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Building Cultural Intelligence in an Age of Incivility

Growing in CQ® Through Holistic Discipleship

By
Vanessa K. Hawkins

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry.

Saint Louis, Missouri

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to seek to build intercultural competence (or cultural intelligence/CQ®) in church members during the polarizing climate of August 2020 to August 2021. A series of polarizing events including racial violence, police brutality, protests, riots, and a presidential election created a divided broader culture that was also experienced in the church. Pastors struggled to unite their congregations in the face of divisive rhetoric in the media and heated responses to issues dividing the culture down racial, socio-economic, and political lines. The goal of this case study was to help church members grow in their ability to communicate respectfully across cultural difference through intentional holistic discipleship

This study utilized a mixed methods approach (both qualitative and quantitative designs) using semi-structured interviews with sixteen members of one church who each experienced significant intercultural competence changes as measured by Intercultural Development Inventory®. The interviews focused on gaining data with four research questions: 1. How did participants grow in CQ® during the year? 2. How did power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® during the year? 3. What discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® during the year? and 4. What barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® during the year?

The literature review focused on four key areas to understand how to grow in intercultural competence through holistic discipleship: the Acts church as an apologetic for cultural intelligence; cultural intelligence, power dynamics and discipleship and spiritual formation.

This study concluded that growing in cultural intelligence, particularly in polarizing conditions in churches requires: 1) having leadership buy-in; 2) understanding the intercultural dynamics which include CQ® growth factors, an objective assessment of intercultural competence and power dynamics; and 3) maintaining a focus on the solution – gospel transformation through holistic discipleship.

To Marcus, Kayla, Sydney and Chelsey,

"…Thus far the Lord has helped us." I Samuel 7:12

"Unity cannot be manufactured. It's a matter of the Spirit. And the Spirit of God compels us to pursue this unity in practice."

— Irwyn Ince, *The Beautiful Community*

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Abbreviations

PCA	Presbyterian Church in America
CQ®	Cultural Quotient or Cultural Intelligence
IDI®	Intercultural Development Inventory

Chapter 1

Introduction

The concept of civility is historically associated with Cicero, Roman philosopher, and his notion of *societas civilus* or civil society. The term suggests that members of the civil society conduct themselves in a way that seeks the good of the city. To this end, civility is not about politeness but about behaving in such a way that advances the city's good.[1] A natural outflow of a civil society is the practice of civil discourse which necessarily includes humble and respectful engagement with each other. Hundreds of years before Cicero, the Prophet Jeremiah captures the notion of civility in Scripture as behavior that causes a city and its citizens to prosper (Jer. 29:7). One of the ways Scripture consistently describes good citizenship, particularly in followers of Christ, includes a principle on which all other biblical principles hang, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31).

In the USA, 2020-2021 was a time when social unrest was great and civil discourse was lacking. It was a time when new categories of mask wearers and non-mask wearers heaped relational strain onto a pandemic-riddled world[2] and the delicate semblance of public security collapsed in a single day with an insurrection at the Capitol

[1] Nora Delaney, "For the Sake of Argument," *Harvard Kennedy School Magazine*, March 15, 2019, https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/policy-topics/public-leadership-management/sake-argument.

[2] Erik Raymond, "Are Masks a Conscience Issue?," *The Gospel Coalition* (blog), December 3, 2020, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/erik-raymond/are-masks-a-conscience-issue/.

building that deepened political and racial fissures.[3] It was a time when the strained relationship between black communities and law enforcement ascended to the international stage with a teen's recording of George Floyd's murder by a Minnesota police officer,[4] The regular election cycle brought heightened divisiveness punctuated by conspiracy theories,[5] protests, riots and a steady cry of "Black Lives Matter!"[6] It was a time when Asian American and Pacific Islander people were targeted for violence, reaching a fever pitch during a series of Atlanta spa shootings.[7]

Few people alive at that time had experienced a pandemic or social unrest of such cataclysmic proportions with no apparent end in sight. People struggled to find their footing and navigate the strange new world they had inherited. The church was not immune to the struggle. It was her first pandemic of such proportions in over a hundred years.[8] There were no easy solutions that would satisfy the agitated masses and the subset that populated the pews. Congregations wrestled with ideas on how to move

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[3] Char Adams, "'Vintage White Rage': Why the Riots Were about the Perceived Loss of White Power," *NBC News*, January 7, 2021, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/vintage-white-rage-why-riots-were-about-perceived-loss-white-n1253292.

[4] "Reflecting on George Floyd's Death and Police Violence Towards Black Americans," Facing History and Ourselves, accessed October 22, 2021, https://www.facinghistory.org/educator-resources/current-events/reflecting-george-floyds-death-police-violence-towards-black-americans.

[5] "Groundwork For Insurrection Was Laid Well Before Jan. 6," *Morning Edition*, February 8, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/02/08/965261736/groundwork-for-insurrection-was-laid-well-before-jan-6.

[6] Serena Bettis and Laura Studley, "Black Lives Matter: A 2020 Protest Timeline," *The Rocky Mountain Collegian*, October 22, 2021, https://collegian.com/2020/06/category-news-black-lives-matter-a-2020-protest-timeline/.

[7] Richard Fausset, Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs, and Marie Fazio, "8 Dead in Atlanta Spa Shootings, With Fears of Anti-Asian Bias," *The New York Times*, March 17, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/03/17/us/shooting-atlanta-acworth.

[8] https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/local/retropolis/coronavirus-deadliest-pandemics/

forward through the social complexities and racial tensions in the broader culture as well as in the church.[9]

Church leaders struggled to know how to best lead in such extraordinary times. Despite the undeniably difficult circumstances, some leaders responded to these challenges with great empathy and winsomely moved their congregations forward in a way that cultivated gospel-centered unity across cultural barriers. Other leaders struggled to know what to do or say, and how not to offend longtime members?[10] Their struggle revealed the need for skill in bridging gaps across difference – the need for cultural intelligence.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ®)

Cultural Intelligence (CQ®) is a common factor that describes the ability of an individual or organization to "reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful."[11] Cultural intelligence can be objectively measured through tools such as Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®)[12]

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[9] Daniel Silliman, "At Purple Churches, Pastors Struggle with Polarized Congregations," *Christianity Today*, October 20, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/november/purple-church-political-polarization-unity-identity-christ.html.

[10] "Pastoring in Polarized Times: Leading Your Congregation through Disruption," October 26, 2020, https://www.christianitytoday.com/partners/american-awakening/pastoring-in-polarized-times.html.

[11] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287: Baker Academic, 2009), 17.

[12] IDI uses the term "intercultural competence". Livermore coined the term CQ. For the purposes of this study, the terms will be used interchangeably. IDI®, LLC, "Intercultural Development Inventory®," March 14, 2021, https://idiinventory.com.

It is also possible for people and church systems to improve CQ® through focused learning and holistic discipleship.

Key steps to the formation of CQ® through holistic discipleship includes learning about the God of the Bible, about oneself and one's own culture, and about other cultures. John Calvin spoke of the notion of "double knowledge" that inextricably ties one's growth in knowledge of God with growing in knowledge of self.[13] Increase in knowledge of God necessarily brings a growth in awareness of self and greater clarity in how one sees and engages the world. Paul speaks of this transformed thinking in Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." A renewed mind comes from knowledge of God and being transformed by it.

Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) describes how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their lived experiences. Edmund O'Sullivan, Professor Emeritus and Associate Director of the Transformative Learning Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, describes transformative learning as:

> "a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions." This deep form of learning creates a "shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world."[14]

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[13] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 44, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.iii.vi.html.

[14] Edmund O'Sullivan, Amish Morrell and Mary Ann O'Connor, *Expanding the Boundaries of Transformative Learning: Essays on Theory and Praxis*, (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002), xvii.

O'Sullivan describes in educational terms, the mind that is renewed by the message of the gospel. When one experiences transformative learning, a renewed mind, they are not able to unsee what has clearly come into view. Jesus' teachings across cultural lines created space for such transformation.

In the biblical account of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10), a scribe recounts the Great commandment – the foundation for Christ's call to discipleship – in an effort to justify himself. He asks Jesus, 'who is my neighbor?' Bonhoeffer says this about that question:

> "Since then, this question of the tempting scribe has been asked countless times in good faith and ignorance. The whole story of the good Samaritan is Jesus' singular rejection and destruction of this question as satanic.[15]"

Bonhoeffer's strong stand against the scribe's inquiry suggests that the scribe's intent was not a humble attempt to bridge gaps between cultural difference or to celebrate the variety of people he was charged to love. Instead, his question reveals a desire to exclude a category of people from Christ's commandment to love.

Jesus explained this truth to the scribe and the crowd by teaching and a bit of Q and A. He also taught it by example. He chooses to use the Samaritans, the very people group that had rejected him and denied him entry into their village in the previous chapter (Luke 9:51-56), as an example. He showed those following him that they were called to love across cultural lines. They were called to renew their minds and a transformed way of being in the world. Part of functioning effectively across cultural difference is to understand the power dynamics at play.

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[15] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440: Fortress Press, 2015), 37.

Power Dynamics

The present culture is rife with misuse of power in the political environment, in policing and in the church. So power, might be thought of as a bad word in the cultural moment of focus in this study. But is power inherently evil? According to theologian and cultural commentator Andy Crouch, power is the Father's good gift to children made in his image for the joint work of participating in his benevolent reign over all Creation. The good and right purpose of power given to the first parents was for image-bearing and culture-spreading. God told them to be fruitful and multiply, to fill and subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28). This is known as the Cultural Mandate. However, they used their power to choose evil, and to eat what was forbidden (Genesis 3), instead of using it to reflect the Father's image. As a result of their choice, Creation bears the weight of a curse.

Power dynamics, along with all of Creation, labors under the weight of a fallen and broken world. Unfortunately, the church is not immune. While the local church usually shares a common mission and vision; individual members typically hold a variety of interests and different levels of power and influence related to those interests. When used well, power affirms the beauty for which humanity was created and aids in its flourishing. Misuse or abuse of power violates the basic sense of how humanity images God in their personhood, voice, and creative expression[16].

God never rescinded the first parents' call to use their power for good. It extends to the church today. It is possible to use power in redemptive ways particularly in culture-spreading. Naming and understanding power dynamics such as, majority/minority

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[16] Diane Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI, 2020) 7.

culture, male/female, and authority figure/subordinate dynamics, involves navigating existing systems in a way that treats each member with a dignity and respect that flows from the culturally intelligent teachings of Christ.

Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

Discipleship is Christ's call to every believer to grow in the knowledge of him (2 Peter 3:18), in likeness to him (Colossians 3:9-10), and in affections for him (Matthew 22:37) until the believer sees him. (1John 3:2). Paul alludes that both the supernatural component and an intentional, grace-based effort are required for this spiritual formation in Galatians 4:19 when he says, "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is *formed* in you…". He indicates that there is both divine and human components in the work of spiritual formation. Christ being formed in those Paul is discipling is divine action yet there is very real, painstaking work required of those leading the Galatians in this development.

In an age of incivility, different cultures can tend to retreat and entrench in their own cultural views, while failing to look for a path to understanding others. Fear responses to civil unrest and racial tension dampen motivation to move toward one another and make growing in cultural intelligence a far greater challenge. Dr. David Livermore, social scientist and cultural intelligence expert, suggests that the incarnation of Christ is the ultimate picture of cultural intelligence[17]. Christ's incarnation is his reaching across the chasm between divinity and mortality to lovingly embrace humanity

[17] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 33.

(John 1:1,14). In the call to discipleship, he invites those who would follow him to embrace humanity with him. Jesus calls his followers to grow in his knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) and likeness (2 Cor. 3:18), which includes bridging chasms of cultural difference to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mk 12:31).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore what distinguishes church leaders in the Deep South who grew in cultural intelligence (CQ®) during the national cultural unrest of August 2020 – August 2021 from those who experienced no growth or regressed in CQ®. Three main areas are central to understanding this distinction: cultural intelligence, discipleship and spiritual formation, and power dynamics.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the qualitative research:

1. How did participants grow in CQ® during the year?
    a. [Motivation] How did their motivation to pursue CQ® change?
    b. [Strategy] How did their ability to create strategy for cross-cultural interactions improve?
    c. [Knowledge] What cross-cultural understanding was gained?
    d. [Behavior] What behavioral changes in cross-cultural interactions occurred?
2. How did power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
    a. How were leaders' growth impacted by the presence of laity?

b. How were lay persons' growth affected by the presence of church leaders?

3. What discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
    a. How was participants' growth affected by small group discussion?
    b. How was participants' growth affected by large group gatherings?
    c. How was participants' growth affected by consistent prayer?
    d. How was participants' growth affected by reading the study material?
        i. Knowledge of God
        ii. Knowledge of self
4. What barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® during the year?
    a. What views did participants bring to the discussions?
    b. How were participants affected by conflict in the broader culture?
    c. What personal constraints did the participants experience?

Significance of the Study

This study has significance for church leaders in particular but is applicable to all people desiring to grow in communicating across cultural differences with understanding. Leaders will gain greater awareness of the power dynamics at play in their conversations with subordinates and minorities and how others experience them. Ministry leaders seeking to further growth in CQ® through discipleship practices and spiritual formation will gain tools for setting expectations and methods and helping to manage challenges for growth. This study will also reveal how tensions and complexities in the broader culture affect motivations for growth in cultural intelligence.

Definition of Terms

Key terms are defined as follows:

Cultural Intelligence (CQ®): the ability to "reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful.[18]

Culture: A human attempt to understand the world around us; the programming that shapes who we are and who we are becoming; a social system that is shaped by the individual and that also has the capacity to shape the individual; the presence of God, the image of God, the mission of God found in the human spirit, soul and social system.[19]

Intercultural Competence: Term used by IDI® to describe the objective measure of a mindset on the continuum from monocultural to intercultural. For the purposes of this study Intercultural Competence and Cultural Intelligence (CQ®) will be used interchangeably.

[18] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 17.

[19] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2010), p38.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to explore practices for building cultural intelligence in polarizing environments. The literature review begins with a study on Bible passages to provide a theological framework for cultural intelligence. Then, three particularly relevant areas of literature were reviewed to provide a foundation for the mixed methods research. These areas focus on the literature concerning cultural intelligence, power dynamics, and discipleship.

The Acts Church as an Apologetic for Cultural Intelligence

The conversation on cultural difference is as old as cultural difference itself. As institutions grow in their cultural variety, the opportunities for cross-cultural misunderstandings increase[20]. This was no different for the early church as presented in the Book of Acts.

Hellenistic Jewish widows, overlooked during the communion meal, presented one of the earliest recorded cross-cultural conflicts of the early church. The Bible mandated caring for widows who had no family to care for their needs. Because of the belief that burial in Israel was more virtuous, many foreign Jews migrated to spend their last days there and die. As a result, a disproportionate number of widows living in

[20] Katie Reynolds, "13 Benefits and Challenges of Diversity in the Workplace," *Hult Blogs* (blog), 2019, https://www.hult.edu/blog/benefits-challenges-cultural-diversity-workplace/.

Jerusalem overwhelmed the charitable distributions of the local synagogues.[21] How did the church respond? It instituted new roles and responsibilities, namely the diaconate, to ensure that widows who were culturally different and among society's lower were being properly included in the church's daily meal distribution. Acts 6:1 describes the problem: "Now in these days the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution." The neglect of the widows was not malicious in its intent but real in its impact.

One might conclude that this is an isolated situation in which the church recognized an inequity and expanded its infrastructure to better serve those in its care. But what does Acts teach us about the gospel priority of cross-cultural engagement? The cross-cultural communication at Pentecost demonstrates the Spirit's priority for ethnic inclusion.

Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion at Pentecost

Acts 2 provides an account of the Spirit of Christ coming to rest upon the church in a supernatural way. The Book of Acts begins with the ascension of Christ - witnesses watching him board a cloud and return to his Father in Heaven with the promise and command that they were to wait for his Spirit to come. On that day, they would receive power when the Spirit came to rest upon them – power to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world (Acts 1:8).

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[21] Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, Second (Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426: InterVarsity Press, n.d.), 334.

When that day came, the Spirit of Christ invaded a room of 120 people where the apostles, women, Mary the Mother of Jesus and his brothers were staying. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages (Acts 2:4). As a result, people from every nation under heaven came together in bewilderment because each of them heard the mighty works of God proclaimed in their own native tongue (Acts 2:6).

Theologians have described this event as a reversal of the act of God confusing the languages at the Tower of Babel[22] described in Genesis 11. The Tower of Babel represents a toxic unity in pursuit of human aggrandizement. Pentecost represented the unifying work of the Spirit empowering the church to be bold witnesses to the resurrection of Christ.

At Pentecost, the Spirit of God reversed the confusion instituted at Babel with a supernatural clarity to understand each other. He gave this ability as a gift to the church. It is significant that God did not return the church to humanity's pre-Babel state of speaking only one language. Instead, a diversity of tongues was allowed, accommodated, included. Confusing the languages at Babel served to frustrate the wicked plans of man while furthering the good and right purposes of God. In this act of pouring out his Spirit upon the church, God affirmed the beauty of diverse languages, his priority of non-partiality and the primacy of the Spirit's unifying power to bridge the chasm of cultural and ethnic difference.

