelievers. It is to go into the community to find nonbelievers and demonstrate this love to them and draw them to God. Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples. The central task of the Great Commission is to make disciples of Jesus. It relies on the power of God and requires all Christians to work together to accomplish it. Christians who love God must follow God's heart and submit to God's will to fulfill the Great Commission with teamwork as Paul did in the first century.

The nature of the church is missional rather than attractional. The missional church movement is a direct response to the drastic discontinuous change of the world in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. The original form of the missional church movement is strongly connected to the concept of *Missio Dei*. It is to recognize that God is a sending God, and the church is sent into the world to participate in the divine mission to save people. The missional church is about actively participating in the *Missio Dei*. It is sending congregations into the community to love the nonbelievers in their love languages, share the gospel to their understanding, lead them to believe in Jesus, and baptized them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

This project would recommend any local church to adapt the HG strategy in their cultural contexts to love people and make the church a missional church.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EVALUATION AND REFLECTION

This project successfully transformed the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnational, missional strategy of HG. HG was effective in both physical and virtual settings in CBCSD's cultural context. The transformation solved the low-effectiveness and low-involvement problems of CBCSD.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project Design

The Strengths

The first strength of this project is that the researcher could use his sabbatical time to visit KBBC and was able to fully immerse himself in the church for about a month to gain first-hand information about HG. The researcher interviewed the senior pastor and other church leaders, observed the operations of several HG teams, and came home with an in-depth understanding of HG. The value of this visit has been reflected in the transformation of CBCSD's evangelism strategy to the HG strategy, particularly at the 4S campus.

The second strength is that the CBCSD leaders were very involved from the beginning of the project, particularly the senior pastor's commitment which enabled the smooth transformation. CBCSD sent 44 leaders, including the senior pastor and all Chinese-speaking pastors, to attend the HG international conference hosted from July 24-26, 2018, in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. These 44 people became a driving force for HG vision sharing, mobilization, and implementation.

The third strength is that this project had a ten-people core HG leadership team. The team planned and drove the HG transformation step by step persistently. The core leadership team consisted of the senior pastor, the cross-campus ministry pastor, six campus pastors, and two fellowship deacons. All team members were very committed.

The fourth strength is that this project created an awareness of change and shared the HG vision through vision sharing meetings, praying meetings, and Sunday services. These intentional efforts opened many ways for the congregation to be involved early and created momentum to do HG at CBCSD.

The fifth strength is that this project emphasized leading by example. All Chinese-speaking pastors at CBCSD were actively involved in HG. The researcher led one HG team and supported more than two HG teams in each round at the 4S campus. The congregation was mobilized by the pastor's teaching and action.

The sixth strength is that this project was able to do three rounds of HG and generated some data for analysis, evaluation, and discussion.

The seventh strength is that this project used the *Zoom* Cloud meetings app to host virtual HG meetings, which provided some information about doing evangelism in a virtual setting and the pros and cons of virtual HG.

The last but not the least strength is that this project valued the prayer and prioritized it in the transformation.

The Weaknesses

The biggest weakness is that this project was limited to reporting HG data generated only from the 4S campus, where the researcher served as an executive pastor. The data sample was relatively small to produce statistical analysis to draw a convincing conclusion for other churches to use.

The second weakness is that this study did not test HG's feasibility in a non-Chinese cultural context.

Suggestions for Future Study

Though the transformation results are encouraging in the three rounds of this project, more HG rounds in both physical and virtual settings are highly recommended to generate more data and test the sustainability of HG transformation. Transforming a church from attractional to missional involves many more ministries. More time is needed to allow the HG strategy to transform the rest of the church ministry operations fully.

CBCSD has led several people far away to believe in Jesus Christ through the virtual HG. How to shepherd these scattered Christians and make them the missional disciples is a good problem that the church has to face in the near future. As the virtual HG keeps ongoing, one can imagine that many more people far away will become Christians. They will need to get together to function as a church in their community. Many cell churches (incarnational, missional community-based micro-churches) may emerge everywhere in the world. The cell church and virtual church elements need to be studied urgently. Covid-19 pandemic brought discontinuous changes everywhere. The virtual and physical hybrid context probably will be the new normal in the post-Covid-19 era. A study on developing new evangelism strategies is definitely needed in the near future. As the world enters into the digital age, the Internet, Wi-Fi, Smartphone, 5G technology, and so on have changed or will change people's communication and social activities. A study on the digital church is needed.

