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Pursuing a Holy Discomfort

Developing Cultural Intelligence as an Aspect of Discipleship

By
Cindy Hylton

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

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore how local church discipleship leaders develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship. The church does not often intentionally address the cultural difficulties of obeying the command to love one's neighbor or prioritize the unity of the church the way Jesus does. The divisions within the church reflect the rising polarity of American society along cultural and political lines rather than a beautiful contrasting vision to it that brings glory to God.

This study utilized a qualitative design using semi-structured interviews with nine discipleship leaders who intentionally incorporated cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship in their local monocultural church. The interviews focused on gaining data with four research questions: what motivates these leaders to incorporate cultural intelligence in discipleship, what challenges do they face doing it, what methods do they use, and what benefits do they find for the individual, church, and community.

The literature review focused on three key areas for incorporating cultural intelligence into discipleship: a biblical framework for cultural diversity within the church, business best practices for developing cultural intelligence, and the experience of multiethnic churches.

Growing in cultural intelligence is a process that requires people to interact with cultural difference to the point of dissonance. People resist this discomfort by retreating. Leaders play key roles by reiterating the rich gospel motivations for perseverance in the difficulties, helping people process their own emotions and resistance, and calling them to the goals of engagement with others with compassion and respect. This outward flow of inward change is the Spirit's work in the life of the disciple.

To my third culture daughters
Rachel, Emily, Abby, and Elizabeth

And especially to Joel
Ever. Always.

Contents

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And from the depths of my heart, I am grateful to my husband Joel. For all the things.

Abbreviations

CQ	Cultural Intelligence
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ESL	English as a Second Language
PCA	Presbyterian Church in America

Chapter One

Introduction

The commandment to love God and love one's neighbor as oneself is an elegant and powerful summary of the entire law; however, its power to reflect the glory of God in the church is weakened to the extent that the church fails to embody its far-reaching call to a radical unity that crosses all ethnic divides. Three of the gospels record that Jesus affirmed the priority of loving God and loving one's neighbor.[1] Paul says the whole law is summed up in a single command, "Love your neighbor as yourself."[2] In so commanding, the Lord God brings two groups of people into an unlikely fellowship. According to biblical scholar Graham Stanton, Paul and his co-workers inaugurate a tectonic cultural shift as Jewish Christians decide to accept Gentiles as equals in the church. "For this there was no precedent in Judaism."[3] With the inclusion of the Gentiles with the Jews, God sets forth a new society with an ethic of multiethnic unity that will reflect his plan for the fullness of time, when all of creation is united under Christ.[4] Through this unity, the church would also reflect the reality of Jesus and the unity of the Trinity as it joined in God's mission to gather the nations to himself.[5] Thus, from its

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[1] Matthew 22:36-40, Mark 12:29-31, Luke 11:26-28.

[2] Galatians 5:14.

[3] Graham Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus*, 2nd ed, Oxford Bible Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 298.

[4] John R. W. Stott, *God's New Society: The Message of Ephesians*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1979), 41.

[5] John:20-26, Revelation 7:9-10

inception, the church was multicultural and countercultural.[6] Yet, despite the simplicity of the command to love one's neighbor and the importance of being unified, the church often falls short of a new society and does not acknowledge or even intentionally address the cultural difficulties required in obeying it.[7]

At the same time, the 2021 cultural moment highlights the need for the American church to intentionally develop the cross-cultural skills needed to fulfill its calling. According to the PPRI 2020 Census of American Religion, seven out of ten Americans identify as Christian, and of those seven, four identify as part of the majority white culture, with the other three identifying as people of color.[8] Additionally, according to a 2020 National Bureau of Economic Research working paper, the United States experienced a more rapid growth of political polarity in the past forty years than any of the other eleven countries involved in the study.[9] PRRI observes that according to their findings, "The most substantial cultural and political divides are between white Christians and Christians of color."[10] With Christians on both sides of the rising polarity, God's commands to love one another are urgently pressing them to address these growing divides using better cultural understanding and skill.

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[6] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1978), 10.

[7] Michael Burns, *All Things to All People The Power of Cultural Humility* (Spring, TX: Illumination Publishers, 2019), 10; Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2010), 11–12.

[8] "The 2020 Census of American Religion," PRRI, July 8, 2021, https://www.prri.org/research/2020-census-of-american-religion/.

[9] Levi Boxell, Matthew Gentzkow, and Jesse M. Shapiro, "Cross-Country Trends in Affective Polarization," Working Paper, Working Paper Series (National Bureau of Economic Research, January 2020), https://doi.org/10.3386/w26669.

[10] "The 2020 Census of American Religion."

Cultural intelligence researcher David Livermore describes Americans as ineffective in dealing with cross-cultural situations. “Unfortunately, there is little difference between the cross-cultural sensitivity of American Christians and that of Americans in general.” Livermore acknowledges the challenge of embodying the love of Jesus as “a messy, complicated process” and working across cultures often brings conflict and division.[11] Despite the difficulty, Jesus expects his followers to love each other and display unity, and effective discipleship must equip them with cultural intelligence to engage people of different backgrounds with love and respect.

Understanding One’s Own Culture

Culture is essential. When God gave Adam and Eve the creation mandate to fill the earth and subdue it, they began a long-term, multigenerational task.[12] This marks the beginning of human social and cultural life, structures needed to accomplish this responsibility. Theologian Al Wolters states that “human history and the unfolding of human culture are integral to creation and its development, that they are not outside God’s plans for the cosmos, despite the sinful aberrations, but rather were built in from the beginning.”[13] When human culture and society develop in ways directed toward God’s laws and norms, they reflect his goodness and live toward their creational design.

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[11] David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*, Youth, Family, and Culture Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 34.

[12] Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2005), 24–25.

[13] Wolters, 25.

When human culture and society develop in ways directed away from God's laws and norms, they reflect human rebellion against God.[14]

Culture impacts every aspect of human life: practices, thinking, and values.[15] Further, culture is complex because cultures and subcultures overlap. Countries and regions have cultures, as do people groups, ethnicities, and tribes. Organizations, neighborhoods, churches, and even families have their own subcultures.[16] Yet, people live and work oblivious to culture's impact on them. The power culture wields is subconscious and thus unexamined.[17] This denial becomes problematic because just as humans bear the image of God and the effects of the Fall, goodness and sin mark human cultures, and without careful examination, destructive words and actions run rampant.

Culture is also specific. People communicate and live out the gospel within the context of a specific culture. Jesus was born into a particular place, time, and culture. He experienced life as a first century Jewish man. Pastor Russ Whitfield says, "Jesus Christ embodied his Jewish culture in a way that did not demean other ethnicities, but rather, dignified them."[18] Effective communication of the gospel necessitates contextualization to a time and culture, using its best parts for presenting and demonstrating the Christian message. Evangelist Sam Chan explains, "We have a timeless story from God, which is

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[14] Wolters, 31.

[15] Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 90.

[16] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 61.

[17] Irwyn L. Ince, *The Beautiful Community: Unity, Diversity, and the Church at Its Best* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 126.

[18] Russ Whitfield, "Preaching: To the Preacher, to the Choir, and to the Empty Seat," in *All Are Welcome: Toward a Multi-Everything Church*, ed. Leon M. Brown (Oklahoma City, OK: White Blackbird Books, 2018), 98.

true for all peoples of all cultures and in all places. But at the same time, it has to be told by a person who is in a time, culture, and place."[19] A humble understanding of one's own culture enables a believer to persuasively present the gospel to hearers in that setting.

Jesus lived within his culture, but he was unafraid to challenge it.[20] Since culture displays sin the same as individuals do, the church must stand against the sinful aspects of culture. Missiologist Michael Goheen laments that the church in the West is far more comfortable dwelling within secular culture than challenging it. He reasons that the Western church has accepted the cultural story over and above the comprehensive nature of the biblical story.[21] In so doing, the church has relinquished its gospel voice to the culture so that the culture goes uncontested and unliberated from its worst aspects.

Professor of Higher Education at Azusa Pacific University Alexander Jun adds another aspect of the problem. "Often leaders believe their churches are purely founded upon Christ. However, our respective cultures, mindsets, and practices are much more influential than we might realize."[22] Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, associate dean for diversity and inclusion at Calvin University, concurs, writing, "…the cultures in which we are raised and in which we live have a huge impact on how we see the world, what we

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[19] Sam Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 18.

[20] See Matthew 5:21-48 and 21:12, Luke 10:29-37, John 4:1-43

[21] Michael W. Goheen, *The Church and Its Vocation: Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 166.

[22] Alexander Jun, "Multivocality in the Church: Striving for More Harmonious and Diverse Faith Communities," in *All Are Welcome: Toward a Multi-Everything Church*, ed. Leon M. Brown (Oklahoma City, OK: White Blackbird Books, 2018), 65.

think of as normal or logical or even right."[23] Goheen expresses the point more specifically. "Our understanding of the gospel will be shaped by the cultures that have formed us. The only way we can be shaken out of these culturally conditioned interpretations of the gospel is through the correcting witness of other believers who have read the Bible within the context of other cultures."[24]

Cultural and historical contexts impact how a person understands scripture.[25] The hidden nature of culture means that people carry unspoken presuppositions of their own culture into reading and interpreting scripture and are not naturally inclined to think beyond these cultural instincts.[26] All Christians need the voices of culturally different Christians to avoid constraining the gospel to a single context. Otherwise, they risk ignoring or misunderstanding the full scope of God's kingdom priorities and purposes, particularly ones that might clash with their cultural norms. Missiologist Lesslie Newbigin warns that a narrow gospel can become a false gospel. "A preaching of the gospel that calls men and women to accept Jesus as Savior but does not make it clear that discipleship means commitment to a vision of society radically different from that which controls our public life today must be condemned as false."[27] The dominating nature of

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[23] Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them: Interpersonal Cultural Intelligence for Community Building* (Grand Rapids, MI: The Calvin Press, 2019), 26.

[24] Goheen, *The Church and Its Vocation*, 162.

[25] E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), 12.

[26] Richards and O'Brien, 15.

[27] Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture*, WCC Mission Series, no. 6 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 132.

culture may entice the church to that constricted or misapplied gospel message unless other voices offer a broader understanding.[28]

Social psychologist Christena Cleveland finds that people can easily confuse religion and culture because they both unify and organize groups over time.[29] Dykstra-Pruim and her colleague David Smith also note, "Christians in cultures that are currently powerful are especially tempted to equate their culture with being Christian, perhaps equating Christian identity with white or middle class or American or European identity."[30] The normative for the majority white culture in the U.S. often becomes the lens through which the church interprets the Bible or sets biblical priorities. According to theological scholar Anthony B. Bradley, "The charge against Anglo theologians is that they determine what the polemical issues are for everyone without acknowledging the possibility of a different perspective on what those polemical issues would, in fact include."[31] Without an understanding of its cultural blinders, the church risks ignoring or distorting what the kingdom of God values. Ince emphasizes, "…the new normal of the multiethnic church in the New Testament moves the center of focus to Jesus Christ, and finding our identity in him helps avoid cultural idolatry."[32] Still, the natural feel of one's culture makes detecting cultural blind spots and cultural idols close to impossible.

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[28] Richards and O'Brien, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes*, 17.

[29] Christena Cleveland, *Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces That Keep Us Apart* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 140.

[30] David Smith and Pennylyn Dykstra-Pruim, *Christians and Cultural Difference*, Calvin Shorts (Grand Rapids, MI: The Calvin College Press, 2016), 26.

[31] Anthony B. Bradley, *Liberating Black Theology: The Bible and the Black Experience in America* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2010), 131.

[32] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 96.

Pastor Daniel Hill asserts, "Because culture plays such a major role in shaping our identity, Christian discipleship requires us to engage deeply with cultural identity as well."[33] Smith and Dykstra-Pruim stress, "But Christ has more claim over us than do our cultural loyalties. We may need to relinquish, resist, and reshape parts of our cultural identity if we are to avoid being conformed 'to the pattern of this world' (Romans 12:2)."[34] Christians must therefore be willing to examine and, where needed, repent of their cultural allegiances and assumptions for the sake of love and unity among fellow believers.

Cleveland observes that a Christian's primary identity is one of belonging to the body of Christ. Thus, she concludes, "We need to adopt the belief that to be a follower of Christ means to put our commitment to the body of Christ above our own identity and self-esteem needs."[35] The common identity found in Christ can motivate Christians to embrace the faith and the fellowship they share with those who are culturally different. Smith and Dykstra-Prim agree:

> In Christ, our identity is shaped so as to make space for others. Christ has embraced them too, from every culture, and has called them into his body, his temple. They too are made in the image of God, are fallen and in need, and are drawn into the new image of God, the body of Christ.[36]

When the church unites around its primary identity as the body of Christ, it allows them to love and welcome each other as Christ has welcomed them.

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[33] Daniel Hill, *White Awake: An Honest Look at What It Means to Be White* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 41.

[34] Smith and Dykstra-Pruim, *Christians and Cultural Difference*, 28.

[35] Cleveland, *Disunity in Christ*, 97–98.

[36] Smith and Dykstra-Pruim, *Christians and Cultural Difference*, 29.

The church's common identity in Christ does not mean that its people must all be the same. Sarah Shin, a trainer in ethnicity and evangelism for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, says cultural idolatry and racial brokenness has torn apart the goodness and beauty of the multiethnic church God intends. "Jesus came to restore us, redeem us, and release us for his kingdom mission, not in *spite* of our ethnicities, but *in* our ethnic identities."[37] Stott agrees that while differences remain in the body of Christ, what is abolished is inequality and disunity within that body.[38] This kind of community is the beauty of what Christ has done for his church.

By better understanding the way cultures shape identity, Dykstra-Pruim says, "We can better navigate situations in which different cultural backgrounds are playing a role…cultural backgrounds or cultural identities almost always play a role." This ability fulfills the church's call to become all things to all people for the sake of the gospel.[39] Shin laments, "The truth is, people don't naturally know how to be friends across cultures. Few of us are taught by our families how to have real friendships in diverse, multiethnic networks. Even our schools teach polite tolerance that never goes deep."[40] Her observation reinforces that for diverse groups to live and worship together, intentional effort toward cultural awareness, understanding, and skills must become normative to fulfill the call to reconciliation and love, far beyond mere tolerance.

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[37] Sarah Shin, *Beyond Colorblind: Redeeming Our Ethnic Journey* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2017), 22.

[38] Stott, *God's New Society*, 102.

[39] 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

[40] Shin, *Beyond Colorblind*, 122.

Understanding the Cultures of Others

Within the American church, impetus for developing cross-cultural skills has been directed toward the service of foreign missions.[41] Cultural intelligence was not pursued when living and working with people within the same culture. Still, the local church makes visible God's mission to reconcile all things, including all cultures, to himself. According to Goheen, "The local congregation is misunderstood if it is not seen to be a local presence of the universal church or the new humankind. It is…where that new humanity is made visible."[42] The local church models the diverse nature of God's kingdom in its specific context. Whitfield adds that diversity is not the aim for its own sake. "Rather the great end of this pursuit is doxology through diversity. Our goal should be to glorify our cross-cultural Savior by cultivating a cross-cultural community that maintains a cross-cultural witness to the grace and glory of God."[43]

Cultural intelligence is important for growing unity in a diverse body of believers, but its importance extends further. Theologian Soong-Chan Rah notes the importance of Christians working toward cultural awareness and understanding for the sake of redemptive work in the world. "Cultural intelligence requires knowledge about our own cultural framework and the immediacy of our cultural environment. But it also requires a willingness to go to another place and to reflect upon your own culture and to see the culture of others from a new angle."[44] He adds, "If we do not take the time to reflect on

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[41] Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 12.

[42] Goheen, *The Church and Its Vocation*, 108.

[43] Whitfield, "Preaching: To the Preacher, to the Choir, and to the Empty Seat," 88.

[44] Rah, *Many Colors*, 84.

each other's history and story, then we are not ready to engage in cross-cultural ministry."[45]

Missional outreach requires the local church to deepen its knowledge of its ethnic and cultural context to reach out within the community.[46] Brenda Salter McNeil, professor of reconciliation studies at Seattle Pacific University, sees cultural intelligence as necessary for effective local evangelism. "To reach people with the gospel today we must take seriously the social, structural, and global realities that they face."[47] Burns also argues for cultural awareness and sensitivity for the sake of ministry, citing Paul's example. "Wherever Paul went, we see he knew the beliefs, philosophies and values of the people he encountered."[48] McNeil points to the ministry of Jesus. "Jesus models a startling kind of evangelism that loves people deeply, crosses religious, ethnic and sociopolitical barriers, builds relationships of mutuality, and calls us all into profound, far-reaching transformation."[49] Newbigin links this kind of ministry specifically to the role of the local church. He describes the church as "a community that does not live for itself but is deeply involved in the concerns of its neighborhood."[50] The most faithful

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[45] Rah, 59.

[46] Mark Lau Branson and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Churches, Cultures, & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 67.

[47] Brenda Salter McNeil, *A Credible Witness: Reflections on Power, Evangelism and Race* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), 21.

[48] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 40.

[49] McNeil, *A Credible Witness*, 18.

[50] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 229.

proclamation of the gospel by any church proves that "good news overflows in good action"[51] for the benefit of its local community.

Conclusion

Smith and Dysktra-Pruim challenge today's church, writing, "To be a Christian is to be called to repentance. Christians are called by God out of every tribe and nation and people and tongue to be conformed to the image of Christ."[52] Despite the pull of cultural loyalties, Christ has a stronger claim over his followers, and identity in Christ must inform and shape a believer's cultural identity.[53] Christians must examine and, where needed, repent of their cultural allegiances and assumptions to foster reconciliation and unity among fellow believers. This repentance is difficult and often uncomfortable, striking at core prejudices and traditions. Navigating the significant cultural divides in society and within the church is no simple task with quick or ready solutions. This demanding work requires openness, understanding, sensitivity, humility, and commitment to Christ and his kingdom.[54] And yet, such repentance means becoming better able to love one's neighbor as oneself, welcoming each other as Christ does, and in so doing, displaying a unity that reflects the glory of God.

Overlooking cultural challenges as a part of discipleship costs the church in several ways, as the literature demonstrates. For individuals, the risk is the inability to understand and identify the cultural forces at play in their own lives, making them

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[51] Newbigin, 229.

[52] Smith and Dykstra-Pruim, *Christians and Cultural Difference*, 27.

[53] Smith and Dykstra-Pruim, 28.

[54] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 149.

vulnerable to cultural identities rather than their identity in Christ. Churches may not understand the influence of culture on their understanding of the gospel, prioritizing cultural values over those of the kingdom of God. This can lead to the failure to display God's new humanity and to testify to the grace and glory of God through its beautiful diverse unity. Lack of including culture in discipleship can render local outreach unproductive and evangelism unfruitful.

Problem Statement

The church does not often acknowledge or intentionally address the cultural difficulties in obeying the greatest commandments, loving God and loving neighbor, or prioritize unity in the church the way Jesus does. The divisions within the church reflect the rising polarity of American society along cultural and political lines, rather than revealing a beautiful, contrasting vision to it that testifies to the reality of Jesus and brings glory to God. Current church efforts are inadequate to overcome the many obstacles currently dividing believers. This failure leaves members caught in their own cultural blind spots, unaware of cultural idolatries. They may also value their cultural persuasions more highly than their identity in Christ, contributing to the divisiveness within the church. Lack of cultural intelligence also makes believers ineffective ministers of the gospel in a diverse and divided society. To overcome these barriers, the church can intentionally disciple its members to address the cultural challenges they face.

Purpose Statement

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of

discipleship. This study will help the researcher discover what motivates these leaders to address cultural intelligence in discipleship, what challenges they face of their efforts, what methods they use, and what benefits they find to doing so.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the qualitative research:

1. What motivates discipleship leaders to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
2. What challenges do discipleship leaders navigate to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
3. What methods do discipleship leaders use to develop cultural intelligence as part of discipleship?
4. What benefits do discipleship leaders observe in others as a result of developing cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
    a. What benefits are there for the disciple?
    b. What benefits are there for the local church?
    c. What benefits are there for the local community?

Significance of the Study

This study has significance for any discipleship leaders who have recognized the challenges of culture differences in living out the call of reconciliation and unity in diversity in their context. The findings may offer encouragement and new methods to integrate cultural intelligence into church-based discipleship for greater commitment to ministry and evangelism.

Churches or individuals with tension or confusion within their setting due to cultural diversity may also find significance in this study. They may learn from the motivation of others or through the methods others have employed.

Given the changing nature of racial and ethnic demographics in America, churches with societal changes emerging in their communities can learn to see them as a place to display the beauty of the diverse kingdom of God. This growth may come through more sensitively engaging fellow believers or being more effective witnesses for Jesus across cultural differences.

Definition of Terms

In this study, key terms are defined as follows:

Assimilation — the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. The process of assimilating involves taking on the traits of the dominant culture to the degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of society. Assimilation may be forced or voluntary.[55]

Culture – a system of beliefs, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and are shared by a group of people. It includes custom, language, systems, and material artifacts. It rests on a particular view of the world that reflects what the group understands to be real and true.[56]

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[55] Adapted from Elizabeth Prine Pauls, "Assimilation," Britannica, accessed December 16, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/topic/assimilation-society.

[56] Adapted from Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008).

Cultural intelligence – an individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings and interactions. It goes beyond the ability to acquire and understand general knowledge about cultural norms, practice, and conventions to a cultural consciousness and awareness during diverse interactions. Such people can observe others while processing and evaluating information counter to their own cultural influences and adapt their verbal and nonverbal behavior appropriately for that setting. It also includes a sense of self-efficacy that encourages perseverance amid the ongoing need for learning in complex situations.[57]

Ethnicity – a socially constructed concept that categorizes large groups of people according to common physical, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background.[58]

Monocultural church – a church where more than 80 percent of the congregation is one ethnic or cultural group.

Multiethnic church – a church where more than 20 percent of the congregation is ethnically different from the largest ethnic group.

Race — a socially constructed concept associated with biology and linked with physical characteristics such as skin color or hair texture and without regard to shared culture.[59]

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[57] Adapted from Ang Soon and Linn Van Dyne, *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence : Theory, Measurement, and Applications* (Armonk, NY: Routledge, 2008).

[58] Adapted from Erin Blakemore, "Race and Ethnicity Facts and Information," National Geographic, February 22, 2019, https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/race-ethnicity.

[59] Adapted from Blakemore.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to explore how local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship. It will explore what motivates these leaders to address cultural intelligence in discipleship, what challenges they face in their efforts, what methods they use, and what benefits they find to doing so.

The literature review begins with a biblical framework for cultural diversity within the church, focused largely on Galatians 2:11-14. Then, two areas of literature, cultural intelligence development in the business world and the experience of multiethnic churches, provide a foundation for the qualitative research.

A Biblical Framework for Cultural Diversity

The Antioch episode Paul describes in Galatians 2:11-14 reveals one instance of how the early church dealt with the expansion the gospel beyond Israel. Douglas Moo, a New Testament scholar, calls Antioch "a laboratory for Jewish-Gentile relationships in the early church."[60] According to Acts 11:26, the term 'Christians' was first used in Antioch, where the church welcomed both Jews and Gentiles from its inception.[61] The Antioch episode highlights how cultural behavior, in this case, Peter's table fellowship, impacts gospel expansion. After having engaged in table fellowship with the Gentile

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[60] Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 143.

[61] See Acts 11:19-26.

Christians, he withdrew from that fellowship after a visit from a group of men from the Jerusalem church, where James was a leader. Given that in Acts 10 Peter had a vision from God and personally declared that God shows no partiality among nations and has witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Gentiles, this change in behavior from participation to withdrawal does not go unnoticed.[62]

Commentators and scholars differ in their interpretation of Peter's motivation for withdrawal. New Testament scholar Kang-Yup Na sees a debate among Jews over how to include Gentiles in the covenant community. The incident results from an intra-Jewish disagreement over "proper Jewish behavior and praxis, especially in the context of their contact with Gentiles."[63] New Testament theologian Grant Osborne notes that some Christian Jews, including James and the elders, continue to follow orthodox Jewish food laws.[64] Missionary Arthur A. Just, Jr. notes this as well, adding that they knew this was custom for them, not salvation.[65] However, other Christian Jews held a different opinion. They were what Moo calls "the conservative position" and still did not eat with Gentile believers.[66] Moo notes this position did not define who could be allowed to join the church and then agrees with Na that these conservatives were defining what constitutes

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[62] Acts 10:9-16; 34-35; 44-48

[63] Kang-Yup Na, "The Conversion of Izates and Galatians 2:11-14: The Significance of a Jewish Dispute for the Christian Church," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 27, no. 2 (December 2005): 73.

[64] Grant R. Osborne, *Galatians Verse by Verse*, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017), 28.

[65] Arthur A Just Jr, "The Apostolic Councils of Galatians and Acts: How First-Century Christians Walked Together," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 74, no. 3–4 (July 2010): 265.

[66] Moo, *Galatians*, 147.

appropriate interaction between Jews and Gentiles within the church.[67] Some of this Jewish concern grew from the problem of immorality among Gentiles.[68] Osborne says more conservative Jews were still concerned about Gentile impurity and perhaps thought the table fellowship Peter participated in had gone too far.[69] Theologian Philip Esler believes the Jewish concerns included a fear of inadvertent idolatry through the use of Gentile wine at the Lord's table.[70] While the issue of meat offered to idols could be avoided in a eucharistic meal, wine could not.

New Testament scholar Charles Cousar posits that the context of the Jerusalem church plays a factor. The circumcision party was composed of zealous Jews who hounded the Jerusalem church by "pressuring the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem to refrain from all associations with Gentiles."[71] Osborne links this zealous insistence to earlier history around the period of the Maccabees when an intensifying sense of Jewish nationalism was connected to "a resurgence of interest in ritual purity among pious Jews."[72] Goheen notes that under harsh Roman rule "racial hatred of Gentiles increased in Israel. It spilled over to include hatred of any of those among Jews who would collaborate with Rome, including priests and tax collectors, as well as Roman appointed

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[67] Moo, 147.

[68] Moo, 142.

[69] Osborne, *Galatians Verse by Verse*, 28.

[70] Philip Francis Esler, *Galatians*, New Testament Readings (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), 107–8.

[71] Charles B. Cousar, *Galatians*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 47.

[72] Osborne, *Galatians Verse by Verse*, 28.

king Herod and his cronies."[73] Todd Scacewater, a New Testament scholar, also mentions the persecution by zealous Jews of other Jews who associated with Gentiles. "This was occasioned by the rising sense of Jewish nationalism both inside and outside of Palestine."[74] He believes that Peter may have been motivated by missiological concerns for the outreach of the Jerusalem church to other Jews.[75] Scacewater sums this up, saying, "Whether he feared physical persecution for himself or his Jerusalem brothers, or whether his actions were missiologically motivated, Peter's actions were not in line with the truth of the gospel."[76]

John Stott simply states that fear resulting from peer pressure from fellow Jews motivated Peter to change his behavior, but he did not change his theology or teaching.[77] Missionary R. Alan Cole notes that Peter's fear of the circumcision party was of a degree that he would even break fellowship of the Lord's table with Gentile fellow believers.[78] Cousar agrees with this assessment, adding that whatever concern was strong enough to persuade Peter to change his behavior was also enough to convince Barnabas and other Jewish Christian leaders to follow his example.[79]

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[73] Craig G. Bartholomew and Michael W. Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 128.

[74] Todd A Scacewater, "Galatians 2:11-21 and the Interpretive Context of 'Works of the Law,'" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 56, no. 2 (June 2013): 313.

[75] Scacewater, 314.

[76] Scacewater, 314.

[77] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, The Bible Speaks Today (London: IVP, 1992), 52.

[78] R. A. Cole, *Galatians*, 2nd ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Nottingham, England: IVP Academic, 2008), 117.

[79] Cousar, *Galatians*, 49.

Regardless of the source of Peter's motivation for withdrawing from table fellowship with the Gentiles in Antioch—peer pressure, Jewish sensibilities or concerns, persecution from Jewish nationalists, threat to the mission to the Jews—Paul refused to accept any justification for Peter's actions. According to Galatians 2:14, Paul deemed that they were not in keeping with "the truth of the gospel." Commentators and scholars find three areas where Peter's behavior impacted the gospel mission: theological, ecclesiological, and sociological.