More than bridging the barrier of language, the Apostle Peter said of this miraculous event, that what they were witnessing was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy:

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[22] Ligonier Ministries, "Babel Reversed", May 31, 2006, https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/babel-reversed.

> "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18)

No category of disadvantage, servant, female, the old, was excluded from the outpouring of the Spirit. This inaugural day for the church[23] was filled with radical diversity and beautiful inclusion of people across every conceivable category. The language of devout people from every nation (Acts 2:5) foreshadows the diverse host, every tribe, tongue, and nation, worshiping the Lamb in Revelation 7. While Pentecost was diverse, the devout people were all committed Judaism. It is clear that ethnic variety was not just part of the church's beginning, but something it would continue to celebrate even in the age to come (Rev. 7:9).

A Prohibition on Revaluating Ethnic Groups

While the commandment to go make and spread culture was never rescinded, it is significant to note that the Acts church was divinely prohibited from revaluating or re-assigning value to non-Jewish ethnic groups. The message given to the Apostle Peter in a rooftop vision recorded in Acts 10:9-16, demonstrates this.

As an ethnic Jew, Peter had faithfully lived in obedience to Jewish ceremonial law which prohibited indulging in non-kosher foods. Strict adherence to the law was a symbol of holiness and being set apart that was to point to a greater reality, one who is utterly

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[23] Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL, IL: IVP Academic, 2014, 22.

holy. Jay Sklar aptly expresses this concept, "All the laws related to ritual states were like the strokes of a pen, underlining again and again the sentence: 'The Lord is holy!' "[24] God confronts Peter's wrong view of those practices were confronted in their rooftop encounter. Peter's vision challenged what he had practiced and believed all his life. In his vision, the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descended with all kinds of animals, reptiles and birds that were unkosher. When Peter heard a voice commanding him to eat, he refused asserting that he had never eaten anything unclean. The voice came a second time saying to Peter, "What God has made clean, do not call common."

In fact, when Peter recounts this event following his return to Jerusalem, he says that the message was giving to him three times (Acts 11:10). God confronted Peter at a point of deep cultural and religious commitment, regulations about food, to transform the way he regarded other people groups. The vision served to clarify that the Jewish ceremonial practices were to point to the holiness of their God and not their superiority as a people. All people groups retained the value that He alone had given them by His imprinted image and indwelling presence.

Blood acted as the purifying agent according to ceremonial law[25]. Now the blood of Christ had been shed for the remission of sins offering a lasting purifying agent (Hebrews 9:11-12). The Spirit of Christ, poured out at Pentecost, empowered the church to bear witness to this good news. With the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, the ceremonial

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[24] Jay Sklar, *Leviticus*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 49.

[25] Sklar, 53.

laws that pointed to the Holy One were now set aside. This is because for those who received him, the Holy One had come to take up residence in their hearts. The revaluation of people groups was not just Peter's error. It has remained with the church as a divisive and damaging force. In recent years, some denominations have openly confessed and repented of this sin. Among those denominations is the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA). At its 30th General Assembly in 2002, the denomination set forth Overture 20 on racial reconciliation, engaging its sinful participation in chattel slavery.[26] Since then other measures addressing racial sins have been taken including at its 44th General Assembly in 2016 the PCA approved Overture 43 on "Confessing and Repenting of Sins Committed During the Civil Rights Era."[27] The document expressed the denomination's repentance of racial sins including the segregation of worshipers by race. While the PCA began in 1973, at its inception it identified as a "continuing Presbyterian Church" with many of its governing principles finding their genesis in its predecessor church, the Presbyterian Church of the United States (PCUS).

Following the Civil War, the 1866 General Assembly of the PCUS began to consider how they were to regard former African American enslaved persons. A committee formed to consider the relation of the church to the freedmen. John L. Girardeau, former missionary to blacks in Charleston, South Carolina, presented a paper upholding the ecclesiastical equality of African Americans, acknowledging the basic

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[26] L. Roy Taylor, "Report on the Actions of the 30th General Assembly of the PCA," accessed April 13, 2023, https://pcahistory.org/pca/ga/actions/30thGA_2002_Actions.pdf.

[27] L. Roy Taylor, "Report on the Actions of the 30th General Assembly of the PCA," accessed April 13, 2023, https://pcahistory.org/pca/ga/actions/32ndGA_2004_Actions.pdf.

unity of the human race and the unity of all true believers in Jesus. His ideas were received by some and opposed by others who argued for ecclesiastical separation and ordaining African Americans to labor among "their own people"[28]. In 1867, the synod passed a resolution declaring that ordination be given to all called to Gospel ministry without respect of persons. Robert Lewis Dabney, who had been absent from the debate, opposed the overture, affirming that if properly trained, black men could be ordained but should never teach and rule white people. His opposition stemmed from his stated beliefs: " 'because that race is not trustworthy for such position.' In his mind, African Americans were a 'subservient race…made to follow, and not to lead.' because the black man's 'temperament, idiosyncrasy and social relation make him untrustworthy as a depository of power.[29]' " Dabney held to a view that revaluated black people.

Dabney made his valuation based on social and civic constructs and not the authority and veracity of the Word of God. "Dabney failed to see that the common waters of baptism and the common bread and cup of the Lord's Supper symbolized a new reality: the one body of Christ, made up of and ruled by those from every tribe, nation, and language[30]." He failed to recognize that not only was the revaluation of a people group disallowed, but explicitly prohibited in Scripture. In his gross error, "Dabney's speech set the "racial

[28] Sean Michael Lucas, *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life* (P.O. Box 817, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865-0817: P & R Publishing Company, 2005), 144.

[29] Lucas, 146.

[30] Lucas, 150.

orthodoxy" of the Southern Presbyterian Church for the next hundred years"[31] with ongoing effects today.

The monocultural makeup of the PCA with only 1% of all teaching elders being African American, 0.8% are Hispanic, and 10% are Korean/Korean American[32], reveals the residual effects of that ruling. The lack of ethnic diversity is a constant reminder of the necessity of giving right value to every individual regardless of ethnic heritage, reflecting the valuation assigned by God himself with the creation of humanity in his image. The truth imparted to Peter reinforces that God's right and lasting valuation should never be reassessed by man.

A Ruling for Cultural Inclusion Over Cultural Assimilation

Much like the differing views in the General Assembly of 1866, the Acts church had no shortage of strong stances on what was culturally and ethnically expedient versus what was rightly rooted in Gospel truth. Some from Judea insisted that circumcision and strict adherence to Mosaic law were necessary requirements for salvation. Apostles and elders of the early church, including Paul, Barnabas, and James who served in a prominent leadership role in the early church,[33] convened for the Jerusalem Council to debate this matter. The Apostle Peter, convinced that the time of Gentile inclusion in

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[31] Sean Michael Lucas, *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life* (P.O. Box 817, Phillipsburg, NJ 08865-0817: P & R Publishing Company, 2005), 149.

[32] Staff, "PCA Unity Fund: Equipping Minority Leaders in the PCA," *ByFaith,* August 8, 2018, https://byfaithonline.com/pca-unity-fund-equipping-minority-leaders-in-the-pca/.

[33] John B. Polhill, study note on Acts 15:1-3, in *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, n.d.), 2114.

God's people had arrived, reminded the Council that "[God] made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). In his statement, Peter made it clear that because God made no ethnic or cultural distinctions for the inclusion of all people groups into the Body of Christ, church leaders should not bar anyone from inclusion on the basis of ethnicity. Inclusion was based on salvation by grace alone and did not require assimilation or the relinquishing of one's own ethnic culture.

James' "judgment" (Acts 15:19) does affirm, however, that those who are in Christ should not just act biblically but also willingly, limit their freedom when it is perceived to be unloving by other brothers and sisters. This willingness is a biblically faithful act. James recommended not burdening the Gentiles with adherence to burdensome cultural rituals but asked for reciprocity from the Gentiles in not participating in practices such as eating food offered to idols – a practice that would be woefully offensive to orthodox Jews. James was calling the early church to be culturally intelligent through mutual respect across cultures.

It is important to note that James does not merely compose a plan for good citizenship. Rather, his judgment is an outworking of the fulfillment of Scripture. In offering his judgment, James quotes the prophet Amos and alludes to the teachings of the prophet Isaiah. In quoting Amos, he upholds Gentile inclusion as fulfillment of the promise that God would "rebuild the tent of David that has fallen" (Amos 9:11) and would use "all the Gentiles who are called by my name" (Amos 9:12) to do it. James goes on to reference Isaiah 45 saying that God was making these things "known from old" (Isaiah 45:21). In other words, the new bid for the inclusion of the Gentiles was not some

haphazard pivot but the plan of God from eternities past that had now reached its time for fulfillment.

Summary of The Acts Church as an Apologetic for Cultural Intelligence

The Acts Church is a clear demonstration of the Triune God's priority to create an ethnically inclusive church demonstrated through the Spirit of God being poured out upon all people groups. This inaugural act of the Spirit at Pentecost affirms the diversity of languages and cultures, making the gospel accessible to every tongue and nation and not flattening language to one uniform, pre-Babel tongue. Instead with full inclusion of all nations and tribes, the Acts Church upholds a clear prohibition on the revaluation of non-Jewish people groups through the vision God gives Peter and declares for all time the intrinsic value of all people regardless of ethnicity or class. In Peter's words, "God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). Finally, the Acts Church formally rules through a plurality of established leadership that the church should not add qualifications over and above salvation through faith alone. James (thought by many to be the bishop of the church) upheld Peter's judgment by not burdening non-Jewish converts with following the Jewish practice of circumcision and asked that Gentiles show respect to their Jewish brothers and sisters by not committing practices they found deeply offensive. The Acts Church called for a mutual love and respect among its earliest members that is not just a call for cultural intelligence, but also a paradigm to follow today.

Cultural Intelligence

"To love others to a place where we effectively express the love of Jesus to people of difference" is the goal of growing in CQ® that David Livermore expresses in the opening pages of his book, *Cultural Intelligence*.[34] His framework for Cultural Intelligence "is a multidisciplinary approach that draws from anthropology, sociology and psychology as well as literature from the fields of business, missions and education."[35] David Thomas and Kerr Inkson, authors of *Cultural Intelligence – Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village*, base the urgent need for the development of cultural intelligence in the fast-moving train of globalization or the growing interconnectedness of the world. Thomas and Inkson posit that globalization brings with it a dramatic increase in the need to interact with persons across lines of cultural difference. Developing cultural intelligence, then becomes necessary to keep pace with the fast-changing global, cultural landscape. Sharing views in the urgent need for CQ®, Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, author of *Understanding Us & Them – Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence for Community Building*, has a slightly different motivator. Dykstra-Pruim cites growing polarization, mostly focusing on the United States, as the driving impetus for the urgent need to develop CQ®.

Most teachings on growing in cross-cultural competence focus primarily on one of two areas: 1) cultural values and how they affect the way one relates to other cultures or

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[34] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009),12.

[35] Livermore, 45.

2) the individual's need to be a humble learner.[36] Dykstra-Pruim's approach is more closely aligned with the former, presenting the reader with a number of exercises to facilitate growth in cultural awareness and behavior modification.

While both approaches are helpful to some degree, the Cultural Intelligence framework, introduced by Livermore, seeks to gather the findings from such approaches and to employ them as part of Spirit-enabled transformation evidenced in cross-culturally competent behavior change. He defines cultural intelligence as the measure of one's ability to reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful.[37] Beyond affecting behavioral change, Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, author of *Understanding Us & Them*, highlights an additional goal in developing cultural intelligence. Dykstra-Pruim coined the term Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence (ICQ) to make the distinction that the ultimate thrust of developing CQ® for some is to build community.[38] For others, CQ® is about predicting fit and success in various settings.

Howard Gardner, psychologist and Harvard professor of cognition and education, is known for his theory on Multiple Intelligences which suggests that each individual has varying levels of different intelligences.[39] Intelligence Quotient (IQ), for instance is a measure of intellectual ability while Emotional Quotient (EQ) is a measure of how one handles his emotions. IQ is used to determine fit for various vocations, and it is widely

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[36] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 46.

[37] Livermore,17.

[38] Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them: Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence for Community Building* (Grand Rapids, MI 49546: The Calvin Press, 2019), 7.

[39] Howard Gardner, "MI Oasis," accessed March 11, 2022, https://www.multipleintelligencesoasis.org/a-beginners-guide-to-mi.

assumed that one's IQ is fixed. In more recent years, many have argued that EQ is a far better predictor than IQ of how well someone will succeed in life and work. Livermore posits that because EQ instruments presume familiarity with an environment, that CQ® picks up where EQ leaves off by dealing with people and circumstances in unfamiliar contexts. "CQ® measures the ability to move seamlessly in and out of a variety of cultural contexts."[40] Unlike IQ, CQ® is malleable, capable of increasing or regressing under certain conditions.

For the purposes of this research, the case study employed the Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®)[41] to measure CQ® in all participants. The IDI® measures intercultural competence over a continuum of monocultural to intercultural mindsets. The full range of mindsets in order from monocultural to intercultural are denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation (See Figure 1). Following a debrief with a qualified IDI® administrator, each participant is provided a development plan with practical steps for moving toward greater intercultural competence. (See Appendix A1 for orientation descriptions).

Participants are given three scores to provide insight into their level of cultural competence: 1) Perceived Orientation (PO) reflects how the tester views her own cultural competence; 2) Developmental Orientation (DO) reflects the objective view of the tester's level of cultural competence; and 3) Orientation Gap (OG) reflects the difference in the tester's perceived and actual orientations (see Figure 2). Each participant

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[40] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 47.

[41] IDI, LLC, "Intercultural Development Inventory."

is also given a development plan with practical steps for moving toward greater cultural competence. While IDI® uses the language of cultural competence and Livermore coined the term cultural intelligence (CQ®), it is helpful to note that the terms are used interchangeably for the purposes of this writing.

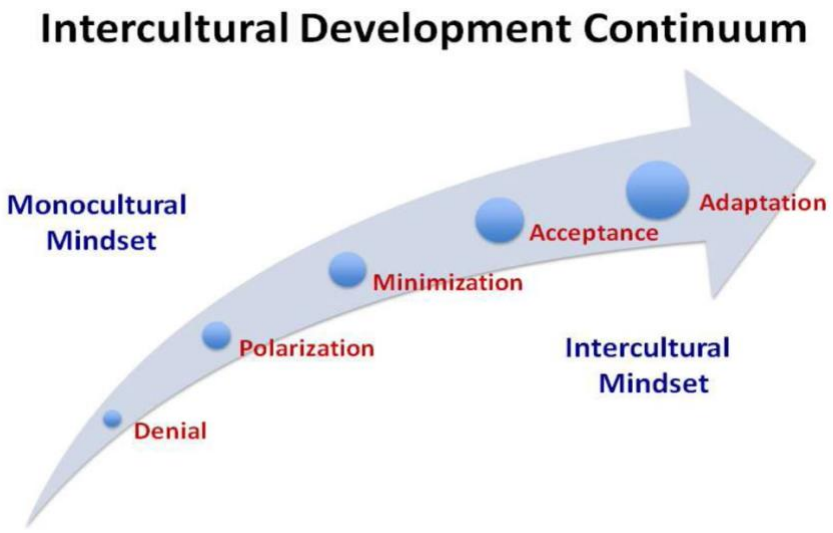

Figure 1

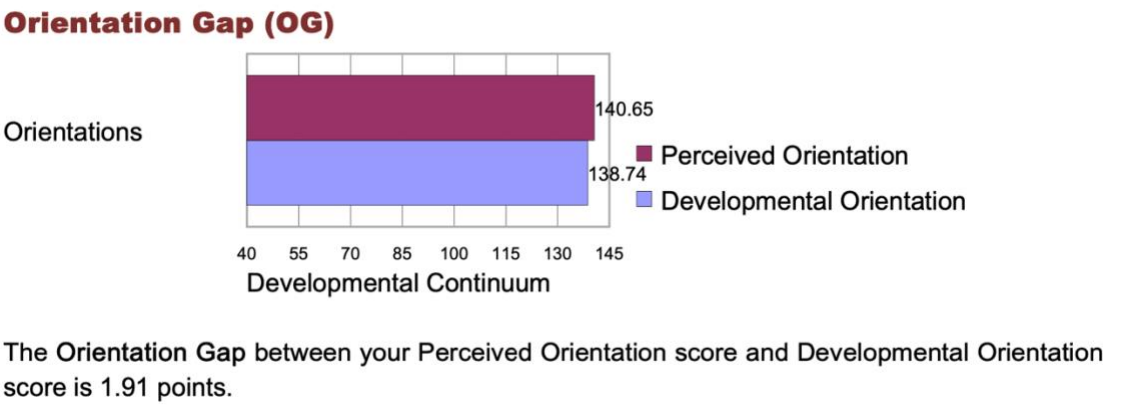

Figure 2

As a more behavior-based, cultural identity focused approach to CQ®, Dykstra-Pruim offers four interpersonal skills for growing in CQ®: Openness, Observation, Flexibility and Empathy.[42] Thomas and Inkson suggest that CQ® growth happens at the intersection of three primary factors: 1. Knowledge; 2. Mindfulness and 3. Skills. The four main factors Livermore cites that most influence CQ® are: 1. Knowledge CQ®; 2. Interpretive CQ®; 3. Perseverance CQ®; and 4. Behavioral CQ®. Because Livermore's comprehensive framework is the basis for many other CQ® frameworks, with some variation on naming conventions, it is reasonable to consider his four key CQ® factors.

