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### Nurturing Emotional Intelligence to Encourage an Increase in Compassion Among the Members of Ecclesia Baptist in Asheville, North Carolina

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NURTURING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO  
ENCOURAGE AN INCREASE IN COMPASSION  
AMONG THE MEMBERS OF  
ECCLESIA BAPTIST IN ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

A PROJECT  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF THE M. CHRISTOPHER WHITE SCHOOL OF DIVINITY  
GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY  
BOILING SPRINGS, NORTH CAROLINA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY  
AILEEN MITCHELL LAWRYMORE

DECEMBER 2020

APPROVAL FORM

NURTURING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO ENCOURAGE  
AN INCREASE IN COMPASSION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF  
ECCLESIA BAPTIST IN ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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First, thanks to my sister for teaching me how to read—a skill that has been invaluable in this process. Plus, the whole soulmate thing—that too.

Thanks to my brother for saying, “The Bible is not the source of truth; God is.” When the Levite’s concubine made me want to quit, I remembered your words and kept reading.

Mother, thanks for making ministry part of every day. Also, thanks for telling me “Just to do one thing, then the next . . .” The path created by that technique led me here. Daddy, thanks for keeping your sermons “God-ish but short.” (Turns out that’s good advice.) And for being a preaching minister who does both beautifully.

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Trellace, my firstborn, thanks for waiting until I got my doctorate to finish yours (most considerate). Thanks for your stand-up comedy routine in 5<sup>th</sup> grade; it still makes me laugh. Thanks also for fighting to heal the brokenness in this world. You’re making a difference; I promise.

Baker, my sweet, sweet son, thanks for learning to play “Linus and Lucy.” I enjoy it every time. Thanks also for choosing Addison. Because you love her, I get to love her too. I like that. You care so deeply and love so completely, Baker. The light you shine into darkness is a beautiful thing.

Margaret, my unrequested blessing, I’m so glad you haven’t grown out of being Mommy’s girl! Thanks for (almost) always wanting to play with me and for sharing your thoughts and ideas with me. You are a joy-bringer, not only to our family, but to the world.

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Ecclesia Baptist, *I thank my God with every remembrance of you.* My gratitude for you is boundless.

Finally, thanks to my (first) husband, Jay. The way you believe in my ministry gives me wings. I would never have tried this without your encouragement. I'm so glad you stopped back in 1985 to ask me what I was studying just so that I could point to my language textbook and say, "Well, it's all Greek to you." Laughing with you is one of my favorite things.

## ABSTRACT

God's infinite *chesed* for humanity, embodied in Jesus, calls Christians to claim their inherent brokenness and their infinite beauty and to offer the same grace to others. This *chesed*, experienced as compassion, enables Christians to extend compassion to themselves and others. To encourage this behavior among members of Ecclesia Baptist, this project paired psychology with theology and biblical study to nurture emotional intelligence (EQ). Participants attended five two-hour sessions and spent time on reflection and practice outside of meetings. Results indicated that increased EQ boosts confidence in compassionate behavior and increases intentions to continue practices formed from the study.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Personal Rationale for Project**

Since the age of six years, I have had a secret. Even in church, where I heard that God loved me more than I could imagine, I did not feel safe to share the shame of it. Now, with a fully developed prefrontal cortex, I realize that others have deeper and darker secrets; when I was a child, mine certainly seemed shameful enough. My secret? Deep, profound, and inexplicable sadness often robs me of anything that resembles joy. Thankfully, as an adult, I began active treatment that has kept the depression manageable.

In 2013, I became a minister on staff at a local church. I saw that the pews were full of people struggling as I had and I wanted to reach out to other sufferers, sharing lessons I had learned from my own experience. In order to do that, I had to share my secret, publicly and readily.

Once I began sharing my story, I became aware of the variety of secrets all people hold. It seems we all have areas of brokenness that we try to disguise or conceal when in the presence of others. Addiction, illness, abuse, loneliness, alienation, illiteracy, anger, and more riddle the lives of God's beloved. I began to wonder if the church could become a safe place for people both to share their secret brokenness and to embrace their inherent belovedness. This question prompted my research which led me, ultimately, to the design of this ministry project.

#### **Statement of Ministry Problem**

In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus proclaims that the whole of faithfulness is summed

up in two directives: love God; love your neighbor. Loving God should translate into gratitude and loving neighbor should be about abundance. Rev. Monica Coleman describes how she has received God's love for her in church.

When I am lost, I go to church to get found. While I trust that God is everywhere—even nearer than my closest breath—something miraculous happens for me at church. There are hugs around my legs from children, a liturgy I know by heart, and music I can clap or dance to. There's something miraculous in kneeling at a wooden altar or hearing a message about God's unconditional love.<sup>1</sup>

That is what church should feel like: an embodiment of God's love for humanity, expressed in our love for others.

Yet, the church, full as it is of imperfect humanity, often fails to deliver. Instead, nitpicky criticisms over appropriate church behavior ensnare worshippers chatting over coffee and doughnuts just as the caffeine and calorie police start taking names of the over-indulgent. Faces contort into expressions of disdain as whispered attacks careen toward God's beloveds. Unforgiving pronouncements, loosely veiled with "Bless her heart," or "I am not trying to be mean," flit from ear to ear, becoming more unkind with each retelling. Judgment comes swiftly to the unfaithful partner, the accused suspect, and the parents who run late each time it is their turn to keep the nursery. Mercy is withheld from the scorned spouse, the inmate's family, and the pastor's child. Far too frequently, church can feel more like middle school angst than a place of communal solace.

This project attempted to promote a loving, nonjudgmental atmosphere at Ecclesia Baptist by guiding members through emotional intelligence activities paired

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1. Monica Coleman, *Not alone: Reflections on Faith and Depression* (Culver City: Inner Prizes, Inc., 2012), 43.

with biblical study and Christian theology, thereby prompting acts of compassion throughout the congregation and beyond.

## **Ministry Setting**

### Church History

Ecclesia Baptist began in a member's living room in early 2004. No minutes were taken, so the exact date is not on record. The initial conversation produced a plan to hold an interest meeting a few weeks later to discuss the possibility of beginning a new church; they expected a maximum of 20 people to attend. Seventy people showed, most of them members of the same church.

Through much prayer and study, the group outlined what they believed God was calling them to create. The church would be Baptist and would meet on Sundays for Bible study and worship. Lay leadership would consist of a group of elders, not deacons, and they would base their leadership on Acts 6:1-4<sup>2</sup>, supporting the ministerial staff and guiding the church through intentional servant leadership. The group decided to take their name from the Greek word for church: ἐκκλησία (*ecclesia*). The official name became Ecclesia Baptist.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Acts 6:1-4: Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word."

3. Because *ecclesia* means "church," founders agreed that the name would be Ecclesia Baptist, not Ecclesia Baptist *Church* as that seemed redundant and therefore unnecessary.

The church would focus on Matthew 25:31-46, reaching out to those considered the “least of these.” Ecclesia has faced more trials in 15 years than many churches face in a lifetime, but it has remained true to this mission: sharing God’s love through building relationships and serving others.

Once formed, Ecclesia Baptist grew immediately and consistently. The first service was Easter Sunday 2004, and by June of 2005, Ecclesia had purchased its own building. Giving was steady and commitment was strong. It seemed that Ecclesia Baptist would be outgrowing its new space in just a few years. Then, on December 11, 2005, everything changed. Ecclesia’s young pastor was found dead in the church office. The autopsy was inconclusive. Cause of death has never been determined. Ecclesia’s attendance, which had grown to around 200, dropped by half.

The next dozen years included periods of growth and increased membership followed by seasons of crisis that diminished attendance and commitment. Through it all, Ecclesia maintained a community presence and active ministry to the marginalized in their area, but each time Ecclesia came back from a crisis, there were those members who never returned. Many who left the church were ones who had originally agreed to pay the bank note for the church building. Obviously, as giving waned, mortgage payments become more and more difficult to manage. By Fall 2017, the church was down to 40 or less participants; they made the difficult decision to sell the building. Church members agreed to continue as a church, operating with lay leadership only.

The building sold in December 2017, and Ecclesia began meeting in the conference room of a local real estate office in January of 2018. Attendance dropped again; even so, Ecclesia continued all community mission activities. By May 2018, it was

evident that lay leadership was insufficient and that they needed to call a pastor. Active participation at that point totaled fewer than twenty individuals, but the sale of the building meant Ecclesia had savings that could be used to hire a pastor. I was called as interim pastor, beginning August 2018. In September 2018, the church voted to remove “interim” from the title, making me Ecclesia’s fourth pastor.

In February 2019, Ecclesia began meeting in the fellowship hall of a nearby church, having outgrown the real estate office. Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, the church also met for Sunday morning Bible study. Attendance at all activities was strong as of March 2020 when the church began meeting digitally in compliance with CDC guidelines. Online worship is well attended, with roughly the same numbers as in face-to-face meetings, albeit a different crowd than attended in person.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout Ecclesia’s history, it has kept Matthew 25 in focus as the primary mission of the church. In addition, Ecclesia’s motto is “You are loved. And there’s nothing you can do about it.” This truth is the guiding philosophy at Ecclesia, and it informs many decisions made by the church. Members say this readily to one another, wear t-shirts that have it as the design, and close every service by saying it in unison. Prior to COVID-19, the church had begun reforming leadership and action teams based on its original model known as the FACE of Ecclesia (see Appendix A). These teams are largely on pause until the pandemic crisis is resolved and face-to-face gatherings are more feasible.

### Church Demographics

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4. Limited access to quality digital resources make attendance for our members who live in poverty difficult. This is a situation that the church needs to address and is seeking solutions.



Currently, Ecclesia has one staff member, the pastor. Volunteers help with teaching, ministry, and worship leadership. The pastor's role encompasses all preaching and pastoral care responsibilities along with administrative duties such as website maintenance and newsletter production. A church elder handles all financial matters for the church, including payroll. A finance team provides oversight and guidance for the elder's activities. Ecclesia was in the process of reforming a reasonable budget based on its new arrangement when COVID-19 interrupted those efforts.<sup>5</sup>

Ecclesia has 60 people who are active in some way. Some attend worship or Bible study; some participate in community service activities only; some are mainly recipients of the ministries of Ecclesia. However, each of them would name Ecclesia as their current church. The group is diverse in nearly every way: ethnicity, age, economic status, education level, marital status, and region of residence.

The majority of the church's members are White: 73%. Yet, 18% are Hispanic and 7% are Black.<sup>6</sup> Approximately 20% of Ecclesia's church family members are age 60 or above; another 30% are in their 40s and 50s, while 28% are between 20 and 40 years of age. The remaining 22% are youth and children.

The group is economically diverse: with members who receive public assistance or are on fixed incomes and those who own successful businesses and nice homes. For example, two of our single parent families live in government housing, and a third benefits from Section 8 subsidies. Meanwhile, another family owns not one, but two

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5. Please find the latest financial statements of the church in Appendix 2.

6. The church seems more diverse than the numbers indicate because the Hispanic and Black members are typically quite faithful attendees. An additional 2% of members identified as "Other."

homes. Most of the membership falls somewhere between those extremes: 18% in poverty, 25% in lower middle class, 42% in middle class, and 15% in upper middle class.

Education level also varies, from those who never finished high school to those with post-graduate studies. The largest single category, high school graduates, totaled 23%; an additional 14% went on to complete some college. College graduates make up the largest combined category: 2% completed an associate's degree, 15% achieved bachelor's degrees, 20% have completed a master's degree or higher. Only 4% left school without a high school diploma; 22% are school age or younger.

Ecclesia includes many families; some are made up of married parents with children, and some look quite different from that. Those who are legally married make up the largest percentage of the church membership at 38%. But 15% live in domestic partnerships and 7% are single parent families. Only 5% are divorced or widowed, and 13% are single. The remainder, 22% are school age or younger.

Though currently meeting in the 28803 ZIP code, in the Oakley district of Asheville, most of the membership live outside this area. In fact, only 25% of Ecclesia folks live in 28803; the zone immediately south of 28803, 28730, is home to an additional 22% of members. The remainder live in the surrounding areas, with the most distant family living 20 miles south of the church (see Appendix C for map).

## **Resource and Literature Review**

### **Review of Resources**

The resources required for the project fell into three broad categories: people, places, and things. I needed participants who would commit to the project and a tech

support person; a place to meet physically that had quality internet access so that we could have participants both in person and online due to the coronavirus. Required materials included technical equipment such as a laptop, projector, and extension cords; and basic classroom supplies—pens and paper for example. Additional needs due to COVID-19 included a touch-free thermometer, face shields, masks, and hand sanitizer.

The project was limited to 10 participants. Six participants chose the online option due to COVID-19 concern and four met in person. We used a video classroom for cyber participants. Once all were online, we projected the computer screen to a larger surface in front of the meeting room so those present in the room could see the Zoom participants. The laptop was positioned so that Zoom members could see most of those in the room; however, those present approached the microphone when contributing so that those online could hear and see them clearly.

I also needed a technical assistant on hand to help with any snags that arise during the class time. This person also helped with set up and clean up, and managed technical difficulties.

Ecclesia Baptist currently meets virtually, but we still pay rent at Oakley United Methodist Church (OUMC) and use space there for small group meetings. OUMC has adequate internet for light use, but it is not sufficient for streaming videos or holding online gatherings. Concurrent with the time of the project, Ecclesia contracted its own WiFi, apart from OUMC's. Though this decision was not made for the sake of the ministry project, it solved a real problem of implementation. During the first session, we

were limited to OUMC's connection and quickly saw its limitations. Before the second meeting, Ecclesia's own internet was installed and operable.<sup>7</sup>

Each participant received a folder containing the necessary course materials. Contents included a journal for project use, weekly journal assignment sheets, dated weekly evaluations, and the book *The Essential Enneagram* by David Daniels and Virginia Price.

### Review of Literature

Research for this project began with a study of mental health and the church to ascertain how the church might do a better job of providing a safe place for those struggling with mental illness. I consulted many valuable resources, but Monica A. Coleman's *Not Alone: Reflections on Faith and Depression*<sup>8</sup> was exceptionally helpful. Reading about Coleman's experiences led me to consider how my project was part of a more general and longer-term goal: the church providing a welcoming atmosphere for the brokenness in all people.

David Goleman's definitive book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*<sup>9</sup> is a must-have for learning about emotional intelligence. The bulk of information herein is substantial; vignettes and personal stories make it relatable and accessible. Goleman also has several videos on YouTube™ and TED™ Talks that introduce and explain emotional intelligence. These provided prior learning and directed me to his book.

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7. See Table 10, page 65.

8. Monica A. Coleman, *Not alone: Reflections on Faith and Depression* (Culver City: Inner Prizes, Inc., 2012).

9. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York City: Random House Publishing, 2005).

I participated in four webinars during May and June 2020 that expanded my understanding of the Enneagram's usefulness in building community in church. Two were on the map itself with Sandra Smith. The other two included the Enneagram as a tool for effective leadership; these two were co-led by Guy Sayles and Sandra Smith. Smith recommended two resources that I have used extensively: *The Essential Enneagram: The Definitive Personality Test and Self-Discovery Guide*<sup>10</sup> by David Daniels and Virginia Price, *Enneagram: Understanding Yourself and the Others in Your Life* by Helen Palmer.<sup>11</sup>

General psychology resources include the work of Brene' Brown and that of Nadine Burke Harris.<sup>12</sup> Brown's work on shame and vulnerability highlights the importance of humility and authenticity, while Nadine Burke Harris' research on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) illuminates the long-term effects of trauma from childhood. Brown and Harris both offer information to increase self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

The books *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus*<sup>13</sup> by C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison, and *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A*

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10. David Daniels and Virginia Price, *The Essential Enneagram* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).

11. Helen Palmer, *The Enneagram: Understanding Yourself and the Others in Your Life* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988).

12. Brene' Brown, *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations Whole Hearts*. (London: Penguin Random House, 2018); —, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* (New York City: Gotham 2012); —, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2010). Nadine Burke Harris, *The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018).

13. C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison, *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014).

*Strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives*<sup>14</sup> by Peter Scazzero both offered insight into the possibility for a more compassionate community.

In *Slow Church*, Smith and Pattison discuss the tendency for churches in the United States to mimic the fast life of consumer culture. Recalling the study of sociologist George Ritzer, they note that this “McDonaldization” focuses on “efficiency, predictability, calculability . . . and control.”<sup>15</sup> Applying this mathematic formula to the church, the authors note that “When evaluated in terms of efficiency—defined as the easiest way to get someone from here to there, from unsaved to saved, from unchurched to church—these top-down inputs seem to yield impressive short-term results: they can sometimes pack the pews.”<sup>16</sup> The problem is these methods may be fruitless, lacking as they are in intentional discipleship and relationship building. Smith and Pattison advocate a slower approach to church, one that is less bent on counting conversions and tweaking technology and more committed to becoming authentic community. Building on the Slow Food movement, Smith and Pattison “reimagine” that group’s principles of “good, clean and fair,” as “ethics, ecology and economy.”<sup>17</sup> In this paradigm, ethics refers to quality over efficiency; ecology is defined as the reconciliation of all creation; and economy points to the abundant provision of God.<sup>18</sup> They liken the church to a family saying, “Our brothers and sisters may incessantly annoy us. But we are called in Christ to love and to

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14. Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

15. Smith and Pattison, 13.

16. Ibid., 14-15.

17. Ibid., 16.

18. Ibid.

be reconciled to them. . . .”<sup>19</sup> This attention to nurturing relationships within the church family made *Slow Church* a helpful resource for this project.

*The Emotionally Healthy Church* by Peter Scazzero approached the topic of compassionate community from a different angle than *Slow Church* did. Smith and Pattison draw readers back to the earliest days of Christianity when believers lived a more communal life and point to innovative ways to bring ancient practices into the present day; Scazzero calls his audience to revisit fundamentals of discipleship and Christian living. Together, they offer a wide variety of modalities than can lead to Christlike community. Scazzero’s Chapter 7 was particularly helpful for this project. There, he proclaims that “[i]n emotionally healthy churches, people live and lead out of brokenness and vulnerability.”<sup>20</sup> In this chapter, he provides a chart of two types of churches: “Proud and Defensive,” and “Broken and Vulnerable.” Comparing the verbiage of the two types, Scazzero offers a clear picture of what church could be if compassion were the rule and misplaced pride the exception.<sup>21</sup>

Studying compassion within a Christian community, I found Roberta Bondi’s *To Love as God Loves: Conversations with the Early Church*<sup>22</sup> and Phillip Bennett’s *Let Yourself be Loved*<sup>23</sup> to offer valuable insight. The work of Joan Chittister, Henri Nouwen, and Richard Rohr added even greater dimension. The lighter pen of Brennan Manning

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19. Ibid., 87.

20. Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church: A strategy for Discipleship that Actually Changes Lives* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 110.

21. Ibid., 114.

22. Roberta Bondi, *To Love as God Loves: Conversations with the Early Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

23. Phillip Bennett, *Let Yourself be Loved* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1997).

offered a less scholarly, more intimate look at brokenness and the church as did Wendy Farley's story found in *The Wounding and Healing of Desire: Weaving Heaven and Earth*.<sup>24</sup>

For theological rationale, the always reliable *New Interpreter's Bible* and the *New Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* enlarged the text through critical analysis and reflective comment: Katherine Sackenfled on the Hebrew scriptures and Alan Culpepper on the New Testament texts.<sup>25</sup> The Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew Interlinear Bible facilitated research on the word *chesed*; the Greek New Testament and Greek Interlinear provided clarity for New Testament texts. Multiple journal articles also helped form the New Testament section of the rationale. Helen Waddell's exploration of the desert abbas and ammas,<sup>26</sup> along with the work of Rowan Williams and Benedicta Ward,<sup>27</sup> offered a vivid picture of these pioneers in Christian monastics. Work by Clarence Jordan, Shane Claiborne, and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove formed the new monastics content.<sup>28</sup> Trevor

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24. Joan Chittister's *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1992) provides practical direction for compassionate living. Henri Nouwen's *The Inner Voice of Love* (New York City: Image Books Doubleday, 1996) is a profound look into a theologian's own brokenness and his *The Wounded Healer* (New York City: Doubleday Religion, 2010) shows leaders the value in claiming their own brokenness so that they can lead the church to do likewise. Richard Rohr's *Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps* (Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2011) takes a look at the connection between addiction and sin and applies the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Brennan Manning's *Ragmuffin Gospel* (Colorado Springs: Alive Communications, Inc., 2005) and Wendy Farley's *The Wounding and Healing of Desire: Weaving Heaven and Earth* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005) are both intimate testimonies of how the truth of God's radical love brings hope to the desperate.

25. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld, "Love in the OT," *New Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press): NP; Alan Culpepper, *NIB* 9:NP.

26. Helen Waddell, *The Desert Fathers* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

27. Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* (Trappist, KY: Cistercian Publications, 1975); Rowan Williams, *Where God Happens: Discovering Christ in One Another* (Boston: New Seeds Books, 2005).

28. A 1957 article by Jordan in the *Journal of Religious Thought*, "Christian Community in the



Hudson and Richard Rohr gave insight into 12-step theology; the early documents of Alcoholics Anonymous provided context.<sup>29</sup>

Additional helpful resources included Athanasius' *On Incarnation*,<sup>30</sup> the *Cotton Patch Gospel* by Clarence Jordan,<sup>31</sup> and multiple translations of scripture including the NRSV, CEB, and The Message.

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South," lent Jordan's timeless voice to the current information available on the Koinonia Farm website. Shane Claiborne's *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*, 10th Anniversary, Kindle (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, November 2015) and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove's *New Monasticism What It Has to Say to Today's Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008) tell of their experiences in the new monastics movement.

29. Trevor Hudson, *One Day at a Time: Discovering the Freedom of 12-Step Spirituality* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2007); Rohr, *Breathing Under Water*; Alcoholics Anonymous. *12 Steps and 12 Traditions*. New York: AA World Services, Inc., 2012; *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism*. 4th. New York City: AA World Services, Inc., 2001; "The Preamble." New York City: AA World Services, Inc., May 5, 2013.

30. Athanasius, Saint. *On the Incarnation*. n.d.

31. Clarence Jordan, *Cotton Patch Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2014).

## CHAPTER 2

### DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### **Project Description**

The goal of this project was nurturing emotional intelligence to encourage an increase in compassion among members of Ecclesia Baptist in Asheville, North Carolina. According to lexico.com, an affiliate of Oxford English Dictionary, emotional intelligence is “The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.” The Oxford English Dictionary defines compassion as “the feeling or emotion, when a person is moved by the suffering or distress of another, and by the desire to relieve it; pity that inclines one to spare or to succor.” Clearly, heightened emotional intelligence can lead to an increase in the compassion humans show one another.

As further discussion in Chapter 3 reveals, compassion is also integral to the heart of God. The experience of God’s steadfast love as described in the Hebrew scriptures motivates Jesus Christ to act in ways that reflect that love to humanity.<sup>32</sup> The writers of the synoptics call that which moves Christ to act, ἐσπλαγχνίσθη (*esplanchnisthē*), translated most often as “compassion.”<sup>33</sup> Scripture tells us that Christ is in those who profess faith in Jesus. Indeed, “God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col

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32. For example, see Matt 9:36, Matt 14:14, Mark 6:34, Luke 7:13, Luke 10:33, Luke 15:20.

33. In Matt 9:36, Matt 14:14, Mark 6:34, and Luke 15:20, ἐσπλαγχνίσθη is rendered “compassion,” in the NRSV, KJV, CEB, ESV, and the NIV. In Luke 7:13 the NIV veers from the other translations which offer “compassion” as the meaning of ἐσπλαγχνίσθη, translating the phrase “his heart went out (to her).” In Luke 10:33, the aforementioned translations use “compassion,” except for NRSV and NIV which offer “moved with pity,” and “took pity on,” respectively.

1:27). Repeatedly, the apostle Paul reminds readers that the indwelling of Christ belongs to the believer.<sup>34</sup> Yet the capacity for Christlikeness does not constrain humanity to act as Christ acted (Rom 3:23). By encouraging compassionate behavior within the church community, this project helped members reflect the qualities of Christ given to them.

The means by which this project attempted to reach this goal was an interactive five-week study based on the example of compassion set by Jesus Christ; the curriculum, entitled, “Becoming Neighbors,” took its name from Jesus’ conversation with the lawyer in Luke 10’s Good Samaritan parable. Aiming to increase participants’ capacity for compassion for self and others, the project introduced emotional intelligence as a tool to achieve this goal. Enrollment was capped at 10 people who committed to attend weekly gatherings and to dedicate approximately 15-20 minutes daily for individual study and practice between sessions. Ten registered; nine completed the study. An additional five volunteers served as the control group, taking the same assessments as project participants.

Participants received *The Essential Enneagram* by David Daniels, MD and Virginia Price, PhD. This short book helped them to determine their Enneagram type.

Discovering your Enneagram personality type can help you learn how to bring positive change into your life. It can help change the way you relate to yourself and others as well as give you a greater understanding of the circumstances and issues facing you. Moreover, it can give you powerful assistance in integrating the personal and spiritual aspects of your life . . . .<sup>35</sup>

This tool was used throughout the course of the project to provide both form and substance to the study. *The Essential Enneagram* supplied journal prompts as well.

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34. See, for example, Rom 8:9-10, 1 Cor 1:30, 2 Cor 13:5, Gal 2:20, and Eph 3:17.

35. David Daniels and Virginia Price, *The Essential Enneagram* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 1.

Twelve-Step Theology, particularly the format of Alcoholics Anonymous, gave the project its foundational design. Incorporating the 12 steps as tools for behavior change, project curriculum focused on the objectives of different steps each week, as shown in the project outline. In addition, participants learned about the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) research of Dr. Nadine Burke Harris<sup>36</sup>. Naturally, knowledge about ACEs increases self-awareness. More important for this project, though, is the understanding that ACEs' affect behavior of others. Thus, ACEs provided context for practicing the skill of giving the benefit of the doubt.

Each two-hour session incorporated various teaching and learning methods; content emphasized emotional intelligence and its connection to the practice of compassion, as revealed in the life and work of Christ Jesus. Individual study included practical activities, Bible study, and journal reflection. Journal activities encouraged acts of compassion in real-life situations. Bible study focused on texts used in weekly sessions, aiming to strengthen participants' understanding of the correlation between biblical truth and practical application. Prescribed journal prompts were designed to promote emotional intelligence, to increase observation of compassionate behavior, and to assess personal acts of compassion.

### **Project Goal**

The goal of this project was to equip a core group from Ecclesia Baptist to increase the practice of compassion for self and others, encouraging them to claim their brokenness while recognizing their beauty and to offer the same grace to others. Success

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36. Nadine Burke Harris, *The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018).

was determined through evaluative methods such as pre/post-testing, Likert scale assessments, and reflective journaling.

## PROJECT OUTLINE

The project form was based on the 12-step program followed by Alcoholics Anonymous. The steps used are noted parenthetically for each week.

The project introduced emotional intelligence and illustrated its helpfulness in bringing about behavior change. One tool I used to expand emotional intelligence was the Enneagram.<sup>37</sup> Participants received *The Essential Enneagram* by David Daniels and Virginia Price.

I also presented the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study; awareness of ACEs is helpful in increasing emotional intelligence and the capacity for compassionate behavior. The research itself and ways ACEs might affect a person's conduct provided context for class discussion.

Weekly sessions included Bible readings and study. Additional study was included in the weekly journal assignments.

The course was taught using a layering method. That is, while topics may only be mentioned once in the outline below, teaching drew themes through each session. For example, when discussing ways people apologize, we considered how Enneagram type might impact ways an apology is offered or received. Also, journal activities recalled topics from each week during a time of reflection. In this way, repetition was built into the project to reinforce learning.

*"There is available to all of us as human beings a Power greater than ourselves—a power that can inwardly change us . . . ."*<sup>38</sup>

### I. PARTICIPANTS PREPARATION

- A. Participants completed and returned pretest evaluations.
- B. After returning pretest evaluations, participants received project resources including journal and book on the Enneagram.

### II. WEEK ONE The goal for week one was to be aware of one's own brokenness but not to be further broken by awareness (steps 1 & 4).

- A. Explained "I am" practice of Alcoholics Anonymous and how it fits into this project.

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37. Over the course of eight weeks, I participated in six workshops that expanded my knowledge of the Enneagram. Sandra Smith, a certified Enneagram teacher, "Introduction to the Enneagram" on May 21, 2020, "Enneagram Wings and Resource Points" on June 4, 2020, "The Enneagram's Spiritual Dimensions: A 2-part Workshop" on July 14, 2020 and July 21, 2020. She partnered with Guy Sayles in "Weavers of What Might Be: Leadership in the Unknown: Parts 1 and 2" on June 2, 2020 and June 23, 2020. The "Weavers" class used the Enneagram throughout the instruction.

38. Trevor Hudson, *One Day at a Time: Discovering the Freedom of 12 Step Spirituality* (Nashville: Upper Room Books: 2007), xi. *One Day at a Time* has been helpful to me in forming the shape of the project using 12-step theology. I will be using multiple other resources throughout for content, but this resource has greatly informed the structure the project will take.

1. "I am \_\_\_\_ and I am broken."
  2. "I am \_\_\_\_ and I am beautiful."
  - B. Explored, "What is self-awareness?"
    1. Enneagram introduction
    2. Emotional intelligence introduction
  - C. Small groups discussed areas of growth:
    1. When are you critical or judgmental?
    2. When are you negative?
    3. When are you self-defeating?
    4. When do you break promises to yourself?
    5. When do you humble brag?
  - D. Small groups discussed areas of strength:
    1. When do you give benefit of the doubt?
    2. When do you slow down?
    3. When do you encourage?
    4. When do you keep promises to yourself?
    5. When do you forgive yourself?
    6. When do you delight over others' successes?
- III. WEEK TWO The goal for week two was to be aware that God loves you and that God's love is restorative (steps 2-3). Participants practiced awareness of God's love by reading scripture and through personal testimony.
- A. Guided discussion addressed various questions:
    1. What does the Bible say about God's love?
    2. What does humanity say about God's love?
    3. What is my will? What is God's will?
      - a. Incidents of my will failing?
      - b. Incidents of God's will failing?
    4. What does it mean to surrender? Gender differences?
      - a. In competition?
      - b. When threatened?
      - c. In the context of faith?
  - B. Asked, "What does the Bible say about surrendering to God's love?"
  - C. Revisited and revised I am statement:
    1. My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am broken.
    2. I am beloved.
    3. I am not alone.
- IV. WEEK THREE The goal for week three was to be aware that as part of the problem, you can also be part of the solution (steps 5-7). Participants practiced using phrases that edify rather than words that are not helpful.
- A. Discussed Self-Compassion as a lead-in to ACE's discussion.
    1. Difference between self-compassion and self-indulgence

- 2.Importance of prioritizing self-compassion through non-judgmental affirmations and healthful habits.
  - B. Explained Adverse Childhood Experiences study by Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. Asked
    - 1.How might ACEs affect someone's behavior?
    - 2.How does understanding that people may have ACEs affect your relationship with them?
  - C. Introduced The Suffering of God
    - 1.Discussed: "Do you suffer when you love?"
    - 2.Asked, "Does God suffer?"
    - 3.Introduced Jeremiah 8:18-9:1
    - 4.Suggested that because God loves, God suffers.
  - D. Introduced self-awareness tool, Johari's Window.
    - 1.Explained origin and usefulness of Johari's window
    - 2.Pointed out upcoming journal activity for Johari's window.
  - E. Revisited and revised I am statement:
    - 1.My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am broken and beloved.
    - 2.I am not alone, and I am part of the solution.
- V. WEEK FOUR The goal for week four was to be aware that others have been hurt by our behaviors and we are called to make restitution (steps 8 and 9). Practiced prayers of confession and language of apology.
- A. Discussed different apology styles.
  - B. Recalled Enneagram and discussed apology in light of Enneagram awareness. Asked
    - 1.How might your Enneagram type affect your apology style?
    - 2.How might your Enneagram type affect your ability to receive apology?
    - 3.What happens when we apologize in a way that cannot be received by the offended one?
  - C. Introduced Prayer of Confession
    - 1.Discussed history of confession and its importance.
    - 2.Explained upcoming journal activity on Prayer of Confession.
  - D. Workshopped language of contrition and apology.
  - E. Revisited and revised I am statement:
    - 1.My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am broken, beloved, am not alone.
    - 2.I am part of the solution, and I am sorry for the ways I've hurt others.
- VI. WEEK FIVE The goal of week five was to be aware that permanent change requires ongoing practice, practice with others, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit (steps 10-12).
- A. Discussed, "What is Compassion?"



- 1.Established difference between sympathy, empathy, and compassion.
    1. Sympathy: “Me.”
    2. Empathy: “You.”
    3. Compassion: “We.”
  - 2.Explained why this project focuses on compassion.
    1. Faith community is about “we.”
    2. Compassion includes action.
- B. Small groups discussed three questions:
- 1.How does practicing compassion change me?
  - 2.How does practicing compassion affect my relationships?
  - 3.How would practicing communal compassion change our church?
- C. Reviewed main topics individually and how they relate to compassion.
- 1.Emotional Intelligence
  - 2.Self-Awareness—Enneagram
  - 3.ACE’s
- D. Revisited and completed I am statement:
- 1.My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am broken, beloved, am not alone.
  - 2.I am part of the solution, and I am sorry for the ways I’ve hurt others.
  - 3.I am still learning.

## PROJECT CALENDAR

Project Proposal submission .....	July 20
Approval received .....	July 31
Institutional Review Board certification .....	September 4
Project Implementation .....	Begins September 13
Evaluation of Project .....	October 11
Draft Report and Analysis Completed and submitted to Guy Sayles .....	October 26
Final Report and Analysis Completed .....	November 5
Oral Defense .....	November 23
Final to printer .....	No later than December 1
Graduation.....	December 12

## CHAPTER 3

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE

*For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Is 54:10)*<sup>39</sup>

Because the goal of my project was to increase acts of compassion among the membership of Ecclesia Baptist, the theological rationale for compassion was critical to its success. Therefore, this rationale considers the compassion of God in the Hebrew scriptures and of Christ in the New Testament; it also presents certain examples of Christian groups from history that were formed to create compassionate community.

The words “compassion,” and “love” are not synonyms in the strictest sense. However, one who loves in the ways modeled by Jesus and acts on that emotion is behaving in a compassionate manner. Likewise, one who feels compassion might, as a result, act in a loving way. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) “love” is

a feeling or disposition of deep affection or fondness for someone, typically arising from a recognition of attractive qualities, from natural affinity, or from sympathy and manifesting itself in concern for the other's welfare and pleasure in his or her presence (distinguished from sexual love at sense);. . . strong emotional attachment. . . .<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile, the OED defines “compassion” as “the feeling or emotion, [that occurs] when a person is moved by the suffering or distress of another, and by the desire to relieve it; pity that inclines one to spare or to succor.”<sup>41</sup> Thus, according to the OED, love

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39. All scripture is taken from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise stated.

40. <http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/110566>.

41. <http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/37475>.

grows from general preference to deep emotion, while compassion begins with pity and prompts action.

Scripture agrees. Isaiah ascribes steadfast love to God in Is 54:10 (above); likewise, through the whole of the Hebrew scriptures, writers delineate God's abiding love for humankind. In the New Testament, we find this quality of loving kindness central to the ministry of Jesus. Upon witnessing a mother grieving the death of her only son, or hearing the cries of blind men longing for sight, or feeling the hunger pangs of a crowd of followers, Jesus feels compassion. In response to his own emotions, he acts: he raises the dead son, restores vision to the blind men, and feeds the hungry.<sup>42</sup>

Naturally, Christ's example has prompted eager followers through the ages to emulate his ministry. Consequently, Christian history includes communities which have aimed to embody God's love, bearing witness through their relationships with each other and with the world.

### Hebrew Scriptures

The Hebrew scriptures offer considerable evidence of the compassion of God. The love of God in the Hebrew Scriptures is often expressed using the word חֶסֶד (transliterated *chesed*), usually translated "steadfast love" in the NRSV. The word conveys more than warm affection. In fact, Katherine Sakenfeld argues that *chesed* is a part of God's liturgical name, as illustrated in Exodus 34:6-7: ". . .The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation . . ." Sakenfeld calls this "God's liturgical name" because "This phrase is used only of God and expresses the

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42. Luke 7:11-13, Matt 20:30-34, Mark 8:1-7.

overflowing greatness of that love that surpasses any human comparison.” She points out that this name is repeated frequently throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, emphasizing the truth that God’s very character is defined by *chesed*. Furthermore, illustrating the persistence of God’s love, she notes that God uses this name at times when the Hebrew people are not behaving in a particularly loving or righteous manner.

Even the initial announcement of God’s liturgical name in Exod 34 is given in the context of covenant continuation that follows the great apostasy of the golden calf. The liturgical name is repeated again in the context of the people’s unfaithful desire to return to Egypt rather than to move forward toward the promised land (Num 14). Because of God’s abounding steadfast love, God simply cannot give up on this people.<sup>43</sup>

In Genesis 39:21, Joseph recognizes God’s *chesed* when, following his imprisonment by Potiphar, the jailor shows him favor. Moses sings of God’s *chesed* when God parts the waters and delivers the Israelites from the hands of the Egyptians (Exod 15:13). In the time of Ezra, the Hebrews, when worshipping at the temple again for the first time since its restoration, “sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, ‘For he is good, for his *steadfast love* endures forever towards Israel’” (Ezra 3:11; emphasis mine). Isaiah proclaims God’s *chesed* in the rich and familiar words of chapter 55, pointing to the abundance of God’s love and declaring its lifegiving power.

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my *steadfast, sure love* for David. (Isa 55:1-4; emphasis mine)

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43. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld, “Love in the OT,” *New Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press): NP.

Likewise, in Micah 7, the prophet follows an aching lament with proclamation of *chesed*. Micah speaks of his own pain and the pain of the people of Israel and then God responds. Micah answers the response saying, “Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity, overlooking the sin of the few remaining for his inheritance? He doesn’t hold on to his anger forever; he delights in *faithful love*” (7:18, CEB; emphasis mine).<sup>44</sup>

Of all the times *chesed* appears in the Hebrew Scriptures, however, almost half (127) are in the Psalms. Repeatedly, the psalmists declare God’s love. For example, in the oft memorized 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm extolling God’s infinite grace, in verse 6, *chesed*—translated here as goodness and mercy—pursues the psalmist, relentless in its quest. In Psalm 51:1, when confessing his grief over his sin with Bathsheba, David calls upon God’s *chesed*: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.” David understands that his sin is so great, that only God’s great goodness could “blot” it out. This theme continues in Psalm 86, a petition for help in time of trouble. Herein, the writer expresses both personal need and confidence in God’s willingness to help, saying in verse 13, “For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.” Despite the fact that this psalmist is faced with “a band of ruffians,” abiding faith in God’s love sustains as verse 15 attests: “But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” Walter Brueggemann says of this text, “The cluster of terms—merciful, gracious, slow to anger,

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44. Curiously, the NRSV translates *chesed* in this verse as “showing clemency.” The CEB renders it “faithful love,” the NIV “showing mercy,” and the NKJV “in mercy.”

steadfast love, faithfulness—together express Yahweh’s resilient, reliable commitment to Israel.”<sup>45</sup>

Brueggemann contends that the proclamation of Yahweh’s *chesed* is “Israel’s most extreme witness about God, and that this affirmation, or something like it, is everywhere assumed in the Old Testament.”<sup>46</sup> Sakenfeld agrees that *chesed* is central to God’s character; she even suggests it is the prime motivator in God’s commitment to the Hebrew people. She says,

In sum, God’s steadfast love is foundational to God’s persistence in covenant relationship with Israel. It is intimately associated with help in any time of individual or communal distress, and in its abounding nature it is the fountain from which flows divine mercy and forgiveness.<sup>47</sup>

This is not to say that God’s people refrain from pointing out when it appears that God has fallen short of covenant love. Scripture is replete with lamentations that call God to account when evidence of *chesed* is lacking to the human eye. Whether communal or individual in nature, the psalms of lament cry out for justice.