The Theological Implication

According to Stott, Peter and Paul share an understanding of the essential nature of salvation for both Jew and Gentile, one of faith centered on Christ.[80] Moo notes that when Paul made his trip to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus for a discussion with James, John, and Peter,[81] "there was no fundamental difference among Paul and the others over the essence of the gospel."[82] Yet Peter's behavior in Antioch, no longer eating with Gentiles, elicits a public condemnation from Paul in Galatians 2:11.

Is Grace Sufficient?

Moo asserts the group agreed earlier in Jerusalem that the truth of the gospel is "its power to bring Gentiles into relationship with God and to maintain them in that relationship right up through the judgment day," and it is "by God's grace to justify and

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[80] Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 55.

[81] Gal. 2:1-10

[82] Moo, *Galatians*, 118.

vindicate at the last judgment any human being."[83] Cousar believes Peter and Paul's theological perspective is unchanged from the earlier meeting and that the gospel of grace is sufficient without other additions to it; however, Peter and Paul seem to disagree on translating truth into practice.[84] Theologian Philip Ryken states while the incident presents as a social problem of Jews and Gentiles eating together, Paul sees this as "nothing less than a battle for the gospel of free grace."[85] He believes "for Paul the main issue was soteriological, not cultural."[86] Moo agrees that Paul would view Peter as abandoning grace as the foundation of the gospel. "By withdrawing from fellowship with Gentile believers on the basis of the Jewish law, the Jewish believers are demanding that the Gentile believers meet them on their Jewish terms" and take up the law to have fellowship with them again.[87] New Testament theologian James Dunn reaches a similar conclusion on Paul's understanding of the incident at Antioch. "Faith in Christ, and faith alone, was what made a Gentile a Christian. He saw the issue to be of a piece with what had already been agreed in Jerusalem regarding circumcision."[88]

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[83] Moo, 130.

[84] Cousar, *Galatians*, 45.

[85] Philip Graham Ryken, *Galatians*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 43.

[86] Ryken, 43.

[87] Moo, *Galatians*, 151.

[88] James D. G. Dunn, "Christianity Without Paul," in *In the Fullness of Time: Essays on Christology, Creation, and Eschatology in Honor of Richard Bauckham*, ed. Daniel M Gurtner, Grant Macaskill, and Jonathan T. Pennington (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 74.

Adding to the Gospel of Grace

Frank Thielman, a New Testament scholar, marks Peter's withdrawal from table fellowship as an addition "to what God accomplished for sinful humanity through the atoning death of Christ, (as if) people had to contribute something to their own redemption before reconciliation with God was complete and fellowship with other, fully justified Christians was possible."[89] According to Cousar, "It is unlikely that Peter would have explained his withdrawal from the table as an attempt to be justified by 'works of the law,' but Paul does."[90] Yet Peter's actions effectively declare the law is a prerequisite for belonging to the people of God.[91] Osborne agrees the Gentile believers would have regarded Peter as a part of their community, so with his return to Jewish legalism, some may have felt compelled to do so as well. Scacewater thinks differently. Despite his withdrawal, Peter has not called them pagans, and they may have not concluded he did not consider them fellow believers. Thus, they may have felt more offended than anything else.[92] Dunn describes the behavior of the Jewish Christians as being more about how to remain obediently in the faith rather than coming into it, that they believed their loyalty to following Jewish traditions and practices was not against justification by faith.[93] "Paul's point was precisely the opposite: that a consistent expression of justification by faith made it impossible to require such works of the law as an essential

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[89] Frank Thielman, "Galatians," in *Romans-Galatians*, ESV Expository Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 496.

[90] Cousar, *Galatians*, 48.

[91] Cousar, 48.

[92] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 316.

[93] James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1990), 176.

mark and condition of maintaining status as heirs of the promise."[94] For Paul, the Gentiles experienced the grace of God for the whole of their lives.[95]

New Testament scholar Andrew Hassler describes the legalism Paul often writes of in his letters as specifically Jewish in nature and finds a false dichotomy between assuming legalistic means to earn God favor versus grace alone.[96] He argues that the Jerusalem visitors imposed "ethnocentric legalism" through Jewish identity and customs to certify membership in the people of God,[97] though "the distance between cultural imperialism and soteriological legalism is not necessarily all that far."[98] For Cornelius Bennema, a New Testament theologian, "The critical factor in the formation of early Christian identity was that it was no longer attached to a particular ethno-religious identity."[99] Dunn concurs "From being *one* identity marker for the Jewish Christian alongside the other identity markers (circumcision, food laws, sabbath), faith in Jesus as Christ becomes the primary identity marker which renders the others superfluous."[100] Gentiles could remain Gentiles and be part of the people of God, without becoming Jews.

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[94] Dunn, 176.

[95] Dunn, 162.

[96] Andrew Hassler, "Ethnocentric Legalism and the Justification of the Individual: Rethinking Some New Perspective Assumptions," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 2 (June 2011): 314.

[97] Hassler, 314.

[98] Hassler, 314.

[99] Cornelis Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity: An Appraisal of Bauckham's Proposal on the Antioch Crisis and the Jerusalem Council," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 56, no. 4 (December 2013): 762.

[100] Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 196.

Gentiles as Second-Class Members

When the Antioch opponents of Paul sought to add circumcision to faith in Christ, they promoted a gospel within the social boundaries of Judaism.[101] According to New Testament theologian Craig S. Keener, although many Jews believed Gentiles who gave up idolatry to worship the one true God would be saved, only full conversion to Judaism marked by circumcision gave them the same covenant benefits as Jews.[102] New Testament theologian I. Howard Marshall notes "Jews practiced a rigid separation from non-Jews…Jews would not eat with Gentiles or eat food prepared by them that did not fulfill the Jewish regulations about ritual cleanliness; both the Gentiles and their foods were considered 'unclean'."[103] New Testament theologian N. T. Wright explains "The Jews banned consorting with gentiles because gentiles were idolaters" and they sought to guard themselves from uncleanness and impurity that Gentile idolatry produced.[104] Deep theological, historical, and cultural convictions informed the way Jews interacted with Gentiles and contributed to a sense of superiority over them.

These influences now threaten to spill over into the church. Even if Peter and Paul agree on the theological aspects of the gospel, Peter's actions communicate something different. Cole says whether Peter is aware or not, "Withdrawal from fellowship with Gentile Christians was tantamount to saying that they were not as good as Jewish

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[101] Gary M. Burge, Gene L. Green, and Lynn H. Cohick, *The New Testament in Antiquity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 270.

[102] Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 522.

[103] I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), 211.

[104] N. T. Wright, *Galatians*, Commentaries for Christian Formation (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021), 71.

Christians, and that in some way they lacked something of the fullness of the gospel."[105] Moo agrees that Peter's action belies his theology, signaling "Gentiles in Christ are not truly and fully cleansed from sin in Christ, that they remain morally stained and must be avoided; and that they can finally remove that stain only by themselves taking on Jewish customs."[106] Wright describes this as a Jewish Christian thinking he couldn't eat with a Gentile Christian without it polluting him.[107] Keener surmises, "Although Peter and others undoubtedly claimed to oppose racism, they accommodated it on what they saw as minor points to keep peace, whereas Paul felt that any degree of racial separatism or segregation challenged the very heart of the gospel."[108] Wright believes separate table fellowship sent a clear message to Gentiles. "You belong in an outer circle, rather like the Court of Gentiles in the Jerusalem temple. If you want to come into the heart of things, you need to become Jewish."[109]

To Scacewater, Peter's actions tell the Gentiles that "the Jews' ritually clean lifestyle was morally superior,"[110] whereas "Paul's law-free gospel elevated Gentiles to social and religious equality with Jews."[111] Bennema reiterates that faith in Christ, as evidenced by having received the Holy Spirit, was the only requirement for Jew or

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[105] Cole, *Galatians*, 119.

[106] Moo, *Galatians*, 143.

[107] Wright, *Galatians*, 72.

[108] Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 523.

[109] Wright, *Galatians*, 73.

[110] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 312.

[111] Scacewater, 316.

Gentile to be part of the people of God.[112] Peter would have witnessed such events repeatedly.[113] To set up such a hierarchy among believers would have had far-reaching implications for the future of the church.

The Ecclesiological Implication

Jesus's priestly prayer in John 17 asks the Father for unity among the disciples.[114] Then three times he asks for unity among those who come to believe because of their word.[115] Cousar believes that the issue at stake in the Antioch confrontation is the theological point Paul thought the Jerusalem meeting settled earlier, that "the unity of the church must be based on the gospel of grace and nothing else."[116] Scacewater agrees that "Paul's concern was the devastating implications that Peter's actions had for the unity of the church."[117] Bennema also notes that Peter's withdrawal from the table created two separate groups within the Antioch church unless the Gentiles adopted Jewish customs.[118] Scacewater describes Peter's action as carrying the potential of "destroying the ethnically unifying message of the gospel."[119] Yet, as Cousar points out, "The church, though

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[112] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 762.

[113] See for example Acts 2 and Acts 10.

[114] John 17:11

[115] John 17: 21-23

[116] Cousar, *Galatians*, 45.

[117] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 316.

[118] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 758.

[119] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 316.

struggling with a Jew-Gentile problem and undoubtedly strained to the breaking point, is nevertheless one church."[120]

Diversity in Their Unity

The gospel is producing a church of amazing diversity and Paul struggles to help establish that church display mutuality in its diversity, with neither Gentiles nor Jews forced to adopt the customs of the other.[121] According to Bennema, "The most significant dispute in early Christianity, however, ran along ethnic lines."[122] Theologian Nancy Elizabeth Bedford sees the incident in Antioch as "an attempt to focus on what is central to the Christian faith: how the gospel of Jesus Christ allows (and indeed requires) the freedom to express itself in particular cultural contexts."[123]

Cousar speculates that Paul likely knew he could have done without the cooperation of the Jerusalem church as the gospel spread geographically outward.[124] However, Paul had deeper convictions about the nature of the church. "Elsewhere in Paul (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:12-26; Rom. 12:4-5; Gal.3:26-29) we learn that the unity of the church is a given, a spiritual reality bestowed by Christ which joins his people to himself and to each other."[125] Scacewater sees this spiritual unity reflected in the table fellowship between Jews and Gentiles. "Even more, Jews who never before would have eaten with

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[120] Cousar, *Galatians*, 38.

[121] Cousar, 42.

[122] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 755.

[123] Nancy Elizabeth Bedford, *Galatians*, Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016), 49.

[124] Cousar, *Galatians*, 42.

[125] Cousar, 42–43.

Gentiles now sit at the same table and call them brothers."[126] Cousar submits this is how "occasions of visible unity lead to further testimony of the gospel."[127]

Bennema states, "Ethnic expansion or Gentile inclusion caused early Christianity to become a transethnic movement. By the term 'transethnic,' I mean that the Christian identity transcends ethnic identities."[128] A person can become a Christian without rejecting their ethnic identity or having to take on a different ethnic identity to do so, he states. Thielman asserts that Paul's rebuke of Peter warns of a current subtle but common problem for the church today as well. "It is possible to communicate through withdrawal from or neglect of those who differ from the majority that the gospel is really only for people who are like most other people in the church."[129]

Bedford marks the challenge to all groups in accepting each other, but certainly for the Jews who were "long invested in practices that help frame their particular identity as a people beloved by God."[130] She goes on, "Is it possible to respect particularities and not to flatten out differences, while at the same time respecting each other and treating each other as equals?"[131] Cousar agrees, "Christian unity is not to be confused with mere tolerance or indifference or the absence of strife. Like love, it longs for expression in some tangible way, the participation of one partner in the life of the other."[132]

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[126] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 315.

[127] Cousar, *Galatians*, 44.

[128] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 755.

[129] Thielman, "Galatians," 496.

[130] Bedford, *Galatians*, 47.

[131] Bedford, 47.

[132] Cousar, *Galatians*, 44.

Jesus' prayer turns to glory and unity in John 17:22: "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one," and Bedford perceives a glory deficit when Jewish Christians and Gentiles did not eat together. The Jews refusal to do so resulted in their failure to give glory to God. "This is a serious matter not least because commensality functions as a sign of eschatological hope and as an anticipation of the great banquet in the very presence of God."[133]

A Unified Message for Mission

If the initial meeting in Jerusalem between Paul, James, John, and Peter had resulted in less than their agreement on the essence of the gospel, Cousar believes Paul would have continued to reach the Gentiles with the gospel. "But he would have been deeply disturbed at their rejection since it would likely have split the early Christians into two or more groups, each with its own mission."[134] Moo agrees that Paul knows only a single good news that fulfills the single plan of God to fulfill his promises to his people.[135] Paul's fear is that if the Jerusalem apostles disagree, "a negative verdict will create a fissure in the church between its Jewish and Gentile wings."[136]

Given the context of Jewish persecution of other Jews in Jerusalem, Peter's continued mission to Jews could be threatened by the continued fraternization of Jews

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[133] Bedford, *Galatians*, 48.

[134] Cousar, *Galatians*, 39.

[135] Moo, *Galatians*, 125.

[136] Moo, 125.

and Gentiles even in Antioch.[137] Hassler notes that Paul's mission was completely connected to justification by faith rather than by law. He does not believe that Paul prioritizes the Gentile mission over the Jewish one. Rather, Paul focuses on "a culpable, fatal misunderstanding of how God works with human beings that gives ground for boasting in one's own works before God."[138] Cousar concurs that Paul would never compromise the gospel merely for the sake of unity.[139] Moo agrees that even facilitating Jewish evangelism was an insufficient reason to Paul to yield this point.[140] Stott comments "If Paul had not taken his stand against Peter that day, either the whole Christian church would have drifted into a Jewish backwater and stagnated, or there would have been a permanent rift between Gentile and Jewish Christendom."[141]

The Social Implication

For Paul, the truth of the gospel is at the heart of the incident in Antioch. Moo believes this was not a fundamental difference of theology, but about "the implications for a specific form of conduct that arises from theology."[142] Peter does not appear to compel circumcision but yields to Jewish food laws, revealing his hypocrisy, not heresy.[143] Just says, "Strict dietary laws were a deeply engrained means of preserving

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[137] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 313.

[138] Hassler, "Ethnocentric Legalism and the Justification of the Individual," 325.

[139] Cousar, *Galatians*, 49.

[140] Moo, *Galatians*, 149.

[141] Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 36.

[142] Moo, *Galatians*, 146.

[143] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 315.

Jewish identity as the people of God," and this was as true for Jewish Christians as well as Jews, making it difficult for them to cross the boundary of table fellowship. [144] Hassler agrees that it was hard for Jewish Christians to part ways with certain Jewish customs.[145] For Bennema the Jerusalem Council agreement means that "observance of the four stipulations *demonstrated* that Gentile believers belonged to the eschatological people of God *as Gentiles*."[146] Dunn agrees with this conclusion, because otherwise Paul's mission to the Gentiles would be more about converting proselytes to Judaism.[147]

Implied Ethnocentrism

Dunn explains in later chapters[148] that Paul confronts the covenantal concerns that caused Jewish Christians to believe Gentiles should live traditionally with covenant practices.[149] The covenant has not been abandoned, but rather the work of Christ has broadened its membership to include the Gentiles to bless the nations.[150] Thus, Gentiles need not take on Jewish practices.[151] According to Dunn, Paul has concluded that "*Covenant* works had become too closely identified as *Jewish* observances, *covenant* righteousness as *national* righteousness." To keep such identifications was "to ignore

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[144] Just, "The Apostolic Councils of Galatians and Acts," 272.

[145] Hassler, "Ethnocentric Legalism and the Justification of the Individual," 314.

[146] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 760.

[147] Dunn, "Christianity Without Paul," 74.

[148] Galatians 3-4 and Romans 2-4

[149] Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 197.

[150] Gen. 12:1-3

[151] Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 197.

both the way the covenant began and the purpose it had been intended to fulfil in the end."[152] Dunn believes Paul has determined that the covenant must not be understood on racial or nationalistic terms, thus the Old Testament appeal to Abraham's faith.[153]

Paul confronts Peter for "implied ethnocentrism which was destroying the unifying effect of Christ's death"[154] but Scacewater doubts that Peter perceived himself as communicating ethnic superiority, even if that was the impact of his actions.[155] Bennema agrees that Paul's rebuke related to adding any work of the law to the gospel but sees some ethnic overtones as well. He describes this as "yielding to a conservative Jewish ethnocentrism that, in Paul's view, infringed on the gospel."[156] Hassler agrees that "this particular form of ethnocentrism" stems from either a misunderstanding or a misapplication of the gospel.[157] He elaborates, "Thus the natural outworking of a legalism that was attached to Jewish works was prejudiced against those who did not do the works that made one a Jew. Thus, we could label this approach 'ethnocentric legalism.'"[158] Bennema comments, "This ethnic dispute was problematic for the early Christians, and it took various meetings over a prolonged period to settle it."[159] For Cousar, a clear understanding the nature of the gospel would free the church from the

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[152] Dunn, 197.

[153] Dunn, 197–98.

[154] Scacewater, "Galatians 2," 315.

[155] Scacewater, 312.

[156] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 758.

[157] Hassler, "Ethnocentric Legalism and the Justification of the Individual," 325.

[158] Hassler, 314n13.

[159] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 762.

false unity that comes from years of practices or traditions instead of the true foundation of the gospel. "A passion for the singularity of the message, when the message is one of grace and forgiveness, issues in an open church in which freedom is not destroyed either by the pressure of conformity or by the contending force of pluralism."[160]

Despite seeing the confrontation as primarily theological in nature, Ryken remarks on other social issues that accompanied the confrontation: cliques within the church, racism, and theology being used to justify pretty much any kind of prejudice.[161] Stott is in complete agreement. "All this is a grievous affront to the gospel."[162] Nothing related to racial or social concerns, much less denominational differences should be attached to Christian fellowship. He concludes, "God does not insist on these things before He accepts us into fellowship; so we must not insist upon them either."[163]

New Testament scholar Thomas Schreiner writes that Paul's missionary work forced him onto new frontiers and provoked new questions for the Jerusalem church and as such, extended discussion and debate to settle thorny issues is understandable.[164] Schreiner notes the incident at Antioch grew out of the church planting there, and Paul implies he encounters Jewish-Gentile tension other times, as evidenced when he writes to

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[160] Cousar, *Galatians*, 42.

[161] Ryken, *Galatians*, 43.

[162] Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 57.

[163] Stott, 57.

[164] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), 42.

the church in Rome to "welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God."[165]

Other Conduct

As noted above, devout Jewish Christians were sincerely concerned that Gentile customs were opening the doors to idolatry. The Jerusalem Council took their concern seriously. According to Just, the four stipulations from James have less to do with adopting Jewish customs and more with avoiding idolatry. He connects the four back to Leviticus 17 and 18 regulations for sacrifices made by foreigners living within Israel.[166] Just believes that as James indicates that the gospel is for both Jew and Gentile when he quotes Amos 9:11-12, James makes clear through the scriptural foundation of Leviticus that the four stipulations are universal for Jew and Gentile as well.[167] All four could be seen as avoiding idolatry.[168] Given that conversion to Christianity by Gentiles would foundationally mean turning from idols to worship the one true God, Gentile believers would expect no less.[169] Bennema notes by having Gentiles adhere only to these four legal stipulations, the Jerusalem Council set a scriptural basis for deciding on the importance of these four laws.[170] He adds, "Paul was in total agreement with the outcome of the Jerusalem Council and remained on good terms with the Jerusalem church."

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[165] Schreiner, 66.

[166] Just, "The Apostolic Councils of Galatians and Acts," 283.

[167] Just, 284.

[168] Just, 284.

[169] Just, 285.

[170] Bennema, "The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity," 760.

The only condition required of Paul was to "remember the poor."[171] Cousar points out Paul mentions in other letters that he has gathered a collection for the poor of the Jerusalem church. Cousar believes that this action would not only "ease their dire plight, but make tangible the bond which drew diverse groups together in the Christian community."[172] He adds, "It was a way for Gentiles to acknowledge their indebtedness for the spiritual blessings which belonged to the Jews and to offer a visible expression of the mutual concern they shared in Christ (cf. Rom. 15:27)."[173] Dunn sees Paul using the collection from mainly Gentile churches for Jerusalem as an opportunity Paul took to heal the rift that occurred as a result of his strong response at Antioch."[174]

Summary of a Biblical Framework for Cultural Diversity

The New Testament church was inexperienced at mission, particularly to the Gentiles. Outside of traditional ways that Gentiles had been included as outsiders in Judaism, Jewish leaders differed on what it meant to belong to the people of God. In addition, being on equal footing was new for Jews and Gentiles. This systemic shift was especially disconcerting for Jews who viewed Jesus specifically through the lens of the old covenant. Paul argues theologically for a free-grace gospel able to inhabit new cultures that carries ecclesiological implications for a unified church and sociological implications for loving and welcoming each other as a diverse people of God.

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[171] See Acts 2:10.

[172] Cousar, *Galatians*, 41.

[173] Cousar, 41.

[174] Dunn, "Christianity Without Paul," 81.

Cultural Intelligence Development in the Business World

While Scripture gives us a theological framework for working across cultures, businesses and organizations provide some additional insight for the purpose of this dissertation. Business interest in cultural intelligence dates to the 1950s as multinational corporations noted negative attitudes toward them in countries where they operated, along with costly turnover in their employees placed overseas.[175] They sought cross-cultural training with information and insights about the employee's country of destination and advice about living there.[176] This intercultural training eventually broadened to include understanding one's own cultural influences, accepting differences of other cultures, engaging with people who are culturally different, noting nuances in behavioral interactions, and understanding the impact of behavior on others.[177] With changing demographics and social and political concerns in the US, this training also became increasingly important for businesses domestically.[178] An intercultural perspective prevailed in the diversity training in the business world.[179] Stella M. Nkomo, professor of human resource management at the University of Pretoria, notes that sociopolitical and demographical changes in the U.S. are ongoing, and they have a

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[175] Margaret D. Pusch, "Intercultural Training in Historical Perspective," in *Handbook of Intercultural Training* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004), 21, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231129.n2.

[176] Pusch, 21.

[177] Pusch, 15.

[178] Pusch, 14.

[179] Pusch, 28.

powerful impact on research and ideas about diversity training.[180] Businesses have also shown a variety of motivations to employ cultural and diversity programs as a result.

Motivations for Development of Cultural Intelligence

The civil rights movement and the women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s led to affirmative action and equal opportunity regulations, among other government interventions.[181] Diversity programs and training developed as a result. Katerina Bezukova, professor of management at the University of Buffalo, remarks that this kind of training often occurs as a stand-alone event, with companies primarily monitoring the number of employees who complete the training.[182] Sociologists Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev observe that during this period, companies developed diversity training, hiring tests, performance tests, and grievance policies. "Those tools are designed to preempt lawsuits by policing managers' thoughts and actions."[183] They find these methods not only did not prove effective, but in some instances worsened behaviors. Others observe that companies use the presence of diversity training to comply

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[180] Stella M. Nkomo et al., "Diversity at a Critical Juncture: New Theories for a Complex Phenomenon," *Academy of Management Review* 44, no. 3 (July 2019): 500, https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2019.0103.

[181] Nkomo et al., 501.

[182] Katerina Bezrukova, Karen A. Jehn, and Chester S. Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training: Where We Have Been and Where We Should Go," *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 11, no. 2 (June 2012): 214, https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2008.0090.

[183] Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," *Harvard Business Review*, July 1, 2016, 4, https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail.

with legal regulations,[184] to counter problematic behaviors,[185] or to manage corporate image[186] without using effective methods, and work environments may not improve.

Nkomo notes a newer motivation for diversity programs along with a shift away from anti-discrimination and affirmative action-based diversity initiatives and toward a business motive. In 1980 a more conservative political and economic ideology dismantled previous governmental interventions in favor of colorblindness, individual rights, and agency.[187] A 1987 report by the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank, predicted a majority of workers joining the U.S. workforce would be ethnic and racial minorities and women by the year 2000. Handling diversity became even more necessary,[188] and the negative connotations of anti-discrimination evolved into the valuing and managing of diversity for competitive advantage.[189]

According to Janet M. Bennett and Milton J. Bennett, internationally recognized experts in intercultural training, the world increasingly recognizes that "international effectiveness depends on an intercultural mindset and skillset."[190] The international

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[184] Victor Ray, "Why So Many Organizations Stay White," *Harvard Business Review*, November 19, 2019, 4, https://hbr.org/2019/11/why-so-many-organizations-stay-white.

[185] Francesca Gino and Bradley Staats, "Why Organizations Don't Learn," *Harvard Business Review*, November 1, 2015, 4, https://hbr.org/2015/11/why-organizations-dont-learn.

[186] Sabrina K. Pasztor, "Exploring the Framing of Diversity Rhetoric in 'Top-Rated in Diversity' Organizations," *International Journal of Business Communication* 56, no. 4 (October 2019): 467, https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488416664175.

[187] Nkomo et al., "Diversity at a Critical Juncture," 501.

[188] Nkomo et al., 501.

[189] Nkomo et al., 501.

[190] Janet M. Bennett and Milton J. Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity: An Integrative Approach to Global and Domestic Diversity," in *Handbook of Intercultural Training*, ed. Dan Landis, Janet M. Bennett, and Milton J. Bennett, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004), 160, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231129.

management firm McKinsey and Company also notes a connection to a global business world. “Diversity matters because we increasingly live in a global world that has become deeply interconnected.”[191] Hilla Peretz, professor of industrial engineering and management at Ort Braude College, stresses an increased international focus on diversity and the need to recruit and maintain a diverse workforce because many countries are experiencing a growing ethnic diversity within their populations.[192] Her research confirms the need for diversity training with a global perspective beyond US-centric assumptions.[193]

McKinsey believes the strongest argument for diversity initiatives is their correlation to competitiveness and financial success. In their 2015 international study of 366 companies in five countries, they found that “companies in the top quartile for gender or racial and ethnic diversity are more likely to have financial returns above their national industry medians.”[194] They further note that companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 30 percent more likely to perform above their industry medians, while those in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15 percent more likely.[195] They are careful to note that the relationship between diversity and financial performance is one of correlation rather than causation. Still, they firmly believe, “The size of the

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[191] Vivian Hunt, Dennis Layton, and Sara Prince, “Why Diversity Matters,” McKinsey & Company, January 2015, 1, https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/why-diversity-matters.

[192] Hilla Peretz, Ariel Levi, and Yitzhak Fried, “Organizational Diversity Programs across Cultures: Effects on Absenteeism, Turnover, Performance and Innovation,” *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 26, no. 6 (March 15, 2015): 876.

[193] Peretz, Levi, and Fried, 898.

[194] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, “Why Diversity Matters,” 1.

[195] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 2.

dataset allows for results that are statistically significant and the analysis is the first that we are aware of that measures how much the relationship between diversity and performance is worth in terms of increased profitability."[196]

FSG, a consulting firm that describes itself as mission-driven, joined PolicyLink, a national research and action institute, to release their own 2017 research report that found competitive advantages to business diversity and equity efforts.[197] In research interviews with fifty individuals across thirty organizations and secondary research on sixty-five companies, FSG concluded that "by ignoring the nation's changing demographics, companies may find their growth curtailed and their global competitiveness undermined."[198] FSG believes, "Disrupting business as usual is more than just a values-based argument; it is a financial imperative. Companies that do not address bias and exclusion risk their financial success."[199]

McKinsey research suggests that "Ethnically and gender-diverse top teams offer companies more problem-solving tools, broader thinking, and better solutions."[200] However, research conducted by McGill University Professor of Organizational Behavior Matthew Corritore argues, "We found that organizations with greater intrapersonal cultural diversity had higher market valuations and produced more and higher-quality

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[196] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 1.

[197] Lakshmi Iyer and Josh Kirschenbaum, "How Companies Can Advance Racial Equity and Create Business Growth," FSG, April 8, 2019, 1, https://www.fsg.org/blog/how-companies-can-advance-racial-equity-and-create-business-growth.

[198] Iyer and Kirschenbaum, 1.

[199] Veronica Borgonovi, "Reckoning, Repair, and Change," FSG, July 31, 2019, 4, https://www.fsg.org/publications/reckoning-repair-change.

