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## From the Co-Editor

Joshua Henson, Ph.D.  
*Regent University*  
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On behalf of the Regent University's School of Business and Leadership and the editorial board of the *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership*, I thank you for support of the journal.

This issue continues to broaden the horizon of exegetical-based research in organizational leadership in both scope and research methodology. As with all organizations and publications, 2020 offered a significant shift in our original plan to have two issues including a special issue "Biblical Perspective of Gender, Race, and Diversity in Leadership" along with our theme for 2020 "Women in Leadership". In this issue, we include articles on both topics.

Some of the highlights in this issue include articles exploring the role of Africans in the Bible; the American working woman; transformational leadership; authentic leadership; and courageous followership. This issue also explores exemplars such as Esther; the little maid of Syria; the Ethiopian Eunuch; Daughters of Zelophehad; Priscilla and Aquila; and Lydia.

We remain grateful for the support and guidance from our esteemed reviewers and the visionary support of Dr. Gomez and Dr. Winston at the School of Business and Leadership at Regent University.

Grace and peace in the name of Jesus Christ.



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## The Editorial Board

Representing a diverse group of scholars in biblical, social-science, historical and leadership studies, from around the world, the JBPL editorial board aims to provide a much needed multi-disciplinary, as well as international perspective on current research and interest in Biblical perspectives in the study of leadership. Each member of the editorial board has been selected because of their published research and focused interest in the exploration of leadership within the Christian Scriptures and its application in the many varied contexts around the world. To contact the editorial staff, please send an email to [carlser@regent.edu](mailto:carlser@regent.edu).

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## In Memoriam

### **Kamerin Lauren, Ph.D.**

March 01, 1979 -  
September 27, 2020

Dr. Lauren had a heart to rediscover biblical restorative justice. She wrote in her dissertation: *“The law according to God, as revealed through Jesus is merciful, it is ethical, and it considers all people. Justice is not intended solely for the ruling class, but rather is in place to protect those without power.”*

What a wonderful perspective as we consider our 2020 issue.



Dr. Kamerin Lauren was a beloved member of the School of Business & Leadership, as she pursued her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership program. She completed her doctoral studies with great excellence amid great suffering. She was - and shall remain - an inspiration to all who had the pleasure of knowing her. Dr. Lauren left an impact on the School of Business & Leadership and she will never be forgotten. Her life and legacy will forever be connected to God’s unfolding plan at and through Regent University. *Christian Leadership to Change the World.*

- Dr. Doris Gomez

Kamerin was among the great students whom one recognizes as capable of great insights and developments to the field of organizational leadership. I was equally impressed with your kind and considerate communication style -- she demonstrated respect and love for everyone. She will be sorely missed.

- Dr. Bruce Winston

Dr. Kamerin Lauren emulated passion - passion for Christ, passion for social justice, passion to learn, passion to keep growing and dreaming and stretching for higher. She didn't dabble in anything. If it interested her, she was all in - swimming in it, soaking in it. And she didn't want to do any of it in a vacuum. She wanted to love and live and learn in community. She wanted to glean from others and invest what she had in their growth, too. She "pressed on toward the goal" with her eye always, always on the prize. My heart is overjoyed when I think of her passion now culminating with seeing her beloved Jesus face to face, and finally seeing him fully, knowing him as she is known. May we honor her legacy with a passion so contagious, and a hunger to live and love and learn that makes others long to join us. Well done, good and faithful servant. Your passion is still with us, and in Christ, you're really not so very far away.

- Dr. MaryJo Burchard

Dr. Kamerin S. Lauren was indeed a model of resilience. Overcoming a stroke and subsequently battling brain cancer, Dr. Lauren finished a rigorous Ph.D. program, literally one-handed. I never heard one complaint about her health, nor did she show any signs of wavering from accomplishing her educational goals. Her life was one of determination that is a shining example for all of us to follow as we consider the difficulties that may come our way. She inspired all of us fortunate enough to call her classmate and friend, to finish the race set before us. I pray that her work and legacy will continue to encourage us all.

- Dr. Mark Shannon

Kamerin is my hero. Her life was a reflection of the grace of God and the power of the Spirit. I will cherish our time together in the "Facebook cohort" of Fall 2013 and am honored to have known her as a dear friend. Her work on restorative justice was profound and I'll do my best to carry it on.

- Dr. Carlo Serrano

As a professor and dissertation chair, I love all of my students deeply. I pour everything I have into them. Sometimes, there are a few who are really special to you. For me, Kamerin Lauren was one of those students. I never knew her before her brain cancer and strokes. But, I was blessed to spend a year-and-a-half mentoring a person who literally wrote her dissertation with one hand. Our quick calls ended up being 45-minute discussions. I was continually amazed by her determination. Even until her last weeks she continued to push to make the world a better place. She served our academic community as contributing author and as one of our JBPL review board members. I never understood how she could fight brain cancer and still work and publish. I know that she was an inspiration to all who knew her - and especially to me. I love you Kamerin - we all love you. Rest in hope weary pilgrim. You have reached your great reward.

- Dr. Joshua Henson



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## Discovering Africa's Presence in Biblical Leadership

Sióbhán D. Spruill  
Joshua D. Henson  
William D. Winner  
James A. Wood

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This article applied social - culture and ideological analysis to Acts 2 and Acts 13 to show how the first church and the development of Christianity were founded by a diverse group of leaders, which included leaders with African heritage. The Holy Bible, as current-day believers and scholars know it, would not be possible without the contributions made by people of African descent. Yet there has been a deliberate attempt by the dominant culture found in Europe and the United States to de-Africanize the Holy Bible. De-Africanizing the Holy Bible, minimizes the role(s) and contributions completed by people with African ancestry. The most common place where de-Africanization occurred in the Bible was when Africans held leadership positions. Through a socio-rhetorical analysis of selected passages, scholars discover the high level of diversity found within the founding fathers of the Christian church. Since God incorporated diversity into the original leadership of the Christian church, current-day Christian organizations have an example of what diversity in leadership can do and should strive for diversity when creating an executive leadership team. Hambrick and Mason's (1984) Upper Echelon Theory explains the benefits of diversity in leadership positions.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Research indicates that African Americans pursuing executive-level leadership positions are less likely to receive equitable and fair treatment during the consideration process for the job (Gamble & Turner, 2015). Individuals of African descent receive the same treatment from faith-based organizations as they do from nonreligious organizations. Overlooking people of African heritage for leadership positions in American organizations that are either Christian based or whose leadership team members identify themselves as Christians may stem from misinterpreted passages of Judeo-Christian scripture.

The Holy Bible's first words describing people of African heritage reside in Genesis 4 and 9. What Moses wrote in these two chapters about people of African descent was not ultimately how he or other future authors of the Bible viewed and described people of African ancestry. Moses' words in Genesis 4 were drastically different from the leadership role that Africans held throughout the remainder of the Old Testament and the development and growth of the Christian church, which resides in the New Testament. The holy text contains several stories where people of African ancestry held leadership positions. African Old Testament characters like Nimrod (Genesis 10), Manasseh and Ephraim (Genesis 10), Cushan-Rishathiam (Judges 3), and Abishag (1 Kings 1, 2) were respected as leaders. New Testament characters with African ancestry like Simon of Cyrene (Mark 15) and the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8) provided examples of African interactions with Christ and His disciples. Acts 2 and Acts 13 enlightened readers and believers on how Africans were embedded in the foundation of the Christian church and the development of Christianity. In addition to the Bible's essential intellectual evolution about Africa and Africans, an abundance of literature supports the benefits of organizations embracing diversity in their leadership team. However, the majority of the national organizations located in the western hemisphere repeatedly fail at evolving from past thoughts about people with African ancestry. This failure is most evident in the lack of diversity in leadership positions.

According to T. A. Jones (2013), present-day African Americans are commonly viewed and judged by the dominant culture in the United States. Oliver (1994) and Dubriel (2006) argued that the dominant culture bases many of their presumptions about African Americans on what they see and hear through media sources as well as how African Americans were viewed decades and even centuries ago. In business, advancement for African Americans occasionally occurs. When there is an opportunity to promote African Americans into leadership positions and the leadership positions requires the African American candidate to supervise subordinates who are apart of the dominant culture in America, century-old perceptions of African Americans infiltrate the decision process on whether they should be hired for the position. If an organization does decide to hire the African American candidate for the leadership position, the new leader's ability to effectively do their job is often challenged by subordinates, fellow leaders, and higher levels of management. The practice of using old perceptions about people of African heritage against current day applicants with African ancestry is also evident in Christian organizations. In 2013, there were 15 major nationwide Christian based companies that were still in operation throughout the United States of America (Nisen, 2013). Out of the 15 Christian based companies, only three of the companies

had a person of African descent in an executive leadership position. These Christian companies do employ people of African descent, but rarely, if ever, do these nationwide Christian based companies hire people of African heritage for leadership positions. The absence of diversity in leadership positions at Christian based organization leads research to wonder how the people who work for Christian-based organizations interpret the sacred text. Desirable attributes of a leader, the role of Africans in the Bible, and how people of African descent were pivotal in the development of Christianity as well as in the first-century church is all found within the Holy Bible.

Symington and Symington (2012) asserted that many of the foundational principles and ideologies practiced in the United States are biblically-based principles. Therefore, it would be appropriate to review the dual relationship between people of African descent and people of European descent from a theological point of view. Stone and Duke (2013) described theology as a way of thinking about life. Ultimately, thinking about life leads to creating beliefs and standards. In the case of organizations in the western hemisphere, the beliefs and the standards that leadership has about the nondominant culture in a country contribute to the continual low number of people with African heritage in leadership positions. Understanding the causes behind the dominant culture's thoughts about people of African descent requires a hermeneutical and sociorhetorical analysis of the sacred books used by the dominant culture. This analysis involves an exploration of the meaning of the words written in the Holy Bible and how these words apply to the lives of previous and current believers.

## II. DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP THEORIES

### *Reconciliatory Practices*

Swain and Sayweed (2006) purported that leaders who embrace reconciliatory practices help their subordinates understand antecedent events that have occurred and contributed to any problems that their organization faces. Reconciliatory leaders seek to find and spend more time evaluating why certain events happened and less time on current problems occurring within the organization. Van de Ven and Poole (1995) believed that if the true reason why problems exist in an organization are discovered, analyzed, and explained, then there is a greater chance that those problems will not continue to reoccur. Reconciliatory practices consist of three components: (a) building relationships, (b) not avoiding uncomfortable topics of discussion, and (c) borrowing successful leadership practices. Lederach (1997) stated that when co-workers establish relationships with one another that their overall communication with each other improves. Secondly, reconciliatory leaders should never avoid activities where staff express grief, loss, or anger. According to Gardner-Feldman (1999), organizational leaders that incorporate reconciliatory practices into their workplace should show their subordinates that feelings of anger, grief, and loss is felt by all groups of people. Lastly, reconciliatory leaders commonly incorporate successful reconciliatory techniques used by other organizations. Day (2000) said that good leaders do not have to reinvent all of their leadership practices. Christian organizations that desire more diversity in their leadership positions requires the organization to go back to the Holy Bible and reevaluate the presence of Africa and Africans in the sacred text.

Organizations that are Christian based must reconcile within themselves and acknowledge the active practice of De-Africanizing the Holy Bible. De-Africanization of the Bible has been an unconscious and unchecked reality for Bible readers and believers for centuries. Until readers and believers of the sacred text accept that people in the western hemisphere are unconsciously biased against the continent of Africa and descendants of Africa, people will never see the need for true diversity and inclusivity in leadership. Reconciliatory practices of current leaders in organizations that desire diversity allow current leaders to look back and try to discover why and where the lack of diversity stems from. Also, the application of reconciliatory practices to organizations that lack diversity in leadership allows current organizational leaders the ability to welcome the fears, confusion, and anxiety of its subordinates that seek for more diversity. Current leaders also have the required space needed for subordinates that express fears, uncertainty, and anxieties about accepting and welcoming more diversity in the workplace.

### *Upper Echelon Theory*

Hambrick and Mason (1984) created the UET—a theory associated with business leadership and states that organizations can obtain many benefits if they attract, recruit, and maintain a diverse executive leadership team for their organization. Nishii et al. (2007) purported that when UET is practiced, positive outcomes occur. The positive effects are felt on all levels within the organization as well as the organization's stakeholders. UET is a widely known and accepted concept in the United States, yet, according to Nishii et al., only 15% of managers in American organizations are people of color. UET believes that the concrete ceiling concept continues to be the reason why organizations struggle with diversity. Ray and Davis (1988) compared the known glass ceiling that women experience in the corporate world to the concrete ceiling that many African Americans endure in the same corporate world. Glass ceilings and concrete ceilings are both barriers established to prevent specific groups from growing in an organization. When comparing the glass ceiling experience to the concrete ceiling experience, the concrete ceiling experience is unequivocally worse (Davidson & Davidson, 1997). Concrete ceilings are almost impossible to penetrate, and people who continually try to break through the proverbial concrete usually end up hurting their future career. Incorporating UET into American organizations will have contemporary implications for leading racial reconciliation in an organization's leadership.

Organizations that desire to diversify the demographic make-up of their employees should start by introducing people of color into senior management positions. The adoption of diversity practices, in conjunction with the demographic changes in an organization's workforce is more positively affected when there is more diversity in senior management. Organizations that implement UET annihilate barriers created by the concrete ceiling and advance their organizations by widening their opportunities to serve and meet the needs of the organization's clients/customers. Nishii et al. (2007) reported that when people of color hold executive leadership positions, they help reshape the mindsets of their employees. Leaders who are people of color help their subordinates understand that being a reliable and capable leader are not characteristics solely reserved for Caucasian leaders. New Testament writers described

Upper Echelon Theory practices in their writing when they wrote about the development of the first church and the Christian faith. Essential elements of Upper Echelon Theory are found in Luke's writings. These elements include the contributions towards Christianity made by people of African descent.

### III. AFRICA AND AFRICAN'S PRESENCE IN THE HOLY BIBLE

#### *De-Africanization of the Bible*

Africa and Africans have a significant place in the Bible (Cone, 2008). Interpreters of the sacred text, institutions of higher education, and even Christian churches have consciously and unconsciously de-Africanized the Bible (Nyang, 1985). The de-Africanization of the Bible continues to happen in America. De-Africanization practices have been so ingrained into the mindset of all Christians born in or raised in the United States that it is the biggest obstacle for why it is difficult to see the African presence in the Bible. Nyang (1985) explained that people and institutions of faith and education have taken references and allusions to Africa out of the Bible and suggested that those African nations and people existed somewhere else in the world. Bennett (1971b) suggested that before scholars could identify the African presence in the Bible, scholars must first acknowledge what had been done to erase the African existence in the first place. Bennett (1971a) believed that to recover from the de-Africanization of the Bible, scholars must accept the notion that there had been and continues to be a denial of the presence of African nations and African people in scripture.

Currently used translations of the holy text were translated after 1500 A.D. by people of European descent (Smith, 2007). Modern-day Christianity began to take its shape during the late 1600s and early 1700s during the Reformation period in Europe (Rublack, 2017). People first downplayed the Bible's connection to Africa during the Reformation. Europeans were against Africans and saw them as inferior. Slavery in Europe served as the reason why Europeans viewed Africans as inferior. According to West (2000), European translators of the Bible in the 16th century did not believe that the beautiful work and land described in the holy script could have happened in the perceived impoverished continent of Africa. For example, according to Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1994), there has been a continual movement to dispel the idea that the Garden of Eden may have been located in Africa. The reason why there is a push by some groups to move the Garden of Eden out of Africa is that if the Garden of Eden is in Africa, that would make the Garden of Eden an African place, which would further mean that the first human, Adam, was African.

Genesis 2 describes the Garden of Eden. Four rivers flowed through the Garden of Eden. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers serve as the two most commonly known rivers in the Garden of Eden narrative. Modern-day maps as well as historical maps created by Eurocentric mappers describe the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as rivers located in modern-day Iraq (Flanagan, 2001, Ingram, 1993). According to Genesis 2:10-14, the Garden of Eden consisted of two more rivers; the Gihon River and the Pishon River. Genesis 2 purported that the Pishon River flowed around the land of Havilah and the Gihon River ran around the land of Cush. Lemons (2014) reported that Havilah and Cush were African countries. Scholars like Adamo (1986) argued that the continent of

Africa may be the true location of the Garden of Eden. Historians that support Adamo's argument agree with Adamo because of the lack of parallel rivers in Mesopotamian or other Near Eastern countries (Oya, 1984). These parallel rivers do however exist in Africa. While research can eliminate some locations as the possible location for the Garden of Eden, the presence of the Pishon River and Gihon River in the Garden of Eden allows Africa to be a strong possible location for the Garden of Eden. Felder (1990) stated it was just as possible for Africa to be the location as the Middle East. In an attempt to de-Africanize the Bible, as well as rationalize and justify chattel enslavement in Eurocentric countries, oral storytellers and historians could not allow Adam, the first man to be of African descent. If Adam was of African descent it would make it difficult Europeans to claim that Africans are inferior to Europeans if Europeans were decedents of Africans (Onah & Nwosu, 2019).

Individuals who only studied the Bible with Israel in mind functioned as another contributing component of the de-Africanization in the Bible (Myers, 1991). Burgh (2006) suggested that people who studied Israel only reviewed Israel and its relationship to Near Eastern countries and Mesopotamia. As a result, biblical scholars in the 1500s and the 1600s just looked at Israel and its connection to its eastern neighbors. These scholars never looked west or to the south to see how Africa shaped the Old Testament's theology. C. Copher (1991) expressed that Africa had more effect on how Israel looked in its early stages than any of the Near Eastern countries. Africa had a notable shaping effect on Israel, especially when people embrace Egypt as the African nation that it is and not a Middle Eastern country that some people would like to believe that it was.

Finally, the last component that has helped de-Africanize the Bible is the identification of African nations that were hindered by people who designed biblical maps. Most of the maps we currently have of ancient Africa were not done by people who lived at the time and could define where different nations were (J. M. Miller, 1983; Wesley, 2017). These maps were drawn by European scholars in the 1500s who read the Bible and tried to trace back what they thought was Africa. There is a significant difference between how things were initially laid out and how Europeans thought how things were laid out based on what they learned and how they interpreted the Bible (Burgh, 2006). The problem with how designers designed the maps occurred when a person in 1500 read the Bible and did not connect or think a place described in the Bible was an African place. For example, the land of Cush described in Genesis is the same place known as Ethiopia in 1500.

All three components show how the Bible has been de-Africanized. Therefore, if European scholars from 1500 had not produced these three components, the evidence and contributions to the Bible made by people of African descent would be more pronounced. Moreover, it would also make it more challenging to limit people of African descent to the role of servanthood and inferior to the Israelites, as Genesis 4 suggest.

A problem for Christian based organizations or organizations that only have members of the United States and Europe's dominant culture in leadership positions is that these organizations struggle to see past skin color when promoting people into executive leadership positions. Also, these Christian organizations do not recognize the vast amount of diversity located in the Holy Bible. People of African heritage played a significant role in the recorded events found in the Old Testament and the development

of the Christian faith described in the New Testament. A greater understanding of the reasons why organizations dislike or fear people of African descent in leadership could generate relevant conversations. These conversations would focus on whether this country has genuinely evolved as much as it thinks it has. Specifically, for organizations located in the United States, this dialogue would help the United States definitively answer whether this country, as a whole, has let go of its divisive racial tendencies and has embraced the constitutional concept that all Americans are created as equal and can equally be successful as leaders of an organization.

Organizations that embrace diversity strive to accurately reflect the diversity found throughout the organization. These organizations also apply reconciliatory practices into their workplace practices and behaviors. Christian leaders and Christian based organizations that lack diversity in their companies would experience a shift in their thinking and behaviors towards potential leaders of color if they understood the misconceptions that surround the first descriptions of Africans in the Bible, which is commonly known as the Curse of Ham.

### *Curse of Ham Theory*

The phrase “curse of Ham” is misleading. It is misleading because God never put a “curse” on Ham. Yet people in both European countries as well as in the United States of America believe in the curse of Ham. People also believe that God ordained the curse over not just Ham, but all of Ham’s genealogy. Adamo (2010) stated the origins of African people began with Ham, therefore God’s curse over Ham also meant that all African people were also cursed. According to Adamo (1986), the dominant culture in the United States and Europe promoted the idea that God cursed a certain group of people because of actions performed by Noah’s son Ham. Whitford (2017) stated that God inflicted a curse on a certain group of people and that the curse was two-fold. First, God cursed a certain group of people with black skin. Secondly, people cursed with black skin would be under the control and submissive to individuals that did not have black skin. These two fundamental thoughts about people of African heritage continued past the end of legalized slavery in both countries. The effects of the curse of Ham theory were and continue to be prevalent in countries where the European culture serves as the dominant culture. The misinterpreted passage of scripture serves as a primary reason why organizations continue to lack in diversity in leadership positions. People believed that it was not God’s design for people of African descent to hold a leadership position. According to Braude (1997), Asian countries and African countries are not affected by the curse of Ham theory like European countries and America. Concepts from the curse of Ham theory have been found in the foundational design of England and later in the United States of America (Haynes et al., 2002). In the United States, this controversial theory dates back to the New England Puritans (D. Whitford, 2010). According to Mackinlay (1973), the idea that Puritans did not support the concept of slavery was not entirely accurate. Puritans were firmly in favor of enslaving another person as long as the enslaved person was not of European descent. Puritans saw nothing wrong with people of African descent being forced into slavery (Rosenthal, 1973). The reason why Puritans saw nothing wrong with African slavery is that Puritans believed that God created Africans to be both inferior and servants to Europeans.

Puritans tied scripture to their actions and how they interacted with Africans (Thomas, 1975). By linking scripture to their actions, Puritans created a way to make their actions ordained by God, which relieved them from owning their racial acts (Bartour, 1983). Puritans were able to alleviate their sense of guilt from enslaving another group of people by placing the reason for the heinous act of slavery on God and the Bible. The Antebellum south received most of the credit for slavery and ideas of European supremacy in America (Cell & Cell, 1982). North of the Mason–Dixon line, in particular, the Puritans in Massachusetts, had their fair share of racist acts and the acceptance of racist behaviors. Griffith (1999) added that the Puritans in New England were the first group of Christians in America to argue that God created Africans innately inferior to other human beings and that Africans' inferiority stems from God's curse over Ham's son Canaan.

While the mindset of most people in the western hemisphere has progressed and improved about people of African descent, behaviors and actions of some show that the original thoughts about Africa and Africans still exist. In organizational leadership, there continues to be a struggle to see African Americans into leadership positions, and some of the justifications for European Americans not being able to see African American in leadership is linked back to thinking that African Americans are inferior. The commonly spread misconceptions of the curse of Ham allowed and still allow organizations the ability to shut out diversity in leadership positions. Organizational theories like Upper Echelon Theory indicate that diversity in the highest level that reflects the diversity found in the lowest level of the organization increase the impact that the organization has on its customers and propels the organization to grow.

### *Acts 2: The Cyrenians and the Book of Acts*

According to Rius-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger (2006), the Book of Acts showcases the Cyrenians' prominence in the development of the early church. The developing church felt the presence of the Cyrenians, and the New Testament links several biblical figures to the nation of Cyrene (DelCogliano, 2011). These people include Simon, Alexander, Rufus, and Lucius, all of whom made substantial contributions toward the church and Christianity. Simon helped Jesus carry his cross to its final destination. Brothers Alexander and Rufus, the sons of Simon, were original leaders within the church, and Lucius was responsible for sending Paul and Barnabas on their missionary work to nonbelieving nations (Ndirangu-Kihara, 2018). Wedderburn (1995) argued that Acts 2 highlights the bulk of the Cyrenian contributions to the church's development.

Acts 2 describes the day of Pentecost. Keener (2009) declared that the purpose of Pentecost was to empower people to go throughout the world and spread the message of Jesus Christ. During the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the people who were in the upper room; the individuals present received the gift of speaking in languages in which they were not trained (Keener, 2009). C. G. Williams (1975) clarified that all languages spoken during Pentecost were known languages, simply unknown to the person who spoke them. Dueck (2002) suggested that God equipped the people with the gift of language as a tool to spread the message of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Acts 2:10 lists the first locations taught the gospel of Jesus

Christ after Pentecost, and Acts 2:10 explains that two of the countries represented at Pentecost were the African countries of Egypt and Cyrene (Williams, 1975). Empowering people with language to spread the good news of Christ meant that followers of Christ would not be limited to Jerusalem and allowed God to spread his message across the world, including Africa.

#### IV. SOCIAL-CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF ACTS 2 AND ACTS 13

##### *Acts 2*

Birch, Brueggemann, Fretheim, and Petersen (2005) affirmed that when applying social and cultural analysis to a selected pericope, the reader of the text must be “self-conscious and critical in its awareness of the effects of the social context within the world that produced the text” (p. 9). Allbaugh (2017) described *social and cultural texture* as an investigation into the local world that surrounds the text when the text was written. Understanding the social and cultural environment that surrounds a selected passage of scripture facilitates understanding of the meaning of that identified pericope. Robbins’ (1996a, 1996b) description of social-cultural analysis helps scholars understand how Christianity was impacted by the diversity of the original church leaders and developers of the Christian faith.

A common social and cultural topic found in the passages of scriptures in Acts 2 is the concept of dyadic personality. Robbins (1996b) described dyadic personality as reliance on others to form one’s own identity. In Acts 2, when the people received the gift of speaking in unknown languages, each required assistance from someone else in the room to interpret what was said. The gift of speaking in unknown tongues or languages in Acts 2 is different than the unknown languages spoken in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapters 12 and 14. According to Nel (2017), then people began to speak in unknown tongues on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) the words uttered by the speaker may have been unknown to the speaker, but was understood by someone else that was present in the room. When Paul referenced speaking in tongues in his letters to the church in Corinth, Paul use of the phrase *unknown tongues* referred to the heavenly or angelic language that a believer used to commune with God that only God understands. Ford (2003) suggested that before the visitation of the Holy Spirit, believers of Christ were able to live a faith-based life in which only themselves and God were needed. After Pentecost and the visitation by the Holy Spirit, believers of Christ needed a relationship with God and a connection with people to fulfill and spread Christ’s mission. On the day of Pentecost, the gift of speaking in an unknown language connected people and created relationships for believers of Christ who represented different races, nationalities, and places of origin.

According to Robbins (1996b), ideological texture focuses on the language used in the holy script. This style of analysis inspects the verbiage presented in the text, studies the language that interpreters of the text used, and gauges how individuals and groups are inspired by the text. An ideological texture topic found in Acts 2 is the concept of gangs. Robbins (1996b) briefly defined a gang as a large clique that has one specific leader. Cliques are groups of people who share common beliefs. In the Book of

Acts, those present in the upper room when the Holy Spirit descended from heaven shared the same beliefs, namely that Jesus was the son of God and that only through believing in Jesus and fulfilling the words that he commanded could a person enter into heaven. Further, the common belief in Jesus Christ as their leader established the Cyrenians and other nationalities represented in Acts 2 as a gang, rather than simply a clique. This identification of Jesus Christ as their leader shifted all decision-making responsibility from members of the group to Jesus.

This analysis of Acts 2 presents the following lessons. First, while the church initially started in Jerusalem, actions performed by Jewish leadership caused followers of Christ to stretch beyond Jerusalem's borders and find other places to live and worship, such as the African nation of Cyrene. Second, Cyrenians were represented in the upper room during the day of Pentecost; thus, God gave a language that could be understood by people from the African country. Third, all languages spoken during the day of Pentecost enabled missionaries to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to nonbelievers in different countries (Cram, 2013). Last, Africa and African nations not only learned and embraced the church and Christianity but were critically involved leading development.

### *Acts 13: The Church of Antioch*

Events described in Acts 13 occurred at the church of Antioch. Penner and Vander Stichele (2009) held that Acts 13 functions as a foundational chapter for followers of Christ for two reasons. First, Acts 13 uses the term *Christian* for the first time (Pervo & Attridge, 2008), a term that has since been used to describe believers of Christ. Second, leaders of the Antioch church blessed and sanctified Barnabas and Paul to go out into the world as missionaries to defend Gentile, converted believers against Judaizers (Hoefler, 2005). According to Acts 13:1, leaders from the church of Antioch were Barnabas; Simeon, also called Niger; Lucius of Cyrene; and Manaen. Though the Bible's account of these four leaders is brief, and never mentions all four men together, Musvovsi (2010) asserted that they were listed in Acts 13 to demonstrate how men of different nations worked together toward the same goal and mission.

Two of the four leaders of the Antioch church were men of African heritage. Simeon, also called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene were men of color. Padilla (1982) commented that while the Bible does not value or devalue a person based on ethnicity, in this pericope, the author of Acts 13 emphasized Simeon and Lucius more than the other two leaders, particularly in reference to their African heritage. Acts 13 refers to Simeon as "Simeon the Niger," a Greek word meaning *black-skinned*. Therefore, the Bible referred to Simeon as *Simeon the Black Skin* (Musvovsi 2010). Lucius was the second named man in the New Testament to originate from Cyrene. While Antioch was not the first church to believe in Christ, this early church was the first to call its members "Christians" (Acts 11:26). Importantly, this historical and biblically memorialized church had leaders of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds.

### *Social-Cultural Texture Analysis of Acts 13*

A common social and cultural topic found in Acts 13:1 is the concept of colleague contract. Actions exhibited by the four leaders at the church of Antioch represent Robbins' (1996a) concept of colleague contract. Readers view all four leaders as equal partners who worked together to complete their assigned task, which was to lead the church of Antioch and bless Barnabas and Paul before they started their missionary work. All actions taken by these leaders were intended to benefit their church and mission. In this colleague contract, no contracted partner accentuated himself over another.

This summary of Acts 13:1 and surrounding ideological implications presents the following key points. First, the church at Antioch is the first place in the Bible to use the term *Christian*. Second, the church at Antioch had four leaders, two of whom were people of African descent. The presence of Simeon the Niger and Lucius of Cyrene in the church of Antioch's leadership indicates that people of African descent were not only taught about Christianity by local missionaries but also helped to develop the Christian faith. Third, the church of Antioch's leadership demonstrates how all four men collaborated equally to complete their assignments and lead the church. Finally, the story illustrates how the Bible used people from all over the world to fulfill God's mission.

## V. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

Hiring officials of organizations, especially at Christian-based organizations, need to apply reconciliatory practices when increasing diversity in leadership. Management and appointing officials of many American organizations have a history of limiting the roles and jobs for African Americans. Religious-based organizations are supposed to be different. Biblical principles function as the foundation on which a Christian-based organization operates. In examining the African presence found in Acts 2 and Acts 13, it is clear that the Bible did not restrict people of African heritage to any one role or type of career. Not only does this pericope show the readers that the founding fathers of the first church came from different heritage, this pericope also functions as an example of diversity that Jesus Christ wants His followers. If God designed for people from various heritages to be equal founding fathers of the first church at Antioch, than it would be rational to think that God would expect and support equality and diversity in leadership positions in all Christ-inspired organizations. Moreover, if Christians are expected to be living examples for non-Christ believers on how people are supposed to love, treat, and respect one another, than Christian based organizations should fill their leadership positions with diversity. Faith-based organizations should strive to have their leadership team be as diverse as the diversity found in their entry-level positions. Christian-based organizations should reconcile their thinking about people of African descent to how biblical authors of the New Testament saw people of African ancestry during the foundation of the first church.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The social and culture and ideological analysis of Acts 2 and Acts 13 shows that people of African descent held a variety of roles in antiquity. One of the roles that people of African ancestry held was the position of a leader or top official of a society. Individuals with African heritage in the Bible were not just leaders and the top officials of African nations but also leaders and senior officials of societies and countries not located in the continent of Africa (Adamo, 1983). When the Bible describes leaders with African heritage who lead non-African countries and societies, it shows its readers that the authors of the scripture, as well as the societies referenced in the sacred book, did not base a person's capabilities to lead on race or skin color. Research has indicated that individuals with African heritage were sought after for leadership positions because of the perceived wealth, their high level of intelligence, their keen military skills, and their ability to protect their followers (Amado, 2015). Having people like Nimrod, Cush-Rashathaim, Queen of Sheba, and Simon the Niger, Alexander and Rufus in leadership positions suggest that successful leadership is not controlled by how people look but by how they behave and, more importantly, how they inspire their followers to act.

For racial reconciliation to occur in organizations, these organizations must recognize that the Bible gives more examples of people with African ancestry in a position of leadership than in submissive and low-level positions in society. Christian organizations would benefit from placing people of African descent in leadership positions. Nishii et al. (2007) suggested that leaders of African descent work harder at their jobs and value their position more than their counterparts who are a part of the dominant culture. This is not to say that people of the dominant culture lack dedication and commitment to their job or that they are not committed to ensuring that the organization reaches its goals. Fear, however, drives people of African descent into working harder in their leadership positions. Members of the nondominant culture in leadership positions live with a feeling that if they make a mistake, do something wrong, or if people of the dominant culture presume or assume that they, the leaders from the nondominant culture are incapable of doing their job, that the role of leadership will be taken away from them. Leaders with African ancestry also have an underlying fear that if they fail in their leadership position that it may impact the organization's decision to put another person from the nondominant culture in a leadership position in the future. Organizational leaders of African descent push themselves as well as their followers harder to achieve more, which ultimately benefits the organization.