The people of God find themselves again and again in the interim between God’s promise and the fulfillment of the promise. That interim is the time when faith is put to the test, for there are no unambiguous proofs that God has spoken and that God is in control of the human situation.<sup>48</sup>

So they cry out to God, questioning the apparent absence of the divine, saying, “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” (Ps 10:1) or

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45. Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 2005), NP.

46. Brueggemann, *Theology*, NP.

47. Sakenfeld, “Love,” NP.

48. Bernard W. Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for us Today* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 55.

“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?” (Ps 13:1) The psalmists remind God of the potential consequences that could result from inaction: “To you, Lord, I call; my rock, do not refuse to hear me, for if you are silent to me I shall be like those who go down to the Pit. Hear the voice of my supplication, as I cry to you for help, as I lift up my hands towards your most holy sanctuary” (Ps 28:1-2). They suggest ways for God to proceed such as “Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me! Take hold of shield and buckler, and rise up to help me!” (Ps 35:1-2) and “Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the scheming of evildoers . . .” (Ps 64:1).

For modern readers who find this form of address too indelicate for Almighty God, Walter Brueggemann’s words offer clarity:

It is an act of bold faith on the one hand, because it insists that the world must be experienced as it really is and not in some pretended way. On the other hand, it is bold because it insists that all such experiences of disorder are a proper subject for discourse with God. There is nothing out of bounds, nothing precluded or inappropriate.<sup>49</sup>

Being honest before God is not something the average psalmist seems to avoid. Yet, after they share their dissatisfaction with God, the lamenters tend to proclaim God’s true character, as in “Vindicate me, O Lord, my God, according to your righteousness . . .” (Ps 35:24). The writer knows that God’s righteousness is reliable, appealing to that characteristic for salvation. For example, Psalm 10 which began so bleakly, closes with “O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth

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49. Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 52.



may strike terror no more” (Ps 10:17-18). Psalm 13 proclaims finally, “But I trusted in your steadfast love [*chesed*]; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because he has dealt bountifully with me.” (Ps 13:5-6). Out of their sorrow and despite their weariness with God, the psalmists still speak what they know to be true: God’s *chesed* endures, even when circumstances suggest otherwise.

### **The New Testament**

Out of this fountain of steadfast love, God sends Jesus Christ, the very embodiment of *chesed*, to humanity. Jesus personifies love in action, silencing tendencies to shame or ostracize while amplifying opportunities to show compassion. The Golden Rule, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you (Mt 7:12),”<sup>50</sup> found on the lips of Jesus (Mt 7:12, Lk 6:31), as a “summary of the law and the prophets, . . . functions as a concise abridgment of Jesus’ message. . . .”<sup>51</sup>

The Golden Rule appears in various forms in many world religions including Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism.<sup>52</sup> In fact, it is alluded to in the Hebrew Scriptures in Leviticus 19:18: “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.” Joel Kaminsky, Professor of Religion at Smith College in Massachusetts,

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50. This rule is a part of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew; the Lukan variety accompanies the parable of the Good Samaritan, discussed in more detail below.

51. Emerson Powery, n.d. “The Golden Rule,” New Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary, Edited by Katherine D. Sackenfild, N.P. Ministry Matters. accessed April 20, 2020, <https://www-ministrymatters-com.ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/library/#/nldb/30f37441feab60038fbc8992e0482dda/golden-rule-the.html>.

52. Zahra Rakhshani, “The Golden Rule and its Consequences: A practical and Effective Solution for World Peace,” *Journal of History, Culture and Art Research* (2017):468-471.

notes that many of his students “are astonished to learn that Jesus did not invent the idea that one should love one's neighbor as oneself.” He continues,

When informed that this expression first occurs in the [Hebrew Bible], many contemporary readers assume it must come from the prophetic material. How could those rather narrow-minded priests so concerned with cultic details have authored this notion, let alone enshrined it in the center of their corpus?<sup>53</sup>

Of course, “Love your neighbor” is one of many commands found in the 19th chapter of Leviticus. Among others are a curse upon the one who eats leftovers on the third day (vs 7-8), a free pass for a man to have an affair with his slave woman—as long as he hands over a ram to the priest after the fact (vs 22-23), and a warning against bad haircuts (vs 27). Situated as it is in a list that sounds antiquated to the modern ear, this little command to love one’s neighbors could have wafted into obscurity with the rest of the rules listed around it.

But, while we have no record of Jesus’ hair care routine, we do have his answer when asked to name the greatest commandment. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus, according to Matthew, responds, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” He did not stop there though. He continued, saying, “a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Mt 22:37-39). The gospel writers are not the only ones who see the value in Leviticus 19:18. Both the apostle Paul and the writer of James base teaching upon this one tenet. In Galatians 5:14, Paul says “For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’” while James 2:8 says, “You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love

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53. Joel Kaminsky, “Loving One’s (Israelite) Neighbor: Election and Commandment in Leviticus 19,” *Interpretation* 62 (2008): 123.

your neighbor as yourself.” Notably, neither Paul nor James comments on time constraints for consumption of leftover food; they likewise do not dismiss adulterous behavior with receipt of a morning-after sheep.

In its multiple expressions, at times the Golden Rule is stated in its positive form in the way Jesus taught (treat others as you wish to be treated); other places it is presented in the negative form (do not treat others in ways you wish not to be treated). Still, the Golden Rule of Jesus, while similar to ancient maxims or sayings, is unique; other iterations have more in common with the negative presentation of the Golden Rule, sometimes known as the Silver Rule.<sup>54</sup> John Topel explains:

The actions mandated by Jesus’ Golden Rule are not merely more extensive than those mandated by the Silver Rule, but they enter into the limitlessness of human desire that is oriented towards the infinite love of God. Thus humans desire not merely material benefits, maintaining and ameliorating physical existence, but the whole range of actions which build a human community where the love of God is present and active, that is the whole range of extraordinarily loving actions described in the Sermon on the Plain. In short, the Golden Rule opens human moral obligation to the deepest human thirst for God’s self-giving love toward [God’s] creatures, far beyond the kinds of actions that can be mandated by an natural or positive law, or even by the divinely revealed Mosaic Law. It embodies the most radical altruism.<sup>55</sup>

The fullness of *chesed* is made manifest in Jesus; in the Golden Rule, Jesus commands humanity to put *chesed* to work in the world. Most importantly, as Topel says above, the goal of the Golden Rule is to “build a human community where the love of God is present and active.”<sup>56</sup>

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54. Jan Tullberg, "The Golden Rule of Benevolence versus the Silver Rule of Reciprocity," *Journal of Religion and Business Ethics* 3, no. 1 (2015): N.P. <http://ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/docview/179831687>.

55. John Topel, “The Tarnished Golden Rule (Luke 6:31): The Inescapable Radicalness of Christian Ethics,” *Theological Studies* (1998): 479-480.

56. *Ibid.*, 480.

Followers of Christ who read the Gospel of Luke will find that Jesus provides greater context for the Golden Rule in the parable of the Good Samaritan found in Lk 10:25-37. Herein, an expert on biblical law asks Jesus how to access eternal life. Jesus answers with a question saying, “What does the law say?” In his answer, the lawyer combines the *Shema* from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 saying, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27). Jesus essentially responds, “Right. Do that.” The lawyer presses the issue, though, asking Jesus to define who the neighbor is. So, Jesus tells the story of the good Samaritan. Through this parable, Jesus conveys the truth that those who show mercy act as godly neighbors; those who do not fail to follow the intent of God’s law.

Reviewing this text, Pastor Andrew Prior of the Uniting Churches of Australia says

The lawyer knows exactly who his neighbour is! It is his people, his family, his town. He doesn't need to ask this question of Jesus. . . . He is defensive not because he does not understand Jesus, or see what Jesus' gospel is about; he is defensive because he understands too well. In the conversation under the surface, he is essentially saying, "I know I must love my neighbour as myself... but how can anyone do that!?" This is because loving the Lord "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might" implies much more than the 'neighbourliness' of Leviticus 19. The lawyer will hear Jesus' parable because, even if he has not been able to articulate it, the law has been prodding him to see that even Samaritans are neighbours.<sup>57</sup>

Though the lawyer asked the question presumably with an answer already in mind, Jesus' answer tosses conventional wisdom aside. He offers a story about a nondescript traveler

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57. Andrew Prior, “On the Same Page as Jesus,” *One Man’s Web*, accessed July 13, 2019, <https://www.onemansweb.org/theology/the-year-of-luke-2019/on-the-same-page-as-jesus-luke-1025-37.html>, NP.

who is brutally attacked by robbers, then abandoned alongside the road to die from his wounds. Travelling the same road, first a priest then a Levite pass without offering assistance. In good stories, as parables so often are, the third in the sequence breaks form with the previous examples to provide clues to the message the story intends to teach. Here, shockingly, the Samaritan appears. The Samaritan, the Assyrian-Jew half-breed, stood as the anti-Israelite in the equation where Israelites equaled truth and goodness. Jesus summarily upturned social norms when he chose the hated Samaritan to be the helper. Alan Culpepper elaborates:

By depicting a Samaritan as the hero of the story, therefore, Jesus, demolished all boundary expectations. Social position—race, religion, or region—count for nothing. The man in the ditch, from whose perspective the story is told, will not discriminate among potential helpers. Anyone who has compassion and stops to help is his neighbor. The question is thereby turned when viewed from the perspective of the one in desperate need. The alteration of the expected sequence by naming the third character as a Samaritan not only challenges the hearer to examine the stereotype regarding Samaritans, but it also invalidates all stereotypes. Community can no longer be defined or limited by such terms. The three on the road are each identified by social class, but the man in the ditch is not identified by such labels.<sup>58</sup>

Upon encountering this unclassified man in need, two passersby ignore his needs; a third, a Samaritan, is “moved by pity” for him. The word translated by the NRSV “moved by pity” is ἐσπλαγχνίσθη (*esplanchnisthē*). Found only twelve times and only in the synoptics, *esplanchnisthē* always relates to the feelings of Jesus, or to those of one of the characters in his parables. It is derived from the word σπλάγχνα (*splagchnon*) which means “inward parts” or “bowels.” In antiquity, the bowels were considered the seat of emotion; in like manner, 21<sup>st</sup> century Americans typically view the heart as the emotional center. Thus, *esplanchnisthē* suggests a feeling that stirs the gut or moves the heart.

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58. Alan Culpepper, *NIB* 9:NP.

Pastor Prior acknowledges that “[t]o be compassionate when we are afraid, and when we want to distance ourselves from people, is heart-wrenchingly difficult. But when we are able to come near them[,] when our fear has been lessened, then our heart goes out to them.”<sup>59</sup> He goes on to say, “He does not choose to be compassionate; the Samaritan’s heart goes out from him of its own accord. This is because he has the heart of Christ.”<sup>60</sup>

Christ not only teaches about compassion; he also behaves in compassionate ways. A brief look at the use of the word *splagchnon* in other synoptic gospel accounts illustrates the point. Matthew tells us in 9:35 that as Jesus travels, people come to be healed. “When he saw the crowds, he had [*splagchnon*] for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Mt 9:36). To address the concerns (10:1), Jesus immediately deputizes his disciples to “cure every disease and every sickness” as apparently one person cannot handle these needs alone—even if that person is God incarnate. Here, compassion prompted action that transformed a community. In Mark 9:14-29, a boy with what modern physicians might diagnose as epilepsy, is brought to Jesus for healing after the disciples fall short in their attempts. The child’s father describes the so-called demon to Jesus and says (verse 22b), “. . . if you are able to do anything, have [*splagchnon*] on us and help us.” Jesus responds in verse 23, “In you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.” The father professes belief; Jesus heals the child and “took him by the hand and lifted him up. . . .” (verses 24-27). Arguably, Jesus could have stopped at the healing. Though the crowd was confused at first, it would have soon become clear that the boy’s health had been restored even

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59. Prior, “On the Same Page.”

60. Ibid.

without further action from Jesus. This gentle touch seems to punctuate the story with evidence of Christ's abundant tenderness for humanity. A third example, this one in Luke 7:11-15, shows Jesus' compassion not just for those who suffer from physical ailments, for those who grieve as well. Here, Jesus happens upon the funeral procession for the only son of a widow. Jesus makes eye contact with her and (verse 13) "had [*splagchnon*] for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.'" Jesus heals her son and then (verse 15) "gave him to his mother." That is Jesus: always overflowing with compassion for the crowds, for the sick children, and for the grieving parents.

John does not use the word *splagchnon* in his gospel, but he displays the compassion of Christ in other ways. The word "compassion" actually comes from two Latin words which mean "to suffer alongside." Though John uses different language than the synoptic writers, he clearly shows Jesus suffering alongside others. For example, In John 11:17-44, Jesus visits his friends in Bethany and learns from Martha and Mary that their brother, Lazarus, has died. Mary and a few companions meet Jesus, their grief bringing them to tears. Verse 33 records, "When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved." Jesus displays similar emotion upon arrival at the tomb of Lazarus in verse 38. The well-known story ends with the miracle of Lazarus rising to the call of Jesus. Again, a little detail added in verse 44, "Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go,'" reveals the attention Jesus gives to the little acts of compassion that could seem like mere afterthoughts. Jesus has just raised a man from the dead. Surely this could have been an ancient mic-drop moment. Yet Jesus does not walk off basking in the glory of the miracle. Instead, Christ notices Lazarus' bindings and calls for help on his behalf.

In 13:1, John says, “Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.” This “love” is a form of *ἀγαπάω* (*agapao*) which means “to love dearly.” The CEB’s translation conveys that meaning a little more clearly: “Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them fully.” The passage continues as Jesus washes the disciples’ feet, setting an example of humility and service for them (13:14). After discussing his coming betrayal, Jesus gives the disciples a new standard in verse 34-35: “I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” Here also, John uses the word *agapao*. Jesus tells the disciples that he loves them in verse 1, shows them that love in action in verses 3-14, then tells them to go and do the same.

Still, living into this life of love Christ modeled challenged believers. The apostle Paul offers critical teaching about *agapao* in several places, none more succinct than the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of his First Letter to the Church at Corinth where Paul defines *agapao*.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Paul points out here in these first three verses that without *agapao*, the articulate become incoherent, the wise and the faithful become inconsequential, and the philanthropic have wasted their efforts. He continues, explaining what love looks like.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.



Paul points out qualities belonging to *agapao*—patience, kindness, truthfulness—and characteristics that are incompatible with it such as envy, arrogance, rudeness, selfishness. Surely from its earliest days as now, this text has resonated with hearers, pointing out areas in their own behavior which did and did not mimic the life of Christ. Paul then speaks to the lasting nature of *agapao*, saying, “Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. . . . And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” Paul says that all the things which appear to have lasting power on earth (prophecy, literacy, knowledge) are fleeting. It is *agapao* that lasts. It is *agapao* that triumphs even when all else fails. *Agapao*, the love taught in the life and work of Christ, like *chesed*, the steadfast love of God, remains.

Thus, the gospel spread and the church grew. We see the first pictures of the growing church in the Book of Acts. Whether biblical writers reference Christ being moved by *esplanchnisthē*, as the synoptics do, or sharing *agapao*, as John and later Paul do, the outcome to the recipients is equivalent: humanity experiences God’s infinite grace. That is, when believers are moved by compassion and thus share the love of Christ *charis* abounds. The Acts of the Apostles tells us how the early church manifested this direction. Not long after the ascension of Christ, they experience the day of Pentecost, sort out what this means, and Peter proclaims, “. . . let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). In response, “. . . those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the

prayers” (Acts 2:41-42). Note that they did not devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom alone, but also to fellowship with each another. In fact, “they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people” (Acts 2:46-47a). The word translated here as “goodwill” is the Greek word *χάρις* (*charis*), often translated “grace.” The CEB offers a more active translation of 2:47a: “They praised God and *demonstrated God’s goodness* to everyone” (emphasis mine). This demonstration of God’s goodness continued as the numbers of Christ followers grew. Acts 4:32 says, “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions but everything they owned was held in common.” Moreover “[t]here was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold” (Acts 4:34).

Yet, while the narrative proclaims unity despite differences, the text also points out moments of discord. For example, the Hellenist Christians point out inequity in the fellowship, saying that “their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food” (Acts 6:1b). The apostles responded to the Hellenist complaint by increasing their volunteer base to accommodate the growing need. By providing for the needs of these whom the culture would deem unworthy, the early church once again demonstrated God’s goodness. Thereby, “the word of God continued to spread” (Acts 6:7a).

### **History**

In Jesus’ day, people understood their value based upon their role in the community. To the ancients, loving God meant loving community; loving community

involved loving oneself. The two were inseparable.<sup>61</sup> For Jesus, love of God is conjoined to loving humanity. Thus, Jesus cannot stop with the directive for humankind to love the divine; he must continue, extending that love to the community. Examples of Christians embracing this challenge include the desert fathers and mothers, Alcoholics Anonymous, and new monastic communities.

### Desert Fathers and Mothers

By the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, Christianity was widely accepted across the Roman Empire.<sup>62</sup> Emperor Constantine signed the Edict of Milan in 313 CE, extending religious tolerance to Christians; the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE established Christian orthodoxy; and the Edict of Thessalonica in 380 CE made Christianity the official religion of the Empire. All this political legitimacy for Christians occurred as barbarian tribes attacked the borders of the Empire, compromising national stability. Apparently seeing these two realities as equally detrimental to the faith, M. Basil Pennington wonders “which threatened Christian life more—the new respectability or the barbarian—it would be hard to say.”<sup>63</sup> It was at this time that certain devoted believers shunned the comforts of city life for the solitude of the deserts of Egypt and surrounding areas. Thus isolated, they sought to grow in faithfulness, preserving authentic faith and practice without the distractions of Rome. We know them as the desert fathers and mothers.

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61. Francois Viljoin, “The Double Love Commandment,” *In die Skriflig* 49, 1 (March 2015): 11 pages, accessed November 20, 2019, <https://indieskriflig.org.za/index.php/skriflig/article/view/1869>.

62. Fourth century Rome encompassed much of present-day Europe in addition to Israel, Syria, and parts of Northern Africa, including Egypt.

63. Helen Waddell, *The Desert Fathers* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), xiii.

The specific reasons these early monastics had for eschewing civilization and embracing simplicity surely varied according to individual life experiences. No doubt, the same motivators affected them that affect decisions all humans make: family relationships, personal difficulties, financial hardships. Yet with all their innate diversity, the desert fathers and mothers shared a common desire: to be more like Christ. As a result, many viewed Rome's political affirmation of Christianity as more curse than gift, recognizing the danger in having their faith sanctioned by secular leadership. They chose to escape to an unforgiving desert than to be lulled into a religion micromanaged by political ambitions. "Society—which meant pagan society, limited by the horizons and prospects of life 'in this world'—was regarded by them as a shipwreck from which each single individual . . . had to swim for . . . life."<sup>64</sup>

What [they] . . . sought most of all was their own true self, in Christ. And in order to do this, they had to reject completely the false, formal self, fabricated under social compulsion in "the world." They sought a way to God that was uncharted and freely chosen, not inherited from others who had mapped it out beforehand.<sup>65</sup>

These men and women, "loved and sought solitude. But they were also persons held in a network of realistic relationships in community."<sup>66</sup> Indeed, there were cenobites who lived in actual physical community, but, as evidenced by the preservation of their sayings, even hermitic monastics had communal experiences. Moreover, while they "led

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64. Thomas Merton, *The Wisdom of the Desert: Sayings from the Desert Fathers of the Fourth Century* (New York: New Directions Books, 1960), 3.

65. *Ibid.*, 5.