[200] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 12.

intellectual property via patenting."[201] These results lead him to conclude that a diversity of ideas contributed to creative innovations more than simple demographic diversity.[202]

Intercultural consultants Sandra M. Fowler and Judith M. Blohm state that attention to diversity training can be either proactive or reactive, but often the motivation is complicated.[203] The challenge can be a specific problem related to diversity in the workplace, a lawsuit, performance deficits, or company concerns about lagging competitively or missing expansion opportunities.[204] FSG adds one more component to the need for businesses to develop their diversity skills: the current cultural moment. They point to the 2020 statements of support that companies made in light of the death of George Floyd, along with other tragic deaths of black people, as an important first step.[205] Though "contemporary business leaders are not solely responsible for the current state of the world,"[206] they believe public opinion has shifted toward higher expectations of corporate leadership.[207] They ask, "Put more simply, this is an opportunity for companies to consider*: How will you lead in this legacy-defining moment?*"[208]

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[201] Matthew Corritore, Amir Goldberg, and Sameer B. Srivastava, "The New Analytics of Culture," *Harvard Business Review*, January 1, 2020, 6, https://hbr.org/2020/01/the-new-analytics-of-culture.

[202] Corritore, Goldberg, and Srivastava, 7.

[203] Sandra M. Fowler and Judith M. Blohm, "An Analysis of Methods for Intercultural Training," in *Handbook of Intercultural Training*, ed. Dan Landis, Janet M. Bennett, and Milton J. Bennett, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2004), 41, https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231129.

[204] Fowler and Blohm, 41.

[205] Greg Hills et al., "A CEO Blueprint for Racial Equity," FSG, July 7, 2020, 2, https://www.fsg.org/blog/ceo-blueprint-racial-equity.

[206] Borgonovi, "Reckoning, Repair, and Change," 7.

[207] Hills et al., "A CEO Blueprint for Racial Equity," 3.

[208] Hills et al., 8.

Training and Initiatives

Diversity programs are essentially a type of change management program, according to McKinsey.[209] While diversity training is generally aimed at individuals,[210] the success of an overall diversity initiative also requires broader organizational changes.[211] Bezrukova's meta-analysis of research confirms that content and delivery of training are important, along with support by the organization. Diversity initiatives ideally start a process of change for individuals and the overall organization.

Bennett and Bennett believe that the self-identification of a trainee plays a role in the effectiveness of diversity training. "The development of general intercultural sensitivity is paralleled to a large extent by identity development."[212] Bezrukova observes an interplay of negative and positive results on attitudes invariably arise from the trainee's sense of identity.[213] Business psychologist Diether Gebert cautions, "Given that values closely relate to a person's identity, the clash of differing values… likely to become apparent in the course of a diversity training can easily induce feelings of exclusion instead of the envisaged feelings of inclusion."[214]

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[209] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 14.

[210] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 208.

[211] Deborah Wingard et al., "Faculty Equity, Diversity, Culture and Climate Change in Academic Medicine: A Longitudinal Study," *Journal of the National Medical Association* 111, no. 1 (February 2019): 50, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jnma.2018.05.004.

[212] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 158.

[213] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 210.

[214] Diether Gebert, Claudia Buengeler, and Kathrin Heinitz, "Tolerance: A Neglected Dimension in Diversity Training?," *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 16, no. 3 (September 2017): 417, https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2015.0252.

Assumptions

As Bennett and Bennett consider the research on corporate efforts in cultural or diversity training, they see standards and models but conclude, "It would be less easy to ascertain their theoretical rationale for why they are doing what they are doing at the time they are doing it." Bezrukova notes that most organizations work under the assumption that diversity training programs should target awareness and behavior to be effective.[215] Bennett and Bennett also note a shift in diversity training from simply raising awareness to a more skill-based focus.[216] While it makes intuitive sense that information should be put into practice, economist Robin J. Ely warns there can be unexpected consequences if policing behavior results from behavioral training. Majority and minority workers can experience the need to tread carefully, either to avoid being politically incorrect or to avoid negative stereotypes, and this apprehension creates a workplace atmosphere of unease and mistrust.[217]

Bezrukova notes another assumption regarding a comprehensive culture change. If diversity training is integrated among other related initiatives, "genuine organizational commitment and support for diversity is communicated, and this should be more effective in changing attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors toward its acceptance."[218]

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[215] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 217.

[216] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 149.

[217] Robin J. Ely, Debra Meyerson, and Martin N. Davidson, "Rethinking Political Correctness," *Harvard Business Review*, September 1, 2006, 3, https://hbr.org/2006/09/rethinking-political-correctness.

[218] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 214.

While this kind of integrated approach is popular within training literature, its effectiveness has not been widely studied.[219]

Training programs usually move forward before research can confirm their effectiveness. For example, Dobbins and Kalev believe that a voluntary approach to diversity training gains more buy-in from managers than mandates.[220] Behavioral scientist Francesca Gino and Katherine Coffman, a Harvard Business School professor, disagree with this conclusion. They note that while companies may offer voluntary training due to their concern for backlash, this practice encourages only those who already plan to participate.[221] California State University Professor of Management Farrokh Moshiri and University of Southern California Professor of Business Communication Peter W. Cardon state in their research that the effectiveness of voluntary diversity training was less studied over mandatory training.[222] Bezrukova highlights the need for further research to better understand contexts required for better training effectiveness.[223]

Correlative Evidence

Two consulting companies have recent studies regarding diversity and competitive advantages, McKinsey and FSG, in partnership with PolicyLink. From their

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[219] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, 222.

[220] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 5.

[221] Francesca Gino and Katherine Coffman, "Unconscious Bias Training That Works," *Harvard Business Review*, September 1, 2021, 5, https://hbr.org/2021/09/unconscious-bias-training-that-works.

[222] Farrokh Moshiri and Peter W. Cardon, "Best Practices to Increase Racial Diversity in Business Schools: What Actually Works According to a Nationwide Survey of Business Schools," *Journal of Education for Business* 94, no. 2 (March 2, 2019): 117, https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2018.1503583.

[223] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 216.

2015 study, McKinsey reports that although the relationship between diversity and performance is correlative not causal, "the findings nonetheless permit reasonable hypotheses on what is driving improved performance by companies with diverse executive teams and boards."[224] They reason that more diverse companies position themselves to acquire top talent, strengthen customer orientation, improve employee satisfaction, and enhance their decision-making.[225] They also hypothesize that diversity training that addresses age, sexual orientation, and diversity of experience will bring a competitive advantage for firms as well.[226] Ely and David A. Thomas, an expert in organizational behavior, disagree with McKinsey, stating that these claims regarding gender and racial diversity have not stood up to rigorous scrutiny.[227] "Meta-analyses of rigorous, peer-reviewed studies found no significant relationships—causal or otherwise—between board gender diversity and firm performance."[228] They further state no research finds significant economic advantage for increasing diversity overall in the workplace.[229] "They *have* found that it leads to higher-quality work, better decision-making, greater team satisfaction, and more equality—under certain circumstances." [230] This improvement does not necessarily impact a company's financial performance. While Ely

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[224] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 1.

[225] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 1.

[226] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 1.

[227] Robin J. Ely and David A. Thomas, "Getting Serious About Diversity: Enough Already with the Business Case," *Harvard Business Review*, November 1, 2020, 5, https://hbr.org/2020/11/getting-serious-about-diversity-enough-already-with-the-business-case.

[228] Ely and Thomas, 5.

[229] Ely and Thomas, 6.

[230] Ely and Thomas, 6.

and Thomas advocate for diversity and inclusion, they determine that most businesses employ a simplistic model not backed by empirical evidence.[231]

McKinsey names several broad categories as important for successfully building inclusion and diversity: commitment and vision from top leadership with commitment and accountability in lower management, articulation of a compelling link between diversity initiatives and company growth strategies, investment in a prioritized range of initiatives linked and tracked metrically with company performance, and adaption of these initiatives to specific needs of different parts of the organization.[232] They identify these as critical areas that companies tend to fall short on.[233] Whereas Ely and Thomas would agree that the benefits of diversity require participation at all levels a company, they also note that some company financial investments may never be recouped and that the kind of difficult and personal work required of all employees are no small feat in any context, much less at work.[234]

FSG also conducted research that yielded correlative rather than causal results. Their racial equity approach is unusual in terms of seeking competitive advantage.[235] They believe by taking the time to investigate and understand the historical and current impact of inequities on the local communities, as well as considering new ways to

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[231] Ely and Thomas, 5.

[232] Vivian Hunt et al., "Delivering through Diversity," January 18, 2018, 26–28, https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity.

[233] Hunt et al., 28.

[234] Ely and Thomas, "Getting Serious About Diversity," 10.

[235] Angela Blackwell et al., "The Competitive Advantage of Racial Equity," FSG, October 2, 2017, 2, https://www.fsg.org/publications/competitive-advantage-racial-equity.

effectively do business with them, businesses can be more profitable, more equitable, and build better relationships with customers and communities.[236]

Ely and Thomas argue that to always look for a profit motive is short-sighted at best. Benefits may or may not come to the company, but more importantly, they may come for society.[237] "If company profits come at the price of our humanity, they are costing us too much."[238] Another less optimistic voice is Smaranda Boros, professor at the Vlerick Business School. Changes in ideological and political contexts moved the business mindset toward diversity for business growth and profitability, yet the meta-analysis of research results offers a "much more complex picture of the dynamics that diversity brings in organizations than these linear claims."[239] She emphasizes that key aspects of diversity training, such as emotional awareness and inclusive climates, happen in historical, social, and cultural contexts. This highlights a "messier reality to nature of diversity in organizations" and that diversity can bring both beneficial and detrimental outcomes.[240] Few organizations have truly integrated approaches due to cost and research is lacking due to the complexity of the issues involved.[241]

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[236] Borgonovi, "Reckoning, Repair, and Change," 9–10.

[237] Ely and Thomas, "Getting Serious About Diversity," 10.

[238] Ely and Thomas, 10.

[239] Smaranda Boroş, "Diversity at a Crossroads: How Diversity Research Can Contribute to the Fight for Social Justice," *Psihologia Resurselor Umane* 18, no. 2 (2020): 71.

[240] Boroş, 71–72.

[241] Boroş, 72.

Training for International Cross-Cultural Effectiveness

While early training initially focused on a particular culture, more recent training for global assignments engages the trainee more broadly. P. Christopher Early, professor of organizational management at the London Business School, and Elaine Mosakowski, professor of management at the University of Colorado, state, "Cultural intelligence resides in the body and the heart, as well as the head."[242] Thus, they encourage managers to use a self-assessment tool to determine strengths and weakness.[243] Professor of Management at Nanyang Technical University Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne, professor of management and organization at Michigan State University, agree that self-assessment is important but note the need for a combined approach with feedback from peers and supervisors.[244] They offer a twenty-item Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) useful for assessing workers for international assignments with a self-report version and an observer-report version.[245]

Jane Hyun, a global leadership strategist, and Douglas Conant, CEO of ConantLeadership, also think that self-assessment alone is insufficient because "it is very difficult for managers to diagnose their own blind spots and even trickier to fix the ones they see."[246] They suggest, "Obtaining external expertise to benchmark both your

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[242] P. Christopher Earley and Elaine Mosakowski, "Cultural Intelligence," *Harvard Business Review*, October 1, 2004, 5, https://hbr.org/2004/10/cultural-intelligence.

[243] Earley and Mosakowski, 10–15.

[244] Soon and Van Dyne, *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence*, 35.

[245] Soon and Van Dyne, 35.

[246] Jane Hyun and Douglas Conant, "3 Ways to Improve Your Cultural Fluency," *Harvard Business Review*, April 25, 2019, 3, https://hbr.org/2019/04/3-ways-to-improve-your-cultural-fluency.

personal and organizational competence can help."[247] Beyond self-assessments and the feedback of others, Hyun and Conant recommend a more reliable and objective measurement tool based on a developmental model called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).[248] They also recommend using this tool in conjunction with a coach outside the company for greater focus on specific areas of growth.[249] Maren Dollwert and Rebecca Reichard, researchers at Claremont Graduate University, advocate using a tool they call "a new measure of cross-cultural psychological capital" that can gauge proficiencies and then generalize across different cultures.[250] They believe the cross-cultural PsyCap captures an individual's "positive psychological state of development characterized by self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience,"[251] four qualities that help individuals adjust to a new cultural context quickly.[252]

Apart from tools designed for individuals, INSEAD France Professor of Management Practice Erin Meyer believes it is important for managers of international work teams to think of specific kinds of cultural behavior when determining how to work effectively across cultures. She developed the Culture Map, which marks where various nationalities lie along eight behavior scales of communicating, evaluating, persuading,

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[247] Hyun and Conant, 3.

[248] Hyun and Conant, 3.

[249] Hyun and Conant, 4.

[250] Maren Dollwet and Rebecca Reichard, "Assessing Cross-Cultural Skills: Validation of a New Measure of Cross-Cultural Psychological Capital," *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 25, no. 12 (July 2014): 1670, https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.845239.

[251] Dollwet and Reichard, 1670.

[252] Dollwet and Reichard, 1692.

leading, deciding, trusting, disagreeing, and scheduling.[253] She recommends comparing the relative positions along the scales of nationalities to understand how culture may impact work dynamics.[254] In an interview with *Harvard Business Review* Executive Editor Sarah Cliffe, international management expert Andy Molinsky points out that there is also a range of appropriate behaviors for a particular aspect of culture. "I tell people to figure out what the cultural norms are and how they differ from the home culture on six dimensions: directness, enthusiasm, formality, assertiveness, self-promotion, and self-disclosure."[255] He encourages his clients to find a place within that range where they can adapt their individual behavior with some level of comfort and not get lost in abstractions.[256]

Key Elements of Training for U.S.-Based Businesses

Professor of Management at University of Texas Meghna Sabharwal distinguishes between diversity training, which focuses on workers gaining knowledge and skills, and diversity management, geared to recruit and retain minorities and women through coaching, mentoring, family friendly policies, personal leave, or flexible work arrangements.[257] She says, "The issue is not about diversity itself, but the challenge lies

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[253] Erin Meyer, "Navigating the Cultural Minefield," *Harvard Business Review*, May 1, 2014, 1, https://hbr.org/2014/05/navigating-the-cultural-minefield.

[254] Meyer, 1.

[255] Sarah Cliffe, "'Companies Don't Go Global, People Do': An Interview with Andy Molinsky," *Harvard Business Review*, October 1, 2015, 3, https://hbr.org/2015/10/companies-dont-go-global-people-do.

[256] Cliffe, 3.

[257] Meghna Sabharwal, "Is Diversity Management Sufficient? Organizational Inclusion to Further Performance," *Public Personnel Management* 43, no. 2 (June 2014): 197–98, https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026014522202.

in integrating and utilizing a diverse workforce toward achieving organizational goals."[258] She concludes this also requires an environment of inclusion.

Deborah Wingard, professor of family medicine and public health at University of California, differentiates between organizational culture and climate. "Organizational culture is a set of rules—values, beliefs, behaviors, customs, attitudes—that shape how people behave within organizations and is defined as the shared perceptions of and meaning attached to the policies, practice, procedures that employees experience."[259] Diversity efforts can impact the culture of an organization through focused training and policy implementation. "Organizational climate is the perception and feeling of each regarding the culture of a particular organization and is taught to newcomers as the proper way to think and feel about the institution."[260] Researchers found no linear link from a particular intervention to organizational climate change, but they conclude that both were important since culture change preceded climate change.[261] Both aspects need attention and periodic measurement of employee satisfaction.

When planning a diversity training initiative, diversity equity and inclusion experts Jim Kirkpatrick and Wendy Kirkpatrick advise that company leadership should have clear goals aligned with learning objectives and workplace behavior.[262] McKinsey's research concludes that diversity programs need clear objectives and adds that top

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[258] Sabharwal, 198.

[259] Wingard et al., "Faculty Equity, Diversity, Culture and Climate Change in Academic Medicine," 50.

[260] Wingard et al., 50.

[261] Wingard et al., 51–52.

[262] Jim Kirkpatrick and Wendy Kirkpatrick, "Stumped on How to Measure DEI Training?," *TD: Talent Development* 75, no. 10 (October 2021): 28.

leadership must foster active involvement from the managers below them and implement the systems needed to manage and measure outcomes.[263] In an interview with *Harvard Business Review*, University of Virginia Professor of Business Management Melissa Thomas-Hunt commented, "We are asking individuals to do things differently when they feel like they are already overwhelmed. Successful efforts require a deep commitment to sustained effort and offers of assistance to employees in changing their behaviors."[264] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick also note the importance of clearly communicating what the organization expects of workers and how it will support them, stressing the importance of an environment where workers can expect feedback to be supportive rather than punitive.[265]

Given that accountability for diversity initiatives is challenging, they also propose that companies focus on key, consistent behaviors needed to achieve the desired outcomes, and then put systems and processes into place that monitor, reinforce, encourage, and reward these behaviors. "Even when people know what to do, chances of them doing it are much more likely if others support their efforts and hold them accountable."[266] Thomas-Hunt takes a different approach and recommends directly asking employees if things are going well and combining the feedback with an in-depth look into the company diversity data. "Where divergences in experience exist, companies

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[263] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 14.

[264] Paige Cohen and Gretchen Gavett, "The Day-to-Day Work of Diversity and Inclusion," *Harvard Business Review*, November 18, 2019, 8, https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-day-to-day-work-of-diversity-and-inclusion.

[265] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, "Stumped on How to Measure DEI Training?," 30.

[266] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 31.

must take a deep dive to understand and resolve the source of the discrepancy."[267] Francesca Gino and Bradley Staats, professor of business at the University of North Carolina, comment that organizations often want success faster than is possible.[268] They lament, "Most leaders know that data is critical to uncovering the true causes of successful performance, but they don't always insist on collecting and analyzing the necessary information."[269]

Researchers and training experts note the importance of managers in diversity initiatives. Thomas-Hunt says that managers are the front line of company culture and have the power to create real culture change.[270] University of Cincinnati Professor of Psychology and Organizational Leadership Donna Chrobot-Mason and Jean B. Leslie, senior fellow at the Center for Creative Leadership, find that an overwhelming majority of their study respondents did not believe multicultural skills were a predictor of organization success even though the study results showed "a strong positive relationship between managerial ratings on multicultural competence and ratings on job performance, leadership ability, and promotion potential, as well as a negative relationship with predicted derailment."[271] McKinsey includes the need for middle management to hold the vision for diversity as well as the accountability for managing as key imperatives for a

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[267] Cohen and Gavett, "The Day-to-Day Work of Diversity and Inclusion," 7.

[268] Gino and Staats, "Why Organizations Don't Learn," 4.

[269] Gino and Staats, 6.

[270] Cohen and Gavett, "The Day-to-Day Work of Diversity and Inclusion," 4.

[271] Donna Chrobot-Mason and Jean B. Leslie, "The Role of Multicultural Competence and Emotional Intelligence in Managing Diversity," *Psychologist-Manager Journal* 15, no. 4 (October 2012): 231, https://doi.org/10.1080/10887156.2012.730442.

successful diversity initiative.[272] They also identify middle management as a critical area where companies are likely to fall short.[273] Dobbin and Kalev believe equipping managers to solve diversity issues is more effective than a plethora of policies and procedures.[274] They see a downside to many current recommendations for diversity initiatives but note that companies have consistently gotten good results if leadership will "engage managers in solving the problem, expose them to people from different groups, and encourage social accountability for change."[275] They also note that task forces or diversity managers can support managers and also hold them accountable.[276]

Diversity Training Goals

The three main categories of diversity training goals are cognitive, the acquisition of knowledge; affective, the changes in attitudes toward diversity and a sense of self-efficacy in engaging it; and behavioral, the development of skills for interacting in diverse settings.[277] While tests have been designed to measure knowledge, Bezrukova notes the use of self-assessments alone limits the ability of researchers to determine the effectiveness of diversity training for affective and behavioral learning.[278]

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[272] Hunt et al., "Delivering through Diversity," 2.

[273] Hunt et al., 28.

[274] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 7.

[275] Dobbin and Kalev, 7.

[276] Dobbin and Kalev, 10.

[277] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 220–21.

[278] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, 211.

In her research for developing multicultural competence, Chrobot-Mason designed a long-term training program that encompassed the three main training categories of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. The results demonstrate that participants understood diversity problems and could support employees facing cultural or racial challenges, openly address diversity issues, take steps to increase minority representation and retention, and make fair and unbiased decisions.[279] She concludes that approaching all three areas with a long-term learning approach accompanied by rigorous evaluation is an effective approach to training. As active coaches, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick caution that "DEI includes complex, sensitive, and longstanding cultural issues. And while programs may not have the power to change what every employee thinks or feels, they can define acceptable behavioral standards and consistent implementation of them."[280]

Cognitive Outcomes

Cognitive training can provide a foundation for other desired change. Fowler and Blohm report, "Knowledge acquisition is rarely the only desired outcome of intercultural training. However, other factors, such as limited time for training and cost to the organization, may make it the most realistic outcome in some situations."[281] It generally provides information to aid insight, understanding, and appreciation of the different

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[279] Donna Chrobot-Mason, "Developing Multicultural Competence to Improve Cross-Race Work Relationships," *Psychologist-Manager Journal* 15, no. 4 (October 2012): 213–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/10887156.2012.730440.

[280] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, "Stumped on How to Measure DEI Training?," 29.

[281] Fowler and Blohm, "An Analysis of Methods for Intercultural Training," 46.

beliefs, behaviors and values of varying cultures.[282] Bennett and Bennett note the importance of learning the wise use of cultural generalizations. Generalizations "should be based on research, not just personal experience" or they become stereotypes.[283] They also recommend an emphasis on the equal complexity of every worldview and the importance of their perspectives. "Building on this foundation of acknowledgment and respect, diversity initiatives can then move more effectively in acknowledging political and historical inequality."[284] FSG links the acquisition of this knowledge as a significant step toward better designs for needed goods and services; they also admit that even so companies have rarely pursued this type of knowledge despite the competitive incentive.[285] Notably, Bezrukova finds "training effects on cognitive learning remained stable or in some cases even increased in the long-term."[286]

Reducing unconscious bias is a frequent focus for corporate diversity training. Cliffe observes, "Hiring and promotion practices still favor people from the same racial, gender, and class background as the decision maker."[287] Gino and Coffman confirm, "UB training doesn't go much past explaining the science behind bias and the costs of discrimination in organizations. In fact, only 10% of training programs gave attendees

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[282] Fowler and Blohm, 46.

[283] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 152.

[284] Bennett and Bennett, 150.

[285] Borgonovi, "Reckoning, Repair, and Change," 5.

[286] Katerina Bezrukova et al., "A Meta-Analytical Integration of over 40 Years of Research on Diversity Training Evaluation," *Psychological Bulletin* 142, no. 11 (November 2016): 1243.

[287] Sarah Cliffe, "Race at Work," *Harvard Business Review*, March 1, 2019, 2, https://hbr.org/2019/03/race-at-work.

strategies for reducing bias."[288] They note that effective training teaches knowledge within a context of experience and practice. "It gives them information that contradicts stereotypes and allows them to connect with people whose experiences are different from theirs."[289] Dobbins and Kalev find that bias can unintentionally be activated when individuals feel they are being force-fed information and processes.[290] Thomas-Hunt finds an unintentional rise in problematic behavior may be true for a different reason—once we know everyone is biased, there is less incentive to work against our own.[291]

Harvard Business Review Senior Editor Lisa Burrell describes several misunderstandings that impact diversity training. A misplaced belief in meritocracy is an example.[292] Organizations like to believe that individual merit drives their decision-making regarding personnel while people like to believe they are on a successful life or work trajectory due to their intelligence, good decisions, or hard work.[293] Burrell agrees that talent and a strong work ethic help with success, but so do chance and social standing or an elite education. People prefer to believe they earned what they have achieved.[294] From their research, Harvard Business School Professors John Beshears and Francesca Gino conclude, "Insidious biases and insufficient motivation are often the main drivers behind significant organizational problems. But it's extremely difficult to change the way

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[288] Gino and Coffman, "Unconscious Bias Training That Works," September 1, 2021, 5.

[289] Gino and Coffman, 4.

[290] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 4.

[291] Cohen and Gavett, "The Day-to-Day Work of Diversity and Inclusion," 7.

[292] Lisa Burrell, "We Just Can't Handle Diversity," *Harvard Business Review*, July 1, 2016, 4, https://hbr.org/2016/07/we-just-cant-handle-diversity.

[293] Burrell, 4.

[294] Burrell, 6.

people's brains are wired."[295] They recommend changing the environment for decision-making over trying to change how people think.[296]

Affective Outcomes

Bezrukova indicates that diversity training is different from other types of training because it challenges how trainees may view the world or address issues they see as subjective. "Since attitudes toward diversity are likely formed before training, diversity training tends to be more emotionally and politically charged that many other types of training."[297] Gebert remarks, "Dogmatic convictions exist not only in the religious sphere but also in the political and corporate spheres."[298] Fowler and Blohm stress, "If the outcome of the training is that trainees will modify their attitudes, methods need to touch the trainees' belief systems, often intensely."[299] They also mention that the effect of training on attitudes is hard to measure. "Attitude changes are not easily evaluated. They may have to be observed over time in behaviors, interpersonal relations, and approaches to issues or problems."[300]

Affective change is knowledge accompanied by both attitudes and attributes. Bennett and Bennett believe that an intercultural mindset is necessary. The mindset includes conscious awareness of operating in a cultural context and an awareness of one's

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[295] John Beshears and Francesca Gino, "Leaders as Decision Architects," *Harvard Business Review*, May 1, 2015, 62, https://hbr.org/2015/05/leaders-as-decision-architects.

[296] Beshears and Gino, 52.

[297] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 208.

[298] Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz, "Tolerance," 417.

[299] Fowler and Blohm, "An Analysis of Methods for Intercultural Training," 46.

[300] Fowler and Blohm, 47.

own cultural influences along with a helpful framework to competently contrast cultures.[301] They also see the need for attributes such as curiosity and tolerance for ambiguity.[302] Earley and Mosakowski observe that given that difficulty of adapting to different cultures, motivation and perseverance come more easily if a person has some confidence in their own self-efficacy.[303] Further, individuals who learn to use their defensiveness as a means to seek to understand their sense of threat are more likely to learn from and be more successful in understanding others as well.[304] Ely sees the need for a willingness to take the initiative in learning.[305] She recommends pausing to reflect in emotional moments, affirming the importance of relationships, questioning oneself when defensive, and getting support when needed.[306] Gino suggests that companies create opportunities for diverse groups to interact and encourage workers toward genuine curiosity, respect, and reflection on the perspectives of others.[307] Offering space for reflection enables workers to keep learning.[308]

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[301] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 149.

[302] Bennett and Bennett, 149.

[303] Earley and Mosakowski, "Cultural Intelligence," 8.

[304] Andrea S. Kramer and Alton B. Harris, "Are Your Work Friendships Only with People Who Look Like You?," *Harvard Business Review*, September 9, 2019, 3, https://hbr.org/2019/09/are-your-work-friendships-only-with-people-who-look-like-you.

[305] Ely, Meyerson, and Davidson, "Rethinking Political Correctness," 3.

[306] Ely, Meyerson, and Davidson, 3.

[307] Francesca Gino and Katherine Coffman, "Unconscious Bias Training That Works," *Harvard Business Review*, September 1, 2021, 8, https://hbr.org/2021/09/unconscious-bias-training-that-works.

[308] Gino and Staats, "Why Organizations Don't Learn," 7.

Molinsky describes adapting to culture as hard and stressful work, listing several psychological barriers.[309] Anxiety can grow from the self-perception that one is inauthentic when they try to adapt, or a feeling of incompetence and the realization they are perceived to be incompetent can raise barriers. Either can lead to resentment.[310] He adds, "Nobody changes without a certain level of self-knowledge." Chrobot-Mason's research on multicultural competence confirms that individuals need to be aware of their feelings and emotions and possess the ability to self-reflect.[311]

Cliffe cites other barriers to affective learning. "Well-meaning white people don't think they could possibly be part of the problem. But rigorous research into implicit biases suggests that they're probably wrong."[312] A related problem is that many white people tend to be deeply uncomfortable talking in the workplace about issues of race.[313] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick note people may be conflict-avoidant, and, in addition to disliking confrontation, many people find "DEI often feels amorphous and brings an emotional charge that can seem daunting."[314] Dobbin and Kalev further observe, "Decades of social science research point to a simple truth: You won't get managers on board by blaming and shaming them with rules and reeducation."[315] The method used

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[309] Cliffe, "'Companies Don't Go Global, People Do,'" 5.