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## TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER: LUKE 18:18–30

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Using the socio-rhetorical methods of socio-cultural analysis, the story of the rich young ruler in Luke 18:18–30 yields insights applicable to Transformational leadership theory. The socio-rhetorical method reveals how Luke's Gospel portrays the church as a thaumaturgical utopian community reflecting an inaugurated eschatology. The limited good worldview of Luke's day informs the reader that Jesus gave the ruler an opportunity to repent of his greed. While the limited good worldview is not as pervasive in 21st century North America, modern-day Christians are likewise urged towards generosity to the less fortunate in their communities. Christian leaders should have modest expectations of the results of applying Transformational leadership theory. The eschatological and thaumaturgical nature of the kingdom of God is beyond the scope of Transformational leadership theory. Christian leaders should also be aware of their motives in employing intellectual stimulation. Innovation and creativity should be used to raise economic equality in the community. Unlike Transformational leadership theory, the Gospel is good news for the poor instead of promising individuals and the upwardly mobile.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Leaders of Christian organizations have many leadership resources available to help them reach their goals. Transformational leadership theory stands as one of the most popular (Northouse, 2019). However, Christians self-identify as those who follow Jesus Christ, a remarkable leader. Transformational leadership theory needs to be compared to the leadership examples of Jesus found in scripture. The present project will examine the story of the ruler in Luke 18:18–30 using socio-rhetorical criticism's social-cultural analysis, according to Robbins' (1996) influential work. The exegetical

findings from Luke 18 will then be used as a lens to view Transformational leadership theory.

The socio-rhetorical method of social-cultural analysis is vast in its methodological options. The present study will focus on two relevant areas of investigation, religious sect types as described by Wilson (1963) and the limited good worldview as outlined by Malina (1987). Other social topics would be helpful to analyze, such as honor and shame texture, as well as collectivism's presence. However, the present study is limited to religious sect types and limited goods because of their saliency in the given text. The analysis of these two social-cultural perspectives will help readers look past the familiarity of the story of the ruler in Luke 18 to see the issues relevant to Transformational leadership theory.

### *Analysis of Luke 18:18–30*

Social scientist Wilson (1963) proposed seven views of salvation (sect types) among religious groups. He listed conversionist, revolutionist, introversionist, gnostic-manipulationist, thaumaturgical, reformist, and utopian (Wilson, 1963). The Conversionist believes that the world is corrupt, and the only solution and salvation is in the personal conversion of as many individuals as possible (Wilson, 1959). Revolutionists believe the only solution to the world's ill is destruction by God and rebuilding it a new (Wilson, 1959). Adherents to this belief see their role as witnesses to the corrupt world of its impending destruction and subsequent renewing. Introversionists maintain that only a complete withdraw from the evil world to create a purer community can save oneself (Wilson, 1959). Gnostic-manipulationists hold that salvation can come to the corrupt world and its systems if they have the right information, knowledge, and the right ways of doing things (Wilson, 1959).

Thaumaturgicalists believe that salvation is a miraculous divine intervention amidst individual problems and ailments, including life after death. The attention of thaumaturgicalists is on immediate problems rather than concern for the larger society (Wilson, 1963). The reformists see the corruption of the world as a result of broken social structures. The reformists believe that God can reveal solutions to correct the social structures and thus bring salvation to the world (Wilson, 1963). The last sect type, utopian, is guided by the belief that humans can reconstruct a new society that eliminates evil. The utopian view is more active than introversion, and does not require divine destruction like the revolutionist, nor does it try to fix the current model as the reformist does. It seeks to remake the entire social world using divinely guided principles (Robbins, 1996).

Luke 18:18–30 uses soteriological concepts to advance the story. The ruler asked Jesus how he could inherit eternal life, and Jesus answered by mentioning the kingdom of God and the age to come (Luke 18:18, 25). The text begs questions about the ruler's understanding of eternal life. What is the kingdom of God, according to Jesus? How does one enter it, and what is the age to come? Did Jesus and the ruler have the same view of salvation? One must examine the greater context of the Gospel of Luke to determine what kind of soteriological conceptions are at play here.

### *The Kingdom of God*

Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of Luke was fundamentally thaumaturgical. This thaumaturgical ministry was evidence of the nearness of the kingdom of God (Luke 11:20). In Jesus' miracle ministry, the God of Israel was present to help his people, especially the poor, the afflicted, the marginalized, and sinners (Marshall, 1994). Luke recorded twenty miracles, while Matthew reported only nineteen and Mark eighteen (Green, 1997). The three synoptic Gospels share seventeen healing miracles (including three resuscitations), six exorcisms, and eight miracles over nature (Green, 1997). His thaumaturgical ministry, witnessed in all the Gospels, brought relief to many local and personal problems for the poor and afflicted (Wilson, 1963). The miracles served as signs of the arrival of God's kingdom (Luke 10:9).

Jesus frequently taught about the kingdom of God, and because the term was ambiguous, he was often misunderstood (Luke 17:20–21; 19:11). The Judaism of Jesus' day had many different notions of what the kingdom of God would look like (Allison, 2010). A renewing of a Davidic political kingdom to overthrow Roman oppression was a widespread view during his days (Green, 2013). Jesus' own twelve seemed to hold to this misunderstanding even up to his ascension (Acts 1:6). It was not until the outpouring of the Spirit that they realized Jesus had been enthroned in heaven as Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36), and therefore people everywhere should repent of sin and receive the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:37). After this event, Luke narrated what salvation looked like in Acts 2:42–47. Those who were "being saved" (Acts 2:47) were the ones who repented and joined the new community centered around faith in Jesus as the Messiah. In Luke and Acts, the church was the renewed Israel, expanded to include Gentile believers (Campbell, 1997). They fellowshiped, shared possessions, broke bread, and worshiped together regularly. This image in Acts was a picture of an inaugurated eschatology (Ladd, 1978). The kingdom of God had broken into the affairs of everyday life.

In Luke and Acts, the kingdom of God is a thaumaturgical utopian society, not separate, but overlapping the broken community around them. It is thaumaturgical in that it brings miraculous divine intervention to individual problems and ailments (Wilson, 1963). The healing miracles that continue in Acts demonstrate value for divine intervention in the community. It is utopian in the sense that it is a new society centered on the Lordship of Jesus, which is ideally free of evil through repentance. The kingdom of God is a new community built on divinely guided principles (Robbins, 1996). This thaumaturgical utopian society does not seek to replace the secular world around itself, but it overlaps it.

Salvation, according to Luke, meant repentance with faith, and inclusion into the utopian community of God's people (Wilson, 1963). The image of Acts 2:42–47 is a fulfillment of Jesus' promise to the disciples in Luke 18:29–30. They had received many times as much because they had entered into the new community and gained a new family. The emphasis was on experiencing salvation in this life in the thaumaturgical utopian kingdom of God. Salvation was concurrent with inclusion in this new community (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14). Entrance into this community required faith and repentance, and its benefits included forgiveness of sin and eternal life (Luke 18:30; Acts 3:19).

### *Eternal Life*

The kingdom of God and eternal life are two separate concepts in Luke. The ruler did not ask Jesus how to enter the kingdom of God in this life, but how to inherit eternal life (Luke 18:18). He was not interested in changing his current lifestyle, but only gaining assurance of life after death. Jesus distinguished the two when he said, "in this age [you will receive back what you gave up] and in the age to come eternal life" (Luke 18:30). Based on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31), eternal life seemed to mean a positive experience in life after death. As stated before, the kingdom of God refers to a thaumaturgical utopian society in the present life.

However, the kingdom of God was not limited to this life. There would still be a greater manifestation of this kingdom in the age to come (Luke 21:25–31; Acts 3:19–21). The phrase "in the age to come" (Luke 18:30), was a reference to an apocalyptic worldview (Aune, 1993). Apocalypticism was an eschatological worldview wildly popular in Palestine in the 1st century (Crawford, 2000). In an apocalyptic perspective, the present age is corrupt, and at a certain point, God will overthrow the evil powers ruling this age and begin a new one characterized by the reign of God (Aune, 1993). At the beginning of the coming age, the righteous would be resurrected to enjoy eternal life (Dan 12:1–2). There was no concept of eternal life apart from a future resurrection in the 2nd temple Jewish theology (Van Voorst, 2000). Wilson (1963) considers this perspective belonging to a Revolutionary sect type. Revolutionists believe the only solution to the world's ill is destruction by God and rebuilding it a new (Wilson, 1959). Adherents to this belief see their role as witnesses to the corrupt world of its impending destruction and subsequent renewing. Luke's portrayal of God's kingdom included both apocalyptic and Revolutionary features (Luke 21:25–31; Acts 3:19–21). The kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus' heavenly enthronement began an overlapping of the coming age with this present evil age ("Last Things," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*). Luke's view is, therefore, thaumaturgical, utopian, and ultimately revolutionary.

The ruler most likely understood the kingdom of God as political as the disciples did (Luke 1:33; 17:20–21; Acts 1:6). It is doubtful that he had any concept of a thaumaturgical utopian kingdom of God. The ruler knew enough Jewish theology to believe in eternal life and therefore, an apocalyptic resurrection of the dead (Van Voorst, 2000). Thus, the ruler had a revolutionary view of salvation, and he asked Jesus how he could be on the winning side of the future resurrection. He wanted assurance of life after death. It was a reasonable question for a religious teacher from a potential follower.

## II. LIMITED GOOD WORLDVIEW

If the ruler's question was not unreasonable, a reader must ask why Jesus seemed to be so rude to him. The economic standing of the ruler colors the entire text. Some significant economic distance exists between 1st century Palestine and 21st century North America. The current readers need to examine what it meant to be a rich person in the ruler's culture.

Palestine's economic system in the 1st century was primarily agrarian and similar to the rest of the rural Mediterranean world, with large estates run by powerful families with contracted laborers (Malina, 1987). Many of the non-elites were practically peasants and therefore lived with assumptions of what anthropologists call limited good (Foster,

1965). For peasants, with the limited good worldview, all desirable things in life were considered finite and in short supply. All desirable goods, money, honor, friendship, and even health were assumed to be similar to the finitude of land, which can only be divided among the inhabitants. One only improved their life situation at the expense of someone else (Foster, 1965). This worldview produced a natural distrust for wealthy members of society. Because the rich could only have an abundance if the poor were despoiled, wealthy people were considered inherently wicked. The culture assumed the rich became wealthy only through depriving, defrauding, and eliminating others (Malina, 1987).

### *Limited Good in Luke*

The limited good worldview colors the pages of the Gospel of Luke. Jesus was from a peasant family (Luke 2:24; cf. Lev. 12:8) and experienced a limited good childhood (Green, 2013). His peasant experience does not indicate his endorsement of the limited good worldview; however, it shows his familiarity with the frustration of lack. Because opportunities were fewer in 1st century Palestine, limited good was the experienced reality. This reality influenced which sins were condemned the most. It influenced who received the call to repentance. In Luke the rich are cast in a negative light frequently while the poor receive salvation (Luke 1:51–53; 3:7–14; 4:18; 6:20–26; 11:39–41; 12:13–19, 33–34; 14:18–23; 15:11–32; 16:1–13, 19–31; 17:26–29; 18:18–30; 19:1–10, 11–27). According to Luke 16:13, the love of money and possessions stands as the chief competitor to God's kingdom (Green, 1997). If the message of God's kingdom was good news to the poor, then it was a message of woe to the rich (Luke 6:20–26).

The kingdom of God was bad news for the rich because it signaled an imminent redistribution of wealth. This redistribution came through almsgiving and generosity caused by repentance (Luke 11:41; 12:32–34). As stated above, Luke demonstrates in Acts 2:42–47 the sharing of possessions (redistribution) as a significant characteristic of God's kingdom. Generosity to the poor was synonymous with repentance for a rich person because of the limited good worldview of 1st century Palestine. The poor were destitute and remained so because of the greed and avarice of the wealthy (Malina, 1987). Thus, the ruler could have followed the commandments from his youth and still lack one thing: he was inherently wicked because he was rich at other people's expense (Malina, 1987). True repentance for the ruler of Luke 18:18 was not to convert to any new understanding of theology but to follow through with his current religious commitment (Green, 2013). He lived in a context that was bound by limited goods, and he had not shared enough. His context determined that true repentance meant generosity to the poor.

### *Jesus' Response to the Ruler*

The ruler approached Jesus using financial language as if he were looking to add eternal life to his current investments. Jesus answered his question using economic terms. It would cost him everything he had. The ruler determined that the price was too high. Jesus' interaction with the ruler was a fulfillment of Mary's song that set the theme

for Luke's Gospel, "He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty" (1:53).

The transactional nature of their conversation begs the question of what Jesus was offering the ruler. If the ruler had sold everything and given to the poor, would that have meant that he bought salvation with money? The limited goods worldview can explain why not. Jesus was not offering eternal life for sale. He was allowing the ruler to repent of his greed, and without repentance (and faith), there is no salvation (Luke 13:5; 24:47).

### *Limited Good in North America*

The direct application of this scripture to 21st-century middle-class Americans requires a comparison between the times (Duvall & Hays, 2012). The differences between modern times and the 1st century are many. Americans are not God's people as a political entity. There is more religious plurality in North America than in 1st century Palestine. Contrary to a limited good worldview, fifty-one percent of Americans believe there are no limits to economic growth (Partisan Polarization Surges in Bush, Obama Years, 2012, June 4). Many believe technological advances have overcome any limitations to economic growth.

However, there are some similarities worth noting. There is still a significant worldview disparity between low-income households (those making less than \$45,500) compared with those making greater than \$45,000 (Fry & Kochhar, 2018). Fifty-eight percent of low-income families believe the poor are poor because of circumstances beyond their control, and 43% of the middle-class think it is because of a lack of effort. In contrast, 12% of the middle class believes it is both (Partisan Polarization Surges in Bush, Obama Years, 2012, June 4). Thus, certain features of the limited good worldview are still embraced by the majority of lower-income American households. Even though the limited good sentiment continues in America, it does not look like ancient Palestinian limited good. Eighty-eight percent of Americans agreed that they admired people who became wealthy through hard work (Partisan Polarization Surges in Bush, Obama Years, 2012, June 4). The underlying assumption is that people could dramatically improve their economic status through hard work without being considered inherently evil.

What are the implications for today since the American economy is more dynamic than 1st century Palestine? Is it still hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God? According to the studies above, God's kingdom manifests itself in the new community of God's people. To join this community, one must believe in Jesus and repent of their sins. In Luke's culture, repentance often meant doing one's part to undo the inequitable access to resources. Repentance meant sharing and giving to the poor (Luke 11:41). It was difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom because it meant financial sacrifice for them. They were king of the hill already, why would they want to change the social order of things by bringing in a new kingdom? Especially a kingdom where they became equals with people who were of lower status than themselves. The kingdom of God meant exaltation for the poor, while it meant humiliation for the rich (Luke 6:20-26). The principle does not change for 21st century America.

However, Jesus left a back door open. After Jesus remarked how difficult it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God, he said, "what is impossible with man is possible with God" (18:27). How should one interpret this cryptic statement? Was Jesus implying that God can save rich people even though they cannot bring themselves to financial repentance, or was he saying that God can persuade rich people to repent even with the prospect of economic and social humiliation? Given the thaumaturgical nature of salvation in Luke's Gospel, it is most likely that Jesus meant the latter. God can bring the rich to repentance. Luke's charismatic theology has been well noted (Stronstad, 1984). The outpouring of the Spirit in Acts caused many signs and wonders that resulted in the sharing of possessions (Acts 2:42–47; 4:32–37). What was impossible for men (rich people to repent of inequalities), was possible with God because God would do the impossible (signs and wonders) to move the rich to repentance. The principle is likewise applicable to wealthy 21st century Americans. God can bring them to repentance, so they also share with the needy in the church as equals in God's kingdom.

### *Summary*

Therefore, the bottom line for the passage is that the ruler failed to follow through with his Jewish convictions and failed to repent of his greed. He had an apocalyptic/revolutionary view of salvation. He believed in the future resurrection of the dead, and he wanted to partake in it. He wanted to inherit eternal life. Jesus was interested in more than merely a positive experience after death; he was interested in bringing a thaumaturgical utopian kingdom to fruition before the coming age. For the ruler to partake in this kingdom, he would have to repent of his greed, by divesting himself of his riches and sharing them with the poor. This true repentance would be an expression of authentic saving faith. Jesus declared that while it may be impossible for rich people to repent of their high status on their own since it would mean humiliation, God could bring them to repentance.

The passage is relevant for 21st century Americans of all classes. The thaumaturgical utopian kingdom is supposed to be alive and active in the churches of America. Rich Americans are not wealthy because they deprived, defrauded, or eliminated others by default (Malina, 1987). There are opportunities to become rich in America through ingenuity, industriousness, and sound investing practices. However, not everyone in America possesses the same opportunities for economic movement. Within the church, the rich are still to humble themselves by being generous with the community members of the people of God and sharing (1Tim. 6:17–19). Those who are willing to enter the kingdom of God, both rich and poor alike, reap the benefits of the community, and in the age to come will receive eternal life.

### III. TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

According to Transformational leadership theory, the best leaders function with four characteristics. Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are the behaviors that separate transformational leaders from other leadership styles (Avolio & Bass, 2001). These four characteristics

are contrasted with Transactional Leadership, which makes use of contingent reward, management-by-exception, and sometimes, *laissez-faire* (Avolio & Bass, 2001). Transactional leadership focuses on the exchange between a leader and their followers. The leader rewards followers for their fulfillment of agreed-upon expectations (Northouse, 2019). Management-by-exception refers to a leader taking note of deviances from standards and mistakes a follower makes (Avolio & Bass, 2001). This type of management can be active or passive. Passive management only intervenes after a major mistake has been made, while an active manager looks for poor performance frequently (Avolio & Bass, 2001). On the other hand, Transformational Leadership elevates the morale of the followers. It can inspire followers to move beyond their self-interests and act on behalf of the good of the organization or group's interests.

The salient features of Transformational leadership are as follows. Idealized influence speaks of the leader's ideal qualities that make them role models for their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). They consider others' needs above their own and avoid using their power for personal gain (Avolio & Bass, 2001). Inspirational motivation refers to transformational leaders' ability to inspire their followers to achieve more than they would be working for their self-interest alone (Northouse, 2019). Transformational leaders help their followers envision a future where their desires are fulfilled with the organization's (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The transformational leader provides meaning for the work of their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2001). Intellectual stimulation speaks of how transformational leaders stimulate innovation, creativity, and new solutions to old problems (Avolio & Bass, 2001). They continually look for ways to improve and include their followers in the problem-solving process (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Intellectual stimulation increases productivity. Individualized consideration refers to the personalized attention a transformational leader gives to the followers they are developing (Northouse, 2019). The leader creates opportunities for individual growth and provides coaching and mentorship to their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2001).

### *Discussion*

As described above, the Gospel of Luke presents the kingdom of God as an inaugurated eschatology ("Last Things," Evangelical Dictionary of Theology). Since the heavenly enthronement of Jesus, the future reign of God has overlapped the current evil age. Within the apocalyptic worldview of 1st century Palestine, the end of the age is still yet to come (Kreitzer, 1997), and with it will come the resurrection of the dead and eternal life (Daniel 12:1–3). The ministry of Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God, and it continued through the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2. The thaumaturgical view of salvation came with a utopian vision of the people of God as a visible manifestation of God's kingdom. This new community was centered around the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It included many divinely inspired religious practices, the most relevant of which to this discussion, is the sharing of possessions (Acts 2:42–47).

Viewed in terms of Transformational leadership theory, Luke's vision for the kingdom of God is beyond human leadership's scope. Even the most exemplary transformational leader could not produce miracles or inaugurate an eschatological future. The ministry of Jesus Christ is not congruent with the categories of

Transformational leadership theory because the vision for his church necessitates divine presence and activity for it to be accomplished.

However, if the necessity for divine activity was suspended for the sake of meaningful analysis, one can find relevant principles between Luke 18:18–30 and Transformational Leadership theory. If Jesus' vision was to prepare the disciples for the kingdom of God that would come with the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 2, then the story of the ruler in Luke 18 was a depiction of a failure of idealized influence to produce a disciple. Jesus Christ is the most magnanimous leader in history. He gave his life for the salvation of the world (Mark 10:45) and inspired his followers to imitate him (John 15:13). While his crucifixion had not happened yet in Luke 18, he still had a famous thaumaturgical ministry (Luke 6:18). He was the ultimate idealized influence. However, his influence was not enough to convince the ruler of Luke 18 to look beyond his self-interest.

The ruler wanted to add eternal life to his investment portfolio. Jesus wanted to inaugurate the kingdom of God, which included a redistribution of wealth by the repentance of greedy rich people. The ruler could not share this vision or see his benefit from it. Perhaps the theory of idealized influence is incomplete. No matter how compelling the vision or ideal the influence, some people will not follow. These non-followers require divine intervention to get them to follow (Luke 18:27). Transformational leaders may do their best, but only God can change some.

On the other hand, the disciples already following Jesus had bought into the vision and influence of Jesus. They had left everything to follow him (v. 28) as an extreme example of inspirational motivation. In this case, the shared vision of God's kingdom overlapped the promise of their contingent reward (vs. 29–30). Therefore, some elements of transactional leadership are at play in the kingdom of God.

### *Limited Good and Transformational Leadership*

The ancient worldview of limited good was ubiquitous in the peasant class of 1st century Palestine (Malina, 1987). Due to the region's agrarian economic potential, the limited goods view was the real experience of most of the population (Oakman, 2018). The charge against the rich in that context was that they were greedy and wicked, storing up an abundance by depriving others who had nothing because of the surplus of the rich (Malina, 1987). The rich ruler in Luke 18 wanted to know how to inherit eternal life, but Jesus offered him an opportunity to repent of his wicked greed instead (Luke 18:22). The offer of eternal life was contingent upon his repentance.

In Luke 18, the character most resembling intellectual stimulation is the ruler. He was looking for creative and innovative ways to increase his wealth. Intellectual stimulation is a post-industrial world issue that assumes unlimited goods and growth (Oakman, 2018). Jesus and the disciples were not looking for new ways to solve old problems. They were looking for the right way to solve problems. The inequitable distribution of wealth was a problem for the majority. In their case, seeking a creative solution to increase productivity so more wealth could go around would be suspicious. The ethical solution was for the rich to repent of their greedy hoarding and share their wealth with the less fortunate. Thus, the story of the ruler in Luke 18 questions the motives behind the theory of intellectual stimulation. The kingdom of God values

integrity and righteousness over innovation and increased productivity. Intellectual stimulation is proper but must be motivated by justice and generosity.

### *Caution For North American Church Leaders*

In light of the above research, it would benefit Christian leaders in North America to embrace Transformational leadership only with sober reflection. According to this research, the church is supposed to reflect the presence of God's thaumaturgical utopian kingdom, overlapping the current evil age (Ladd, 1978). The thinking Christian leader should consider how much of Transformational leadership theory is merely an ornament of the present age rather than a quality example to follow. There certainly are congruences between the interests of the kingdom of God and Transformational leadership. Idealized influence and inspirational motivation could be shared values between the two. If Jesus was not able to inspire the ruler based on his charisma, signs, and wonders, he pointed to God as being able to inspire rich people to repent and humble themselves (Luke 18:27). In this case, God has characteristics similar to idealized influence.

Likewise, the process of discipleship shares similarities with individualized consideration. A disciple is trained to be like their teacher (Luke 6:40). Jesus offered the ruler an opportunity to become a follower (Luke 18:22), which was not provided to everyone (Luke 9:57–62; 14:25–33). However, unlike individualized consideration, Jesus was not willing to overlook the ruler's greed and selfishness. By North American leadership standards, the ruler had good qualities. He was confident, religious, well resourced, and already in a civil leadership role (Northouse, 2019). He was full of potential, but Jesus let him self-disqualify. North American Christian leaders would do well to follow Jesus' example in allowing promising individuals to repent of besetting sins before appointing them to highly visible roles in church leadership.

## IV. Conclusion

Transformational leadership theory is useful for Christian leaders in North America today. However, the Christian leader must take measures to seriously reflect on which aspects of Transformational leadership theory are congruent with God's kingdom's values. In light of the above studies, a Christian leader should proceed with the following questions before implementing Transformational leadership theory. 1. Can the reader's Christian organization accomplish its goals without divine presence and activity? If the answer is yes, then perhaps the organization is due for a realignment of its mission towards the same as Jesus Christ's thaumaturgical utopian kingdom that overlaps the current evil age. 2. Does the reader's Christian organization desire to use intellectual stimulation to improve the lives of all within the organization, or only for a few elites? If innovation and creativity do not produce a higher level of equality, then greed might motivate increased productivity. 3. Does the reader's Christian organization give rich and powerful people opportunities to repent before installing them into leadership? If not, the organization is, perhaps, not in alignment with the kingdom Jesus came to establish. Instead, the organization might merely reflect the values of the present evil

age in promoting only the rich, talented, and attractive rather than proclaiming good news to the poor.

The next steps to continue this research would include 1. Analyze the social-cultural texture of collectivism in the Luke 18 text. A collectivist analyzation could yield some helpful insights to refine individualized consideration. Perhaps the ruler was more individualistic than the collectivistic kingdom Jesus intended to inaugurate. 2. Explore the challenge-response social-cultural texture of Luke 18. Such an analysis could speak to the appropriateness of a Christian application of management by exception. Perhaps Jesus' rebuke of the ruler could inform the way leaders conduct performance reviews.

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## JESUS CHRIST AS THE ULTIMATE AUTHENTIC LEADER: AN INNER TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

Ayo Adepoju

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Authentic leadership is one of the most researched leadership theories in the past 20 years and has garnered much attention due to the values-based theme of this leadership style (Avolio et al., 2004; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). This article contains a literature review on authentic leadership from a conceptual framework to practical applications. An exegetical analysis using inner texture, as a form of socio-rhetorical criticism, is utilized to understand the texts of Philippians 2:5-11 properly. Inner texture analysis is a tool to understand the meaning of texts through a review of the inherent factors such as the nature of repetitions, patterns, and other underlying intentions of the texts. Finally, this article explores the referenced pericope. It draws insights and applications to authentic leadership, applying it to Jesus Christ, who is believed to be the greatest leader to have ever lived (Youseff, 2013).

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Authentic leadership means different things to many authors. There are divergent thoughts on this subject (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cooper et al., 2005; Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004; Ilies et al., 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2004; Walumbwa et al., 2008). There are as many definitions of authentic leadership as the number of people who have attempted to define this leadership construct. In the midst of all of these varying dimensions of authentic leadership, this article presents an x-ray of the leading views and unifying themes of authentic leadership. Although extensive research has been performed on authentic

leadership from an academic leadership perspective, little has been done from a biblical perspective, thus creating a literature gap to address. This article contributes to the field of knowledge through viewing authentic leadership from the lens of Philippians 2:5-11 using inner texture analysis to add to the richness of the authentic leadership theory. This socio-rhetorical criticism approach helps in further expanding the knowledge of authentic leadership from a biblical approach. A review was performed of the exemplary nature of the life of Jesus Christ, one of the greatest leaders that ever lived (Youssef, 2013).

## II. AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP THEORY

There are many leading thoughts in the research of authentic leadership. In terms of peer-reviewed articles, the early views commenced in 2004 with Gardner and Schermerhorn (2004) and Walumbwa et al. (2004) from the Gallup Leadership Institute of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 2015, additional articles on authentic leadership emerged, such as Avolio and Gardner (2005), Cooper et al. (2005), Ilies et al. (2005), Shamir and Eilam (2005), and Sparrowe (2005). As a result of the various perspectives emerging on authenticity as leadership theory, further research articles were produced such as Walumbwa et al. (2008), Ladkin and Taylor (2010), Zhou and Guan (2010), Gardner et al. (2011) and Zhang et al. (2012). They explored the definitions and components of this leadership theory. Additional research continues to be documented in this field, bringing new dimensions to the meaning of authentic leadership.

A central theme for the emergence of authentic leadership is the identified gap noticed during the early 2000s (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004; Walumbwa et al., 2004). Researchers identified that leadership is beyond bottom-line profitability, as it seeks to restore some order into organizations and societies, refuel confidence and optimism, strengthen resilience, and create hope for the people. In summary, there existed a vacuum in the various types of leadership and authenticity came to fill the gap (Cooper et al., 2005). Avolio and Gardner (2005) identified genuine leadership as a major challenge for organizations, thus requiring some new form of leadership. Avolio and Gardner (2005) pinpointed the origin of the leadership theory as the inaugural Gallup Leadership Institute Summit held in Nebraska in 2004 to gather thoughts from scholars and practitioners on the emerging views on authentic leadership theory and style. Major challenges facing the world at that time, included the ethical challenges and the effects of terrorism, amongst others, increasing the need for a different leadership model (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Coopers et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Avolio and Gardner identified Bill George as one of the early proponents of authentic leadership as he was a practitioner as the former head of Medtronic. Cooper et al. (2005) specifically identified the decline in ethical leadership as the primary reason for the development of authentic leadership due to corporate scandals such as Worldcom and Enron, and the negative consequence of terrorism on economic downturns. Walumbwa et al. (2008) stated that these ethical challenges generated calls for a new form of leadership to resolve the ills of society.

Following the Gallup leadership conference held in 2004, additional ideas were documented in several articles to expand the theory of authentic leadership. Cooper et

al. (2005) wrote on the need to learn from the past and identify potential challenges to developing authentic leadership theory. Shamir and Eilam (2005) explored a life-stories approach to authentic leadership development by reviewing the concepts of authentic leaders and authentic leadership. Sparrowe (2005) of Washington University utilized the narrative self-approach to studying authentic leadership by critically appraising why authenticity in leadership is a game-changer. Ilies et al. (2005), in addition to explaining the concept of authentic leadership, also reviewed the influence it has on follower well-being.

A starting premise is to understand what authentic leadership is all about to synthesize all of these views. There are as many definitions of authentic leadership as the number of people who have attempted to define this leadership construct (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Many research articles presented views on the concept of authenticity before proceeding to define the construct of authentic leadership. This makes sense, particularly knowing that there had been various leadership theories before authentic leadership came on board. Such theories include transformational and transactional leadership, servant leadership, charismatic and spiritual leadership, amongst others. Shamir and Eilam (2005) provided an excellent perspective when they recognized that authentic leadership needs to provide a different viewpoint from other leadership styles for it to be distinctive and useful.

The concept of “authenticity” originated from the Greek philosophy, which has the meaning of “to thine own self be true” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 319). Gardner et al. (2011) held similar views that authenticity reflects Greek aphorism “know thyself” (p. 1121). From the foundational Greek meaning of authenticity, the underlying meaning points to self-awareness. To know thyself or to be true to thine own self means the individual has a high level of self-awareness. Walumbwa et al. (2008) explained that a self-aware leader has an optimal level of self-esteem and more adept in engaging in an open and transparent relationship with others. Ilies et al. (2005) viewed authenticity as a psychological construct of how an individual exists within an environment according to one’s deeply held values. Shamir and Eilam (2005) viewed authenticity from the dictionary meaning, which indicates “genuine,” “original,” “not fake” (p. 396).

Many definitions abound applying authenticity to authentic leaders. Avolio and Gardner (2004) defined authentic leaders as:

Those individuals who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others’ values/moral perspective, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and high on moral character. (p. 804)

Other board definitions of authentic leaders abound in research pieces of literature. Shamir and Eilam (2005) argued that all definitions are arbitrary and that they are usually unproven. They presented the primary distinguishing characteristics of authentic leaders as: “authentic leaders do not fake their relationship,” “authentic leaders do not take on a leadership role or engage in leadership activities for status, honor, or other personal rewards,” “authentic leaders are originals, not copies” and “authentic leaders are leaders whose actions are based on their values and convictions” (p. 397). On the other hand, Nichols and Erakovich (2013) asserted that inauthentic

leaders are usually deceptive and manipulative. They also argued that inauthentic leaders seek powers to serve their personal benefits at the expense of their followers.

In addition to the definitions of authentic leaders, there are many definitions of authentic leadership. Yukl (2020) indicated that the definition provided by Walumbwa et al. (2008) is the most accepted.

A pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (p. 94)

According to Walumbwa et al. (2008), due to the divergence in definitions of authentic leadership, an area of convergence is in its underlying components. Table 1 shows the attempted classifications of the components of authentic leadership.

Table 1  
*Components of Authentic Leadership*

Author	Components of authentic leadership
Illies et al., 2005 (p. 376)	Self-awareness Unbiased processing Authentic behavior/acting Authentic relational orientation
Walumbwa et al., 2008 (p. 95-96)	Self-awareness Relational transparency Balanced processing Internalized moral perspective
Sparrowe, 2005, (p. 421-424)	Primacy of self-awareness Enduring nature of the true self Self-regulation and consistency Positive or moral leadership
Ladkin and Taylor, 2010 (p. 70)	Self-exposure Relating Leaderly choices
Covelli and Mason, 2017	Agrees with the classification of Walumbwa et al. (2008)
Peus et al., 2012 (p. 332)	Agrees with the classification of Walumbwa et al. (2008)
Yukl, 2020 (p. 263)	Agrees with the classification of Walumbwa et al. (2008)

The component classification provided by Walumbwa et al. (2008) is viewed as universally acceptable (Yukl, 2020).

### *Self-Awareness*

Walumbwa et al. (2008) defined self-awareness in the context of authentic leadership as “demonstrating an understanding of how one derives and makes meaning of the world and how that meaning-making process impacts the way one views himself or herself over time” (p. 95). Yukl (2020) shared similar views of self-awareness as “understanding one’s own values, beliefs, emotions, self-identities, abilities, and attitudes” (p. 263). To Ilies et al. (2005), positive self-concept should be the foundation of authentic self-awareness. Ilies et al. expect authentic leaders to have an optimal sense of self-esteem, emotionally stable, confident in their capabilities of accomplishing things, and aware of one’s own strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, Yukl pointed out that “authentic leaders know who they are and what they believe” (p. 263).