66. Rowan Williams, *Where God Happens: Discovering Christ in One Another* (Boston: New Seeds Books, 2005), 2.

lives of uninterrupted prayer and great physical mortification,” they focused even more “on the loving kindness which they show[ed] to one another.”<sup>67</sup>

The desert fathers and mothers believed this responsibility to show loving kindness—the *chesed* discussed above—to be fundamental to embracing Christlikeness. For example, when Abba Poemen is asked what faith is, he proclaims the truth he and his peers espoused, saying, “To live ever in loving kindness and in humbleness, and to do good to one’s neighbor.”<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Abba Poemen notes, “Evil cannot drive out evil. If anyone hurts you, do good to him and your good will destroy his evil.”<sup>69</sup> Abba Anthony says it this way: “Our life and our death are with our neighbor. If we do good to our neighbor, we do good to God; if we cause our neighbor to stumble, we sin against Christ.”<sup>70</sup>

They did not just quote Jesus’ words, though; they regularly showed Christlike compassion to their fellow monastics, guests, and even strangers. Abba Agathon, student of Poemen, once said, “If I could meet a leper, give him my body and take his, I should be very happy.”<sup>71</sup> Such comments would sound like outrageous hyperbole if it were not for the recollections of his peers which tell of Agathon’s many deeds of charity. One relates an encounter Agathon had with a lone traveler who had become ill. Recognizing the need, the abba remained with him in a rented room four months, caring for the

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67. Helen Waddell, xxvii, 8.

68. John Chryssavgis, *In the Heart of the Desert (revised): The Spirituality of the Desert Fathers and Mothers* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2008), Foreword to the Revised Edition, Kindle.

69. Williams, 133.

70. Williams, 129.

71. Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (Trappist, KY: Cistercian Publications, 1975), 24.

traveler until he was well. Another speaks of an incident in the marketplace where a crippled beggar entreated Agathon for assistance, each demand more irritating than the last. Agathon, counting his responses to the man an offering to God, remained patient and pleasant. At the close of the day, the stranger revealed himself to be God's angel testing Agathon's true devotion. The angel lauded him saying, "Agathon, you are filled with divine blessings, in heaven and on earth."<sup>72</sup>

Clearly, while the early monastics certainly desired solitude in order to draw near to God in their interior selves, they still valued community and the role human relationships played in coming to know God better. In truth, Agathon is more typical than exception among his peers. These devout followers of Christ habitually sought to offer grace and compassion to God's people. One recollection of their communal worship habits illustrates the point.

One by one they abide in their cells, a mighty silence and a great quiet among them: only on the Saturday and on the Sunday do they come together to church, and there they see each other face to face as folk restored in heaven. If by chance any one is missing in that gathering, straightway they understand that he has been detained by some unevenness of his body, and they all go to visit him, not indeed all of them together but at different times and each carrying with him whatever he may have by him at home that might seem grateful to the sick.<sup>73</sup>

This is the kind of community godly compassion can birth: one where "we see each other face to face as folk restored in heaven."

### The New Monastics

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, completing a worship service without disruption from congregant devices is an accomplishment few can achieve. An attempt—even if it

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72. Ibid., 25.

73. Waddell, 8.

promised heavenly community—to coax those same believers into a distant desert forsaking all modern conveniences would surely be wasted effort. Luckily, modern monastic equivalents look vastly different from their ancient counterparts. Today, “[s]ome live in traditional monasteries, but the majority do not. Many are integrating what previously seemed impossible to reconcile—deep spiritual practice and conjugal love, solitude and social responsibility.”<sup>74</sup> Three examples of this type of community are Koinonia Farm, The Simple Way, and The Rutba House.

### **Koinonia Farm**

Clarence Jordan had both a bachelor’s degree in agriculture and a doctorate in New Testament Greek in hand when he began his attempt at the above-mentioned integration in 1942. From his study of the New Testament, he knew that Jesus spoke more about the Kingdom of God than any other topic. Jordan noted that according to Jesus’ teachings outcasts would be far more welcome (as a rule) than aristocrats, and “to enter this Kingdom was to be saved, to find eternal life.”<sup>75</sup> From his study, he recognized the Kingdom as the community formed from those living by Christ’s Sermon on the Mount, those seeking first the Kingdom. Jordan believed that this *koinonia* (the Greek word for fellowship) was what Christ had in mind when speaking of the Kingdom of God. As a result, Clarence and his wife Florence sought to create a place where people from all backgrounds could live out this picture of God’s Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Fifteen years into the community’s founding on a barren plot of land in

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74. Williams, 8.

75. Clarence Jordan, "Christian Community in the South," *The Journal of Religious Thought* (1957): 27.

Americus, Georgia, Jordan spoke of his convictions about the early church and the Kingdom.

Wishing to realize anew the intensity of this fellowship, a group of nearly sixty men, women and children are living together at Koinonia Farm, in southwest Georgia near Americus. We have come together from many denominations, occupations, and sections of the nation. Some of us are white, some Negro. Our education ranges from illiteracy to Ph.D. Our economic backgrounds are from middle-class to poor. We come from both farms and cities, from North and South. Some of us have been here from the beginning in 1942 ; others have come very recently.<sup>76</sup>

Since Jordan founded his “demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God,”<sup>77</sup>

Koinonia Farm has adapted to meet many challenges. Members have conscientiously objected to military service, stood toe to toe with the KKK, overcome economic deficiencies, and suffered the loss of the beloved Jordans, first Clarence (in 1969) and later Florence (in 1987). Yet Koinonia prevails. After visiting in 1976, G. Clarke Chapman, Jr. discussed the difficulties they had faced and the almost mystical sense of connection shared by the members.

. . . Koinonia spends little time rehearsing the past, but seems willing to move out in new directions in its longstanding concern both for spiritual renewal and for service to others. And perhaps it is in that very combination of flexibility and compassion that we find the less obvious reasons why newcomers can sense there a certain presence.<sup>78</sup>

Today, Koinonia is home to eight community members who work and live on the property. “Covenanted Members promise to serve God and God’s people at and through this place called Koinonia Farm. Our commitment is for the long haul, for as far as the

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76. Ibid, 28.

77. Derek C. Hatch, "Conscience in the Cotton Patch: The Witness of Clarence and Florence Jordan," *American Baptist Quarterly* (2015): 291.

78. G. Clarke Chapman, Jr., "Koinonia, 1976: An Experiment in Community, Revisited," *Cross Currents* (1975): 285.



eye can see. Covenanted Members renew their vows regularly at a worship service held in the spring of each year.”<sup>79</sup> In addition, seven staff members help manage daily operations. Plus, Koinonia houses seasonal volunteers, interns, and visitors. The community has two guiding statements: a mission and a vision statement.

Mission Statement: We are Christians called to live together in intentional community sharing a life of prayer, work, study, service and fellowship. We seek to embody peacemaking, sustainability, and radical sharing. While honoring people of all backgrounds and faiths, we strive to demonstrate the way of Jesus as an alternative to materialism, militarism and racism.

Our Vision Statement: Love Through Service to Others • Joy Through Generous Hospitality • Peace Through Reconciliation<sup>80</sup>

The model that Koinonia Farm offers is one of compassionate community, the kind of community that lives out Jesus’ command to love God and neighbor in word and deed.

### **The Simple Way**

Shane Claiborne the teenager would be appalled by adult Shane’s outrageous behavior. Raised in the hills of Tennessee, buckled in by the Bible Belt, Shane was a good Christian boy who dutifully marked all the prohibition boxes so as to avoid the fiery pits of hell. It worked well for the Young Republican cum evangelist. He recalls, “I was passionately pro-life and anti-gay, and I tore apart liberals. I helped organize the local Bush-Quayle campaign, running around slapping pumper stickers on cars whether the owners wanted them or not. Nobody could stop us Jesus freaks.”<sup>81</sup> Then he chose to

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79. “About Us: Our Members,” Koinonia Farm, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.koinoniafarm.org/about-us/>.

80. “About: Our Mission Statement,” Koinonia Farm, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.koinoniafarm.org/about-koinonia-farm/>; “About: Our Vision Statement,” Koinonia Farm, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.koinoniafarm.org/about-koinonia-farm/>.

81. Shane Claiborne, *Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical*, 10th Anniversary ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), Jesus Freak, chap. 1, Kindle.

attend Eastern University in Pennsylvania. His relatives warned him he would be changed irrevocably if he took up company with Yankees. They were right.<sup>82</sup>

In college, Shane began to see the problem with prosperity gospel teaching and had his eyes opened to the plight of the disenfranchised. So, when Shane and his friends learned of mothers and children living in an abandoned church in Kensington (a nearby neighborhood) who were about to be evicted, they promptly walked out of their university cafeteria to go stand with them. “This,” Claiborne says, “complicated the old ‘love your neighbor as yourself’ thing, which had become so manageable.”<sup>83</sup>

Following the resolution of the housing situation, he became convicted that most Christians failed to live like Jesus; he went in search of those who had. He studied Francis of Assisi, Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, Florence and Clarence Jordan, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Mother Teresa. Desiring to see a real Christ follower at work, he called up Mother Teresa from his dorm phone, spoke to her directly, and got her permission to go to Calcutta and work alongside her.<sup>84</sup>

His quest for authenticity, his experience with advocacy, and his new understanding of what church should be led him and a group of friends to start The Simple Way right there in Kensington, the neighborhood he had championed in college. The Simple way is not a church in the traditional sense. It is also unlike the typical neighborhood. In an interview with Paul Brandeis Raushenbush, Claiborne explains.

The Simple Way identifies with this monastic tradition. “Monastics such as Francis of Assisi heard the whisper of God say, ‘repair my Church which is in ruins’. That is the whisper many of us hear today,” Shane explains, “There is a

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82. Ibid.

83. Ibid, chap. 2, Kindle.

84. Ibid, chap. 3, Kindle.

history of Christians who have ‘left the world’ to save the world — they often go to the margins and to the abandoned places like the desert. The inner city is our contemporary desert.”<sup>85</sup>

The Simple Way has grown to include lifelong residents of the neighborhood, newcomers to the area, and temporary guests who come for a day, a week, or a full year. They live and work together, sharing celebrations and struggles, but also physical belongings and personal gifts. They also fight systemic brokenness together, envisioning a world where “all of our neighbors coming to a place of security that enables growth and flourishing,” but they insist that at the heart of The Simple Way is “genuine love for each other.”<sup>86</sup>

### **The Rutba House**

In the late nineties, when Republican Senator Strom Thurmond (December 5, 1902 – June 26, 2003) of South Carolina was president pro tempore of the US Senate, he had an eager and devoted page in young Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. Like Claiborne, devoted to the cause of the religious right, Wilson-Hartgrove recalls, “. . .in my rush to follow Jesus to the White House, I almost tripped over him one day on my way to lunch at Union Station.” It was there, in the entrance to the station, that he encountered a man asking for spare change. Wilson-Hartgrove continued, saying, “. . .in my rush to achieve power and fight for justice and truth, I had rushed right past Jesus as he begged with a Styrofoam cup.” He was still a high school student, but already he was “starting to realize

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85. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush, “For Times Such As These: The Radical Christian Witness Of The New Monastics,” Huffington Post, February 8, 2012, accessed June 30, 2020, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/shane-claiborne-new-monastics\\_b\\_1156525?ref=religion](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/shane-claiborne-new-monastics_b_1156525?ref=religion).

86. “About,” The Simple Way, accessed June 30, 2020, <https://www.thesimpleway.org/about>.

just how hard it is to be a Christian in America.”<sup>87</sup> After graduation, Wilson-Hartgrove began his freshman year at Eastern University in Pennsylvania, just five years after Shane Claiborne had enrolled.<sup>88</sup>

Jonathan met Leah Wilson before the semester even started and she introduced him to The Simple Way. He quickly fell in love, both with The Simple Way and with Leah who became his wife in 2001. Two years later, the Wilson-Hartgroves “joined the Christian Peacemaker Teams in Baghdad as a ministry of presence against a war that the churches had called unjust.” At the end of their two week stay, part of the team landed in a hospital in a little town called Rutba. Their team was treated with godly care and compassion, despite being from the United States which had just bombed the very same hospital.<sup>89</sup> Wilson-Hartgrove recalls the experience saying,

We realized that we had been given the gift of community, even among enemies. That gift at Rutba helped our vocational discernment. Returning to the United States, Leah and I knew what kind of life we were called to. We would start a Christian community of hospitality, peacemaking, and discipleship in an urban neighborhood of Durham, North Carolina, a city broken by a history of racial division and rapid economic change. There we would trust God to once again give us the gift of community. And we would call the community Rutba House.<sup>90</sup>

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87. Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *New Monasticism: What it Has to Say to Today's Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008), 12-14.

88. *Ibid.*, 23.

89. *Ibid.*, 35.

90. *Ibid.*, 36.

They returned to the United States, they moved to Durham, Jonathan enrolled in Duke Divinity School, and Rutba House was born in the predominantly African-American Walltown neighborhood of Durham.<sup>91</sup>

Soon, Jonathan accepted the role of associate pastor at St. John's Missionary Baptist Church, the historical African American church in Walltown. In time, Jonathan started the School for Conversion, an outgrowth of the experiences of Rutba House. The School purchased the house next to St. John's for its headquarters and "is modeled after Tennessee's Highlander Center, known for training many of the leaders of the civil rights movement. It runs after-school and mentoring programs and has a small library of books by and about figures in the American freedom struggle."<sup>92</sup> But it is the School's tagline that seems to tell the real story of its intent: "making surprising friendships possible."<sup>93</sup>

The Rutba House and the School for Conversion both make relationships the priority. Learning to live with people who are different from oneself requires significant personal growth and patience. It is not easy. Wilson-Hartgrove notes that as important as this goal is, "[I]t's hard to be a people who love each other. It's hard because Christians disagree about so many things."<sup>94</sup> In order for these relationships to grow, people must be compassionate with one another, realizing that despite the brokenness they all experience, their beauty—as individuals and as a community—is beyond compare.

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91. Jonathan R. Wilson, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2010), Kindle, Introduction.

92. Yonat Shimron, "Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove White Evangelicals to Reckon with the Bible," Religion News Service, January 2, 2020, accessed June 30, 2020, <https://religionnews.com/2020/01/02/jonathan-wilson-hartgroves-mission-to-liberate-white-evangelicals/>.

93. Logo, <https://www.schoolforconversion.org/>.

94. Wilson-Hartgrove, 145.

## New Monasticism and Compassion

In their book *Slow Church*, C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison offer “an invitation into the long, rich, deep and necessarily slow conversation about what it means to be part of the movement that Jesus started two thousand years ago.”<sup>95</sup> They explain that a critical part of building community is the practice of compassion. Further, “patience is how compassion is embodied in our lives.”<sup>96</sup> The New Monastic communities have embodied compassion intentionally as they share life together. Whether as an interracial experiment in South Georgia in the 1950’s, a group of college students grown into faithful adult activists in Pennsylvania, or a neighborhood transformed into a multi-ethnic family of faith in North Carolina, these New Monastics live together with patient compassion, even when its hard; thereby, they show us a glimpse of the Kingdom of God, on earth as it is in heaven. This glimpse will serve as an example for Ecclesia, as participants in this project imagine a community of their own rooted in Christ-like compassion.

## Alcoholics Anonymous

When his phone rang that night in November of 1934, Bill W. accepted his old friend’s self-invite with quick anticipation. Ebby Thacher was always one to enjoy a drink or ten, so Bill rightfully expected a night marked by shared inebriation. When Ebby arrived, though, it was clear to Bill that something was different about his childhood buddy. Ebby explained, “Well, I’ve got religion.” He went on to explain his newfound

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95. C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison, *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus* (Downers Grove, Illinois: 2014), 9.

96. *Ibid.*, 84.

sobriety and its connection to an evangelical movement known as the Oxford Group<sup>97</sup>.

Ebby had been sober for two months thanks to the Oxford program which, in addition to turning to God, included “[taking a] personal moral inventory, admission to another person of wrongs done, making amends and restitution, and an effort to be of real service to others.”<sup>98</sup>

Bill initially wanted no part of this religious approach to his very earthy problem. Still, there was something about the fact that Ebby, this man who was in many ways so like him, had come to him free of judgment and overflowing with compassion, that kept drawing Bill back to the possibility that freedom from addiction might actually be possible. It took months of hangovers for him to acquiesce to the yearning Ebby had stirred in him. During that time, Bill landed in the hospital for detox; it was there that he had a spiritual encounter that transformed him from cynic to believer. He describes the supernatural experience as acute awareness of God’s presence which revealed to him the truth that he could give and receiving love in ways he had previously not imagined. Six months later, in June of 1935, he met Dr. Bob Smith. Together, using the Oxford Group’s design, Bill W. and Dr. Bob formed Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).<sup>99</sup>

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97. The Oxford Group, founded by American Frank Buchman (1878—1961), offered a new approach to the faith. Buchman described the group thusly: “The Oxford Group is a Christian revolution, whose concern is vital Christianity. Its aim is a new social order under the dictatorship of the Spirit of God, making for better human relationships, for unselfish co-operation, for cleaner business, cleaner politics, for the elimination of political, industrial[,] and racial antagonisms.” Buchman, Frank N.D., *Remaking the World*, (London: Blandford Press, 1961), 4.

98. Mel B., *Ebby: The Man Who Sponsored Bill W.*, (Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing, 1998), accessed February 15, 2020, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=44000&site=ehost-live>.

99. Ibid.

“Alcoholics Anonymous is a worldwide fellowship of . . . men and women who are banded together to solve their common problems and to help fellow sufferers in recovery from that age-old, baffling malady, alcoholism.”<sup>100</sup> Groups gather around the globe to “share their experience, strength and hope with each other” in an effort to combat their addiction.<sup>101</sup> To presume that these groups are homogeneous, however, is to misunderstand their intent. AA encourages formation of new meetings, requiring only that they adhere to the membership guideline: that a person has a desire to quit drinking. Basically, AA is “structured rhizomatically, growing laterally, with new groups proliferating at will; a common saying holds that ‘all that is required to start a new AA meeting is a resentment and a coffeepot.’”<sup>102</sup>

Though AA is not expressly a Christian community today, it maintains components that reflect its commonality with the faith, including the second step which encourages members to proclaim “a power greater than ourselves can restore sanity.”<sup>103</sup> Throughout the 12 steps, evidence of AA’s Christian foundation in the Oxford Group is apparent. For example, Oxford’s principles included the idea that radical change is possible when individuals accept the need for it; in addition, those who benefit from such transformation have an obligation to reach out to others who need to change.<sup>104</sup> Whether or not today’s groups proclaim Christ, they certainly exhibit Christlikeness.

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100. Alcoholics Anonymous, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (New York City: AA World Services, Inc., 2012), 15.

101. Alcoholics Anonymous, *The Preamble* (New York City: AA World Services, Inc., 2013), NP.

102. Trysh Travis, *The Language of the Heart: A Cultural History of the Recovery Movement from Alcoholics Anonymous to Oprah Winfrey* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2013), 5.

103. Alcoholics Anonymous, *Twelve and Twelve*, 25.

104. Travis, *Language*, 46.



While there is great variability in style and form of AA meetings, a common characteristic is compassionate acceptance of one another, the kind of welcome Jesus modeled throughout his ministry. The honesty of address, “My name is Bill W. and I am an alcoholic,” sets a tone of vulnerability that seems to enable real connection. There is a facilitator at each meeting, but responsibility for leadership is shared among those present, virtually flattening any perceived hierarchy. Members participate by setting up the space, brewing coffee, reading passages from the AA handbooks, passing out AA tokens of sobriety, cleaning up at the close of the meeting, and more. Many members readily share contact information and encouragers others to reach out to them for support, often capping the invitation with an admission of their own need for support. The message permeates the room: “You and I are broken. You and I are beautiful. Let’s be broken and beautiful together.”<sup>105</sup> The success of AA and similar groups suggests to Ecclesia project participants that an atmosphere marked by compassion encourages authentic community and promotes lasting transformation. Thus, AA offers a practical example for participants as they seek to increase the practice of compassion for self and others.

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105. I attended an open AA meeting in Asheville on June 12, 2019. Additionally, the church where Ecclesia Baptist meets hosts multiple 12-Step meetings weekly; I’ve interacted informally with members of these groups and gotten a similar vibe to what I experienced when I was in attendance myself.

## CHAPTER 4

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS

#### **Means of Evaluation**

The experiment ran for five weeks from September 13, 2020 to October 11, 2020. Nine participants completed the study, forming the test group; five additional volunteers formed the control group.