Four Key CQ® Factors

Knowledge CQ®

Knowledge CQ®, or Cognitive CQ®, measures ongoing growth in understanding cross-cultural issues.[43] It includes understanding language and customs. This factor anticipates how people of a culture will likely view another culture and how that will shape interactions across cultures. Knowledge or cross-cultural understanding is generally "acquired by means of education, everyday experience, and travel."[44] Knowledge CQ® is the basis for growing overall CQ® in each of the frameworks

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[42] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them: Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence for Community Building*, 67.

[43] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 48.

[44] David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson, Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village (Oakland, CA 94612-1921: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2017), 79, Kindle.

introduced. Although Dykstra-Pruim does not name knowledge as one of the primary factors, the concept that knowledge is the basis for developing CQ® is thoroughly embedded in her methodologies.

Knowledge is the foundational understanding that enables growing in CQ® and the appreciation of diverse cultures. Marvin J. Newell, Senior VP of Missio Nexus, emphasizes the importance of growing in cross-cultural knowledge in his book, *Crossing Cultures in Scripture – Biblical Principles for Mission Practice*. Newell suggests that it is only through the many varied cultural expressions that one begins "to grasp and more deeply appreciate the character, awesomeness, and multifaceted nature of God."[45] He concludes that in God's authoring diversity, He tells us about himself.

Interpretive CQ®[46]

Interpretive CQ®, or metacognitive CQ®, measures the ability to be mindful and aware as one interacts with people from different cultural contexts.[47] It is the ability to accurately make meaning from what one observes. Interpretive CQ® has a strong connection to Knowledge CQ® as some measure of cross-cultural knowledge is needed to make interpretation. Livermore calls this symbiotic relationship "cultural strategic thinking". Interpretive CQ® at its core requires some level of reflection and thinking so

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[45] Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2005), 32.

[46] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 33.

[47] Livermore, 49.

that one is able to make meaning of what she observes in real-time. Thomas and Inkson employ the language of mindfulness to describe this concept.

In *Crossing Cultures in Scripture*, Marvin J. Newell discusses the Acts 17 account of the Apostle Paul's interaction with the people of Athens, a city steeped in paganism and sophisticated philosophies. He upholds Paul's contextualization of the gospel for the people of Athens as instructive for other cross-cultural messengers. He describes the complexity of such contextualization as one requiring the messenger to stand at the crossroads of three cultures: Firstly, the message bearer is presenting a message couched in the cultures of Scripture; Secondly, he must be aware of his own cultural biases and worldview; and Thirdly, he needs an adequate grasp of his audience's culture.[48] Thomas and Inkson similarly describe this 3-sided awareness as being part and parcel to mindfulness: 1)"being aware of our own assumptions, ideas and emotions; 2) noticing cues from the other people; and 3)tuning in to their assumptions, words, and behavior."[49] This kind of in the moment awareness and meaning making exemplifies Interpretive CQ®.

Perseverance CQ®[50]

Perseverance CQ®, or motivational CQ®, measures our level of interest, drive, and motivation to adapt cross-culturally.[51] Effective perseverance CQ® requires an awareness

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[48] Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission*, 235.

[49] Thomas and Inkson, *Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village*, 756.

[50] Livermore also refers to this as CQ drive in some of his materials.

[51] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 52.

of what motivates a person to keep going and awareness of what slows her down. Newell raises an example of an extreme level of motivation in his telling of the story of Queen Esther. In the story of Esther, Haman, prime minister of Persia (Esther 3:1-2) was in a position of great advantage and was intent upon exterminating the entire Jewish community. Esther and her oppressed community would have had "little time or opportunity to arm themselves, defend themselves or flee."[52] Esther initiating cross-cultural engagement with the king was done with inordinate motivation as the lives of the entire Jewish community depended upon her successful engagement. While most cross-cultural engagement is not as dire as Queen Esther's, like the Jewish community, other people groups may tend to perseverance informed by the need for day-to-day survival in an oppressed state.[53]

Livermore cites a great challenge in perseverance CQ® is learning when to persevere despite the discomfort and when to respectfully decline. Thomas and Inkson describe the balance needed in navigating cultural difference. They suggest that one who is culturally intelligent is able to strike a balance between the expectations of others and the demands of the situation. "This balance will be imperfect, a work in progress. As with surfing, skiing, or cycling, finding this balance is initially difficult but becomes easier and feels more natural over time."[54] The ability to navigate these situations is part of growing in perseverance CQ®.

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[52] Marvin J. Newell, *Crossing Cultures in Scripture: Biblical Principles for Mission Practice* (Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 152.

[53] Sheila Wise Rowe, *Healing Racial Trauma: The Road to Resilience* (Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 33.

[54] David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson, Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village (Oakland, CA 94612-1921: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2017), 1696, Kindle.

Dykstra-Pruim accounts for the ongoing discomfort of cross-cultural engagement but does not dedicate a category to perseverance or motivation. Instead, she encourages "flexibility and choosing unselfishness for the sake of getting along and building relationships."[55] Thomas and Inkson, while also accounting for the ongoing difficulties of this work, do not dedicate a category to perseverance or motivation. They name mindlessness as a means by which one relies on "cultural cruise control" or unconsciously running her life on built-in cultural assumptions that prevent flexibility in changing circumstances. In contrast, mindfulness is exercising great intentionality in discarding rigid mental programming and actively paying attention to the present situation and its context.

Behavioral CQ®[56]

Behavioral CQ® refers to the actions and words one uses to interact cross-culturally.[57] It involves the ability to observe, recognize, regulate, adapt and act appropriately in intercultural environments. Thomas and Inkson describe the culturally intelligent person as one who has an ever-increasing repertoire of skilled behaviors that he is able to deploy appropriately in different cultural situations. "The elements of knowledge, mindfulness and skills enable the [behavior or] practice of cultural intelligence."[58] Dykstra-Pruim

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[55] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them: Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence for Community Building*, 71.

[56] Also known as CQ action in some of Livermore's materials.

[57] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ To Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 53.

[58] David C. Thomas and Kerr Inkson, Cultural Intelligence: Surviving and Thriving in the Global Village (Oakland, CA 94612-1921: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2017), 859, Kindle.

attributes lasting behavioral change to 3 cornerstones: 1) focusing on cultural identities and building community; 2) learning cross-culturally together; and 3) sharing stories. These 3 objectives frame the project that is the basis for *Understanding Us & Them*. Each chapter of Dykstra-Pruim's book has a learning kit, practical exercises, which accompany teaching on growing in interpersonal cultural intelligence with the ultimate purpose of building community. Like Thomas and Inkson, Dykstra-Pruim seeks to aid the reader in building a behavior repertoire from which to draw in cross-cultural situations. Livermore takes a more holistic approach, not settling for behavior modification and a collection of ideas but the transformation of the hearts and minds of individuals.

> "So there's little hope that we can deal with our cross-cultural behavior in any kind of sustained way unless we actually become different people. …we have to get beyond behavior modification… and move toward actually becoming more multicultural people who genuinely love, respect, and appreciate the Other and his or her differences."

Livermore suggests that lasting change in the area of cross-cultural intelligence will not come from behavior modification but must necessarily be the product of spiritual formation. The sustained adaptive behavior he describes comes only by Spirit-enabled transformation.

Power Dynamics

In addition to examining the literature in the area of building cultural intelligence it is crucial to consider the impact of power dynamics on growing in CQ®. Just the mention of the word "power" results and a myriad of reactions surface ranging anywhere from joyful acceptance of the ability to affect good change in the world to deep displeasure for power differentials. "Power in its basic sense is the capacity to act and to

influence others."[59] But what is its origin and how is it relevant in the conversation on building CQ®? Soong Chan-Rah, in *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* suggests that "as we look for ways to cross cultures and develop cultural intelligence, we need to understand the impact and role of complex power dynamics."[60] In understanding the role of power dynamics, we must first understand the origin and purpose of power.

The Purpose of Power

In *Redeeming Power*, Dianne Langberg describes power's origin as being from God in his giving humanity the Cultural Mandate following the creation event. The mandate given by God to humanity in Genesis 1:28

> "And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' "

In this command, God grants power to man and woman to jointly subdue and have dominion over the earth. Nancy Pearcey describes these powerful acts of subduing and having dominion as harnessing the natural world to create culture and build civilizations – churches, schools, cities, and governments. Pearcey demonstrates for us the many ways this derived power is given for the flourishing of humanity[61] and

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[59] Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman, and Donald C. Guthrie, *The Politics of Ministry: Navigating Power Dynamics and Negotiating Interests* (Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426: InterVarsity Press, 2019), 32.

[60] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 112.

[61] Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 47.

according to Langberg "to bear God's character in the world."[62] Louis Berkhof goes on to describe the Spirit's giving of power to the church for the purpose of "carry(ing) the laws of Christ into effect."[63] Langberg suggests that "we all have power in varying degrees that we can use or withhold for good or for evil."[64] So what happens when power is not used to bear God's character in the world? What happens when power is perverted?

The Perversion of Power

When power is perverted people act out of their own self-interest and not in the interest of the flourishing of all. "Power misused is also always a study of deception, first of self and then of others."[65] Langberg cites the story of the Fall recorded in Genesis 3 as evidence of humanity's propensity towards self-deception. She suggests that like the first humans, all of humanity inherited the tendency to ingest what is toxic and label it as good. Rah speaks of the establishment of gradations of culture as a common and significant mistake that results from such self-deception. In so doing, the dominant group has the opportunity and the power to determine that theirs is the culture closest to God resulting in the marginalization of other cultural expressions.[66] Rah appeals to Acts 15,

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[62] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*. Kindle.

[63] Louis Berkhof, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, 2005th ed. (East Peoria, IL: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2020), 130.

[64] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*. Kindle.

[65] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020), 29.

[66] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 186.

and the early church leaders' choice to prioritize the gospel message over their own culture, refusing to use their formal power to establish cultural hierarchy.

Langberg continues the discussion on deception noting that the tendency towards self-deception and the deception of others continues when there is a failure to label power dynamics accurately. Rah agrees noting that those in Christian contexts often do not discuss power dynamics and by not doing so continue to perpetuate the systems of power that are at work. Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman and Donald C. Guthrie, in their book, *The Politics of Ministry*, further support this notion commenting that "if we refuse to face the facts of unequal power use in ourselves and our organizations, we will not be able to function responsibly or redemptively."[67] Labeling the power dynamics is key to the organization using power well.

The Perception of Power

Geert Hofstede, Dutch social psychologist and author of *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, coined a term called power difference to describe how people belonging to a specific culture view power relationships - superior/subordinate relationships - between people, including the degree that people not in power accept that power is spread unequally.[68] The objective measure for how one approaches people as having unequal power is called *Power Distance Index* (PDI).

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[67] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *The Politics of Ministry: Navigating Power Dynamics and Negotiating Interests*, Kindle.

[68] Geert Hofstede, "Hofstede's Power Distance: Definition & Example", Study.com, accessed April 13, 2023, https://study.com/academy/lesson/hofstedes-power-distance-definition-examples-quiz.html.

Groups with a high PDI perceive power to have a higher impact on individuals, and groups with a low PDI perceive power to have a lower impact on individuals. Rah emphasizes the importance of considering the potential assumptions held by majority and minority culture individuals regarding power distance. Majority culture individuals may tend to operate on an egalitarian basis with the perception that everyone has equal opportunity and equal access. This view would be considered high PDI. Minority culture individuals are more likely to operate with an awareness of how a negative racial history and social systems and structures can limit access to power. This view would be considered low PDI. Rah further draws attention to the significant disconnect between these two assumptions. Not using the language of the PDI, Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie both affirm the unequal power dynamic and suggest a path forward: "Because those with more power tend to be less aware of their power, healthy leadership at any level requires us to be students of people's interest and of the power dynamics in our organizations. Those with less power tend to be most aware of the power dynamic in any given context. Therefore, we should seek them out to learn from their perspectives."[69] How one perceives power is typically related to the amount of power they have.

The Power to Walk Away

One of the most significant powers in cross-cultural dialogue is the power to walk away or what Langberg calls the power of absence – refusing to engage in the conversation. To have the luxury of only engaging at a philosophical level or to be able to

[69] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *The Politics of Ministry: Navigating Power Dynamics and Negotiating Interests*, 50.

question the existence of systems of unequal power is to also be in a position of great power in cross-cultural engagement. Those harmed by systems of inequity lack the luxury of questioning its existence. Those very systems that Rah describe as being sewn into the fabric of American culture and makeup the climate in which all Americans are socialized.[70]

Diane Langberg says this about culture: "As humans, we are easily seduced and shaped by the culture in which we have marinated. We breathe it in constantly, and our culture becomes part of us without assessment…. we are easily blind and oblivious to the toxins we ingest that grow in and around us and that we transmit to others."[71] Burns, Chapman and Guthrie state similarly with regard to those holding more power that "most people will not be conscious of all the interests they themselves bring to the planning table, let alone the interests of others." The complexity of cross-cultural engagement is due in part to the unconscious nature of norms that are breathed in from the culture. The sordid history of formalized systems of unequal power through slavery and Jim Crow are among the toxins that continue to infuse American air. If unequal power systems are ubiquitous and locked in cultural oblivion, how is movement toward respectful engagement across these power differentials possible?

The Proper Use of Power

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[70] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 52.

[71] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020), 45.

It may be helpful to begin with a few common mistakes. According to Burns, Chapman and Guthrie, a common mistake born out of power difference is that those with more power may operate under the assumption that others at the table have equal power as them.[72] This lack of awareness produces unhelpful engagement that further alienates those with less power whose interests are not understood or known. Those with less power can then be tempted to remain silent, becoming complicit in decisions being made that may cause suffering and injury to those holding less power. Forward movement happens when healthy leaders consider the interest of those with less power and create space for and empower those with less power to engage the process well. Those with less power must then also speak up and have the courage to speak up respectfully and honestly so that any competing interests are better understood. Langberg reminds us, after all, that "to be human is to have a voice."[73] Using one's voice asserts her humanity.

Often when complicated situations arise in organizations, the tendency is to leverage simplistic problem-solving approaches employed in the business world.[74] Instead of using such problem-solving methods, both Rah and Langberg rely on the language of systems. Langberg defines systems as "a combination of parts that work together, forming a complex unitary whole."[75] Rah goes on to assert that "Systems thinking is a way of seeing and talking about reality that helps us better understand and

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[72] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *The Politics of Ministry: Navigating Power Dynamics and Negotiating Interests*, 138.

[73] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020),11.

[74] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 186.

[75] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*. Kindle.

work with systems to influence the quality of our lives."[76] Because culture is often not part of day to day consciousness, movement towards cultural intelligence requires much more than a formula or a set of steps. If power and cultural difference are to be bridged, the simplicity of individualized, linear problem-solving is not an adequate framework to support such complex difference and change. Systems thinking is necessary. Understanding the power dynamics of those in the system is key to navigating it in a way that produces flourishing for all involved.

Those in positions of authority may have formal power by virtue of their role that gives them certain rights that others do not have. In that context, the circle of their "ruling and subduing" is larger than most. [77] Because those in power tend to be less aware of their power, learning to see power dynamics is paramount in maintaining and establishing health in inequitable power systems. It requires a humble willingness of those with more power to limit their power and consider the interest of others. Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie describe the process by which those with more power and those with less power promote their own interests to one another as negotiation. Negotiation has the potential to produce lasting effects on the health of the system. In successful negotiation, "the people involved generally grow in trust and respect for each other and their diverse interests."[78] In that sense, negotiation can aid CQ® growth, aiding the ability to speak respectfully across cultural difference.

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[76] Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 188.

[77] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020), 8.

[78] Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie, *The Politics of Ministry: Navigating Power Dynamics and Negotiating Interests*, 117.

Summary of Power Dynamics

What each of the authors mentioned have in common is their view on the necessity of developing a biblical worldview rather than a socially derived view of power. All of humanity has power in varying degrees that can be used or withheld for good or for evil. When power is used well those using it bear God's image in the world and brings about human flourishing for those with varying degrees of power. When power is perverted those wielding more power act in ways that benefit themselves often to the detriment of those with less power. Because power is derivative, people are to hold it with great humility,[79] grow in awareness of the existence of power dynamics in their organizations and be willing to limit their power in deference to the interests of others.

[79] Langberg, *Redeeming Power: Understanding Authority and Abuse in the Church*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2020), 10.

Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

Discipleship is Christ's call to every believer to grow in the knowledge of him (2 Peter 3:18), in likeness to him (Colossians 3:9-10), and in affections for him (Matthew 22:37) until the believer sees him. (1John 3:2). So why does discipleship matter? In his book, *Deep Discipleship*, J. T. English posits that "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord is the goal of deep discipleship." He references the prophet Habbakuk's words to God's people that, "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Habbakuk 2:14). Growing in knowledge of God is the future to which all world history is pointing. Regarding the purpose of discipleship, Hans Bayer states in his book, *A Theology of Mark: The Dynamic Between Theology and Authentic Discipleship*, that discipleship is about following God himself and being "captivated by God's ultimate reversal of the consequences of humankind's rebellion against its Maker."[80] This reversal happens in the inbreaking kingdom of God inaugurated in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

The message of this inbreaking kingdom was "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). In other words, 'turn from your ways to the priorities of this new Kingdom.' Jesus himself best describes the priorities of this Kingdom when asked by the disciples which commandment is the greatest. He responded with his kingdom priorities: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' … 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:36-40). He described a love that necessary flowed from the vertical to the horizontal – from God to people. The

[80] Hans Bayer, *A Theology of Mark*, Explorations in Biblical Theology: The Dynamic Between Christology and Authentic Discipleship (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2012), 59.

natural outworking of a genuine love for God is a love for people. When Jesus discusses this commandment (also known as the Great Commandment) with a law expert in Luke 10, he would demonstrate that the genuine outworking of this love transcends cultural difference. J. T. English describes the Great Commandment as the picture Jesus gives of holistic discipleship, a means for recentering whole selves on God and producing more people who loves God as they do. English suggests that the primary way to make deep disciples is through intentional community in the local church. Of such community he says, "It is not enough to connect people to community; it must be a community that is committed to learning the way of Jesus together."[81] Deep, holistic discipleship involves growing in the ways of Jesus in the context of deepening community – growing in knowledge of self and others.

As has been expressed by Livermore and Dykstra, knowledge is foundational for growing in awareness of cultural difference. While it is believed by some that cultural difference has no discernable bearing on day to day, lived experiences across cultures, IDI®'s categories of cultural competence suggest a different dynamic. According to IDI®'s categories along the spectrum of monocultural to multicultural competencies, those in the denial phase may recognize more observable cultural differences but may not recognize deeper cultural differences. This lack of awareness often leads to their withdrawing from such situations and undermining opportunities for growing in understanding in cross-cultural community (See Figure 1). Those in higher levels of competence, acceptance, and adaptation, not only accept deep differences but look for

[81] J.T. English, *Deep Discipleship: How the Church Can Make Whole Disciples of Jesus* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2020), 83.

ways to navigate those paths in culturally appropriate and authentic ways. These varying degrees of cultural competence make it necessary to consider the criticality of knowledge of oneself as the basis for growing in cultural intelligence.

Growing in Knowledge of God and Self

"It is plain that no man can arrive at the true knowledge of himself, without having first contemplated the divine character, and then descended to the consideration of his own."[82] Calvin asserts that knowledge of self is inextricably tied to knowledge of God. The beginning of true knowledge of self must necessarily start with understanding who God has revealed himself to be. In *A Theology of Mark*, Hans Bayer suggests that Jesus begins the process of discipleship by posing two core questions to his disciples. First, "Who do you perceive yourself to be?" and second, "Who do you perceive God to be?" In asking these fundamental questions, Jesus leads those who follow him into what Bayer calls a "double crisis" (with crisis meaning to judge following serious consideration). Through this dynamic, the heart of disciples is opened to their need for reconciliation with God and a life of dependence on him.[83] The call does not focus on changing behavior but on changing heart attitudes which in turn shape behavior. He seeks to reshape thinking about themselves and God thus affecting every area of their lives. This reshaping comes as the disciple seeks to answer who she perceives God to be.

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[82] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 6th ed., vol. 1 of 2, n.d., 48–49.

[83] Hans F. Bayer, *A Theology of Mark*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 2012), 63.

In *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, Louis Berkhof describes the ways that God has revealed himself to humanity as general and special revelation. Of general revelation, he says "It does not come to man in the form of verbal communications, but in the facts, the forces, and the laws of nature, in the constitution and operation of the human mind, and in the facts of experience and history."[84] Knowledge of God in this sense comes from observing creation in all its vastness. Of special revelation he says it is given through God's inspired Word - the Bible. Through the pages of the Bible, God expresses his purposes, priorities, character, pursuit, redemption, and ultimate destiny for humanity.

The most tangible and explicit statement that God makes about himself is in the person of Jesus. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being," (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus expressed this truth in conversation when Phillip, one of his disciples, asked to see the Father. Jesus asserted that: "…Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father… Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?" (John 14:9-10). To know Jesus is to know the Father. The heart and priorities of God are on full display in the teachings of Jesus.

In his Luke 10 teaching on the Great Commandment, " 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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself," Jesus was questioned by an expert on the law who asked for clarity on exactly who he should consider a neighbor. His question

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[84] Berkhof, Louis. *A Summary of Christian Doctrine,* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 5.

exposed his wrestle with the question of who he perceived himself to be. He sought to justify himself in asking the question. He wanted permission to exclude an ethnic group he found detestable from the mandate to love. In Jesus' response he told the law expert a story about a "good Samaritan" which would itself have been a contradiction in terms for the inquirer. Jesus challenged his limited cultural understanding by making the despised Samaritan the hero of the story in contrast to those from his culture who would have been expected to love well, namely a priest and a temple worker. He exhorts the law expert to go and love across cultural divides just as the Samaritan had done. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident, remarks with regard to the good Samaritan parable, "Being a neighbor is not a qualification of someone else; it is their claim on me, nothing else…I am the one required to act, to be obedient… I must be a neighbor to the other person."[85] The call to discipleship necessitates obedience in following in the path of the One who calls and growing in knowledge of him. To grow in CQ® is to first grow in knowledge of self as neighbor. To grow in knowledge of self is to first grow in knowledge of God. To grow in knowledge of God is to answer Christ's call to discipleship.

Growing in Likeness

Bayer identifies eight core attitudes and behaviors of Christlikeness for all disciples that begin with surrender – denying oneself. This self-denial results in a real, life dependence upon Christ that includes love of God, love of others, and love of self (Mark 12:30-21). Bonhoeffer similarly subscribes to self-denial being core to discipleship

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[85] [85] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440: Fortress Press, 2015), 38.

but differs slightly from Bayer in what self-denial means. Bonhoeffer teaches that self-denial means knowing only Christ and no longer knowing oneself. "It means no longer seeing oneself, only him who is going ahead, no longer seeing the way which is too difficult for us. Self-denial says only: he is going ahead; hold fast to him."[86] Bayer would argue from his reflections on Mark 8:34-37 that paying the cost of discipleship includes taking loving care of oneself and others as those loved by God.

Bayer's eight core characteristics of Christlikeness include: 1) Surrendering; 2) Believing and trusting; 3) Praying; 4) Watching over/guarding your heart; 5) Being humble; 6) Forgiving; 7) Withstanding temptation; and 8) Confessing Christ to all humanity. Bayer highlights that Jesus is more interested in transforming the character of disciples than in their particular behaviors. Christlike attitudes and behaviors flow out of transformed hearts and minds (Romans 12:1).

J. T. English posits that community is an absolutely indispensable element of growing in the likeness of Christ. He diagnoses a common one-sidedness in churches as having a focus on either learning the way of Jesus or on growing in community. English says: "It is not enough to connect people to community; it must be a community that is committed to learning the way of Jesus together. It must be a community that learns."[87] Becoming like Christ happens in the context of community but only when that community is committed to learning the way of Christ and growing in his likeness. Bayer concludes that the eight core characteristics of Christlikeness are to be understood as the

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[86] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440: Fortress Press, 2015), 51.

[87] English, *Deep Discipleship: How the Church Can Make Whole Disciples of Jesus*, 83.

fruit of being shaped and transformed by Christ and not as mere spiritual disciplines to be emulated in the disciple's own strength.

Growing in Affection

"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22:37-38). Disciples of Christ are commanded to grow in the fullness of their love for God as evidenced in the "all" language of the Great Commandment. According to English, our desires are shaped by the gospel in community. "The best discipleship spaces do not satisfy our desires; they shape our desires and create a hunger for more".[88] This gradual shaping of desires is part of the progressive sanctification (growing likeness of God) of the believer. Bonhoeffer argues for a more binary, all or nothing perspective. He posits that one either completely loves God or completely hates him. The basis for his perspective is the Matthew 6:24 which states that no man can serve two masters. "We can give our hearts in complete love only to one object, we can cling only to one master. You love God, you think. But by loving God and also the goods of the world, our love for God is actually hate…our heart is no longer in communion with Jesus.[89] Bonhoeffer does embrace the progressive nature with which the image of Christ increases in clarity as the believer grows from one level of understanding to another. In this he distinguishes between affections being binary and knowledge being progressive.

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[88] English, 147.

[89] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440: Fortress Press, 2015), 135.

English suggests that the affections are created and shaped by the gospel as the disciple matures. “Deep discipleship is all about helping people find greater enjoyment in the Triune God.” It is the gospel that molds affections for that greater enjoyment. Bayer suggests that prayer is the natural form of communion with God through which the Spirit gradually opens eyes to the ongoing need for God’s presence. Like English, he views this work as progressive in nature yet mostly applies it to increased knowledge and dependence and not desires.

Until the Believer Sees God

Discipleship begins with Christ’s call to follow him and concludes when Christ returns. Bonhoeffer asserts that the disciple should not speak about his life but only about the true life of Christ in them. He challenges the Christian to see himself as one through whom Jesus continues his resurrected life: “The life of Jesus Christ here on earth has not yet concluded. Christ continues to live it in the lives of his followers.” [90] He draws on the Apostle Paul’s language in Galatians 2:20 that “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.” Bonhoeffer boldly claims that it is the incarnate, crucified, and transfigured Christ who enters the believer and lives her life.

Bayer expounds upon the implications for both the individual as well as the community of Christ being on mission for the triune God. The core characteristics of Christlikeness are given for expression in all areas of individual and public life in every sphere of society. The all-encompassing transformation represented in these core

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[90] [90] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* (Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440: Fortress Press, 2015), 271.

characteristics necessarily lead to "worship in all areas of life -"[91]worship that extends into eternity: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever (Revelation 5:13)! English states that "Everything else we pursue in this life will come to an end; only deep discipleship will continue into eternal life." Bonhoeffer quotes I John 3:2 concerning the disciple's destiny that "We will be like him, for we will behold him as he is" (I John 3:2). The telos of the disciple's life is to be in perfect likeness to his Lord – a grace-based pursuit that gives way to eternity.

Summary of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

Bonhoeffer's teachings on discipleship focus on Christ's call to obedience, the costly demands of the gospel and radical self-denial. Bayer roots his teaching on discipleship in development of the Great Commandment – love of God, neighbor and self and provides the eight marks of Christlikeness. English gives theological footing for discipleship also rooted in the Great Commandment with the telos of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covering the whole earth. He diagnoses common discipleship mistakes and gives practical approaches to growing holistic disciples in communities that teach the way of Christ in the context of genuine community. Like Bonhoeffer, who argues for a costly discipleship that calls people to press on toward maturity. While Bayer emphasizes the cost of discipleship which is Bonhoeffer's focus, he is careful to include

[91] Hans Bayer, *A Theology of Mark*, Explorations in Biblical Theology: The Dynamic Between Christology and Authentic Discipleship (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P&R Publishing, 2012),158.

the need for the disciple to take loving care of themselves and others as those loved by God.

Summary of Literature Review

In light of the literature examined, there are four primary themes to be aware of when considering growing in cultural intelligence: 1) the Acts church as an apologetic; 2) the nature of cultural intelligence; 3) power dynamics and 4) discipleship and spiritual formation.

The Acts church demonstrates the Spirit's priority for ethnic diversity in the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost irrespective of ethnicity, gender, age, or social standing; in Peter's vision prohibiting the revaluation of non-Jewish people groups; and in James' ruling for cultural inclusion and respect over cultural assimilation.

The nature of CQ® is that it is comprised of four growth categories which include Knowledge CQ®, Interpretive CQ®, Perseverance CQ®, and Behavioral CQ®. These four areas contribute to one's ability to grow in communicating respectfully across cultural difference.

Power, while created for flourishing, is often misappropriated, and leveraged in ways that oppress, hinder and harm. Understanding power difference and developing a biblical worldview for the use of power allows those with more power to use or withhold their power to bring about flourishing for themselves and others.

Inherent to the call to follow Christ is the call to love God, neighbor, and self. Intentional discipleship communities that teach the way of Christ in the context of authentic community are spaces that foster growing in knowledge of God, in likeness to

God, in affections for God until the disciple sees God. Such intentional communities are where the way of Christ is learned, lived, and experienced, and that way includes his love and respect across every chasm of difference.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this comparative case study is to explore what distinguishes church leaders in the Deep South who grew in cultural intelligence (CQ®) from those who regressed in CQ® during the national cultural unrest between August 2020 - August 2021. There are three main areas central to understanding this growth and regression: cultural intelligence, power dynamics and discipleship and spiritual formation.

The following research questions guided the qualitative research:

1. How did participants grow in CQ® during the year?

2. How did power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® during the year?

3. What discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® during the year?

4. What barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® during the year?

Design of the Study

In Sharan B. Merriam's book, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, she defines a general, basic qualitative study as an "intensive, holistic, description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit."[92] Merriam identifies four characteristics of qualitative research. First, qualitative research focuses on process, understanding, and meaning. The researcher desires to achieve an understanding

[92] Sharan B Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2016), 14-17.

of how people make sense of their lives, delineating the process of meaning making, and describing how people interpret what they experience. Second, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research. Third, the process is inductive, allowing the researcher to gather data to build a concept or theory. Fourth, qualitative research develops a richly descriptive product, using words and pictures rather than numbers to convey what the researcher learned.[93]

This study employed a comparative case study, a mixed-methods approach that utilizes both quantitative and qualitative research. Merriam describes this approach as one in which "the quantitative data are collected first and the collection of qualitative data follows, generally with the purpose of explaining the results or a particular part of the findings in more depth."[94] Quantitative data were collected by use of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) at the beginning and close of the one-year case study. Qualitative data gathering was also achieved through semi-structured interviews after the completion of the one-year case study and closing IDI assessment. This qualitative method facilitated the discovery of more comprehensive and descriptive data from participant perspectives in the narrow phenomena of building cultural intelligence in leaders. In addition, this method sought to further the stated executive goals of the participating organization to become a multicultural church. Participants in the cross-cultural groups agreed to read and discuss the biographical account of a majority culture pastor who shared his failed attempts toward the same goal and the eventual cross-

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[93] Merriam citation.

[94] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 47.

cultural understanding that enabled him to realize his goal of building a thriving multicultural church.

The comparative case study method allowed collecting and analyzing data from multiple cases – those in cross-cultural groups who grew in CQ® and those who regressed. "By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases , we can understand a single-case finding, grounding it by specifying how and where and, if possible, why it carries on as it does."[95] All of the participants shared the same institutional structure, specific curriculum, and assigned discipleship practices for one year in order to grow in CQ®. Because the variables involved in the data analysis were more focused, the case study provided avenues for enhanced exploration of the intricacies of cross-cultural issues and CQ® growth. The case study analysis work provided a fuller understanding of the single context as an additional advantage. Thus, the case study enabled the researcher to gain a more complete emic perspective of those participating in cross-cultural discipleship groups and the comparative dynamics that affected their growth or regression.[96]

Participant Sample Selection

This research required participants who were able to communicate in depth about their cross-cultural experiences and growth in CQ® from August 2020 – August 2021. Participants consisted of a selection of people from the population of a Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) church and included a purposeful study sample of 14 majority

[95] Merriam, 41.

[96] Merriam, 40.

culture elders, their majority culture wives, and a total of 25 minority culture individuals both single and married who participated in the CQ® discipleship initiative for the year.

Out of all those participating in the CQ® discipleship initiative, research participants were purposefully chosen for variation in ethnicity and church leadership status. This variation provided a criterion-based selection of diversity and cultural intelligence for the study.[97] The interviewer also chose participants who had explicitly demonstrated interest in growing in cultural intelligence and who reported having grown or regressed in CQ® by at least 7 points, to gain rich data towards best practices. The researcher sent an introductory email to gauge interest in the study.

The study was conducted through personal interviews with eight participants who demonstrated a significant improvement of 7 or more points and eight participants who demonstrated significant regression of 7 or more points, on their IDI developmental orientation score. Participants were purposefully chosen to provide variation in growth from moderate improvement (7 points) to significant improvement (15 points) and to provide variation in the amount of regression from moderate (7 points) to significant (15 points) to gain a spectrum of experiences towards best practices. They also varied in age and consistency in small group and large group participation, which provided a spectrum of age and variation for the study.

They were invited to participate via an introductory letter, followed by a personal phone call. All expressed interest and gave written informed consent to participate. In addition, each participant signed a "Research Participant Consent Form" to respect and to protect the human rights of the participants. This form is included below. The Human

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[97] Merriam, 97.