### *Relational Transparency*

Relational transparency is similar to the “authentic behavior/acting” put forward by Ilies et al. (2005). Walumbwa et al. (2008) explained relational transparency as “presenting one’s authentic self (as opposed to fake or distorted self) to others” (p. 95). This component appeals to the root of authenticity to ensure that leaders are genuine and do not fake their leadership. Yukl stated that authentic leaders do not misrepresent but rather are very open in disclosing all relevant information to the people. Trust is birthed in an environment where the followers feel the authenticity of its leaders.

### *Balanced Processing*

Balanced processing is similar to the “unbiased processing” put forward by Ilies et al. (2005). According to Walumbwa et al. (2008), balanced processing refers to “leaders who show that they objectively analyze all relevant data before coming to a decision” (p. 95). Ilies et al. (2005) identified this is the personal integrity and character of the leader. Yukl (2020) viewed balanced processing as seeking and using feedback in an informed and objective manner without being too defensive. Authentic leaders use feedback and mistakes as learning tools. Balanced processing is critical to ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of the followers.

### *Internalized Moral Perspective*

Walumbwa et al. (2008) defined an internalized moral perspective as self-regulation. This is a test of the moral values and standards of the leader, and authentic leaders are wired in the form of doing what is right and fair for the followers (Yukl, 2020). Yukl strongly argued that the drive for authentic leaders is not to be popular or reelected but put forward and execute ideas that are determined by their values and beliefs.

The research question based on the authentic leadership theory and the periscope of 1 Peter 5:1-11 is whether Jesus Christ exhibited authentic leadership behaviors. Is Jesus an authentic leader? What are the pieces of evidence in the periscope supporting authentic leadership?

### III. INNER TEXTURE ANALYSIS

Generally, the application of knowledge is dependent on the understanding of the meaning of words and context. Without the right appreciation of the purpose of words, the appropriate application of knowledge is impossible to achieve. According to Robbins (1996), literature needs to be understood, and social-rhetorical criticism is a way of understanding the words which we read and the world around us. Robbins (1996) described “inner texture analysis” as one of the six primary ways of understanding the texture of texts, by reviewing repetitions, the underlying story, and the aesthetic of texts.

Communication is primarily all about the words used in capturing feelings, emotions, and thoughts. The ability to properly understand these words is central to inner textual analysis. It seeks to unravel the repetition of words, the progression of words, the voices, the narrations, the plots, and other forms used in conveying meanings. Henson et al. (2020) stated that “if Scripture is a person, then inner texture is its anatomy” (p. 83). According to Henson et al., inner texture analysis is about reviewing the different structures of a text and understanding how all these structures come together to form a complete whole.

Henson et al. (2020) and Robbins (1996) summarized the six different approaches to an inner textual analysis as repetitive, progressive, narrational, opening-middle-closing, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic. Henson et al. added the concept of textual units, which is similar to the narrational unit identified by Robbins.

### IV. AN INNER TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

The genre of the text of Philippians is an epistle or letter. According to Osborne (2006), the epistle is the most basic out of all the various categories of genres (law, history, poetry, prophecy, and gospel). The Epistle of Philippians is one of the thirteen books ascribed to Apostle Paul in the New Testament. Timothy co-authored this book of Philippians with Paul, and it was addressed to the Christian church in Philippi. According to Allen (2007), many scholars believed that the book of Philippians is an aggregation of two or more letters.

Philippians 2:5-11 is usually described as an early Christian hymn. The apostle Paul used this pericope to portray the uncommon humility of Jesus Christ. In Phil. 2:5, Paul admonished the church to have the mind of Jesus Christ. Phil. 2:5 is a follow-up from the preceding verse of Phil. 2:4, where Paul encouraged the church to look out for the interests of others. In Phil. 2:6, Paul wrote that Jesus Christ did not have to go through what he went through. Even though Jesus is in the form of God, He did not consider it appropriate to equate Himself with God. He rather chose to deny Himself of that privilege by emptying Himself and taking the form of a slave (Phil. 2: 6-7). The fact that Jesus Christ is in the form of God but chose to be a servant is a true demonstration of humility, as described in Phil. 2:8, where it was recorded that He became obedient even to the point of death. He died like a slave on the cross, which was a punishment usually meted out to slaves and rebels during the Roman rule.

The concluding parts of Philippians 2:9-11 revealed the rewards of the immense sacrifice and uncommon humility of Jesus Christ. God exalted and gave Him a name that is above every name, the term “Lord,” as shown in verse 11. Not only this, at the

mention of the name of Jesus, but every knee must also bow, whether in heaven or earth or underneath the earth (Phil. 2:10). In addition to knees bending, Paul also mentioned that every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:11).

Inner texture analysis of this pericope may help in better understanding the underlying meanings of the texts. The six different approaches to an inner textual analysis are utilized to understand the words in this pericope. The methods are repetitive and progressive patterns, narrational, opening-middle-closing, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic.

### *Structure*

The pericope of Philippians 2:5-11 can be viewed as three sections in Table 2. The first section of verse 5 is about the instruction – “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” The second section of verses 6-8 presents a description of the “mind” referenced in verse 5. The last section of verses 9-11 shows the reward and benefits which accrued to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Table 2

#### *Structure of Philippians 2:5-11 (NKJV)*

STRUCTURE	
INTRODUCTION (1 <sup>st</sup> SECTION)	
5	Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus
MIDDLE (2 <sup>nd</sup> SECTION)	
6	who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God
7	but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men
8	And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
CLOSING (3 <sup>rd</sup> SECTION)	
9	Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name
10	that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth
11	and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father

### *Repetitive Texture*

The repetitive analysis is usually the first stage of inner texture analysis. It simply looks into the unit and picks out the words or verbs or topics or syntax appearing more than once (Robbins, 1996). Robbins believes that this creates a pattern and an early

indication of the purpose of the unit. In Philippians 2:5-11, the major repetitions are highlighted in Table 3.

Table 3

*Repetitive Nature of Philippians 2:5-11*

		Words							
5	mind you	Christ							
6		Jesus	Form of						
		who	God						
			Equal						
			with God						
7		Himself			No		Bonds		
					reputation		ervant		
							men		
8		He/Himself			Humbled		man	Point of	
					Obedient			death	
								Death on	
								the cross	
9		Him	God	Name		Exalted			
		Him		name					
10		Name of		name		Every		Heaven	
		Jesus				knee		Earth	
						should		Underneat	
						bow		h earth	
11		Jesus	Lord		confess	Glory			
		Christ	God the						
			Father						
	1	1	9	5	3	4	3	3	3

In Phil. 2:5-11, the major repetitions in the form of characters are Jesus Christ, God/Lord, man/men, appearance/likeness, bondservant/slave/no reputation, humility/obedience, death, and name. These repetitions give an overall view of what Phil. 2:5-11 is all about. The principal subject is Jesus Christ, though a God; he willingly chose to be a man. He took the form of a slave ignoring His reputation, clothed with humility, and complete obedience to God to the point of death. An important inference to draw from the pericope is that Jesus Christ did not go through this experience for his personal benefit. It was done for the benefit of humanity and thus exhibited some form of authenticity.

*Progressive Pattern*

The second form of inner texture is the use of a progressive pattern. It studies the most frequently used words or phrases and how they progress throughout the passage (Robbins, 1996), in terms of new meanings or understanding. Henson et al. (2020) asserted that progressive pattern helps “indicate advancement or structure within

the passage” (p. 88). In Phil. 2:5-11, the major progressions are “slave to Lord,” “death to name that is above every other name,” “humbled to exalted,” “heaven/earth/underneath the earth,” and “mind/knee/tongue.” The transition from being a slave to the Lord is the reward for an uncommon humility. According to Smith (2016), the death on the cross was not permanent but instead led to a new and glorious life. He, therefore, transitioned to been given a name that transcends all. In terms of body parts, there was a transition from mind to knee to the tongue, with each piece conveying different meanings. All of these transitions are intentional and purposeful, and therefore a creates a pattern.

### *Narrational Pattern*

The third form of inner texture is the use of narrational pattern. Robbins (1996) ascribed this as the voices through which the texts speak. Robbins stated that narrational texture “reveals some kind of pattern that moves the discourse programmatically forward” (p. 15). The voice in this pericope is the apostle Paul, as this is a letter or epistle written to the church in Philippi. From Philippians 2 verse 5 to 11, this shows a hymn with just one voice. The narrational tone is one of admonishing the church to model their mind like that of Jesus Christ.

### *Opening-Middle-Closing Texture*

The fourth form of inner texture is the opening-middle-closing texture and pattern. According to Henson et al. (2020), there is always a purpose for writing or communication. They believed that each component or textual unit brings a contribution to the overall message.

The pattern in Phil. 2:5-11 is segregated along the lines of opening (Phil. 2:5), middle (Phil. 2:6-8), and closing (Phil. 2:9-11). The opening part of this unit in Phil. 2:5 gave a piece of advice to the church, encouraging them to have the mind of Christ. The pattern in the middle of this unit is a description of Jesus Christ in terms of his mindset and qualities of being sacrificial, humble, and obedient, even to the point of death. The closing pattern reveals the benefits and gains in terms of being exalted in all forms and a change of name.

### *Argumentative Pattern*

The fifth form of inner texture is the argumentative pattern. Robbins (1996) ascribed this as reviewing the logical reasoning. Robbins indicated that where a point of view is given, this analysis evaluates how this is supported through examining the reasons or examples or through analogies. Serrano (2014) stated that the argumentative texture of a text “refers to the way in which a passage uses reasoning, metaphors, or logic in order to persuade the reader” (p. 37). In the selected pericope, Phil. 2:6 asserted that Jesus Christ is in the form of God. Ideally, He should not even fathom the idea of becoming a slave and dying like one. From the literary meaning, the question is: why would a superior being become a slave? A few scholars believe that content of Phil. 2:6-7 is best captured using The New American Standard Bible (NASB):

“who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men.”

### *Sensory-Aesthetic Texture*

The last form of inner texture is the sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern. According to Robbins (1996), this is where a text conveys “thought, emotion, sight, sound, touch, smell” (p. 29). Robbins stated that one of the ways of determining areas of sensory-aesthetic usage in a passage is looking at texts that “refers to a part of the body” (p. 30). In Phil. 2:5-11, three parts of the body were mentioned: the mind (Phil 2:5), the knee (Phil. 2:10), and the tongue (Phil. 2:11). Robbins described the use of mind/heart as a “zone of emotion-fused thought” (p. 30), the use of the knee is a “zone of purposeful action” (p. 31), and the use of the tongue or mouth is a “zone of self-expressive speech” (p. 31). Apostle Paul used the concept of “mind” to admonish the church to be like Jesus Christ by appealing to their emotions in this letter. The use of “knee” is a purposeful acknowledgment that Jesus Christ is Lord because the knee is a zone of purposeful action. The use of tongue indicates an expression borne out of self-revelation.

## V. APPLICATION TO AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

From the in-depth analysis of Philippians 2:5-11, there are some salient connotations that are applicable to authentic leadership. The various themes in the literature review are utilized in further explaining Philippians 2:5-11.

### *Jesus’s Actions were not for Personal Reward*

In defining authentic leaders, Shamir and Eilam (2005) stated that “authentic leaders do not take on a leadership role or engage in leadership activities for status, honor or other personal rewards” (p. 397). Algera et al. (2012) posit that authentic leaders are designated as being superior on the basis of the ability to overcome inauthenticity. One of the measures of “inauthenticity” is where a leader seeks personal gain. Authentic leaders lead from a conviction. Jesus Christ is already “God.” He is a member of the Trinity. Jesus Christ existed from the beginning of the world. In John 1:1-2: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was at the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him, nothing was made that was made” (NASB). By implication, there was no need to go through the experience of becoming a slave up to the point of death. He left the comfort of the heavens, was born of a woman, and endured the earthly shame. All these huge sacrifices were made for humanity. The whole experience of dying on the cross was of no benefit whatsoever to Jesus Christ as a person, which is a true hallmark of an authentic leader. His death on the cross was primarily to save us from the curse of sins. Jesus Christ intentionally experienced this humiliating circumstance to clearly prove his authenticity so that many could be saved.

### *Jesus has a High Level of Self-Awareness*

As previously highlighted, the original idea of authenticity is “knowing thyself” from the Greek word. Yukl (2020) refers to this as “understanding one’s own values, beliefs, emotions, self-identities, abilities, and attitudes” (p. 243). Phil. 2:5-11 provides many illustrations of this self-awareness concept.

Jesus Christ knew who He was and is in the current scenario of Phil. 2. Jesus Christ existed from the beginning of time and was in the form of God. Despite this, he chose to empty himself of this acclaimed nature as shown in Phil. 2:6-7: “although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men” (NASB). This perfectly illustrates the concept of self-awareness, with Jesus Christ realizing that He needed to be authentic as a person to be able to deliver the mandate that God has given Him. For an authentic leader, it is not about the power or position of authority; it is about the followers or subordinates. Jesus Christ could have simply decided not to go through that experience by virtue of the enormous power that He had as a person in the form of God (Phil. 2:6). Ladkin and Taylor (2010) supported the view that authentic leadership does not exist without the concept of self-awareness.

### *Jesus is Genuine and not a Fake*

Shamir and Eilam (2005) put forward another important qualification for authentic leaders. Authentic leaders are original rather than copies and hold their beliefs because they are right and not because they are socially or politically appropriate (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Authentic leaders may also be similar to other leaders in terms of values and convictions.

Humility is one of the values and self-identity that Jesus Christ demonstrated as an authentic leader. Phil. 2:8 recorded that He humbled Himself and was obedient to the point of death. Jesus Christ realized that it was not all about Him. From the preceding verse 4, He was not just looking for His own personal interests but for the interests of others. He realized that He needed to pay the price for salvation to come to the world. Jesus Christ did not stand to gain anything from the selfless act that he exhibited because He is already God! He is part of the Trinity; He does not need to defend his position. However, Jesus had to go through that horrifying experience of the cross simply because of the love He had for the people. He wanted them to be saved. He wanted them to experience the perfect life He is used to.

### *Jesus exhibited Relational Transparency*

Yukl (2020) viewed relational transparency as a basic necessity for authentic leaders. It involves relating to others from a perspective of the true self and not from a “superficial or phony self” (p. 264). Walumbwa et al. (2008) highlighted that the ability to express one’s mind clearly is one of the evidence of relational

transparency. Drawing from the pericope, Jesus Christ bares Himself to the world. He poured out His mind to humanity in the form of teachings, parables, and miracles. He linked people to higher-order needs. Jesus Christ did not misrepresent any facts to the people.

### *Jesus is Results-Driven*

Another lesson to draw from Phil. 2: 5-11 and authentic leadership is the focus on the ultimate goal without compromising. In a world where there are unethical practices in the corporate world and the public sector, Jesus Christ demonstrated that a person or leader does not have to compromise under any situation. As recorded in Phil. 2:8 that Jesus Christ was obedient up to the point of death. It is critical to understand that it was not convenient for Him. This was a Godhead that went through the experience of a slave or bondservant. He did not waiver and simply unyielding.

The ultimate objective of any leadership is influencing people towards the achievement of goals. Phil. 2:11 appropriately captured this: “and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (NASB). This is the ultimate goal for Jesus Christ to persevere and go through those experiences. For authentic leaders, the self-awareness of the ultimate goal should drive authenticity as it is always for the greater good.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In the last two decades, there has been a proliferation of many views on authentic leadership. There are many definitions and measurement views. The academic world has done justice to this leadership theory. From a biblical perspective, the use of inner texture analysis offered a different dimension to authentic leadership. The research question based on the authentic leadership theory and the periscope of 1 Peter 5:1-11 is whether Jesus Christ exhibited authentic leadership behaviors. Is Jesus an authentic leader? The life of Jesus Christ is exemplary and ticks many boxes of authentic leadership. In His dealings with us, Jesus Christ displayed all levels of authenticity. He is true to Himself and to humanity. He does not misrepresent any facts. His words are yea and amen.

For future research purposes, an additional contribution to the body of knowledge is an extension of the authentic leadership to the other acts of Jesus Christ. This would help further exemplify the many other acts of Jesus Christ through proper identification and measurement of the authentic leadership behaviors. Jesus Christ remains the most authentic leader the world ever had and should be documented academically for posterity.

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## COURAGEOUS FOLLOWERSHIP ACCORDING TO THE EPISTLE OF JUDE

Kellie L. Playter

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The epistle of Jude is often an overlooked book of Scripture with only 25 verses but offers important instructions for early and modern Christians who are threatened by false teachers. This epistle also includes several Old Testament references to address a very specific crisis facing early Christians (deSilva, 2004). To make accurate interpretations of this text, this paper follows Osborne's (2006) method of genre analysis to help draw out the meaning for followers of Christ. Chaleff's (2009) five dimensions of courageous followership: the courage to assume responsibility, the courage to serve, the courage to challenge, the courage to participate in transformation, and the courage to take moral action, are then examined in relation to this epistle. As a result, Jude's epistle highlights the importance of Christians being courageous followers, protecting themselves and their fellow Christians from those who would pollute them or lead them astray. It is evident that Christians must be courageous followers of Christ and contend for the faith since Jesus and the apostles gave Christians all the tools and resources, needed to live a Godly life. Moreover, followers should monitor and correct errors made by leaders, showing courage to make a stand when needed (Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2015).

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Holy Scriptures are a manual for the church, giving followers of Christ an "identity, vision, mission and hope" while connecting people to their past, present and future (deSilva, 2004, p. 29). The New Testament consists of 27 books that offer Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles, and Revelation. One epistle that is often overlooked because of its brevity and location at the end of Scripture is Jude (Kovalishyn, 2014). While this particular epistle may only be 25 verses, "the entire story from Genesis to Revelation is all there" (Kovalishyn, 2014, p. 13). Moreover, deSilva

(2004) stated that this epistle demonstrates the diversity of traditions and voices that helped shape early Christian discourse. Jude is also the only text in the New Testament almost wholly devoted to criticizing certain people who threaten the message of salvation (Trompf, 2010). As such, this letter is meant to warn fellow Christians about the dangers posed by the ungodly false teachers, why this is so important, and how Christians can persevere through such threats (Engelbrecht, 2009). Therefore, to more closely examine this text, this paper follows Osborne's (2006) method for genre analysis to help draw out the meaning for followers of Christ. Then Chaleff's (2009) model of courageous followership is examined in relation to this epistle, encouraging Christians to protect themselves and their fellow Christians from those who would pollute them. This pericope highlights the importance of followers of Christ to embrace and become courageous as their very salvation is at stake.

## II. EXEGESIS OF JUDE

Jude is an epistle, a formal letter from one person to another (Osborne, 2006), although it was likely "delivered orally at the point of destination" which was common during the time (Witherington, 2007, p. 560). In the New Testament there are three common types of epistles: the private letter, the public epistle and the treatise (Osborne, 2006). While Jude is considered a general, or public epistle, instead of addressing a variety of challenges like many other public epistles, Jude addresses a very specific crisis facing early Christians by a particular group of teachers (deSilva, 2004; Witherington, 2007). New Testament epistles follow the typical structure of a greeting, body, and conclusion (Stowers, 1986). Similar to other New Testament epistles, the greeting of Jude's letter includes a clear identification of himself as the author (v. 1); however, there is a lack of concluding greetings common to other epistles (deSilva, 2014). This genre has much to offer readers as epistles make up most of New Testament texts.

Osborne (2006) illustrated the importance of genre analysis as it "functions as a valuable link between the text and the reader" (p. 182). As such, Osborne (2006) outlined three hermeneutical principles that help contemporary Christians interpret epistles. First, readers should note the development of arguments (Osborne, 2006). Osborne (2006) noted that in some epistles this can be a more challenging task than others. Second, the situation behind the epistles should also be examined (Osborne, 2006). This is where Osborne (2006) argued that many Christians can extend the application of Scripture too far if they do not know the historical circumstances for readers. Third, the various sub-genres employed such as hymns, creeds, proverbs, and apocalyptic should be noted (Osborne, 2006). Therefore, by working through these principles, readers can have a better understanding of epistles, such as Jude, and make more accurate interpretations.

### *Development of the Arguments*

The framing of Jude's letter is important to the logical developments of the arguments. Specifically, Jude offers affirmation and reassurance for readers that

Christians are kept safe by God in both the opening verse (kept for Jesus Christ) and in the doxology (Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling). The middle of the letter is where readers are reminded that “every choice we make must be based in our assurance that he is sufficient to hold us, to guard us, while we navigate our complex world,” making it clear that faith should ultimately be put in God (Kovalishyn, 2014, p. 14).

After the greeting, the first argument presented is for God’s called people to “contend for the faith” and be aware of those who are perverting the grace of God (v. 3). According to Banstra (1997), this argument is a call to arms for Christians to defend themselves against ungodly people. Kovalishyn (2014) contended that this verse alludes to notion that God has entrusted many people throughout Scripture with faith and “sometimes they got it right, and sometimes they got it wrong, and sometimes they got it spectacularly wrong, but God kept entrusting his plans to the people he called. God hasn’t changed his nature” (p. 15). To illustrate this point and explain why it is important to contend for the faith, the next section of verses describe several of God’s ungodly people throughout Scripture (Bandstra, 1997).

Jude cites nine different examples of God’s judgement from the Old Testament and 1 Enoch. For instance, versus 5 is a reference to Exodus (15:22-17:7; 32:1-33:6) and God delivering his people out of Egypt but a reminder that the unfaithful did not reach the promised land (Engelbrecht, 2009). Verse 7 is a reminder of the destruction of the cities Sodom and Gomorrah for their sexual immorality (Genesis 18:16-19:29). In verse 11 readers are reminded of Cain, who attacked and murdered his own brother (Genesis 4:1-16). According to Engelbrecht (2009) this passage provides a lasting example of those who profess care for others but harbor hatred and deception. Jude 14-16 uses the one and only direct quotation which comes from 1 Enoch 1:9 but changes “Enoch’s judgment on “all flesh” to judgment on only the ungodly” (Witherington, 2007, p. 623). While Enoch is not considered Scripture, it was a popular text among the Jewish people during the time of this epistle and therefore provided authority to Jude’s argument (Witherington, 2007). These passages are just a few examples from Jude to remind readers that God protects those who are faithful, and destroys those who are not (Engelbrecht, 2009).

Once it is clearly established why it is important to remain faithful, Jude then makes the argument for how followers should fight for the faith using the Lord’s methods, not human methods (Bandstra, 1997). Verses 17-19 argue for followers to stay alert by remembering and properly identifying those who are the enemy (Bandstra, 1997). Verses 20-21 urges readers to remain faithful in the love of God (Bandstra, 1997). According to Kovalishyn (2014), followers should do this by looking forward to the mercy of Jesus Christ who gives eternal life (v. 21). Lastly, verses 22-23 describe how Christians should show mercy mixed with fear to doubters (Bandstra, 1997). Since all Christians are sinners, correcting each other should be done in fear (v. 23). Brown (2016) stated that while it is important to show mercy to those who have been led astray, Jude is clear that people should hate their corruption. Overall, to contend for the faith means “reminding one another of who we are in Christ, mercifully, and gently encouraging one another in faithfulness” (Kovalishyn, 2014, p. 16). As such, Christians must ban together because they have a shared salvation (v. 3).

The overall argument of Jude is to be aware of false teachers and to stay true to Scripture and the resources already provided by God through Jesus and the apostles (Engelbrecht, 2009). In addition, “Jude’s discourse has depended on both emotion and argument” (Witherington, 2007, p. 625). These arguments presented create a stark polarization between God’s true followers and these false teachers threatening Christians’ true faith through language of holiness and pollution (Charles, 1990; deSilva, 2004). Jude argues that believers must remember that God alone should receive all the “glory, majesty, power and authority” (ver. 25).

### *Situation*

This letter is presented as a product of Jude, “a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James” (Jude 1). Although there is some debate about who Jude actually was, many agree that he was one of Jesus’ younger half-brothers (Brown, 2016; deSilva, 2004; Joseph, 2013; Kovalishyn, 2014; Wiersbe, 1992). According to Kovalishyn (2014), this is significant because it was written by someone who knew Jesus intimately. It was also common during this time that the first apostles, and then their family members, were leaders of many of the early churches (Brown, 2016). Regardless, the author identifies himself as a servant to Christ, showing his humility and where he has placed authority (Green, 2009). Besides authorship, the context and audience are also important to understand.

The context and timing of the letter have also been debated. According to Easton (2015), while there is nothing definite to determine the time and place at which it was written, it was likely written in the “later period of the apostolic age, for when it was written there were persons still alive who had heard the apostles preach (ver. 17)” (p. 1893). Therefore, many believe it was written about the years 66 to 70 in Palestine (Easton, 2015). This is further corroborated by deSilva (2004) who noted that this letter is not from a period later than 80 C.E. and has deep roots in Palestinian Jewish traditions. For instance, Jude 12 echoes Proverbs 25:14 and Jude 13 speaks of the “wild waves,” similar to Isaiah 57:20 (deSilva, 2004). Regardless of the exact time period in which this was written, deSilva (2004) claims the apostles’ converts are the intended audience for the letter based on the poignant message delivered.

The first verse of Jude announces that this letter is written to those who have been called. For the audience to be considered “called” people means those elected by God to faith and service (Engelbrecht, 2009). According to Green (2009), this demonstrates how privileged the position of a Christian is. The congregations Jude is addressing have encountered teachers claiming to be Christian sharing a message he views as “incompatible with the apostolic gospel” (deSilva, 2004, p. 867). These false teachers deny the authority of the law of Moses (v. 8–10) and Christ himself (v. 4, 8), and as a consequence they are immoral and ungodly (Watson, 2014). As such, Jude is writing to these early Christians to convince them that these people threaten their very salvation and are actually enemies of the church (Watson, 2014). Also, deSilva (2004) noted that false prophets were a common phenomenon in the early church and this letter is meant to intervene in the discernment of these false teachings from Scriptural truth. One of the main problems related to this was related to upholding both Jewish and Christian traditions (deSilva, 2004). This is further demonstrated in Jude’s citation of 1

Enoch 1:9 which was an influential Jewish writing at the time, but Jude is clear that Jesus is God and thus encourages readers to follow Him (Heiser, 2015). Therefore, Jude sought to demonstrate how ungodly these false teachers were and bring focus back to Christians' shared salvation in Christ Jesus (deSilva, 2004).

### *Subgenres in Jude*

The epistle of Jude also contains apocalyptic content. According to deSilva (2004), "Jude is thoroughly apocalyptic and steeped in the apocalyptic traditions of early Judaism" which is seen in verses 14-15, 21, and 24 (p. 866). Specifically, verses 14-16 reference the Old Testament figure Enoch to further illustrate the harsh judgement of false teachers (Witherington, 2007). Verses 21 and 24 remind the early Christians they have security in Christ if they keep to him (Wiersbe, 1992). In addition, it was also common for apocalyptic literature to include specific names, such as Moses and Cain mentioned by Jude (Charles, 1990). Moreover, Bautch (2014) stated that end-time speculation was important to early Christians and their communities. As such, "divine intervention, judgement, and deliverance" were all essential aspects of apocalyptic imagination and essential to this epistle and others (Bautch, 2014, p. 82).

### *Exegetical Summary*

Overall, the epistle of Jude offers important instructions for early and contemporary followers of Christ that false teachers will always be a threat. As such, Jude helps readers to distinguish between false teachers who are leading people to sin for profit and are doomed to destruction, and believers who may be struggling with doubt and need fellow Christians to encourage them (Engelbrecht, 2009). Jude makes it clear that it is the responsibility of the followers, not the leaders, to remain true to the teachings of Christ and the apostles and not be misguided by those with ulterior motives (deSilva, 2004). Overall, followers must show courage to help themselves and their fellow Christians who may have been led astray because ultimately it is a matter of life and death (deSilva, 2004).

## III. FOLLOWERSHIP THEORY

While several contemporary theories can relate to this text, Jude's epistle aligns well with the tenants of courageous followership. Chaleff (2009) proposed that there are five dimensions of courageous followership: the courage to assume responsibility, the courage to serve, the courage to challenge, the courage to participate in transformation, and the courage to take moral action. The courage to assume responsibility helps followers to develop a partnership with the leader and build a sense of community (Chaleff, 2009). The courage to serve involves showing care and concern for the leader as a person, which will build trust and goodwill (Chaleff, 2009). According to Chaleff (2009), the courage to challenge leaders is important for the organization's purpose and goals. Moreover, Chaleff (2009) states:

Devoted leaders and followers enter a type of sacred contract to pursue their common purpose. They both are guardians of that purpose. Part of the

courageous follower's role is to help the leader honor this contract. If we do not challenge a leader about dysfunctional behavior, the contract is slowly shredded before our eyes. (p. 77)

In addition, the courage to participate in transformation involves reaching out to leaders and helping them transform damaging behaviors that may harm the organization (Chaleff, 2009). For instance, in many circumstances where leaders are caught in a scandal, many followers mention they saw signs of the destructive behavior but did nothing to stop it (Chaleff, 2009). Lastly, the courage to take moral action involves followers clarifying their own values and grappling with the tension between what they feel is right and opportunities for personal gain or loss (Chaleff, 2009). For instance, if a leader asks a subordinate to do something unethical, the follower should have the courage to take action (Chaleff, 2009).

#### IV. APPLICATION

The epistle of Jude offers several new insights that enhance courageous followership as outlined by Chaleff (2009). The courage to assume responsibility involves building a strong Christian community that has a shared salvation in the body of Christ (v. 1 and 3). When Jude urges Christians to remember they are kept in Christ, he is reminding them to serve their one true leader, God (v. 25). According to Jude, followers should also have the courage to challenge these false teachers and prophets who pervert this grace (v. 4). As Chaleff (2009) states, leaders and followers have a sacred contract to pursue their common purpose, just as Christians have a sacred contract to follow God who holds all power and authority (v. 25). As such, this epistle demonstrates "a serious problem has arisen and a change in behavior and approach of the audience to these persons is required" (Witherington, 2007, p. 596). The courage to participate in transformation is the ability for followers of Christ to transform the damaging behaviors of these false teachers that are harming the early church. To do so, Jude urges followers to build themselves up in the holy faith (v. 20), which is what sets Christians apart from those without faith (Engelbrecht, 2009). Christians are "to be soldiers who hold the fort at any cost" (Wiersbe, 1992, p. 784). Lastly, the courage to take moral action is where Jude encourages followers to save fellow Christians and then show them mercy and fear. According to Wiersbe (1992), "some we might be able to save; others we can only pity" (p. 787).

Followers of Christ should also reclaim their fellow brothers and sisters "with the love that manifests itself in the investment of time that dialogue requires, in the boldness that dares to go into uncomfortable areas, and in the wary caution that keeps a vigilant watch over our own passions and weaknesses" (deSilva, 2004, p. 875). As previously stated, this letter makes no appeal to church leaders to deal with the false teachers polluting early Christians, but instead appeals directly to God's called followers to be courageous enough to do so (deSilva, 2004). As such, "Jude shows us what it means to walk by the Spirit amid our differences" (Kovalishyn, 2014, p. 13). This reinforces the notion by Chalett (2009) that followership is not passive. The followership of Jude's community should help modern Christians realize how crucial it is to defend themselves and others from those who want to lead them off course. For secular organizations, this pressure can involve superiors asking followers to do things unethical or unlawful. For

Christians, false teachers can challenge their salvation, making this literally a matter of life and death. Therefore, followers have a responsibility to monitor and correct errors made by leaders and others and must be courageous enough to make a stand (Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2015).

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Jude offers further insight into followership theory and what it means to be a courageous follower of Christ, especially in the midst of false teachers leading God's called people astray. The next steps in research would be to examine the epistle through socio-rhetorical criticism, in particular social and cultural texture as outlined by Robbins (1996), to offer further insight into "living a committed religious life in the world" (p. 71). As Osborne (2006) warns, the situation behind epistles is not always easy to detect, therefore it is essential to use exegesis to gain further insight into the life situations of the biblical times to ensure it still has applicability for modern Christians. Examining the text through a social and cultural lens would further help to enhance courageous followership in relation to this text. Future research should also explore the false teachers described in the epistle of Jude in relation to pseudo-transformational leadership to further help Christians beware of how they can be manipulated by those who claim to be Christian leaders but have ulterior motives.

Overall, this text offers clear arguments for why and how Christians should contend for the faith and remain true to Scripture and the resources that were given through Jesus Christ and the apostles (deSilva, 2004). Although it is often overlooked and seen as a negative text because it demonstrates God's wrath throughout the Old Testament, Jude offers sound advice on how to respond to dangers as Christians began to divide from within (Brown, 2016). Thus, followers of Christ must be courageous to stand up to false teachers and help their fellow Christians do the same, when possible, because in the end, it is God alone that keeps followers in the one true faith and grants salvation (Wiersbe, 1992).

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## FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS: A SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TEXTURE OF ESTHER 4:1-17

Monica L. Isaac

The purpose of this paper is to examine the interactions between Esther and Mordecai through the lens of a social and cultural texture of Esther 4:1-17. The paper investigates the social and cultural factors existing in the background of the text, including specific cultural topics such as cultural rhetoric and common social concerns such as honor and shame. The challenges presented within the book are examined in relation to the responses to and actions that occur as a result. The paper seeks to link the behavior of one of the main characters to the aspects of transformational leadership and to identify how modern leaders can look to this pericope for guidance in their individual situations. As the transformational leader often rises in response to uncertain times, times of changes, or times of great adversity within societies (Bass, 1978), it is crucial that leaders possess sound judgment and the ability to act decisively, move followers to action, and identify creative solutions to novel problems.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

According to Robbins (1996), socio-rhetorical criticism allows the reader to enter the world of the text by examining the "values, convictions, and beliefs" (p. 1) of the people living within the text. The method involves critically investigating the different nuances found within the details. Robbins defined five methods for exploring texture, each of which involves different angles and approaches to interpretation. Est. 4:1-17 chronicles the reactions of both Queen Esther and Mordecai to a deadly decree credulously issued by King Xerxes at the request of Haman. The pericope focuses on "changing people [and] social practices" (Robbins, 1996, p. 3) and reveals much about the cultural orientation and social location of the two main characters within the text. This study examines the book of Est. 4:1-17 through the lens of social and cultural texture analysis and uncovers its implications for transformational leadership in present times.