I administered four evaluations to both groups before and after the project's implementation. The pre/post instruments included a general knowledge test I created specific to the project. This test, designed with a 10-point Likert scale, assessed participants' confidence in their awareness of and proficiency with project content (Appendix D). In addition, participants completed Dr. Kristin Neff's self-compassion and compassion scales (Appendices E and F). These instruments, each formed with a five-point Likert scale, measured participants' perception of their capacity for compassion for self and others. The fourth and final evaluation was the Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Questionnaire published by the United Kingdom's National Health Service (Appendix G). Similar to Neff's scales, the EI draws from subjects' self-analyses, using a five-point Likert scale.

Participants submitted evaluations (Appendix H) following each session to help determine the effectiveness of the facilitator and that evening's session, allowing for design correction when necessary. Members were asked to journal between sessions, responding to prompts designed to encourage reflection (Appendix I). Several members submitted selected responses from their journals, with permission to use their reflections

in the final report. Furthermore, I personally interviewed members privately after the project ended, giving them a single prompt: “Tell me how what you learned in this project impacted you.” Some responses were one or two words and not useful for the purpose of assessing the project’s effectiveness. Others, however, offered detailed reflections on their experiences. With these objective and subjective data sources, along with information from simple observations, I collected sufficient data to draw valuable conclusions.

### Data Analysis

The Becoming Neighbors Pre/Post-Test is a 10-point Likert self-assessment which measured participants’ perceived knowledge of the project’s subject matter, based on their responses to 45 items. To score this instrument, I added the selected numerical values for each of the items. The assessment covered project content such as the

Becoming Neighbors Pre/Post-Test--Test Group

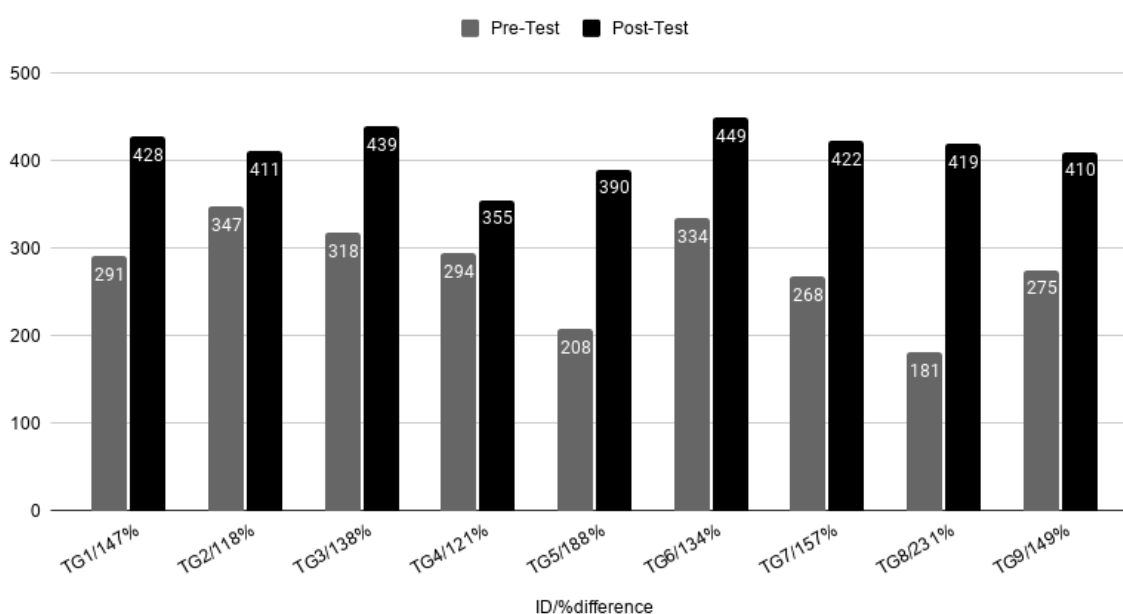


Table 1: Becoming Neighbors Pre/Post-Test

Enneagram, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and compassion, as well as biblical and theological matters. The control group also took the assessment. While all nine project participants showed a substantial increase on the post-test, (see Table 1), none of the control group members had significant gains (see Table 2).

### Becoming Neighbors Pre/Post-Test

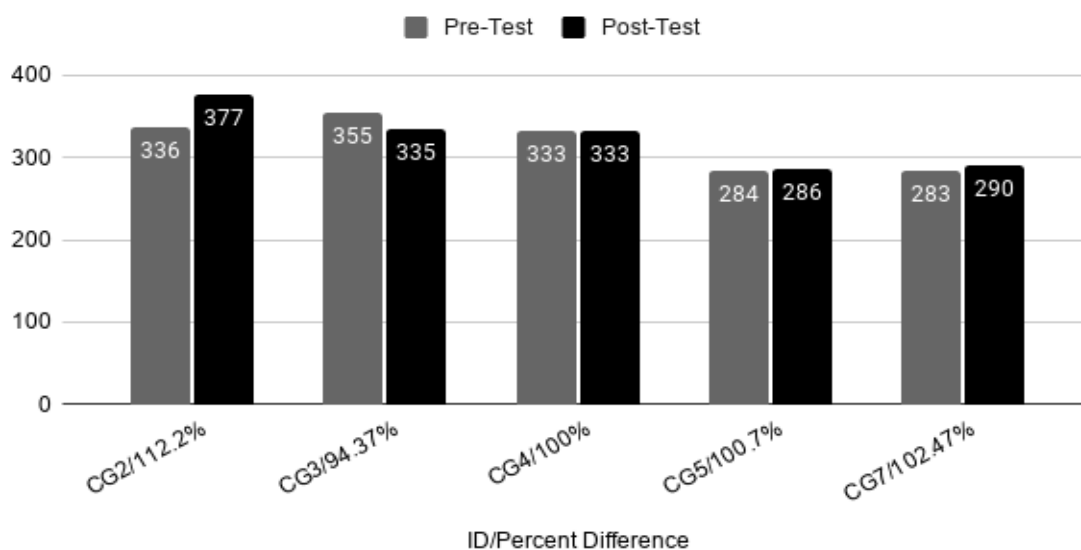


Table 2: Becoming Neighbors Pre/Post-Test—Control Group

One insight from the data was the responses of both groups to prompts regarding God's love for humanity. Every member of both the test and control groups indicated a strong belief that the New Testament teaches God loves, suffers for, and acts compassionately towards humanity. Yet, they were much less confident that the Old Testament taught the same tenets. The post-test scores revealed that teaching on God's *chesed* increases learners' understanding of God's unchanging mercy and grace. This suggests that a Bible study on God's character might be helpful for the church at large. The Psalms study done for this project will aid in the formation of that curriculum.

Dr. Kristen Neff's Self-Compassion and Compassion Scales, using 5-point Likert scales, measured participants' perception of these two characteristics. Across both groups, self-compassion scores were noticeably lower than compassion in general. Considering Christ's command to love others as we love ourselves, this seems problematic. Perhaps the United States' culture of spotlighting individual achievement has given rise to overactive inner critics who lack patience with human frailties. Alternatively, the church may have prioritized community service to the exclusion of self-care, causing Christ followers to downplay their own needs and accentuate their kindness towards others. There is also the chance that during this once-in-a-century global crisis, people are more forgiving of others than they are of themselves. In any case, the results suggest that this population could benefit from some spiritual direction in loving oneself (see Table 3).

#### Comparison of Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) and Compassion Scale (CS)

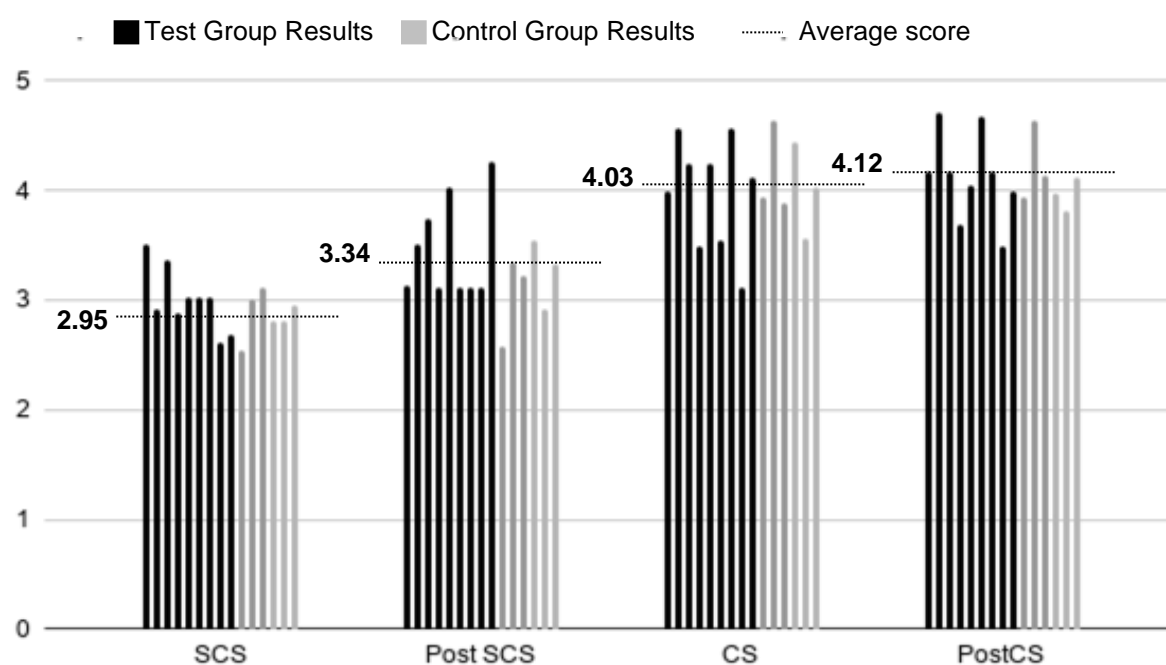


Table 3: Comparison of Self-Compassion Scale and Compassion Scale

### Self-Compassion Scale--Test Group

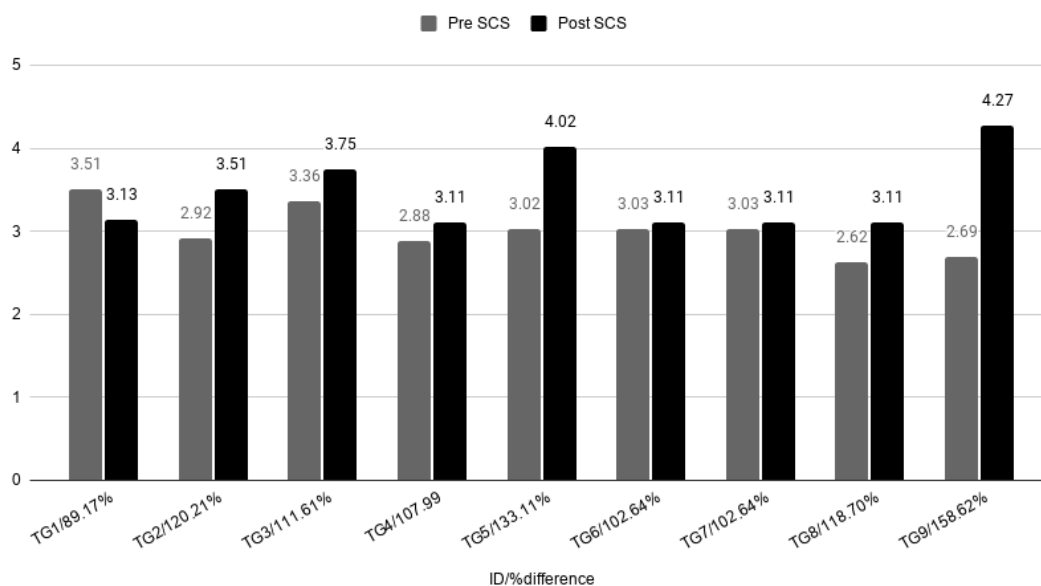


Table 4: Self-Compassion Scale—Test Group

Test group participants did show an increase in self-compassion after completing the course. Scores averaged 116% of pre-test scores (Table 4). Note that the control group, however, also showed a slight increase: averaging 109% of pre-test results (Table 5). The increase for both groups could be attributed to familiarity with the instrument,

### Self Compassion Scale--Control Group

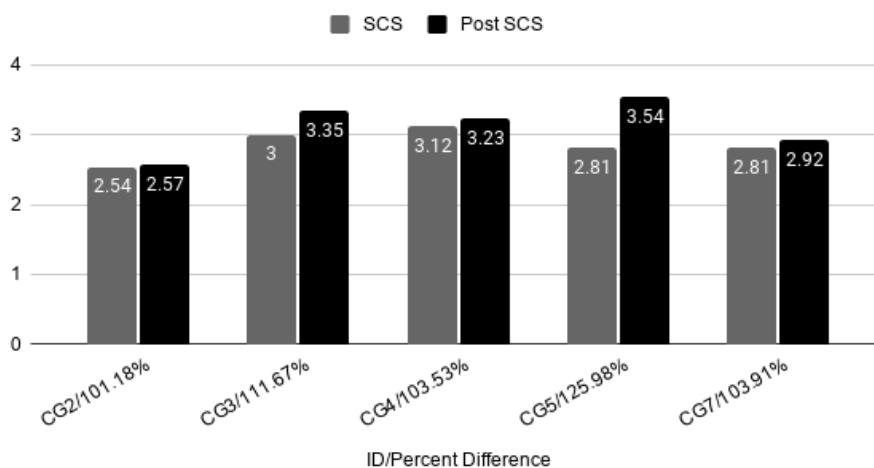


Table 5: Self-Compassion Scale—Control Group

with changes in personal circumstances, or unknown variables. Project participants seemed to understand the importance of self-compassion based on their responses in journals and in group discussions. “I guess I am really hard on myself,” one respondent said. “I never thought about being compassionate to myself,” another remarked. One mused in the journal, “I just realized that therapy is a form of self-care. Maybe that’s like self-compassion?” From this feedback, it seems the experiment did prompt participants to explore the value of self-compassion. Naturally, this is only the first step in developing this skill; only practice over time can really bring lasting change. Thus, the modest increase seems reasonable and instructive of the project’s effectiveness.

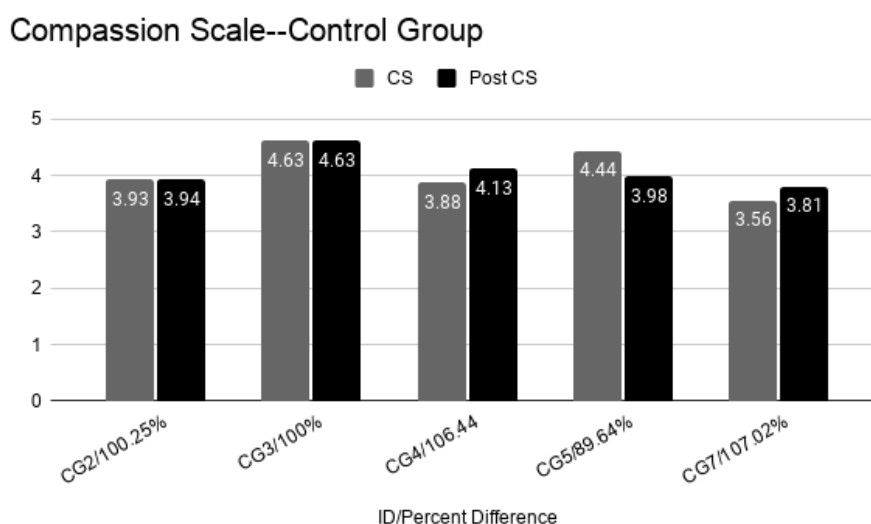


Table 6: Compassion Scale—Control Group

The Compassion Scale returned more impressive change for the test group than the control group. The control group (Table 6) averaged less than a quarter of one percent difference over the five-week period while the test group showed over four percent increase (Table 7). This difference was borne out in journal reflection and personal testimony.

Compassion Scale--Test Group

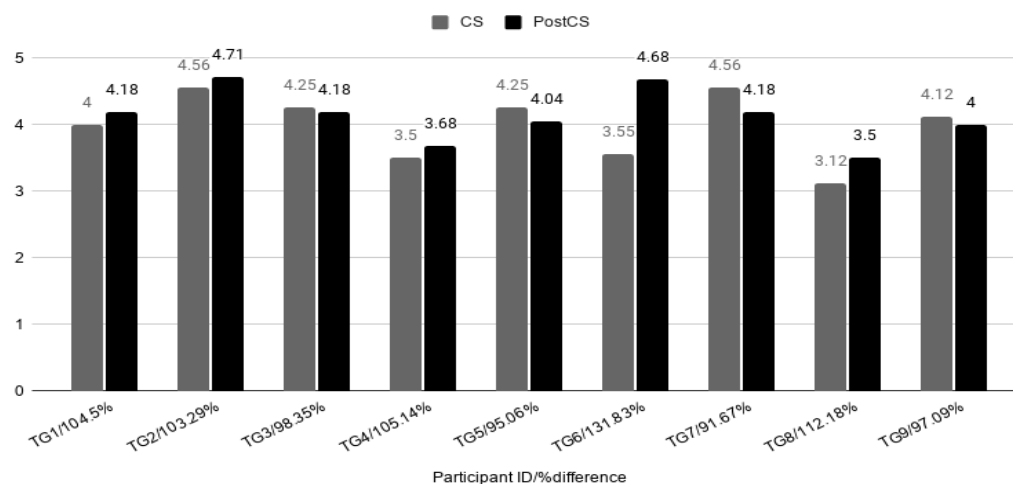


Table 7: Compassion Scale—Test Group

Several commented that they were more focused on offering others the benefit of the doubt. Understanding ACEs seemed to offer the biggest insight for participants. Most had never considered how others' past experiences might have shaped current behavior. Using the Johari Window also seemed particularly helpful for participants. Several remarked that they had never considered that they could have blind spots to their behavior and mused that this might mean others had blind spots as well. One reflected on an experience that occurred that week.

My boss had to bring her 13-year-old daughter to work with her because she had a cold and the school wouldn't let her stay. She was annoying to say the least. [I considered] reasons for her behavior: She's 13. She was sick. She wasn't able to be at her school. I truly love this kid and I know she was upset at not being able to be in school on the first two days [her friends] were able to be there.

The participant practiced strategies discussed in the journal activities and in class meetings to mitigate personal frustration and offer compassion to a beloved child.

The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire post-test scores averaged 112% of the pre-test scores (Table 8). The control group's post-test results averaged only 103% of



### Emotional Intelligence Quotient--Test Group

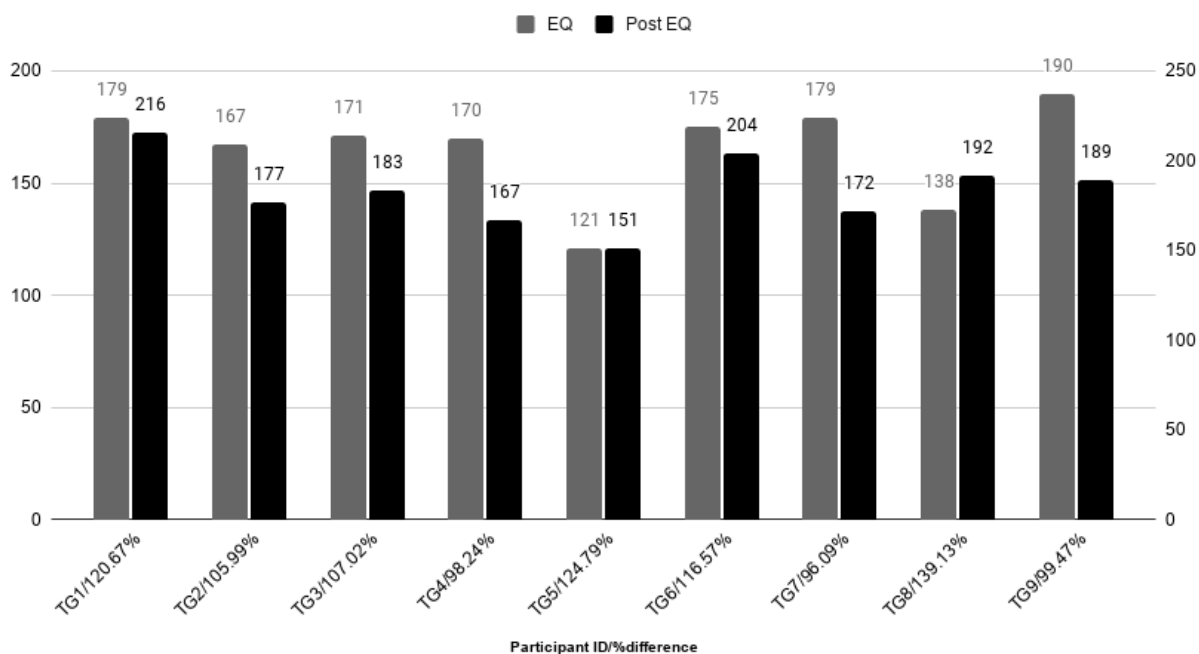


Table 8: Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire—Test Group

their pre-test scores (Table 9). Journal reflection and personal interviews supported these results. “I learned a lot about emotional intelligence and believe that learning my Enneagram type helped me understand why I respond in certain ways in certain situations,” one participant offered. “I feel more confident connecting with others on a more emotional level now.” Another noted, “I didn’t realize how angry I really am all the time. I’m trying some of the things I learned to manage my temper better.” One said, “I did get annoyed one day this week. . . . I went into the office, took some deep breaths and did feel more calm. [Next time] I can better manage by starting earlier with my breathing exercises.”