[310] Cliffe, 5.

[311] Chrobot-Mason and Leslie, "The Role of Multicultural Competence and Emotional Intelligence in Managing Diversity," 232.

[312] Cliffe, "Race at Work," 2.

[313] Cliffe, 2.

[314] Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, "Stumped on How to Measure DEI Training?," 30.

[315] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 4.

impacts the desired outcome, and managers are more likely to participate when they are invited to volunteer and when the message is framed in a positive way.[316]

Peretz's research into the global context of companies finds that for companies with higher levels of diversity, diversity training can create feelings of cultural dissonance when individuals perceive conflict between their values and those of others.[317] "To the extent that the values that support diversity programs are in tension with the practices that guide employees' behavior in the workplace, employees are likely to withdraw psychologically and behaviorally from their organization."[318] When national cultures differ widely from the values of the diversity training, negative rather than positive outcomes occur. Bezrukova finds diversity training appears less effective at changing attitudes with "no compelling evidence that long-term effects of diversity training are sustainable in relation to attitudinal/affective outcomes."[319]

Behavioral Outcomes

Fowler and Blohm list several desirable behaviors that can come from training. "Skills might include looking at situations from more than one perspective, identifying cultural bias in job interviews, learning how to learn in confusing situations, using more (or less) direct communication in a specific setting, and so on."[320] Bennett and Bennett suggest, "The skillset can be thought of as the expanded repertoire of behavior—a

[316] Dobbin and Kalev, 7.

[317] Peretz, Levi, and Fried, "Organizational Diversity Programs across Cultures," 897.

[318] Peretz, Levi, and Fried, 897.

[319] Bezrukova et al., "A Meta-Analytical Integration of over 40 Years of Research on Diversity Training Evaluation," 1243.

[320] Fowler and Blohm, "An Analysis of Methods for Intercultural Training," 46.

repertoire that includes behavior appropriate to one's own culture but that does not thereby exclude alternative behavior that might be more appropriate in another culture."[321] This includes the ability to analyze interactions to predict misunderstanding and adapt behavior.[322] Gebert posits, "'Constructively' dealing with diversity is dealing with diversity in ways that serve the mutual growth of those involved and increases the chance that people will be able to engage in a dialogue."[323]

Thomas-Hunt particularly mentions the role that managers can play in offering specific, actionable feedback to all employees for their own growth and development potential.[324] Organizations can't change attitudes, though they can make clear what is expected of leaders and managers.[325] She also urges managers to build solid relationships before diversity problems arise. Cornell Professor of Management James R. Detert and Ethan R. Burris, professor of management at University of Texas, encourage managers to seek feedback by branching out to ask "the people who know something you don't. The folks in your immediate network probably are similar to you in background, perspective, and knowledge."[326] Such networking includes people new to the organization who may offer fresh perspectives coming from outside of it.[327]

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[321] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 149.

[322] Bennett and Bennett, 149.

[323] Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz, "Tolerance," 418.

[324] Cohen and Gavett, "The Day-to-Day Work of Diversity and Inclusion," 5.

[325] Cohen and Gavett, 6.

[326] James R. Detert and Ethan Burris, "Can Your Employees Really Speak Freely?," *Harvard Business Review*, January 1, 2016, 8, https://hbr.org/2016/01/can-your-employees-really-speak-freely.

[327] Detert and Burris, 8.

The problem Chrobot-Mason and Leslie discover is that despite the strong positive correlation between multicultural competence and high levels of job performance and leadership ability, participants did not believe these skills were key in organizational success. They hypothesize that participants do not believe these skills are rewarded in the same way as other more recognized core business skills.[328] Their research also reveals "that managers who tend to excel in handling stressful situations and interact well with others are rated higher on multicultural competence."[329] They suggest, "Such individuals are likely to possess the ability to tactfully negotiate employee differences in such a way that minimizes inter-group conflict and promotes cooperation and teamwork."[330]

Dobbin and Kalev suggest training can cause people to learn the right answers without accompanying behavioral changes when negative language, compulsory classes, and remedial or other negative connotations exist.[331] They also state, "As social scientists have found, people often rebel against rules to assert their autonomy."[332] Sabrina Pasztor, University of Southern California professor of business communication, found that when companies use their websites to promote diversity rhetoric that "reframed the issue itself as not one caused by organizational culture or systemic institutionalized discrimination, but rather by customers and stakeholders who expect (and are groomed to expect)

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[328] Chrobot-Mason and Leslie, "The Role of Multicultural Competence and Emotional Intelligence in Managing Diversity," 231–32.

[329] Chrobot-Mason and Leslie, 232.

[330] Chrobot-Mason and Leslie, 232.

[331] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 4.

[332] Dobbin and Kalev, 4.

diversity initiatives to be the 'solution,'"[333] such companies essentially give lip service to diversity training without regard to effectiveness.

Obstacles and Effectiveness

Overall effectiveness depends on the individual and on the organization. Bennett and Bennett believe that diversity training and initiatives need to consider the readiness of the client.[334] Methods, content, and even the choice of trainer can play into effectiveness or resistance to diversity training, depending on the trainees.[335] In their report, McKinsey identifies diversity programs as change management programs and note such programs have a 70 percent rate of failure.[336] They attribute diversity program failures to the lack of prioritization by leadership or low support by workers.[337] Likewise Gino and Coffman acknowledge the impact of leadership on training. "Employees respect it more when the corporation invests intentionality, time, and money."[338]

Research shows members of a demographic majority may be resistant to specifically focused training if they feel they are held "indirectly responsible for past histories of discrimination or other inequities," according to Bezrukova.[339] In their research, Harvard Business Professor Michael I. Norton and social psychologist Samuel

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[333] Pasztor, "Exploring the Framing of Diversity Rhetoric in 'Top-Rated in Diversity' Organizations," 469.

[334] Bennett and Bennett, "Developing Intercultural Sensitivity," 147.

[335] Bennett and Bennett, 158.

[336] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 14.

[337] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 14.

[338] Gino and Coffman, "Unconscious Bias Training That Works," September 1, 2021, 6.

[339] Bezrukova, Jehn, and Spell, "Reviewing Diversity Training," 222.

R. Sommers find that although blacks and whites had similar perceptions of bias in the 1950s, that common understanding has dramatically changed.[340] Their findings "situated specific claims of persecution by White Americans in a broader belief in a new, generalized anti-White bias."[341]They suggest this change may be in part a reaction to affirmative action policies.

Gebert points to another change related to identity and resistance to diversity efforts. He states that different groups often associate with certain values, which may relate closely to an individual's identity.[342] As tolerance has shifted from a demand to bear with differences to a demand to endorse them, some people categorize non-endorsement of different values as intolerance. "Under the regime of a shifted meaning of tolerance, individuals face the demand to adjust, or if not possible, to deny their own values."[343] Peretz finds from her international research that the values of openness, individualism, and egalitarianism are necessary for a diversity program to have effect.[344] "Cultural values are antecedents to diversity programs, while cultural practices serve as moderators of the effect of diversity programs on organizational outcomes."[345]

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[340] Michael I. Norton and Samuel R. Sommers, "Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game That They Are Now Losing," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 6, no. 3 (May 2011): 216, https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691611406922.

[341] Norton and Sommers, 217.

[342] Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz, "Tolerance," 417.

[343] Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz, 418.

[344] Peretz, Levi, and Fried, "Organizational Diversity Programs across Cultures," 897.

[345] Peretz, Levi, and Fried, 898.

Moshiri and Cardon find "diversity training was not associated with more racial diversity."[346] This gap corresponds with Dobbin and Kalev's position that despite rhetoric and implementation, the overall numbers have not changed much.[347] Gebert adds that the dogmatic language and attitudes of trainers or participants can cause poor outcomes.[348] Moshiri and Cardon also note, "Many of the suggested best practices are difficult to draw conclusions about because they are so rarely deployed."[349]

McKinsey concedes from their research that "while certain industries perform better on gender diversity and other industries on ethnic and racial diversity, no industry or company is in the top quartile on both dimensions."[350] Evan P. Apfelbaum, professor of organizational behavior at Boston University, finds these two outcomes benefit from two different emphases: women benefit from difference in approach, and racial minorities from equality in approach.[351] He concludes, "The value in equality approach may represent a foundational priority—a commitment to fairness and equality, all else equal."[352] When a group's representation in a company increases, "it may become increasingly important to build on this foundation by explicitly acknowledging group

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[346] Moshiri and Cardon, "Best Practices to Increase Racial Diversity in Business Schools," 122.

[347] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 4.

[348] Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz, "Tolerance," 416.

[349] Moshiri and Cardon, "Best Practices to Increase Racial Diversity in Business Schools," 122.

[350] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 1.

[351] Evan P. Apfelbaum, Nicole M. Stephens, and Ray E. Reagans, "Beyond One-Size-Fits-All: Tailoring Diversity Approaches to the Representation of Social Groups," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 111, no. 4 (October 2016): 562, https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000071.

[352] Apfelbaum, Stephens, and Reagans, 563.

differences, and to communicate how and why they matter."[353] He posits a need for sequencing the value in equality and value in difference approaches.

Another relatively recent change in diversity training is the definition of diversity itself. Burrell states, "Millennials think of diversity and inclusion as valuing open participation by employees with different perspectives and personalities. In contrast, older workers think of it as equitable representation and assimilation of people from different demographic groups."[354] Moshiri and Cardon note the shift in both academia and corporate America from demographic group-based diversity to diversity of approaches, thinking, ideas, values, and identifications encompassing all aspects of human experience.[355] They suggest, "Part of the reason for the shift from identity groups to value-based diversity in some private industry environments might be that some corporations have found that their diversity approaches that have focused on identity groups have not worked."[356] They also note the influence of Millennials who, as the main generational component of many corporate workforces, tend to define diversity as related to the unique mix of experience, ideas, and opinions that comprise an individual's identity.[357] Such a broad definition of diversity is difficult to manage, track, and quantify.

Key components of diversity programs do emerge for effective outcomes. McKinsey notes that diversity success comes through commitment to dedicated programs

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[353] Apfelbaum, Stephens, and Reagans, 563.

[354] Burrell, "We Just Can't Handle Diversity," 5.

[355] Moshiri and Cardon, "Best Practices to Increase Racial Diversity in Business Schools," 115.

[356] Moshiri and Cardon, 115.

[357] Earley and Mosakowski, "Cultural Intelligence," 115.

with clear and specific goals and the necessary infrastructure to support it.[358] Wingard finds a combined strategy of training, policies, and programmatic interventions is effective.[359] This strategy included periodic measurement and adjustments. Moshiri and Cardon identify the single most significant component for increasing racial diversity as formal authority structures to guide and track the progress of diversity efforts.[360] Dobbin and Kalev find actively engaging managers to help solve diversity problems is more effective overall and without the backlash that comes with other diversity practices; they suggest that it could be because they are not specifically branded as diversity efforts.[361] Regardless, managers are indispensable to effective diversity efforts because of the nature of their day-to-day management of employees.

Summary of Cultural Intelligence Development in the Business World

Businesses and organizations acknowledge a need for cultural intelligence within their leadership and overall workforce. The current primary rhetoric for diversity argues for improved business outcomes. Methods of developing cultural intelligence include training for cognitive, affective, and behavioral results that are often interconnected. Diversity training can be challenging because it touches on emotionally connected and deeply held personal values that are difficult to change. Effective practices include training combined with organizational structures to support and measure outcomes. Overall, diversity is a dynamic complex challenge to viewed as an organizational

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[358] Hunt, Layton, and Prince, "Why Diversity Matters," 14.

[359] Wingard et al., "Faculty Equity, Diversity, Culture and Climate Change in Academic Medicine," 50.

[360] Moshiri and Cardon, "Best Practices to Increase Racial Diversity in Business Schools," 122.

[361] Dobbin and Kalev, "Why Diversity Programs Fail," 8.

commitment for the long term rather a problem that can be solved in a straightforward manner. A few voices in the business community call for companies to seek the greater good of society through their diversity efforts rather than mere profit.

The Experience of Multiethnic Churches

Multiethnic churches engage regularly with matters of culture. Rah notes, "Contrary to popular opinion and assumptions, culture is more of an issue in multiethnic contexts than in single-ethnic contexts. In a single-ethnic context, culture is a given, hardly to be considered."[362] Sociologists Michael O. Emerson and Karen Chai Kim find that some churches serve as an intentional place "where one sacrifices some degree of comfort to be challenged and practice reconciliation and cooperation with people of different cultures." [363] Burns believes the church should be preaching the whole gospel of Jesus as the Lord who gathers the nations to himself.[364] He sees the choice of gathering with one's own culture or sacrificing a degree of comfort to display that gospel to present a credible witness of God's love for all people in an increasingly diverse society.[365]

Motivations for Multiethnic Churches

Multiethnic churches find their primary motivation in the biblical purpose of the church. Bruce Milne, a theologian who pastored a multiethnic church, emphasizes the

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[362] Rah, *Many Colors*, 167.

[363] Michael O Emerson and Karen Chai Kim, "Multiracial Congregations: An Analysis of Their Development and a Typology," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42, no. 2 (2003): 218.

[364] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 228.

[365] Burns, 37.

diverse churches throughout Acts and the letters of the apostles.[366] Such churches are "deeply congruent with major Christian doctrines such as the Trinity, the incarnation, and the future hope."[367] Ince describes the trinitarian nature of God as the heartbeat of the Christian faith,[368] and the church reflects God's unified but diverse nature when it seeks unity across ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic lines.[369] Further, he says when they are "mutually glorifying, speaking…striving to bring praise and to honor others, exhibiting a mutual deference, a willingness to serve on another, and submit to one another—especially across lines of difference—we are imaging God's beauty."[370] Milne calls them "a sign of the presence of God's kingdom as well as anticipating its final triumph, and hence are a supreme means of glorifying the triune God."[371]

During his thirty years as a pastor of a multiethnic church, Tim Dickau discovered a deeper understanding of salvation and redemption. "Salvation does not refer to personal conversion alone, but rather describes God's redeeming work in Christ to restore the whole world—indeed, the whole of creation—to Shalom."[372] Through studying scripture together, the church embraced God's vision of renewal of the whole of creation through

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[366] Bruce Milne, *Dynamic Diversity: Bridging Class, Age, Race, and Gender in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 15.

[367] Milne, 15.

[368] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 37.

[369] Ince, 50.

[370] Ince, 55.

[371] Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*, 15.

[372] Tim Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way: Practicing the Shared Strokes of Community, Hospitality, Justice, and Confession*, New Monastic Library: Resources for Discipleship 7 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 45.

Jesus by the power of the Spirit.[373] Bradley calls this Cosmic Redemption Christianity.[374] "The kingdom of God is the reign of God dynamically active in human history through Jesus Christ over the entire cosmos. Redemption, then, is God's work to restore the whole of creation to himself…a covenant story about everything in creation."[375]

Displaying A New Humanity

Richly diverse churches, according to Milne, "are the fruit of the reconciling work of Christ, and they bear witness and honor not only him, but that all things in heaven and earth are united in Christ." From Ephesians 1:9-10 and 2:14-16, God is uniting all things in heaven and earth under Christ and making one new humanity out of Jew and Gentiles reconciled to himself and each other. "New-humanity congregations offer a unique, biblically mandated means of witnessing to God's purpose in history, of fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments of Jesus."[376] In Matthew 28:18-20, Burns finds more than a command for expansion. The Great Commission is God's ongoing call first given in Genesis 1:28 to be fruitful and multiply to fill creation.[377] He concludes, "This would be one of the major visible signs that God's kingdom had broken into the present age…the love for one another that transcends all nationalities."[378] Mark

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[373] Dickau, 45.

[374] Anthony B. Bradley, "The Great Commission Christianity Keeps Blacks Away from Evangelicalism," Fathom, March 11, 2019, http://www.fathommag.com/stories/the-great-commission-christianity-keeps-blacks-away-from-evangelicalism.

[375] Bradley.

[376] Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*, 15–17.

[377] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 27.

[378] Burns, 34.

DeYmaz, pastor of a multiethnic church for the past thirty years, believes the church walks worthy of its calling to be the new humanity when it manifests in a diverse local church.[379] Taking seriously the Great Commission and the Great Commandment of Jesus means taking seriously the call to love one's neighbor. From the parable of the Good Samaritan, he notes Jesus defines neighbors to include people who may be very different from the dominant culture, groups ignored, marginalized, alienated, and of a different race, class, or culture.[380] "These, then, are our biblical neighbors, the very ones we are called and expected to pursue in love, individually and corporately, through the local church and for the sake of the gospel."[381]

Dickau describes his church moving "towards seeing worship as a way of responding to God's welcome so that we can be (re)formed as the people of God and sent out to share in God's mission for the world."[382] He says they focus on the interaction of the theological vision of the radical welcome of God extended to them which they receive and extend to others for the transformation of their community.[383] Ince states, "The Spirit is at work breaking down the inherent discrimination between Jew and Gentile as he builds the church. Faith in Jesus Christ has replaced overt exclusion with radical inclusion."[384] Yet he knows this does not happen without challenges. Milne names three

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[379] Mark DeYmaz, *Disruption Repurposing the Church to Redeem the Community* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 36.

[380] DeYmaz, 41.

[381] DeYmaz, 41.

[382] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 38.

[383] Dickau, 46.

[384] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 93.

fundamental cleavages in humanity—race and ethnicity, sociopolitical status, gender—that are impacted by the gospel.[385] Thus he states, "It is into this astonishing, unprecedented, multicolored, multigenerational, multiracial, multi-everything community that we are headed if we belong to Jesus Christ."[386] In light of eternity, an individual's current identifications with groups are temporary and pale in comparison to what it means to belong to such an all-inclusive community.[387]

Ince indicates a further importance of a unified diverse church in John 17:21-23. "Jesus says that our unity is the evidence to the world that he is real!"[388] DeYmaz also emphasizes that unity in diversity comes from Jesus, who calls the church to manifest it so the world can see it and believe in him.[389] "If we unite as one in mind, love, spirit, and purpose, the world will experientially understand that he is truly the Savior of the world" because our unity in diversity proclaims the gospel in a compelling way.[390]

The Overarching Biblical Story

God's intention for gathering the nations and making one new humanity follows the biblical storyline from Genesis through Revelation. Burns connects the Genesis 1:28 mandate given to Adam and Eve in Eden to Babel, where humanity remained together to

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[385] Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*, 33.

[386] Milne, 70.

[387] Milne, 70.

[388] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 87.

[389] Mark DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments, and Practices of a Diverse Congregation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 10.

[390] DeYmaz, 10.

build their tower rather than spread throughout the earth to fill and steward it.[391] God's plan for unified humanity spreading throughout the world can only happen through him as "the differences that God gave us quickly became divisions, and only God could put the nations back together in one people."[392] By Genesis 12:1-3, God indicates he intends to bless all the peoples of the earth through Abraham's descendants. Psalms 22 and 67 foretell the nations will turn to the Lord and his salvation known among them.[393] Isaiah repeatedly mentions the inclusion of the Gentiles and the nations in God's establishment of righteousness on earth and revealing his glory.[394] The Old Testament concludes with the promise of Micah 4:1-3 of nations turning to the Lord and dwelling together in peace. "The sign of the Messiah's kingdom would be the launch of the mission to gather the people of all nations back together as one."[395] DeYmaz succinctly outlines the bulk of the New Testament as Christ envisioned the multiethnic church, Luke describes the multiethnic church, and Paul prescribes the multiethnic church.[396] Dickau adds, "The uniting work of the Spirit at Pentecost calls the church to overcome divisions—cultural, ethnic, and racial—and embody God's reconciliation achieved through Christ."[397] He connects the segregation begun at Babel to the reconciling work of the cross and to the

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[391] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 27.

[392] Burns, 27.

[393] Burns, 28.

[394] Burns, 28–29.

[395] Burns, 31.

[396] DeYmaz, *Disruption*, 57. Scripture references: John 17, Acts 11:19-27, Acts 13:1-3; Ephesians.

[397] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 52.

multitude gathered in Revelation 7:9. “The thrust of the biblical story moves persistently toward this multicultural vision.”[398]

Rah notes the opportunity of increasing diversity within North America to reflect the promise of Micah 4:1-3 and the fulfillment of that promise in Revelation 7:9.[399] Researchers Hyun-Chul Lee and Jichan Kim find that multiethnic churches believe they are following God’s initiative and plan for their setting.[400]

Strategies for Discipling

David W. Swanson, pastor of a multiethnic church in the South Side of Chicago, believes that a focus on discipleship rather than conversions is key. “While the call to follow Jesus includes salvation and assurance of eternal life, it does not end with that.”[401] A whole-life approach to discipleship prepares believers “for the costly nature of following Jesus.”[402] Dickau’s church shapes their worship and practices around the liturgical seasons of the church year to connect their local body to the universal church.[403] He describes practices of confession and forgiveness and prayer as part of their

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[398] Dickau, 52.

[399] Rah, *Many Colors*, 15.

[400] Hyun-Chul Lee and Jichan J Kim, “A Qualitative Approach to Ministries and Church Education in Multicultural/Ethnic Churches in the U.S: From ‘Melting Pot’ to ‘Salad Bowl,’” 기독교교육논총 25 (2010): 116, https://doi.org/10.17968/jcek.2010..25.006.

[401] David W. Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to True Solidarity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 156.

[402] Swanson, 156.

[403] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 38.

regular worship as transformational to the congregation.[404] Swanson also recommends using all aspects of formal or informal liturgies to weave the church's understanding of their identity in Christ as individuals but also as a community committed to Christ.[405] Philosopher James K. A. Smith points out "that the sorts of practices that form us—that form our core or ultimate identities—constitute liturgies."[406] He also believes in regular and focused practices of Christian worship as "an alternative cultural formation."[407]

Swanson notes that given the individualism of North American culture, discipleship also includes building an actual community.[408] DeYmaz describes the importance of fostering relationships and friendships.[409] Initially his church formed intentionally diverse groups across ethnic, socioeconomic, and generational lines that met monthly for meals and fellowship. Several years later they launched a more comprehensive program of discipleship through small groups for more consistent interaction.[410] He notes that building committed relationships is fundamental for when misunderstanding or conflict inevitably occurs.[411] Dykstra-Pruim also sees that learning together in the context of smaller groups is key to growth and learning particularly about

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[404] Tim Dickau, "Seeking the Kingdom of God as a Church in a Postmodern Age," *Direction* 48, no. 1 (2019): 52.

[405] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 101–3.

[406] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 26.

[407] Smith, 35.

[408] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 35.

[409] DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, 86–87.

[410] DeYmaz, 87.

[411] DeYmaz, 89.

culture since a person cannot gain intercultural skills without the help of others.[412] In his research into multiethnic churches, Pastor Jacob Dunlow finds integration outside of the worship service is a challenge. "It's not as hard to help people feel comfortable in a worship service as it is in a small group."[413] Some members of Dickau's church have committed to living in their immediate neighborhood. "We have been able to move from diversity towards a shared, integrated life in part because we are a small church with a commitment to community, which places us in proximity to each other."[414]

The hearing and telling of personal stories build relationships. Dykstra-Prium states, "When we tune in to the stories of others, our ideas of them and their world change."[415] Rah describes practical elements to sharing stories—the truth of one's experience, the feelings of joy and pain or suffering experienced, sharing who one is as a fallen image-bearer, and how the power of God is transforming one's identity.[416] He stresses the importance of community truth telling for the sake of reconciliation. "Truth telling will liberate the church to write a more biblical narrative that will integrate the lost practice of lament, the power of shared journey, and the building of common memory."[417] While Swanson agrees with the importance of hearing uncomfortable truths and lamenting the impact of personal and corporate sin and injustice, he also adds that it

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[412] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 8.

[413] Jacob Dunlow, "Disciples of All Nations: The Challenge of Nurturing Faith in Multi-Ethnic Congregations," *Christian Education Journal* 14, no. 2 (2017): 299.

[414] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 60.

[415] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 9.

[416] Rah, *Many Colors*, 144–45.

[417] Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah, *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2019), 11.

is important not to rush or move to quick solutions lest issues be dealt with superficially rather than on deeper, lasting levels.[418] Ince emphasizes that groups who have historically been on the receiving end of public injustice in America need to see their churches attend to the impact of public justice issues.[419] Diverse churches often intentionally address these issues, as a means of confessing truth and also as a way of facilitating the experience of belonging for different groups.[420]

Diverse churches will also directly address the need for cultural training and development. Burns declares, "Cultural competency classes should be a regular feature for diverse churches. This is not something that can be taught one time at a workshop and then forgotten, with the assumption that we now know what we're doing."[421] DeYmaz reports the need to see cultural competence as an ongoing developmental process. His church uses a continuum describing movement from destructiveness to blindness to awareness to sensitivity to competence.[422] He describes cultural competence as taught and grown through personal experience and interactions with diverse peoples.[423] Burns believes churches should "require that any leaders, including small group leaders, ministry organizers, ministry staff, deacons, and shepherding and eldership groups, take a course on cultural training and diversity."[424] Lee and Kim find churches who discovered

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[418] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 45.

[419] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 117.

[420] Ince, 118.

[421] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 211.

[422] DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, 103.

[423] DeYmaz, 96.

[424] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 211.

what they learned from cultural training required for short term mission teams could be transferred to their own congregational context.[425] Ince recommends getting outside help to discern blind spots.[426] Pastor Brad Roth noted the benefit his rural church gained from a local organizer from the Center for Rural Affairs who helped the community "learn to have 'comfortable uncomfortable conversations' about diversity."[427]

Multiethnic churches seek diversity among the leadership. DeYmaz says diverse leadership conveys "a partnership of people from top to bottom reflecting the very heart and message of the church."[428] He warns against diversity for the sake of diversity, which can treat people as tokens or put them in stereotyped roles.[429] Ince adds that minority leaders need to be given genuine authority to be effective.[430] Though the need for diverse leadership is a given, Burns advocates thoughtful choice and intentional development of future ones.[431] Dickau looks for diversity in lay leaders as well as paid staff.[432]

For a spirit of inclusion, DeYmaz suggests intentional steps that include anything from signs in multiple languages to music styles to what art or posters adorn rooms or the

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[425] Lee and Kim, "A Qualitative Approach to Ministries and Church Education in Multicultural/Ethnic Churches in the U.S," 108–9.

[426] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 131.

[427] Brad Roth, "Called to Become the Household of God: Proclaiming the Gospel among Rural Diversity," *Vision* 18, no. 2 (2017): 47.

[428] DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, 71.

[429] DeYmaz, 73–74.

[430] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 138.

[431] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 213.

[432] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 67.

color of the dolls in the nursery.[433] Healthy multiethnic churches should be places where people are comfortable being uncomfortable, but little things can make a difference.[434] Roth recounts efforts to build trust in his rural church. "Singing a song or two in Spanish during worship or having the sermon translated for folks to hear it through headsets did not exactly usher in the kingdom. We were still us. They were still them."[435] Simple neighborly practices of hospitality and attentive listening brought results, "practices that made space for new community to form."[436]

Areas for Growth for Cultural Understanding

Multiethnic churches seek to lay a foundation of biblical knowledge and cultural understanding. They also work to develop character and postures that allow them to welcome each other and pursue loving relationships. In addition, they look to establish both personal and church practices that facilitate building unity in their diversity.

Knowledge of Scripture and Culture

Multiethnic churches teach and preach how the Bible talks about culture. Dickau states, "The gospel narrative is a universal story that weaves together all cultures in God's re-creative action in Christ, offering us an overarching or transcendent purpose and path for the work of intercultural integration."[437] Burns believes, "Every church should

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[433] DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, 109–13.

[434] DeYmaz, 110.

[435] Roth, "Called to Become the Household of God," 50.

[436] Roth, 50.