## II. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TEXTURE

The social and cultural texture leads interpreters to uncover the "social and cultural 'location' of the language and the type of social and cultural world the language evokes or creates" (Robbins, 1996, p. 71). This type of analysis investigates the worldviews of the narrator and characters by examining their understanding of the world based on their society and culture (Robbins, 1996). Additionally, the social and cultural texture of a text reveals the positioning of characters and exposes their innate religious responses to the complications of their world. Robbins summarized several stances characters adopt when faced with issues, as presented by Wilson and Wilde. These descriptions involve the way characters speak about their present issues and places emphasis on the primary concerns that can be drawn from this speech (Robbins, 1996). According to Robbins (1996), these religious responses include conversionist, revolutionist, introversionist, thaumaturgical, reformist, utopian, and gnostic-manipulationist.

The conversionist believes that people are the root of evil and that changing people will bring salvation. Revolutionists believe salvation will come only through the supernatural destruction and recreation of the social order. The introversionist view is that no salvation is possible for the world, so they choose to withdraw from society in order to achieve personal redemption. A thaumaturgical response involves exact incidents that are present and central to the time of the text and the characters within the text. Salvation is specific and in response to only that precise grievance. The reformist viewpoint is that the social order within the world is the cause of evil and if the order can be fixed, the world can also be mended. Utopian response seeks to completely eradicate evil through the recreation of social order by people, with no intrusion from a divine entity. Finally, the gnostic-manipulationist response seeks a method of dealing with evil, believing that society can be redeemed, but people must learn how to spark that redemption (Robbins, 1996).

The social and cultural texture requires that interpreters be aware of the distance that exists between ancient times and current times (Robbins, 1996). This awareness helps prevent the mistake of projecting meaning into the message of the text as a "function of the reader's location" (VanHoozer, 1984, p. 149). According to Osborne (2006), each original author shares a certain amount of tacit knowledge with the society and culture for which they originally wrote. In the modern world, this implicit knowledge is frequently either lost or foreign to the present-day reader, and background investigation can help recover and familiarize this obsolete knowledge (Osborne). It is the study of these "common social and cultural topics" (Robbins, 1996, p. 75) that spark awareness of the historical distances and differences between ancient and modern times. Mindfulness allows interpreters to identify and isolate presuppositions and biases that exist as a result of their worldviews. Robbins provides several social and cultural topics that require special attention due to the significant differences in the modern age compared to ancient times. These topics will be discussed in the exegesis section of this paper.

### III. THE WORLD OF ESTHER 4:1-17

Per Robbins (1996), "specific social topics in the text reveal the religious responses to the world in its discourse" (p. 71). The book of Esther is rich in social and cultural references and reactions that reveal the religious backgrounds of the main characters, thereby exposing their social and cultural locations, worldviews, and religious stances. The narrative and discourse featured in chapter four of the book provide a distinct glimpse into the background of the verse. Chapter four begins as Mordecai mourned over a decree sealed with King Xerxes' signet ring. "When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry" (English Standard Bible, 2001/2016, Est. 4:1). Haman, an Aggagite official of King Xerxes', requested the decree after he became enraged over Mordecai's refusal to bow down to him per another edict.

#### *Background Events*

Esther was the Queen of the Gentile King Xerxes of the Persians. Xerxes was ignorant of her origins; both Jewish and an orphan, she was raised by her cousin Mordecai (Cairns, 2013). Esther ascended to the throne under guidance from Mordecai, after winning a pageant held to replace the former Persian Queen Vashti, who was banished for insolence by Xerxes and his advisors (Pierce, 1992). Mordecai, appointed to a government position due to his relationship with Esther, had recently uncovered a plot to assassinate King Xerxes, a deed for which he received no recognition (Est., 6:3; Cairns, 2013). Haman, instead, was honored, though it was not clear for what deed. The mistake possibly contributed to the conflict between him and Mordecai (Pierce, 1992). The narrative begins after the Jewish people have been removed from their lands by King Nebuchadnezzar (Pierce, 1992). Many chose to remain living in Susa even after King Cyrus cleared the way for their return to Jerusalem (Pierce, 1992).

#### *Specific Social Topics*

The book explicitly deals with aspects of society, including exile, grieving customs, deception, exclusion, loyalty/disloyalty, and genocide through the actions and behaviors of the characters within the narrative (Pierce, 1992). The absence of explicit references to God in the book has called to question the nature of the book itself (Magonet, 2014; Berger, 2016). God's involvement is implied and understood as background movement expressed through the rhetoric and behaviors of the characters within the chapter. A more in-depth linguistic analysis of the book reveals "phrases where the initial letters of the words, as a form of an acrostic, actually spell out divine names" (Magonet, 2014a). Others have posited that this unique absence is a result of the times, speculating that the Gentile attempt to displace God or exile the Jews and distance them from God's leadership contributes to the seeming omission of Him in the book (Berger, 2016). Whatever the reason for the apparent absence, the religious response of the characters is evident considering their perceptions of the problems which they face.

#### IV. EXEGESIS OF ESTHER 4:1-17

Est. 4:1-17 narrates Mordecai's appeal to Esther to for help in Haman's decree of destruction against all Jews. When Esther initially heard of the plot she objected out of fear "if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter" (Est. 4:11). Despite her fears, Mordecai's unadorned reply prompted Esther to act. "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews" (Est. 4:12). The cause of the decree in question is a point of confusion for historians and Biblical scholars. Mordecai's refusal to bow made no apparent sense as no article of Law prohibited the Jewish people from this action (Hertzberg, 2015). Whether a point of stubbornness, a matter of pride or honor, or just an inane refusal to defer to his political enemy, Mordecai's actions triggered the issuance of the decree. The edict is an even more significant problem as King Xerxes later declared that an "edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked" (Est. 8:8) Per Katz (2003) this is another point of confusion for historians and scholars, as no other evidence exists that supports the irrevocability of laws issued by the King.

#### *Final Cultural Categories*

Per Robbins (1996) cultural location is revealed by the way the characters "present their propositions, reason, and arguments to both themselves and other people" (p. 86). Est. 4 involves dominant culture rhetoric, the presentation of "a system of attitudes, values, dispositions, and norms" (Robbins, p. 86) which the author understands to be endorsed by those in a position of power. The book also exhibits ethnic subculture rhetoric, the result of the Jews living in a diasporic state and residing within a "new cultural environment" (Robbins, p. 86). Despite the danger faced by Jews simply for the offense of being Jewish during this exilic period, Mordecai struggled to establish a sense of order (Green, 2011) and uphold the ways of Judaism within their new environment. Chapter four opens with Mordecai and all the Jews mourning at the issuance of the decree. Haman's vendetta against Jews has already been made evident in Est. 3:10 which describes how "the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman, son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews."

Est. 4:1-3 depicts the grieving actions of the Jews, describing the tearing of garments, donning of sackcloth, ashes, fasting, and wailing. The description of Mordecai's tearing of his clothes is a form of ethnic subculture rhetoric. The action is directly related to an ancient Jewish mourning ritual known as Keri'ah. The custom involved tearing cloth as a form of expressing emotions such as extreme grief (Cutter, 1992). Donning sackcloth and ashes were not directly related to Jewish customs but were more a shared ritual of mourning (Oren, 2009). Description of these behaviors and actions are presented as a form of dominant culture rhetoric which is familiar to the social structure of the time. Mordecai carries out his protestations boldly. He tore at his clothes, perhaps even aggressively ripping the cloth away himself in anger and grief (Jastrow, 1899) before donning his sackcloth and weeping and wailing loudly outside

the King's gates (4:1-2). Effectively "parading his Otherness" (Resnick, 1994, p.81) for all to see, confusing those who are unaware of the decree (including Esther) and calling attention to the fact that he is a Jew.

### *Gnostic Manipulationist Response*

Mordecai's strange behavior captured the attention of Esther, resulting in an exchange between Esther and Mordecai facilitated by Hathach, Esther's attending eunuch. Hathach is ordered by Esther to relay the cause for Mordecai's behaviors to her, prompting him to travel back and forth to deliver messages between the two. Esther first attempted to have Mordecai remove his sackcloth and come inside, but Mordecai refused, rendering the involvement of Hathach a necessity. It is this exchange that first revealed Mordecai's religious approach to the world. Per Robbins (1996) the gnostic-manipulationist rebuff "the institutionalized means of attaining [societal goals] and the existing facilities by which people might be saved" (p. 73). This view does not rely on supernatural intervention for salvation, but rather, contends that redemption is possible "if people learn the right means [and] improved techniques to deal with their problems" (p. 73). Mordecai sent a copy of the document executed to destroy the Jews to Esther, instructing "her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people" (Est., 4:8). Mordecai's plan to intercept the destruction of the Jews involved the intervention of Esther, in her position as Queen as a technique to address the problem.

### *Honor, Guilt, and Rights*

The perception of honorable behavior and actions is not uniform across all cultures; instead, they are relative based on the culture surrounding the society standing in judgment (Speier, 1935). Est. 4:11-17 chronicles the conversation between Esther and Mordecai as it progresses through Hathach and provides a glimpse into Esther's own sense of "self-worth and the public, social acknowledgment of that worth" (Malina, 2001, p. 48). Esther questioned the wisdom of approaching the King and informed Mordecai "I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days" (4:11). The expression of shame shows Esther's awareness of how the opinions of others regarding her honor impacted her; it shows that she was cognizant of the "rules of human interaction" (Malina, p. 49) and was aware of her boundaries and the laws governing her behavior and limiting her rights. Even as the Queen, if the King did not delight in her uninvited appearance, Esther was subject to losing her life. Mordecai's response reminded Esther of her worth, place, and honor as a member of the Jewish culture before and after she became a Queen. Mordecai warned that "relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish" (Est. 4:13-14). Mordecai's response highlighted that risk existed regardless of the route Esther chose.

Robbins (1996) described challenge-response (riposte) as a "sort of constant tug of war, a game of push and shove" (p. 80). Per Robbins, challenge-response develops through a minimum of three phases. First, the challenger (Mordecai) initiates the

challenge either through an action or a message; second, the challenged (Esther) must receive and process the challenge, and finally, the challenged person must respond, and be judged in the eyes of the public (the Jewish community, the Persian community and all those privy to Mordecai's revelation of Esther as a Jew). Mordecai's approach is positive; he approached Esther to save not only himself and her, but the entirety of their people. Esther initially considered Mordecai's challenge from the viewpoint of the damage that it might cause to her honor and self-worth in the face of the King, and those surrounding the King. She reminded her cousin that this could mean her life. Mordecai rebuffed her reaction by expanding his challenge, and finally, Esther agreed to act, and acknowledged that though the stakes were

high, she had no other option. The outcome of the book of Esther shows that her judgment in acting was apt, resulting in the salvation of people.

## V. TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP: FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

James MacGregor Burns, political scientist, author, and professor, was a primary developer of the transformational theory of leadership (Sorenson, 2014). Burns (2003) contended that transformational leadership raised both leaders and followers to increased levels of motivation through expanding "want and hope and ambition and demand" (p. 151). Burns (1978) further posited that transforming leadership "ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (p. 20). Further, transformational leaders are a "response to the needs of society" (Burns, 1978, p. 142), arising at times of turbulence or crisis and often struggling with internal, external, or societal conflicts. Bass (1990), later defined transformational leadership as:

when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group" (p. 21).

Transformational leaders accomplish complete investiture by using a combination of behaviors, including exemplifying morals and values to boost follower respect, encouraging creative thought and innovation, developing and increasing employee performance, and sharing a vision using artifacts that engages followers (Yukl, 2013). Respectively, these actions are known as idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Per Vondey (2010) "it is not only important to create a vision, but also vital to communicate that vision in a way that followers can, in turn, imagine a positive future" (p. 11). This behavior of the transformational leader is categorized as inspirational motivation. Bass described inspirational motivation (1990) as leader ability to effectively project an appealing prediction of the future to followers. Per Yukl (2013) transformational leaders empower followers by "delegating significant authority to individuals or teams, developing follower skills and self-confidence, providing direct

access to sensitive information, [and] eliminating unnecessary controls (p. 329). Per Bass, these traits fall under the heading of individualized consideration, an aspect of the theory in which leaders focus on the individual growth of their followers. Idealized influence encompasses role model behaviors and engagement in activities such as self-sacrifice and displays of humility that increase follower trust (Yukl) in the leader. The leader effectively positions their own behavior as an example for followers (Bass). Per Vondey, "the creativity and the imagination that a leader brings to the organization should pervade throughout the system so that followers feel welcomed to express their own creative imagination" (p. 10). She describes a form of intellectual stimulation, in which the leader challenges followers to ascend to higher levels of innovation and creativity (Bass) through engaging in and encouraging imaginative and novel solutions to problems and decisions faced by organizations.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS OF ESTHER 4:1-17 FOR LEADERSHIP

This single pericope presents vision, influence, decision-making, planning, and action, all of which are crucial metrics of effective leadership (Yukl, 2013). Mordecai's actions and behavior in these verses more closely resemble those of the transformational leader than any other. This section presents an examination of Mordecai's actions as they align with the four primary behaviors of transformational leaders. Though Esther had an exhibited tendency to acquiesce to Mordecai's instruction which is apparent in her joining the harem of a gentile King under his guidance, and the hiding of her origins from the King, again, under Mordecai's tutelage (Hertzberg, 2015). This time, however, Esther showed resistance to Mordecai's demands, sending back a carefully worded message that not only outlined the reason for her refusal but seemed to contain a rebuke for Mordecai's disregard for not only her honor but her very life. "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned, the king has but one law..." (Est. 4:11) which implied that Esther is aware that Mordecai should also be familiar with the law as a member of both the government and the royal province. Esther further theorized her potential death if the King did not favor her arrival and expressed her concern over the time that had passed since she had last seen the King.

Per Green (2011) Mordecai's considerable skill in persuasive tactics helped him determine how to best override Esther's protests. He appealed to her sense of honor, deigned to incite her rage at the callous disregard Haman showed for Jewish life, and reminded her that her life was irrevocably intertwined with the lives of the entire Jewish race. Mordecai conveyed his vision to her in a real enough manner, "for if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish" (Est., 4:14) thus revealing his vision of her fate if she fails to move to thwart the planned genocide. Finally, Mordecai appealed to Esther's sense of duty and religious doctrines in a final question posed to her in which he asked: "who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (Est., 4:1).

Mordecai's actions and rhetoric resembled that of the transformational leader in the way he conveyed "high expectations and expressed important purposes in simple ways" (Bass, 1990). His rhetoric was bold and pointed and his vision, though not one of positivity, was clear enough that it inspired Esther to act. Per Bass (1999) "idealized influence encompasses influence over ideology, influence over ideals, and influence over "bigger-than-life" issues" (p. 19), while Burns (1978) argued that "skill in exploiting power resources is in itself a vital power resource for leaders" (p. 169). Mordecai did not hesitate to tap into Esther as a source of power to counteract an issue as severe as the genocide of his entire race. Further, the entirety of the Jewish community living within reach of the provinces of King Xerxes seemed to identify with and imitate Mordecai's actions within the pericope (Green, 2011). First Mordecai began to grieve, then all the Jews begin to grieve. The surrounding books within the Esther narrative show that Mordecai exhibited individualized consideration for Esther throughout her life, but also was concerned for the entire Jewish community through his movement toward "reinvigorating his people by endowing them with a sense of confidence and strength" (Green, p. 69). Finally, Mordecai presented a challenge to Esther to formulate a creative and innovative method to gain the favor of the King and sway him to decide to protect her people. Mordecai's actions essentially changed Esther's mind; she transcended to an elevated level of "motivation and morality" (Burns, p. 20) in which their objectives joined, and moved to become a leader herself.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This social and cultural texture revealed essential areas of application to the contemporary theory of transformational leadership. The close examination of Mordecai's behaviors and actions within the text reveals that his behavior aligned well with the behaviors of the transformational leader. The revelation of his gnostic-manipulationist response to the problems within the text demonstrates his concern with a "transformed method of coping with evil" (Robbins, 1996, p. 73). He approached the salvation of his people by exploiting the most logical power resource at his disposal: the relationship of his cousin Esther to the King. Further, Mordecai was prepared to risk the life of Esther, and his own position and safety through his boldened actions throughout the passage to appropriate salvation of the greater good.

Mordecai's resolve and determination to create change is a reminder to leaders of the importance of the remaining focused on the goal, appealing to follower values, and willingness to make sacrifices in order to transform followers or influence situations that may seem beyond their normal abilities. Further, the pericope presents a case for the importance of timely decisions coupled with swift execution in the face of a "dynamic, unstable environment that increases the need for change" (Yukl, 2013); a facilitating condition that calls for the rise of a transformational leader. Per Green (2015) decisive action was a strength of Mordecai's, especially considering his position as mediator between the exiled Jews and the Gentiles.

Finally, the pericope solidifies the importance of joining with followers and available power resources "as mutual support for a common purpose" (Burns, 1978).

Leaders should take advantage of all available resources to work toward a shared goal and vision that is beneficial for the community overall. Mordecai's words to Esther "but you and your father's family will perish" (Est. 4:14) sound harsh to modern ears. However, they are well-chosen by Mordecai to remind Esther of the nature of their dyadic relationship and the danger that hung equally over each of their heads. The final message for leaders in the book of Esther is to remain mindful of the fact that leaders often rise to dizzying heights and are often granted a specific window of opportunity for a precise purpose (Seidler, 2017). When the time comes to act or to inspire others to act, one should not hesitate, but rather, should move forward with resolve and determination, empowering and inspiring followers to do the same.

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### About the Author

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## LEADING FROM THE MARGINS: THE LITTLE MAID IN SYRIA

Jeremiah E. Shipp

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This article explores the role and impact of the embodied Marginal Leader as seen in the unnamed “little maid” in 2 Kings 5. The anonymity of the little maid does not negate the significant contribution she makes to the physical and spiritual healing of her captor. The influence the little maid exemplifies is consistent with the character of Yahweh who uses unlikely people to accomplish great things. The actions of the little maid who is described as a marginal leader reveal notable lessons that leaders should remember to be successful in various ministry and organizational contexts.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The heroes of Scripture often come from unexpected places. Few narratives embody this reality better than the narrative of the Little Maid in 2 Kings 5. Traditional assumption reflects Great Man leadership theory, assuming that leadership is designated to those with power, prototypicality/“insider” social status based on desirable traits (Spector, 2016), and often gender (Ferguson, 2018). Yet at critical moments in history, God chooses people on the fringe of society, with no power of their own, to shape the course of history. In the 2 Kings 5 narrative, the foreign war hero, Naaman, a renowned Great Man, is influenced by the Little Maid, who is marginalized and naturally powerless on three levels: (a) as a female, (b) as a foreigner, and (c) as a prisoner of war. This study of the Little Maid narrative demonstrates the impact of marginal leadership (Rast, Hogg, & de Moura, 2013), and how God chooses what may be assumed to be “weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Cor. 1:27, KJV).

Gender roles and perceptions of leadership are often intertwined (Ferguson, 2018). Women who are in positions that are often associated with male gender roles expose the stereotypes and unconscious bias that can exist within an organization (Eagly, 2007; Ferguson, 2018; Putnam & Campbell, 2010). The position or job title a leader holds influences the ethical climate of an organization and how employees respond to those in authority (Randall, 2012). Campbell, Shollen, Egan, and Neilson (2019) suggests that the capacity for leadership is often equated to the social standing of the one under consideration. When a leader exhibits an attractive communicative style, support is garnered because followers believe they can identify with the prospective leader (Hogg, 2018). Consequently, the perception of leadership can include some, while excluding others based on gender, power, and social status (Hogg, 2001).

## II. MARGINAL LEADERSHIP

Research on leadership styles (McCleskey, 2014; Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014), leader characteristics (Lisak & Erez, 2015; Shamir & Howell, 1999), and the impact of leadership (Givens, 2008; Stewart, 2008) are plentiful. Often equated to a title or position, leadership should often include influence particularly among those who are not in a position of authority. Kruse (2013) defines leadership as “a process of social *influence*, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal” (p. 3). When examining leadership, Robert Greenleaf’s servant leadership is often regulated to those who adhere to the Christian faith (Locke, 2019). While numerous studies have examined leadership from the perspective of the one in authority, emphasis on those from minority demographic groups, particularly women leaders is a growing area of research.

The power of marginal leadership in the Old Testament is most frequently demonstrated in women, who – despite their immersion in a strongly patriarchal society – still influenced political decisions, economic stability, and spiritual revitalization. Joseph became a prominent leader despite being sold into slavery and falsely incriminated (Gen. 39:1-6). Similarly, while in Babylonian captivity, Daniel, a eunuch, ascended to a position of power despite being a foreigner from Israel (Dan. 1). The midwives Shiphrah and Puah protected the Hebrew male infants from the assassination attempt of the king of Egypt (Ex. 1:15-17). Their stance would ultimately protect Moses who would lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. Deborah provided the emotional support Barak needed to go into battle (Judg. 4:6-9). Esther risked her life to protect the Jews by appearing before the king unannounced (Est. 4:16).

In the New Testament, women were active in ministry. According to Clifford (2018), “In the time between Jesus’ death and resurrection, women, not men, exercised leadership” (p. 36). Mary Magdalene and other women were the first to announce the resurrection of Christ (Mark 16:1-8). Lydia opened her home to Paul and Silas during their missionary journey (Acts 16:14-15). Phoebe, Priscilla, Aquila, Mary, and other anonymous women were recognized for supporting the Apostle Paul (Rom. 16:1-4, 6; Phil. 4:3). The Ethiopian eunuch was sent as the first Christian missionary into the royal courts of Ethiopia in Acts 8. He, too, was ostracized due to his status as a eunuch which was despised and viewed as inferior outside of the royal court (Dube, 2013). The socio-

cultural tension that the interaction between the eunuch – an outsider – and Luke – an insider – reveals the significance that geography, ethnicity, gender, and class have on propagating the gospel (Huizing, 2016; Spencer, 1992; Wilson, 2014). Also, Paul told Timothy not to allow anyone to look down on him because he was young, but rather to set an example to the believers in speech, life, love, faith, and purity – exerting influential leadership despite not fitting the stereotype of a learned rabbi (2 Tim. 4:12), and even the Apostle Paul himself said he came to the Corinthians in weakness and trembling, yet revealing what the eloquent and powerful did not understand (1 Cor. 2:1-8). Although leadership is often limited to external or cultural “predictors” such as power, social status, or gender, the little maid in Syria reveals that visibility does not determine importance. The purpose of this article is to explore leadership from the perspective of the little maid and the implications her actions have for leaders who endeavor to integrate the Christian scriptures in various ministry and organizational contexts.

### III. BACKGROUND

#### *Leadership Succession*

In the book of 2 Kings, a notable change in leadership occurs. Elijah has demonstrated that he was a true prophet (Deut. 18:15-22) whose function was to point people to Yahweh. Throughout the Old Testament, prophets communicated messages of varying degrees from deliverance to destruction. The prophetess Miriam led the Israelites in celebration after crossing the Red Sea (Ex. 15:20-21). The prophetess Huldah shared dual messages concerning the reading of the Law (2 Kings 22:12-20). The prophet Gad instructed David to retreat to the land of Judah to escape Saul (1 Sam. 22:5). The prophet Nathan confronted David for having Uriah killed (2 Sam. 12:1-7). The prophet Jeremiah exposed the false prophet Hananiah for speaking lies (Jer. 28:15-17). Thus, when prophets shared the word of the LORD, they were often met with apprehension.

As Elijah approaches the end of his ministry, he is miraculously transported to heaven (2 Kings 2:11). His prophetic mantle is then transferred to Elisha, his mentee (Zucker, 2013). As Elijah ministered to women during his ministry (1 Kings 17:9; 1 Kings 19), the same occurred with Elisha. To help a certain woman eradicate her debt, Elisha instructed her to sell some oil (2 Kings 4:1). Next, Elisha raises the son of a Shunammite woman from the dead (2 Kings 4:8). Finally, Elisha advises Naaman that he can be healed by washing in the Jordan River (2 Kings 5:2). As Elisha continues the ministry of his predecessor, the spiritual condition of the nation is another challenge (Carroll, 1969; Zucker, 2013).

#### *Spiritual Decline*

The prevalence of idolatry was a continuous challenge as the Israelites intermingled with and conquered surrounding nations. The perpetual cycle of worshipping idols and then returning to Yahweh was a detriment to their spiritual health. The consequences were many causing sickness, war, infertility, and famine. Yet, despite the sins of the nation, the mercy of Yahweh abounded. But You, O Lord, are a

God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth (Ps. 86:15, NKJV). Through many spiritual leaders – prophets, judges, prophetess, and other anonymous individuals – the sovereignty and grace of Yahweh were shown to Israel. It is at this point in the narrative that Elisha becomes a central figure in the text (Nantenaina, Raveloharimisy, & McWilliams, 2015; Satterthwaite, 1998).

### *Political Power*

The intersection of spiritual and political leaders was common. Kings would often consult prophets for advice (1 Kings 22:6-8; Effa, 2007). Bremmer (1993) observed that there was a connection between prophets and political power in Israel. As the political structure changed to kingship, the prevalence of the prophetic voice diminished. During this time a divided leadership structure emerged. Various kings embraced religious practices, which often violated the commands of Yahweh. The Southern kingdom of Judah was led by Jehoshaphat. Jehoram was the king of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel whose evil practices are noted in 2 Kings 3:2-3. At the apex of the 2 Kings account, an alliance among three kings emerges in retaliation against Mesha, the king of Moab. The Moabites are defeated and each king returns to his homeland. After this battle, Naaman, a significant figure in Syria is introduced.

### *Naaman the leper*

“Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.” (v.1, KJV) The text reveals five traits about Naaman: (1) army captain, (2) great man, (3) honorable, (4) mighty man of valor, and (5) leper (Kim, 2005). First, as the army captain, Naaman led the Syrian army in battle against their enemies. Second, a great man speaks to his character. Naaman had demonstrated his loyalty to the Syrian king. Third, Naaman was honored because of the military success Syria experienced under his leadership. Although Naaman was the army captain, Yahweh was the source of their victories (2 Kings 5:1; Ps. 20:7; 115:1). Fourth, as a mighty man of valor, Naaman exhibited strength and military prowess. Lastly, Naaman has fame, but he was a leper. According to Mosaic Law, leprosy was a contagious skin disease that required a period of isolation (Lev. 13; Hulse, 1975; Smith, 1994). Whereas, Naaman was able to fulfill his duties with the Syrian army because there are different kinds of leprosy (Davies, 1890). Since Naaman was not Jewish, he did not live by the requirements of the Mosaic law. His disease did not prevent him from interacting within the Syrian community or fulfilling his official duties (Smith, 1994). The irony that a man who is a great military strategist is powerless to eradicate his disease ignites the curiosity of the reader and turns the attention to the nameless individuals in the narrative (Brueggemann, 2007; Kim, 2005; Smith, 1994).

## IV. THE ANONYMOUS WOMEN OF 2 KINGS 5

The 2 Kings 5 narrative often focuses on the primary male characters – Naaman, Elisha, and Gehazi. However, the role of the female characters is diminished (Kim, 2005). After the short biographical sketch of Naaman is provided, the little maid is

identified only by gender, status, and native country. According to Dewey (1997), “female characters can sometimes be seen in biblical stories, they can seldom be heard” (p. 55). The voice of the little maid is heard when she shares that Elisha could heal Naaman of his leprosy. The anonymity of the maid and mistress reveals how the identity of women was viewed in Hebrew culture. The identity of male figures in the biblical narrative is consistent with biblical patriarchy. Men had a primary voice while women were secondary. The anonymity of women is consistent with the use of archetypes in narratives (Bronner, 1994; Hendel, 2008). Additionally, Callender (2014) highlights myth as a literary strategy to understand biblical texts. People whose position, gender, or social status were seemingly insignificant became the vessels for deliverance. While the 2 Kings 5 narrative begins with Naaman as the archetypal hero, it is the anonymous individuals in the text, specifically the little maid that becomes the heroine. Lockyer (1998) observes that the anonymity of the women portrays the irony that someone in a subordinate position can become central to the story. When a person is anonymous, Simon (1990) suggests that they are characterizations of the major characters in the narrative. Consequently, the anonymity of the little maid and the mistress can make the “nameless” a stronger symbol for people who relate to their plight (Kensy, 2002).

### *The Little Maid*

“And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman’s wife.” (v. 2, KJV) The little maid is a young, female slave from Israel. Israel has experienced the miracles of Yahweh manifested through the lives of the patriarchal leaders – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The miracles performed were documented and transmitted orally from one generation to another (Deut. 6:4-9). Yet, the fear and uncertainty that being in exile created could quickly overshadow the miracles. The little maid faces a three-fold challenge: (1) she is a female, (2) she is a foreigner, and (3) she is a slave. Despite her femaleness, she is contending with the emotional trauma of not being able to see her family with no recourse that she will ever see them again. While she is a gift to Naaman’s wife, she is experiencing the grief of being separated from everything familiar. She also grapples with the tension of determining how to adhere to her Jewish faith in a foreign land. Additionally, the startling reality that she has no rights, no family, highlights her sense of powerlessness. Henry (1896) suggests the significance of this reality when he states, “The unhappy dispersing of the people of God has sometimes proved the happy occasion of the diffusion of the knowledge of God” (p. 583). While the duration of her time in captivity is not disclosed, her assignment is to serve Naaman’s wife.

“And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.” (v. 3, KJV) The response of the little maid is counter to what one would expect. She is a prisoner of war, yet she exhibits a depth of compassion for the well-being of her captor by sharing the solution to his problem. Brueggeman (2007) posits that the little maid was not mean-spirited but cared deeply for Naaman and his wife. She seized the opportunity to meet a need by instilling hope and using her voice to ignite the possibility of a new narrative in Naaman’s story

(Brueggeman, 2007). Menn (2008) observes that the little maid used the opportunity to focus on healing and restoration instead of the destruction caused by the Syrian military. Lockyer (1998) and Shields (1993) observe the irony of anonymity because minor characters often model characteristics the major characters should possess. The nameless men and women in the bible can reach a wider audience because people can identify with their stories (Wells, 2012). The name of the little maid was not the focus of the narrative but the eternal significance of nameless individuals. Who you are is not important, but who you serve is what matters. Summarily, Brueggemann (2001) and Smith (1994) agree that the little maid was instrumental in helping Naaman meet Elisha.

### *The Mistress*

“And [the mistress] went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.” (v. 4, KJV) The personal name of Naaman’s wife is not revealed. Her husband had a prominent position in the Syrian army. She has been assigned a servant from the land of Israel. Although no additional details are provided about her, she knows her husband. She knows his private struggles. She is acquainted with his strengths, problems, and weaknesses. Although she was a Gentile, unfamiliar with the Jewish faith, Brueggeman (2007) observes that time created an opportunity for the truth to triumph. In their private quarters, the mistress had Naaman’s undivided attention to express what the little maid shared. The little maid had observed the concern and sorrow that the disease caused the mistress. The desperation and sense of hopelessness the mistress felt made the recommendation of the unnamed slave girl more meaningful. Potential reasons the mistress valued and shared the message of the slave girl include (a) they wanted to handle the issue privately by keeping the diagnosis a secret (Brueggeman, 2007); (b) the fear of losing a prominent, social standing within the Syrian community; (c) the depth of her love for her husband; and (d) a trusting relationship had been established between the two. Since the little maid was already a prisoner of war, she had nothing else to lose. Baeq (2010) observes that the mistress was under divine constraint, unconsciously obeying God to fulfill a specific role in the narrative. However, Sain (2020) posits that when problems arise and there is the possibility of hope, people will go to great lengths to get the people they love the help they need.

### *The Powerlessness of the Mighty*

“And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.” (vv. 5-6, KJV) After the little maid shares a remedy, the King of Syria is involved. Her words are transmitted to the one with political authority and not directly to the prophet. In turn, he writes a letter to the King of Israel accompanied by money and clothing. Naaman thought he could purchase a cure for his disease due to his position and financial standing. Money and prestige are the languages of the powerful (Brueggeman, 2007). However, real power is

the ability to humble ourselves and acknowledge our limitations (Bakon, 2001; Satterthwaite, 1998). The actions of Naaman reveal that those in authority only converse with the powerful and not the powerless. Despite the money and gifts, human tactics could not remedy his problem but required divine intervention.

“And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel” (vv. 7-8, KJV). The rending of the clothes was an expression of mourning and sorrow (Kim, 2005). The king probably thought this was a distraction that would lead to an attack against him and the kingdom due to the ongoing tension with Syria (Cohn, 1983; Kim, 2005; Satterthwaite, 1998). The prophet Elisha gave the King of Israel instructions because the source of his power was from God and not man. The prophet was bold and confident in his God and did not fear the position of the king (Kim, 2005). Prophetic voices are not afraid to speak to political powers (Bremmer, 1993). Elisha’s response to the king was not a statement of pride but a statement of faith about the transformation that Naaman would experience (Cohn, 1983). He knew that after their encounter, Naaman would recognize that power belongs to God, not money, military success, or political power.