Rights risk Level Assessment for this research is “no risk” according to the Seminary IRB guidelines.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I agree to participate in the research which is being conducted by Vanessa K. Hawkins to investigate *Building Cultural Intelligence in an Age of Incivility* for the Doctor of Ministry degree program at Covenant Theological Seminary. I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that they can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, and/or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1) The purpose of the research is to investigate how to help leaders build cultural intelligence (CQ®) particularly in polarizing climates.
2) Potential benefits of the research may include facilitating understanding between church leadership and members; discovering best practices for discipling leaders and members across cultural difference; individual growth in cross-cultural understanding and strategy for improvement. Though there are no direct benefits for participants, I hope they will be encouraged by the experience of sharing their experiences with an eager listener and learner.
3) The research process will include 17 members of a of a 1-year cross-cultural discipleship group from August 2020 to August 2021. The participants are those who demonstrated significant change in IDI results over a year of polarization in the broader culture during the time of focus. Data will be collected through recorded interviews and compiled for the sake of understanding trends and best discipleship practices for developing CQ®. *(Describe briefly how many participants are involved and what your dissertation research process involves, including audio recording interviews)*
4) Participants in this research agree to a 90-minute interview where they answer questions about their experience of participating in the 1-year, cross-cultural discipleship group, their motivations, challenges, and barriers. will *(describe what you are asking them to do, and time required)*
5) Potential discomforts or stresses: Admittedly, being interviewed on such a sensitive topic and reflecting on such a polarized time has the potential to be an uncomfortable exercise, particularly if the interviewer and interviewee are of different ethnic heritages. It is the intention and commitment of the interviewer to remain a researcher and learner which necessitates withholding judgment and criticism and being intentional about creating a space that fosters reflection and learning.
6) Potential risks: (Write *"Minimal" with the relevant descriptions using the relevant "Human Rights Risk Level Assessment" document descriptions in the Notebook.)* Participants are asked to reveal personal information regarding individual viewpoints, background, experiences, behaviors, attitudes, or beliefs. People are selected to participate based upon particularly unique characteristics of participating in a 1-year, cross-cultural discipleship group and demonstrating significant IDI result changes over a year of notable polarization in the broader culture. Topics or questions raised may be emotionally and culturally sensitive. Participants are required to reflect upon their own behavior, values, relationships, or person in such a way that one might be

influenced or affected, and/or anxiety or concern might be raised regarding the subject matter of the inquiry.

7) Any information that I provide will be held in strict confidence. At no time will my name be reported along with my responses. The data gathered for this research is confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. Audiotapes or videotapes of interviews will be erased following the completion of the dissertation. By my signature, I am giving informed consent for the use of my responses in this research project.
8) Limits of Privacy: I understand that, by law, the researcher cannot keep information confidential if it involves abuse of a child or vulnerable adult or plans for a person to harm themselves or to hurt someone else.
9) The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the study.

_____

Printed Name and Signature of Researcher Date

_____

Printed Name and Signature of Participant Date

Sign both copies of this form. Keep one. Return the other to the researcher. Thankyou.

Research at Covenant Theological Seminary which involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to: Director, Doctor of Ministry; Covenant Theological Seminary; 12330 Conway Road; St. Louis, MO 63141; Phone (314) 434-4044.

Data Collection

This study utilized semi-structured interviews for primary data gathering. The open-ended nature of interview questions facilitated the ability to build upon participant responses to complex issues in order to explore them more thoroughly.[98] These methods enabled the researcher to look for common themes, patterns, concerns, and contrasting views across the variation of participants.

The researcher performed a pilot test of the interview protocol to evaluate the questions for clarity and usefulness in eliciting relevant data. Initial interview protocol categories were derived from the literature but evolved around the explanations and descriptions that emerged from doing constant comparison work during the interviewing process. Coding and categorizing the data while continuing the process of interviewing also allowed for the emergence of new sources of data[99].

The researcher interviewed eight elders for. To accommodate participant schedules; the researcher sent a scheduling link allowing the interviewees a range of options for meeting times. The researcher audiotaped the interviews with a digital recorder. By conducting two interviews a week, the researcher completed the data gathering over the course of four weeks. Directly after each interview, the researcher wrote field notes with descriptive and reflective observations on the interview time.

The interview protocol contained the following questions:

1. What were your expectations at the start of the Cross-Cultural Family Group (CCFG) meetings?

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[98] Merriam, 90.

[99] Merriam, 180–81.

2. How consistent were you with discussing the material? With regular meetings?
3. How did your conversations with your CCFG change over the course of the year?
4. How do you think the conversation would have differed if you were not an elder?
5. How did events in the broader culture (insurrection at the Capitol, ATL spa shootings, murder of George Floyd, election of Kamala Harris) affect conversation in your CCFG?
6. How would describe your interest in CCFG in August 2021?
7. How often would you say you prayed for your CCFG personally? As a group?
8. Who initiated meeting with your CCFG most often?
9. What were some helpful lessons you learned in your CCFG?

Data Analysis

As soon as possible, and always within one week of each meeting, the interviews were transcribed by professional transcribers. The researcher personally revised, clarified and evaluated the resultant transcriptions for accuracy to the recorded data. This study utilized the constant comparison method of routinely analyzing the data throughout the interview process, which provided for ongoing revision, clarification, and evaluation of the resultant data categories.[100]

[100] Merriam, 90.

When the interviews and observation notes were fully transcribed into computer files, they were color coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The analysis focused on discovering and identifying common themes, patterns, concerns, and contrasting views across the variation of participants as well as congruence or discrepancy between the different groups of participants.

Researcher Position

One limitation in qualitative research studies is the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator. Merriam notes, "The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis."[101] Given this important aspect, some challenge the trustworthiness of a qualitative research, raising questions of the validity and reliability of the instrument since researchers bring their own biases, assumptions, and worldviews into their analyses. To address this concern and enhance the internal validity of research, Merriam suggests that the researcher's "assumptions, experiences, worldview, and theoretical orientation" should be clarified on the outset of the study."[102]

As an African American woman serving as a ministry leader in a predominantly white, male-led institution, the researcher brings both conscious and unconscious cultural and gender biases to how she sees and engages in cross-cultural relationships. The researcher acknowledges a known bias in her desire to see church leaders grow in their motivation, awareness, and follow-through in cultural intelligence i.e., their ability to bridge longstanding cultural chasms in the PCA and the church at large.

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[101] Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*.

[102] Merriam.

Motivated by the belief that healthy cross-cultural intelligence fosters understanding across cultures that facilitates loving one's neighbors well, the researcher posits that growing in cross-cultural intelligence is growing in our capacity to love all people and live out the unity to which Christ calls the church.

Study Limitations

As stated in the previous section, participants interviewed for this study were limited to those serving in a local PCA church in a predominantly white, affluent context. Some of the study's findings may be generalized to similar churches in a PCA context and a one-year period of extraordinary cultural upheaval. The results of this study may also have implications for churches less ethnically homogenous. Readers who desire to generalize some of the particular aspects of these conclusions in their church or institution should test and compare IDI results considering their current context and how it may affect test results. As with all qualitative studies, readers bear the responsibility of determining what can be appropriately applied to their context.

The primary objective of this study was to understand CQ® growth patterns which called for extensive examination of interview data collected from the ten participants who demonstrated significant growth. Because understanding obstacles to growth gives insight to what hinders growth, the six participants who demonstrated significant CQ® regression were also interviewed. Due to time limitations, regression data was examined for key indicators and not examined as extensively as growth data.

Cross-Cultural Family Groups
Participation Agreement

Cross-Cultural Family Groups exist to provide grace-filled spaces for members of this PCA Church congregation to do the work of loving our neighbors as ourselves (Mat 22:37-40) through education and intentional relationship building. Participants can help maintain and cultivate spaces for cross-cultural development by agreeing to the following:

1. **Prayer** - Because the change we are seeking is Spirit-dependent, a commitment to pray for both our family group and our own personal growth is foundational to this work. (Eph. 6:18)

2. **Listening** - Listening well will aid us as we seek to see through one another's eyes. To that end we will seek to understand more than we seek to be understood. This means working to not react immediately in offense but instead asking clarifying questions and seeking greater understanding. (James 1:19)

3. Giving gentle answers - We commit to always speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) to preserve the integrity of these spaces. Speaking the truth in love means that we will use our words to create space for others to speak by not judging, criticizing, or invalidating their comments. These grace-filled spaces are to allow room for missteps without penalty for the purpose of growth.

4. Disagreeing well - Disagreement is not to be shunned but welcomed as it produces opportunity for each person to see another vantage point. Disagreements tempered with gentleness, truth, and grace, provide the opportunity for us to see each other more fully and love each other more deeply as we move towards each other empowered by the Spirit of the Lord. (Gal 5:22-23)

Statement of Understanding
I understand that I am committing to participate in my assigned family group for **1 full year** and will be asked to complete the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) at the beginning and end of the 1-year period. I agree to being accountable to both my family group and the MAT for honoring my commitment to this work which includes sharing my IDI assessment results with my family group and the MAT. Information discussed in family groups and with the MAT is strictly confidential.

IDI Results:
My Perceived Orientation (PO) score is: _____
My Developmental Orientation (DO) score is: _____
My opportunity for growth or Orientation Gap (OG) is: _____

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this study was to understand how church members discipleship practices aid the growth of CQ® particularly in polarizing conditions. This chapter provides the findings of 16 case study participants and reports on common themes and relevant insights pertaining to the research questions. In order to address the purpose of this study, the following research questions guided the mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) research.

1. How did participants grow in CQ® during the year?
2. How did power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
3. What discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
4. What barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® during the year?

Introductions to Participants and Context

The researcher selected 30 persons to participate in a cohort designed to promote cross-cultural understanding over a one-year period, August 2020 – August 2021. Participants agreed to submit to an IDI at the beginning and the end of the year to show change in CQ® over the one-year period. Twenty-eight of those persons were 14 white pastors and elders and their wives. The remaining 23 of those persons were 10 minority (multicultural) couples and 3 minority (black or bi-racial) single persons. The majority culture pastors and elders agreed to partner with minority culture laity for a cross-cultural study and relationship intensive. Participants agreed to meet with their cross-cultural

family group (CCFG) biweekly and to meet together bi-monthly with all participating groups. Thirty of the participants completed the one-year commitment. Of those 30 participants, 10 showed significant growth (7 or more points) in CQ®, and 6 showed significant regression (7 or more points) in CQ®. Those 17 persons – the 10 who improved and 6 of the 7 who regressed – are the focus of this case study (See Figures 3 and 4 for participant completion stats). The 10 persons who improved include 5 black males, 3 white males and 2 white females. The 6 who regressed include 2 white females, 2 black/bi-racial females, 1 black male and 1 white male.

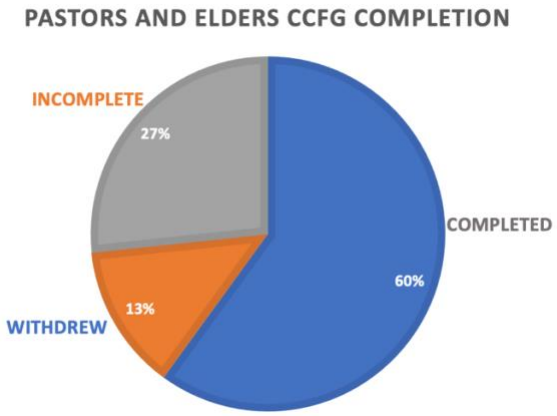

Figure 3

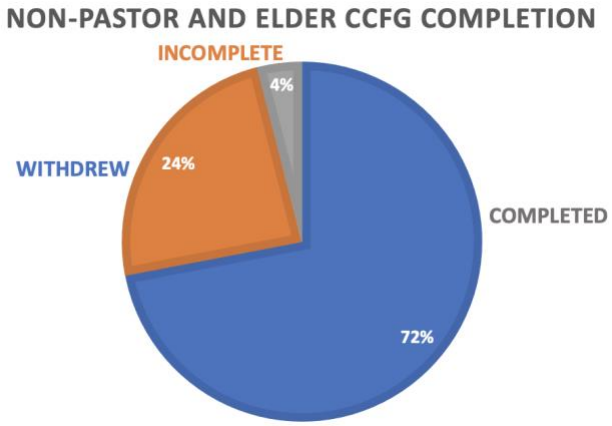

Figure 4

Growth Factors for CQ®

The first research question sought to determine what growth factors aided participants' growth in CQ® August 2020 – August 2021. The four growth factors explored here are: 1. Knowledge, 2. Interpretive, 3. Perseverance (Motivation) and 4. Behavioral.

Knowledge and Motivation

The three participants who demonstrated the greatest CQ® growth, an increase of 18 – 33 points on the IDI from August 2020 August 2021, also demonstrated high motivation to persevere in cross-cultural understanding in the following ways: having gospel motivation for pursuing growth; being a minority or in close relationship with a minority family member (spouse or child); sustained optimism and hopefulness for ethnic and racial harmony; and persistence for overcoming obstacles.

Those top three IDI performers demonstrated a high commitment to learning in the area of cultural identity in the following ways: completing assigned reading materials; pursuing other resources outside of Cross-Cultural Family Groups; continuing to pursue study after the conclusion of Cross-Cultural Family Groups and being teachable/humble learners.

The four participants whose IDI® scores increased by 12-16 points have varied growth factors for CQ® growth. One participant had both high, sustained motivation for cross-cultural understanding and high commitment to knowledge. Two of the four participants demonstrated high motivation through their cross-cultural marriages. The remaining two have meaningful, cross-cultural mentoring relationships that speak to their

motivation for continued growth with one having a moderate commitment to knowledge and the other a low commitment.

Two of the three remaining IDI participants who improved their scores by 8 – 11 points, demonstrated a high commitment to knowledge and a moderate to high motivation to persevere in their pursuit of cross-cultural understanding. The third participant demonstrated moderate motivation for continued growth.

Figures 1 and 2 show completion stats which contrast the difference in motivation or perseverance of majority culture leaders and multi-cultural couples and singles who are laypersons. Majority culture pastors and elders show a 60% completion rate while 72% minority culture couples and singles completed the commitment. Incompletion rates show participants who completed the program and failed to complete their final IDI. Multiple requests to complete the final IDI were sent to each participant designated as incomplete with no response. Withdrawal rates account for participants who withdrew from the groups due to illness, relocation, or other major life changes.

Three participants served as missionaries abroad for 2 years or more. Others participated in short-term missions trips. Long term missionaries demonstrated high motivation for growing in cross-cultural understanding expressed in their ability to clearly articulate their gospel motivation; their optimism/hopefulness for ethnic and racial harmony and their persistence in overcoming obstacles. Overall, their pursuit of knowledge, however, was only fair to moderate – reading the required materials but being less teachable/humble learners. Missionaries – both long and short term, were often

surprised at how little their extensive experience in other cultural spaces translated to cross-cultural understanding as measured by the IDI.

Interpretive and Behavioral

Participants expressed various ways they grew in self-awareness and their ability to anticipate cross-cultural interactions and how to kindly and respectfully navigate them. Betty Martin discussed frustrating conversations in her small group where her conversation partner consistently had a viewpoint grossly different from her own. She began anticipating her own frustration with his comments and made advanced decisions about what parts of his argument she could respectfully engage and what parts she needed to absorb and just listen.

Will Mathers had deep shame around acts of racism he witnessed growing up with his parents. After finally feeling comfortable enough with his group members to share a shameful act of racism his parents perpetrated against one of his classmates, he was met with grace and care without judgment. Will says this about that experience, "I can't remember what they said, but I can remember them not making me feel ashamed." Through his group's care he was finally able to discuss a situation he had regretted for years without feeling shame. He began recognizing that much of his motivation for growing in CQ® had been driven by shame and the need to distance himself from his parents' acts.

Through observation and reflection, Harold Martin gained a perspective that caused him to be more gracious in engaging majority culture persons in his church family. He says this concerning his observation: "There are people, families who don't have to engage other cultures. It is quite possible for them to go from infancy to

adulthood and never truly have to engage other cultures because they can remain in private school, go to a private college, and come back home to a private practice and start that over again in their neighborhood. I was more understanding of those that had certain views after I realized they never had to engage other cultures. Their ignorance was something that wasn't willful." Harold's newfound understanding gave him greater patience in engaging those whose cultural context had been far different from his.

Larry Sears has long believed that the greatest cultural disadvantage is poverty and not race. Growing up as a white male in government subsidized housing in D. C. while being exposed to a broad demographic of cultures solidified this way of thinking for him. He ascribed to the school of thought that black excellence is what's needed to overcome systemic racism. Over the course of meeting with his cross-cultural family group, Larry had cause to reflect on his childhood and consider some of his African American male friends with which he had grown up. He was surprised to look them up and find that their paths had led them to low paying, dignified yet menial work. Larry remarks, "Growing up where I did, I felt like I was just like everybody else, but it's a lot easier for a white person. I've had to realize that the pathway to black excellence is much more narrow than I previously understood." Ongoing conversations in and outside of Larry's group challenged his cultural assumptions and experiences.