The work of the Holy Spirit plays a determining role in empowering HG coworkers and leading people to accept Jesus Christ. KBBC encourages coworkers to

pursue and be filled by the Holy Spirit, including practicing speaking in the tongues as a way to experience the Holy Spirit. This charismatic practice caused some uneasiness or concerns among some traditional Chinese church leaders. How HG brings a constructive charismatic impact on evangelical churches to practice healthy charismatic gifts such as speaking in tongues remains unclear and needs to be studied in the future.

The study on adaptation and application of HG in the other race cultural context is also needed. HG only provides a platform for churches to do evangelism. How to deliver the gospel message in a specific cultural context incarnationally needs the church leaders to study their culture and figure out if the HG strategy is usable in their church's cultural context.

HG needs new blood to keep it ongoing. HDTS plays a pivotal role in raising the HG coworkers. Because of the time limitation, HDTS is not studied in this project but certainly needs to be studied in the future.

Project Summary

In summary, this project established that the love of God is the foundation for mission and evangelism. *Missio Dei*, the mission of God, expresses both the heart of God and the call of the church. The heart of God is to love everyone and to save as many as possible. God so loved humankind that the Father sent the Son, then the Son and the Father sent the Spirit, and then the triune God sent the church into the world to save them. The call of the church is to be blessed and be a blessing to others. The Great Commission is a mandate for the church and requires every Christian to work together to fulfill it effectively.

The incarnation of God demonstrates God's love and reveals the model of doing mission and evangelism. The incarnational strategy is a practical and effective approach

to reach out to the people outside of the church in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. It is entering other people's worlds as Jesus Christ entered the world without compromising biblical convictions, values, or standards.

This project introduced the HG strategy as a new practical evangelism model to the Christian community. HG is a missional, incarnational, love-based group evangelism platform that lets every Christian participate in the Great Commission and grow in the ministry. It applies the incarnational strategy to send believers into their community to love nonbelievers and spread the gospel proactively. Just as Jesus was sent into the world to love people and bring salvation to them, Christians are sent into other people's world to spread the gospel and love them as Jesus would.

This project identified that the traditional attractional evangelism approach is no longer effective in the postmodern and post-Christendom era. The low-effectiveness of CBCSD's evangelism program is because the church was not adjusting well to keep up with the world's changes. Low-involvement of the congregation was due to a lack of an effective evangelism platform and a lack of understanding of the heavenly value of evangelism.

This project, therefore, adapted the HG strategy in CBCSD cultural context and transformed the attractional evangelism strategy of CBCSD to the incarnational, missional strategy. The majority of the congregation participated in the three HG rounds, which outreached to 194 nonbelievers, led 67 to believe in Jesus, and 31 were baptized.

The result indicated that the HG strategy was effective in CBCSD's cultural context. The transformation successfully solved the low-effectiveness and low-involvement problems of CBCSD. The result of using the *Zoom* meetings app to host HG

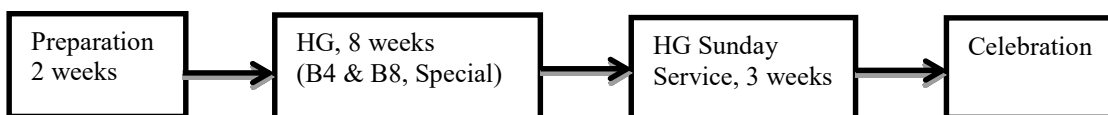
meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic provided an example and some valuable information for churches to do evangelism in virtual settings.

Finally, the researcher strongly sensed that the return of the Lord is imminent, and there is not much time for churches to waste doing unimportant and ineffective things. The nature of the church is missional. The church is believers who are gathered to bring nonbelievers to God. The most important ministry of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission. May all church leaders be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in this ever-changing world and diligently explore effective evangelism strategies to lead the congregations to go outside of the church walls into the community incarnationally to love people and bring salvation to them in their cultural context as Jesus would.