When Naaman arrives to meet Elisha the greeting is not as expected (v. 9). His greatness in Syria is not reciprocated before the prophet. Instead, Elisha sends a messenger, a nameless servant to greet and advise Naaman to dip in the Jordan River seven times (v. 10). The significance of this interchange can be attributed to humility and idolatry. First, greatness requires humility and servanthood. As Jesus told the disciples, “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matt. 23:11, KJV). This may speak to how those viewed as inferior are the most powerful. Worldly power pails in comparison to spiritual power (Bakon, 2001; Satterthwaite, 1998). It could be a lesson in humility that worldly power must recognize the humility required to approach spiritual matters (Zackovitch, 1995). Second, it could be his familiarity with the idol Rimmon and how he perceived spiritual matters. Naaman likely expected a performance consistent with magic and idol worship (Bakon, 2001). In response, Naaman is offended, expresses how he expected to be received, and prepares to leave without being cured (vv. 11-12). Then the nameless servants intervene. “And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?” (v. 13, KJV). These nameless individuals reflect the voices of the marginalized. After appealing to his perception of greatness (“great thing”), Naaman follows instructions and is cured of his leprosy (v. 14).

The reoccurrence of anonymous individuals in this narrative (e.g., the little maid, the mistress, Elisha’s messenger, and Naaman’s servants) suggests that nameless people can change the course of history (Wells, 2012). According to Moore (1990), “The words of kings have come to nothing, while words from lowly persons have prevailed” (p. 77). While the social significance of Naaman serves as the genesis of the narrative, truly how powerless the mighty are is revealed by the intervention of nameless

individuals in the text. It is not money, position, or status that warrants salvation but humility and faith that God honors (Zackovitch, 1995). This change was sparked by the bold and compassionate expression of the little maid, a prisoner of war in Syria.

The little maid is only referenced once in the 2 Kings 5 narrative. Yet, her influence impacted the remaining content of the chapter and positioned Naaman for healing (Smith, 1994; von Rad, 1977). Although Naaman has the position of leadership, it was the little maid who demonstrated the power of influence. While the role of the little maid would be considered of low status, she exemplifies what Rast, Hogg, and Randsley de Moura (2018) describe as a marginal leader. Marginal leaders are “people who emerge as leaders even though traditionally they are not normally accepted or cast into leadership positions” (p. 9). Individuals from marginalized groups can exert an influence that positively contributes to the success of groups, organizations, and nations (Eagly, 2018). These marginalized, unexpected leaders should cause organizations to assess their perceptions of stereotypical cultural, social, and gender roles. The skepticism that women, culturally or educationally different, or social outsiders who ascend to positions of leadership experience reveal the need for a paradigm shift in how leadership is both defined and characterized. In 1 Cor. 1:26-29, it says,

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.”

Although the little maid would be considered a marginal leader, there are valuable principles that can be extracted from her life that apply to leaders today.

## V. LEADERSHIP LESSONS

### *The Power of Discipleship*

The little maid was from the land of Israel. She became a prisoner of war due to the conflict between Syria and Israel (Berman, 2016). This tension created an opportunity to address the spiritual needs of the Syrian leadership, culture, and community (Berman, 2016; Brueggemann, 2007). She had heard of Yahweh and the prophet Elisha and was convinced that her God was still able to heal, even when she was isolated from her family and homeland. Her youthfulness is evident since the text refers to her as a *little maid*. As a young, slave girl, she was helpless in like manner to Israel that was subdued by Syria (Menn, 2008). She is an example that many youths face challenges beyond their control. Therefore, biblical instruction must begin in the home. The necessity of parental discipleship can be found in scriptures such as Deut. 6:6-9, Prov. 22:6, and 2 Tim. 3:14-15. Clarke (1837) states, “And see the benefits of religious education! Had not this little maid been brought up in the knowledge of the true God, she had not been the instrument of so great a salvation” (p. 500). Parents do not know how God will use their children for his glory. What the little maid heard left such an impression that she was able to share with others. Brueggemann (2007) suggests that

the little maid is an evangelist who helped create a narrative of hope rooted in the one true God within the Syrian community. The same boldness can be seen in the life of Daniel and the three Hebrew boys (Dan. 1). Children are listening. The goodness of God must be shared with them continuously. Consequently, God strategically sends those who are willing into cultural contexts where opportunities for discipleship and evangelism are plentiful (Brueggemann, 2004).

### *Soul Strength*

The things the little maid heard would ultimately sustain her while in captivity. The work conditions in Naaman's home are unknown. Due to her age and being separated from family, it was the strength of Yahweh that helped her. Leaders should remember that even in times of difficulty, God provides strength. According to Prov. 24:10, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." With the proper foundation and perspective, adversity can be seen as a gift. Leaders can find solace in the character of God in times of uncertainty. Ps. 138:3 (NKJV) states, "In the day when I cried out, You answered me, *And* made me bold *with* strength in my soul."

### *Marketplace Ministry*

Forster and Oostenbrink (2015) believe a dual theology has created tension between the church and the culture leading to an imbalanced view of the kingdom of God. The little maid did not abandon her faith. Although she was taken captive from Israel and forced to serve in Syria, she models how to seize opportunities. Johnson (2003) observes the marketplace as the most influential mission field of the twenty-first century. Similarly, Wright (2007) affirms the marketplace as a divine opportunity for evangelism. It is easy to succumb to the pressure to conform or to remain silent, but leaders embrace challenges as an opportunity for growth. The ability to navigate through climates, even professional workplaces that are counter to the moral convictions of the leader can be difficult. However, Jones (1997) suggests that Christians can remain ethical in a secular, business environment. To this end, training is vital to effectively represent Christ in the marketplace.

### *A Servant's Heart*

With Christ as the ultimate example (Phil. 2), the most powerful leader in the biblical narrative is exhibited through those who serve. Esther (4) and the Hebrew midwives (Ex. 1:15-22) exemplifies how to serve others. They were committed to their role but did not jeopardize their religious heritage even when the outcome could result in severe punishment. The little maid served Naaman's wife. She was likely responsible for tending to her needs, preparing meals, and extending hospitality when guests came to their home. Service characterizes the effectiveness of a leader. In Luke 22:27 (NLT), Jesus said, "Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves."

### *Be Courageous*

Leaders are willing to take risks. To do so requires courage. The importance of courage is seen in the life of Joshua (1:7, 9). In Ps. 27:14, David states, "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD." It was risky for the little maid to offer advice without knowing how Naaman would react. Nevertheless, she was courageous and left the consequences to Yahweh who she had heard of in the land of Israel.

### *Problem Solvers*

The little maid could have been silent, but she told the mistress how Naaman could receive help for his leprous condition. In turn, she communicated a prophetic vision (Winston and Patterson, 2006) that led to a miracle. Leaders should assess which team member may have the answer to an ongoing challenge. We may be the solution to the problem someone is facing. Many people need to know God and he wants to use us to share Him with the world. We are instruments God wants to use to touch the lives of people who need him the most. We can ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and witty ideas to help remediate challenges that our employers may be facing.

### *Look Again*

Sometimes we question why God has us where we are. We can be in a place where we are overlooked, discredited, and undervalued. Yet, God is still at work. God sovereignly allowed the little maid to be taken captive. It was in her captivity that Naaman would have an encounter with the power of Yahweh. This encounter results in Naaman declaring, "...Behold, now I know that *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Israel..." (2 Kings 5:15). Effa (2007) notes, "a strategically placed witness at a time of deeply felt need may open doors to belief even among people of the most powerful strata of society" (p. 312). Despite where we are, we must be willing to change our perspective to see the good hand of God at work in every season and circumstance in our life (Rom. 8:28).

### *Impact*

The impact of the little maid was expansive. By sharing that Elisha could help Naaman, official documentation is sent to the king of Israel. While in captivity, geographical, spiritual, and political barriers are removed. By connecting Naaman with Elisha, his healing would impact not only Naaman, but his wife, servants, army, the king of Syria, and ultimately the nation of Syria (Eagly, 2018; Kim, 2005). The little maid can be accredited with impacting an entire nation with a message of hope about the prophet Elisha and Yahweh (Zucker, 2013). Additionally, the text provides a portrait of the expansiveness of the love of God to reach the lost (Smith, 1994). Despite our accolades, we all have a need that can only be filled by God. If we seek Him, we will find Him and receive all that we need.

### *It takes a Team*

Leadership does not occur in isolation but requires a team. While the Great Man theory focuses on the individual leader (Spector, 2016), Hambrick (1987) views leadership as a collective effort. The little maid was not the only individual that aided in Naaman's healing. The little maid planted the seed, Elisha watered, and Yahweh brought the increase. We each have a part to play but we cannot do it alone. The body and family imagery used in scripture are reflective of the importance of community (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:14). We should show appreciation to the members of our team by thanking them for their contributions to our success. Leaders should demonstrate gratitude in verbal and physical acts to express appreciation. This can come in the form of an email or text to say thank you, gift card, or employee appreciation initiatives – the options are unlimited.

### *No Discrimination*

This narrative in 2 Kings 5 demonstrates how leadership is not determined by age, status, or gender. Unexpected blessings can come from unlikely people. As God told Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7, KJV). Who have we overlooked because of their outward appearance – age, gender, status? The Apostle Paul made it clear when we said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28, KJV). In the kingdom of God, the inherent value in everyone means that being a cultural insider (Jew/Greek), social status (slave/free), or even a certain gender (male/female) is not what qualifies us for divine connections, leadership opportunities, and innovative ideas. When leaders take a moment to reflect, countless individuals have been instrumental to their success. The little maid was from Israel and Naaman was Syrian. His nationality was not a barrier to the little maid sharing the answer to his problem or him accepting the solution (Barrick, 2000). God does not discriminate nor should his leaders.

## VI. CONCLUSION

While stereotypes of preferred leadership styles are plentiful, the little maid referenced in 2 Kings 5 is an example of how even the most marginalized of people can be effective leaders in every area of life. Her courage led to the physical and spiritual healing of Naaman whose impressive credentials were tainted by a physical malady. She chose to share information that helped Naaman resolve a problem he could not fix on his own. The impact of this encounter extends beyond gender, nationality, and social status. Scripture affirms that race, social status, and gender does not exclude anyone from the family of God (Gal. 3:28, KJV). Each of these factors exemplifies the little maid whose marginalization and powerlessness were the very things that made her impact so great. Hence, the inclusivity of the gospel requires a theologically sound view of the inherent value of everyone. The willingness of the little maid to share her faith

demonstrates that despite being marginalized, anyone can lead. Leaders have a responsibility to help point people to God. In His sovereignty, God strategically positions those who would otherwise be overlooked and discredited to communicate truth to those who need it the most. The little maid is among the countless people – women and men – who are leading from the margins without receiving the proper recognition that they deserve. We cannot forget the marginalized individuals whose gender, social status, and powerlessness have been instrumental in our physical and spiritual well-being.

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## The Ignored Miracle of the Dark-Skinned Eunuch Ideological Texture Analysis of Acts 8:26-40

Mary Kay Copeland and Cora Barnhart

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The conversion of the first Gentile, a dark skinned, African eunuch, has historically commanded scant attention from biblical scholars. This analysis uses Robbins tool of ideological texture analysis to uncover insights on this under-emphasized, historical pericope. Analyses of the text reveals that God offers His salvation not only to the masses, but to each and every individual regardless of race, background, and social status. The examination discloses: a) Luke's desire and passion to communicate to both the Jew and Gentile, God's proclamation, that all men and women throughout the world are offered salvation and redemption; b) Philip's use of the authoritative text of the Old Testament to support and explain the implications of the prophetic Scripture for the Gentile; c) the reversal of the popular, incorrect ideology of the time that eunuchs, non-Jews, and those of different ethnicity would find themselves outside God's favor; and d) an assessment of the marginalization of ethnic minorities in Scripture. The exploration concludes by applying the findings to contemporary leadership theory, noting Philip's combination of servant and spiritual leadership traits impact his effectiveness as a leader.

*Keywords:* minorities, redemption, ideological texture analysis, contemporary leadership theory, servant leadership, leadership effectiveness

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Biblical scholars and preachers have historically directed little attention to the first Gentile converted to Christianity, a dark skinned, African eunuch (Martin, 1989). Ideological texture analysis of this text discloses the irrelevancy of one's race, background, and social status to God's offer of salvation to every individual. The text of Acts 8:26-40, described by Karris (1978), as a "diamond in the rough," (p.99) is overshadowed by Paul's persecution of the Christians and his radical conversion. This analysis uses Robbins' (1996b) tool of ideological texture analysis to present a deeper

understanding and insights on details underlying this under-emphasized, historical pericope. The text outlines that God offers salvation to not only the masses, but to every individual regardless of race, background, and social status. Assessment of ideological texture studies the initial inconspicuous nature of the event, as well as the subsequent portrayal as almost an inconsequential occurrence. The examination discloses the following: (a) Luke's desire and passion to communicate to both the Jew and Gentile, God's proclamation, that all men and women throughout the world are offered salvation and redemption; (b) Philip's use of the authoritative text of the Old Testament to support and explain the implications of the prophetic Scripture for the Gentile; (c) the reversal of the popular, incorrect ideology of the time that eunuchs, non-Jews, and those of different ethnicity would find themselves outside God's favor; (d) an assessment of the marginalization of ethnic minorities in Scripture.

Applying ideological texture analysis to this scripture allows the reader to gain a greater understanding of the underlying meaning of the text. The study then applies the concepts uncovered to contemporary leadership theory to identify how Paul's servant and spiritual leadership contributed to his effectiveness as a leader.

## II. SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF SCRIPTURE

Studying Scripture can be a challenging, daunting, and enlightening task. Robbins (1996b) proposed socio-rhetorical criticism as a systematic methodology that allows the scholar to merge "social – scientific and literary critical approaches" to explore, interpret, and understand early Christianity and the emergent canonical biblical text (p.i). Robbins introduced socio-rhetorical criticism as a way of analyzing Scripture by focusing on the values, convictions, and beliefs that are gleaned from Scripture interactively with the current world in which the inquirer lives (Robbins, 1996a). This approach acknowledges Christianity as an evolving ideological construct that emerged through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but also amidst a specific culture. It challenges the postmodern academic to examine the text from their perspective, as well as from the ancient and modern perspectives (Robbins, 1996a). This multi-dimensional approach is an alternative way of evaluating Scripture that includes both a detailed analysis of the text as well as interactively weaving the culture and world of the authors with the traditions and life as we know it in the twenty-first century. Robbins (1996b) challenges the scholar to reorient their thinking as they interpret and examine the multiple layers and interpretations in each reading. Robbins describes that looking at the "socio" includes accessing the "social class, social systems, personal and community status, people on the margin, and people in the positions of power" (1996a, p.1). Additionally, Robbins notes that the term 'rhetorical' challenges the reader to take note of the individuals and topics described in the text. Robbins argues that the combined socio-rhetorical criticism "integrates the way people use language with the way they live in the world" (1996a, p.1). Robbins (1999) notes that socio-rhetorical interpretation is

*guided by the metaphor of a text as a tapestry rather than a site of windows and mirrors, socio-rhetorical interpretation has begun to focus not only on multiple textures of a text but also on multiple discourses that interweave with one*

*another within those textures. The interweaving of multiple textures and discourses within a text creates an environment in which signification, meanings and meaning effects interact with one another in ways that no one method can display. Only an approach that is highly programmatic, complexly variegated and readily adaptable can begin to engage and exhibit the rich world that texts bring into the life of humans as they live, work, struggle, suffer, die, celebrate and commemorate together ( p.1).*

This approach integrates different types of analysis to produce a richer, more in-depth understanding of Scripture. According to Bekker (2006a), Robbins' methodology introduces a "paradigm shift in the way one perceives, understands and uses texts" (p. 8), replacing a single lens view of Scripture with multiple layers within the text as the basis for the interpretation.

Fairclough (2003) also supports analyzing and interpreting text using similar social rhetorical analysis tools as outlined by Robbins. While Fairclough refers to this analysis as social, discourse, and text analysis, it embraces some of the same core concepts and benefits of Robbins' approach. Fairclough's bases his methodology on discourse analysis that emphasized a more detailed linguistic analysis of texts previously presented by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) and Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2000, 2001). Fairclough describes his approach as "discourse analysis (a version of 'critical discourse analysis')" (2003, p.2) and explains that it "is based upon the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always has to take account of language" (2003, p.2). Fairclough perceives his approach as a technique for conducting social research, using discourse analysis and focusing on language. Fairclough recognizes that while his method is "one analytical strategy amongst many" (2003, p.2) but argues similarly to Robbins (1996a) that "it often makes sense to use discourse analysis in conjunction with other forms of (rhetorical) analysis" to gaining a truer, more in-depth understanding of the text (2003, p. 2).

The socio-rhetorical approach to textual analysis is systematic and methodical which allows users to easily grasp and employ its use (Robbins, 1996b). Robbins (1996a) developed five different ways in which one could review the text to more fully assess, dissect, and understand Scripture. These methods include the following analyses of: "(a) the inner texture; (b) the intertexture; (c) the social and cultural texture; (d) the ideological texture; (e) the sacred texture of the text" (Robbins, 1996a, p. 3). This examination will analyze the ideological texture to explore Luke's writing in Acts 8:26-40 where Philip ministers to the Enoch and helps open this prominent official's eyes to the great news of the Gospel.

### III. IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE ANALYSIS

Robbins (1996b) notes that ideological texture analysis is an excellent tool to explore the interaction between the author, text, and reader and to better understand the intended meaning of the passage.

#### *Ideological Texture Analysis as a Tool*

Robbins (1996b) outlines that the ideological texture analysis addresses the area of the text where the implied reader (reader at the time the Scripture was written) and the real reader/audience “receive and empower the message of the text” (1996b, p.37). Robbins explains that “ideology concerns the particular way in which our speech and action, in their social and cultural location, relate to and interconnect with resources, structures, and institutions of power” (1996b, p. 36). Robbins concludes that “analysis and interpretation of the ideological texture of texts raises, in the end, the issue of spheres of truth and how we attempt to approach them” (1996b, p.37). Robbins emphasizes that it is believed that truth can be captured in the unraveling and studying of the underlying ideas and concepts through this method of ideological observation.

Patte (1989) proposes a similar tool, structured analysis, which assists the scholar in interpreting the author’s convictions. When coupled with ideological texture, structured analysis improves the overall interpretation of the text. Patte also asserts that understanding the ideological perspective of the author improves the scholar’s ability to accurately assess the author’s true intended message.

DeSilva (2004) summarizes how ideological criticism attempts to unravel how the ideology of the interpreter influences the reader’s interpretation and application of the text. DeSilva notes that, as the investigator seeks to understand how the “cultural location, ethnicity, social location, gender, and other factors constrain an interpreter and contribute to the results of any investigation of the text (viewed negatively, as limiting or constraining interpretation; viewed positively, as opening alternative readings of the text)” (2004, pp. 463-464). In summary, understanding biases, prejudices, and stereotyping of the writer allows the interpreter to gain a truer understanding of the written work. Alternatively, understanding the author’s culture, background, passion, and intent facilitates a deeper understanding of the truth that the author intends to communicate. DeSilva emphasizes that ideological criticism should attempt to explore how the ideology of the writer “shapes the text itself and works through the text on the readers in their situation” (2004, p.464). Underlying this is the assumption that the New Testament is a rhetorical text, and its authors seek to “persuade, influence, affirm or limit or constrain the readers to respond in certain ways and not in other ways” (2004, p.464). Implicitly, the biblical text is best understood as having an intended message of directing, influencing, freeing, and persuading the reader with the message of Christ. A reader who understands the ideology of its authors will gain a more accurate and revealing significance of each portion of the Scripture.

### *Benefits of Ideological Texture Analysis*

Bekker describes ideological texture as a method of “exploring the ideological inner dynamics of the text” (2006a, p. 11). Martin (1989/1993) demonstrates how expanding analysis beyond traditional boundaries and identifying ideological occurrences that expands the intertexture analysis leads the scholar to more deeply understand the social, cultural, and ideological meanings of the text.

DeSilva (2004) recognizes that extreme positions held by authors that are disclosed through ideological rhetoric and understood through ideological texture analysis can, if interpreted correctly, enable the reader to better understand the positions and experiences that are dissimilar to their own. DeSilva provides two

examples, “Postcolonial criticism” (2004, pp. 677-682) and “Feminist criticism” (2004, pp. 757-770), where valid and beneficial contributions are provided within the texture that represent minorities’ views that have been misunderstood. Similar to the benefits of using metaphors, ideological texture pulls a reader into the world of the author, taking the reader to a deeper level of understanding.

### *Methodology for Ideological Criticism*

Unlike the other forms of socio-rhetorical criticism, ideological criticism does not have a structured analysis format or methodology. Instead, the scholar is encouraged to carefully read and assess the Scriptures. DeSilva (2004) recommends addressing six critical questions to determine which lens the biblical author is interpreting the biblical concepts through and how this bias is influencing the author’s writing and directives. DeSilva’s recommended questions to help the scholar better understand the ideological predisposition of the author include the following:

1. What were the interest and aims of the author and the groups represented?
2. How does the writer address their authority and the authority of others?
3. What groups are discussed in the text? Are any groups or parties minimized? Are the writer’s opinions inappropriate or influenced by the biases of the culture?
4. Does the writer attempt to control, direct, or shape the way the reader interprets and responds to the text?
5. What issues, difficulties or concerns are present among those in which the text is directed? How does the author address these concerns?
6. How does the writer explain, limit or outline the choices or options available to those that he/she is addressing? The authors’ affirmation or discouragement of available choices reveals biases of the author. (p. 464)

DeSilva (2004) and Robbins (1996b) both assert that understanding the ideology of the author conveyed in the text enables the scholar to fully understand the true and intended meaning inspired by God and captured by the author. This free form analysis and inquiry enables the interpreter to strip away the cultural and unintentional biases held by the author.

## IV. IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF ACTS 8:26-40

### *Overview - The Book of Acts*

The Book of Acts provides a detailed account of the birth and expansion of the Christian Church. Dillion (1990) and DeSilva (2004) note that the author’s identity is not specifically disclosed in the text. Dillion outlines that initially, the writing of Acts and the third gospel were attributed to Luke, a fellow citizen of Antioch and known companion of Paul. Subsequently, some have contested this assertion, but numerous respected scholars have concluded that Luke was the author (DeSilva, 2004; Dillion, 1990; González, 2004; Wenham et al., 2001). Most concur that the author was a companion

of Paul's which helps the reader to understand the culture and filter in which the historical events were presented (Dillion, 1990; Wenham et al., 2001). Some scholars have also questioned the historical accuracy of the book of Acts. Some theorize that Acts was written much later than the events of the first century church and was written for the intended purpose of improving the image of the ministry that was plagued with divisive, conflicting events that resulted from the controversy between the "Peterine Jewish church and the Pauline pro-Gentile church" (Wenham et al., 2001, p. 1066).

### *Understanding the Author of Acts*

DeSilva (2004) and Wenham et al. (2001) support Luke as the author of Acts and outline that Luke was an educated, Jewish physician, and a traveling companion of Paul's. Luke's academic credentials strengthened both the facts and details of his observations, which are believed to be eye-witness and participatory accounts (DeSilva, 2004; Wenham et al., 2001).

Wenham et al. (2001) concluded that Luke was both a historian and theologian and that he presented accurate theological truths about "the Holy Spirit, the role of Jesus, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and the acceptability of the Gentile believers apart from the law" (2001, p.1067). Marshall (1988) argues that Luke is a theologian, but Acts is not a systematic theology text. Marshall suggests that the inclusion of theological ideas and interests does not indicate that one should negate the historical details, which are also described, but should conclude that they are accurate and relevant.

It is probably not in error that Luke is chosen to present the story of the first Gentile convert, the Ethiopian Eunuch. While the other Synoptic Evangelists tend to minimize the role of women, Luke is more inclined to highlight women in the ministry of Jesus (DeSilva, 2004). Women appear in Luke's gospel more frequently than in the others. Luke appears to be unencumbered by his higher position in life and portrays the Gentile as a worthy recipient of the good news (DeSilva, 2004).

### *The Audience of Acts*

Dillion (1990) concludes that Acts is a Greek book of the Bible, written by Luke, a Hellenistic, compassionate man. It is a sequel to the gospel of Luke. DeSilva (2004) and Wenham et al. (2001) note that the books of Luke and Acts need to be considered together for a comprehensive understanding of the text. DeSilva (2004) summarizes that the audience has already heard and been instructed on the Christian message.

### *The Purpose of Acts*

DeSilva (2004) observes that Luke provides reasons for his Evangelical message, with Luke stating that he "writes an orderly account" and hopes to enable the "friend of God" to know the truth about what has been instructed (p.309). Luke also seeks to authenticate the Christian story and presents apologetic arguments for the proof of Christianity in preparation for his offering of the Gospel message to all the ends of the earth (DeSilva, 2004; Wenham et al., 2001). Luke's specific purpose includes his pastoral intent to help all Christians, Jews, and Gentiles understand "where they stand

in God's plan" for salvation (DeSilva, 2004, p.354). DeSilva notes a great emphasis of Luke's concern for legitimatizing the Gentile in God's family. This intent should be kept in the forefront, as the passage of the Ethiopian Eunuch, where Philip ministers to an African gentile that is the farthest out on the social Christian ladder, as a result of his ethnicity, absence of Jewish roots, and his castrated state. Luke states that his intent is to provide history, but more importantly theological understanding and guidance to those joining and committing to the Christian journey (DeSilva, 2004).

DeSilva (2004) observed that Luke's audience was searching for answers to questions such as:

- How do we know that, having joined this small religious group, we are standing in the center of God's will?
- How can we be assured that we are part of God's people, and that we are doing the right things to please God?
- How do the Gospel message and the mighty acts of God outline a plan for the reader to support and take part in God's plan for redemption?

As we continue through Acts, and as Acts 8:26-40 supports, Luke's intent is also to confirm to the Gentile Christian reader the "certainty (in sense of reliability) of the promises of God" (DeSilva, 2004, p.310). DeSilva contends that Luke's message in Acts to the Jews and Gentiles is a difficult one, as he attempts to communicate how the promises of God made to the house of David can be received by both the Jew and the Gentile. It is no mistake, DeSilva contends, that the author was an educated man who was most equipped for this difficult literary and leadership challenge.

### *Cultural Considerations*

The Book of Acts begins in Jerusalem with a Jewish, Hellenistic following of Christian converts, but then the Christian mission expands, as Christ promised, to the ends of the earth. The author's position in this society is important to consider. Luke's gospel and his writing in Acts reveal that the author is keenly aware of "patronage and reciprocity of relationships and expectations" (DeSilva, 2004, p.334). As a result, Luke is observed as caring for those outside of his own circle. His recognition of his own privilege, both in heaven and on earth, continually underscores God's favor and the fact that God responds to those who seek him and ask for the outpouring of his Spirit (DeSilva, 2004). While culturally Luke was educated and from privilege, his writing reflects his appreciation of that advantage and includes recognition that if he was not in Christ, he would not have the benefits that have been bestowed upon him (DeSilva). Luke outlines that God's patronage is directed not only to the elite, but equally to the poor, the weak, and those outside the Jewish tradition (DeSilva, 2004). One can only conclude from examining Luke's behavior that he was filled with God's Spirit and that his words were inspired by the almighty. Specifically, we observe him setting aside his education and prestige. This allows him to consider himself, in Christ, as an equal to

others rather than a spiritual, social superior. Such an action requires a Christ-centered, Spirit filled servant.

### *An Overview of Acts 8:26-40*

The book of Acts connects the Gospel writings on the life, work, and message of Christ to the conical letters written for the purpose of addressing and forming the life, ministry, and development of the Christian Church (Wenham et al., 2001). The beginning of Acts (chapters 1-12) outlines Peter's ministry and the latter portion (chapters 13-28) discusses Paul's ministry (Dillion, 1990). Themes discussed in Acts prior to Acts 8:26-40 include: (a) the gift of the Holy Spirit; (b) Christ' ascension and the outlining of the remaining work to be done on earth; (c) the replacement of Judas and reestablishment of twelve disciples; (d) the indwelling of the disciples and the Church leaders with the Holy Spirit; (e) subsequent evangelical events that transpired; (f) exposure of hypocrisy in the early church; (g) Steven's ministry, persecution and death; (h) the first missionary thrust of the Christian church (Philip's evangelical mission to Samaria) (Wenham et al., 2001).

The text in Acts that this paper assesses is interestingly placed between the Scripture that discusses Saul's persecution of the church with his attempts to destroy it and Saul's (Paul's) own conversion to Christianity. Paul's transforming encounter with God and his anointing with the Holy Spirit enabled him to become an influential and evangelical messenger of the gospel.

In the Scripture that directly proceeded the text being studied, Acts 8:26-40, Steven, a loved and blessed leader in the early church was persecuted, ridiculed, and martyred as Saul (Paul) observed and approved (Acts 7:54 – Acts 8:1). Saul continued to pursue and persecute Stephen's co-ministers and the faithful Christians in the surrounding area (Acts 8:3). As a result, the persecuted Christians were scattered to many different geographical locations (Dillion, 1990; González, 2004; Wenham et al., 2001). Stephen's death, however, was not in vain. While the mistreated Christians were fearful, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, leading to the first missionary tours that evolved as a result of the Christians dispersing from their previously secure homeland (Wenham et al., 2001). The Christians were scattered and preached the word wherever they went (Wenham et al., 2001). Miraculously, the direct result of Steven's death had the following four outstanding ministry outcomes: (a) Philip's evangelical tour; (b) Paul's (Saul's) dramatic conversion and indwelling with the Holy Spirit; (c) Peter's missionary tour; (d) the founding of the church in Antioch (Wenham et al., 2001).

Acts 8:26-40 shares the story of the Ethiopian eunuch who converts to Christianity after Philip explains the prophetic Scriptural passage in Isaiah to him. The passage begins with Philip completing his large scale, mass conversion in Samaria and being directed by an angel, or possibly the Holy Spirit, to the south where he encounters a lone man, studying the book of the prophets (Dillion, 1990; Wenham et al, 2001). The redirection, whether by an angel or the Holy Spirit, was clearly directed by God, as he sought to fulfill Jesus' promise of salvation for all (Wenham et al, 2001).

Philip perceives the Ethiopian eunuch as a dark skinned exotic man, a high official, but powerless in masculinity because of his castrated state (Wenham et al., 2001). The Ethiopian was returning from Jerusalem, the center at that time of the

Christian movement. Luke observes that even though the eunuch was an important official and Philip was clearly not a social equal, Philip was received with humility and grace (Wenham et al., 2001). It is also striking that while in stature the eunuch had power and prestige, eternally, he was absent salvation. In a sense, God orchestrates these men as equals or having a balance of power. While Philip holds less power and prestige in the government, socially and spiritually his potential status exceeds the eunuch's. It is also striking in Acts 8:30-31 that when Philip asks the eunuch if he understands the passage of Isaiah he is reading, the eunuch responds "How can I...unless someone explains it to me?" and requests that Philip sit with him. The grace and humility with which both men accept each other is a work of the Holy Spirit, and likely a probable cause for the effectiveness of the evangelical message outlined by Philip and embraced by the eunuch.

In Acts 8:31-40, the Holy Spirit's power remains apparent as the eunuch's heart was being prepared to receive the radical and life changing message of salvation and grace. When the eunuch encounters Philip, he is already reading Old Testament Scripture and is returning from a time of praise and worship in Jerusalem (Wenham et al., 2001). The work of the Spirit continues, as the Scripture has raised the eunuch's curiosity to the point where he seeks to understand the truth, even one shared by a foreigner with different ethnicity and of lower political stature. Also noteworthy is that the eunuch was reading Isaiah 53, which included prophetic promises of Jesus and salvation (Wenham et al., 2001). The story continues with Philip clearly and succinctly using the verses from Isaiah to share with the eunuch the salvation message of Jesus. The conclusion is an account of God's care and mercy and Philip's testimony of how all are extended the offer of salvation. When the eunuch hears of the opportunity to be baptized (likely from Philip's explanation of the gospel message) he asks if he too can be baptized (Wenham et al., 2001). Wenham et al. (2001) and Dillion (1990) both recognize that the manner in which the eunuch timidly makes this request suggests that in the past he may have been refused baptism and admission into the church. Wenham et al. (2001) suggest that the eunuch's status of being outside this racial, religious community, as well as a possible inability to fulfill the law and be circumcised, provided the religious family rationale for keeping him the farthest out. The Spirit's power remains apparent as Philip is abruptly removed after the eunuch's conversion, an action that Wenham et al. posit is to ensure that the eunuch's conversion is not contested. The testimony of God's strength and power and not Philip's is reiterated, as the eunuch continues to rejoice in Philip's absence.

### *Ideological Texture Analysis of Acts 8:26-40*

Robbins (1996b) explains that to facilitate ideological texture, socio-rhetorical criticism analyzes the text by examining the writing according to the following "four subsets: (a) ideology in traditional interpretation; (b) ideology in the text; (c) ideology in the intellectual discourse; and (d) ideology in individuals and groups" (p. 221). DeSilva's (2004) questions addressing ideological texture, outlined previously, prompt a similar assessment. DeSilva's questions include the following six subtopics: (a) the author's personal agenda, interest and goals; (b) the readers' background, interest and goals; (c) the way in which the author addresses authority in the text; (d) how the author

addresses the reader; (e) how the author attempts to influence the reader; (f) the way in which the author presents alternative responses to the issues presented (2004, p. 464). This ideological texture analysis addresses both Robbins' (1996b) and DeSilva's (2004) subtopics and questions in the examination.

### *Ideology in the Text*

Elliott adopted a definition of ideology as "an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions, and values, not necessarily true or false, which reflects the needs and interests of a group or class, at a particular time in history" (1990, p.268). Robbins elaborates that exploring the ideology of the text means to reveal the "comprehensive patterns of cognitive and moral beliefs about humans, society, and the universe that are intended to function in the social order" (1996b, p. 193). The intended goal is to understand how patterns that emerged explain the ideals and ideology of social actions that were occurring in the culture described in the text.