Summary of Growth Factors for CQ®

Participants have demonstrated varied improvement over all growth factors for CQ® including growing in knowledge of cross-cultural understanding through reading and regular conversations. Few brought with them knowledge shaped by culturally diverse upbringing while most had limited cross-cultural exposure until adulthood. All

participants demonstrated some degree of perseverance/motivation in completing the one-year group commitment. Others had high degrees of motivation to grow in CQ® based on cross-cultural family dynamics or being minorities. Majority culture leaders demonstrated less perseverance and motivation for growing in CQ®. Participants perspective changes evidenced the continued development of self-awareness as they became more aware of their own emotion and made advanced decision and strategy for engaging cross-culturally in productive ways.

Power Dynamics

The second research question sought to understand how power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® from August 2020 to August 2021.

Perceived Use of Power by IDI Status

The case study participants who grew in CQ® expressed their perceived power dynamics by grading their church on a scale from 0 to 4 (with 0 being poor and 4 being excellent) on the following power and authority dynamics:

1. How well the church uses its power to serve the marginalized.
2. How welcoming of an environment the church is for diverse ethnic groups.
3. How well the church values the wisdom of women.
4. How well the church helps women thrive in their gifts.
5. How well the church creates belonging for minorities.

When asked how well the church uses its power in these areas, the responses of participants who grew in CQ® demonstrates they perceive the church as using its power to serve the marginalized, to be welcoming to diverse ethnic groups, to listen to women

and to empower women to thrive in their gifts slightly more than half the time. Their responses also show they perceive the church to use its power to create belonging for minorities less than half the time. The responses of participants who regressed in CQ® demonstrate they perceive the church as using its power to serve the marginalized, to be welcoming to diverse ethnic groups, to listen to women and to empower women to thrive in their gifts about a third of the time. Their responses also show they perceive the church to use its power to create belonging for minorities less than a quarter of the time – half as well as the CQ® growth group suggests (See Figure 5).

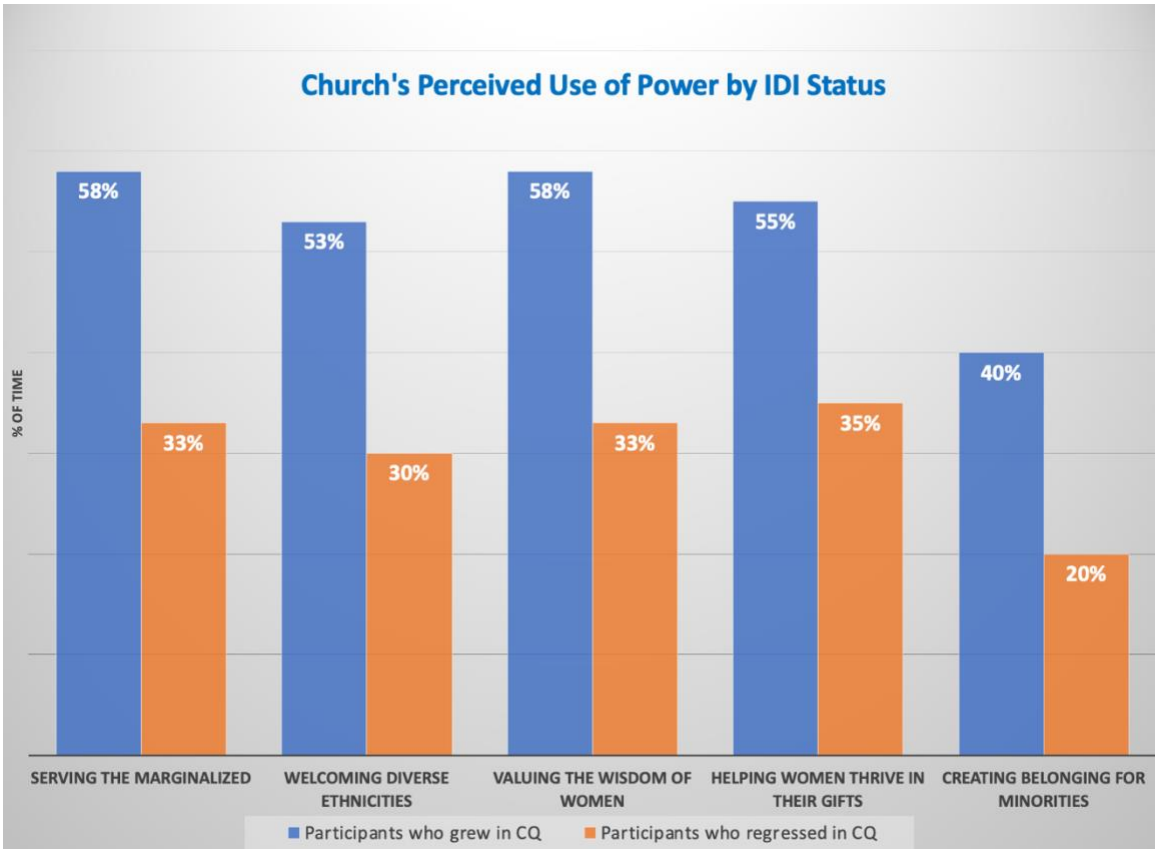

Figure 5

When asked how well the church uses its power to serve the marginalized, Patricia Johnson, a white female, stated that the church rarely does this well. Patricia is a part of the group who demonstrated significant regression in CQ®. She states specifically concerning the church not using its power well to serve the marginalized, "We're not just talking about the African American community. I'm talking about widows, singles, the Asian American community, divorced. I mean, you name the margin. The PCA is white family oriented with children. The margins are outside of that. We're not good at margins – terrible at margins!" Patricia concluded that the church and their denomination as a whole routinely misses the opportunity to serve those in various categories of marginalization.

Larry Sears, a white male who demonstrated a significant increase in CQ®, expresses how he views the church's support of those in the margins: "Our church doesn't do it well, but they do try to facilitate other people doing it." Larry expresses that the support the church offers to the marginalized is typically financial.

Perceived Use of Power by Gender

Men perceived the church's use of power as more frequent than women perceived in all categories but one – "helping women thrive in their gifts". Women perceived the church's use of power in this area as slightly more frequent than men view it. With that exception, men consistently see the church's use of power more favorably than women see it (See Figure 6).

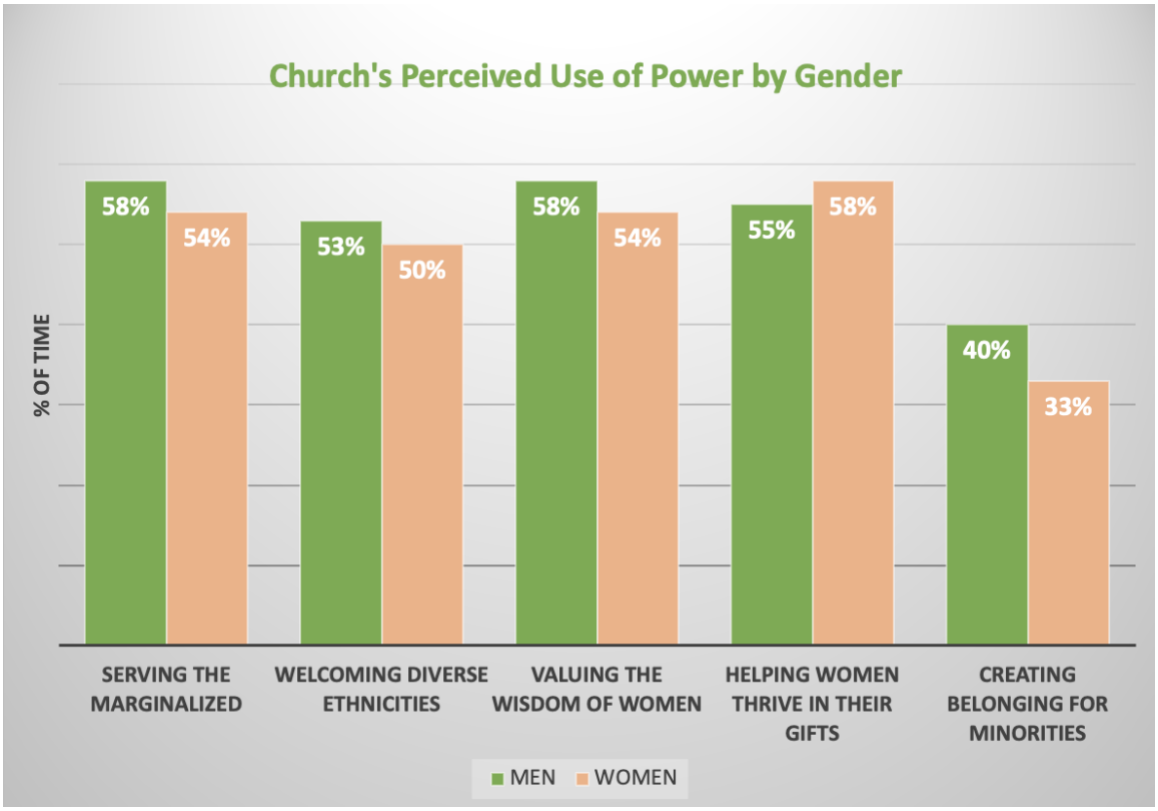

Figure 6

Wanda Anderson describes her church as sometimes helping women thrive in their gifts but being constrained by denominational principles: "I think there are certain things that women do at the church and with women's ministry that I guess are confined by the denomination. Women aren't teaching Sunday School. I would say they do what the denomination says they can do." Wanda described the space for women thriving in gifts as being restrictive.

Harold Martin expresses how he perceives the church helping women thrive in their gifts: "We have a women's ministry that has given our women the avenue to thrive in their gifts. Outside of that, I think it's very hard. Women trying to participate in something outside of women's ministry find roadblocks to using their gifts to the fullest."

Harold affirms that while there are certainly places for women to flourish, there remain "roadblocks" to women using their gifts in the church at large.

Perceived Use of Power by Leadership Status

Consistently elders and pastors view the church's use of power to serve the marginalized, to welcome diverse ethnicities, in valuing the wisdom of women and in helping women thrive in their gifts as occurring more frequently than those who are non-elders and non-pastors. Both groups – pastors and elders and non-pastors and non-elders perceive the use of power to create belonging as occurring with the same infrequency (See Figure 7).

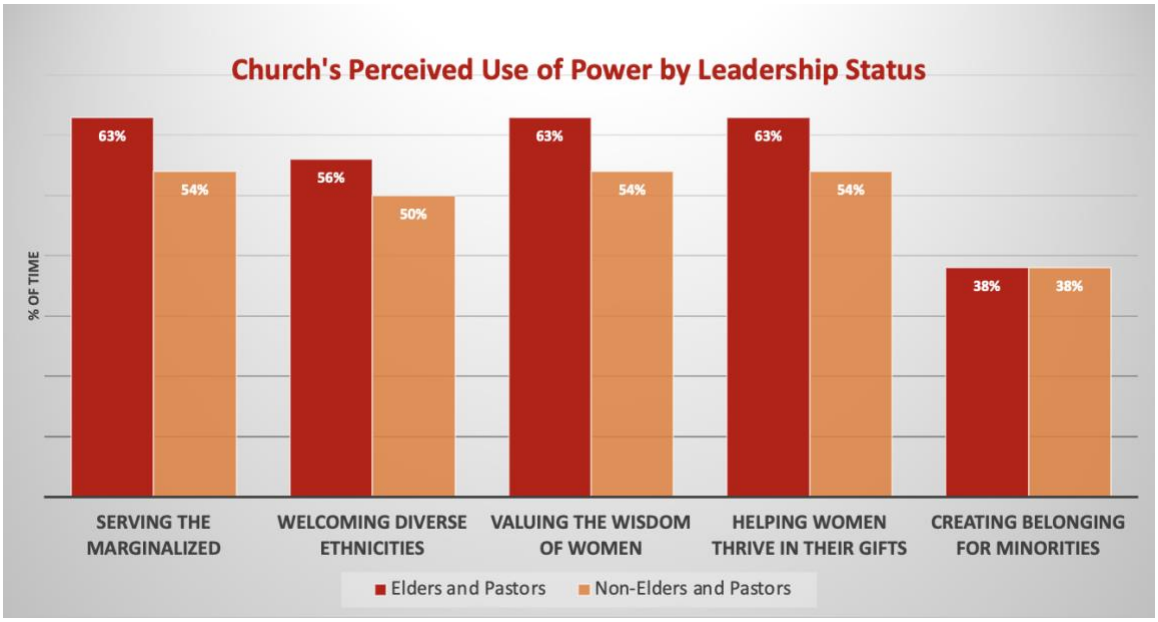

Figure 7

Ron Michaels, a layperson, explains why he thinks the church might struggle to be welcoming to diverse ethnic groups: "It's tough because I think, going back to tradition, this is just the tradition of a 200- year-old church. I think the sacrifices that we

need to make it more welcoming might be too much for us." Ron doubts that his church may ever be a place where other ethnic groups feel welcome. Vince Brown, an elder, says that the people he's talked to seem to feel welcome, so he concludes that the church is usually a welcoming place for other ethnic groups.

Perceived Use of Power by Culture

The largest gap in perception among minority and majority culture participants is in how they view the church valuing the wisdom of women and helping them thrive in their gifts. In both categories, majority culture participants saw the church's use of power toward women as much more favorable than minority culture participants did. Minorities saw the church as serving the marginalized more regularly than majority culture participants did, and both groups perceived the church's welcoming of diverse ethnicities similarly. Majority culture participants believe that the church does a better job serving the minorities than the minority participants experience. Of those who stated that the church is rarely a great place for minorities to be, some of the concerns included African American males and females either leaving or taking on unhealthy habits in order to remain at the church: "We've had several African American women come through. There were at least more than six, and I've watched just about all of them leave. I've seen brothers who have stayed and start to become unhealthy." Robert Mitchell, a minority culture male, expressed his frustration with the church rarely being a place where minorities find belonging.

Larry Sears, a majority culture elder explained why he believes his church is rarely a great place for minorities: "If you as a minority want to adopt our culture, it is a great place for you to be. If you subscribe to our cultural identity, it can be a great place.

If you don't, we're probably not going to change for you." According to Larry, the only way for minority persons to find belonging in his church context is for them to assimilate to majority culture preferences.

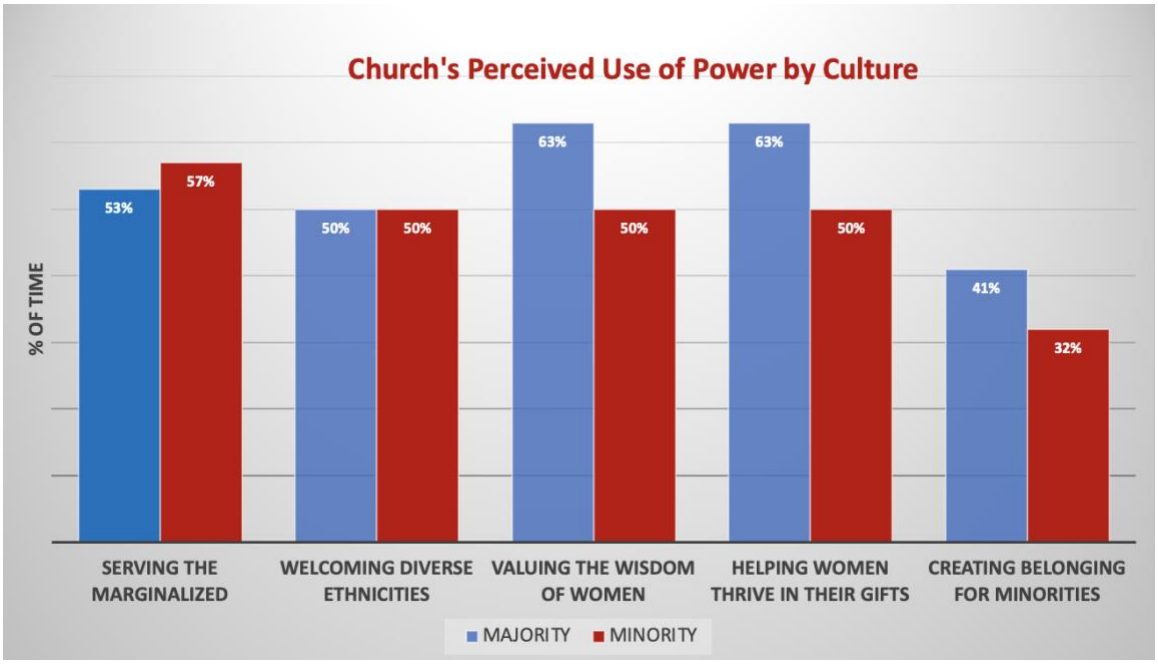

Figure 8

Summary of Power Dynamics

The greatest power distance (difference in perception of power) is between those who grew in their cultural awareness and those who regressed in their cultural awareness as measured by the IDI. In each category, creating belonging for minorities is perceived to be least often the way the church uses its power. Perceptions of the church's use of power by gender is remarkably similar between genders while pastors and elders view the use of power in support of women more favorably than non-pastors and non-elders perceive the church's use of it. Majority and minority cultures demonstrate a larger gap in their perceptions of

valuing the wisdom of women and helping them thrive in their gifts. Majority culture participants believe the church uses its power in support of women more frequently than minority culture participants recognize.

Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

The third research question explored what discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® from August 2020 – August 2021. During this year, participants were asked to read Daniel Hill's *White Awake* and to discuss one chapter per month. White Awake is an autobiographical account of Daniel Hill's failed attempts as a white pastor, to start a multicultural church. He offers stages of learning he experienced in finally reaching his goal of forming a multicultural church. The church where the case study was conducted had an executive goal of creating a multicultural church but has experienced minimal success in their pursuit much like Hill's earlier accounts. The hope was to offer talking points for exploring parallel experiences through a gospel lens in grace-filled, cross-cultural community.

Initial IDI Assessments

Each case study participant sat for the IDI in August 2020 to assess their intercultural competence. IDI placed participants along a continuum of monocultural to intercultural mindsets within the following categories: Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance and Adaptation (See Figure 9).

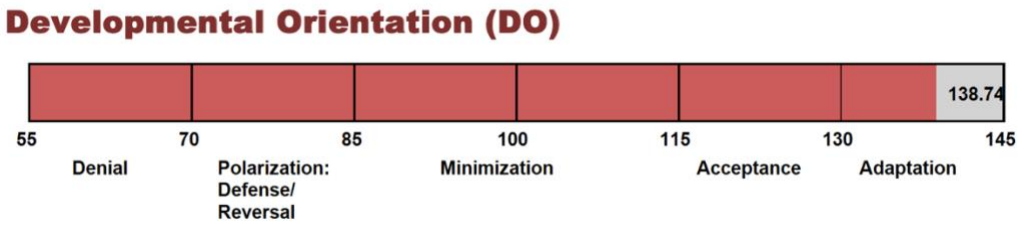

Figure 9

Participants Who Grew

Seven of the 10 people who grew from 2020-2021 started out in minimization and perceived themselves to be 24-35% more interculturally competent than they actually were. Two of the 6 scored in acceptance and perceived themselves to be 10-12% more interculturally competent. One participant started out in polarization perceiving himself to be 55% more interculturally competent than he actually was.

Participants Who Regressed

Five of the 6 people who regressed from 2020-2021started out in minimization and perceived themselves to be 22-29% more interculturally competent than they actually were. One of the 6 scored in acceptance and perceived herself to be 13% more interculturally competent.

Reading Material

Ninety percent of the participants read the assigned book. Ten percent of the group strongly disagreed with the book's content but still read it.

Vince Brown, a white male elder commented concerning the reading material: "My perception is that he's way off in left field. They may be speaking to an audience that needs to hear what they're saying. I didn't think it applied to me." Vince's perception represents a 10-point regression in IDI and a move from a minimization mindset to a polarization mindset.

Harold Martin, an African American male describes his concern and appreciation for *White Awake*: "I had read the book prior to this process. I had concerns because it is slanted toward the minority view. Experience tells me that could create a level of discomfort with majority participants that might stifle conversation and transparency. …great foundational launch points to talk about cultural experiences…" Harold exhibited tremendous growth in intercultural competence, increasing his score by over 30 points and moving from a minimization mindset to an acceptance mindset.

Brenda Johnson, a white female, had read and enjoyed the book before being asked to read it for the case study. She pointed to the chapters on disorientation and awakening as being particularly helpful in her earlier reading but admitted that reading the book again in the cultural climate of August 2020 – August 2021 was difficult: "I really had some difficulty with the book. My educational perspective seemed to be more open before the rioting. What was happening in our culture was divisive, and it made the reading harder for me to absorb and understand." The pulling back that Brenda described showed up as a 15-point regression on the IDI landing her on the border of the polarization mindset.

Attendance

Attendance was inconsistent across bi-weekly small groups particularly during the height of the pandemic when meetings were relegated to videoconferencing. Large group attendance among those who showed significant growth in cross-cultural competencies was an average of 80%. Those who showed significant regression attended an average of 71% of the large group meetings. Attendees agreed to feeling less safety in the larger groups but consistently being encouraged by the stories shared and their small group table discussions during large group sessions.

Participant View of the Process

When the participants were asked if they thought of the Cross-Cultural Family Groups as a head or heart exercise, they overwhelmingly considered it a heart exercise. Sixty-seven percent of those who grew in intercultural competence saw it as a heart exercise while 11% saw it as a learning opportunity only. Twenty percent of those who grew saw the cohort as holistic discipleship ultimately intended for transformation.

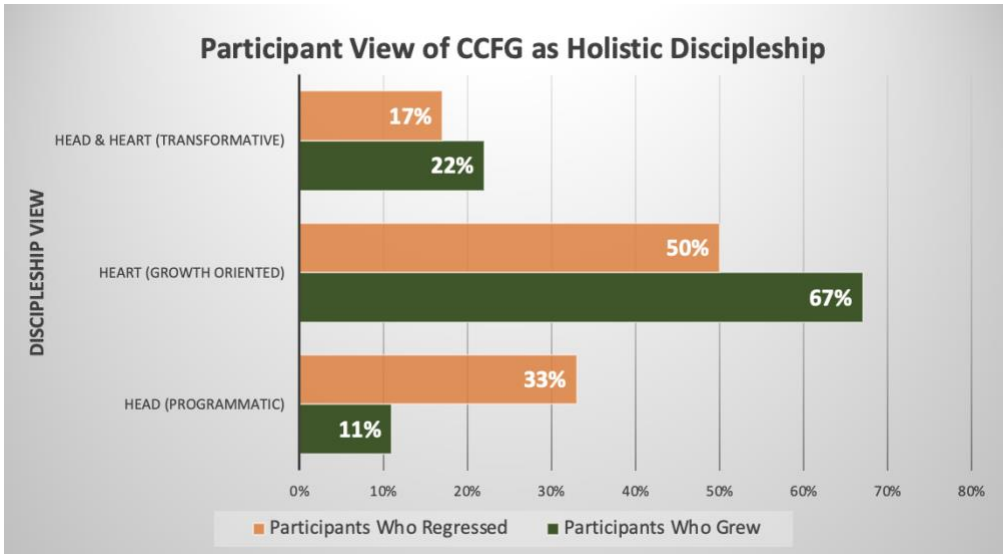

Figure 10

Half of those who regressed viewed the groups as a heart exercise while 33% believed it was for educational purposes only. About 17% of those who regressed saw the process as holistic discipleship, an opportunity for transformed hearts and renewed minds.

Content versus Community

Most groups sought regular meetings to grow in friendship but some of those focused just on community and avoided discussing the book. Others discussed the book and stayed on a very superficial level where no conflict happened, or ideas were challenged. A small percent of the groups experienced regular, healthy conflict that exposed differences in experiences and conviction.

The Role of Prayer

Prayer was programmatic and not consistently used for orienting the group to the presence of God or seeking heart change. A few participants, primarily minorities and spouses of minorities, mentioned praying regularly for the cultural upheaval and safety for them and their loved ones. Prayer was typically used as a part of the open and closing rhythm of the groups. When asked about the role of prayer in their groups, many admitted that they missed the opportunity to incorporate prayer in a meaningful way.

Gospel Motivation for Group Participation

Several participants cited the Great Commandment as the theology behind their motivation for intercultural competence growth. Others referenced God's purposes in

image-bearing or Revelation 7:9 “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the lamb…”. Motivations in general, began with a desire to see the local church “reflect the complexion of heaven”, a Francis Schaeffer phrase often quoted by their former pastor.

Renewed Minds and Transformed Hearts

Those who demonstrated significant growth in intercultural competence were asked what lessons they learned and to what did they attribute their growth. Responses include the following:

“There’s enjoyment in other people’s cultural differences. I’ve been able to see more of God’s goodness in that and seeing people in more dignifying ways.” JD

“Where the change and the transformation comes is in seeing Jesus and seeing change. It really happens when you stick in it with people who see it like you do and people who don’t see it like you do – just staying in the relationship…” WC

“There was one point where my eyes just weren’t open to seeing other people’s perspectives…but just [learning] the importance of seeing other people’s perspectives, hearing them out and learning how to carry yourself better in conversations and not get so offended…” JA

"I think it's encouraging to show that if you put people together in a cross-cultural context and encourage them to learn, that you will learn. It's not some innate thing. Its' something you have to be purposeful to learn." LS

Summary of Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

Holistic discipleship includes both growing in the ways of Christ and in genuine community. Intentional communities are a context that aids the disciple's growth in the knowledge and likeness of God and in deep relationship with people. Small groups will often default to growing in the way of Christ or in deep community. Healthy, intentional communities learn to do both. Discipleship means being a humble learner who is other-centered, taking attendance seriously and being responsible for Christ being formed in other members in the group. Prayer can easily become a rote part of small group routine while it should be regarded as the necessary power that moves mere efforts of amassing knowledge and friends to transformative communities that deepen love for God and neighbor.

Obstacles to CQ® Growth

The final research question sought to determine what barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® from August 2020 – August 2021. Among the many challenges that participants faced was a world-wide, Covid-19 pandemic that complicated every aspect of life including gatherings. Many meetings necessarily occurred on Zoom or some other videoconferencing platform to accommodate fluctuating health and social distancing protocols. Getting to know new group members on Zoom to discuss sensitive

topics was less than ideal. Other general obstacles included busy schedules, early bedtimes for small children, lack of energy and different rates of growth within groups.

Cultural Upheaval

Various events in the broader culture contributed to the unrest and polarization in the United States between August 2020 and August 2021 including: the Derek Chauvin conviction and the trial leading up to it; the 2020 presidential election season; the Atlanta spa shootings; and the January 6 insurrection on the State Capitol in Washington, D.C. Participants expressed a variety of polarizing views around those events.

WC comments about watching the Derek Chauvin trial: "There was just this tension in my heart… We know this is an event, but it felt like a representation of something larger. It just felt so weighty… I've never felt so much adrenaline as a bystander." Why is my heart beating fast like I'm the one on trial?" WC described his anxious, stress-filled response to waiting for the Chauvin verdict.

When asked about the Derek Chauvin trial, WD expressed his views on George Floyd's death suggesting his death was his own fault: "I have many good friends who are police officers…They see wrong on both sides, but they think perhaps the people involved in the marches, in the looting, and burning and all that was an overreaction to what happened." WD clearly disagreed with the Chauvin conviction.

"The thing in Washington, D.C.? It shouldn't have happened. I don't trust what I hear in the mainstream media. They're saying, 'Well, that was Trump's supporters. They were mad because their boy lost the election,' and I'm not sure I buy that." He finally

concluded that Joe Biden was not legitimately elected president and that he will no longer watch mainstream news affiliates.

Each of these incidents complicated communication within the groups and exposed polarizing views that were accompanied by deep emotion. Some participants took advantage of talking points offered by the Multicultural Advancement Team (MAT) to facilitate their small group discussions on these topics. Others chose to entrench further into their polarized thinking and found comfort in others sharing their view.

Perceived Pastoral Disinterest

The inconsistency of pastoral presence was an obstacle repeatedly cited by participants. Many expressed discouragement that pastors were not more involved particularly after fully committing to the one-year initiative. On average, pastors attended around half of the large group meetings. All pastors but one assessed as having a minimization mindset and on average perceived their intercultural competence to be 31% higher than it actually was. One pastor assessed as having an acceptance mindset and perceived his intercultural competence to be 10% higher than it actually was. When participants were asked about how important they perceived growing in cross-cultural understanding to be to their pastors, they commented in the following ways:

"My discouragement was that our pastors were not as involved as we wanted them to be. They decided it wasn't important. It didn't rise to the level of importance that they would carve out time for it." Larry Sears

"I continued to see people not participate and then toward the end to see people opt-out, just a little disheartening. To me, it reflected the commitment of the church to the

program. I didn't want to have that level of insight into the leadership of our church walking away from that type of conversation. I felt like that would happen and that is precisely what happened." Harold Martin

"Participation from our leadership dropped off which was disappointing. I remember several times when WC (African American male) was there (participating in the large group gatherings) but without N and T (a pastor and his wife). If I had been paired up with a leader who couldn't attend the larger group meetings, I would feel slighted by that." Patricia Johnson

The inconsistent pastoral attendance was disheartening to many – male and female, black and white alike. Participants perceived the pastors' poor attendance as not honoring their commitment and the lack of genuine interest and commitment to building a multicultural church. Their perceived disinterest perpetuated a growing narrative of distrust among minorities and frustration among diversity-minded, majority culture persons.

Racial Trauma

A few participants had stories of significant racial trauma that surfaced during a lament service at their church during the period of the case study. Ron Michaels expressed the importance of having loving community to aid him after being re-traumatized by violence towards African American males in the broader culture, particularly toward George Floyd: "If I hadn't participated in the Cross-Cultural Family Groups, I don't know if I'd still be at [this church]. I was so hurt, and I was so wounded. I

didn't realize the racial trauma that I had." Ron grew in close relationship with his group and have remained connected since the conclusion of CCFG.

Wanda Anderson had childhood, racial trauma that was triggered by the racial upheaval in 2020-2021. She recounts memories of growing up during the riots in Detroit when she was nine years old. She says this about the trauma of that event: "It doesn't really go anywhere and then you have to deal with it, but it's there. It remains. I'm not thinking about the riots when I was 9, but after the incident happened with Ahmaud Arbery, I felt that a riot was coming. My body for whatever reason remembers what it felt like before the riot. Wanda started at an intercultural competence level of acceptance and regressed to minimization during the case study.

Racial History of the Church

The church's long and sordid history of racial impropriety hinders forward movement in the area of racial harmony. From its southern big steeple architecture to its use as a civil war hospital, relics of its past bear present witness to beliefs it has held dear. One such relic is an ornate chair from General Assemblies gone by where rulings upholding segregated practices were made. Becoming a multicultural church is the stated goal that continues to elude this body of believers. To the contrary, the sparce minority presence that pre-dated pandemic times has further dwindled. Five minority males who started the cohort are no longer with the church. Past racial realities continue to infect the church's mostly monocultural present.

Summary of Obstacles to CQ® Growth

Obstacles to CQ® growth proved to be many between August 2020 to August 2021. Among the most pervasive and challenging was a world-wide pandemic that complicated rhythms and routines with fluctuating social distancing protocols. While some rhythms slowed, others picked up pace, complicating schedules in new and challenging ways. Full schedules made coordinating bi-weekly small group meetings and bi-monthly large group meetings a hefty challenge for many. Lackluster pastoral attendance and participation in their Cross-Cultural Groups proved to be deflating and discouraging to other participants and particularly to minorities with which they partnered. Discussions brought past racial trauma to the fore while the church's racial past proved to be an ever-present reality in the pursuit of forward movement in racial harmony.

Summary of Findings

This chapter examined the growth factors, power dynamics, discipleship and spiritual formation practices and obstacles involved in building CQ® in case study group participants between August 2020 and August 2021.

While all participants demonstrated some degree of perseverance in completing the one-year commitment, participants who were minorities or had cross-cultural dynamics in their own families were the most motivated to grow.

In considering the church's use of power to serve the marginalized, to welcome diverse ethnic groups, in valuing the wisdom of women, in helping women thrive in their gifts and in creating belonging for minorities, the greatest difference in the perception of how the church uses its power is between those who grew in intercultural competence

and those who regressed in intercultural competence. Creating belonging for minorities was most consistently perceived to least often be the way the church uses its power.

Intentional communities are essential in aiding disciples' growth in knowledge and likeness of God and in deep and meaningful relationship with his people. Growing in intercultural competence is to follow in the ways of Christ in his command to love God and neighbor. Discipleship communities can tend to teach the way of Christ or to deep community but must be intentional about incorporating both dynamics to form healthy disciples who love God and neighbor.

The Covid-19 global pandemic and its fluctuating social distancing protocols was a significant obstacle in community building and intercultural competence growth. Coordinating busy schedules made consistent and frequent meetings difficult. Low pastoral investment brought discouragement to many while others wrestled with past racial trauma and the lingering present effect of church systems tainted by a racist past.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to understand how to build intercultural competence in church leaders particularly in polarizing conditions. The review of literature in chapter two provided insight into key areas for affecting CQ® growth in intentional discipleship communities. The following research questions guided the research:

1. How did participants grow in CQ® during the year?
2. How did power dynamics affect participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
3. What discipleship practices affected participants' growth in CQ® during the year?
4. What barriers hindered participants' ability to grow in CQ® during the year?

Summary of the Study and Findings

This study reviewed relevant literature in three areas – 1) cultural intelligence, 2) power dynamics and 3) discipleship and spiritual formation and analyzed interview data from 10 church members who experienced significant growth in intercultural competence and 6 church members who experienced significant regression in intercultural competence from August 2020 to August 2021.

The literature review showed that the driving impetus for growth in the area of intercultural competence for some was the need to keep pace with the fast-changing global landscape and the resulting need for interaction with persons from other cultures. For others, the motivation was behavioral modification to overcome growing societal

polarization. Livermore posits a more substantial and holistic incentive. The respectful bridging of chasms of cultural difference is modeled in the incarnation of Christ and fuels the disciple's motivation for a holistic CQ® framework that is Spirit-enabled transformation.