APPENDIX A: HG WEEKLY PLAN

Appendix A: HG Weekly Plan

Fourteen Weeks HG Strategy



Weekly HG Plan

Week	Theme	Task	Notes
	Form HG Teams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruiting Coworkers and inviting Bests 2. Budgeting 	Bests invitation evaluation Coworkers assignment
Preparation Week 1	The Power of the Gospel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stress the power of the Gospel and the purpose of Evangelism 2. Focus on Prayer and rely on the Holy Spirit 3. Make sure everyone invites his or her Bests 	Pray for the Bests invited one by one Each coworker recruits two prayer partners
Preparation Week 2	Fishing of Men	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unity of the team 2. Pray for the Bests 3. Pray for each other 	
Week 3	True Happiness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony about seeking Happiness 3. Give the Bests small precious gift 	Build up connections Invite Bests to come next time
Week 4	The Truth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony about deceived 3. Build up a relationship 	Evaluation Best's responses Invite Bests to come next time
Week 5	The All-Time Super Star	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony 3. Introduce Jesus 	Invite Bests to accept Jesus in prayer Invite Bests to come next time

Week 6	The Happiness Connection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony 3. Introduce Jesus 4. Special: Make it a quality time for Bests 	<p>Have fun and flexible</p> <p>Invite Bests to come back</p>
Week 7	God Knocks on Your Door	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony 3. The love of Jesus 	<p>Follow up with Bests to evaluate their spiritual status</p> <p>Encourage coworkers and pray for each other</p> <p>Prepare Baptism invitation card</p>
Week 8	The Victory on the Cross	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony 3. Introduce the Salvation of God 4. Give gifts to the Best 	<p>Invite Bests to accept the Salvation.</p> <p>Follow-up and invite Bests consider baptized</p>
Week 9	Deliverance and Freedom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray for the Bests 2. Share testimony 3. Introduce Jesus' resurrection 	<p>Invite Bests to accept the Salvation.</p> <p>Follow-up and invite Bests to consider baptized.</p>
Week 10	The Happiness Church	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite Bests to accept the Salvation. 2. Follow-up and invite Bests to consider baptized 3. Give precious Gift 4. Invite Bests to attend Gospel Sunday services 	
Week 11	Happiness Sunday 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome the Bests 2. Gospel Message in Testimony by a Celebrity #1 3. Altar calling 	<p>Welcome Bests to the church</p> <p>Introduce church to the Bests</p>
Week 12	Happiness Sunday 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome the Bests 2. Gospel Message in Testimony by a Celebrity #2 3. Altar calling 	<p>Invite Bests to consider baptism</p> <p>Introduce church to the Bests</p>

Week 13	Happiness Sunday 3	1. Welcome the Bests 2. Gospel Message in Testimony by a Celebrity #3 3. Altar calling	Invite Bests to consider baptism Introduce church to the Bests
Week 14	Celebration Sunday	Special Sunday Service	Invite Bests to join a small group Fellow up
Baptism			It can be done in various time and location

APPENDIX B: HG MEETING FLOWCHART

Appendix B: HG Meeting Flowchart

Flow	Time	Purpose and Content	Notes
Preparation	30-60 min.	Setup and Food Preparation Coworkers pray for at least 30min	Pray in spiritual warfare
Bests Arrival		Play background music Warmly welcome and give them the name badge or Tags Free talk to mingle Self-introduction	Every coworker must participate in welcome.
Icebreaking	5 min.	Goal: 1. Relax and reduce nervous of the Bests 2. Guide Bests to focus on HG 3. Gain information about Bests 4. Simple and easy for everyone to participate 5. To the point, do not take too long	Choose a game related to the Topic Every coworker must participate passionately to set an example for Bests to follow.
Song sing	10 min.	1. Let Bests touched by God in song sing 2. Worship God in song sing is a testimony of coworkers 3. Provide PPT or lyric 4. Clear introduction and instruction 5. Be sensitive on leading of the Holy Spirit 6. Do a simple prayer at the end	Practice before the meeting Avoid using too spiritual songs Avoid singing too many new songs
Testimony	10 min.	1. Guide the Bests paying attention to the person who will do the testimony. 2. Choose a testimony related to the Message and Best's interests. 3. Naturally tell the story (testimony)	Write down the testimony and have feedbacks from the HG leader Motivation: Glorify God, not oneself, must be a real story and tell lively. Avoid reading through.
Message	25 min.	1. Guide the Bests to pay attention to the speaker. 2. Use multi-medium to make present interesting 3. Tell stories rather than teaching or preaching	Prepare and practice well Focus on help Bests understand rather than a good presentation