DeSilva's (2004) challenge to understand the goals and interest of the author and the individuals that he or she represented assists in uncovering the underlying ideology in the Acts 8 text that describes the conversion of the first Gentile believer. The author, Luke, had a clear passion to communicate to both the Jew and Gentile God's proclamation, that all men and women throughout the world are offered salvation and that redemption and the promise land was not merely reserved for the Jew (DeSilva, 2004; Wenham et al., 2001). Prior to this point, the widespread belief still existed, even among Christian converts, that salvation was reserved for the Jewish believer.

In addition to Luke's desire to articulate the dissemination of the gospel to people of all ethnicities and religious backgrounds, the author had additional objectives apparent in this pericope that are found in other texts by Luke as well. Other themes and goals highlighted by Luke include: (a) the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's role in "preaching and evangelism;" (b) the significance of the witness of Christians and their expression of the details of Christ's life, death and resurrection; (c) the common Lucan theme of great joy after conversion, echoed as the eunuch goes "home rejoicing" (Martin, 1989/1993, p.107). Luke's passion for the new believer, his desire to spread the message of hope that Jesus offered, and his embracing of the Holy Spirit were prevalent ideological themes in this and other Scripture written by Luke.

### *Ideology in Traditional Interpretation*

Robbins notes that "Ideology resides not only in biblical texts, but also resides in interpretative traditions that have granted position of authority" (1996b, p. 200). Martin (1989/1993) outlines how Luke describes Philip's articulation of Isaiah 53. Luke describes the eunuch as "reading from the prophets," the Old Testament Scripture and the accepted and revered Word of God at the time. The eunuch was trying to understand the basic interpretation of the passage when Philip was able to apologetically take the words from the accepted, ancient tradition and help the eunuch interpret that text. Philip's ability to understand how the words from the prophets impacted the culture, the Jew, the Gentile, and the eunuch opened his eyes and heart to the good news of the gospel (Martin, 1989/1993). Luke highlights how Philip used the

authoritative text of the Old Testament to support and explain the implications of this Scripture for the Gentile.

### *Ideology in Individuals and Groups*

Robbins (1996b) argues that understanding the ideology of individuals and groups is critical to understanding the passage outlining the conversion of the Ethiopian. Martin (1989/1993) argues that the fulfillment of prophecy that is outlined in this passage provides a window to understanding the ideology of individuals and groups to which the passage is addressed. The individuals and groups include the eunuch, the Jews, the Gentile, those of different ethnicity, and essentially those outside the borders of the traditional Jewish convert from Jerusalem (Martin, 1989/1993; Robbins 1996b; Wenham et al., 2001). Radical ideological switches occur in the few verses as the first Gentile is converted and God's kingdom is seen as being extended to the ends of the earth (Martin, 1989/1993; Robbins 1996b; Wenham et al., 2001).

The Ethiopian initially is reading Isaiah 53 and asks Philip to explain its meaning. Philip uses this opportunity to explain the gospel message and the eunuch becomes the first known gentile to convert to Christianity (Martin, 1989/1993; Wenham et al., 2001). What is noteworthy, according to Martin, is the transformation of the accepted ideology of the time regarding those who would be included in God's salvation plan. Initially, the critical ideology of the eunuch's identity personally and as a group (as a eunuch, as an Ethiopian, and as a Gentile) is addressed, as the curse of a eunuch from Deuteronomy is removed (Martin, 1989/1993). The Scripture states the belief that eunuchs would be forbidden from entering "the assembly of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 23:1). Three chapters after the Isaiah 53 passage, the outcome for the faithful eunuch is prophesized. The Isaiah 56:3-8 passage states:

*Do not let the foreigner joined to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely separate me from his people"; and do not let the eunuch say, "I am just a dry tree." For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant— these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered (Isaiah 56:3-8).*

This passage, where the conversion of this eunuch, a Gentile, and an Ethiopian, reverses the popular incorrect ideology of the time that eunuchs, non-Jews, and those of different ethnicity would find themselves outside God's favor and his promised land (Martin, 1989/1993; Robbins 1996b; Wenham et al., 2001). Understanding the ideology underlying individuals, groups, and power structures and their interaction and interplay

provides additional insights into the understanding of the text (DeSilva, 2004; Robbins, 1996b).

Castelli (1991) states when looking at power structures within text, it is critical to the process of ideological interpretation. Castelli notes that when examining these power structures, often the importance of how the text operates can supersede what it actually means. Castelli bases this theory on Foucault's analysis of relations of power. The principles derived by Castelli assist in developing a better understanding of the power relations in a text.

The story of the Ethiopian eunuch depicts Castelli's (1991) first principle, referred to as the system of differentiations, which allows dominant people to act upon the actions of people in a subordinate position. In this passage, the eunuch was politically more powerful and noteworthy than Philip, yet the eunuch humbly accepted Philip's advice, guidance, and leadership (Wenham et al., 2001). In addition to the eunuch's political power and prestige, he also possessed religious status, as it was believed that he was part of an elite group of pious Jews, referred to as the Jewish proselytes (Green, 2003).

The eunuch continued to ignore his own religious and social stature as he honestly admitted his lack of understanding of the book of the prophets and begged Philip for an interpretation. Most noteworthy though was when Philip completely turned the ranks upside down by explaining the gospel. Luke suggests that the eunuch recognized the same humility in Philip and Jesus Christ, as Philip kindly explains the offer of salvation in Acts 8:35, "Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus." Numerous biblical scholars posit that the Holy Spirit was influential in the preaching and evangelism as Philip explained the message of Christ (Martin, 1989/1993; Wenham et al., 2001). The eunuch does not seem offended when Philip explains the eunuch's status and rank in God's order, even though Philip would have to acknowledge the eunuch's need for salvation (Wenham et al., 2001). The Scripture says that when the eunuch hears this message, he accepts the offer of salvation with great joy.

Luke's inclusion of this story, where the politically and religiously powerful are presented as on the same par with those without status from God's perspective, is noteworthy. Castelli's (1991) system of differentiation is observed as Luke conveys that power, prestige, and status from God's perspective is not equivalent to the power structures of the secular world.

DeSilva (2004) suggests that ideology in individuals and groups can also be understood by reviewing the issues, difficulties, or concerns that are present among those in which the text is directed. Studying how the author addresses these concerns provide additional insights as well.

In the case of the eunuch, a Samaritan, a significant issue emerges when Philip shares the gospel message and the eunuch asks to be baptized. The baptism of a Samaritan breaks social and ritual barriers present in the Jewish, Christian church at the time (Matthews, 2001).

Luke's details regarding the eunuch's conversion and baptism provide an opportunity for the researcher to better understand Luke's ideological perspective and the message he was conveying. Luke describes the discussion of baptism, the request by the eunuch to be baptized, and the great joy the eunuch experienced after being

baptized. Luke also observes that Philip was immediately removed from the encounter after the baptism. The fact that Luke, a Jewish, Christian included these events and described them in a positive nature suggests that, though some of his contemporaries would have strongly opposed this event for cultural and religious reasons, Luke supported it wholeheartedly. Luke's ideology and message were clear. God intended salvation for the Jew and the Gentile, the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the fair skinned Roman and the dark skinned Ethiopian (DeSilva, 2004; Green, 2003; Martin, 1989/1993). Lastly, Luke's inclusion of Philip's immediate removal reveal Luke's understanding and desire to convey that many may have refuted and challenged the validity of the baptism of the Ethiopian Gentile, had Philip not have been quickly swept away (Wenham et al., 2001).

### *Ideology in Intellectual Discourse*

Robbins (1996b) notes that the ideology presented during intellectual discourse in a text can also allow the reader to better understand its intended meaning. DeSilva's (2004) recommends examining how the author explains choices or presents alternatives and how they affirm or discourage the available options. Doing this reveals ideologies or biases of the author, often presented as intellectual discourse.

In the Acts text, the lack of discourse or discussion of the ethnicity of the Gentile suggests an ideological perspective that most would not want to admit was present in Luke, a disciple of Christ (Martin, 1993). The underlying ideology of the secularization of the discourse is also noteworthy (Felder, 1982; Martin, 1989/1993). Martin observes Felder's findings that "the socio-political realities of the secular framework of Christian authors in the New Testament lead to the marginalization of the darker skinned races" (1989/1993, p. 120).

In conclusion, the ideological texture analysis takes the scholar into the text and through the process of examining the ideological perspectives from within, allowing the reader to derive a significantly more in-depth understanding of the true meaning of the passage.

### *Leadership Lessons from Acts 8:26-40*

The ideological texture analysis of Acts 8:26-40 permits the reader to gain greater insight into the underlying meaning of the text as this analysis unpeels the layers of texture from within. In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of the text, this investigation also intends to apply the lessons learned from studying this pericope to better understand and apply contemporary leadership theory.

The measurement of an effective leader can be gauged by a leader's ability to successfully lead others and achieve a positive outcome for individuals and their organization as a whole. In Acts 8:26-40, Philip effectively leads the Ethiopian eunuch to eternal life and demonstrates noteworthy leadership traits. Philip was able to engage, influence, and persuade a man of another culture, higher political status, and another race to respond to a message that contradicted what other leaders and contemporaries had proclaimed and offered previously.

Philip's combination of sacrificial and servant leadership allowed him to influence and lead another who may have been difficult to persuade had Philip not processed exemplary leadership traits.

### *Servant Leadership*

Philip demonstrated servant leadership when addressing the Ethiopian. Greenleaf (1977) describes servant leadership as a paradigm where the leader serves their follower and seeks to develop them to their full potential. Full potential is defined as "task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities" (Liden et al., 2008, p. 162). Bekker (2006b) states that the Christological approach of Christian leadership centers on serving as Christ served, as it includes self-sacrifice, servant posturing, humility, and obedience.

Liden et al. (2008) outline nine dimensions of servant leadership that were developed from their interpretation of servant leadership and the taxonomies of servant leadership developed by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), Page and Wong (2000), and Spears and Lawrence (2002). Table 1 summarizes these servant leadership dimensions and the ways in which Philip exemplified each of these characteristics as he interacts and shares the message of eternal life with the eunuch.

**Table 1:**

#### *Philip's Servant Leadership in Acts 8:26-40*

<b>Servant Leadership Dimensions</b> Liden et al. (2008, p. 162)	<b>Philip's Servant Leadership</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emotional healing—the act of showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In their conversation, the eunuch (a Gentile) asks Philip, "What is to prevent me from being baptized?" (Acts 8:37) Wenham et al. (2001) suggests that it is likely that the eunuch may have been refused baptism in the past based on his 'mutilated' condition, as well as the belief by many that only Jews could ultimately be accepted into the Kingdom of God. Henry (1961) describes the eunuch as an Ethiopian. Ethiopian's, according to Henry were "looked upon as the meanest of nations, blackamoors, as if nature had stigmatized them" (p.1667). From these accounts, it is likely that the eunuch's question carried, emotional hurt, and the expectation that baptism would not be something that would be offered (Wenham et al., 2001; Henry, 1961). Philip looks beyond any preconceived attitudes about this dark, skinned foreigner, that others had placed outside of the Kingdom of Heaven. Henry suggests that Philip allowed the grace of God to overtake him and compassionately care for the eunuch, sharing</li> </ul>

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- Creating value for the community—a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community.**

    - with him the Good News of Jesus and inviting him into the Eternal Kingdom of God.
    - Wenham et al. (2001) describes how Philip had just come from an invigorating ministry event that had led to a mass conversion of citizens in Samaria. It would have been easy for Philip to be less concerned for a single man he meets along the road, after partaking in such a significant event. In Philip's treatment of both ministry events (large and grand and small and individual) show that Philip has a genuine concern for helping each individual, in each community that he encountered. Philip's servant heart, is a trait that Dillon (1990) attributes to Philip being filled with and led by the Holy Spirit.
  
  - Conceptual skills—possessing the knowledge of the organization and tasks at hand so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers.**

    - Wenham et al. (2001) noted that when the eunuch asked Philip about the Scripture he was reading (Isaiah 53) that Philip "had little trouble using *that very passage of Scripture* as a springboard to tell the whole *good news about Jesus*" (p.1079). Wenham et al. noted that in both the large crowd, mass conversion and the individual, single conversion of the eunuch, Philip was articulate and knowledgeable, largely, as Wenham suggests because Philip was able to communicate a direct message from God, as he is guided by the Holy Spirit.
  
  - Empowering—encouraging and facilitating others, especially immediate followers, in identifying and solving problems, as well as determining when and how to complete work tasks and Helping subordinates grow and succeed—demonstrating genuine concern for others' career growth and development by providing support and mentoring.**

    - Wenham et al. (2001), Dillon (1990), and Matthews (2001) all describe the relationship between Philip and the eunuch as transformative, as Philip was politically not superior to the eunuch, yet emerged as a spiritual leader to the eunuch. Philip was able to encourage and empower the eunuch and help him to grow and to succeed. Through Philip's caring demeanor and clear explanations, he was able to explain the Good News to the eunuch and invite him and provide a way for him to receive eternal life. As soon as the eunuch emerged from the water, after being baptized by Philip, Philip was removed by the Holy Spirit. Without Philip present, the eunuch continued to rejoice as he was now joined with Christ. Philip had left the eunuch with a deeper understanding of the Scriptures, a personal connection to Jesus and eternal life. The eunuch went forward and brought this great
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- news to his own countryman, as Philip had brought these gifts to him (Henry, 1961).
- **Putting subordinates first—using actions and words to make it clear to others (especially immediate followers) that satisfying their needs is a priority (Leaders who practice this principle will often break from their own work to assist subordinates with problems they are facing with their assigned duties.)**
  - Wenham et al.(2001) notes that Philip was obedient when led by an Angel (or the Holy Spirit) (Acts 8:26) to depart from his planned route and take a desert route. This path was clearly more difficult and one that Philip would have preferred to avoid (Wenham et al.,2001) He then encounters a man that Wenham et al. argues was quite foreign to him, being from one of the remote parts of the world, as well as an important political official. Philip was finishing an important ministry milestone as his prior city involved a mass conversion of a sizeable crowd. It would have been understandable for Philip to ignore the eunuch or disregard the importance of their potential encounter. Philip instead embraces the opportunity to lead the eunuch and makes it a priority to help the man understand the Good News of Jesus Christ and Eternal Life for those who believe in Him. It would have been easy for Philip to justify moving on from a single man in search of another gathering of the masses, but Philip listened to the Holy Spirit's guidance and led his unlikely follower to eternal glory (Acts 8:26-37.)
  - **Behaving ethically—interacting openly, fairly, and honestly with others. In Relationships, make a genuine effort to know, understand, and support others you encounter.**
  - Wenham et al.(2001) explains that the Ethiopian eunuch clearly felt like a foreigner as a gentile and one of the farthest out from those that Philip was ministering to. Had Philip's heart not been right and had he failed to receive him as both an equal and one worthy of baptism, this important conversion of the first Gentile, a eunuch with an open heart, may not have occurred.
  - **Servant hood—a way of being marked by one's self-categorization and desire to be characterized by others as someone who serves others first, even when self-sacrifice is required.**
  - Dillion (1990) outlines that Philip's servanthood is clearly depicted in this story. Instead of resisting the guidance of the Holy Spirit when told to take an unlikely route through the desert, and then enthusiastically ministering to the dark, skinned foreigner that could have been easily ignored or avoided, Philip's servant and Christ centered heart is clear.
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Philip clearly demonstrates servant leadership characteristics as he approaches the eunuch humbly, with respect, with care, attempting to welcome, embrace and emotionally heal. Philip sacrificed his time and energy, and obediently and proficiently, proclaimed the Good

News of salvation to the man, who was clearly a foreigner, outside of the Jewish inner circle (Dillon, 1990; Matthews, 2001; Wenham et al., 2001). The eunuch was a man of differing ethnicity, dark skinned, a knowledgeable Gentile and converted proselyte, and a man with a sexuality that others may not understand and embrace (Dillon, 1990; Matthews, 2001; Wenham et al., 2001). Any of these factors may have been enough for Philip to dismiss this man. Instead, Philip chose to serve, as Christ served, and he patiently embraced the eunuch and shared with him life changing lessons. Philip exemplified Christ-centered, servant leadership and effectively won over this powerful, learned, Gentile eunuch.

### *Christian Spirituality and Leadership*

It is posited that Philip's spirituality strengthened his ability to be an impacting leader. Delbecq (1999) outlines positive characteristic in contemporary Christian leaders that we also observe in Philip. Delbecq contends that "Christian spirituality impacts contemporary business leadership" (1999, p. 345) positively. Delbecq reports that a study of numerous Silicon Valley, Christian, CEO's indicates the Christian spiritual tradition of these executives deeply informed and shaped their leadership and led to positive outcomes. Delbecq (1999) begins by stating that:

*Let me forthrightly state that my interest in spirituality in the context of business leadership did not flow from my own inner inspiration. Rather it came from experiencing the intense spirituality of senior executives in Silicon Valley, and their selflessness of service flowing from the richness of their individual inner journeys (p. 345).*

In other words, Delbecq did not seek to study the spirituality of these individuals because of his own faith, but through looking at their spirituality found that he was inspired to seek spirituality more deeply.

Delbecq (1999) notes the three common themes among these business leaders of organizations experiencing rapid change environments in the 1980s included: a) the leaders saw their work as a calling and this provided a vitality and purpose to their pursuits; b) their work and spirituality were intermingled and not seen as two separate and distinct pieces of their life; c) their spirituality provided great strength in staying the course during challenging and difficult times. Delbecq observes such a clear distinction between Christian and non-Christian leaders that Delbecq himself was led to a greater pursuit of spirituality. As noted by Dillon (1990) and Wenham et al. (2001), Philip exhibited a strong, compelling and contagious spirituality and the eunuch is drawn to Philip's message and listened and embraced and accepted Philip's teaching about eternal life, despite the fact that politically, and in social stature Philip would not normally be considered one that could lead a man in the eunuch's position.

### *The Divine Empowerment of Philip*

Numerous scholars have posited that Philip's interaction with the Ethiopian eunuch was supported and influenced by God's Holy Spirit (Dillon, 1990; Martin, 1989/1993; Wenham et al., 2001). Leadership theory commits significant efforts toward uncovering the mystery of which leader traits, qualities, or situations result in increased

leadership effectiveness. While certain combination of qualities increases a leader's effectiveness in general, history and Scripture provide evidence that the Divine empowerment of leaders in the early Christian church led to unprecedented outcomes and results that have not been replicated (González, 2004; Harnack, 2015). Studying the Scripture and Acts reveals that a divinely empowered leader is far more effective with God's Spirit than without it (González, 2004; Harnack, 2015). While the concept of Divine empowerment is still a mystery, researchers argue that Philip embraced Jesus Christ and was empowered by the Holy Spirit, resulting in an augmentation of his personal leadership strengths (Dillion, 1990; Martin, 1989/1993; Wenham et al., 2001).

### *Leaders Must Also Be Good Followers*

Kelley (1996) outlines to be a good leader, one must also be a good follower. Philip was a strong and effective leader because he also knew how to follow. The reader's first glimpse of Philip's followership is observed in Acts 8:26 as Philip listens to the angel and redirects his route, putting himself in the direct path of the Ethiopian eunuch.

In studying this text and the ideological texture, Luke's ability to follow is also observed. The effectiveness of his leadership is largely a result of his ability to follow and to serve (Wenham et al., 2001). Philip acknowledges his place in God's kingdom and understand that Christ's death and resurrection has occurred for him personally and without it he would be spiritually bankrupt. One can only conclude from examining Philip's ministry that he is filled with God's Spirit and that his words were inspired by the Almighty. In Philip's case, his followership is further observed by his grace and humility while explaining the gospel message to the eunuch with no apparent desire for status, prestige, or recognition.

## V. CONCLUSION

The short and under-recognized passage in Scripture of the Ethiopian eunuch's humble conversion as a foreign, dark skinned gentile initially seems like a simple pericope without deeper meaning. Ideological texture analysis presents this passage as an onion with layer after layer of rich, underlying messages. Utilizing this analysis tool allows the reader to understand the full significance of the text. In this case, this text reveals a complete reversal of ideology of some, during a time with a prevailing thought that Christianity was reserved for the Jewish convert from Jerusalem. Ideological texture analysis assists in interpreting this text and reiterating that salvation is offered to all, to the ends of the earth. Ideological texture analysis also allows one to more readily recognize the leadership theories prevalent throughout the text and extend these acquired lessons to contemporary leadership application. The exploration concludes by noting how Philip's combination of servant and spiritual leadership traits significantly contributed to his effectiveness as a leader.

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## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AS MODELED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD

Kelly L. Schmidt

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The Bible offers many models of women displaying both formal and informal leadership. The story of the five daughters of Zelophehad found in Numbers 27:1-7 is an example of strategic leadership operating from a marginalized position in society. Operating within a patriarchal culture, the daughters overcame cultural and legal challenges to claim their rightful inheritance. Using the socio-rhetorical hermeneutic, this paper analyzes the social, cultural, and sacred textures to bring insight to the text. The actions of the daughters are then critiqued using the framework of strategic leadership, as suggested by Hughes et al. (2014), to see how the daughters utilized strategic thinking, acting, and influence.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Bible has many examples of women who sought to exercise leadership, although Classens (2013) pointed out that the portrayal of female leadership in the Bible is complex in its nature. Given the cultural orientation of male hierarchy and patriarchal ordering in ancient Israel (Hurley, 1981; Martos & Hégy, 1998; Swartley, 1983), the leadership of women was expressed in a myriad of ways. Female leadership was rarely appointed or formally recognized (e.g., Abigail, Miriam). At times, this leadership manifested through nefarious or clandestine ways (e.g., Delilah, Jezebel, Rachel). Women's leadership needed to react to the choices of their husbands or other men in their lives (e.g., Dinah, Ruth). Often leadership was expressed in response to the poor decisions made by other leaders around them (e.g., Zipporah, Esther, Deborah). The women in the Bible did exercise leadership regardless of their cultural context. Examining Biblical models may give insight to contemporary women leaders as they

navigate their own dynamics and barriers in the context of leadership (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Rhode, 2017).

The story of the daughters of Zelophehad demonstrated women operating successfully within a patriarchal culture. After analyzing the texts which develop the story, the actions of the five daughters will be examined in reference to the frame presented by Hughes, Beatty, and Dinwoodie (2014) that proposes strategic leadership as an integrated process involving thinking, acting and influencing, which is best done in collaboration with others.

Using Robbins' (1996) socio-rhetorical hermeneutic, this paper explores an event that occurred in the development of the nation of Israel in Numbers 27:1-7 concerning the daughters of Zelophehad. By incorporating aspects of anthropology and sociology, the socio-rhetorical method analyzes a variety of dynamic textures that help to position the periscope and its interpretation based on social and cultural location (Robbins, 1996). Of the five elements of socio-rhetorical criticism, this article highlights social and cultural textural analysis and sacred textural analysis.

### *Background on the Book of Numbers*

The book of Numbers is found within the first five books of the Bible, commonly referred to as the Torah or the Pentateuch. Clines (1997) argued that the overarching theme of these five books is the response to the promise given by God to Abraham in Genesis 12-15. The three components of this promise include 1) a multitude of descendants, 2) a special relationship between God and the people, and 3) a promised land (Clines, 1997). The totality of the Pentateuch recounts the partial fulfillment of this promise, while the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy place particular emphasis on the land aspect of the promise, which is finally fulfilled in the book of Joshua (Clines, 1997).

Numbers is structured around three sections related to location: Mt. Sinai, Kadesh-barnea, and the plains of Moab, and it recounts the migration of the Israelites toward the Promised Land (Ashley, 1993). The primary texts concerning the daughters of Zelophehad are found in the third section of the book (Num. 27:1-7, 36:1-13). Ulrich (1998) noted that the placement of the event in relation to the two censuses taken of the people of Israel, the second which happened in Numbers 26, gives it significance as a call to remember the covenantal arrangement God had given the patriarchs. Most scholars place particular emphasis on the story based on the unusual act of naming the daughters (Mahlah, Noa, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah) rather than listing them only via a male relative (Grossman, 2007; Sakenfeld, 1988; Ron, 1998; Shemesh, 2007). Aaron (2009), who agreed with the significance of including the names of the daughters rather than just leaving them known only as "Zelophehad's daughters," ultimately concluded that the whole encounter is a fictional case, yet his opinion is the exception to most research.

Numbers 27:1-7 tells the story of Mahlah, Noa, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah (the five daughters of Zelophehad) who were part of the clan of Manasseh descended from Joseph. Their father, Zelophehad, died with no sons, leaving the family in danger of receiving no land inheritance. After their father's death and against cultural precedent, the five daughters approached Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the entire Israelite

assembly and asked for their share of the family's inheritance (Num. 27:2). Faced with a cultural dilemma, Moses inquired of the Lord, who confirmed that the daughters should receive their father's inheritance regardless of the practice of the times (Num. 5-11).

The five daughters are reencountered in Numbers 36:1-13 because the heads of the clan of Manasseh are concerned with how marriage might impact the future of the land inheritance. If the daughters marry men from other tribes, this land would be lost to the clan (Num. 36:3-4). After consulting with the Lord, Moses stated that the daughters must marry within their own clan so that the land inheritance will remain within the tribe (Num. 36:5-9). The daughters responded in obedience to this command (Num. 36:10-13).

Finally, the story of the daughters asking for their inheritance was refreshed in Joshua 17:1-6. Joshua, Moses' successor, who is leading the Israelites into the Promised Land, is now tasked with distributing the land allotments. Because time has passed since Moses gave his pronouncement, the daughters again approached the leaders, including Joshua and Eleazar, and remind them of what Moses had said. Joshua complied, and the tribe of Manasseh received a share of ten tracts of land.

## II. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TEXTUAL EXEGESIS

Examining the social and cultural texture gives insight into the context and dynamics faced by the figures presented in the text (Robbins, 1996). Weingreen (1966) stated that the story of the daughters of Zelophehad should be understood as a legal action intersecting with two social and cultural principles: the patriarchal ordering of the family unit and the economic implications of the inheritance laws.

### *Patriarchal Ordering*

The culture of the Israelites was patriarchal in its emphasis on male leadership and male heirs. This type of social order was reflected in other cultures of the same time (Babylonian and Assyrian). Patriarchical ordering meant that family life centered around the senior male, with women and children viewed as commodities (Breyfogle, 1910; Hurley, 1981; Laffey, 1988; Martos & Hégy, 1998). Some scholars believe this implies that women were seen as inferior (e.g., Douglas, 1982; Litke, 2002), while some do not (e.g., Hurley, 1981). Breyfogle (1910) noted that women were dependent on a father or husband. A woman had no legal standing for divorce and was valued for her ability to produce a male heir (Breyfogle, 1910).

### *Inheritance Law*

Israel was patrilineal (descent follows the male line) (Freeman, 1992; Hurley, 1981). Furthermore, the land was the critical unit of economic sufficiency, especially for the family unit (Freeman, 1992). Thus, Freeman (1992) noted that families were protected by the "principle of inalienability" (p. 763). "This was the rule that the land should remain in the family to which it had been apportioned, and could not be sold permanently outside the family" (Freeman, 1992, p. 763-4). Deuteronomy 21:15-17

stated that land was passed down to male children (with the firstborn male receiving a double-portion), establishing a clear sense of societal order (Freeman, 1992).

### *Analysis of Numbers 27:1-11*

In Numbers 27:4, the daughters of Zelophehad stated that the request they brought to Moses was not for their own sake but for the sake of their father's name. So important was the cultural appeal to patrilineality that it superseded the gender prescriptions. Much to the chagrin of modern feminists, Jewish scholars suggest that this was the motivating factor for the courage of the daughters, projecting their motivation as "If our father had had a son, we would not have spoken" (Kadari, 2009, para. 5).

When the daughters approached Moses and gave their position, they stated that their father had "died in the wilderness" but not as a follower of Korah. This is a reference to Numbers 16, which described an uprising led by Korah, who was disgruntled at the leadership of Moses and Aaron (Douglas, 1982). The grievance of this rebellion was its inherent disdain for the authority of God and those whom He had appointed as leaders. The daughters of Zelophehad remind Moses of the trustworthiness of their family heritage: their father had remained loyal to God and Moses during this time of rebellion (Num. 27:3-4). This sentiment might also have acted as an assurance that their current request was not to be interpreted as a violation of the established social order. Keil and Delitzsch (1975) argue for the gravity of a family line becoming extinct within this cultural context. As part of their appeal, the daughters urged Moses to consider the negative implications of their family line disappearing. So significant was the appeal of the daughters of Zelophehad, that, according to Numbers 27:5-11, Moses enacted a permanent change to the inheritance laws of the nation of Israel (Exell, 1975).

### III. SACRED TEXTUAL EXEGESIS

Examining the sacred textual element allows one to explore how the text speaks about God and his relationship with people. This is especially important to consider given that Moses directly consulted God on a legal issue (Num. 27:5), which was not his typical response. Milgrom (1990) suggested this showed Moses' weakness, while others noted it highlights the initiative of the daughters (Grossman, 2007; Shemesh, 2007) as well as the real focus on the divine relationship (Litke, 2002). Robins (1996) used eight different sacred textures for analysis, and this event highlights two: human commitment and religious community.

#### *Human Commitment as Sacred Texture*

The texts concerning the daughters of Zelophehad emphasize an effort of human initiative and commitment. The first issue concerns the right to continued lineage and land inheritance (Num. 27:1-11). The five daughters recognized the significance of both issues and were willing to advocate for them. However, Litke (2002) stated that the actions of the daughters of Zelophehad show a deeper issue of continued inclusion in

the nation of Israel. "The issue is not whether or not the daughters inherit but whether they and their family count as Israelites and so should be awarded land by the Sovereign" (Litke, 2002, p. 214). This is seen in the connection between the census taking in Numbers 26 (to determine the nature of land grants) and the petition of the daughters to be included in receiving a land grant.

### *Religious Community as Sacred Texture*

In Numbers 36:1-13, the implications of the daughters of Zelophehad's petition are explored by the community: what will happen to the land when they marry? Of concern were the rules of marriage, which transfer land possession if the daughters marry outside the tribe (Num. 36:3-4). The request for the daughters' inheritance is likely overshadowed by preserving patrimonial rights and tribal economics (Sakenfeld, 1988). Litke (2002) proposed that the possession of the land was integrally tied to the identity of Israel, that lack of land was tantamount to the loss of community. Key in the text is that the daughters have no intention of overthrowing the cultural order and agree with the new instructions, satisfying all parties involved.

Gevaryahu (2013) observed that the events of the daughters of Zelophehad highlight three different relationships: preserving the name of the *family*, preserving the integrity of the *tribe*, and preserving a connection to the *nation* of Israel. The request of the daughters of Zelophehad gets to the heart of the Abrahamic covenant: that the people of Israel were promised legacy, land, and a special relationship with God (Ulrich, 1998).

### *The Legacy of the Daughters of Zelophehad*

Various Biblical commentators praised the significance of the actions of Mahlah, Noa, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Renowned evangelical pastor Ray Stedman called them daring examples of faith. He wrote:

Their daring request moved him [Moses], for there is never faith without venturing. You must leave the crowd; you must leave the gang or the herd, and step out on a divine possibility before you have exercised faith. That is why faith is so liberating. (Stedman, 1964)

C. H. Spurgeon (1909) urged his listeners to imitate their faith as well as their determination, prudence, and devotion. Elisabeth Cady Stanton used the daughters of Zelophehad as an example of how women should stand up for justice (Classens, 2013). Hopkins (1939) suggested that this was the first request for women's rights noted in the Bible. However, other scholars, such as Shemesh (2007) and Aaron (2009), claimed that this view surpasses the intent of the text.

## IV. LEADERSHIP THEORY

Just as the interpretation of Biblical text is influenced by social and cultural voices, so is the application of leadership principles in contemporary contexts. The actions of the daughters of Zelophehad in navigating the social, cultural, and sacred dynamics of this petition deserve consideration for contemporary relevance. They successfully presented

a difficult request amid a culture in which they were not dominant power players that resulted in a foundational shift in inheritance law. This could not have been done without some form of intentionality. Hughes et al. (2014) stated that strategic leadership creates enduring change through intentional thinking, acting, and influence. These elements may be found within the story of the daughters of Zelophehad.

### *Strategic Thinking*

Strategic thinking considers the interconnected systems and complicated relationships of both internal and external forces (Hughes et al., 2014). It is striking that the daughters of Zelophehad had enough foresight to bring this issue to Moses long before it was a relevant issue. The Israelites were not yet in the Promised Land, and although preparation was being made for land division, it would take time for it to happen. This shows a tremendous sense of agency on the part of the daughters and is another component necessary for the effective leadership of women (Bandura, 2001). In addition, according to Hughes et al. (2014), the daughters employed two helpful tools of strategic thinking: reframing and making common sense.

*Reframing.* The daughters of Zelophehad had to keep in mind the principles of their social order and cultural values. "Reframing is the ability to see things differently, including new ways of thinking about an organization's strategic challenges...It involves questioning or restarting the implicit beliefs and assumptions that are often taken for granted" (Hughes et al., 2014, p. 79). The circumstances of the petition of the daughters of Zelophehad are compelling. Jewish scholars suggest that at the time of the meeting, Moses was discussing the details of levirate marriage, which examines the familial responsibilities to provide an heir for a widow (Kadari, 2009). One Midrash proposed a lively debate where the daughters' catch Moses in an inconsistency of logic (Bacon, 2003). Regardless of the circumstances, it is clear that the daughters were able to bring to light an unjust situation that needed to be addressed (Shemesh, 2007). Not only were the daughters able to engage in the thoughtful discourse of scripture, but they also reframed the situation in a new way to bolster their point and gain approval from those in power.