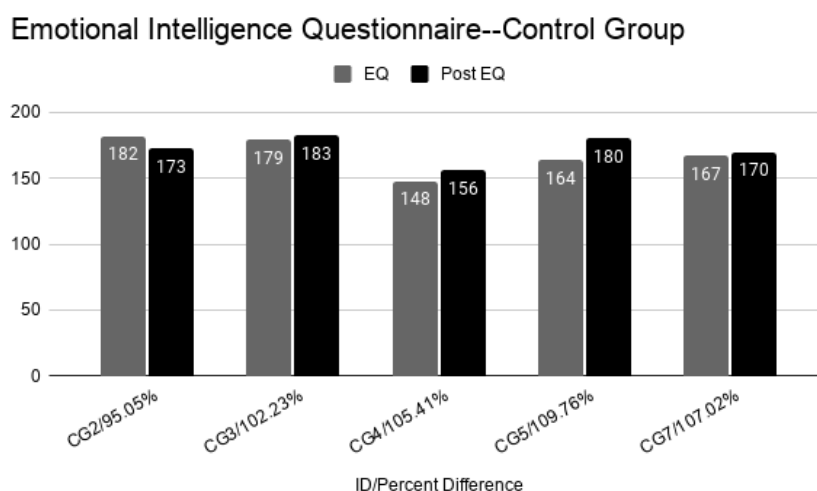


Table 9: Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire—Control Group

Post Session Evaluations were largely positive (Table 10). A few aggravations with technology occurred on the first night, but we resolved most before week two. The evaluations suggest that members prepared well for each session. This may be an exaggeration since in post-session discussion, members often confided they had not “had a chance to do the journal activities.” Of the nine who completed the project, four reported completing all assignments. One did “most of them,” and four did “some.”

One issue addressed during the proposal approval process was the amount of material planned for the allotted time. Consequently, I asked for verbal feedback and paid careful attention to the weekly evaluations. By their own responses when asked and according to the evaluations, participants found the time sufficient for the content. Also, in the proposal phase, sessions were planned for 90 minutes; proposal comments prompted lengthening sessions to two hours—a helpful adjustment.

Unsurprisingly, COVID-19 caused difficulties not accurately reflected in the session evaluations. Because some were unable to access technology that would work for

video conferencing and others did not feel safe meeting in person, two groups met simultaneously. When course instruction necessitated small group discussion, in-person participants divided into groups; video attendees separated into break-out rooms. When people in the physical space commented on course topics, they approached the hand-held microphone attached to the computer. Because not everyone was comfortable with this necessity, some hesitated to contribute in the beginning. Generally, it went remarkably well under the circumstances. As a confirmation of this assessment, members have asked when we will have another class that they can join and have repeatedly mentioned to me that they miss our Sunday night gatherings.

## Becoming Neighbors: Weekly Evaluation

	9/13/20	9/20/20	9/27/20	10/04/20	10/11/20
I felt well-prepared for tonight's meeting.	9.5	9.125	8	9.25	9.33
The journal activities were clear and understandable.	9.75	9.25	9	9.25	10
The journal activities were relevant to tonight's topic.	9.625	9.125	9.57	9.5	10
The preparation expected was reasonable.	9.625	9.625	9	9.5	10
The amount of material covered in this meeting was reasonable.	9.625	9.75	9.57	9.75	10
The leader was well-prepared for this meeting.	9.375	9.875	9.86	9.75	10
The leader was knowledgeable about this topic.	9.75	9.875	10	9.875	10
I felt welcomed by the leader at this meeting.	9.75	10	10	10	10
I felt the leader welcomed my input at this meeting.	10	10	10	10	10
I felt safe at this meeting.	10	10	9.86	10	10
I felt my opinion was valued at this meeting.	10	9.875	9.71	9.875	10
The group session added to my understanding of tonight's content.	9.625	9.875	9.86	9.975	10
<b>In Person Only</b>					
The temperature in the room was comfortable.	8.8	9.25	10	10	9.5
The room setup was appropriate for learning.	9.6	10	10	10	10
The seating was comfortable.	9	10	9.5	10	9.75
<b>Online Only</b>					
The internet experience was positive.	7.5	9	8	9	8.5
I felt connected to the group.	9.25	9.5	8.6	9.5	9.5
I could hear/see the meeting & other participants comfortably.	8	9.25	7.66	8.5	9

Table 10: Aggregate of Weekly Post-Session Evaluations

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

A decade ago, I took a class at Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity taught by Dr. Jimmy Whitlow that considered the connection between the fields of psychology and theology. I most definitely took this course either to satisfy curriculum requirements for a Pastoral Care and Counseling credit or because it was the only course that would fit into my schedule. I know this because at that time in my life, I had little interest in psychology. I saw psychology as a soft and fluffy discipline that offered little to real scholars. (I overstate, but only slightly.)

What I learned then, in addition to how radically I had misjudged the value of psychology, was how understanding human behavior informs the ministry of the gospel. At that time, I kept my own psychological woes to myself; eight years later, I had learned the strength of sharing my story and knew well how simple tools from psychology could improve relationships and enhance ministry. This project grew out of that new understanding. A seed that began to develop deep roots in Whitlow's class, blossomed in the form of this DMin project. This season of its cultivation and harvest has taught me even more about God, ministry, and my own self.

Perhaps the most meaningful—and the most difficult—part of this work has been the biblical and theological research. Following *chesed* throughout scripture, unfolded in the lives of the patriarchs, laced through the psalms, proclaimed by the prophets, and manifested in Christ Jesus, led me to an even deeper conviction of the love of God. In 1998, over the course of six months, I read the Bible through for the first time as an adult. When I finished it, I recorded in my journal that I believed the Bible to be about two

things: God's grace and God's love. This DMin project effectively reiterated that truth for me, and gave me the opportunity to convey this message to others.

Interestingly, the project did that for participants as well. Repeatedly, individuals have told me in conversation (face to face or text message) that they shared course content with others:

- “I’ve been telling my husband all about the Enneagram. He totally understands now why I, as a Enneagram 5, always have to have all the facts.”
- “My coworker and I were talking about this giving the benefit of the doubt stuff the other day when one of our most difficult clients came in. We just looked at each other, took some deep breaths, and took care of her. Later, we talked about why she might be the way she is—maybe she has ACEs or just had a bad day.”
- “I told the [person] I work with about something on my Johari window and she said she understands me better now. She appreciated the conversation.”

I had not anticipated this kind of spillover. I expected people to begin to act more compassionately; I had not figured that they would do that and share what they had learned with others. This gives me hope that our church members will continue sharing their knowledge with one another and continue practicing acts of compassion towards themselves and others.

Participants do seem to agree that compassion is essential to vital community. For example, when I asked the group what a church that practiced radical compassion might feel like, one participant sighed deeply and said, “Safe.” Another reflected on this prompt and the class in general, saying, “For me, this course helped give me hope that we all have the capacity to be compassionate to those different from us and that we get to use

the Bible as a teaching tool for examples of compassion. [That could help in even the] most divisive situations.” Others indicated their agreement with these ideas. This simple notion, that compassion makes church a safe place, could have a transformative impact on Ecclesia Baptist as we move forward with a church population that is becoming more and more diverse racially, socio-economically, and otherwise.

Because of the success of the project, I would like to repeat the curriculum, correcting for obstacles we faced and strengthening the weaker aspects of the project. In future iterations, for example, I would rewrite *Becoming Neighbors* as a 10-12 week program, with weekly 90-minute sessions. This would provide a slower pace for learners and more time to digest the information and practice skills. Journal commitment would remain the same duration, but participants would receive a cohesive booklet with all activities included instead of a personal journal with weekly assignments given one at a time. Perhaps this more compact system would encourage greater follow through.

One concern, mentioned by two members, was that the journal was not available online. The journaling process was based on an old-school, paper-and-pen system. I am certain there is a way to offer an online workbook and would like to explore this option in the future for the techno-savvy crowd. Giving participants a choice for their journaling preference might improve participation as well.

Undoubtedly, additional practical experience applying the lessons learned in weekly meetings would have strengthened the value of the experience for participants. However, practical application, which would have been natural before we knew the term “social distancing,” was inconvenient and complicated due to the presence of the

coronavirus pandemic. Moreover, role-playing activities, made awkward by the cumbersome format of two groups meeting simultaneously, proved ineffective as well.

From the outset, the five-week time constraint gave limited opportunity for participants to practice what they had learned. In future iterations of *Becoming Neighbors*, I would lengthen the study to at least 10 weeks. Additionally, journal entries that ask participants to reflect on interactions would be included to encourage regular use of newly acquired tools. For example, a prompt might read,

Consider a time this week when you had a lengthy wait in line, in traffic, for an appointment, or in a comparable situation. Describe your emotions as you waited. How did you offer yourself compassion as you coped with the inconvenience you experienced? What compassion did you extend to those causing the extended wait time? How did your emotions change as you offered compassion to yourself and others? How might you improve your experience in future, similar conditions?

Weekly activities such as these should increase the likelihood that the information gained leads to real behavior change.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the project revealed two strong possibilities for future Bible studies: one on self-compassion as a spiritual discipline, and one on the consistency of God's character across all of scripture. Those who participated in the project have expressed interest in future activities being offered in the same time slot—Sunday evenings. Several control group members report that they share this desire. I plan to begin a study in January, offered both online and in person, on one of these topics.

In the first seminar of the DMin program, Dr. Danny West introduced students to Dr. David Carscaddon and advised using his generous offer to help with data collection. He stated that contacting Carscaddon prior to project implementation was critical to successful data analysis. This proved to be most helpful. Carscaddon directed me to quality assessments and offered suggestions on careful collection and examination. That



extra step made the data analysis stage not just easier, but possible. It enabled me to avoid what could have been a major obstacle.

One problem I did not avoid was getting instruments returned in a timely fashion. Most of the test group cooperated, though one who attended every session, failed to complete the post-test, despite multiple reminders. The control group, which started at 10 members and ended as five, were harder to reach. One of these returned the pre-test but not the post-test. Two or three forgot and a couple of them returned incomplete responses that rendered their participation invalid. If I were to redo the study itself, I would do a better job of follow-up with these individuals. My original plan was to hold two dinners, one at the beginning and one at the end, and to have both test and control group members complete their packets at that time and give them directly to me. Stipulations in place due to COVID-19 made this an impossibility. I did not have a good backup plan and wound up physically delivering and retrieving most of those packets, sometimes driving great distances to do so.

When I began the DMin program in August 2017, I identified three lifelong learning goals: becoming a better administrator, theologian, and preacher. I did not know then that I would soon leave the job I loved at First Baptist of Weaverville (FBCW); I certainly never imagined I would begin the job of my dreams as pastor of a small local church immediately after my exit from FBCW. Yet the goals I named in those earliest days have continued to guide my academic study and church ministry.

Managing all the details necessary for this DMin project gifted me with practical experience in the mundane tasks of churchwork. Technological skill acquisition, logistics management, and conflict supervision: each played a part in the months leading up to the

project and in the work itself. This experience enlarged my capabilities considerably. In fact, even simply increasing proficiency with word-processing and spreadsheet software has improved my efficiency with church-related reports and documents.

Undoubtedly, the copious reading I did in discerning the direction for this project broadened my understanding of God and God's love. The reading I did on 12-step theology was particularly helpful in expanding my own theology, as was my study of the early desert theologians and the new monastics. In preparing my biblical and theological rationale for this project, I intentionally looked for writers from varying backgrounds. Thus, I learned from Australian Christians and Jewish rabbis, Arabic Christians and Catholic nuns. I sought out both women and men, people of different ethnicities and nationalities, and both academics and clerics. That method of research paid off with a deeper and wider conception of the God of the Bible and of God's infinite love.

While I am quite certain that practice does not perfect make, it does create experiences from which to sharpen skills. Preaching weekly has helped me to find my voice and hone the preaching craft. I have been in the DMin program since beginning at Ecclesia Baptist in August 2018 and have been pleased at how often my studies for class have intersected with my sermon preparation. This organic collaboration between academics and proclamation has benefitted both.

In preaching class at GWU SOD, I once heard something like, "The best preacher for a church is the preacher who knows the church best." I did not expect the project to help me proclaim the gospel more vividly or succinctly. Yet my connection with my (virtual) congregation during the sermon is stronger than ever. I believe that is at least in part because through the project I got know many of them better. These strong

relationships with key members of the congregation seem to have formed conduits for the flow of the Spirit through the message. It is a beautiful thing.

At the heart of what I believe about God is that God's infinite *chesed* for humanity, embodied in Jesus, calls Christians to claim both their inherent brokenness, and their infinite beauty, and to offer the same grace to others. Through this project, I had the privilege of imparting that truth to others, who shared what they learned with others in their lives. Now if this Gospel will multiply like the news of Faberge Organic shampoo did in the 1980's, then we might just build the Kingdom of God right here on earth, just as it is in heaven.

## Appendix A

### F.A.C.E of Ecclesia<sup>106</sup>

The FACE of Ecclesia Baptist is a set of purpose-driven teams seeking to fulfill the mission God has given us.

- **Formation**--baptizing and forming disciples of Jesus  
Formation at Ecclesia involves sharing the gospel, baptizing new Christians, and making disciples. Our Formation Team provides opportunities for this through small group encounter and Bible study groups. Small groups of all ages meet every Sunday morning at 9:45 for Bible study. Additionally, we have Bible study and fellowship every other Tuesday night at Oakley United Methodist Church from 5:30-7:00. The Formation team helps to plan baptismal services and to mentor new believers and new Ecclesia members.
- **Assembly**--gathering together and building relationships  
At Ecclesia, we believe in assembling with one another--finding time to gather and fellowship and build relationships. Christ called us to love one another, to encourage one another, and to be unified together. All this comes from getting to know one another, sharing our stories, our hopes, our dreams, our challenges. The Assembly Team plans opportunities for us to spend time together. From our annual Back-to-School picnic to monthly gatherings, the Assembly Team coordinates and communicates Ecclesia's social events.
- **Compassion**--caring and praying for the suffering  
Jesus calls us to care for those who are suffering, the "least of these" of our world described in Matthew 25. Ecclesia's Compassion Team provides opportunities for people to work together on projects designed to meet the needs of the least of these. Most Ecclesia family members participate in some way in the Compassion Team, gathering together around common interests to see the face of Jesus in our community's most vulnerable populations.
- **Exaltation**--praising and worshiping the Savior  
Ecclesia's Exaltation Team, made up of Pastor Aileen, Spikenard (the worship band led by Michael Tachenko), and other volunteers, plan and lead our weekly worship. The Exaltation Team also arranges for the monthly observance of Holy Communion. Additionally, the Exaltation Team sees to the setup of our space each Sunday, distributes the order of worship and children's bulletin, and oversees storage of worship furniture following the service.

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106. From [ecclesiabaptist.org](http://ecclesiabaptist.org).

## Appendix B Ecclesia Financials

### B1. Contributions and Expenses.

Ecclesia Baptist Church Contributions and Expenses								
	January 2020 4 Sundays	February 2020 4 Sundays	March 2020 5 Sundays	April 2020 4 Sundays	May 2020 5 Sundays	June 2020 4 Sundays	January 1 - June 30	January 1 - June 30
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Monthly Avg.
Income								
1, Non Designated Offerings	\$2,135.00	\$2,532.00	\$1,509.50	\$2,425.00	\$1,680.00	\$2,190.00	12,471.50	2,078.58
Cuba Chair Fund		\$20.00					3.33	
Designated to Cuba Missionaries	-\$175.00		\$500.00	\$40.00	-\$500.00	\$165.00	30.00	5.00
Designated to Steadfast House M		\$11.14					11.14	1.86
Designated to VRQ Ministry	\$50.00	\$100.00	\$300.00	\$200.00		\$50.00	700.00	118.67
Designated to Kim D's Emma Class							0.00	0.00
Interest-Savings, Short-Term CD	\$160.00	\$149.83	\$81.49	\$50.30	\$52.28	\$50.51	544.41	90.74
Mission Breakfast Income	\$98.00	\$148.00	\$76.00				322.00	53.67
Pastor's Discretionary Missions Fund	\$1,000.00			\$75.00	\$25.00		1,100.00	183.33
Recycling Income	\$18.00			\$11.00	\$5.00		34.00	5.67
Sales of Products	\$0.00				\$75.00		75.00	18.75
Total Income	\$3,286.00	\$2,960.97	\$2,466.99	\$2,801.30	\$1,337.28	\$2,455.51	15,308.05	2,551.34
Expenses								
Business Expenses								
Bank Fee		\$25.00			\$10.00		35.00	5.83
Auto Books Fee	\$10.50	\$11.25	\$14.40	\$23.29	\$19.40	\$39.83	118.67	19.78
Pay Pal Fee	\$3.10	\$5.74	\$5.56	\$14.37	\$0.85		28.61	4.94
Total Business Expenses	\$13.60	\$41.99	\$19.95	\$37.66	\$30.25	\$39.83	183.28	30.55
Facilities and Equipment								
Equip Rental and Maintenance	\$192.60	\$192.60	-\$192.60		\$257.48	\$128.74	578.82	96.47
Property Insurance			\$200.00	\$78.00	\$200.00	\$78.00	156.00	26.00
Rent, Parking, Utilities		\$200.00		\$400.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	1,200.00	200.00
Total Facilities and Equipment	\$192.60	\$392.60	\$7.40	\$478.00	\$457.48	\$406.74	1,934.82	322.47
Meeting Costs								
Conference, Convention, Meeting			\$34.24	\$72.20			106.44	17.74
Total Meeting Costs			\$34.24	\$72.20			106.44	17.74
Missions								
Children and Teen Ministry	\$58.74		\$300.00				58.74	9.79
Missions - Cuba							300.00	50.00
Missions - Steadfast House	\$285.20	\$199.17	\$17.36	\$151.30	\$55.86	\$61.88	730.77	121.80
Missions - VRQ		\$921.50	\$134.03	\$178.71		\$421.71	1,665.95	275.99
Pastor's Discretionary Community Missions Fund		\$303.88		\$183.08			486.96	81.16
Total Missions	\$434.94	\$1,384.55	\$451.39	\$513.09	\$55.86	\$483.59	3,232.42	538.74
Office Equipment				\$448.29	-\$500.00		-51.71	-8.62
Operations								
Books, Subscriptions, Reference			\$149.90	\$147.84			297.74	49.62
Postage						\$44.00	44.00	9.88
Supplies	\$19.78					\$40.10	59.88	9.88
Supply Pastor		\$100.00					100.00	16.67
Total Operations	\$19.78	\$100.00	\$149.90	\$147.84	\$0.00	\$84.10	501.62	83.60
Other Types of Expenses								
Payroll Expenses	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	13,000.00	2,166.67
Training					\$120.00		120.00	
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$2,569.92	\$3,919.14	\$3,662.88	\$3,687.08	\$2,163.59	\$3,014.26	19,026.87	3,171.15
Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Program	\$716.08	-\$958.17	-\$1,195.89	-\$856.78	-\$628.31	-\$538.75	-3,718.82	-628.71
				\$4,300.00			4,300.00	
								\$581.16