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Simple topic and easy to understand 5. Skillfully lead Bests pray at the end 	<p>Avoiding: talking too much, lost focus, reading out, speaking too many Christianese, debating, and attacking other religions.</p> <p>Pray, pray, and pray.</p>
Prayer	20 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play prayerful background music 2. Pray for Best's needs 3. Divide into small groups 4. Encourage Bests to pray 	<p>Do not miss any Bests</p> <p>Remember Best's prayer requests and follow-up</p> <p>Do not share Best's prayer request outside the group unless the Best requested.</p>
Fellowship and Gift time	Flexible	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have some snack 2. Free talking and do not leave out any Bests. 3. Encourage Bests to tell his or her story and establish a good relationship 	<p>Make sure everyone is involved and happy</p> <p>Intentionally talk to every Best</p>
Encouragement and Debriefing	30 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay attention to positive things, encourage each other, and praise the Lord! 2. Write down major things that need to be improved or be aware of. 3. Discuss and make follow up plan 	<p>Do it right after the HG meeting</p> <p>Focus on encouraging each other</p>
<p>【HG Special Weeks】 (Suggest on week six and week 10)</p> <p>Goal: Strong connection with Bests, create belonging, and introduce other coworkers to the Bests.</p> <p>Manner: In addition to HG, have some fun together.</p> <p>Suggestion: Arrange some activity fit the Best's need, such as Birthday Parties, picnic, outing, camping, watching movies, playing sports, etc.</p>			

APPENDIX C: HG MEETING CHECKLIST

Appendix C: HG Meeting Checklist

Week :

Stage	Time	Program	Tasks	Task Assignment
Before Bests Arrival	30 min.	Setup	1. Facility decoration 2. Name tag: Place all attending Best's name tag in order 3. Gift preparation and placement 3. Food preparation 4. Seating arrangement: Intentionally seat Best and coworker side by side for easy mingling. 5. Last minutes check: All types of equipment are working properly. Coworkers are ready (welcome, icebreaking, song singing, testimony sharing, message, food, etc.) 6. Rehearsal: Ice break and Song Sing	1. Name Tag: 2. Gift: 3. A/V equipment: 4. Welcome: 5. Children Care: 6. Snack: 7. Background Music: 8. ____: 9. ____: 10. Set up: All
	30 min.	Prayer	1. Pray for Best's attendance and heart 2. Pray for a smooth meeting and the guidance of the Holy Spirit 3. Pray for coworkers are empowered and fulfilled by the Holy Spirit 4. Pray for the Bests	The leader leads every coworker to pray
		Welcome	A warm welcome at the door	Greet at the door: Issue Name Tag:
During The Meeting	5 min.	Icebreaking	Welcome the first-timers, Self-introduction Have fun while gaining more information about Bests	Coworker:
	10 min.	Song Singing	Choose songs to fit the need of Bests Use the same song if Bests like it	Singing Leader: Pianist or A/V:
	10 min.	Sharing Testimony	Content: Conversion story, Prayers answered, or overcome story, etc. Goal: Setup stage and prepare Best's heart for the message	Main Speaker:
	25 min.	Message Sharing	1. Create curiosity or interest (5 min.)	Leader

			2. Guide to the topic naturally (5 min.) 3. Clear present the message with your own story (10 min.) 4. Give the Bests opportunity to respond (5 min.)	
	20 min.	Pray	1. Ask everyone's prayer item 2. Pay attention to the need or response of the Bests 3. Encourage Bests to pray	All, leader leads
	Flexible	Gift and Free talk	One on one talk to the Best Enjoy the snack	Snack setup: Gift:
After HG Meeting	30 min.	Teardown		All
		Debriefing	1. Leader first encourage and praise every coworker 2. Debrief the meeting flow 3. Coworkers Feedback of observation about Best's response 4. Compile Best's prayer requests 5. Fill the report form	All, leader leads
		Closing Prayer	Thanksgiving, Praise, and Blessings	All, leader leads
		Report	Submit the meeting report form	Leader

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