*Making Common Sense.* Strategic leaders help others to make sense of their context, which is both a skill and art (Hughes et al., 2014). Communication is essential and must be done in multiple ways to be effective. Torbert (2001) stated that four interwoven parts mark effective communication: framing, advocating, illustrating, and inquiring. In their appeal to Moses, the daughters use all four modes. First, they framed the context: "Our father died...and left no sons" (Num. 27:3). They advocated for a desired course of action: "Give us property" (Num. 27:4). They illustrated with stories to make their point: Our father "was not among Korah's followers...but he died for his own sin" (Num. 27:3). Finally, they used a question to make an inquiry: "Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he had no son?" (Num. 27:4). The use of multiple approaches for communication helps in the sense-making process because it gives a leader a deeper repertoire for communication.

### *Strategic Acting*

Strategic acting is concerned with both short-term and long-term initiatives (Hughes et al., 2014). It recognizes that specific actions produce a discernable advantage. The daughters of Zelophehad displayed an insightful ability to translate their complicated situation into a plan of action that impacted their present and future. This aspect receives much praise from Biblical commentators (Exell, 1975; Spurgeon, 1909). Hughes et al. (2014) suggested that to act strategically, a leader must have a clarity of focus, as well as the ability to adapt with agility. This is seen in two dimensions of the plan of the daughters: how they approached Moses in the tabernacle and how they responded to the concerns of the people.

*Clarity of Focus.* Strategic action is a combination of decisions designed to impact the outcomes of an organization or context (Hughes et al., 2014). This suggests that the strategic leader knows "what not to do as well as what to do" (Hughes et al., 2014, p. 112). The daughters' presentation of their request strategically followed cultural protocols without violating them. The daughters approached Moses and the leaders at the entrance to the tent but did not enter. Ron (1998) proposed that shows both bravery and wisdom, as they appeal directly to the highest court, which was mostly male-dominated, yet did so in a respectful manner. Tempered radicalism is a change theory that suggests that those on the "inside" of a system can exert change through long term influence (Meyerson, 2008). The idea is that one can work from within the system to both affirm and bring change to the organization. This method is especially useful when a leader cannot operate from a heroic standpoint (Kelan & Wratil, 2018). As such, the daughters of Zelophehad "played by the rules" in bringing their grievance to leadership, and this approach allowed them to be heard without being perceived as a threat.

*The Ability to Adapt.* The ability to adapt with agility suggests that a leader is able to respond to instability and conflict with grace and effectiveness (Hughes et al., 2014). The request of the daughters had long-term implications for the tribe of Manasseh. When the five daughters made their request, none of them were married (Shemesh, 2007). But as time passed, it became feasible that one or more might marry into a different tribe. Inheritance laws dictated that property belonged to the husband when the woman married (Freedman, 1992). Therefore, the leaders of the Manasseh tribe become concerned that they would lose portions of their land inheritance in the future, which had severe economic implications. An essential aspect of Heifetz's Adaptive Leadership Theory is its attention to the element of loss. The risk of loss makes people avoid change (Hughes et al. 2014). Adaptive leadership suggests that loss is best identified and processed so that its power to derail change is minimized (Heifetz et al., 2009). The people's concern was a legitimate one, and as the five daughters were able to respond to the potential conflict and modify their strategic expectations, all parties were satisfied.

### *Strategic Influence*

The ability to influence is a crucial leadership skill (Goleman, 2000). Within the strategic process, it is the capacity to inspire others toward the adoption of the proposed goal(s) (Hughes et al., 2014). A key to developing influence is the ability to foster relationships, both inside and outside the organization (Hughes et al., 2014). Influence may be more difficult and require a political approach depending on the positional power a leader possesses (Bolman & Deal, 2017). The daughters of Zelophehad used political influence to achieve their strategic goal by invoking cultural core values and strategic societal drivers in connection to critical relationships.

*The Power of Relationships.* The complexities of strategic leadership are mitigated by a thoughtful involvement of crucial relationships and teams. Attempting change as a lone individual is extremely difficult. Hughes et al. (2014) defined the importance of a strategic team as "the confluence of information in an organization" (p. 198). People are unified around vision and values, and augment the strengths and weaknesses of one another in pursuit of their goals. The five daughters themselves may be viewed as the first strategic team in this story. Winterblotham (1978) suggested that in the initial meeting with Moses, it is likely that the girls were young, possibly still in their teens, as they were all unmarried. Hughes et al. (2014) state, "strategic leaders can't achieve success by themselves" (p. 146). It is plausible that the strength of their numbers gave them courage and wisdom beyond what they would have possessed individually. Moreover, the five daughters also invoked a strategic relationship with Moses, the person of the highest authority among the Israelites. Lias (1978) pointed out that this was likely Moses' last case of judgment. Moses' influence, even his apparent sponsorship of the five daughters, carried great weight with the Israelites. Perhaps the end of his tenure allowed him to move with a boldness he would not have previously been able to rally at an earlier time. Having the right coalition of people is vital to helping strategic change move forward (Kotter, 1996). Moses' influence and authority helped to set a cultural shift in motion.

*Political Influence and Key Drivers.* Influence stems from an ability to "engage the hearts of the people and engender commitment to strategic goals" (Hughes et al., 2014, p. 186). The primary way to do this is to connect organizational aspirations to the strategic goal. Strategic influence is highly effective when a leader understands the core values driving an organization or group (Hughes et al., 2014). The daughters of Zelophehad did this by prioritizing a key strategic driver of the culture: the family lineage. Sakenfeld (1988) suggested that the cultural driver of the preserving the family line would have been more persuasive to the Israelite community than a general appeal for rights by the daughters. The danger that the family line would be done away, especially in light of their father's refusal to participate in Korah's rebellion, was presented as an injustice (Shemesh, 2007). Citing Korah's rebellion and disassociating the family from it, according to Aaron (2009), may also represent a political move that suggested that the daughters' request was not to be associated with any form of rebellion. Hughes et al. (2014) pointed out that political influence and strategic drivers, when prioritized, clarify the direction and choices that should be made to reach the desired outcome (Hughes et al., 2014).

## V. CONCLUSION

Not everyone views the daughters of Zelophehad as a strategic triumph. Classen (2013) is particularly cautious about elevating the status of the daughters of Zelophehad, noting: "Even though it would be wonderful to view the story...as a legal breakthrough benefiting womankind, a remarkable instance of female agency with a positive outcome, feminist critics have pointed out...it still preserves the status quo" (p. 326). However, this fails to keep in mind a truth about strategic leadership: it is about trade-offs. Hughes et al. (2014) wisely state, "By its nature, a good strategy is not all things to all people. A good strategy is clearly centered on a few key priorities" (p. 100). It should also be noted that female leaders do not operate from a monolithic context. Marginalized groups are often well-practiced in reading and responding to complicated cultural and relational dynamics. Operating from a standing of little or no power, confronting a culture ordered by patriarchy, and having the foresight to envision and claim an inheritance in a land not yet apprehended is remarkable. So remarkable that commentators offer backhanded compliments such as this: "They were but women, yet they had all a man's decision and courage – and more than belongs to most men – to break way from all conventional notions rather than tamely submit to injustice" (Winterbotham, 1978, p. 365). The daughters of Zelophehad serve as an example that personal agency and strategic influence are possible even from a marginalized position. Furthermore, due to this reality, women leaders may become adept at using their influence in political and non-traditional ways. The actions of the daughters of Zelophehad changed Jewish law forever. Hughes et al. (2014) offer a final thought about what strategic leadership takes: "It demands that leaders be clear about what drives them so that they can authentically navigate the political landscape, be able to see and understand other perspectives, and be patient and persistent to continue influencing as strategic initiatives unfold" (p. 147). This is certainly an appropriate description of the five daughters of Zelophehad.

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## GENDER EQUALITY AND RACE EQUITABILITY WITHIN THE CONTEMPORARY UNITED STATES AND POLISH CULTURES

Alina Wreczycki

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This qualitative research explored the gender equality and race equitability phenomena within the contemporary organizational structure and leadership context of the United States (U.S.) and Polish cultures in the backdrop of the biblical culture since both nations originate from the Christian roots. The gender equality phenomenon was examined from the perspective of women's access to (a) reproductive choices, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism. The phenomenon of race equitability was analyzed from the standpoint of (a) socio-political inclusion, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism. Grounded in the environment contingency theory (Burns & Stalker, 1961), which posits that the environment of an organization determines its best form of governance, this study probed the American and Polish organizational environments from the perspective of gender equality and race equitability to provide insights on factors that might have determined the ways to govern.

*Keywords:* Diversity, gender equality, national culture, organizational structure, organizational leadership, race equitability

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### I. LITERATURE REVIEW

The U.S. and Poland are located on different continents. The U.S. and territories are in North America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The U.S. national culture as a conceptual phenomenon has evolved since July 4, 1776 as a composite of 50 state and 13 unincorporated and one incorporated territories' cultures marked by high diversity (Endo & Reece-Miller, 2006). Poland is located in Central Europe and has had a homogenous national culture until the collapse of the Eastern Bloc originated in Poland during the Round Table Agreement on April 4, 1989 when the Solidarity movement was

legitimized, and free elections facilitated on June 4, 1989. On May 1, 2004, Poland joined the European Union (EU), and the inclusion into the Schengen Act initiated migration from the neighboring Eastern and other countries (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). While the U.S. is diversified in terms of religious traditions, Poland's state religion has been Roman Catholicism since the country's inception in 966 (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). However, both countries originate from Christian roots. The biblical perspectives on the socio-political structure and the role of women and members of races other than Caucasians in a diversified society were expected to provide insights on how both the U.S. and Poland have evolved over time along the lines of gender equality and race equitability issues.

For this research Gupta's (2019) definition of diversity as inclusiveness was used. Diversity is important in the contemporary global organizational context and is supported by cross-cultural and cross-generational leadership. While cross-cultural leadership functions based on understanding of diversity and the knowledge of other cultures, cross-generational leadership operates on the premise of effective communication between members of different age groups for sustainable results (Wreczycki, 2019a). Balanced diversity, interpreted as equal parts of opposing traits within a group, results in increased employee engagement and innovation (Gupta, 2019). The phenomena of gender equality and race equitability as characteristics of diversity are discussed within the context of the organizational and leadership structures of the contemporary U.S. and Poland.

### *Organizational Structure*

Hatch (2013) discussed organizational structure as stable relationships between all components of an organized system. Based on the environment contingency theory (Burns & Stalker, 1961), the environment of an organization determines its best form of governance. Burns and Stalker (1961) posited that in transforming environments, the organic form of an organizational structure works best because of flexibility and adaptability. In a national culture, diversity can be found among members of various groups that maintain their (a) identities, (b) norms, (c) social practices, and (d) symbols (Hatch, 2013).

### *National Culture*

National culture reveals itself through (a) artifacts, (b) beliefs, (c) customs, (d) rituals, and (e) rules of its people as individuals, groups, and members of national institutions as they interact (Duong, Kang, & Salter, 2017; Hofstede, 1983; Williamson, 2000). As much as a national culture can be considered as an abstract phenomenon, it serves as a repository of national values and a restraint system for its people (Wreczycki, 2019a). National culture is formed and transformed by its people by applying the national values stored in their moral characters (Issler, 2012). Citizens of a national culture cultivate the belief system followed by behaviors that amplify (a) artifacts, (b) customs, (c) rituals, and (d) rules (Duong, Kang, & Salter, 2017; Hofstede, 1983; Williamson, 2000).

### *The Biblical Culture*

The population of the biblical region at the onset of Christianity, known then as the Way (Kirkegaard, 2006), was represented by various socio-political groups that maintained their (a) identities, (b) norms, (c) social practices, and (d) symbols (Hatch, 2013). The vast region was controlled by the Roman Empire. The region's population was predominately represented by (a) the Romans as occupants and pagans, (b) the Hebrew Jews, and (c) the Hellenistic Jews who started the Christian movement in "the big city" of Antioch (Kraeling, 1932, p. 132).

*The Romans.* The Romans spoke Latin and worshipped numerous gods. As occupants, the Romans imposed their will onto non-Romans in an autocratic manner and used their legions to maintain order in the vast and diversified territories. The Romans enjoyed higher social status and economic prosperity in comparison with the other socio-political groups (Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003).

*The Hebrew Jews.* The native Hebrew Jews spoke the Aramaic language and practiced the orthodox interpretation of and adherence to the Torah as the Law of the Temple. The Hebrew Jews exemplified reverence for God/Jehovah. To reflect this reverence, the Torah does not mention the word God, but there are blank spaces in the passages instead. The Hebrew Jews rejected Gentiles due to idolatry and denied them salvation (Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003).

*The Hellenistic Jews.* The Hellenistic Jews relocated to the city of Antioch from the Diaspora, spoke Greek, and were not as devoted to the Torah as the Hebrew Jews. The message shared by the emerging Christians, as a new socio-political movement, appealed mostly to the Hellenistic Jews. The Hellenistic Jews maintained the liberal interpretation of the Torah and established their own (a) synagogues, (b) rituals, and (c) customs. The Hellenistic Jews founded the Church of Antioch (Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003).

Stene (1940) posited that routines as part of social practices serve as binding agents of society. The biblical society was diversified but controlled by the Romans' occupation. It consisted of three main groups that maintained their social practices yet managed to coexist relatively peacefully. This was due to the Romans' acceptance of the local customs if they did not cause social unrest (Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003).

### *The U.S. Culture*

The U.S. culture has evolved since July 4, 1776 into a composite of 50 state and 13 non-incorporated and one incorporated territories' culture. States might have regional cultures embedded in their state culture. As much as the U.S. is the product of a brave rebellion against the British economic oppression, since its inception, the Union has grown in diversity due to immigration. According to the U.S. election map, the American culture is divided into two different political orientations of Democrats and Republicans. For this study, the Greek term *politicos* – meanings among others on the matters of citizens – was used. While the states characterized by the Democratic

orientation are coastal with some inland exceptions, the states characterized by the Republican-leaning are inland. It is noteworthy to mention, that there are American citizens who claim not to be affiliated with either of the two political parties and refer to themselves as an independent. Until August 18, 1920, which marked the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Union's culture was Anglo-Saxon and patriarchal, and the gender equality issue based on Roosevelt's (1999) political writings has improved over time. The race equitability issue that originated during the Civil War of 1861-1865 has improved over time as well (Endo & Reese-Miller, 2010).

### *The Polish History and Culture*

In June 1989, Poland emerged again as an independent nation liberating itself peacefully from the Soviet Union controlled Eastern Bloc established in 1945 after World War II (Paczkowski, 2015, Wreczycki, 2019b). Paczkowski (2015) referred to Poland as the bloc's "weakest link" (p. 3) pointing at the nation of brave people who could bring down the nation's socialist government and start the domino effect of the Eastern Bloc's dissolution (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). The collective courage stemmed from 44 years of socio-economic oppression and the socialist government's favoring the mining region of Silesia (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). The Solidarity movement born at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk on September 17, 1980 led by a shipyard worker Lech Walesa quickly spread across Poland resulting in martial law between December 13, 1981 and July 22, 1983 but ultimately led to independence in June 1989 (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). Poland has had a long history of courage confirmed by heroic facts such as the insurrections to overthrow the Russian, Austria-Hungarian, and German oppression during the uprisings of 1794, 1830, and 1863, and the Nazi occupation between 1939 and 1945 (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). Prior to partitions, Poland was a feudal and patriarchal society controlled by aristocrats, the local officials, and the Catholic clergy reporting to the Pope through the chain of command of the Catholic Church (Topidi, 2019; Wreczycki, 2019b). Since 2015, Poland has been governed by the Law and Justice party lead by Jaroslaw Kaczynski. The party's orientation is "Euro-sceptic", conservative and in line with culturally specific practice of the Roman Catholic Church that has developed in Poland over almost 11 centuries (Lazar, 2015, p. 215).

### *Gender Equality*

By nature, gender differentiates human species into two distinct groups assigned to collaborate in the area of reproduction for species continuation. Gender also serves as a factor in diversity (Gupta, 2019; Nimu, 2018). Gender equality is characterized by socio-political structures that treat men and women the same. Historically, the issue of gender equality has been a sensitive one. In contemporary democratic countries referred to as the Western civilization, women enjoy the same rights as their male counterparts. However, due to cultural differences, there are still variances in the way women are perceived and treated in organizational environments (Gupta, 2019; Nimu, 2018). This research referenced the role of gender equality and race equitability from the contemporary perspectives of the U.S. and Polish cultures. In both countries,

various forms of organizing such as (a) sole proprietorships, (b) partnerships, and (c) corporations, among others, are used. In both national cultures, there is also a differentiation made between the private and public economic sectors with a distinction between for-profit and non-profit organizations.

Focusing on gender, Kanter (1977) theorized that unequal proportions of opposing human characteristics in a group will have negative organizational implications. When a group of people is classified as a minority, prejudice is often directed toward the group members by most of the population (Amidon, 2007). Courage allows humans to confront cultural stereotypes by serving as human change agents to transform prejudice as a form of social injustice into acceptance of diversity. National culture serves as a repository of values that flow from citizens' moral characters. National culture not only honors the rights of citizens but restrains them to be emotionally balanced to ascend their will to inform their behaviors to act morally as they interact with others within and outside of their culture (Wreczycki, 2019a).

### *Gender Equality in the Bible*

Galatians 3:28 (English Standard Version) states that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." While this is a noble statement, in practice, the patriarchal society depicted in the Bible by influential representatives of the male gender placed men above women in all spheres of human life in a socio-political setting with unequal distribution of power (Kirkegaard, 2006; Rugwiji & Masoga, 2017). The male patriarchal system, inclusive of the perception of God as a male, was grounded in controlling the issues of (a) relationships between men and women, (b) intimacy, and (c) reproduction (Jacobs, 2007; Kirkegaard, 2006; Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003). These socio-political issues have been known to transfer power to the favored group at the expense of the disadvantaged members of the minority. Over time, such socio-political conditions might cause tensions and transformations (Wreczycki, 2019b).

### *Gender Equality in the U.S.*

Gender equality in the U.S. had been a neglected issue until August 18, 1920 when American women were granted the right to vote based on Carrie Chapman Catt's petition to the U.S. Congress for women's suffrage that resulted in the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (Wreczycki, 2019a). Eleanor Roosevelt (1999) assessed gender equality and the American women's progress in the field of public service 20 years after the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and ascertained that women were still not fully accepted in organizational roles outside of the home and some struggled with performance issues (Wreczycki, 2019a). President Franklin Delano Roosevelt urged American men to end prejudice against women and honor the fact that females were forced to step into the masculine roles to support WWII military efforts domestically while men were fighting (Beschloss, 2007). During the 1960s with the onset of the birth control pill, American women gained access to controlling their reproduction and changed their views on intimacy in favor of open relationships. Since selective pregnancy termination was not legal at the time, women's concern with

multiple intimate relationships was the sexually transmitted diseases inclusive of AIDS as of its onset in the 1980s (Cimons, 2018).

Gupta (2019) referred to women as being critical in promoting diversity in organizations and interpreted that women outperformed men in 12 out of 16 organizational competencies of (a) taking initiative, (b) results in orientation, (c) inspiration, (d) motivation, (e) establishing and sustaining relationships, (f) team collaboration, (g) listening, (h) integrity, and (i) transformation. The performance gap between women and men widened when women served as senior organizational members (Gupta, 2019). Women can achieve such performance due to their nurturing and transformational skills and the ability to toggle between feminine and masculine traits known as androgynous (Ergle, 2015; Pink, 2006; Wreczycki, 2019a).

Globalization in the early 1990s has amplified the issue of gender equality in the U.S. bringing it to the global context. Since the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the issue of gender equality regarding (a) reproduction, (b) employment, and (c) pay has been a part of federal compliance. Examples of federal laws addressing gender equality are presented below.

*Roe vs. Wade 410 U.S. 113 (1973).* This federal law enacted by the U.S. Supreme Court states that the Constitution of the United States protects American women's right to make a choice to terminate a pregnancy without excessive government intervention. Even if there is a state law in existence that is not consistent with the federal law, the federal law must be followed. Because of the Republican and the Democratic parties' orientation – the former being conservative and the latter being liberal – there is an ongoing national debate about selective pregnancy terminations (Miller, 1989; Stephenson, Mills, & McLeod, 2017).

*The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1964.* This federal legislature marks the onset of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). This federal agency is the result of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Its role is to ensure that there is no employment discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, country of origin, sexual orientation, religion, and race (Levine & Montcalmo, 1971; Mio, 2006).

*The Equal Pay Act of 1963.* This federal legislature amended the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA) of 1938. This law abolished gender inequality regarding compensation for the same work performed by men and women. The Act was signed into law on June 10, 1963, by President John F. Kennedy as part of the New Frontier Program (Vogliano, 2018).

### *Gender Equality in Poland*

In Poland, women were granted the right to vote in 1918. This socio-political change coincided with Poland's gaining its independence as a nation after 100 years of partition between Prussia, Austria-Hungary, and Russia (Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). According to Zuk and Zuk (2017), the Polish women's access to managing their reproduction has historically been controlled by ideological pressures from political authoritarianism and religious fundamentalism. Poland has historically been a country of

conservative views about female health (Nimu, 2018; Zuk & Zuk, 2017). These perspectives stem from the state religion, Roman Catholicism, modulated by the Eastern European cultural views. Therefore, the aspect of female health inclusive of reproduction is not rationally approached as a socio-economic consideration but is viewed from the position of inflicting shame. Moreover, after the socialist regime's collapse in June 1989, Poland has been dependent on foreign funding to support women's civil rights activism (Nimu, 2018). In contrast with the U.S. culture, Poland experienced de-industrialization, increasing income gap, and increasing conservative social norms as the bi-product of its re-emergence from the Eastern Bloc in June 1989 (Nimu, 2018).

*Ordinance of January 7, 1993.* This legislation was passed by Sejm to govern (a) family planning, (b) human fetus protection, and (c) conditions under which selective pregnancy terminations can be carried out (Nimu, 2018). Based on the Polish Government's website, on January 10, 2018, a proposal to amend this Ordinance to consider selective pregnancy termination in cases when the developing fetus is severely damaged and at risk for survival was voted on and did not pass. The Polish Constitutional Tribunal is reviewing whether opening the possibility to selectively terminate a pregnancy marked by a severe human fetus development issue is consistent with the Polish Constitution. According to the IPSOS poll conducted at the end of December 2018, 78 percent of Poles are in favor of selective pregnancy terminations in the event of severe fetus development (Wilczek, 2020). Contrary to the wishes of the Polish citizens, there is noteworthy pressure exercised by the Roman Catholic clergy and the Roman Catholic media to postpone any progression of this socio-politically sensitive topic, and the leader of the Law and Justice party Jaroslaw Kaczynski continues to stall it.

*Equal Employment.* There is currently no law in Poland governing equal employment based on gender and other issues. Although women constitute a higher percentage of citizens, there are more males supporting the economy. According to the Central Statistical Office (GUS), gender still plays an important role in employment opportunities (Zielinski, 2018).

*Pay Egalitarianism.* There is currently no law in Poland governing pay egalitarianism between members of the female and male genders. Because males support the Polish economy in greater numbers due to women dealing with birthing and raising children and earlier retirement age, the pay is still a gender-driven issue in Poland. Not surprisingly, the issue of pay favors males (Zielinski, 2018).

*2000/78/EC.* 2000/78/EC is a EU Council directive that deals with the issue of equality in employment. It protects both the female and male genders from discrimination based on disability, sexual orientation, religion, and age.

### *Race Equitability*

Race equitability refers to socio-political conditions that facilitate the same treatment of members of all races in a society. Just like gender equality, achieving race equitability is a long-term balancing process. Race equitability is such a sensitive socio-political issue that some public servants choose to forgo any references to it to ensure being elected or re-elected and the achievement of their campaign promises on behalf of all their constituents (Wreczycki, 2019a).

### *Race Equitability in the Bible*

Citing Galatians 3:28 (English Standard Version): “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” paints a picture of an egalitarian society. In practice, however, the biblical society was not only diversified but stratified. Although in most cases slaves were members of races other than Caucasians, they were given equal rights to participate in the Christian tradition and grow spiritually. However, at the socio-political level, they remained slaves (Kirkegaard, 2006; Kraeling, 1932; Zetterholm, 2003).

### *Race Equitability in the U.S.*

The race equitability issue in the U.S. came to the forefront due to the Civil War between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. The agricultural plantation-based South relied on the labor of African Americans under the condition of slavery. The Civil War between the Northern and industrialized states led by President Abraham Lincoln as the Commander in Chief of the Union’s army won with the Confederate army of the Southern states. As a result, slavery was abolished (Beschloss, 2018).

*The Civil Rights Act of 1964.* This federal legislature prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, gender, and national origin. This law is part of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964.

*The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1964.* This federal legislature marks the onset of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The federal agency acts as an arm of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to eliminate employment discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, country of origin, sexual orientation, religion, and race (Levine & Montcalmo, 1971; Mio, 2006).

*The Equal Pay Act of 1963.* This federal legislature amended the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA) of 1938. This law abolished gender inequality regarding compensation for the same work performed by men and women. This Act was signed into law on June 10, 1963, by President John F. Kennedy as part of the New Frontier Program (Vogliano, 2018).

### *Race Equitability in Poland*

Until June 1989 when Poland became the first country to sever its ties with the Soviet Union due to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, it was predominately a Caucasian

nation of Roman Catholics (Grunberg, 2016; Paczkowski, 2015; Wreczycki, 2019b). In 2004, Poland joined the EU. The result of liberalizing the border crossing rules under the Schengen Zone inclusion resulted in an unprecedented influx of people from other nations into a relatively small country of conservative Roman Catholic Poles. Consequently, Poland has entered a new era in its existence as a nation where biracial marriages and partnerships became a reality producing biracial progeny (Grunberg, 2016).

There are currently no laws in existence protecting members of races other than Caucasian from discrimination in areas covered by this research such as (a) socio-political inclusion, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism. Per Grunberg (2016), members of races other than Caucasian referred to as “the sensitive populations” (p.47) have been discriminated against especially in the North-East region of Poland – home to nationalistic, xenophobic, and racist groups that resort to violent means to assert their control over public gatherings.

This literature review illustrating and grounding the issues of gender equality and race equitability in the U.S. and Poland led to the following research questions. While the U.S. and Poland originate from the same Christian roots, the U.S. has a long history of being a country of immigrants coming from all over the world and bringing with them cultural diversity of their originating countries. Poland, on the other hand, has had to deal with the legacy of pre-WWII antisemitism that due to the opening of the borders grew to nationalism, racism, and xenophobia (Grunberg, 2016). To explore the topics of gender equality and race equitability within the contemporary U.S. and Polish cultures, the following research questions were asked:

### *Research Questions*

1. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on female reproduction issue from the standpoint of access to selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development (Gupta, 2019)?
2. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the female employment opportunities issue (Gupta, 2019)?
3. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the pay egalitarianism issue between males and females (Gupta, 2019)?
4. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the issue of socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race (Gupta, 2019)?
5. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the issue of employment opportunities between Caucasian and non-Caucasian races (Gupta, 2019)?
6. How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the pay egalitarianism issue between Caucasians and non-Caucasians (Gupta, 2019)?

## II. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research considered factors that assess gender equality and race equitability issues. For the gender equality phenomenon, the factors of women’s access to (a) selected pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development, (b) equal employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism were

considered. For the race equitability phenomenon, the factors of (a) socio-political inclusion, (b) equal employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism were considered.

Using the below tables, assessments were made to make a comparison between the U.S. and Polish cultures on gender equality and race equitability issues. The three-step conceptual and qualitative scale of (a) restricted, (b) neutral, and (c) unrestricted was used to grade the factors playing a noteworthy role in gender equality and race equitability. The restricted access represents the existence of national laws that prevent citizens' full engagement with gender equality and race equitability issues. The neutral access reflects situations in which there are either no national/federal laws in existence, or they exist, but there might be other socio-political considerations restricting the citizens from fully engaging with the gender equality and race equitability issues. The unrestricted access represents full access of the citizens to engage with gender equality and race equitability issues.

### III. RESULTS

The results of the qualitative analysis of the gender equality and race equitability phenomena between the contemporary U.S. and Polish cultures are presented below guided by six research questions. While the main themes are gender and race, the results are presented and analyzed from the perspective of (a) female reproduction, (b) female employment opportunities, (c) pay egalitarianism between females and males, (d) socio-political inclusion of the non-Caucasian race, (e) employment opportunities between non-Caucasians and Caucasians, and (f) pay egalitarianism between non-Caucasians and Caucasians.

#### *Study 1 - Female Reproduction*

The aspect of female reproduction was examined between the U.S. and Polish contemporary cultures from the standpoint of access to selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development (Gupta, 2019). However, since access to selective pregnancy termination is not restricted in the U.S. at the federal level, the phenomenon was also noteworthy when considered from the standpoint of the state legislative level. In Poland, on the other hand, selective pregnancy termination can only occur in rare circumstances of the severe fetal development, and the decision to pursue the medical procedure involves sociopolitical and religious considerations involving the conscience clause affiliated with the state Roman-Catholic religion. Therefore, the members of the decision-making committee can use this clause if they happen to be practitioners of the Roman-Catholic religion to vote to deny the procedure.

Table 1  
*Female Reproduction*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
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Access to selective	Neutral	Restricted
pregnancy termination in		
severe fetal development		
cases		

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The above table illustrates a contrast between the U.S. and Poland concerning access to selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development. The neutral classification was assigned to the U.S. culture based on the 1973 case of *Roe vs. Wade* when the U.S. Supreme Court recognized each pregnant woman's constitutional right to selective pregnancy termination for any reason. While this legislature serves as the national/federal anchor with regards to selective pregnancy termination for any reason, the federal government maintains that states should have the power to prohibit selective pregnancy termination for any reason once the fetus reaches viability of being capable of sustaining life outside the womb. Since then, the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently reaffirmed the fundamental right to selective pregnancy termination but has delegated the power to each state to determine the gestation limit as a condition to pursue the medical procedure (Espey, Hofler, & Gonzalez, 2019). So, the neutral classification has been applied based on the federal unrestricted regulation of selective pregnancy termination for any reason in conjunction with the state regulations limiting the gestation week during which such a procedure can be carried out.

Poland was assigned the restricted classification regarding the selective pregnancy termination due to severe fetal development due to the reason of women having limited access to prenatal testing and even upon gaining information about severe fetal development being subjected to the decision of a medical committee whose members can use the faith conscience clause to deny the procedure. This finding is consistent with Zuk and Zuk (2017).

*Research Question 1: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the female reproduction issue from the standpoint of the selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development (Gupta, 2019)?* The U.S. and Poland apply a different approach to female reproduction from the standpoint of selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development. While the U.S. federal government does not restrict this right to any female, there is a delegation of power to the states to decide and enforce the maximum gestation week during which selective pregnancy termination for any reason can be carried out. At the state level, this right might be impacted by the ideological and sociopolitical conditions. By ideological conditions, this research refers to the literature review and the split between the red or Republican states and the blue or Democratic states. Since the U.S. is an amalgamation of various immigrated cultures forming ethnic groups/enclaves and bringing with them various religious and philosophical traditions, the assigned rating for the U.S. is neutral. This means that the

federal law provides the right to terminate a pregnancy without restriction, but the state laws might constrain it in addition to other conditions.

In Poland, on the other hand, the right to selective pregnancy termination for any reason does not exist. In rare circumstances, the right to selective pregnancy termination due to severe fetal development issues might be given based on conditions associated with the medical committee members' Roman-Catholic religion affiliation and the possibility for them to utilize the conscience clause. Hence, the rating for Poland is restricted.

### *Study 2 - Female Employment Opportunities*

Females in both countries, the U.S. and Poland, gained suffrage at similar times. In the U.S., suffrage was instituted with the introduction of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on August 18, 1920. The U.S. was going through the era of prosperity until the Great Depression hit on October 29, 1929 and lasted until the onset of WWII when the U.S. was attacked by Japan in Pearl Harbor. In Poland, women gained suffrage at the end of WWI in 1918 when Poland re-emerged as an independent nation after 123 years of partitions. Between 1939 and 1945, Poland was occupied by Nazi Germany. Between 1945 – 1989, Poland was occupied by the Soviet Union.

Table 2  
*Female Employment Opportunities*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
Female employment opportunities	Neutral	Restricted

Based on the presence of the federal EEOA of 1964, the U.S. was given the rating of neutral that reflects the anchoring of the issue of the female as well as male employment opportunities. However, this rating also conveys the possibility of state, economic sector type, and the organization type as noteworthy factors that might influence employment opportunities between females and males.

In Poland, on the other hand, there is no overarching federal nor voivodships' law on equal employment opportunities between females and males. Moreover, such a directive exists within the context of the EU of which Poland has been a member since 2004. However, Poland has been known to have breached and has been reprimanded for violations of this directive. Hence, the rating for the equal employment opportunities concerning females is reflected as restricted since historically Polish females have been subjected to unequal employment opportunities.

*Research Question 2: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ in the female employment opportunities issue (Gupta, 2019)?* In the U.S. due to the existence of the EEOA of 1964, every citizen has an opportunity to file a discrimination claim, which is initially reviewed at the state level, but its decision can be appealed at the federal level. In Poland, on the other hand, every citizen can file a claim for unequal treatment

concerning employment, but it must be done via the judicial system at the expense of the plaintiff. Moreover, since Poland has been cited for violations of the EU's equal employment directive, the Polish plaintiff can appeal to the EU Commission.

### *Study 3 - Pay Egalitarianism Between Females and Males*

The pay egalitarianism phenomenon is a noteworthy byproduct of women's suffrage in the U.S. and Poland, which occurred during similar historical periods but with different manifestations. While the U.S. experienced the Progressive Era during the implementation of women's suffrage in 1920 until the Great Depression in 1929, Poland gained independence as a nation in 1918 and instituted women's suffrage after 123 years of partitions by three neighboring occupants. However, Poland as an independent state only lasted for 22 years. Between 1939 and 1945, Poland was occupied by Nazi Germany. Between 1945 and 1989, Poland was occupied by the Soviet Union with all its implications.