The IDI, the Intercultural Development Inventory, offered an objective assessment of intercultural competence offering testers awareness of their perceived and actual levels of competence. It is necessary to understand complex power dynamics to bridge the chasm of cultural difference. Power was given for the purpose of bearing God's character in the world, and everyone has power that can be used or withheld for good or evil. Power's perversion and use for self-interest is a product of the fall. Failing to acknowledge the reality of unequal use of power in ourselves and our organizations can prevent functioning responsibly and redemptively.

Those with more power tend to be less aware of their power while those with less power aware often most aware of the power dynamic in any given context. Leaders who are willing to be humble learners can find greater understanding of power dynamics by seeking out those with less power. This requires leaders to resist leveraging one of their greatest powers – the ability to walk away and not acknowledge power differences - particularly in intercultural conversations. This also requires boldness in those with less power and the willingness to use their voice to call attention to misuse of power. The common view needed by both those with more and less power is a biblical framework for power that addresses the inherent goodness of power, its purpose in bearing God's image in the world and its potential to produce flourishing for all people.

Since CQ® is rooted in love for God and neighbor with the goal of Spirit-enabled transformation, it becomes necessary to consider the ability to respectfully reach across cultural difference as part of a gospel framework. Holistic growth and transformation come through intentional discipleship communities that seek to embody the ways of Christ and to deepen in community with others.

The interviews revealed that the four growth factors for CQ® – knowledge, interpretive, perseverance and behavioral, existed in varying amounts and combinations for all participants who demonstrated significant growth. The interviews also revealed significant power dynamics among church leadership and church laity that both demonstrated and affected participants' motivation for growing in CQ®. Participants worked to develop CQ® programmatically and struggled to view the work of CQ® building as discipleship. About half of them saw the initiative as heart work and only a small percentage of them saw the work as transformational head and heart work. Few thought of prayer as having an essential role in their meeting times and while most of their relationships deepened and grew, those who were conflict averse avoided difficult conversations and showed limited CQ® growth.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, the literature and interview research are compared in order to identify how specific growth factors impacted cultural intelligence; to consider power dynamics at play in church leaders and laity; and to examine discipleship practices and spiritual formation in case study participants.

Cultural Intelligence

The four factors for CQ® growth – knowledge, interpretive, perseverance and behavioral – were demonstrated in varied amounts and combinations in each participant who grew in CQ®. Variations in how growth happened established that there is no specific formula for growth rather individualized growth is composed of some subset of these factors.

An interesting trend was that the lower the intercultural competence demonstrated, the higher the self-perception of being interculturally competent. One hundred percent of those tested thought their intercultural competence was higher than it actually was. This highlighted the need for a humble, teachable spirit in the pursuit of intercultural competence since a sober, objective view of our own competence seems rare.

Growth in knowledge was common for those who remained culturally curious, consistently pursuing resources to expand their intercultural competence outside of the assigned resources for the Cross-Cultural Family Groups. Others who demonstrated notable growth in knowledge were not avid readers yet intentionally immersed themselves in cross-cultural situations in their jobs and communities. One example is a white female who was one of few majority culture persons on her job. She was intentional about having regular conversations, food exchanges and other cross-cultural learning opportunities in her place of employment. The common thread with all who showed significant growth in knowledge was they remained culturally curious and differed only in how they engaged in intercultural enrichment.

Those who employed intentionality in learning were more apt to reflect upon their intercultural encounters which positively impacted their interpretive/strategy growth factor. Those who were most contemplative by nature tended to be stronger in making meaning out of interactions, anticipating intercultural interactions and making advanced decisions on how to best function in them. Extroverts in this study seemed more confident and willing to rely on their relational abilities in those interactions but were often not as self-aware as their introverted counterparts. Understanding this propensity might encourage extroverted learners towards greater efforts to be more reflective and anticipatory of intercultural interactions. Introversion alone, however does not predict propensity toward interpretive/strategy growth factor but introverts growing in knowledge and with sustained cultural curiosity tended toward greater interpretive/strategy growth than their extroverted counterparts in this study.

Participants' pursuit of supplemental reading not only demonstrated growth in knowledge but also higher levels of perseverance/motivation, and sustained cultural curiosity over time. Those demonstrating the highest motivation to grow in CQ® were minorities or married to minorities although not all minorities demonstrated high perseverance or motivation. Minorities who expressed low to moderate motivation for the one-year initiative, showed a significant decrease in intercultural competence. Nearly one hundred percent of minorities who demonstrated significant regression were able to point to a racial trauma event or expressed an intense racial identity crisis where they became less open to growing interculturally or expressed hopelessness that improving intercultural dynamics was possible. Participants who were intentional about reflection on intercultural events were best able to anticipate cross-cultural encounters and create

strategy for respectful cross-cultural engagement. They were also more aware of their own anger, frustration and discomfort in various intercultural situations and showed the most growth in and ability to communicate gospel conviction for growing in CQ®.

Motivation for pursuing intercultural understanding for the church in this study was born out of the leadership's desire to address increasingly strained intercultural relations with the minority population of the church. For minorities and spouses of minorities, intercultural strain in the church was a small part of their motivation. Their tearful frustrations over the polarization in the broader culture and widespread aggressions towards black males were undeniable motivators for these families. Minority participants were desperate for discipleship in how to think rightly about all they were encountering.

While all of these motivators were significant, they did not all lend themselves to perseverance through the year-long, intercultural initiative. The motivation to be discipled in the conversation on race and culture as it pertained to the widescale events happening in the broader culture, proved to be a persistent motivator. The absence of discipleship in how to think rightly about cultural upheaval led minority members of the congregation in this study in particular to look for disciplers in written instruction – books, articles, podcasts - and in online services at other places of worship. Some minorities left the church in frustration, feeling uncared for in the silence around the cultural upheaval from their church's pulpit. Others remained at the church continuing to look for discipleship in these discussions from other leaders in the Christian community. The silence around the discussion clearly did not diminish the motivation of minority members to be discipled in a conversation that had great import for how they were to

interact with both their world and their church. Their desire to be shepherded while suffering perpetual injury and frustration arising from unavoidable encounters with the culture and the need to be discipled by trusted spiritual leaders was deep and persistent.

Leaders who began with higher levels of intercultural competence showed a higher motivation and perseverance in the initiative than leaders beginning with lower levels of intercultural competence. The church leadership's motivation was strong in earlier days of the one-year initiative evidenced by high attendance at large group discussions and hopefulness for improving relations with minority members. Pockets of pushback around study materials from members of the congregation demotivated leaders which was evidenced by the faltering participation of most. Suspicions that the study materials could align with teachings on Critical Race Theory discouraged participation of others. Lackluster attendance in the remaining time in the bi-monthly large group gatherings showed a waning motivation and wavering persistence for intercultural conversations. A small representation of leadership's presence at the concluding meeting coupled with their failure to complete the agreed upon closing IDI assessment suggested a sustained interest in showing good faith toward improving minority relations but an unwillingness to be known in authentic, intercultural community. Based on these findings, the motivation/perseverance as a growth factor was low among leadership. The optics of inconsistent attendance was particularly discouraging to participants in their respective cross-cultural family groups and deepened distrust and suspicion of a lack of commitment to the intercultural growth of the church. These findings affirm that pastoral presence is a significant motivator towards growth in CQ®. Not just the well-intentioned

permission, but persevering presence by pastors and other senior leadership is critical to steering a congregation towards a maturing cultural intelligence.

Growth in behavioral CQ® was expressed in the contemplations and major takeaways that led to profoundly different ways of participants being and interacting in their world. Such change included a male participant coming into a newfound awareness that he had the capacity to not just tolerate other cultures but that he could genuinely enjoy them. Another participant gained a new category of grace towards those who are lifelong members of monocultural communities. He moved from the belief that all bias from monocultural persons was willful ignorance. His participation in a cross-cultural family group debunked that thinking and allowed him to create a more gracious category to embrace those only knowing one culture. A woman with a history of racial trauma came away from the intercultural group experience surprised by her newfound compassion for a violent offender who perpetrated a racist hate crime. She was surprised that her heart allowed her to pity him as he received widespread hatred in the media. Each of these persons expressed a behavioral shift that represented more than behavioral modification but a fundamental shift, a transformation in how they exist in the world.

Power Dynamics

Both Dianne Lang and Soong Chan-Rah express the importance of naming the power dynamics at play in organizations for the sake of using power responsibly and redemptively. Being reminded that power is not a bad word and that its intended use is the flourishing of humanity, should motivate us to pursue good and right use of power in

our spheres of influence and to not remain silent in the face of its misuse. It was interesting to see the inverse relationship between power and motivation to grow in CQ® in the context of this case study. The power to walk away was a demonstrated reality for some church leadership who had lackluster attendance and some who dropped out altogether. The effects were harmful, particularly to relationships with minority members they committed to and to majority culture onlookers concerned about the de-prioritization of cross-cultural engagement and the stated goal of becoming a multicultural church. As Lang stated, those with less power had greater motivation for engagement evidenced in higher attendance and completion rates.

The common agreement among various demographics represented in this study express that the church does not use its power to create belonging for minorities. The church is perceived to do a better job at being open to diversity - seeing a variety of people, and less open to creating space and belonging for the same individuals. The distinction is the gap between merely welcoming an assimilated diversity and a love for neighbor that transcends personal preference as evidenced in respectful inclusion across cultural difference.

The participant agreement addressed the need for mutuality in the intercultural communities by asking groups to alternate meeting between majority culture and minority culture persons' homes. Groups comprised of parents with small children often met where it was convenient for children's bedtimes. With very few exceptions, when meeting in homes, the cross-cultured families primarily met in the majority culture persons' homes. Some participants admitted in hindsight that mutuality in hosting would have likely changed learning outcomes. Others admitted discomfort with having church

leaders in their homes and were grateful for their willingness to host. A majority culture elder who experienced mutuality in alternating hosting with the minority members of his group, reflected on his intercultural childhood and recognized that he had never experienced such mutuality in hosting and being hosted by minority persons. He had always hosted in cross-cultural situations even when there was no discernable socioeconomic difference.

Table fellowship, sharing meals in homes, was a common theme in New Testament fellowship. Jesus' willingness to dine with tax collectors (Luke 19:1-10) and to allow himself to be touched by a sinful woman at a dinner party (Luke 7:36-50) demonstrates both the inclusive nature of table fellowship as well as the lengths Jesus was willing to go to make those who were despised welcomed guests and worthy hosts. The importance of the practice of mutual, intercultural hospitality cannot be minimized in its effects of bringing awareness to power difference, exposing unconscious bias around varied living situations. Unfortunately this was a takeaway that most participants recognized in hindsight.

Discipleship and Spiritual Formation

Unless growing in intercultural competence is understood within a gospel framework, it easily becomes wooden, programmatic and legalistic. Understanding growing CQ® as growing in the way of Christ and his mandate to love God and love neighbor, places this work in the realm of discipleship.

While this was the groundwork given in the beginning, it would have been helpful to repeat this message often especially in the face of various forms of disruption (the

pandemic, cultural upheaval, church dynamics). Hans Bayer identified the 8 marks of Christlikeness: 1) Surrendering; 2) Believing and trusting; 3) Praying; 4) Watching over/guarding your heart; 5) Being humble; 6)Forgiving; 7) Withstanding temptation; and 8) Confessing Christ to all humanity. Continuing to talk about this work in a discipleship framework may have been helpful in encouraging participants to consider certain heart attitudes and practices over the duration of the cohort. In addition, J. T. English's wisdom for guarding against "either/or" discipleship communities but exercising great intentionality around embodying the way of Christ and growing in authentic community would have also been a good focus to keep before participants as some opted for relationship building while negating the assigned intercultural reading and discussions.

The goal of discipleship and spiritual formation is to grow in knowledge of, likeness to and relationship with Christ and in deep community with others. The reading material for this study, *White Awake*, was chosen to raise issues that hinder loving one another across ethnic and cultural lines and to provide the opportunity to apply biblical truth to such issues while learning to respectfully move towards one another. Initial reactions to the material were varied. Most minority members rightly discerned that the book was not written with them as the author's primary audience but wrongly assumed mastery of what was being taught and that they were to be teachers instead of mutual learners. Many majority culture participants struggled to get past the offense of the book and found ways to dismiss it's content categorizing it as Critical Race Theory, not biblical or too offensive. The bi-monthly large group discussions provided accountability and often re-energized discussions that were stalling in the small groups, modeling safe and winsome intercultural engagement. In the end, some opted to ignore the book and

just focus on getting to know each other. They built safe, shallow community evidenced by their lack of connection after the groups concluded.

Even when there was an unwillingness to discuss the book, the welcome that was extended consistently in most groups was the willingness to create space to hear others' stories. Groups that welcomed storytelling often started very superficially but many concluded with much deeper sharing than they first thought possible. They expressed clear growth in their knowledge of one another and willingness to share more deeply. Some participants suggested that they needed to grow in relationship before feeling comfortable tackling issues of racial difference. While that is a reasonable approach, it was not a fruitful one for this focus group. Those who delayed having the difficult conversations at the beginning of the cohort year generally avoided the conversations and focused on fellowship that celebrated the groups' similarities and avoided their cultural differences. In doing so, participants affirmed their IDI classification of minimization, often characterized by hyperfocus on similarities to the neglect of difference.

Recommendations for Practice

In light of the findings described above the church is well advised to:

1. **Get buy-in**

- Cast vision for building Cultural Intelligence within the gospel framework of discipleship.
- Understand leadership's level of commitment to the process. If a cohort-level initiative is not possible, understand what steps they are willing to take and

faithfully execute at a level they can support. Leadership's faithful participation is a significant motivator to corporate CQ® growth and should not be discounted.

- Set right expectations with potential participants for the time commitment and the discomfort necessary for growth.

2. **Understand the dynamics**

- Employ an objective tool such as IDI to measure intercultural competencies in participants. Participants'actions in this study affirmed their assessed intercultural competence. Understanding those competencies helps guard against the expectations that participants will act in ways not aligned with their assessed competence. They usually don't.
- Seek basic understanding of organizational power dynamics from published materials by Andy Crouch, Dianne Langberg, or Soong Chan-Rah, to name a few. The power dynamics that played out in this study acted according to predictable, parallel dynamics described in these author's writings.

3. **Focus on the solution – gospel-driven transformation**

- While it is essential to have a basic understanding of the dynamics at play in order to make meaning out of the system you are assessing, a hyperfocus on those dynamics can be immensely frustrating, deflating and the enemy of hopefulness.
- Seeking to understand holistic discipleship and the power of the gospel to renew minds and transform hearts is the focus that is most apt to bear good fruit. Understanding behaviors helps us understand how to frame the issues, but lasting

transformational change is best wrought through holistic discipleship – growth in the way of Christ and deep, authentic community with people. As discipleship is for the whole of life, consider regular assessments to measure ongoing growth or regression in intercultural competence.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on building CQ® in church members particularly in polarizing conditions. As with any study, there are limitations as to how extensive the research can be. Given what my findings suggest, it could be highly valuable for those seeking to better understand church culture and how to encourage communicating respectfully across cultural difference to focus next steps of research in the following areas of study: 1) Discipleship practices of pastors of multicultural churches; 2) Church trends post pandemic; and 3) Intercultural competence regression studies.

Discipleship practices of pastors of multicultural churches

For the purpose of this study, the practices of a largely homogenous church population were considered. The same study conducted in a more multicultural environment with leaders of those spaces would likely yield data that would deepen our understanding of cross-cultural competence growth dynamics in churches and broader culture. This could especially prove true in contexts where leadership already displays some diversity and where there is discernible and visible buy-in.

Church trends post pandemic

A constant dynamic throughout the length of this study was pandemic conditions that complicated travel, attendance, childcare, in-person conversations and served as a general stressor and obstacle throughout the period of time considered. A similar study conducted outside of pandemic conditions and the unique cultural strain of broader society in the cultural moment considered would further aid our understanding of cross-cultural competence.

Cross-cultural competence regression studies

There seems to be less work available in this field of study which suggests that more case studies would be helpful in further identifying behavioral practices associated with intercultural competence regression as well discipleship practices that address needed areas of growth in its subjects. Where studies from other institutions and workplaces (e.g. networks of Primary Care Practices and Educational settings) have demonstrated an association between cultural competence and basic behavioral practices such as fostering teamwork and a climate of culturally competent care, equivalent studies do not yet exist for churches. At the same time, beginning with wider workplace studies and with what aids in establishing and growing cross-cultural competence, could shed much needed light on absent basic practices leading to regression. (As one example: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6345619/)

Appendix

Summary Orientation Descriptions

Denial An orientation that recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food), but may not notice deeper cultural difference (e.g., conflict resolution styles) and may avoid or withdraw from such differences.

Polarization A judgmental orientation that recognizes more observable cultural difference in terms of "us" and "them". This ranges from (1) a more uncritical view toward one's own cultural values and practices coupled with an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices (Defense) to (2) an overly critical orientation toward one's own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices (Reversal).

Minimization An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.

Acceptance An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one's own and other cultures.

Adaptation An orientation that can shift cultural perspective and change behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.

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