[437] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 72.

go through the New Testament Scriptures together and study the cultural training that Paul and the other authors gave to the followers of Christ. It was a major component of education and community life in the first century."[438] Ince believes the reality of the Greco-Roman world of the New Testament is like the growing multiethnicity of the U.S. context, including the church.[439] "The multinational audience of Acts 2 came together as people religiously committed to Judaism. They were either ethnically Jewish or converts to Judaism."[440] Despite this commonality, Acts 6 reveals discrimination. The inclusion of the Gentiles, found in Acts 8-13, leads to diverse churches throughout the book of Acts according to Milne, citing Syrian Antioch, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome.[441] The new inclusive society that emerged from the gospel began to weaken and dissolve former divisions of "Jew/Gentile, male/female, slave/free, elder/youth, powerful/powerless, rich/poor, cultured/uncultured."[442] Burns stresses, "God's kingdom is pliable to any culture; it does not have a default human culture, not even Jewish. It will welcome and adapt to any culture but also challenge any person to both bring their culture into the kingdom and to adapt parts of it to the standard of kingdom."[443] Roth highlights, "The power of the transcultural gospel to address changing community demographics arises from the gospel's subtle radicality."[444]

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[438] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 210.

[439] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 91.

[440] Ince, 92.

[441] Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*, 44–50.

[442] Milne, 52.

[443] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 235.

[444] Roth, "Called to Become the Household of God," 48.

Ince also points to New Testament teaching on identity in Christ. "People's Jewishness was not to be the center of their identity."[445] Ethnic identity was not negated but put into its proper place. "The Spirit of God worked to press the people of God into the new normal of having Jesus Christ at the center of their identity."[446] Kevin Gushiken, professor at Capital Seminary and Graduate School, concludes that a "principal purpose of multiethnic discipleship is to locate a person's identity in Jesus Christ, yet in a manner that preserves ethnic identity."[447] Smith states, "Our identity is shaped by what we ultimately love or what we love as ultimate—what, at the end of the day, gives us a sense of meaning, purpose, understanding, and orientation to our being-in-the-world."[448]

Burns finds some churches fear that cultural training is humanism or progressive ideas being smuggled into the Bible, which ignores "the context of much of the New Testament, especially Paul's letters, which consistently walked diverse Christian families of believers through very different cross-cultural experiences and problems."[449] Lee and Kim find that many multiethnic church members perceive exposure to different cultures as a benefit that "helps broaden our perspectives on life…It increases awareness of different worldviews and of God's purposes in the world."[450] Dykstra-Prium stresses the importance of cultural knowledge, which includes knowing one's own cultural identity

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[445] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 96.

[446] Ince, 97.

[447] Kevin M Gushiken, "Is a Christian Identity Compatible with an Ethnic Identity?: An Exploration of Ethnic Identity Negotiation Influences and Implications for Multiethnic Congregations," *Christian Education Journal* 11, no. 1 (2014): 46.

[448] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 26–27.

[449] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 228.

[450] Lee and Kim, "A Qualitative Approach to Ministries and Church Education in Multicultural/Ethnic Churches in the U.S," 109.

and how cultures differ.[451] This is important to undoing the problem of stereotypes.[452] Dickau notes that commitment to sharing life together also helps expose false stereotypes and move toward better understanding.[453] Burns thinks learning about culture and recognizing cultural differences helps discern potential culture clashes within the congregation.[454] For Dykstra-Prium, "Considering which broad cultures, subcultures, and microcultures we belong to can help us understand our cultural identities."[455] Multiethnic churches have to be aware of the various factors that shape a person, including nationality, region where they grew up, urban or rural, race or ethnicity, gender, class, socioeconomic status, religious background, education, and family.[456] Burns also notes understanding how one's cultural background has shaped preferences helps avoid arrogance, judgmentalism, and ethnocentrism.[457] Swanson adds, "We are valuable not despite our distinctions, but with them."[458] Rah believes cultural intelligence is "more about developing a biblical view, rather than a socially derived view of culture."[459] People in multiethnic churches have an opportunity to educate each other.[460]

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[451] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 23.

[452] Dykstra-Pruim, 29.

[453] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 60.

[454] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 213.

[455] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 34.

[456] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 236.

[457] Burns, 131–32.

[458] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 141.

[459] Rah, *Many Colors*, 195.

[460] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 129.

Both Swanson and Rah stress the importance of knowing local history. For Swanson, learning history is part of being rooted in a place and committed to it.[461] Rah sees it as gaining a shared understanding, particularly if people can learn from people who have lived through a period of its history.[462] It can also be a shared learning experience for members of the congregation with aspects of a biblical framework, holistic theology, and spiritual formation.[463] Rah also believes it is important for the practice of lament. "Lament recognizes that no matter what the circumstances, God is faithful, and God delivers. We can rely upon God to be faithful to his Word. Without lament, human effort and human success emerge as the driving force in the activity of the church."[464] Dickau describes a theology of place, an understanding from scripture "of how God is restoring and redeeming places rather than discarding them."[465] This theology allowed his church to cultivate greater imagination of what God might be doing in moving his kingdom toward his vision of beauty and justice in their neighborhood[466] and led them toward "a vision of a church incarnated within a place, seeking to participate in God's mission of making all things new."[467]

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[461] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 142.

[462] Rah, *Many Colors*, 152–58.

[463] Rah, 162.

[464] Charles and Rah, *Unsettling Truths*, 9.

[465] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 10.

[466] Dickau, 10.

[467] Dickau, "Seeking the Kingdom of God as a Church in a Postmodern Age," 51.

Character, Attitudes, and Postures

Beyond an understanding of culture rooted in scripture, multicultural churches pinpoint qualities and characteristics important to foster. Burns encourages members to grow in heart areas including sensitivity to cultural issues, willingness to learn, humility, gentleness, patience, and love.[468] He notes that while Paul was troubled by the idolatry of the people he worked among, he showed no cultural elitism. "He still respected the people. There is not a hint of disdain for them or their culture. In fact, he paid close attention to their culture."[469] He looks to leaders to model learning and humility."[470] Smith puts forth the primacy of love for God and neighbor to orient believers to the world. "Being a disciple of Jesus is not primarily a matter of getting the right ideas and doctrines and beliefs into your head in order to guarantee proper behavior; rather, it's a matter of being the kind of person who loves rightly."[471] Dickau believes that patience is key for diverse churches, along with "commitment to stay in the struggle, even though the inevitable differences and conflicts that arise within a diverse community."[472] He says, "We must at the same time seek a way of life together which ensures that their views or practices will be equally valued…a process of intercultural transformation that

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[468] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 237–38.

[469] Burns, 235.

[470] Burns, 215.

[471] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 32–33.

[472] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 74.

requires large doses of humility."[473] DeYmaz also stresses the importance of staying committed to each other amid the inevitable disagreements with patience and grace.[474]

Ince encourages an attitude of gratitude. "Gratitude builds community while ingratitude destroys it." He describes it as being "grounded in the peace we have with God and one another through Jesus Christ."[475] Burns warns to beware of ethnocentricity that may come when members fall back into thinking that their cultural ways or values are superior. "Cultural assumptions and preferences are below the surface, and that means they have become ingrained into who we are as part of our identity which in turn means that when our cultural norms are violated...it can be an emotional issue."[476] Dykstra-Prim discusses the need for developing and practicing openness, which she terms "a purposeful attitude adjustment" for a person's head and heart.[477] She also adds that empathy is important.[478] While empathy is not necessarily a two-way street, that does not preclude offering it even when it is not returned.[479]

Burns recommends fostering curiosity and sincere questions, attentive observation, and giving others the benefit of doubt when translating someone else's actions or words.[480] Dykstra-Pruim describes similarly, "Observation is active but not

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[473] Dickau, 73.

[474] DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, 89–90.

[475] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 144.

[476] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 229.

[477] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 67–68.

[478] Dykstra-Pruim, 72.

[479] Dykstra-Pruim, 73.

[480] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 238–43.

aggressive: look, research, reflect analyze," while resisting the urge to judge or assign value.[481] She sees this as moving toward dialogue, not to change someone else but rather a change in both people to "understand our differences in more helpful ways." For Burns, this requires self-awareness and self-analysis. "We identity our differences so that we can overcome them using Jesus' method of bending and sacrificing ourselves. This is not limited to one group within the body of Christ; we must all be willing to embrace this."[482] Dickau comments, "Holding these two together—genuine openness to the other and genuine openness to Scripture—will certainly stretch us," but to navigate complex, emotional issues and remain united as a missional community means a commitment to solidarity over conformity.[483]

Behaviors

Multiethnic churches emphasize the biblical imperatives of hospitality and welcome as a way of life together.[484] Dykstra-Pruim describes it as sojourning together. "We need to be a community that extends hospitality and understands the need for a sense of belonging."[485] Burns stresses that God is at work, so relax and get out of one's comfort zone with less fear and self-concern.[486] Rah suggests steps like taking the time to

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[481] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 68.

[482] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 236.

[483] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 70.

[484] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 277.

[485] Dykstra-Pruim, *Understanding Us & Them*, 89.

[486] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 238.

learn basic greetings with the immigrants in the fellowship and to have multiple ethnicities participating from the front platform during worship services.[487]

DeYmaz underlines the importance of language and conversation; in an age of polarity, avoiding dogmatic statements and encouraging thoughtful discussion is essential.[488] He encourages the goal of first adding balance to discussions rather than trying to change someone's opinions all at once. Arguments do not win people's hearts and minds.[489] Swanson finds commonality across differences for the sake of solidarity.[490] Burns alerts leaders to prepare to thoughtfully handle criticism.[491]

Multiethnic churches also encourage corporate practices often used in many monocultural churches but with deliberate attention to the challenges faced by diverse churches.[492] Ince suggests intentional heart examination as a regular practice before taking communion together.[493] Dickau describes regular worship practices of confession for individual sin, corporate, and societal sins as a way to name idols and repent of idolatries.[494] Prayer is important as well, especially for the healing those who have been

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[487] Rah, *Many Colors*, 170–71.

[488] DeYmaz, *Disruption*, 178.

[489] DeYmaz, 179–80.

[490] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 97.

[491] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 252.

[492] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 64.

[493] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 130.

[494] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 103.

wronged and as a pathway toward forgiveness.[495] His church also emphasizes prayer as an action toward dwelling together more deeply in God.[496]

Burns recommends a focus group who can assess and direct progress within the church.[497] DeYmaz notes that healthy multiethnic churches naturally have an outward Great Commission focus because of their family and international connections that churches may capitalize on both locally and globally.[498] Swanson highlights ministry to children as needing the same integration of biblical foundation and teaching about cultural understanding as adults.[499] Gushiken identifies the importance of teachers who can cross cultural boundaries for children and adults.[500] He specifically describes the importance of discipling leaders who consider the individual nature of life situations and cultural factors that influence a person's spiritual formation.[501] Dunlow finds, "The vast majority of curriculum is designed for middle class, white, suburban people."[502] In order to meet the needs of their people, many churches write or adapt their own.

Roth finds that many people misunderstand the challenges of rural life. He has learned that to cherish other people and places means developing a willingness to

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[495] Dickau, 123.

[496] Dickau, 120.

[497] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 262–63.

[498] DeYmaz, *Disruption*, 127.

[499] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 119–28.

[500] Gushiken, "Is a Christian Identity Compatible with an Ethnic Identity?," 47.

[501] Kevin M Gushiken, "Spiritual Formation and Multiethnic Congregations," *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 4, no. 2 (2011): 193.

[502] Dunlow, "Disciples of All Nations," 296.

advocate on behalf of them.[503] Swanson says putting down roots and getting involved is hard and messy because to know others is to open one's self to being vulnerable to their suffering.[504] Dickau recounts that once they extended welcome and companionship, "we were compelled to seek justice for our neighbors by confronting the structures that diminished and marginalized them."[505] Political scientist Nancy Wadsworth finds that multiethnic church participants will risk engaging across cultural difference despite the costs of it. "But their primary operating framework (a biblical multiracial mandate), at least as they articulate it, does not offer clear guidance for engaging in higher cost discussions of political matters."[506] She discovers a range of attitudes toward collective political engagement among multiethnic church participants with significantly fewer on the extreme ends of ambivalence/resistance and active justice-orientation and the large majority falling into a category she termed "nervously interested."[507] Dickau acknowledges the sensitive and difficult nature of civic or political engagement.[508]

Obstacles to Perseverance

Multiethnic church leaders articulate obstacles within the broader North American culture and as well as within individual churches. People want a quick fix, and they have

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[503] Roth, "Called to Become the Household of God," 49.

[504] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 145.

[505] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 44.

[506] Nancy D Wadsworth, "Bridging Racial Change: Political Orientations in the United States Evangelical Multiracial Church Movement," *Politics and Religion* 3, no. 3 (2010): 451.

[507] Wadsworth, 455.

[508] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 119.

the tendency to give up when the complexity of addressing problems within either church or culture proves hard.[509]

Rah points out that if building multiethnic churches was easy, everyone would do it.[510] He identifies the difficulty of the transformation of internal values, and to change the cultural system that produced those values in the first place is even more difficult than simply changing the individual.[511] From their research, sociologists Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith describe a particular convergence of the cultural value of American individualism with certain broader evangelical theological convictions, including sin as a problem of the individual, the need for a personal relationship with Jesus as savior, and individual accountability for free will actions.[512] The often exclusive emphasis on taking personal responsibility for sin without shifting blame onto others and the ability to use free will to determine one's destiny dismisses the minority groups' experience of legal and governmental systems that favored certain groups over others.[513] Like other white Americans, white evangelicals are often ahistorical, leading them to dismiss the lasting impact of historical injustice on others as irrelevant to current issues.[514] Rah points to the fact that when confronted with systemic, transgenerational, communal sins, there is no

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[509] Charles and Rah, *Unsettling Truths*, 174.

[510] Rah, *Many Colors*, 196.

[511] Rah, 189–90.

[512] Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 75–79.

[513] Emerson and Smith, 76–79.

[514] Emerson and Smith, 79–83.

theological space in the American church to wrestle with these issues.[515] Swanson notes that whites struggle to see themselves as anything but individuals—rather than a distinctive culture—making it difficult for them to identify their own assumptions and take seriously the experiences of others.[516] Burns finds growing cultural sensitivity difficult for churches where "the dominant culture is unaware of just how difficult it can be for the nondominant members."[517]

DeYmaz grieves the polarized nature of U.S. culture while admitting that the emergence of the missional church has done little to mitigate it. "And because we are not framing the questions, shaping the narratives, or influencing the conversations, we are left only to choose one side or another."[518] Burns laments that people find it easier to default to political divides.[519] Dickau believes the transient nature of mobile people unreflectively in pursuit of upward mobility makes community building even harder.[520]

Yet multiethnic churches persevere. In Ince's words, "You didn't call yourself into this life. God called you."[521] Rah describes the work as an extremely high calling to truly represent the kingdom of God despite the many obstacles in human society and in human nature.[522] Milne reiterates, "The goal of the church is about the quality of our

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[515] Charles and Rah, *Unsettling Truths*, 185–86.

[516] Swanson, *Rediscipling the White Church*, 36.

[517] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 275.

[518] DeYmaz, *Disruption*, xxx.

[519] Burns, *All Things to All People*, 229–30.

[520] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 17.

[521] Ince, *The Beautiful Community*, 144.

[522] Rah, *Many Colors*, 196.

lives as well as quantity of our conversions."[523]According to Roth, "Paul took the long view, knowing that his work was both pressing and patient, and only realized in fits and starts. Christ had laid the foundation, but the vision was ongoing as the new peoplehood was being built together across time and space."[524]

Dickau reports a slow transformation of character and practices over time.[525] Smith says, "Whether we choose to participate in a practice or unintentionally just find ourselves immersed in it over time, the result is the same: the dispositions become inscribed into our unconscious so that we automatically respond the way we've been conditioned."[526] Emerson and Kim find, "Whites who attend multiethnic churches exhibit less social distance toward African Americans and a lower tendency to hold stereotypes."[527] They posit that such churches carry potential for broader impact on racial attitudes and actions in the U.S.[528] They also find multiethnic churches attracted members "who admittedly would not have been religiously active otherwise."[529]

Summary of the Experience of Multiethnic Churches

Despite encountering obstacles in the broader culture and the nature of fallen humanity, multicultural churches persevere through a strong commitment to the biblical

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[523] Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*, 156.

[524] Roth, "Called to Become the Household of God," 51.

[525] Dickau, *Plunging into the Kingdom Way*, 48.

[526] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 81.

[527] Emerson and Kim, "Multiracial Congregations," 218.

[528] Emerson and Kim, 218.

[529] Emerson and Kim, 225.

mandate to make the invisible kingdom of God visible through their unity in diversity. They are motivated by a robust theology and the reality of the current cultural moment. Key elements of their endeavors include gospel preaching, an integrated approach to discipleship, attention to developing cultural skills and understanding, a commitment to loving their neighbor, and a posture of learning, humility, and graciousness. They consider their work of unity to be ongoing though difficult, and they believe that this is the kind of fellowship to which God has called them, and he will work both individual and corporate transformation.

Summary of the Literature Review

This review of literature examined the three areas of a biblical framework for cultural intelligence, the development of cultural intelligence in the business world, and the experience of multiethnic churches. The first section showed that when the gospel moved into Gentile areas, it raised questions about what beliefs and practices were essential to Christianity and what were Jewish cultural ones. This proved quite difficult for early Jewish Christians as cultural and religious values are both connected to a sense of identity; however, the unity of the diverse early church prevailed. Section two explored the business world's approach to diversity. Working in other cultures or among diverse groups is often difficult, and effective workers require support and training. Diversity training touches on deeply held personal values, often culturally shaped, that people generally resist changing over the long term. The business world lacks a compelling reason for people or corporations to change, particularly where internal values are concerned. Section three reveals that multiethnic churches find a solid biblical foundation and motivating vision to be multiethnic despite the challenges of doing so.

They generally take a comprehensive discipling approach with a long-term view because the slow but dynamic process of individual and corporate sanctification inevitably remains. These three areas of literature provide insights that discipleship leaders can apply to the difficult nature of addressing culture as an aspect of discipleship.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore how local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship. The assumption of this study was that discipleship leaders convinced of the importance of developing cultural intelligence within their congregants have learned important principles on how to grow in cultural intelligence. Therefore, a qualitative study was designed to gain a detailed understanding of the perspectives of discipleship leaders. After being informed by the literature review work, the researcher pursued the qualitative data collection and analysis. To address the purpose, the research identified four main areas of focus to study: motivations, challenges, methods, and benefits. To examine these areas and discern best practices for integrating cultural development into church discipleship, the following research questions guided the qualitative research:

1. What motivates discipleship leaders to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
2. What challenges do discipleship leaders navigate to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
3. What methods do leaders use to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
4. What benefits do leaders observe in others as a result of developing cultural intelligence as a part of discipleship?
    a. What benefits are there for the disciple?
    b. What benefits are there for the local church?

c. What benefits are there for the local community?

Design of the Study

Sharan B. Merriam, in her book *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, defines a general, basic qualitative study as one where the researcher is "interested in how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and the meaning they attribute to their experiences." Merriam identifies four key characteristics of qualitative research: "the focus is on process, understanding, and meaning; the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the process is inductive; and the product is richly descriptive." The nature of a qualitative study allows it to be flexible and responsive to the conditions arising during the process.

This study employed a basic qualitative research design and conducted semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data gathering. This qualitative method allowed the discovery of more comprehensive and descriptive data from participant perspectives in their experience of integrating cultural intelligence development in discipleship.

Participant Sample Selection

This research required interviews with local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches able to communicate in depth about their experiences with the challenges and benefits of developing cultural intelligence within congregants. Therefore, the purposeful study sample consisted of a selection of people from the population of church discipleship leaders who have a conviction about the importance of cultural

intelligence and who have worked in monocultural churches. In order to gain data towards best practices, the participants needed to have intentionally integrated cultural intelligence into their discipling process and have experience of doing this for at least three years.

Participants were selected to represent a variety of reformed evangelical denominations. They also varied in church size and geographical region to provide a broad spectrum of ministry settings. The final study was conducted through personal interviews with nine church discipleship leaders. They were invited to participate via an introductory letter, followed by a brief demographic questionnaire. 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. The Human Rights Risk Level Assessment 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 Cindy Hylton to investigate cultural intelligence and discipleship 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 cultural intelligence can be included as an aspect of discipleship in order to discover best practices.
2) Though there are no direct benefits for participants, the researcher hopes the participants will be encouraged by the experience of sharing their experiences with an eager learner.
3) The research process will include a ninety-minute interview with each of 6-8 participants. Interviews will be video and audio recorded and transcribed for research purposes only.
4) Participants in this research will complete a short demographic questionnaire and participate in a ninety-minute video interview.
5) Potential discomforts or stresses possibly include being interviewed on a recorded call.
6) Potential risks are minimal according to the Human Rights Risk Level Assessment and in accordance with the Seminary guidelines. The risk involved is in being asked questions about viewpoints, experiences, background, behaviors, attitudes, or beliefs that could be politically, emotionally, culturally, spiritually, or psychologically sensitive.
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. Thank you.

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 flexible order of interview questions and the open-ended nature of questions themselves facilitated the researcher's ability to build upon participant responses to complex issues in order to explore them more thoroughly. The data collection and the initial analysis were done simultaneously. Ultimately, these methods enabled this study 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.[530]

The researcher interviewed nine local church discipleship leaders for ninety minutes each. Prior to the interview, the participants completed a demographic form. Due to limited resources and in order to accommodate participant schedules, the interviews were conducted via video calls. The researcher recorded the video calls. An audio digital recording was made as well. By conducting three interviews in a week, the researcher completed the data gathering in the course of three weeks. During and directly after each interview, the researcher wrote field notes with descriptive and reflective observations on the interview time.

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[530] Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4th ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016), 199–200.

The interview protocol contained the following questions.

1. Describe an experience where you saw the connection between cultural intelligence and discipleship.
2. What are some situations in your current church setting that you believe call for growth in cultural intelligence?
3. What are some ideal contexts for promoting cultural intelligence in discipleship?
4. Describe some of the elements you have found necessary to growing cultural intelligence.
5. What are some of the resources that have influenced your thinking about cultural intelligence in discipleship?
6. Tell me about a disciple you saw change as a result of growing in cultural awareness through discipleship.
7. Describe a way you have seen growth in cultural intelligence improve ministry of your church.
8. What are some ways your community has benefited from congregants growing in cultural awareness?

Data Analysis

As soon as possible and always within twenty-four hours of each meeting, the researcher personally transcribed each interview by using computer software to play back the digital recording on a computer and to type out each transcript. The software allowed for coding with subsequent reading. This study utilized the constant comparison method

of routinely analyzing the data throughout the interview process.[531] The analysis focused on discovering and identifying common themes and patterns across the variation of participants as well as congruence or discrepancy between their experiences and insights.[532]

Researcher Position

In qualitative study, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Therefore, the researcher inevitably processes all information and analyses through personal perspective and values.[533] Researchers should be attuned to understanding how biases or subjectivity may shape the research process and findings. It is important for the researcher to report subjectivities and potential impact on the collection or interpretation of data.[534]

This researcher identifies as a missional Reformed Christian who believes that the Bible is the inspired and authoritative Word of God. This belief informs her understanding of the mission of God and the role of every disciple of Jesus to participate in it. This researcher further identifies as an Anglo-American missionary with eighteen years of experience living and ministering in three European countries. She also has extended family members from a different cultural background. These beliefs and experiences suggest some general biases affecting the position of the researcher. However, these experiences also give the researcher a sensitivity to the impact of

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[531] Merriam and Tisdell, 201–2.

[532] Merriam and Tisdell, 207–8.

[533] Merriam and Tisdell, 16.

[534] Merriam and Tisdell, 16.

intercultural situations as well as an awareness and appreciation of the difficulties of engaging other cultures. They also make her sympathetic to the challenges of cultural understanding.

Study Limitations

This study is limited to discipleship leaders working specifically in a local monocultural church setting. Thus, the described best practices may not be available or applicable to those serving in other ministry contexts. This study is further limited to Americans discipling in American evangelical Reformed churches. Some of the study's findings may be generalized to similar leaders in churches in other countries. Findings could also be used by Christian organizations or non-profits to develop discipleship curriculum and to train members in cultural intelligence. The results of this study may also have implications for cross-cultural missionaries working in multicultural settings. Readers who desire to generalize some of the particular aspects of the study's conclusions should test those aspects in their particular context. As with all qualitative studies, readers bear the responsibility to determine what can be appropriately applied to their context.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore how local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship. It explored what motivates these leaders to address cultural intelligence in discipleship, what challenges they face in their efforts, what methods they use, and what benefits they find to doing so. This chapter provides the findings of the nine interviews 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 qualitative research.

1. What motivates discipleship leaders to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
2. What challenges do discipleship leaders navigate to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
3. What methods do leaders use to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
4. What benefits do leaders observe in others as a result of developing cultural intelligence as a part of discipleship?
    a. What benefits are there for the disciple?
    b. What benefits are there for the local church?
    c. What benefits are there for the local community?

Introductions to Participants and Context

The researcher selected nine participants who self-identified as intentionally incorporating cultural intelligence into discipleship in a monocultural church for over three years. All nine serve or had served on the staff of a Reformed evangelical church in the United States, with one having recently retired and one recently joining a cross-cultural ministry. All names and identifiable participant information have been changed to protect their identity. Listed below are the research participants, their ethnic identification, the number of years they have incorporated cultural intelligence into discipleship, and the size and type of church where they have done so.

Zeke, white, seven years in two different large white suburban churches.

Yosef, white, forty years in a large white suburban church.

Xavi, African American, three years in a very large white urban/suburban church.

Werner, white, six years in a small white urban/suburban church.

Vladi, white, four years in a large white suburban church.

Ulrich, white, twelve years in a large white suburban church.

Theo, white, six years in a large white urban/suburban church.

Sven, white, thirty years in a large white suburban church.

Radek, African American, ten years, in a black suburban church, then a white suburban church that has recently become multiethnic.

Motivations for Incorporating Cultural Intelligence

The first research question explored what motivated discipleship leaders to incorporate cultural intelligence into discipleship. While every interview participant referred to a biblical motivation for developing cultural intelligence, other motivations

were given as well. These included social contexts, relationships, and spiritual empowerment.

Biblical Motivations

Every interview participant expressed a biblical motivation to intentionally incorporate cultural intelligence into discipleship. For some, their main impetus was a general motivation for being a faithful disciple of Christ within the broader culture. Theo described how including cultural intelligence with those he discipled encouraged his own desire to "be aware of how culture is shaping me and engaging with that, and where am I unbiblical, outside of gospel values and… unthinkingly absorbing cultural values instead." Vladi also described a general motivation. "When you look at your own heart, the setting, and then God's Word, those three things combined are necessary for learning to live in sort of the kingdom of heaven, even though we live here on Earth."

Most participants stated more specific biblical motivations. The Great Commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself was repeatedly cited. Yosef spoke from the perspective of leading others well. "We have a responsibility to help our people to apply the gospel to these important issues and think, from a biblical point of view, 'what does it mean for me to love my neighbor? What does it mean for me to lay down my life for others?'" Regarding cultural intelligence for the church, Xavi noted, "If we thought of this as part and parcel to the Great Commandment, I think it would look a lot different in how we execute on this."

Another frequently stated biblical motivation was the unity in diversity that Jesus describes in his prayer of John 17. The unity of believers brings glory to God and testifies that God has sent Jesus because of his love for the world. Zeke said, "There is a missional

aspect to that unity." Yosef and Zeke lamented how the divisions of the church had to grieve the Holy Spirit, particularly when unity had such potential to demonstrate the power and truth of unseen realities to the world. Zeke declared, "We are one. It's not like we're trying to be one. We are one in Christ." Xavi also noted, "The early church was never called a multicultural church; it was just called the church. And part and parcel to that was just this beautiful diversity." When the church is unified in diversity, it enjoys the beauty and joy of that unity as it displays the truth of Jesus to the world.

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8 also served as motivation. Radek commented that Jesus commands all his followers whoever and wherever they were to make disciples. He had to challenge his African American monocultural church, "We are an African American church, surrounded by white people, and the Great Commission is still in force."