## B2. Contributions and Expenses, Mission Fund

Ecclesia Baptist Church									
Contributions and Expenses (VRQ, STEADFAST HOUSE AND CUBA MISSIONARIES)									
(Monies are raised outside the operations of church and not from regular tithes and offerings)									
	January 2020 4 Sundays	February 2020 4 Sundays	March 2020 5 Sundays	April 2020 4 Sundays	May 2020 5 Sundays	June 2020 4 Sundays	January 1 - June 30 Total	January 1 - June 30 Total	Monthly Avg.
<b>Income</b>									
Cuba Chair Fund		\$20.00						20.00	3.33
Designated to Cuba Missionaries	-\$175.00		\$500.00	\$40.00	-\$500.00	\$165.00		30.00	5.00
Designated to Steadfast House M		\$11.14						11.14	1.86
Designated to VRQ Ministry	\$50.00	\$100.00	\$300.00	\$200.00		\$50.00		700.00	116.67
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-\$125.00</b>	<b>\$131.14</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>	<b>\$240.00</b>	<b>-\$500.00</b>	<b>\$215.00</b>		<b>\$761.14</b>	<b>\$126.86</b>

Ecclesia Baptist Church									
Contributions and Expenses (Pastors Discretionary Fund)									
(Monies are raised outside the operations of church and not from regular tithes and offerings)									
	January 2020 4 Sundays	February 2020 4 Sundays	March 2020 5 Sundays	April 2020 4 Sundays	May 2020 5 Sundays	June 2020 4 Sundays	January 1 - June 30 Total	January 1 - June 30 Total	Monthly Avg.
<b>Expenses</b>									
Missions									
Missions - Steadfast House	\$285.20	\$159.17	\$17.36	\$151.30	\$55.86	\$61.88		730.77	121.80
Missions - VRQ		\$921.50	\$134.03	\$178.71		\$421.71		1,655.95	275.99
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$285.20</b>	<b>\$1,080.67</b>	<b>\$151.39</b>	<b>\$330.01</b>	<b>\$55.86</b>	<b>\$483.59</b>		<b>\$2,386.72</b>	<b>397.79</b>
<b>Net Income vs Expenses</b>	<b>-\$410.20</b>	<b>-\$949.53</b>	<b>\$648.61</b>	<b>-\$90.01</b>	<b>-\$555.86</b>	<b>-\$268.59</b>		<b>-\$1,625.58</b>	<b>-270.93</b>

Ecclesia Baptist Church									
Contributions and Expenses (Pastors Discretionary Fund)									
(Monies are raised outside the operations of church and not from regular tithes and offerings)									
	January 2020 4 Sundays	February 2020 4 Sundays	March 2020 5 Sundays	April 2020 4 Sundays	May 2020 5 Sundays	June 2020 4 Sundays	January 1 - June 30 Total	January 1 - June 30 Total	Monthly Avg.
<b>Income</b>									
Pastor's Discretionary Missions Fund	\$1,000.00			\$75.00	\$25.00			1,100.00	183.33
<b>Expenses</b>									
Pastor's Discretionary Community Missions Fund		\$303.88		\$103.08				406.96	67.83
<b>Net Income vs Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>-\$303.88</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>-\$108.08</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>		<b>\$613.04</b>	<b>\$102.17</b>

## B3. Balance Sheet

**Ecclesia Baptist Church**  
**Balance Sheet**

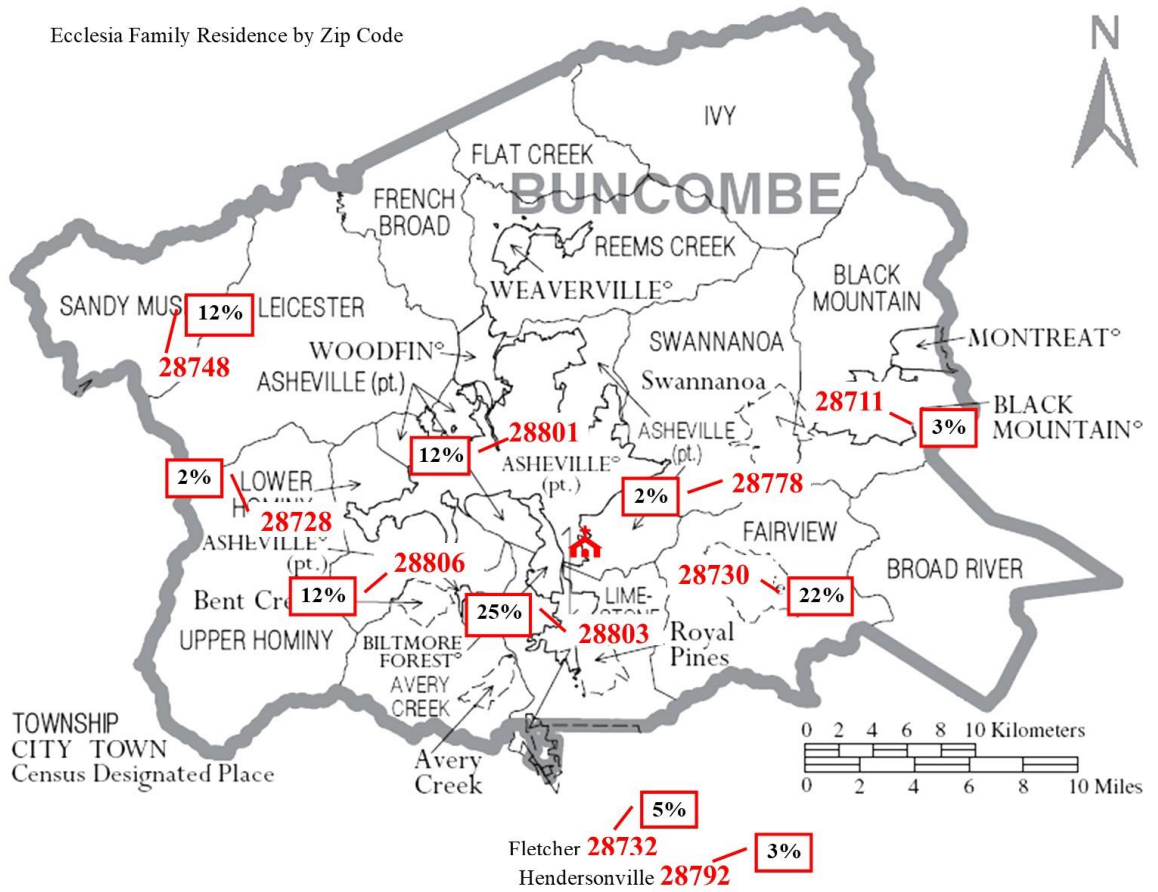
As of June 30, 2020

	<u>Total</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Cash in Bank	
Missions Account	10,661.63
Money Market	153,388.97
Operating Account	1,708.40
Operating Account-Old 3-31-18	0.00
Pay Pal Account	0.00
Total Cash in Bank	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>
Total Bank Accounts	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	165,684.80
Unrestricted Net Assets	-507.98
Net Income	582.18
Total Equity	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<u>\$ 165,759.00</u>

Friday, Jul 10, 2020 06:54:18 AM GMT-7 - Accrual Basis

# Appendix C

## Ecclesia Family by ZIPcode





## Appendix D

### Becoming Neighbors Pre-Test/Post-Test

Please respond to each prompt using the scale with 0 being “Not at all likely,” 5 being “Neither likely nor unlikely,” and 10 being “Extremely likely.”

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

1. I feel confident that I can define compassion.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

2. I feel confident that I can recognize compassionate behavior.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

3. I feel confident that I can define emotional intelligence.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

4. I feel confident that I can define self-awareness.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

5. I am familiar with the Enneagram.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

6. I know my Enneagram number.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

7. I know how the Enneagram can help me understand myself.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

8. I know how the Enneagram can help me understand others.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. I believe the Enneagram increases self-awareness.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. I know about the research done on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

11. My knowledge of ACEs helps me be more compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

12. I am confident I could define 12-step theology.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

13. I am confident I could explain how 12-step theology could help me be more compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. I am confident I would recognize the self-awareness tool Johari's Window.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. I am confident I could use the self-awareness tool Johari's Window.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

16. I feel confident I could define "prayer of confession."

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. I have made mistakes that hurt other people.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

18. I know where to find an apology in the Bible.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

19. I believe the Old Testament teaches that God suffers for humanity.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

20. I believe the New Testament teaches that God suffers for humanity.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. I believe the Old Testament teaches that God loves humanity.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

22. I believe the New Testament teaches that God loves humanity.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

23. I am confident I could name an example of God acting compassionately in the Old Testament.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

24. I am confident I could name an example of God acting compassionately in the New Testament.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

25. I believe God calls believers to compassionate behavior.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

26. I believe compassion is important to the formation of godly community.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

27. I know how compassion strengthens godly community.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

28. I am confident that I know how compassion impacts community.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

29. I am confident that I could explain how compassion impacts the church.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

30. I am confident that compassionate community is possible.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

31. I am confident that Scripture teaches believers to be compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

32. I believe that emotional intelligence affects behavior.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

33. I can explain how emotional intelligence affects behavior.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

34. I believe increased emotional intelligence can help me be more compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

35. I am usually compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

36. I can name a compassionate behavior I witnessed in the last week.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

37. I can name a time within the last week that I acted compassionately.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

38. I give people the benefit of the doubt.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

39. I forgive easily.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

40. I look for opportunities to be kind.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

41. I have taken actions this week to be more compassionate.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

42. I recognize when others are struggling.

Not at all likely					Neither likely nor unlikely					Extremely Likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

43. I display compassionate behavior easily.

Not at all likely		Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

44. I often feel compassionate towards others.

Not at all likely		Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

45. I often do something because I feel compassionate towards others.

Not at all likely		Neither likely nor unlikely						Extremely Likely		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

## Appendix E

To Whom it May Concern: <sup>107</sup>

Please feel free to use the Self-Compassion Scale in your research. Masters and dissertation students also have my permission to use and publish the Self-Compassion Scale in their theses. The appropriate reference is listed below.

Best,  
Kristin Neff, Ph. D.  
Associate Professor  
Educational Psychology Dept.  
University of Texas at Austin  
e-mail: kneff@austin.utexas.

Reference:

Neff, K. D. (2003). Development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2, 223-250.

Coding Key:

Self-Kindness Items: 5, 12, 19, 23, 26  
Self-Judgment Items: 1, 8, 11, 16, 21  
Common Humanity Items: 3, 7, 10, 15  
Isolation Items: 4, 13, 18, 25  
Mindfulness Items: 9, 14, 17, 22  
Over-identified Items: 2, 6, 20, 24

Subscale scores are computed by calculating the mean of subscale item responses. To compute a total self-compassion score, reverse score the negative subscale items before calculating subscale means - self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification (i.e., 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1) - then compute a grand mean of all six subscale means. Researchers can choose to analyze their data either by using individual subscale scores or by using a total score.

(This method of calculating the total score is slightly different than that used in the article referenced above, in which each subscale was added together. However, I find it is easier to interpret the total score if a mean is used.)

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107. Kristin Neff, "Self-Compassion Scale," Self-Compassion, 2003, accessed November 25, 2019, [https://self-compassion.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/06/Self\\_Compassion\\_Scale\\_for\\_researchers.pdf](https://self-compassion.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/06/Self_Compassion_Scale_for_researchers.pdf).

## HOW I TYPICALLY ACT TOWARDS MYSELF IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5  
Almost Always

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I think about my inadequacies, it tends to make me feel more separate and cut off from the rest of the world.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I try to be loving towards myself when I'm feeling emotional pain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. When I'm down and out, I remind myself that there are lots of other people in the world feeling like I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When times are really difficult, I tend to be tough on myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. When I see aspects of myself that I don't like, I get down on myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. When I fail at something important to me I try to keep things in perspective.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. When I'm really struggling, I tend to feel like other people must be having an easier time of it.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I'm kind to myself when I'm experiencing suffering.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. When something upsets me I get carried away with my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I can be a bit cold-hearted towards myself when I'm experiencing suffering.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. When I'm feeling down I try to approach my feelings with curiosity and openness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I'm tolerant of my own flaws and inadequacies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. When something painful happens I tend to blow the incident out of proportion.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like
- .

Appendix F  
*The Compassion Scale (CS)*<sup>108</sup>

Instructions: Please read each statement carefully before answering. Indicate how often you feel or behave in the stated manner on a scale from 1 ‘Almost Never’ to 5 ‘Almost Always.’ Please answer according to what really reflects your experience rather than what you think your experience should be.

	1. I pay careful attention when other people talk to me about their troubles.
	2. If I see someone going through a difficult time, I try to be caring toward that person.
	3. I am unconcerned with other people’s problems.
	4. I realize everyone feels down sometimes, it is part of being human.
	5. I notice when people are upset, even if they don’t say anything.
	6. I like to be there for others in times of difficulty.
	7. I think little about the concerns of others.
	8. I feel it’s important to recognize that all people have weaknesses and no one’s perfect.
	9. I listen patiently when people tell me their problems.
	10. My heart goes out to people who are unhappy.
	11. I try to avoid people who are experiencing a lot of pain.
	12. I feel that suffering is just a part of the common human experience.
	13. When people tell me about their problems, I try to keep a balanced perspective on the situation.
	14. When others feel sadness, I try to comfort them.
	15. I can’t really connect with other people when they’re suffering.
	16. Despite my differences with others, I know that everyone feels pain just like me.

Coding scheme

Kindness items: 2, 6, 10, 14 Common Humanity items: 4, 8, 12, 16

Mindfulness items: 1, 5, 9, 13 Indifference items (reverse-coded): 3, 7, 11, 15

To compute a total compassion score, take a grand mean of all items.

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<sup>108</sup> Kristin Neff, “Compassion Scale,” Self-Compassion, September 9, 2019, accessed November 25, 2019, <https://self-compassion.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/The-Compassion-Scale.pdf>.



## (EI) Emotional intelligence questionnaire

Leadership Dimensions	Leading with care	Connecting our service
Sharing the vision		

This self-assessment questionnaire is designed to get you thinking about the various competences of emotional intelligence as they apply to you.

Daniel Goleman first brought 'emotional intelligence' to a wide audience with his 1995 book of that name. He found that while the qualities traditionally associated with leadership such as intelligence, toughness, determination and vision are required for success, they are insufficient. Truly effective leaders are also distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence, which includes:

- **Self-awareness**  
The ability to recognise what you are feeling, to understand your habitual emotional responses to events and to recognise how your emotions affect your behaviour and performance.  
When you are self-aware, you see yourself as others see you, and have a good sense of your own abilities and current limitations.
- **Managing emotions**  
The ability to stay focused and think clearly even when experiencing powerful emotions.  
Being able to manage your own emotional state is essential for taking responsibility for your actions, and can save you from hasty decisions that you later regret.
- **Motivating oneself**  
The ability to use your deepest emotions to move and guide you towards your goals. This ability enables you to take the initiative and to persevere in the face of obstacles and setbacks.
- **Empathy**  
The ability to sense, understand and respond to what other people are feeling.  
Self-awareness is essential to having empathy with others. If you are not aware of your own emotions, you will not be able to read the emotions of others.
- **Social Skill**  
The ability to manage, influence and inspire emotions in others.  
Being able to handle emotions in relationships and being able to influence and inspire others are essential foundation skills for successful teamwork and leadership.


### What to do

1. **Assess and score** each of the questionnaire's statements.  
Score your assessment, using a scale where
  - **1** indicates that the statement *does NOT apply at all*
  - **3** indicates that the statement *applies about half the time*
  - **5** indicates that the statement *ALWAYS applies to you*
2. **Total and interpret your results**
  - Transfer your scores to the calculation table and total your results.

Remember, this tool is not a validated psychometric test - the answers you give are likely to vary depending on your mood when you take it.
3. **Consider your results and identify one or two actions you can take immediately to strengthen your emotional intelligence.**
  - Put your actions into your *Well-being@work plan*.

109. "Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire," NHS London Leadership Academy, accessed August 5, 2020, [https://www.londonleaingforhealth.nh.uk/sites/default/files/Emotional\\_intelligence\\_questionnaire-LAL1.pdf](https://www.londonleaingforhealth.nh.uk/sites/default/files/Emotional_intelligence_questionnaire-LAL1.pdf).

## 1. Assess and score how much each statement applies to you

#	How much does each statement apply to you	Mark your score				
	Read each statement and decide how strongly the statement applies to YOU. Score yourself 1 to 5 based on the following guide. 1 = Does not apply ~ 3 = Applies half the time ~ 5 = Always applies	 the number that shows how strongly the statement applies				
1	I realise immediately when I lose my temper	1	2	3	4	5
2	I can 'reframe' bad situations quickly	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am able to always motivate myself to do difficult tasks	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am always able to see things from the other person's viewpoint	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am an excellent listener	1	2	3	4	5
6	I know when I am happy	1	2	3	4	5
7	I do not wear my 'heart on my sleeve'	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am usually able to prioritise important activities at work and get on with them	1	2	3	4	5
9	I am excellent at empathising with someone else's problem	1	2	3	4	5
10	I never interrupt other people's conversations	1	2	3	4	5
11	I usually recognise when I am stressed	1	2	3	4	5
12	Others can rarely tell what kind of mood I am in	1	2	3	4	5
13	I always meet deadlines	1	2	3	4	5
14	I can tell if someone is not happy with me	1	2	3	4	5
15	I am good at adapting and mixing with a variety of people	1	2	3	4	5
16	When I am being 'emotional' I am aware of this	1	2	3	4	5
17	I rarely 'fly off the handle' at other people	1	2	3	4	5
18	I never waste time	1	2	3	4	5
19	I can tell if a team of people are not getting along with each other	1	2	3	4	5
20	People are the most interesting thing in life for me	1	2	3	4	5
21	When I feel anxious I usually can account for the reason(s)	1	2	3	4	5
22	Difficult people do not annoy me	1	2	3	4	5
23	I do not prevaricate	1	2	3	4	5
24	I can usually understand why people are being difficult towards me	1	2	3	4	5
25	I love to meet new people and get to know what makes them 'tick'	1	2	3	4	5



3 of 4

#	How much does each statement apply to you	Mark your score				
	Read each statement and decide how strongly the statement applies to YOU. Score yourself 1 to 5 based on the following guide. 1 = Does not apply ~ 3 = Applies half the time ~ 5 = Always applies	<div> <div></div> the number that shows how strongly the statement applies </div>				
26	I always know when I'm being unreasonable	1	2	3	4	5
27	I can consciously alter my frame of mind or mood	1	2	3	4	5
28	I believe you should do the difficult things first	1	2	3	4	5
29	Other individuals are not 'difficult' just 'different'	1	2	3	4	5
30	I need a variety of work colleagues to make my job interesting	1	2	3	4	5
31	Awareness of my own emotions is very important to me at all times	1	2	3	4	5
32	I do not let stressful situations or people affect me once I have left work	1	2	3	4	5
33	Delayed gratification is a virtue that I hold to	1	2	3	4	5
34	I can understand if I am being unreasonable	1	2	3	4	5
35	I like to ask questions to find out what it is important to people	1	2	3	4	5
36	I can tell if someone has upset or annoyed me	1	2	3	4	5
37	I rarely worry about work or life in general	1	2	3	4	5
38	I believe in 'Action this Day'	1	2	3	4	5
39	I can understand why my actions sometimes offend others	1	2	3	4	5
40	I see working with difficult people as simply a challenge to win them over	1	2	3	4	5
41	I can let anger 'go' quickly so that it no longer affects me	1	2	3	4	5
42	I can suppress my emotions when I need to	1	2	3	4	5
43	I can always motivate myself even when I feel low	1	2	3	4	5
44	I can sometimes see things from others' point of view	1	2	3	4	5
45	I am good at reconciling differences with other people	1	2	3	4	5
46	I know what makes me happy	1	2	3	4	5
47	Others often do not know how I am feeling about things	1	2	3	4	5
48	Motivations has been the key to my success	1	2	3	4	5
49	Reasons for disagreements are always clear to me	1	2	3	4	5
50	I generally build solid relationships with those I work with	1	2	3	4	5





### Total and interpret your results

1. **Record** your 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 scores for the questionnaire statements in the grid below.  
The grid organises the statements into emotional competency lists.