Revelation 7:9-12 also motivated the participants with its vision of so many people around the throne of God in worship, displaying their ethnic distinctions. Sven responded to the glory of it. "The full flower of the Christian church has all the tribes, languages, peoples, and nations unified around the throne worshiping the Lamb, yet still remaining in some way distinctive from one another. That diverse, many-faceted picture brings God so much glory." Werner likewise found inspiration in that passage. "It blows up our monocultural ideals. And I mean, I haven't met that many people who actually have monoculture as a stated ideal. I think we all want to be diverse, at least in theory, but in practice it is much harder." Radek contended that future vision requires growth in believers now. "If we're actually going to, you know, do the 'every tribe, nation, and tongue' thing, we have to have a sensitivity and deal with our own biases."

Several participants believed that understanding others' cultures is simply living out the gospel. Sven admitted, "I do have a little bit of a reputation at church, for better for worse, that I'm just someone that finds this important, somehow finds it closer to an essential than some other people." Given that the Jerusalem Council ruling clearly meant that other cultures were included rather than merely assimilated into Jewish culture, Xavi also concluded, "There is a gospel impetus to this…this conversation is part of the that broader gospel. And if you don't see that, you're really not understanding Christ, you're really not understanding the Spirit's priority in giving and empowering the church for witness." Werner found the impetus for cultural learning throughout scripture, from creation to consummation. "Just the whole biblical story—it does drive me."

Missional Motivations

A second motivation involved the missional aspect of the unified church of Jews and Gentiles found in Ephesians 2 and 3, built together and able to navigate and work across cultural differences. Zeke traced that progression thus: "There's an I, and a we, and then it ends in mission. It talks about working together, participating with the Lord and what he's doing. It's so comprehensive." Xavi lamented the missed opportunities to put this process into practice, specifically in 2020-21, amid such cultural upheaval. "As the body of Christ, you would hope that we would be the ones who would have some answers, that we would be the ones who would understand what it's like to have a variety of differences and be able to love well across them." Radek saw the missional importance of unity in diversity for the church in stark terms. "Here's the truth of the matter. I'm just convinced that, and nobody can tell me different, that if we can't figure this out, we should shut up about Jesus completely."

Several pastors mentioned the motivation to reach out missionally, either within their own cities or beyond. Ulrich wanted to equip his congregation to engage all types of people through their jobs, professions, and daily lives as they rubbed shoulders with non-believers. Radek thought more about reaching out locally in missional partnerships with different kinds of churches. “If you’re just going to cooperate as churches in the same city, you’ve got to understand one another, you’ve got to be culturally sensitive, deal with your judgments and presuppositions about each other. Everyone has to do it.”

Social Contexts

A few leaders reported that local violence resulting in the deaths of young black men shocked them into an awareness of what life was like for minorities and motivated them to gain greater cultural understanding, as members of the dominant culture. According to Zeke, “That terrible death really caused us, I think, to realize that we don’t get something.” Werner also noted his own ignorance. “That was a big eye opening, a key learning moment for me just even understanding white culture as a culture on its own. And it prompted a lot of curiosity because it’s just all I’ve ever known.” Zeke discovered he needed to hear and acknowledge the stories and histories of minority brothers and sisters to help heal the wounds that block racial unity. “I’m telling you, it’ll break your heart...I can’t leave my brother and sister like that, you know? You can’t do that.” Whenever his church taught and discussed racial justice, it encouraged Sven that the church youth always showed up. He observed they were more attentive and adept at diversity than their parents.

Radek and Xavi acknowledged that where racial reconciliation and unity are concerned, American history grieves minorities. “White people have not historically been

great for black people," stated Radek. "I just don't think as a black man, as deeply as I feel all those things, I don't think it lets us off the hook. I really don't." While both leaders expressed the conviction that they carried the same gospel imperatives to unity, grace, forgiveness, and love as whites, Xavi described how significant the gospel motivation was as a minority. "When you don't understand this conversation on cultural intelligence, you're not getting the full breadth of the gospel. And that's a message I can't afford to tire of."

Some participants noted the importance of attending to the culture around their churches. A change in demographics due to recent immigration impacted one church where Zeke served. Prayerful consideration of what the Lord was doing led the church leadership to ask questions about how to adapt to the people God was bringing into their monocultural area. Their strategic plan embraced the changing demographics as a motivation for incorporating other ethnicities. Theo also noted that as part of a church plant launch team, a first consideration was awareness of the local culture. "Who are we trying to reach within this city? What is the cultural norm? How does the culture shape them and how does the gospel speak to that particular lens of culture?"

Pastors of different generations talked about their motivation to live counter-culturally. Yosef came of age in the 1960s during a time of cultural upheaval in the U.S. When he became a believer, the earlier counter-cultural discussions became questions of how to live counter-culturally in a biblical way. His early fellowship readily challenged American ideas regarding power, justice, and personal affluence or comfort. They regularly wrestled with, "What does it really mean to be a Christian in the world and challenge some of the cultural assumptions and fully live out what we read in scripture?"

Theo talked about the struggle for people in the American South to ask cultural questions because of the mingling of Southern cultural values with the gospel. He regretted how many people conflate the status quo with gospel priorities, saying, “There’s not a real sense of being salt and light,” of rejoicing that “gospel security, intimacy with Jesus, frees people to live as citizens of a different kingdom and culture.”

Relationships

Several leaders mentioned that being part of a community motivated and sustained them. Having like-minded majority friends helped, but even more important was having some diversity in the church. Sven prized the generous and vulnerable openness of the minority culture people in his church. “They have set some things aside to participate, and they are open books to us. And I’m amazed at that.” A key theme was the value they placed on their friendships and relationships across lines of diversity. Sven spoke of a colleague, “He’s really one of my best friends and a close confidant, and we talk about this stuff all the time. And I think I need that partnership to be sustained. I don’t think I could do it alone. I don’t think I’d bother if I was alone.” Radek described his cross-ethnic relationships, “I won’t say it’s easy, but I’ve just got a lot of people who really love me and who I love, and I want other people to experience that.”

Another theme was the benefit gained from being with people different from one another. Several leaders mentioned significant impact from short-term mission experiences, with one of them often returning to the same place. Other cultures shaped how they grew in their faith and understood God’s activity in the world. Another participant learned new things about his home country as a teen-aged missionary kid living abroad. The experience of cross-cultural living also enriched his vision of the

world and other cultures as it deepened his faith. As Radek described people of different cultures rubbing shoulders, the sum became greater than the parts. “I genuinely do feel like we are all much better together, like we are impoverishing ourselves when we don’t. We’re not experiencing one another in Christ.”

Spiritual Empowerment

A few leaders mentioned that growing in cultural intelligence for the sake of the kingdom of God required the power of the Holy Spirit. Head knowledge was helpful, but the real work was a work of the heart and proved more challenging. Xavi declared, “Saying this is a gospel imperative—the gospel just doesn’t work on our heads, it holistically affects everything about us, including our hearts.” Ulrich noted his difficulty in dealing with culture yet acknowledged the power of the Spirit. “The Holy Spirit can manage even in the midst of our hopelessness, our helplessness.” Both he and Theo mentioned the practice of traditional spiritual disciplines to renew their hearts in the struggle. He continued, “The answer is individually learning how to live more in Christ…I have a rich prayer life.”

Most of the leaders mentioned the difficulty of the work and how easy it was to grow demotivated. While many motivations could start the process of engaging well with culture, the power of the majority culture allowed retreat from engaging with others. They perceived dire consequences if leaders did not persist. Yosef pressed the urgency of being aware of cultural forces at work. “What’s the air that we breathe? It’s so much that is counter to the gospel and a biblical worldview. And we’re going to slowly be discipled in that direction without even realizing it.” Ulrich added that the church had a key role to play in God’s purposes. “I don’t see an alternative. Christ usually uses the vehicle of the

church. She's never been healthy you know. I have asked the Holy Spirit to keep me from cynicism…I'm very hopeful in Christ." Xavi spoke emphatically about hope for change through the power of the Spirit to fulfill God's purposes.

> The type of cultural intelligence that we see in scripture is being wrought by the Spirit. When I see people empowered to speak across differences, that's being done by the Spirit. And only he can empower that type of lasting change that has the right impetus, that has the right motivators, that sustains our ability to stay in and endure and persevere in it. It has to be a heart level change.

Summary of Motivations for Incorporating Cultural Intelligence

All nine participants referred to biblical motivations for incorporating cultural intelligence into discipleship. Several specifically rooted that motivation in the words of Jesus—either the Great Commandment, the Great Commission, or Jesus' prayer of John 17. Some also referred to Revelation 7, and some referred to a gospel imperative for cultural intelligence for the sake of unity in the church or for mission. Other motivations included experiences in their social context, including the cultural, social, or political turmoil of recent years. Diverse friendships or being part of a diverse community of believers motivated and sustained many of the participants. They all acknowledged the difficulty of standing against cultural forces, particularly for the sake of unity and faithful witness to Jesus. They believed it was a work that could only be done by the Spirit.

Challenges to Incorporating Cultural Intelligence

The second research question examined the challenges that leaders faced incorporating cultural intelligence into discipleship. The challenges fell into two broad categories: strong cultural forces and a weaker gospel foundation and formation of disciples in the face of those forces.

Strong Cultural Forces

Participants noted the difficulty in helping their congregants grow in cultural intelligence as a part of discipleship despite being in churches with vision statements committed to engaging in their communities and world. The participants described several areas within their majority culture churches that proved challenging to fostering cultural intelligence. These included cultural values, cultural blind spots, cultural or political priorities, majority culture attitudes and ignorance, and cultural barriers.

Cultural Values

The busyness of life was often one of the first things participants mentioned. Activities most often mentioned were high pressure jobs and kids' activities, with sports leagues being big consumers of time and energy. Part of the busyness came from the sincere desire of parents to provide a good education and beneficial opportunities for children; however, two pastors mentioned that it was not merely "good" but "the best" that people were seeking though their busy work lives and schedules. Yosef described these as "un-reflected upon choices" generally related to affluence or a definition of success. He also lamented parents' pursuit of "the best" for their kids without making character or virtue development a primary goal. Theo linked the desire to be a good parent with the relentless pursuit of opportunities for kids. Parents bought into a cultural ethos that to not do this made them bad parents. He detected a fear of somehow putting kids in jeopardy compared to their peers that drove parents so hard. Vladi also noted the pressure parents felt to do what other seemingly successful parents did or risk being labelled a bad parent. Cultural assumptions about what parents needed to provide and what kids needed to be participating in led to a pace of life that curtailed energy for

anything else. Both leaders also mentioned that the pace also crowded out self-reflection and discouraged self-awareness, important elements for growing cultural intelligence. Werner noted that the busyness of his congregants caused them to be territorial about their free time. They not only had no time for reflection, but they also had no time for involvement, even though they said they wished to have more diverse relationships or diversity in their church. Sven likewise had numerous members who would assent to the need for cultural intelligence but had no time for what it required. Ulrich confessed to being frustrated with choices his congregants made in pursuit of success, comfort, financial security, and what they believed constituted a good life. These choices dictated their pace of life and the vision of what they were doing and why. He found it hard to get people enthused about "interacting with the culture and society in the name of Jesus" when they had no greater vision for it.

A few leaders mentioned individualism or independence as a primary value that blocked learning. In terms of individualism, a person's choices have become culturally unassailable, even among people who professed to believe in the authority of scripture. Yosef commented that people are now "unwilling to be challenged about really basic things" that are clearly not in line with scripture, whereas when he was a young pastor, his church regularly did exactly that. Vladi raised the issue of individualism in the context of mask-wearing but believed it was symptomatic of far more serious concerns considering what it means to be part of the body of Christ. "That is a huge barrier, I think, to life as a body and community of believers. We use and hear the body metaphor a lot, but I don't think we realize how different that is from American culture." When participation in community called for a person to conform to biblical values or sacrifice

for other parts of the body, participation often lost to what Theo termed "this American cultural ideal of sort of independence; nobody can tell me what to do." In Werner's context, he noted a high value on free time and a dearth of people willing to volunteer for anything. The impact of everyone off doing their own thing left newcomers struggling to connect or find community. Vladi believed if people weren't so busy or caught in these cycles, there would be more time for people to support others or just build some relationships. Thus, even though congregants might believe the biblical mandates, cultural values fueled lifestyles that made growing cultural intelligence difficult.

Cultural Blind Spots

The obliviousness of the majority culture to the impact of their own culture was brought up repeatedly. Leaders sometimes felt people failed to perceive a world beyond the culture they inhabited. Having spent several years on the mission field, Ulrich admitted he sometimes thought "you have no idea what the world is actually like" when he was talking with people in his comfortably affluent church. People took their financial well-being and educational experiences for granted. Vladi identified a lack of awareness that "this feels like normal to us that everybody has all these things," whereas generally speaking, "this is not the way of the world." Werner noted majority culture members could see other groups as having a culture, but it was harder when it came to themselves. "People don't see they are enculturated."

Werner's church started with a stated vision of reaching a diverse community. Reflecting on their lack of success, he speculated that the church did not realize that they were signaling a different vision. As an educated, middle-class congregation, they unintentionally created a church that they liked. His concern was that they communicated

who the church was really for—people like themselves. As an educated population, their communication style included "a very dense vocabulary," and they excelled at a particular style of music. But he noted, "Everything about us is so white." He went on, "If we are going to pursue diversity, then there's got to be some kind of signal that this is not just for white people." A similar issue manifested in churches that had some diversity. Sven said, "My minority members and attenders of the church are often just not seen by the larger church." Zeke also described a majority culture church who ignored the diverse community around it as well as the diversity of people who attended. Often majority culture churches found little impetus to become inclusive spaces. Xavi said, "When you have limited exposure to such engagement, you go with what's familiar, and you go with what you've always done."

With blind spots, people can be oblivious to what they have missed or what questions to ask to grow in their awareness—they simply don't know what they don't know. But there can also be an element of denial. The majority culture has an accepted understanding of the world that has encouraged people to not hear the experiences and stories of minority voices. Xavi observed, "We find all types of reasons to dismiss people, to not hear their narrative, and to not hear their stories." People can refuse to hear and see, and thus they refuse to develop empathy. Denial becomes a protective shield. In Xavi's experience, this denial signaled a painful emotional place that people were not yet able to explore. So, they remain stuck with cultural blind spots.

Cultural and Political Priorities

The mix of politics and culture over the past few years was a common refrain for participants. It proved impossible for a participant not to raise the topic at some point. A

few mentioned generational propensities toward either end of the political spectrum in churches. Ulrich described a generally more conservative older generation with a high value on liberal democracy and capitalism, with an added concern for "reacquiring Christendom." He stated that living in a red state, "It's very, very hard for people to believe that America is post Christian or that we live in truly a secular environment." When the staff tried to engage the church on issues of culture, they were accused several times of "not preaching the gospel." On the other hand, he found the younger, more progressive part of his congregation leaned toward a personal sense of goodness or right and wrong that they perceived as "a morality higher than God's." He believed that the 2016 election led people to become entrenched in ideologies over obedience to scripture. Both Yosef and Theo spoke of the difficulty of confronting libertarian attitudes, notably during the pandemic. According to Theo, "It's been shocking how much people haven't recognized that conflict with scriptures that speak to how we're to relate to government."

Participants also talked of the overall impact of the 2016 election on the church and the negative fallout from it. Radek lamented, "Trump's election, and not just election, but ascension and election, and what not only he said and did, but what he represented was the exposure of the willingness of many evangelicals to push morality to the side." Sven noted that his church has long talked about cultural intelligence, crossing cultures, and racial reconciliation as a normal part of discipleship in the life of the church, but now "talking about it seems political and hard somehow." The current political climate has pushed people to be more extreme in how they characterized others, contrary to what scripture calls believers to do. Xavi described it as limiting "a person to the worst characteristic we can think of for a group." Yet for Radek, the reality was, "There's more

in between strokes than there has ever been when it comes to that stuff on both sides." Werner had to be careful not to be labelled as a type of person or others "will shut down and just not hear what you have to say," despite being in what he described as generally open and receptive congregation. Deep suspicion and division over a mix of political and cultural values exists in the body of Christ rather than actual unity and commitment to scripture; the research participants grieved that reality.

The strength of these cultural and political priorities also led to identities that compete with an identity in Christ. Ulrich observed that people were being formed by things other than the church and scripture. Subculture identities haven taken precedence over the one found in Christ. Those groups so influence a person's sense of right and wrong that they refused to yield even in the face scriptural contradiction. Along with that came a fear of rejection by that subgroup of people. Theo described a sense that "my group holds to this belief in a way that it is threatening. I would lose my innermost community if I moved away from this belief…This is who I am." Like several other participants, he was surprised at this discovery. "I thought that we were grounded in more gospel values as a church community and saw how much people weren't. They were more committed to political cultural values, or tribal cultural values, than they were to church community." Xavi also saw fear among pastors. "I've just seen amazing leaders afraid to have the conversation on what's happening, afraid to name the divisiveness that they're seeing, afraid to name the polarization, afraid to take a gospel stance because they are afraid of alienating one group or other." Considering the immersion of people in cultural, non-biblical values, Yosef declared, "We don't stand a chance if the only thing we're doing is a thirty-minute sermon."

Majority Culture Oblivion and Attitudes

Participants acknowledged problems with majority white culture perceptions that blocked growth in cultural intelligences. Many congregations had little understanding of the ongoing experience of minorities, preferring to think racial issues were mostly resolved. Theo said that when his church met with an African American church in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, the leadership realized "how little our people understood kind of the way their own living in the predominant culture had shaped them and the places they were blind to." Sven noted that even in a church that did a lot of immigrant and refugee ministry, a persistent attitude remained of "Why should I come and hear more about race? Aren't we in a good spot? Why should we stir all that up again?" There was an ignorance of the continuing impact of racism on minorities and the majority culture believed talking about issues unnecessarily stirred up issues that no longer persisted. Zeke noted that for many African Americans, the experiences of Jim Crow or the Civil Rights movement were part of their lives and family histories, not something they read about in textbooks at school. Xavi experienced sitting in a segregated medical waiting room when Jim Crow laws were illegal yet still practiced. Radek commented that he followed Ruby Bridges, who first integrated schools in the South as a young girl, on Instagram. "She's alive and well." Werner acknowledged that the Southern congregation he pastors could definitely grow in their understanding of the breadth and depth of the culture of their area. His state is well-known for its long history of racism, and the pain of those wounds lingers still.

Majority culture churches also have strong preferences for their theology and chosen style of worship that leaders found hard to dislodge. Zeke admitted, "You mess with people's worship space, and it's a huge hurdle." Werner noted their sermons and

music were pretty much aimed at white, middle class, college-educated people, and the congregation was not inclined to make changes to appeal more broadly. A sense of superiority could also be attached to preferences. Several leaders mentioned majority culture churches often welcomed others to join them, but with an underlying assumption that they had the correct way to worship. Said Zeke, "From the white perspective, white Western expression of worship is quality…and anything less than that is not good enough." Radek explained that to African Americans, whites were therefore not genuinely interested in racial reconciliation. "They just want blacks to come to their churches and go along with their program."

Werner noticed that it was easy for an educated group to believe that because they read the right things and used the correct language, they understood cultural issues. His congregation would agree in theory on the importance of an issue of justice, but when it came to doing something for justice's sake, they were too busy. "Their lives feel really full." They had intellectual assent with a busy life that inhibited deeper involvement. Sven saw how the majority culture was practiced at identifying what is wrong or offensive without doing anything further, concluding, "but that's not cultural intelligence." Xavi agreed, saying, "People often think they're more culturally aware than they are." In Sven's experience, even people who wanted to be involved often struggled to reconcile their desire for impact with the background role they had been asked to play to be genuinely helpful. It was hard for them to persevere when experiences didn't meet their expectations.

Another problem that participants mentioned were attitudes regarding minorities in leadership in white churches. An unconscious bias often played out where majority

culture leaders held roles with power while minorities led in supportive roles. When Sven pointed out the dynamic in one situation, people took offense, grew defensive, and became suspicious for his articulating what was happening. Radek noted that most majority culture people had never been under minority leadership. He said that the people who struggled most with his leadership were white men. He had been accused of saying things he'd never said, of being Marxist, and of teaching Critical Race Theory, most often without the person knowing what Marxism or CRT is. "So, I'd know when they said that, 'you're just parroting a trope.'" Some folks would just leave the church, but he credited those who stayed and wrestled through issues with him.

Cultural Barriers to Overcome

Minority communities have also erected barriers against the majority culture. When deep wounds have been inflicted, when history has played out differently for different groups and the majority narrative prevails, and when systems persist that advantage the majority, resentments and suspicion result. Werner found high walls around the ethnic communities in his ministry neighborhood. "But it's still our call to try to understand and try to build relationships." Sven described that upon realizing there existed "an invisible barrier that someone had to cross," he concluded that it should be him. One thing he learned was the existence of different cultural values. "My black friends who are leaders in the church, they think a lot about justice. I don't. And they think about justice as a spiritual discipline. I don't. I think about it as a political thing that the church doesn't mess with. That's changing for me." Radek described the black perspective when whites wondered why blacks lacked the motivation for reconciliation within the church. "We tried a couple hundred years ago, and you literally dragged

Absalom Jones off his knees while he was praying in the church and kicked him out." Blacks now have a rich history of their own denominations, churches, and worship, and they do not want to give them up. He acknowledged the importance of validating that history and story, and still concluded, "But we as Christians don't have that option of just saying we're good with being segregated."

Minorities who choose to participate in majority culture churches set aside significant things to do so. While Sven notes that many truly love a minority member of the staff, he believed they did not realize the things this person had to navigate as an extreme minority in the church. Radek mentioned that most minorities spend a lot of time in majority spaces, and they "code switch" to move in and out of minority and majority cultures. "Most African Americans don't even realize the toll that those mental gymnastics take on them…because we just do it." But it leads to a weariness that the majority culture cannot fathom. But Sven also knew his church had deeply hurt some of their minority members during the past couple of years as racial issues unfolded "by our silence, by our not taking enough initiative towards them, by not praying in the service enough, or including it in our sermons." He personally was initiating a lot with these members. "But they're still not quite so sure. Is this church serious about racial reconciliation or cultural intelligence?" He knows that they bear the brunt of the burden of hurt when the majority culture makes mistakes, and he's equally aware that the majority culture cannot learn without them. "They know how to adapt and read culture already."

To see the way culture shapes people and try to change or stand against it inevitably means disruption in how things have been done. There is a cost to resisting

where culture naturally pushes when the gospel calls to something different. Awareness also brings greater responsibility for those who gain it. “You can’t unknow it,” said Xavi.

Weak Foundations and Formation

Participants identified weak gospel foundations and formation that made developing cultural intelligence difficult. Members possessed a weak biblical, missional, and communal foundation from which to engage culture. Fear and the difficulty of growing cultural intelligence likewise inhibited its growth in their congregants. Leadership changes often brought other challenges.

Weak Foundations

The response of congregations to the challenges of cultural and political priorities led several participants to consider the state of biblical literacy among the members. All of them were in solid Bible believing and teaching churches, but good teaching did not necessarily lead to deeper understanding or life application. Sven reported that though many people attended his church because they really liked the preaching of the senior pastor, they also did not otherwise participate in the life of the church. Theo realized that though his church valued biblical teaching, they tended toward head knowledge for correct theological answers but did not apply it to life, particularly when it challenged a belief or commitment people held dear. They did not look at their lives or their cultural values through the lens of the gospel and critique the choices or values they saw with the scripture that they read. Despite frequent teaching from the New Testament, Xavi and Sven realized that people simply did not see the multiethnic and multicultural nature of the biblical context. With this lack of understanding of the ethnic and cultural tensions of

that context, people failed to apply the scriptural teachings to their own. The result was a weak biblical conviction that God wanted them to also move past lines of difference for his kingdom purposes.

In the face of current issues, participants described a church ill-prepared for the challenges of the time. Churches reflected the divisions within the broader culture rather than considering how God was inviting them to join him in mission. Ulrich described members as neither seeing nor being motivated by new possibilities for local evangelism or mission. Sven wanted the church to think more like missionaries in their own context. He cited a need for a better missiology and a stoutness of heart to engage not only unbelievers but differences within the church. Zeke described an unwillingness to die to self as a big hurdle. "Loving your neighbor well would require you to die to yourself a whole lot...folks need to die to themselves and their preferences and that's a challenge." The call to lay down one's life to follow Jesus appeared peripheral to the pursuit of personal flourishing; culture or political wars felt more pressing than God's missional activity in the world.

Participants found what had seemed to be strong fellowships were exposed as fragile during the pandemic. Unexpected differences, often along political lines, became exacerbated. Theo described his realization that congregants identified more strongly with subcultures than the church as "jarring." He said that "watching the community be so fragile" was heartbreaking for him. Several participants expressed shock that people would leave churches over having to wear a mask to protect others. Pastors struggled to motivate and comfort their people in a universally stressful season. Sven admitted, "People have said very hurtful things, and I've not always known the way to go. I have

felt my weakness and also just the pain of trying to shepherd people." He found it hard to lead or set an example with people like himself, much less across race or cultural lines. He concluded the church had proven "malformed for this cultural moment." Yosef added, "Who can tell what God will do to reverse some of the things that have come about?"

The Context of Fear and Difficulty

Participants all mentioned that people simply find it too easy to be comfortable, to be with people doing things that feel more natural or don't require a lot of effort in the context of their busy lives. Separate and comfortable was far easier than the hard work of real love and unity within the gospel of Christ. In terms of ministry, members working with Vladi were known for supporting missionaries in foreign countries. However, "There's a proximity, like their actual neighbors, that requires you to consider how you are allocating your time and energy." The church is less inclined toward that kind of direct ministry. "That requires physical changes. That's hard. That's really uncomfortable." Yet as Xavi put it, "Discomfort is necessary for growth." Growth requires that a person be exposed to different people and beliefs, though mere exposure does not necessarily translate into cultural intelligence. Sven described the need for "heart work," getting deeper into the ways to resist the exposure of sinful attitudes, commitments, and beliefs that need repentance and resist the call of the gospel to live differently. Specific heart issues that participants mentioned included arrogance, personal pride, selfishness, self-centeredness, judgmentalism, resistance to critical examination of assumptions or values, and suspicion about the experiences or insight of other cultures.

The difficulty of growth is exacerbated by the prevalence of fear. The fear described by participants took several forms. One fear involved stereotypes and

caricatures about other cultures. Xavi said, “It’s easy to kind of create your own narrative of suspicion about what you don’t understand, and I think that often happens in cultural difference.” Other fears mentioned were exposure of their own ignorance or culpability or exposure of a lack of competency interacting with a different culture. Werner believes that education has fed guilt among millennials about white history or complicity in injustice. They lack the ability to deal spiritually or culturally with historical guilt and fear something may be wrong with them. The resulting shame could play a role in their passive resistance to more active involvement in their broader community. Xavi described a fearful reaction after a suggestion to invite input from minority members before for a church session decision. “The suspicion was that we were wanting to take something, and not that we were wanting to give something.”

Interest in cultural intelligence often waxed and waned in majority culture churches. Leaders found it hard to sustain the interest of the majority culture. Zeke noted, “We live in a white world. We don’t think about race, except when we see it on the news.” Xavi agreed, “You have the ability to walk away when it gets uncomfortable, and it will necessarily get uncomfortable if you’re growing in it.” But Zeke insisted that leaning into the discomfort was key. “The gospel should disturb you.”

Leadership

Leadership issues could also be problematic. Several leaders were in churches initially planted with a strong vision for commitment to reconciliation and engaging the cultures of their community. Werner related how after some challenging pastoral transitions, motivation for the original vision disappeared. Despite discussion among the current leadership, “The initial mission just never fully took off.” Ulrich described the

loss of a key leader, and "no one could quite fill the leadership vacuum." New leadership left the congregation "confused," and they lost earlier momentum and motivation. Even with a consistent vision and leadership, sustaining a vision was hard. Normal transitions of membership require continually engaging new members with the vision. Otherwise, members become comfortable while newcomers may never buy in. Zeke commented, "When that mission is not kept in front of people, it just gets lost."

Other pastors mentioned the propensity of church leaders toward risk-aversion and a high value on efficiency, qualities that impede engaging across cultures. Yosef believed the majority culture value on numerical growth was a barrier to intentional work toward multiethnic unity, which required a lot of time and trust-building. He described how even strong partnerships with other churches of different ethnicities took time, buy-in, and good structural support. Radek was a part of a diverse group of pastors who were doing exactly that—working together and dreaming of ways they could move together toward further racial reconciliation in their community. But due to changes in personal situations, "the band broke up." Though the pastors continued the same kind of work elsewhere, their shared hopes never came about.

Summary of Challenges to Cultural Intelligence

Participants noted that largely unexamined cultural values kept members of majority culture churches busy, even pressured, with little time or energy beyond their jobs and families. Cultural blind spots and assumptions also kept people oblivious to the impact of their culture on themselves or on minority cultures. Recent cultural and political shifts exposed how non-gospel priorities took precedence over gospel ones and how individuals tethered their identity to those priorities and values over an identity in

Christ. Through the challenges of the pandemic and political and cultural developments, people displayed an inability to apply biblical teaching to their current context. This weakened the church's motivation for mission or community building. They said that growing cultural intelligence was hard work that requires a willingness to enter uncomfortable spaces. Fear was a demotivator, and white people often retreated rather than engage for the sake of loving their neighbor. Leadership transitions often contributed to loss of vision or momentum.

Methods Used to Grow Cultural Intelligence

The third research question looked at the methods that discipleship leaders used to develop cultural intelligence. Leaders used a variety of strategies and methods, but all sought to encourage biblical motivation, expand cultural knowledge, address attitudes and issues of the heart, offer opportunities for experiences and relationships in other cultures, and deepen dependence on God.

Overall Approaches

The importance of meeting people where they were emerged as a theme, and a common view the participants expressed was that people needed to be in a receptive place to listen and learn. Werner remarked, "I have to be careful about what I suggest to people and how fast…otherwise it shuts down learning." Zeke articulated how he used strategic steps, starting with a big event where skeptics could come but remain on the sidelines. Though not a big commitment, it was a good first step. Later they might feel safe enough to join a smaller setting such as a Sunday school class or small group discussion where conversations could stretch them.

A couple of pastors described church leadership pursuing a more holistic, unified strategy for teaching, understanding, and engaging culture for ministry purposes. Ulrich described their strategy to encourage incarnational discipleship and evangelism as "a relentless emphasis on this through every vehicle at our disposal." For Sven's church it was more of an ethos in the teaching and outreach ministries of the church. "We'll talk about principles, but we'll try to connect it to our stories, our contexts…we try to make it an element of everything the church does."

Encouraging Motivation for Cultural Intelligence

All the leaders mentioned the need to root everything in scripture. The passages most often mentioned were John 17, Ephesians 2, Colossians 3, Revelation 7, the Great Commandment, and the book of Acts. They also noted using the Incarnation of Jesus and identity in Christ. Regarding the progression of scripture from Acts to Revelation, Xavi declared, "This is the Word of God, and this is the Spirit's priority. It's God's priority. This is about his image bearers being beautiful and given inherent dignity. When we can get people just to recognize that in scripture, I think we've done them a great service."

Even beyond the teaching, people needed to wrestle with scripture themselves as a part of learning to live it. For Theo it meant trying to get scriptural teaching beyond a person's head to become an embodied or experienced gospel. Yosef described helping small groups learn to apply it to their lives by asking, "What does 'love of neighbor' mean here? What does 'laying down your life for the gospel' look like here?" Xavi observed a big difference in the motivation of people who grasped the gospel's imperative, not an optional add on, to love one's neighbor. "It's just qualitatively different when this is seen as core to the gospel and not something extra."

The participants also mentioned the need for an environment of grace and kindness that also reassured people of their security in the gospel. When people began to look at culturally held beliefs, they often struggled to distinguish what is cultural from what is biblical. Theo said, “It feels like it gets wrapped into identity in a way that’s even more threatening to question whether that’s cultural or not.” Yosef said offering a grace-centered context helped encourage more honest conversations. “We need grace for each other, not to demonize,” added Radek.

Growing Knowledge

Along with deeper understanding and application of scripture, participants also mentioned using book studies. Book studies helped inform thinking and offered the opportunity to hear from others. Leaders agreed that books must be chosen wisely. Radek said reading a book was good, but to read it in community with people who were different from them, rather than an echo chamber, was far better. Sven described their strategy for two staff members of a different ethnicities to lay a foundation from scripture and share candidly from their own experiences before moving into smaller mixed group table discussions. He said they had to continually reiterate the point was not to critique a book but to do work in their own hearts about the issues it raised. The smaller groups also learned to navigate hard conversations together as they learned from each other.

Small groups were also used by the research participants with a range of goals. Small groups provided opportunities to wrestle with scripture, learn together, ask questions, share life stories, and to deepen the fellowship. They could also be a means for doing ministry together as they tried to put knowledge into practice. Small groups ideally offered safe spaces to process some of the harder emotions or questions that came up

when people started to becomes aware of their own responses to culture. Theo noted that after the death of George Floyd in 2020, the church had conversations with a nearby African American church. The bigger event was helpful and educational, but afterward, smaller groups provided the space for individuals to be honest about how hard it was for them to acknowledge the depth of their ignorance or their resistance to the disruption of guilt or exposure. In Xavi's church, some members made a yearlong commitment to learn in a mixed small group though a book study and intentional steps to live life together. As groups explored topics together, leaders helped with talking points about what they observed or experienced among themselves and helped them name what they felt and saw or what unsettled them.

Leaders have had to describe what culture was or what its impact was like. This work was done from the front of a larger group as part of teaching or more personally in small groups settings. Xavi has had to identify for people that what confused, frustrated, or unsettled them in a situation was that they were experiencing a different culture. Sven found it helpful to simply offer a course on cultural intelligence with some regularity. It provided a good place for people to learn the basics of different cultures and then use that language and frame of reference in appropriate situations.

Leaders also used partnerships with churches of other ethnicities to learn about the experiences of minorities. Joint conversations or prayer vigils after traumatic events resulted. Zeke admitted ruefully, "I've learned how racist the history of this state is." Some churches hosted big events like combined conferences or meetings with minority churches, while other pastors found opportunities through attending events or conferences in the broader community. In a smaller church where members found it easy

to talk about issues in terms of concepts but harder to get out of their comfort zones, Werner commented, “The more we can get our people to hear somebody else talk about them, the better.” Partnerships also took the form of working together in ministry projects. Zeke found it effective for majority culture churches to be on equal footing with minority culture churches in partnerships. Werner also preferred “true common spaces” where whites were not always the main leadership.

Experiences and Opportunities

Participants agreed that cultural intelligence could not be learned in a vacuum. A good first step was for people to leave their current setting and experience something different, even if it was just another area of their city. Several leaders mentioned local ministry outreach provided a helpful step in experiencing other cultures. Churches also offered short-term mission trips to other parts of the United States or to foreign countries. Werner said simply to see God work in other people in other places in different ways was a start. Yosef mentioned the blessing of having refugees attend their church. All they had to do was engage to listen and learn. “Just having their presence in our church, we were developing a bigger view of the world and a bigger burden for mission, but also a different lens for thinking about our own culture.”

Sven’s church provided many ways for people to engage cross-culturally. “I’m happy as a pastor if anybody tries anything with someone from a different culture, anything at all.” He appreciated when people took steps and persisted with learning. He added, however, that another important step was learning to engage appropriately. He described a recent opportunity he took to teach someone in the context of a cross-cultural experience. Before he took an elder with him into a challenging ministry setting, he

prepared him. He described to the elder what could happen and how it might feel to them. He related how the situation was perceived within that culture and what was likely expected of them as church leaders. He warned of awkwardness and discomfort where they wouldn't know what to do. He explained how not to respond. He reiterated that hard emotions expressed to them were not personal, and they needed to receive them graciously. He reminded him their goal was to offer love and support, and they would have to depend on the Spirit to do so. Then they prayed together and asked for grace to join in well with this community. Afterward, they debriefed the experience. He noted this chance to prepare spiritually for the event and debrief it spiritually was a rich learning opportunity. "That stuff delivered close at hand; that's the best school for discipleship."

While exposure and proximity to other ethnicities and cultures to encourage empathy and compassion were important, many leaders mentioned that developing relationships and friendships across cultural lines was the most powerful thing a person could do to grow cultural intelligence. Sven put it, "You have to make a friend. Nothing has been more powerful than that for us." He described a much older member of his church who was suspicious of anything labeled cultural intelligence and disliked the books they read for book study discussions. But when tragedy struck a family of refugees who he knew personally, this man was on the phone consoling them, showing up at homes to offer compassion and prayer, and rallying others in the church to reach out to them. He acted because he cared about them. "I'd love to clone you." Sven told him.

Friendship encourages people to listen without arguing. It encourages a mutuality that mercy ministry may not. "Sometimes in service you do that to people, without ever talking to them," remarked Sven. When it came to learning cultural intelligence,

"friendships are better than service." Xavi also said that rather than simply engaging with someone like themselves, people needed to let someone of a different culture speak into their lives and have them bring the benefit of their differences into the relationship. When it came to his own growth, Sven said cross-cultural friendships and seeking out minority mentors had helped him more than anything else. Mentoring did not need to be formal. He said he regularly seeks out mentors from other cultures to just sit under their leadership and teaching. Radek said that majority churches should learn to experience and be blessed by other parts of the body of Christ.

When leaders modeled how to grow cultural intelligence, congregations benefited from seeing the value the leaders placed on it and the effort they invested in it. As a minority pastor, Radok said he had enjoyed working with majority pastors who modelled friendship, respect, deference, and mutual submission. He believed it was equally important for the black congregation he formerly pastored and the white congregation they partnered with to see that kind of mutuality among their leaders. "They have been trying to drive conversations for so long. I think one of the most beautiful things for people in majority culture to actually learn from and value and celebrate is the leadership and culture of minority people." In churches that already have minorities attending, seeing them up front in services and participating in decision-making greatly benefited the majority culture by countering stereotypes. But serving in a majority culture space was an added burden for a minority leader. Sven stressed that these leaders needed to be given real authority, along with the equipping and support to fulfill their responsibilities.

Processing Experiences for Heart Change

Education and experience create a context for cultural intelligence, but they do not always yield growth in cultural intelligence. Xavi observed that people sometimes used denial to retreat into a type of self-perseveration. When confronted with a cultural difference of perspective that unsettled them, it allowed them to resist the actual learning that could take place. Being a member of the majority culture makes that easy to do. When cultural situations or conversations inevitably get uncomfortable, majority culture members have the option to withdraw back into the majority culture world. Radek found that white men are more prone to struggle under his leadership. He summarized the process he has walked through with individuals. "So, if what I'm saying is true, if it's being said in the spirit of love, if it's biblical and truthful, and it's pushing against your narrative, is there something wrong with your narrative?" For the ones who stayed in the conversation and engaged with him, there had come "really rewarding fruitful relationships," even though they might still disagree. He was content with that.

People often interpreted strong and intense feelings negatively, but they also offered an opportunity to talk, explore, and understand what was being internally challenged and resisted. Such disruptions became fertile ground for growth. "As a leader in ministry, something that you would be doing as you start to see those changes, you start to see things stirred up, is to come in and say, let's talk about that…what's making us all so upset?" Zeke said. People needed a safe place to process disruption, see their resistance, and move toward confession and repentance. Theo noted anything that remotely touched on guilt or shame met more resistance, even though the gospel addresses both. Pressing too hard on these areas drew more defensiveness and pushback.

He sought "to embody grace, to give them experiences of a graceful response that hopefully unlock some of the guilt and shame and allows them to look critically at those cultural values." As he worked with individuals, Ulrich asked himself the question, "What is this person protecting? What do they value?" He noted what people value is often not what God does, thus their internal conflict. He mused, "The gospel, of course, is out to change values, and you should be scared of it."

Insight alone does not cause change. Xavi described steps to help a person learn to process their internal conflict over culture differences toward a changed heart: First, set the expectation that discomfort occurs as a natural part of growth in cultural awareness. Second, when it happens, label it as confronting a difference and the feeling as the expected discomfort. Third, help the person discern what temptations accompanied that internal tension. It would often be a temptation to resist and withdraw rather than remain in the conversation and move through the tension and difference. This place was the opportunity for growth to begin. "It's an opportunity to be covered in grace by the other person and you allow yourself, you position yourself, to receive that grace and be clothed in grace." As people learned to recognize the temptation, they learned to repent and relationally move toward people rather than away from them. According to Xavi, doing this also helped train the person to do the same thing for others. "You help them to quickly cover the other person with grace. You help them to love them…you run shame out of the room as much as you can by just being a loving and a kind presence, non-judgmental."

Individuals also needed to take time for reflection. While this involved reflecting on one's own heart and life, it also included time reflecting on God and meditating on his

Word. With a relatively young congregation, Theo identified technology as a hindrance to his people finding space for reflection. “Our technology is affecting us, and how do we step away from that?” He encouraged his congregation to unplug from technology as part of learning other spiritual disciplines such as silence, solitude, and prayer to reflect and to deepen their experience with God. Though prayer and reflection are ways the Spirit uses for conviction, Xavi highlighted that people may still need someone to walk with them, to pray with them, and to lead them back to the Father. “If the Lord convicts us of sin or wrongdoing, it’s never to crush us. It’s always to bring us into agreement with him and his Spirit.” Sven talked about teaching people how to do “heart work.” He said, “If we do believe that the Word of God is power to divide between soul and spirit, you know it’s a piercing thing. It’s God speaking.” Sven called it, “going through the time-tested exercises of paying attention to who God has revealed himself to be, then assessing yourself as a sinner in need of grace, seeing how God’s revealed himself not just as holy, but as a Father who has provided his own Son.”

Summary of Methods Used to Grow Cultural Intelligence

Participants said that the overall method of growing cultural intelligence rooted everything else in the gospel. They agreed that growth in cultural intelligence could not happen without interaction with people from other cultures, and the most productive way to learn was through friendships, role models, and mentors. Knowledge and exposure to culture did not necessarily produce empathy and growth; people often needed to process their external experiences and internal responses with someone who could help them in a gracious and fruitful way. Ultimately, heart change came only through the conviction and power of the Spirit as a person learned where they needed to repent and how to apply the

gospel to their lives in an ongoing way. This process often bore the fruit of a deeper love of God and of others.

The Benefits of Growing Cultural Intelligence

The final research question looked at the benefits of growing cultural intelligence for the individual, the church, and for the broader community.

Benefits for an Individual

Several leaders described seeing people develop a posture of learning marked by curiosity, genuine questions, and good listening to people who were different from them. People had less fear and greater appreciation of difference. Zeke attributed this growth not just to conceding and tolerating the preferences of others but rejoicing in them and taking delight in how another way of doing things delighted others. Greater reliance on God for change was another benefit. Xavi noted that when people asked, God faithfully answered, and people became aware of their own sin or blind spots and aware of where they had lacked sight. “Often growth is painful.” Priorities that started to look more like God’s was another benefit. Zeke said, “This is the gospel and it’s going to stir you to make some painful changes.” Werner stated the cost as worth it because joy and gratitude came with it. The benefit for an individual to grow in cultural intelligence was summed up succinctly by Radek, who said, “They become more like Jesus.”

Individuals growing in cultural intelligence also experienced greater freedom, but leaders described that freedom differently. Theo described it as an internal freedom rooted in gospel security, giving a person the ability to resist harmful cultural pulls and greater openness and empathy for others. Radek thought of it as more outward-focused.

"A freedom to engage other cultures, knowing that Christ is in the business of redeeming all these people from every nation." Vladi described a freedom of broader flourishing, "Freedom that looks like taking the gifts God has given us, the gifts, the skills, the material things we have, and putting them to glorious, joyful use in God's kingdom."

Another benefit from cultural intelligence included a process of repenting of attitudes that then yielded a deeper love of others. Yosef noted more "self-examination and reflection about their own attitudes and their own heart. And they are doing some active repenting and changing things that aren't in line with the gospel…then certain behaviors flowed out of that." Xavi described how learning to trust the words of Jesus that there was no condemnation for those in him resulted in people being able to give and receive grace for offenses with more humility and openness. An experience for Radek involved church members who struggled the most under his leadership initially, yet with faith and teachable hearts, they stuck with him and became "some of the most welcoming, sweetest people" in the church.

Participants also saw individuals experience God more deeply as they grew in cultural intelligence. They had a richer prayer life as they dwelt more with God and trusted him more deeply, inviting him to expose areas of their life they needed to change. Xavi saw fear and hiding become a new perspective. "The blessing is that you're causing me to see! You're causing me to grow." It also involved a deeper trust that God's conviction was not to condemn them but bring them into alignment with his Spirit and be more like Christ. Xavi saw the result as being "a maturity to understand how the Lord has used even your past to serve his purposes and to get you to where he is taking you in the sanctification process." Yosef saw a deeper identity in Christ. "Their identity in Jesus is

more important than those other identities. You know, first and foremost, I belong to Jesus and am his follower."

Individuals learned communication skills to enter conflict rather than avoid or exacerbate it. Zeke said tense conversations become growth opportunities when leaders were ready to help. Xavi agreed, articulating how people learned to recognize their tendency to push back or pull back in difficult conversations and identify the emotion attached to that response as fear, suspicion, discomfort, or weariness. With that awareness, they learned steps to gain better outcomes, such as suspending judgment, stating fewer opinions, asking more questions, and remaining curious. While people learned in the context of handling cultural conflict, they reported later that they found the skills useful in many other settings as well.

An outward focus was another common benefit of growing in cultural intelligence. People looked beyond themselves and saw opportunities to engage with people who are different and were more willing to reach out. Xavi said, "The person who is growing is able to reconcile that I still don't have it together, Yet the Lord has me on a trajectory that he has taken me from one degree of grace to the next…and he is using me where I am." Sven put it that they were people willing to go—not merely invite people in but actually go to others, to someone's home, to a new neighborhood. "The gospel is more on their lips than ideas or politics or sociology or anthropology," he explained. "They are talking a lot about the gospel, talking about Jesus a lot." He pointed out that growing in cultural intelligence cannot be separated from people, because without people there is no culture. As people grew in cultural intelligence, they grew in their love of

people, and for believers such love included a desire for the people in their work, neighborhood, or family to know more of the love of Jesus.

Benefits for Churches

Churches that grew in cultural intelligence often experienced richer fellowship together. Community happened without pressure for uniformity. It fostered greater unity and vitality within the congregations. Zeke found that working toward cultural intelligence impacted the church when some of the older members started to change their attitudes towards racial minorities, and the younger members started to notice in amazement. It encouraged the church that God was at work during a volatile time in their city. A benefit for Ulrich's ministry was that after a year of focusing on a group of young adults to equip them for cultural awareness and skills, they were less fearful and adversarial toward non-believers who were different and instead viewed them as people they loved, enjoyed, and wanted to know Jesus. They were more committed to the church, to living out their faith in their chosen vocations, and have since grown into key contributors to the life of the church. Vladi's church took the risk of starting an additional worship service quite different in tone and style to reach a population who would never come to their normal Sunday services. They tapped into underused gifts of people already in the congregation to appeal to a different segment of the neighborhood.

Years of outward-focused ministry with immigrants, refugees, ESL programs, youth, or school tutoring programs provided cultural opportunities that shaped individuals and grew their empathy for others. Yosef noted that despite being a monocultural white church, issues of race or justice had not become divisive or polarizing. Their mercy ministry outreach and short-term missions kept people "on the

same wavelength." For example, he noted that refugees and immigrants were not a political issue but real people who church members had real relationships with. Over time, those relationships shifted some of his members' political opinions in healthy ways. Sven said cultural intelligence protected the church from the pressure within their denominational tradition to be overly intellectual. "It's rescued us from thought ministry." He explained, "When we are confused or get scared in Reformed circles, we go right to the light, shining the light of truth…kind of telling people how to understand it." But he described how light had an element of warmth to it as well. "But that truth has got to be applied in linking arms with your brothers and responding in repentance and following Jesus together, repenting and acting like a family." Cultural intelligence helped them combine the warmth of compassion with their proclamation of truth.

Benefits for Communities

Many churches have used mercy ministry to meet the needs of their communities. As churches grew in cultural intelligence, they also understood and ministered to their communities better. In their diverse neighborhood, Sven said of the church, "We do have a little bit of a good reputation in the community." A group of Muslim refugees were initially suspicious and somewhat hostile. But through the warmth and kindness of the church's ministries such as a food pantry, programs for kids, and ESL classes, the group grew more comfortable with them. Some stayed to listen to a simple worship service after ESL class and some regularly came directly into the church office to ask for prayer. The group felt welcomed and valued by this church, and now they have been known to warn off vandals attempting to paint graffiti on the building walls. Ulrich reported on a creative

arts initiative that broke down suspicion from the arts community after they joined in arts events and opened their facilities for community arts use.

Cultural intelligence growth within the church had further impact for Radek's ministry. He became the pastor of a church that was 95 percent white, whereas the community around it was 45 percent black, 45 percent white, and 10 percent Asian. "It didn't reflect the community at all." He spent quite a while struggling through culturally based conflict with members. Some people left, but some stayed. God used their struggles. "The missional reality is that as the Lord softened us…he has brought the community into the church. The church has been more prepared than they would have been otherwise." The church composition now represents the community, but he credited the change not to anything he did or any great outreach strategy, but rather to the church's warm and inviting welcome of different kinds of people. His church had grown willing to inconvenience themselves so others could experience Christ.

Churches have also partnered with churches of other ethnicities to address identified broader needs in city together. These efforts have often focused on disadvantaged neighborhoods by trying to help mothers and kids break cycles of poverty through tutoring and other support services. Zeke said, "The whole gospel led to looking for a whole restoration of the community." Yosef says it only strengthens the witness of the church to the world as it offers "a preview of what we're going to see in the new heaven and new earth, where people from every tribe, tongue and people and nation are united and gathering around the throne."

Summary of the Benefits of Growing Cultural Intelligence

Participants listed the benefits for individuals to growing in cultural intelligence and gaining knowledge and skills for crossing cultures. People deepened their relationship with God as he used the process of growth for their sanctification and changed hearts and attitudes. This growth resulted in a deeper love and concern for others. Churches had richer fellowships and enjoyed a greater vitality. They learned to be more welcoming and responsive to the needs of others. They won the trust of suspicious neighbors by their kindness and generosity. They partnered with other churches to make progress within disadvantaged communities. They offered their communities a foretaste of the coming kingdom of God.

Summary of Findings

This chapter explored the motivations, challenges, and methods of church discipleship leaders who intentionally incorporate cultural intelligence into discipleship, along with the benefits that result when they do so.

Research findings revealed the impact of strong cultural forces that believers fail to recognize as non-biblical values and priorities. This gap resulted in people having cultural identities and pursuits where the indicatives and imperatives of scripture took a secondary role. While people assented to a value on scriptural teaching, they often did not grasp the non-optional nature of the gospel imperatives to love neighbor and bear witness to Christ to the world by their unity as his diverse body.

Leaders found the motivation to incorporate cultural intelligence into discipleship in the words of Christ and in the vision of his kingdom fully come. They labored to lay biblical foundations to nurture that same vision and motivation for the people they led as

they modelled their own continued pursuit of cultural intelligence. They found further motivation from minority friends who also helped sustain them.

Growth in cultural intelligence did not happen easily. To grow, they had to interact with different kinds of people with different values, experiences that are predictably unsettling and stretching. These church leaders noted that majority culture people have the option of retreating into a majority world, but they cannot learn cultural intelligence without the presence and help of minorities. They also needed someone to walk with them through the inevitable discomfort that came from encountering cultural difference and dissonance. This guidance came in the form of debriefing an experience or through someone graciously shepherding them through the process of conviction and repentance. Lasting growth demanded a heart change, which only the Holy Spirit accomplishes.

Benefits from growth in cultural intelligence were both inward and outward. Individuals experienced internal changes of attitudes and heart as well as a deeper trust in God. They gained a greater ability to demonstrate their love to other people and a greater desire to share the love of Jesus. Churches experienced richer fellowship together and more powerful ministry by engaging in partnerships for the sake of their communities. Communities responded with less suspicion and welcomed churches involvement. They saw a small glimpse of God's kingdom.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to understand how local church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship. In chapter two, the review of literature shed insight on developing cultural intelligence in three areas: by exploring the biblical framework for cultural diversity within the church, by considering how businesses and organizations develop cultural intelligence, and by examining the experience of multiethnic churches. The following research questions guided the qualitative research.

1. What motivates discipleship leaders to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
2. What challenges do discipleship leaders navigate to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
3. What methods do leaders use to develop cultural intelligence as an aspect of discipleship?
4. What benefits do leaders observe in others as a result of developing cultural intelligence as a part of discipleship?
    a. What benefits are there for the disciple?
    b. What benefits are there for the local church?
    c. What benefits are there for the local community?

This chapter summarizes the literature reviews of chapter two and the interview findings of chapter four. These findings will be discussed and recommendations for practice and further research suggested.

Summary of the Study and Findings

This study reviewed relevant literature in three areas and analyzed interview data from nine church discipleship leaders in monocultural churches. The first area of the literature revealed the struggle in the New Testament for believers of different cultures to become one unified, inclusive church. The second literature area reviewed what businesses and organizations learned about developing cultural intelligence over the past seventy years. The final literature area discussed what the multiethnic church could offer to help our understanding of growth in cultural intelligence.

The literature for the biblical framework focused on the incident in the church at Antioch because it illustrates the challenges the gospel faced once it spread beyond the borders of Israel. Deep religious, historical, and cultural convictions had long informed the way that Jews interacted with Gentiles. The issues of table fellowship highlighted the problem of Jewish Christians identifying more strongly with their cultural expressions than their identity in Christ. The truth of the gospel of grace through faith in Christ put all believers on an equal footing, creating a radical social shift that called for a different kind of engagement through their shared lives—breaking down cultural barriers toward not only welcoming each other but also becoming the family of God. For Jews, an example of this new engagement meant changing ideas of purity and practices of cleanliness when they prevented common fellowship meals together with Gentiles. Jesus prayed that all believers would display the reality of God's love and the glory of the Trinity by their love and unity. In Christ there is one new humanity and there is one unified church with a rich diversity of cultural expressions. When the church visibly displays the spiritual reality of its transethnic unity, it further testifies to the gospel.

Businesses and organizations tried a variety of approaches to diversity training with limited success. Overall, the literature revealed researchers had no empirical evidence for long term success, though they did report several barriers. The most challenging areas were workers' attitudes and behaviors, which needed shifting to create a more inclusive work environment. Unexplored or unspoken historical, social, and cultural contexts impacted how participants receive diversity training. Training often touched on deeply held values and convictions linked to identity that could be unconscious to the individual, and thus could create internal tension, and work environments were not conducive to addressing this type of introspection. In other findings, researchers recommended that organizations make sweeping changes to improve performance and profits. Because such comprehensive practices were rarely employed, their effectiveness remained unproven. The most helpful research recommendations for businesses pointed to the day-to-day influence of top leaders and management as a key element to develop an inclusive environment.

The third area of literature review offered the insights of the multiethnic church. Multiethnic church leaders found a rich biblical motivation throughout scripture. It stretches from Genesis to Revelation, including the Creation Mandate of Genesis 1, the promise of Micah 4:1-3, the Great Commission and the Great Commandment of the gospels, the new humanity of Ephesians, and the vision of transnational worship in Revelation 7:9. They regarded it a high calling to display a beautiful community drawn from every nation reflecting the glory of the triune God who created them all. They focused discipling on knowledge and sensitivity to others, humility, respect, teachability, gentleness, patience, and love. They taught communication skills and instituted regular

self-examination and prayer. They sought diverse leadership and put structures into place to assess and direct progress within the church. Yet none of the literature suggested that being a unified, multiethnic church was easy: the impact of historical and current wounds persists, and members remain prone to interpersonal conflict or political divides. The individualistic mindset of the majority culture clashes with the communal values of minority cultures, as well as their weighty narratives of life within the majority culture. Yet these churches believe they are following God's calling despite the challenges.