Self awareness		Managing emotions		Motivating oneself		Empathy		Social Skill	
1		2		3		4		5	
6		7		8		9		10	
11		12		13		14		15	
16		17		18		19		20	
21		22		23		24		25	
26		27		28		29		30	
31		32		33		34		35	
36		37		38		39		40	
41		42		43		44		45	
46		47		48		49		50	

2. **Calculate** a total for each of the 5 emotional competencies.

Total = (SA)		Total = (ME)		Total = (MO)		Total = (E)		Total = (SS)	
-----------------	--	-----------------	--	-----------------	--	----------------	--	-----------------	--

3. **Interpret** your totals for each area of competency using the following guide.

35-50	This area is a <b>strength</b> for you.
18-34	<b>Giving attention</b> to where you feel you are weakest will pay dividends.
10-17	Make this area a <b>development priority</b> .

4. **Record** your result for each of the emotional competencies: strength, needs attention or development priority.

	Strength	Needs attention	Development priority
Self awareness			
Managing emotions			
Motivating oneself			
Empathy			
Social Skill			

5. **Consider** your results and identify one or two actions you can take immediately to strengthen your **emotional intelligence**. Put them into your **Well-being@work plan**.



### Self awareness and well-being

## Appendix H

### Post Session Evaluation Form

Please respond to each prompt based on your agreement with the comment: 0 = "Not at all," 5 = "Neither agree nor disagree," and 10 = "Completely agree."

I felt well-prepared for tonight's meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The journal activities were clear and understandable.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The journal activities were relevant to tonight's topic.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The preparation expected was reasonable.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The amount of material covered in this meeting was reasonable.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The leader was well-prepared for this meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The leader was knowledgeable about this topic.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
I felt welcomed by the leader at this meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
I felt the leader welcomed my input at this meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
I felt safe at this meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
I felt my opinion was valued at this meeting.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
The group session added to my understanding of the content for this week.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> <span>Not at all</span> <span>Neither agree nor disagree</span> <span>Completely Agree</span> </div> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		

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**Face to Face Participants Only:**

The temperature in the room was comfortable.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Completely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The room setup was appropriate for learning.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Completely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The seating was comfortable.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Completely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

---

**Internet Participants Only:**

The internet experience was positive.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Extremely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

I felt connected to the group.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Completely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

I could hear and see the meeting and the other participants comfortably.	Not at all			Neither agree nor disagree				Completely Agree		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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 Additional Feedback (if any)
 

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## Appendix I

### Journal Activities

Journal assignments following weeks one, two, three, and four, were formatted as a two-sided, tri-fold document that would easily fit into the participant's journal.



#### Week 1: September 13-19 Journal Activities

*Broken & Beautiful, Kelly Clarkson*

I never held my hand out & asked for something free  
I got pride I could roll out for miles in front of me  
I don't need your help, and I don't need sympathy  
I don't need you to lower the bar for me  
I know I'm Superwoman, I know I'm strong  
I know I've got this 'cause I've had it all along  
I'm phenomenal and I'm enough  
I don't need you to tell me who to be

**Chorus:**  
*Can someone just hold me?  
 Don't fix me, don't try to change a thing  
 Can someone just know me?  
 'Cause underneath, I'm broken and it's beautiful  
 I'm broken and it's beautiful x-4*

We're walking on the ocean, turning water into wine  
We bury our emotion and pretend that we're just fine  
The only way to live now is to know you're gonna fly  
Don't listen to the lying liars and their lies  
I know I'm Superwoman, I know I'm strong  
I know I've got this 'cause I've had it all along  
I'm phenomenal, I'm enough  
I don't need you to tell me who to be

**Chorus**  
 I'm tired (oh)  
 Can I just be tired? (just be tired)  
 Without piling on all sad & scared and out of time (oh)  
 I'm wild (wild)  
 Can I just be wild? (just be wild)  
 Without feeling like I'm failing and I'm losing my mind

**Chorus**

What is your Enneagram Type?

Is this surprising to you?

What insights

do you have

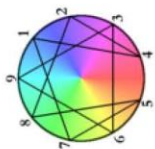
from this

information?

What

questions do

you have?



Want more Enneagram fun?

Check out these videos:

<https://youtu.be/fr1pVl3RSvU>

<https://youtu.be/voDPLbRoUcE>

### For Further Study:

You'll find a list of songs at the link below that might encourage you in your journey to become more compassionate. Consider listening to some of these this week.

Particularly, there are two songs called *Broken and Beautiful*, one by Kelly Clarkson and one by Mark Shultz (lyrics included on side panel and back). If you have time, listen to these two and compare them. Similarities? Differences? Preferences?

[https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6vOeP87BdsBrvZnUdEjji?si=\\_tHZ7nMYQVGogEKCTrjWg](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6vOeP87BdsBrvZnUdEjji?si=_tHZ7nMYQVGogEKCTrjWg)

## Week 1: September 13-19 Journal Activities

*Galatians 6:2-5*  
*<sup>2</sup> Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup> For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. <sup>4</sup> All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. <sup>5</sup> For all must carry their own loads.*

This week, consider how you treat yourself and others.

Reflect in your journal about times you relate to either

yourself or others by being:

- Critical or judgmental
- Negative or discouraging
- Positive or encouraging
- Uplifting or forgiving
- Unforgiving or dismissive
- Trustworthy (Do you keep promises to yourself as well as you keep ones to others?)

### Consider:

When do you give the benefit of the doubt?

When do you forgive yourself?

When do you delight over others' successes?

### *Broken & Beautiful*, Mark Shultz

There's a businessman. There's a widowed wife

There's a smiling face with A shattered life

There's a teenage girl with a choice to make

It's crowded here in church today

And the preacher says as the sermon ends

Please close your eyes and bow your heads

Is there anyone in need of prayer

Jesus wants to meet you here

Cause we all fall short We all have sinned

But when you let God's Grace break in

### **Chorus:**

*It's beautiful*

*Beautiful*

*Come as you are*

*Surrender your heart*

*Broken and beautiful*

Well he'd never been to church before

But he came today as a last resort

His world was crashing in

And he was suffocating in his sin

But tears ran down, As hope rushed in

He closed his eyes, Raised his hands

Worshipping the God who can

Bring him back to life again

### **Chorus**

Cause there's nothing more beautiful to God

Than when his sons and daughters come

Broken

Alleluia Alleluia Come as you are

Alleluia Alleluia Come as you are

### **Chorus**

Alleluia Alleluia Come as you are

Alleluia Alleluia Come as you are

Surrender your heart

Broken and beautiful

(Repeat)

- On the reverse, you see 1 John 4:7-21.
1. Read the passage once and underline or highlight or note every time you see the word "Love."
  2. Read the passage a second time. This time, notice when love is a verb—action word—and when it is a noun—an emotion in this case. (Hint: if you can add the word "the" before "love" and the sentence still makes relative sense, even though it may sound awkward, then in that instance, "love" is a noun.) Example: Dear friends, let's [the] love each other, because [the] love is from God, and everyone who [the] loves is born from God and knows God. *In this case, only the second "love" is a noun. The other two are verbs. In this passage, this little trick works except for when there is already a "the" or the word "is" in front of "love." Another hint: there are more verbs. Also, it doesn't have to be perfect for you to get the general idea. :)*
  3. Notice how often "love" is a verb. Love is active. Challenge yourself to "Let it be Love," as Lady A says in the song below.

### Let it be Love, Lady A

See, the thing about envy and me  
Comes out of nowhere, hits so hard I can  
hardly breathe  
In the middle of the night when I need sleep  
You see, that's the thing about envy

Yeah, the thing about angry and me  
I'm strong, then I'm down on my knees  
I scream when the silence should speak  
You see, that's the thing about angry

The love lifts you up  
I know it's hard sometimes to see it,  
but it does  
Oh, it's a power that will rise up,  
a well that never dries up  
The one and only feeling you can trust  
So let it be first, let it be us, let it be love

Let it be love; Let it be love  
You see, the thing about humility and me  
I put myself a little higher than I should be  
Forget I'm just one drop in a big ol' sea  
A little more you, a little less me



Week 2:  
September 20—26  
Journal Activities



## Week 2: September 20-26 Journal Activities

### Daniels & Price, *The Essential Enneagram*

- Read pages 71-top of 73.
- It may seem weird or uncomfortable, but without judging yourself or setting too high a standard to reach, try the breathing exercise described on 72-23.
- Write a short description—a couple of words (or more if you like)—of how you felt about this experience. (For example, “Sleepy, awkward,” or “Relaxing, energizing,” or whatever you feel like noting.)
- Now read about Principle 1 on page 73-74.
- Pick a day or two this week to answer the questions at the top of page 74:

1. How did I do today at staying aware of my pattern of attention and energy? (Explain)
2. When I reacted automatically to someone or something, was I able to bring back my awareness and redirect my attention and energy? (Explain)
3. How can I better manage my pattern of attention and energy tomorrow? (Explain)

Consider posing these questions where you can see them so you will be reminded of this practice.

### Giving the Benefit of the Doubt

1. Consider a situation where you are irritated. (Not infuriated or enraged or threatened. Just annoyed.)
- *Maybe you're driving and there's an obnoxious driver in your way.*
- *Or maybe you are at work and a customer or client is giving you a hard time, or maybe a co-worker is.*
- *Perhaps a neighbor, friend, person is just getting on your last nerve.*
2. Briefly describe that situation.
3. Now brainstorm possible reasons for the irritating person's behavior and list them in your journal.
4. Pick a reason and review that situation with that knowledge.
5. How does this change your attitude to the annoying person in your scenario?

### Record your thoughts in your journal.

Now. Apply this same attitude to a real life situation when it comes up this week. Go through steps 2-5 and later record the experience in your journal.

### For Example:

**1/2.** Your neighbor is making noise when you are trying to sleep. You've not slept well all week and you are exhausted. This was your one night & they are over there kicking up a fuss, keeping you awake.

**3.** What if they are practicing because they have an audition tomorrow? Cooking because they have unexpected company? Arguing because they just found out some upsetting news? Playing the music too loud to drown out the sound of an angry neighbor on their other side? (It doesn't have to be true. It just has to be a possibility—even a distant one.)

**4/5.** Maybe it's a last minute audition that they didn't hear about until the email they just received. They have to be at work early and they have no other time to practice before tomorrow's audition. If that's the case, I can understand why they are practicing so late. I'm still tired and still annoyed that it's noisy, but now I am not as frustrated with the individual.

Or  
Maybe they just found out today that their job has been terminated and this is the first chance they've had to talk about it. The whole family is upset and it just leads to a screaming battle because... Well, they are scared they'll be living in their car & no one wants to say that so they scream about other things. If that's the case, I can understand why they are being loud at this hour. I'd be loud too! I'm still tired. I'm still irritated. But now I also have compassion for someone in a difficult situation.

*It really doesn't matter if you are wrong about their reason. What matters is that you've offered them the benefit of the doubt. You've offered them grace. And in return, you've received a softer mindset, a lighter—less judgmental—burden to bear.*

### 1 JOHN 4:7-21 (CEB)

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>This is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God remains in us and his love is made perfect in us. <sup>13</sup>This is how we know we remain in him and he remains in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>If any of us confess that Jesus is God's Son, God remains in us and we remain in God. <sup>16</sup>We have known and have believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who remain in love remain in God and God remains in them. <sup>17</sup>This is how love has been perfected in us, so that we can have confidence on the Judgment Day, because we are exactly the same as God is in this world. <sup>18</sup>There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. <sup>19</sup>We love because God first loved us. <sup>20</sup>Those who say, "I love God" and hate their brothers or sisters are liars. After all, those who don't love their brothers or sisters whom they have seen can hardly love God whom they have not seen! <sup>21</sup>This commandment we have from him: Those who claim to love God ought to love their brother and sister also.

### **Review: Giving the Benefit of the Doubt**

Last week, we practiced giving the benefit of the doubt. Now that you've learned about ACES, try again this week. (Another way to look at "giving the benefit of the doubt" is "offering compassion.")

1. Consider a situation where you are irritated. (Not infuriated or enraged or threatened. Just annoyed.)
2. Briefly describe that situation.
3. Now brainstorm possible reasons for the irritating person's behavior and list them in your journal.
4. Pick a reason and review that situation with that knowledge.
5. How does this change your attitude to the annoying person in your scenario?

Record your thoughts in your journal.

Now, Apply this same attitude to a real life situation when it comes up this week. Go through steps 2-5 and later record the experience in your journal. See how many times you can do this over the next few days!



### **Week 3:**

September 27–October 3  
Journal Activities

Daniels & Price,  
*The Essential Enneagram*

- Turn to page 82 in your book.

Practices (or behaviors) help us make changes. It's not enough to agree with an idea. We must also act in a different way.

The authors identify five practices and offer directions on how to implement the practice for each type. Read over these and choose one as your focus this week.

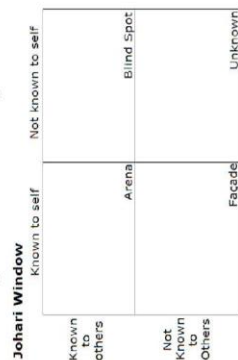
### *In your journal:*

- Note which practice you chose.
- Reflect on your experience with this practice.
  - Do you see the value in the practice?
  - Will you continue this practice?
  - Will you choose to try a different one?
  - What did you learn?

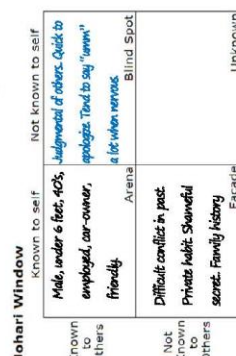
### For Further Study: *Preview of 10/4 Topic*

How good are you at apology?  
Recall the last time you apologized.  
How did that feel? What was the result?  
Now consider a behavior you should have claimed and offered apology but did not. Describe how you feel about that behavior and non-apology.

Sunday night, we looked briefly at Johari's Window, a self-awareness tool developed by a couple of psychologists named Joe and Harry. (Seriously.) Draw this diagram on one full page in your journal. Perhaps even turn the journal horizontal and draw it there so you'll have more space to write.



Now complete your diagram as best you can. Consider using coded language for the facade section if you are concerned about privacy. Ask a trusted friend or confidant if possible to help you complete the blind spot section. See below for a fictitious example.



As we become more self-aware, we can move things about ourselves out of our blind spot and unknown quadrants.

We might even move things from the facade box to the arena box. Have you ever done this—even on a small scale? Maybe you had a secret you decided to share? Or maybe it wasn't your choice. How did that feel? (Use your journal to reflect.)

Divine Suffering: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

**The voice of Jeremiah/God:** (18) "My joy is gone, grief is upon me, my heart is sick. (19) Hark, the cry of my people from far and wide in the land."

**The cry of the people:** "Is the Lord not in Zion? Is her King not in her?"

**The voice of Jeremiah/God:** ("Why have they provoked me to anger with their images, with their foreign idols?")

**The cry of the people:** (20) "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

**The voice of Jeremiah/God:** "(21) For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me. (22) Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored? (9:1) O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people!"

### *In Your Journal:*

- ♦ List or highlight (circle, underline, your choice) the emotions of God in this passage.
- ♦ Why might God be so full of emotion?
- ♦ Have you ever considered that God might suffer on your behalf? On behalf of others? What does this mean to you?
- ♦ Now, consider ACEs, remembering many of these ACEs affect people in ways that would fall into the unknown section of Johari's Window. Many more will fall into the facade section and you will never know they exist. Is it likely, based on what you've learned in the passage above, that God hurts for those who have been hurt by ACEs? How might that knowledge change how you treat yourself or others? How might this help you give the benefit of the doubt?

Over



YOU SAY, by Lauren Daigle

I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough  
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up  
Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low?  
Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know,  
ooo oh

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak  
And You say I am held when I am falling short  
And when I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I) I believe

The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me  
In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity, ooh oh  
You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak  
And You say I am held when I am falling short  
When I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
Oh, I believe

Taking all I have and now I'm layin' it at Your feet  
You'll have every failure God, You'll have every victory, ooh oh  
You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak  
You say I am held when I am falling short  
When I don't belong, oh, You say I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh, I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I) I believe  
Oh, I believe (I), yes, I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
I believe (oh)



Week 4:  
October 4-10  
Journal Activities

This week you have two roles:

1. Compassion Detective
2. Compassion Operative

Watch for compassion in the world and seek out opportunities to offer compassion to others. Keep track in your journal.

*Luke 10:27*

## THE PRACTICE OF CONFESSION

**A confession is a form of apology. You can find many examples of confession in the Psalms. Here's one: Psalm 51:1-4, 10-12. (Read the text below or in your own Bible.)**

### Psalm 51:1-4, 10-12

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.  
<sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup>Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. <sup>11</sup>Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

*Now read this text a second time as a prayer.*

Read 1 John 1:9. (Below or in your own Bible.)

### 1 John 1:9

<sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**Hear the good news: You are forgiven. Will you accept God's forgiveness?**

**Record your thoughts about this experience in your journal.**

For example, what did confession feel like to you? Forgiveness? Accepting forgiveness? Is this new for you? Is this something you could do daily? Why or why not?

## APOLOGIZING

In your journal, write about the practice of apologizing. Do you apologize too much? Not enough? Is healthy apologizing something you could improve in your life?

An apology might include at least

- **Admission of wrongdoing.** (Psm 51:3)
- **Admission of pain caused.** (Psm 51:4)
- **Statement of desire to change.** (Psm 51:10, 12b)
- **Statement of appreciation for relationship.** (Psm 51:11)
- **Statement of willingness to make amends.** (Psm 51:12a)

What would you add? Now write an apology in your journal that you might use at a future time. (*Behavior changes as we practice. This is an opportunity to practice apologizing without any risk.*)

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary,

"Compassion" is "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it." Let's break that down.

- "Sympathetic" suggests "tender feelings."
- "Consciousness" means "active awareness."
- "Alleviate" means "make it better."

So "compassion" is

1. **feeling tender towards others,**
2. **because you are actively aware that they are hurting, &**
3. **having a desire to make it better.**

Remember the word "chesed"? (Hint: It's my tattoo!) Need a refresher? Here's the video we watched about it: <https://youtu.be/HPOPMondw>. *Chesed* is found in English translations as "steadfast love" or "mercy and kindness" or "lovingkindness" or "goodness and mercy." AND it's ONLY found in the Old Testament. The New Testament uses another word to describe God's love: *agape*.

Listen to Lauren Daigle's song "You Say." (Over for lyrics.)

What she describes in this song is *chesed* or *agape*. Reflect in your journal:

Imagine that the "I" in the song is YOU. What does it mean to you that God's love for you contradicts what the culture might say to you?

How might you reflect this love to yourself? In your journal, write an affirmation to yourself from God that reflects God's love. It might be, "Because you say I am enough, God, I believe I am enough." Make it personal. Make it about you and about God.

NOW. In the Good Samaritan Parable in Luke 10:25-37, Jesus confirms that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. That's why it is so important that we allow ourselves to accept God's love for us—so we can share it.

This week, your main task is to seek out compassion. Look for it in others and be compassionate yourself. (Tip: The recipient of your compassion does not have to know!) Here are a few ideas:

1. Give the benefit of the doubt.
2. Actively smile—even behind your mask. Your eyes tell the story.
3. Send a compassionate text, make a call or send a note.
4. Let someone ahead of you in line.
5. Pick up someone else's trash without being judgmental.
6. And infinitely more. Be creative!

**Because Jesus was compassionate, we are called to be compassionate . . .**



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