The interviews revealed that monocultural church discipleship leaders were also motivated by scripture, through general biblical principles and specific passages. Those passages focused on the imperatives of love and unity of the New Testament or the vision of Revelation 7. Some leaders mentioned friendships with people of other ethnicities that encouraged and sustained them. All of these leaders experienced an ebb and flow of interest in their monocultural churches and struggled to help their church members to see its ongoing importance. Most of their members lived and worked in social spheres dominated by the majority culture, so it was also difficult for leaders to help them see the impact of common non-biblical cultural values like busyness or individual autonomy. Likewise, the social milieu made it hard for members to see beyond the cultural blind spots encouraged by comfortable affluence. Most respondents cited challenges of the political division that surrounded the 2016 election and the government restrictions surrounding Covid; however, more concerning were subcultural identities that supplanted an identity in Christ and lessened empathy for other groups. Leaders discovered that congregants exhibited an inability to apply biblical teaching in the face of non-biblical values or assumptions of culture. They found that growth required experiencing other

cultures to the point of cultural dissonance. It often entailed having hard conversations or feeling discomfort, uncertainty, or awkwardness. People needed time for reflection, self-examination, and prayer, as well as mentors to help them process their internal tensions and emotions to remain open and engaged. Through this process of growth, many congregants gained greater compassion for the struggles of minority cultures and a deeper relationship with God. Churches became more outward focused as members grew in cultural intelligence. Churches also became more effective in ministry and evangelism. They became more integrated into and welcoming of their communities.

Discussion of Findings

This section integrates the findings of the literature with those of the research interviews. Five themes emerged around the process of change—sufficient motivation, outward focus, relationally based methods, practices for sustainability, and leadership. I also integrate my eighteen years of experience as a cross-cultural missionary.

Sufficient Motivations

The primary motivations for business fell into three broad areas: avoidance of discrimination lawsuits, enhanced company performance and profits, and the more noble reason of "doing the right thing" in the face of systemic racial discrimination, inequity, and injustice. The presence of training programs helped companies fulfill legal requirements to avoid lawsuits, but there was no evidence they were effective in improving organizational performance or increasing diversity. In the complex environment of big business, the recommendations to increase profit and performance

required such extensive measures that few companies attempted them, and there was no empirical evidence of their effectiveness to improve profit margins. Even the motive for doing the right thing encountered issues of political and social divisions. Companies would release statements of support but the need to not alienate their business base often mediated against bigger changes. Business experts admit that profit motives and good intentions fail to move organizations toward consistent or sustained efforts.

Participants in the research interviews found initial motivations for cultural intelligence in several places. Some mentioned studying abroad or an experience of ministry in a diverse context. Some found it through experiencing or witnessing racial discrimination, having refugees or immigrants come to their cities, or learning the tragic events surrounding racial violence toward young black men. Several interviewees mentioned having deep, influential friendships with people of other cultures. In an initial stage for majority culture respondents, a broad range of motivations were noted, but at some point the main motivation became a biblical one.

The kind of biblical motivations ranged widely. On one side was a more general biblical motivation to understand one's own culture to be able to stand counterculturally as a faithful disciple. The goals for becoming more countercultural were 1) to confront personal sin or idolatry related to cultural values and 2) to be salt and light in their settings. On the other end was a bigger vision of the kingdom of God in which the participants saw themselves participating. Rather than relying on general biblical principles, these participants mentioned biblical imperatives in the gospels and the priorities of the Spirit in Acts. Their goal was to make visible the invisible reality of the unity of the followers of Christ in his kingdom. They believed greater love across

divisions and greater unity as one body in purpose and worship of Jesus would result. This specific biblical motivation echoed the literature about multiethnic churches.

Paul's confrontation of Peter in Antioch provides a starting point towards a framework to understand the biblical motivation for cultural diversity. Paul's charge that Peter's behavior was not in line with the "truth of the gospel" reflected the Bible's over-arching, compelling vision and plan of how God's kingdom will gather the nations to himself. Jesus himself declares that the whole Old Testament law and prophets are summed in the commands to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself in Matthew 22:37-40. His prayer in John 17 prioritizes the unity of his followers that they might reflect the Trinity and bear witness to the reality of the love of God. The Great Commission to go make disciples of all the nations sets forth another priority. Jesus promises in Acts 1:8 that his disciples will receive the power of the Spirit to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. From Genesis to Revelation, God's kingdom is coming by the power of his Spirit, and all believers from any and all nations are part of that kingdom.

Paul firmly grasped the ramifications of Jesus' words and God's plan. Peter demonstrated the opposite when he withdrew from table fellowship in Antioch. Paul grasped that the theological truth of the gospel of grace carried social implications for a new humanity, which loves and welcomes each other across diverse cultures in a unified, diverse church. In the name of this gospel vision, Paul called out Peter in Galatians 2. He described it in Ephesians 2-4. He reiterated it again in Colossians 3. This is the truth of the gospel that Peter failed to practice, and this is the gospel truth motivating multiethnic churches. It is also the primary motivation for some of the leaders of monocultural churches that I interviewed. Xavi's words are an excellent example: "This is part and

parcel to the gospel," and further, "This is the word of God. And this is the Spirit's priority." They have heard a high calling and responded to it.

I do not dismiss the role that smaller, less sustainable motives play when it comes to growing cultural intelligence. They provide the initial steps toward deeper convictions and motivations. My own experience of culture and motivation demonstrates a process of the Spirit at work. It began through social concern and the youthful desire to be a "really good" disciple of Jesus. I first encountered real cultural difference when I worked in inner city Washington, DC, for a college summer ministry internship. Decades later I became a long-term missionary out of a distinct sense of God's calling. Every missionary has a story of how God brought them to the mission field. But that story is inevitably not sufficient for long-term work, as can be noted in the statistics for missionary failure. In a fallen world, faithfulness to any calling is fraught with difficulty, and an understanding of how a person fits into God's purposes for his kingdom offers a solid foundation amid ever changing circumstances. The overarching biblical vision of how God is manifesting his kingdom is where I need to return repeatedly. It reminds me that this is who we are as the people of God, and this is what we are about by the power and direction of his Spirit.

Outward Focus

In helping people learn to understand their own culture in the context of a monocultural church, several interviews revealed that the leader's efforts focused on a member coming to understand the negative impact of an aspect of their culture. Their assumption was that necessary changes in values and behaviors would follow. The pitfall to this approach was that when people concentrated on understanding their own experience, it could lead to continued self-focus. As Xavi commented, "People are not

naturally other-centered." In the individualistic culture of the U.S., people make themselves the focal point and cease to look beyond themselves. While several pastors felt they had helped people gain insight, meaningful change was more difficult. Another leader observed that, while the people he worked with found insight helpful, he could not see a transformative desire to love others.

By contrast, the literature of the multiethnic church suggested that being a part of a multiethnic church, along with the interpersonal work necessary to remain multiethnic, encouraged an ongoing focus on loving each other well. Even though their unity did not always play out smoothly, people who chose to be part of these churches exhibited an inclination toward mutuality and a value for loving each other. In addition, leaders could appeal to their common commitment to unified fellowship when difficulties inevitably surfaced. Being a multiethnic church also positioned it to make relational connections with different outside groups and to encourage an outward focus on the broader concerns of their community. This outward orientation and missional desire could also be focused beyond their locality when members of different backgrounds had family and friends throughout the world.

In monocultural churches, even a willingness to learn about reaching out across differences was not sufficient to develop an outward focus in individuals. Sven described this problem. A group invested significantly in learning about cultural difference and racial reconciliation, yet rather than yielding a greater involvement and deeper love of others, an attitude of superiority surfaced when they compared themselves with other members of the congregation. He added, "I didn't see them crossing a lot of cultural differences." They were satisfied with their sense of advanced awareness without putting

it to fruitful use for either love of neighbor or unity within their church. Their attitudes also exacerbated division rather than promoted helpful synergy for ministry.

In the business literature, experts recommended that leaders provide a rationale for diversity initiatives with a clear link to growth objectives. They recommended that individuals within the organization know what part they were expected to contribute toward those goals. The research interviews revealed this process could be useful in church contexts to mitigate a tendency for majority culture members to lose interest or motivation. Sven offered this further illustration from a church that talks regularly about cultural intelligence and racial reconciliation and routinely makes the case for engaging them as a normal part of discipleship. He did not experience active resistance to their efforts to engage their members, just majority culture inertia due to believing social issues were solved so long as no crisis was at hand. “Most people are like, tell me why I would do that again?” He needed to continually reiterate the biblical imperatives and values and also have an opportunity that people could be invited into. The outward focus of their church toward ministry in their diverse neighborhood kept people more engaged with learning and growing.

Even when people participated in outward focused ministries, inward issues of heart posture need to be addressed, including paternalistic or patronizing attitudes. One example was the majority culture’s hero mentality, bringing resources and expertise to rescue another ethnic group or fix a neighborhood’s problems. The biblical framework highlighted the value of diverse groups showing mutuality and being on equal footing with each other as fellow image bearers who follow Jesus. Sven noted that service was certainly a good start to help people have cross-cultural experiences, but it held limited

benefit. He noted his people learned a lot more from having mutuality in friendships across cultural divides, where there was trust, honest conversations, and input into each other's lives.

This is true for missionaries as well. American missionaries have been guilty of showing up in other parts of the world with resources, skills, and ideas without taking sufficient time to understand the needs of another group, the ways to enter another culture effectively, or the impact of our sincere and enthusiastic desire to help. We have not always been good at respecting or listening to what others have to say about themselves or about us. My growth in understanding my own culture and the ones I have lived in has come most richly through my friends in those cultures.

Missionaries typically come to their work with a strong desire to be fruitful. The desire for impact is a part of bearing the image of God. This desire can fuel a person to take initiative in the face of challenges. It can also encourage a sense of self-efficacy that the business literature promotes as important to engaging with cultural differences. The desire for impact might also come with mixed, perhaps unconscious, motives, such as to justify the individual's ministry to supporters or to assuage the sense of personal sacrifice that comes with missionary calling. Yet, I have lived in cultures where people preferred that missionaries come and do less but be more present, dwelling with them and offering companionship, support, and hope. To truly listen to the people we serve and work among helps us repent of sinful attitudes or selfishness that undermine our sincere desires to love and serve others, the essence of emotional intelligence. We want to throw off everything that entangles and hinders us to become more like Christ and follow him. But

the purpose of that freedom is to enable us to better move out to love others and join into the work that God is doing among them. It may look quite different from what we expect.

Relationally Based Methods

The biblical framework literature revealed that as the gospel spread into other cultures, there were social implications. Unity among groups in the New Testament was not the norm; divisions were. Yet the truth of the gospel called for a completely new way for groups to relate, and it did not come easily. It required people to move past the suspicions, prejudices, history, and cultural differences toward parity and mutuality. It's not surprising that the literature of the multiethnic church and the research interviews revealed methods rooted in relationships.

The practice of the multiethnic churches stressed the importance of smaller groups. Small groups might first serve the purpose of intentionally mixing various groups within the church to build fellowship, trust, and a sense of belonging for everyone. At other points they might be part of a more comprehensive approach for study and growing together. The literature also reported group members often sharing their personal stories as a foundational step to work through deeper heart issues together.

Practically every method the research participants mentioned centered around relationships. Leaders started by getting to know their people well enough to discern where an individual was in their cultural understanding to know how best to encourage further growth. People had to engage directly with cultural differences, and that happened most helpfully in the context of a relationship. Even in an activity that could be done by an individual, like reading a book, participants found relationships made it more effective. For example, Sven and Radek strongly recommended books be read in groups

because they believed the best understanding of the issues stirred up came when books were discussed in a diverse group of people. An example of a one-to-one relationship came from Theo, who described a conversation where a person noted how a friend in the same circumstances made different choices due to biblical convictions. The person saw the values and choices, and while unsettling, the contrast was intriguing.

Mentors and Role Models

Growth in cultural intelligence means dealing with the attitudes and commitments of the heart. The significance of mentors, coaches, and role models stood out in the research interviews. Three approaches to mentoring emerged from the data.

One focused on helping individuals recognize their blindness to the negative impact of culture on their lives. As mentors, these leaders pointed to the heart issues apparent in the pursuit of unexamined cultural values and goals. These heart issues could present as being driven or weary and drained; they could also look like being self-satisfied or comfort-seeking. The goal of this mentoring was to bring the light of the gospel to bear on these issues and to foster internal changes of heart, attitude, and values. The hope was that those changes would move more naturally toward outward application. Several leaders mentioned this type of mentoring, particularly to help their members recognize the effect of their own cultures on their choices and lifestyles.

A second approach focused on issues of the heart revealed in the emotional dissonance when encountering cultural differences. The mentor worked with the individual to recognize and probe their internal and external responses. A person's fears, shame, and frustration often emerged, and the mentor had to be prepared to address it with grace and without judgment. As the person learned to apply the gospel to emotional

reactions in the moment, that skill became natural in similar situations. Xavi offered a detailed example of this kind of mentoring, which can be found in the previous chapter.

The third approach focused also on issues of the heart but included real-time experience. The mentor worked with an individual to anticipate responses to a particular cultural event or setting. Then the mentor accompanied that person into a situation to experience it together. The individual had an immediate opportunity to observe and experience it with the mentor and to process and debrief it together afterward. The emotions and uncertainties would be noted and discussed. The leader had the opportunity to teach, shepherd, and model concretely in this setting. In the previous chapter, Sven offered a rich example of this type of mentoring.

While preaching and teaching inspire our calling to Christlike love, it is often difficult to see those issues in ourselves without the help of someone else. All of these mentoring approaches played a role to help people learn the impact of culture on their hearts and move into areas they could not see on their own. I have benefitted from each, and I have used them as I have mentored others. Particularly for a new missionary, a mentor to help adapt to life and ministry and to help apply head knowledge in the midst of trying circumstances is invaluable. Otherwise, the development of cultural intelligence could become blocked by fear, frustration, self-protection, and guilt. As Xavi and Sven mentioned, the role of prayer and a reliance on the Spirit are fundamental. All three of these approaches worked toward more than cognitive change, emotional awareness, attitude adjustment, or behavioral difference. The goal was an inner transformation ultimately accomplished by the work of the Spirit. The effect of this transformation was

people who were better able to love others and work through differences with a posture of openness, respect, and humility.

The business literature acknowledged the complexity of diversity training because it occurs in historical and societal contexts with obstacles to receptivity and stirs deep emotional responses in training participants. At the same time the workplace rarely offers a place for workers to explore internal issues, even when a person is so inclined. Mentoring in a business context is generally for the purpose of professional performance and career development. Even though experts acknowledge the problem of people's resistance to diversity training, businesses lack a ready answer to the individual nature of overcoming it.

Communication Skills

The business literature and the multiethnic church literature agreed on the importance of learning communication skills, as did the research interviews. For businesses, communication skills can get past cultural differences to foster a good work environment or effective collaboration within teams.

The research participants focused on developing the skills to have the hard conversations that can result from cultural differences. Some of the participants described helping small groups learn these skills as they either worked or learned together. They found that a group had to develop a certain level of trust and relationship before hard conversations would even occur. Once that trust was built, the leaders could leverage it to help members learn and practice the awareness and skills necessary for productive conversations. The context of the group offered space to grow together as people learned to offer grace for failures and stay engaged. This shared grace deepened relationships and

friendships. Members also gained confidence that they could move further out of comfort zones to engage differences. These group efforts were not always successful. One participant mentioned a time when a couple of groups "kind of blew up." He still considered the effort worthwhile but learned some lessons for the future.

The literature for multiethnic churches concurred with the importance of building trust in relationships to weather unavoidable conflicts. This literature also addressed communication as it relates to language use, highlighting that even in using a common language, the same words were often received differently by different ethnic groups. Language, therefore, generally required more thoughtful use between cultures, particularly with an ear for how others might perceive it.

Practices for Sustainability

The business literature acknowledged the difficulty of diversity initiatives in the face of social and cultural complexities. The solution was merely sustained effort, a typical grinding it out. While agreeing that unity across cultural divides was a difficult task and required human effort, the biblical framework offered a greater hope. Scripture reminded believers that a diverse, unified church was part of the trajectory of the kingdom of God. The ongoing work of the Spirit among faithful followers of Jesus promises good work until the day of Jesus. They will fail and repent. They will rest in God's purposes and the certainty of his promise, inspired to engage yet again.

The literature around multiethnic churches spoke readily of the obstacles they faced in perseverance. Internal changes are hard in general. Cultural blind spots still exist, and dominant culture members fail to see the impact they have on minorities. People still default to political divides. Many of the same challenges that monocultural church

leaders faced occur in multiethnic ones. For both types of churches, the gospel call to love one's neighbor seemed easier to emphasize and work toward than one diverse but unified body of Christ.

As Roth noted earlier, Paul took the long view of success, since becoming one new humanity was an unending task. In the literature, multiethnic leaders reported several helpful practices that helped sustain their work as multiethnic churches. They continually talked about issues of culture. Multiethnic churches intentionally integrated culture into every aspect of the church's life. This sustained drive included worship liturgy and music styles, adult and children's education, and the outreach ministries of the church. The research participants' churches did not attempt that level of overall integration, though a few had extensive efforts. Participants dealt with more pushback from congregants about always talking about culture, while multiethnic leaders experienced less pushback but dealt more with conflicts related to cultural difference overall. The literature reported that multiethnic leaders set realistic expectations of slow change happening over time, just like any other fruitful discipleship. They reiterated that being a multiethnic church was a high calling. They tried to keep the biblical vision of unity continually before the whole congregation through sermons as well as in liturgical practices like self-examination and reflection before taking communion together. Leaders also encouraged regular practices of prayer, meditation, and other spiritual disciplines to encourage deeper dwelling in Christ. Research participants shared some of these same practices, particularly the reiteration of the biblical vision or imperatives and the practice of spiritual disciplines.

One practice more common to multiethnic churches was to engage issues of history and justice in a straightforward manner. The literature described an emphasis on

the church's commitment to the local community and a part of that commitment was to learn the ethnic and cultural history of the place. These churches also engaged in regular practices of prayer and lament, particularly during instances of tragedy or injustice. These practices allowed the dominant culture members more insight into the experience of minorities. This insight helped foster empathy and comforted those who identified with the pain of the victims. These practices of prayer and lament also helped the congregation experience their dependence on God in the face of injustice and tragedy. Sven regretted that the neglect of this kind of practice had deeply wounded their minority members during the police killings of young black men during 2020. In retrospect, he saw that it could have been a source of consolation and helped ease grief and anger. Instead, it caused their withdrawal from the church and now required the hard work of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

The practices outlined above helped multiethnic churches mitigate the strong cultural forces dividing churches. Research participants also found many of the spiritual disciplines, particularly prayer, mediation, and reflection on scripture, to be sustaining for them personally. Several mentioned their sense of calling to the work they were doing while others mentioned how important their friendships were for their sustainability. These comments indicated their need to dwell more deeply in Christ, to remember the purposes and calling of God, and the helpfulness of companions to labor with. My experience connected with the needs and the practices employed for sustainability.

Something I did not see in the literature or hear from the research participants was any reference to spiritual warfare. This lack may merely indicate that these churches were Reformed evangelical churches that don't often use this language. However, the

interview participants and multiethnic churches stressed how they looked to the description of the new humanity and one united church in Ephesians 2 through 4, and significantly Paul concludes the epistle with the reality of spiritual warfare. My colleagues and I talk regularly about spiritual warfare, not to excuse sin or human agency, but as a reality of life. As an Irish friend once commented, "Satan doesn't care what idol you worship; anything but God will do." The devil is a personal active force, and he works through individuals and systems, including cultures. I have found it helpful in the struggle for unity across differences to remember that our struggle is not ultimately against each other, but against the spiritual forces of evil that will exploit anything to separate and divide us. To overcome those forces, we must deeply rely on prayer.

Leadership

Every area of literature emphasized the importance of leadership. The literature for the biblical framework showed the conflict between two gifted leaders, Peter and Paul. These two men knew "the truth of the gospel," but Paul confronted Peter when he did not act consistently with it. Paul knew the truth carried implications for social interactions and for a unified church. Peter knew the truth, but he withdrew from table fellowship in Antioch to satisfy the men from Jerusalem and keep Jewish customs. In so doing, he neglected the longer-term effects on personal relationships and the unified church. Paul held to the truth and preached love among believers to welcome all people into the church as equal participants, as evidenced by his epistles. God used both men in powerful ways, but in this instance, Peter failed as a leader.

Much of the literature for business stressed the importance of leadership. The McKinsey Report was a good example, noting critical but unused recommendations for

leadership. Most significant was that leadership at all levels through middle management needed to be committed to diversity and inclusion goals. Leadership should invest in achieving those goals and clearly tie the importance of the diversity initiatives to overall company goals. They should then track progress metrically and adjust strategies or priorities as necessary. Some of the literature about multiethnic churches used similar ideas. Senior leaders all the way through community group leaders received cultural intelligence training. Pastors supported the lay leaders and checked in with them to see what problems surfaced and how leaders responded, offering advice or encouragement as needed. No literature referred to metrics for this, but the literature consistently noted a growing diversity among people in the church as well as in all levels of leadership.

The multiethnic church literature described diversity in leadership as a priority, beyond anything indicated by the business literature. Diverse leadership marked the church's commitment to being multiethnic. The literature also noted the importance of choosing leaders wisely but being careful not to keep them in stereotyped roles. Leaders should not be chosen solely on their ethnicity but for their gifting and given the training and support required by the role. It also stressed that minority leaders should have roles with real authority. Further, diversity should not only be among the staff but also among lay leaders and small group leadership. Leadership development should engage all ethnic groups within the church.

In monocultural churches, the participants described the importance of leaders as well. Several research participants described how their church lost vision or momentum when key leaders who encouraged cultural intelligence efforts left their roles. Consistent leaders who carried the biblical vision, modeled developing diverse friendships, and

sought cultural intelligence themselves were the most effective in helping their members do the same. This consistency has been effective on the mission field as well. When area leaders and team leaders shared a bigger kingdom vision, it carried into the ethos of teams and of churches. This carryover happened through a consistent proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom and participation in what God was doing to bring it about. Leaders kept the rationale and the beauty of vision before people without guilt or manipulation. They modelled diverse friendships, and they celebrated smaller successes as the Spirit's work in building love and unity. It did not mean the churches did not have flaws to repent over and work through, but a common vision and purpose provided a good foundation.

A few research participants mentioned the helpfulness of having diversity on their church staffs, but that situation was not without concern. Several leaders noted that serving on a monocultural church staff carried additional costs for minorities that majority staff people did not have to encounter. Working and leading in majority culture churches required significantly more emotional and social energy for minorities; it could also mean bearing the brunt of majority culture insensitivities. Sven described this burden with great compassion and deep appreciation for the church's minority leaders. Their session learned how hard the experience was when they had only one minority staff, and as a result they were more careful in how they interviewed, supported, and equipped subsequent ones for their roles. Sven noted how much the church benefited from their influence as well. "We need God to bring these people. Typically, our best people for cultural intelligence are minority people who have joined us in leadership here. They're phenomenal. They know how to adapt and read culture. Intuitively, they are crazy gifted people." Werner believed his church would benefit from hiring a minority pastor as well,

but he saw the challenges for whomever they might hire of joining the staff of a smaller, all-white church and wondered at the motive. “Should we inflict this upon somebody if it is just so we feel better about ourselves?” He wrestled with how his church might change from where they were in terms of what should be their best steps forward. But given that the existing leadership team was not yet ready to take concrete steps, he chose to take personal steps to model the importance of cultivating his own cultural intelligence and invited other members to join him in doing so.

Recommendations for Practice

Given the complex nature of culture and the ongoing process of discipleship, I offer the following four areas of consideration for churches as they incorporate cultural intelligence into discipleship.

A Rich Encompassing Gospel

Helping a church see the integral role of cultural intelligence in discipleship is a difficult and painstaking endeavor. The church needs to see that God is calling us to participate now in what he is doing ultimately, drawing together a unified people from all nations. This is the redemptive story of scripture from start to finish and describes the church now and through eternity as one body under Christ as its head, reconciled to God and to each other, reflecting the glory of the Trinity through love and unity in diversity. When this vision is suffused though the leadership and it continually flows in the preaching, teaching, and mentoring, the people of the church soak it in over time. Slowly it becomes second nature to people in such a way that they begin to catch the vision of something bigger and more beautiful, and they start to identify and express it as

fundamental to what they believe as Christians. The imperatives of love and unity become the clear implication of this vision. The effort, rationale, and strategies for growing cultural intelligence can rest on this encompassing gospel message.

Applied on an Individual Level

While the sweeping vision of scripture needs to be in place, people can get lost or even demotivated by its vastness. The larger gospel story needs to be applied on the personal level so that individuals can access the power of God through a faith that will enable them to move through several developmental steps. These developmental steps fit into two broader categories: learning to discern culture and learning to process their individual responses to cultural difference.

The developmental steps of learning culture are not necessarily sequential, but all of them are important. People learn how to recognize and question their cultural assumptions. They start to view different cultural ways of approaching life situations as equally valid. They come to understand and value the contributions of other cultures and of their own. They begin to value the varied and rich expressions of life and faith that may arise from each culture. They also learn to discern from scripture the practices and values of different cultures that need to be left behind or repented of to better glorify God. They grow in appreciating how the variety of cultures together reflect the richness of the kingdom of God. They persevere through the work called for by the goal of visibly reflecting the unseen realities of the kingdom.

There are also developmental steps in learning to process responses to cultural difference. Individuals start to identify the sense of discomfort and disorientation that comes from encountering cultural difference and to recognize their own emotional

responses, which often shut down healthy relational engagement. They learn to remain open and experience empathy toward others so that they can reengage and move toward other people in love.

Equipped by Leaders and Mentors

Leaders and mentors play significant roles in helping people through these developmental steps in the process of growth. In their preaching and teaching, they point back to the biblical story and provide applications for the developmental steps of discerning culture and the need to move outward toward others in love. Leaders and mentors also implement relational approaches that include individual mentoring and small groups. Individual mentoring is particularly important in monocultural churches due to the ease of withdrawal into the norms of the majority culture world.

Group leaders and mentors are attentive to where people are internally. They help individuals name their struggles. When issues of guilt or shame arise, they help people apply the gospel of grace to those places. These grace-based responses enable leaders to call people to the larger goals of engagement with others, motivated by love and free in conscience to take risks for the sake of love.

Leaders also walk with people through their experiences in the context of group relationships or stretching cultural situations for experiential learning. They are also careful to debrief those experiences, being attentive to internal and external reactions within the context of the goal of love and the gospel of grace.

Staying the Course

Discipleship is a process that continues throughout the life of the believer. This life-long aspect is also true for understanding the influence of culture. Ongoing growth in cultural intelligence involves a cycle of heart examination and repentance of attitudes, convictions, and behaviors counter to those of Christ. This inward look leads to an outward focus and movement toward others for the sake of love. It manifests itself in relationships. Leaders will observe growth as more and more people reach out in love to others who are different and form and maintain mutual relationships across cultural divides. A church that does this together displays a deeper hospitality that welcomes people in and reaches out to engage with others. As Radek said, "They look more like Jesus." This cycle of growth is sustained by prayer and dwelling more deeply in Christ. Jesus promises in John 7:37-39 that a person who is thirsty can come to him and drink, and rivers of living water will flow from them.

Discerning and measuring growth depends on several variables. Even becoming more like Jesus depends on where a person begins. It could be helpful for leaders to consider a few categories as they assess growth in their churches: where did a person or the church begin in this process, how much transition in membership has occurred, what is God doing and stirring in the congregation and surrounding community, and how is Satan in opposition. Keeping these categories in mind can also fuel practices of prayer and deeper dependence of the Spirit. The growth of love and unity in the church is not made possible by simple human effort. But love and unity are the trajectory of the kingdom, the work of the Spirit. We lean into him and follow where he leads.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on the experiences of monocultural churches in the U.S. that integrated cultural intelligence into discipleship. As noted in the findings, cultural learning happens in the complexity of one's own historical and societal context. I've visited or been a part of monocultural churches outside of the U.S. that were also dealing with changing ethnic demographics and an influx of immigration. Further research into the experience of monocultural churches outside of the U.S. would be extremely helpful.

This study also occurred using leaders in churches from Reformed evangelical traditions. Research on the experience of churches from other denominational backgrounds could offer different results.

This study focused on ethnic cultural differences that predominantly fell within similar social classes. Research is needed to explore how class difference impact cultural differences and how they may mitigate or exacerbate how to grow cultural intelligence.

Every research participant mentioned recent problems of polarization and politicization in their churches. This development reflects the rise of value-based identity groups within the white majority culture. Research on how churches can effectively disciple their congregations regarding these issues would be helpful.

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