Table 3  
*Pay Egalitarianism Between Females and Males*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
Pay egalitarianism between females and males	Neutral	Restricted

Based on the presence of the EPA of 1963, the U.S. was given the rating of neutral that reflects the federal anchoring of the issue of female and male pay egalitarianism. However, this rating also conveys the possibility of state, economic sector type, and the organizational type as noteworthy factors, among others, that might influence pay scales between females and males performing the same or highly similar job duties.

In Poland, on the other hand, there is no overarching federal law about equal pay between females and males. Moreover, such a directive exists within the context of the EU of which Poland has been a member since 2004. However, Poland has been known to have breached and has been reprimanded for violations of this directive. Hence, the rating for the equal pay concerning Polish females versus males is reflected as restricted since historically Polish females have been subjected to unequal pay treatment.

*Research Question 3: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the pay egalitarianism issue between males and females (Gupta, 2019)?* In the U.S. due to the existence of the EPA of 1963, every working citizen has an opportunity to file a discrimination claim, which is initially reviewed at the state level, but its decision can be appealed at the federal level. In Poland, on the other hand, every working citizen can file a claim for unequal pay concerning employment, but it must be done via the judicial system at the expense of the plaintiff. Moreover, since Poland has been cited for

violations of the EU's directive concerning employment discrimination, the Polish plaintiff can appeal to the EU Commission.

#### *Study 4 - Socio-political Inclusion of Members of non-Caucasian Race*

The difference between the socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race phenomenon between the U.S. and Polish cultures is embedded in the history of both nations. While the U.S. was forced to encounter this important issue during the Civil War between 1861 and 1865, which resulted in the abolition of slavery, it took the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to start paving the way for race equitability. Poland, on the other hand, whether under the occupation or as a free country, has been a homologous nation of Caucasians until Poland's ascension to the EU in 2004. Once Poland was included in the Schengen Zone, the migration of minorities as persons outside of the Polish Caucasians' gene pool started (Grunberg, 2016).

Table 4

#### *Socio-political Inclusion of Members of Non-Caucasian Race*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
Socio-political inclusion of members of non-Caucasian race	Neutral	Restricted

Based on the presence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the U.S. was given the rating of neutral that reflects the federal overarching of the issue of socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race in the U.S. However, this rating also conveys the possibility of states' noteworthy factors that might influence the socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race.

In Poland, on the other hand, there is no overarching federal law about the socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race. 2000/78/EC directive exists within the context of the EU of which Poland has been a member since 2004. However, Poland has been known to have breached and has been reprimanded for violations of this directive. Hence, the rating for the socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race is reflected as restricted since Polish minorities have been subjected to discrimination. This observation is consistent with Grunberg (2016).

*Research Question 4: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the issue of socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race (Gupta, 2019)?* In the U.S. due to the existence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, if any citizen who, by virtue of race classification is considered to be a non-Caucasian, feels discriminated against has the right to file a discrimination claim, which is initially reviewed at the state level, but its decision can be appealed at the federal level. In Poland, on the other hand, a discrimination claim directed to the Polish court might not return a just ruling honoring 2000/78/EC EU's directive. Since Poland has been cited for violations of this directive

concerning the equal treatment of minorities regarding employment and compensation, a disadvantaged Polish citizen representing the minority group has the right to appeal to the EU's Commission.

#### *Study 5 – Employment Opportunities Between Caucasian and non-Caucasian Races*

The difference between the issue of employment opportunities between Caucasian and non-Caucasian races in the U.S. and Poland is tied to the level of socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race embedded in the history of both nations. While the U.S. was forced to encounter this important issue during the Civil War between 1861 and 1865, which resulted in the abolition of slavery, it took the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to start paving the way for race equitability. Poland, on the other hand, whether under the occupations or as a free country, has been a homologous nation of Caucasians until Poland's ascension to the EU in 2004. Once Poland was included in the Schengen Zone, the migration of minorities as persons outside of the Polish Caucasians' gene pool started.

Table 5

#### *Employment Opportunities Between Caucasians and non-Caucasians*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
Employment opportunities between Caucasian and non-Caucasians	Neutral	Restricted

Based on the presence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the U.S. was given the rating of neutral that reflects the federal law overarching the issue of employment opportunities presented to the Caucasian and non-Caucasian members of the nation based on the historical trajectory of inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race in the U.S. However, this rating also conveys the possibility of state and states' regions as noteworthy factors that might influence the presentation of non-Caucasians with employment opportunities.

In Poland, on the other hand, there is no overarching federal law about employment opportunities presentation to members of the non-Caucasian race. Based on 2000/78/EC EU's directive, there should not be any form of discrimination against members of the non-Caucasian race regarding employment. Poland has been a member of the EU since 2004. Poland has also been known to have breached and being reprimanded for violations of this directive. Hence, the rating for the employment opportunities presented to the non-Caucasian race members in Poland is reflected as restricted since historically Polish minorities have been subjected to employment discrimination. This observation is consistent with Grunberg (2016).

*Research Question 5: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the issue of employment opportunities between Caucasian and non-Caucasian races (Gupta, 2019)?* In the U.S. due to the existence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEOA of

1964, every citizen who under race classification is considered to be a non-Caucasian and feels discriminated against has the right to file a discrimination claim, which is initially reviewed at the state level, but its decision can be appealed at the federal level. In Poland, on the other hand, a discrimination claim directed to the Polish court might not return a just ruling honoring 2000/78/EC EU's directive. Since Poland has been cited for violations of this directive as it relates to equal treatment of minorities regarding employment, a disadvantaged Polish citizen representing the minority group has the right to appeal to the EU's Commission.

#### *Study 6 – Pay Egalitarianism Between Caucasian and non-Caucasian Races*

The difference between the issue of pay egalitarianism between Caucasian and non-Caucasian races in the U.S. and Polish cultures is tied to the level of socio-political inclusion of members of the non-Caucasian race and the presentation of employment opportunities to them embedded in the history of both nations. While the U.S. was forced to encounter the issue of socio-political inclusion of non-Caucasian race members during the Civil War between 1861 and 1865, which resulted in the abolition of slavery, it took the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to start paving the way for race equitability. Poland, on the other hand, whether under the occupations or as a free country, has been a homologous nation of Caucasians until Poland's ascension to the EU in 2004. Once Poland was included in the Schengen Zone, the migration of minorities as persons outside of the Polish Caucasians' gene pool started.

Table 6

#### *Pay Egalitarianism Between Caucasians and Non-Caucasians*

Description	The U.S.	Poland
Pay egalitarianism between Caucasians and non-Caucasians	Neutral	Restricted

Based on the presence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EPA of 1963, the U.S. was given the rating of neutral that reflects the existence of the federal law overarching the issue of pay equitability between Caucasians and non-Caucasians based on the historical trajectory of inclusion of non-Caucasians in the U.S. However, this rating also illustrates the possibility of state and states' regions as noteworthy factors that might influence the presentation of non-Caucasians with employment opportunities impacting their pay.

In Poland, on the other hand, there is no overarching federal law about pay egalitarianism between Caucasians and non-Caucasians. Based on 2000/78/EC EU's directive, there should not be any form of discrimination against non-Caucasians concerning employment and therefore pay. Poland has been a member of the EU since 2004. Poland has also been known to have breached and being reprimanded for violations of this directive. Hence, the rating for the pay egalitarianism between non-

Caucasians and Caucasians is reflected as restricted since historically Polish minorities have been subjected to pay discrimination. This observation is consistent with Grunberg (2016).

*Research Question 6: How do the U.S. and Polish cultures differ on the issue of pay egalitarianism between Caucasians and non-Caucasians (Gupta, 2019)?* In the U.S. due to the existence of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EPA of 1964, any citizen who by race classification is considered to be a non-Caucasian and feels discriminated against, has the right to file a discrimination claim, which is initially reviewed at the state level, but its decision can be appealed at the federal level. In Poland, on the other hand, a discrimination claim directed to the Polish court might not return a just ruling honoring 2000/78/EC EU's directive. Since Poland has been cited for violations of this directive as it relates to the equal pay for equal work of minorities concerning employment, a disadvantaged Polish citizen representing the minority group has the right to appeal to the EU Commission.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

This qualitative analysis examined the contemporary U.S. and Polish cultures from the standpoint of gender equality and race equitability. Within the gender equality context, issues of (a) female access to selective pregnancy termination due to severe fetal development, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism were considered and evaluated. Within the race equitability context, issues of (a) socio-political inclusion of non-Caucasians, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay equality were considered and evaluated.

Although both nations originate from the same biblical roots, Poland has been a nation of Caucasian Roman Catholics since the country's inception in 966 until the country's ascension into the EU in 2004. The U.S. was established as a union of initially 13 colonies converted to states on July 4, 1776. Although initially represented by the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, the influx of African natives initially considered as slaves caused a disagreement between the Northern and Southern states as to the future of the African Americans in the expanding nation. As a result of the Civil War, slavery was abolished in 1865, and the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 further supported the inclusion of predominantly African Americans and then members of other races into the American society on equal terms. The implementation of the EPA of 1964 and the EEOA in 1964 further strengthened the federal protection of minorities who, in cases of perceived discrimination, have the right to file state claims and appeal the ruling at the federal level.

Concerning women's suffrage, both countries implemented it at approximately the same time – Poland in 1918 upon its gaining independence after 123 years of partitions, and the U.S. in 1920 after the implementation of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, Poland's independence only lasted for 22 years before succumbing to Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union's occupations between 1939 and 1989 when Poland, once again, became an independent nation.

So, there are noteworthy factors that need to be considered while discussing the issues of gender equality and race equitability between the two cultures that are geographically distant and do not share their evolutionary paths besides their origin from the Christian roots. Poland as a country established in 966 through an act of

baptism of the nation and therefore its subordination to the Pope, has historically maintained the traditional/biblical gender role division with all its implications. The U.S., on the other hand, being a much younger nation of immigrants has admitted many a religious tradition into its states allowing for greater penetration of ideas on the role of females in the national culture, which in the U.S. given the presence of 50 states and 13 not incorporated and one incorporated territories is an abstract phenomenon and the result of the artificial amalgamation of the state and territories' cultures. The Polish culture, on the other hand, is the homologous phenomenon represented by the Caucasian Roman Catholic Poles, who contrary to the Roman Catholic Church's teaching are not necessarily a nation of tolerant people. Moreover, while Poland's ascension to the EU on May 1, 2004, might have served as a cause for excitement and the expected economic benefits, the inclusion of Poland into the Schengen Zone might have surprised many a Pole with the migration of non-Caucasians into the Polish culture. Also, the lack of preparedness and envisioning a shift in socio-political issues associated with the influx of population segments into the existing Roman-Catholic Caucasian and true Polish majority might have caused prejudice between the two groups – the majority and the prejudiced. Additionally, the ascension of Poland to the EU on May 1, 2004 might have been accompanied by certain economic expectations to promote growth, which is reasonable to infer as the lingering condition of the failed Eastern Bloc but might have been lacking the reasonable assumption of Polish citizens' responsibilities concerning gender equality and race equitability. This noteworthy inference is consistent with the existence of citations issued by the EU's Commission concerning gender equality and race equitability issues relating to (a) socio-political inclusion, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism. And of course, there is the sensitive female right to choose to reproduce or not reproduce, which in Poland has been approached from the feudal perspective of shame.

In conclusion, the rating across the evaluation pillars such as (a) female access to selective pregnancy termination due to severe fetal development, (b) employment and pay egalitarianism between genders and races, and (c) socio-political inclusion of the minorities were classified as neutral in the U.S. reflecting the existence of the federal laws protecting women and minorities and the right of the protected groups' members to file discrimination claims at the state level with the possibility to appeal at the federal level. For Poland, the ratings of restricted were assigned due to the lack of national laws to protect women and minorities and the violations of the EU's directive to do so.

### *Limitations and Future Directions*

The limitation of this qualitative research is its scope referencing, evaluating, and comparing the phenomena of race equality and race equitability within the context of two national cultures, the U.S. and Poland, that are noteworthy different through the prism of (a) female reproductive rights – specifically access to selective pregnancy termination due to severe fetal development issues, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay egalitarianism. Based on the organizational structure theory of Hatch (2013), which depicts organizational structure as stable relationships between all components of an organized system, it would be worthwhile to further explore the level of stability of the conditions existing in the U.S. and Polish contemporary cultures as not only

organized systems but part of the global system characterized by the local/internal, global/external, and contextual dynamics (Arrow et al., 2001). Since based on the environment contingency theory of Burns and Stalker (1961), the environment of an organization determines its best form of governance and in transforming environments, the organic form of an organizational structure works best, because it is flexible and adaptable, have both nations, the U.S. and Poland, been flexible and adaptable to promote and sustain diversity, which according to Hatch (2013) can be found among members of various cultural groups that maintain their (a) identities, (b) norms, (c) social practices, and (d) symbols. Also, what does the national culture phenomenon mean within the context of a large and diversified country of 50 states maintaining their Constitutions versus the national culture of a small and homogenous country until its ascension to the EU in 2004 – the country characterized by conservative and somewhat conflicted with the teaching of the Roman-Catholic faith views on gender equality and race equitability?

## V. CONCLUSION

This qualitative analysis evaluated the gender equality and race equitability phenomena within the contemporary U.S. and Polish cultures in the backdrop of the biblical culture since both nations originate from the Christian roots. Gender equality was examined from the perspective of women's access to (a) reproductive choices – specifically selective pregnancy termination in cases of severe fetal development issues, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay decisions. Race equitability was analyzed from the standpoint of (a) socio-political inclusion, (b) employment opportunities, and (c) pay. Grounded in the environment contingency theory (Burns & Stalker, 1961), which posits that the environment of an organization determines its best form of governance, this study probed the American and Polish cultures from the perspective of gender equality and race equitability to provide insights on factors that might have determined the ways to govern.

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### About the Author

Alina Wreczycki, Ph.D. is a 24/7 caregiver to her dementia afflicted mom and widowed mom of two sons, a disabled adult and a minor.

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## CROSS-GENDER LEADERSHIP: PRISCILLA, AQUILA, AND APOLLO

Daniel Sharma

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Every narrative in the Bible provides stories of leaders and followers. However, limited academic Christian literature exists on leadership partnerships such as joint ventures between women and men. This article focused on Acts 18 as an exemplar of how Priscilla and Aquila worked as co-leaders, retaining their faith as they moved from Rome to Corinth to Ephesus to Rome. This pericope illustrated that couple made tents together and they conducted ministry together, while keeping their individual identities. This raised the question of whether their effectiveness could be attributed to authentic leadership since the duo expressed various traits of this organizational leadership theory. They chose to express accountability together by leaving Rome instead of abandoning their religious freedom; altruistic since they opened their home to Paul and to the local Ephesian church; fair in their behavior in engaging with small groups and in instructing Apollo; honest in earning their keep since they continued as tentmakers as they lived through their diaspora; kind on deciding when to engage aggressively and when to retrieve; optimistic in their newfound religious freedom and continued to share it; and they chose to trust Apollo.

*Keyterms:* Priscilla, authentic leadership, Acts 18.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The Bible is replete with many examples of men who were leaders (the argument here is not about whether they led people towards something good or something bad). A non-comprehensive list included Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Ahab, David, Isaiah, and the Apostles. While these names may be familiar to most, the Bible also has many examples of women who were leaders. These included Miriam, Noah, Rahab, Deborah, Delilah, Jezebel, Michel, Esther (Hadassah), Naomi, Magdalene, Lydia,

Rhoda, and Salome. However, the partnerships between men and women are in scant supply. One obvious partnership is that of Adam and Eve. They lived in Eden together and they were removed from Eden together; but this pairing is sub-optimal in the current context. While other pairings existed, even when the marital bond is not considered, little is known about them as is the relationship of Moses and Miriam. However, Acts delivered a rather unique example. Note that the article is not limited to women leading women but how effective leadership partners can co-exist across, that is, between women leading women, women leading men, and women plus men in a joint effort. This is the definition of cross-gender leadership referenced throughout this article.

### *Statement of the Problem*

“He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18: 26, English Standard Version).

This verse referred to Apollo who was an eloquent Jewish orator educated in Judaic law. However, the context introduced two other key players; Priscilla, and Aquila. Priscilla is a diminutive of Prisca, and in the New Testament either name appears with Aquila. The larger pericope delivered better context for the quoted verse. The interconnected stories started in Acts 18:1 and ended when the chapter does. Essentially, Priscilla and Aquila were living in Rome when Claudius Caesar ordered Jews to leave. They arrived in Corinth and continued working as tentmakers. Paul, being a tentmaker himself, chose to stay with them while he reasoned with the Jews in Corinth. After a series of events, Paul left with them to go to Ephesus and from there he went on to other parts of Galatia and Phrygia whereas the couple remained in Ephesus, where this fateful meeting with Apollo occurred.

Mukhongo, and Buteyo (2010) suggested that leadership was more about the actions a person took in leading a people. The leaders, Priscilla and Aquila, experienced the eloquence of Apollo and while he faithfully argued for Jesus being the Messiah, he was only aware of the baptism of John meaning that he did not understand the significance of the resurrection of Jesus and how that fulfilled the requirements of the Messiah. As such, the duo engaged with Apollo in a private setting and educated him on the rest of the lesson. Apollo listened and accepted what they said, and his oratory was refined later; but that is beyond the current scope. This dialogue and its resulting effects suggest a relationship existed between Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollo.

Kort (2008) argued that the relationship between a leader and a follower was of a social nature. As such, the relationship changed based on how each agent of the relationship behaved. The event between the couple and Apollo occurred in Ephesus. These people had not known each other prior to this setting. First, Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollo in public forum as he made the case with the local Jews for why Jesus was the Messiah. Then, they intervened discretely, and this indicated not just an exchange of ideas but an understanding of what each party spoke of in the context of Jesus as the Messiah. Paul was not mentioned in this discussion as he had already left Ephesus and so neither mediated nor influenced this setting. A key challenge in existing literature is that limited material is available on Christian women leaders, and even fewer on effective leadership partnerships between men and women.

### *Statement of the Purpose*

The purpose of this article was to not only address the shortage in literature but to show Biblically how Christian women can be effective co-leaders. To better understand the leadership exemplified by Priscilla and Aquila, one must understand not only Acts 18 but also understand the world in which this pericope existed. Robbins (2012) posited that understanding the phenomena that existed forms the context in which the events were lived and in which they were written. Throughout this section, the conversation will traverse texture analysis to understand the data from the lens of organizational leadership. deSilva (2014) acknowledged that much of Acts focused on the shift of the gospel message from the Jews to the Gentiles. Acts 18 reinforced this since this is not the first time that Paul spoke of preaching to the Gentiles instead. Furthermore, this exchange suggested that others, beyond Paul, were also actively spreading the gospel. In doing so, they did not reach for leadership positions but the roles they played prescribed to them leadership in various capacities.

To understand the dynamics of this Scripture and its relevance in the post-modern world, one must also contend with contemporary leadership theory. Avolio, et al. (2004) discovered that leadership influenced follower attitudes through identification, hope, positive emotions, optimism, and trust. Does this explain the relationship between Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila? After all, the author of Acts recorded these sequences of events. Paul was a Roman citizen. Priscilla and Aquila were living in Rome until the order from Caesar. They were Jews who travelled as they believed in the message of hope. As Paul continued his missionary work elsewhere, the couple stayed in Ephesus and nurtured the local church. Van Droffelaar, and Jacobs (2017) analysis revealed that authentic leaders were intentional and that intentions fell into four (4) categories: self-awareness, living by an inner compass, careful listening, and transparency. Nichols and Erakovich (2013) reflected that authentic leaders influenced followers in an ethical manner using motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Puls, et al., (2014) indicated that authentic relationship was influenced by self-awareness, worldview, and balanced processing.

Yukl (2013) acknowledged that authentic leadership axioms were not developed yet but suggested that one fundamental theme of this leadership theory was that followers received a clear sense of what the leader valued because the leader's behavior reflected his/her words and this affirmed for the follower the perception that the leader was a good leader. While the public at large may not contend with various leadership theories regularly, people seem to have perceived notions of what makes a good leader. As such, this relationship became one of not just leading a following but also managing associated perceptions. This was illustrated in how Priscilla and Aquila connected with each other, their relationship with Paul, with the various local communities, and with Apollo.

## II. ACCOUNTABILITY

Priscilla and Aquila were specifically mentioned six (6) times in the New Testament and were always mentioned together. Parker (2017) emphasized that while little was known of this couple, that neither Priscilla nor Aquila are ever mentioned

separately. This was also expressed in Acts 18 since they departed Rome together, they arrived and worked as tentmakers in Ephesus together, Paul found them together when he decided to work as a tentmaker in Ephesus, and together they instructed Apollo. An order by Claudius Caesar forced Jews to leave Rome, including Aquila and Priscilla. Hoerber (1960) speculated that since Josephus recorded Caesar granting Jews religious liberties, that this specific order was for Jews taking part in apparent wholesale propaganda, in this case, the volatility of declaring Jesus as the Messiah. If this speculation is true, then the couple left Rome because they had been involved in the Jesus movement in Rome at that time, and that they left their home, and all that was familiar, together.

According to Hedlund (2010), this story of Priscilla and Aquila form the fundamental narrative of Acts as Luke recorded their presence in Rome, Corinth, and Ephesus, at least. Since travel in the postmodern world is still difficult, the couple would have borne the burden of sea travel and living nomadic lives. White (2012) pontificated that through their various travels, they still maintained their occupation as tentmakers. This suggested a business venture that is portable and requiring a certain level of transparency for it to provide sustenance as they moved. This pericope did not segregate the role that Priscilla played in this tentmaking profession versus the role that Aquila made since tentmaking involved gathering raw materials, manufacture, and sale; among other matters of that trade.

Frederick (2015) discovered that there was a high correlation between accountability and authenticity, as can be found in academic and popular literature. Frederick et al. (2016) further evidenced that 82% of variance in authentic leadership was predicted by responsibility, openness, and answerability. In this context, responsibility, openness, and answerability were elements that defined accountability. Consider that Priscilla and Aquila remained as tentmakers in different geographies, in different cultural settings, and with interacting with different people. It would be difficult to argue that they were the only tentmakers in Corinth when Paul found them. The narrative implied that Paul, as a tentmaker, Christ follower, and with a certain sense of transparency, would partner with people of similar ilk to continue the spread of the salvation message. Furthermore, when the couple first heard Apollo preach, they practiced accountability together because they educated Apollo together to ensure that the complete salvation message (John's and Spirit baptisms) were being preached. Consider also that when Priscilla and Aquila added to Apollo's message, their instruction aligned with Paul's message and that Paul had already left to go to the next mission area.

### *Integrated Principle 1*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must be accountable to self, to their partner, as well as to others that this partnership interacts with.

### III. ALTRUISM

The order by Claudius Caesar was not the first time that Jews were told to leave Rome. Slingerland (1990) referenced Dio's report that Tiberius Caesar had erected a similar order which was implemented by force since the Jews of that previous time were converting the Romans en masse. With Claudius, no similar force is used (considering that this Caesar followed Nero). Even so, at least some Christ followers, including Priscilla and Aquila, opted to leave instead of stopping their missionary work. Also consider that the Bible did not record when and how this couple chose to follow Christ since none of the Apostles take credit for their conversion. They kept their profession and their faith while opting to uproot themselves.

Beare (1944) posited that this intersection between Paul and the couple happened at a time when Paul was traveling solo since Barnabas, Timothy, Silas or other followers are not mentioned in this exchange. Paul chose to work with them and stay at their home, that much was true but Acts 18 did not specify that Paul compensated the couple. This suggests that Priscilla and Aquila chose to open their home. Not only were they hospitable to Paul but they also opened their home to local gatherings when the Christian Jews could not congregate in the local synagogue (Green, 2016). Priscilla and Aquila maintained this hospitality even as they were refugees in a diaspora. First, the Christian Jews were made to leave Jerusalem. Then, they were made to leave Rome. The pericope did not indicate any conflict between Priscilla and Aquila in using their home in this manner.

Furthermore, Paul recognized their effective partnership for he called them cooperators, which is the same title he used for Timothy, and for Epaphroditus (Thériault, 1985). The title was applied to both and not just to one part of the partnership. This indicated that Paul saw both contributing equally to apostolic work. While the postmodern world may be more familiar with Timothy, calling Priscilla and Aquila cooperators, did not distinguish between this missionary work and the other workers nor did it distinguish between the gender of Priscilla and Aquila, and thus the value-add since the duo chose to cooperate with each other as well as other missionaries to be acknowledged as such. According to Pizzuto-Pomaco (2003), Rome eventually recognized the significance of this couple's work since it acknowledged where this couple used to live in Rome.

Wright (2015) defined altruism as valuing multiple perspectives, balancing intellectual quotient with emotional quotient, internal honesty and trust with others, and dedication to commitment and the courage to act. Priscilla and Aquila experienced Jewish and Christian cultures in different places. They hosted Paul while knowing of his reputation. When Paul engaged with the local Jews, they chose to stay in the background. When Christian Jews were rejected from the synagogue, this couple opened their home. They maintained their occupation and missional work in the face of adversity. And, they quietly instructed Apollo instead of confronting him in the public. They took initiative.

#### *Integrated Principle 2*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must choose to tackle hardship by focusing on the benefit to others, and not of self or the partnership.

#### IV. FAIRNESS

Osiek (2012) established that while the New Testament made a big deal about Paul's Roman citizenship, it does not state the same for Priscilla and Aquila so that one cannot assume that this couple were Roman citizens. Furthermore, the Bible does not reveal their socio-economic status, beyond them being tentmakers. However, Kurek-Chomycz (2006) argued that Priscilla had excellent didactic qualities, and an outstanding education. This could be speculative but note that both Paul and Apollo were highly educated orators. Paul accepting their hospitality and companionship, and Apollo accepting their instruction illustrated that they were able to connect intellectually and theologically. This indicated that Paul and Apollo treated them fairly. In recording these events, Luke also expressed similar sentiment because their story is addressed first, before the narrative shifts to Paul's experience in Ephesus (Lee, 2004).

Daniels (2014) argued that Acts 18 showed Priscilla and Aquila as correcting a theological male orator, and no specific husband-wife role distinction is found here. Thus, it is less of which person contributed more significantly to Apollo understanding the totality of the good news, but the focus was on how the couple synergized and instructed an educated man so that actions were not gender-bound but based on the talent each party brought to the partnership. Kim (2002) debated this rather controversially that while Priscilla and Aquila were not outstanding leaders like Paul, that they collaborated to produce results. Just from this pericope, one can see that they were leaders even if none of the letters in the New Testament are ascribed to them. They were leaders because they chose to leave Rome and not abandon Christianity, they were leaders in engaging with the local community, and they were leaders in instruction. Together, they were consistent in their message, and were self-motivated. According to Polk (2017), Paul acknowledged their efforts at risking themselves on his behalf.

Akrivou, et al. (2011) proposed a leadership model along the action-reflection continuum as a pathway to executive trust and fairness in actions. They suggested that when executives take moments of reflection on the consequences of past actions and these feed into future actions, this pause in time allowed for future decisions and resulting actions that provide a fairer treatment. This was also illustrated in Acts 18 as this pericope started with Priscilla and Aquila leaving Rome and settling in into a new Mediterranean neighborhood. As they melded into the background, the synagogue leader became a Christian after Paul's harangue. As the Christian message shifted from the local synagogue to next door, Priscilla and Aquila again came into the forefront after Apollo's initial oratory.

#### *Integrated Principle 3*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, the partnership needs to provide a collective front and not be confined to gender stereotypical roles, knowing when to push to the forefront together and when to retrieve into the background.

## V. HONESTY

The fact remains that Caesar's order for Jews to leave Rome was the motivation for Priscilla and Aquila to live a diasporic life. Jiménez (2014) proposed that at that time Christian pilgrims were reaching Rome and since the public meetings were happening in Rome's synagogues, this caused a division which resulted in two groups, that is, traditional Pharisees, and the Messianic Jews. He indicated that the conflicts between these groups often became violent, which forced Claudius to make his proclamation. Acts 18 showed the volatility of these two Jewish groups in Corinth as well. When Gallio did not respond to the Jews complaint against Paul, the Jews turned on their synagogue leader and beat him; the Romans posted guards in Corinth did not engage in these brawls. Note that when Luke narrated this account, it is with a certain element of honesty.

Moody (1995) speculated that since there is no specific record of when and how Priscilla and Aquila chose to follow Christ, that they could have been exposed to this message by the Pentecostal pilgrims especially since none of the listed Apostles had visited Rome by that time. Furthermore, in Paul's time Corinth was a metropolitan city with people from different professions and backgrounds such as soldiers, businessmen, merchants, slaves, and sailors from different parts of the known world (Barbero, 2001). This was before the age of information technology so there would be different challenges in finding likeminded people. Szesnat (1993) reasoned that when Paul arrived in Corinth, he would have sought the tentmakers quarter and/or the Jewish quarter in Corinth to find work and accommodation. Of course, this brought up the question of why Paul chose not to stay in the religious quarter or with the Pharisees but that is less significant in this context.

What is obvious from this pericope is that Priscilla and Aquila arrived in Corinth before Paul, and that the party had not interacted with Paul previously. Deduction encourages that living as tentmakers and Christ-followers, they must have had a presence in Corinth for Paul to find them. After all, the Scripture did not say that Paul had any special vision or direction to specifically find this couple. Considering the metropolitan nature of Corinth, it is improbable that they were the only tentmakers in that city. Furthermore, being only tentmakers would not have been enough for Paul to live and work with them. Consider also that they chose to leave Rome so as not to deny the truth, indicating a certain honesty with which they lived and interacted with others. Adealbert (1928) reasoned on this front that Paul had a reputation of independence that that Priscilla must have with the honesty of courage to live her life and for Paul to work with them.

Dasgupta (2018) elucidated that honesty is the hallmark of an authentic leader since an honest person chooses not to dupe others. In the case of Priscilla and Aquila, they chose to live honestly, even when it forced them to live away from Rome. They did not compromise on their belief on Jesus being the salvation for all. Tang, and Liu (2012) used honesty and integrity synonymously and found that when leaders showed a higher level of honesty, this improved ethical behavior in secular people to a greater effect than followers who had some religious foundation. Note again that Priscilla and Aquila chose to behave in an honest way, within their partnership, and with others. They had certain similarities with Paul in that they stayed honest in living their beliefs and continuing

missional work. There is no intent at deceit as was the case with Ananias and Saphira (another partnership contrast). When they heard Apollo's oratory, they were compelled to complete the narrative, not with a motivation to manipulate, but to ensure that the message relayed was complete for Apollo's future audiences.

#### *Integrated Principle 4*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, the partners must be honest in motivations since this affects actions since motivations and actions transcend gender.

## VI. KINDNESS

Of the six times that Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned in Scripture, Maloney (2003) proposed that she is mentioned twice before Aquila, and this should portray her significance in missional work. This perspective can readily be refuted since the author claims the church being primitive at that time such that the underlying assumption may be that in a patrilineal society the male should be mentioned first as the male would have a more significant role in a marriage and/or partnership. As such, this author pontificated that the New Testament authors expressed acts of kindness by mentioning her first in some of the passages. However, the church, even in its infancy was counterculture such as appealing to people who were either outcasts or in lower socio-economic standing. One can argue that who is mentioned first is irrelevant, that they are presented together speaks more of cross-gender partnership than of stereotypical gender roles, or some overcompensation, thereof.

Stenschke (2009) posed the potential that the Jews in Ephesus were more open to the Christian message because Priscilla and Aquila were less abrasive than Paul in connecting with the local community. This potentiates a certain extent of reciprocity since Priscilla and Aquila were kind in their expression of faith and they contributed to the local economy directly as tentmakers, that the Ephesian Jews responded in a similar kindness. After all, they wanted Paul to stay longer with them. Based on this pericope, reason encourages that the absence of Priscilla and Aquila from the violent Jewish conflict in Corinth as an act of kindness. Note that the recorded violence was within the local Jewish community. Neither Gallio the proconsul, Paul, nor Priscilla and Aquila took part on either side of that conflict. The couple remained in the local community for a certain length of time after this violent eruption before departing for Syria. Note that the Christian minority in Corinth would need encouragement in the aftermath. Therefore, it can be argued that the extended stay was an act of kindness towards this minority community. During this Corinthian rift, instead of continuing to contend with the Jews in their synagogue, Paul transferred the debate to the home of Justus, who lived next to the synagogue (Goodspeed, 1950). It could be argued that this was an attempt at de-escalation and therefore an act of kindness by Paul in providing a safer environment for the minority and a kindness from Justus in opening his home for such conversation.

When Priscilla and Aquila travelled to Ephesus, they eventually met Apollo after Paul left for Caesarea. Preisker (1931) eluded that Priscilla and Aquila recognized the passion with which Apollo preached his message and that they responded based on

that initial impression. Kindness came to the forefront here as well because after they had heard Apollo's argument with the Ephesian Jews, they took him aside to instruct him in the fullness of the gospel message. Again, they engaged with Apollo together to reason with him in private conversation instead of in public forum. Consider that if no Jew opposed the Christian message in Ephesus, then there would be no need for Apollo to debate with them on Jesus being the messiah so that in this case, their kindness was to complete his instruction so that he could make a stronger case for Jesus with the Ephesian Jews. Since Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers in Rome and in Corinth, it is logical that they would remain tentmakers in Ephesus as well. The scripture is not specific in that regard. Smith (2014) indicated that during his stay in Ephesus, Paul retained his occupation as a tentmaker. Priscilla and Aquila had travelled with him from Corinth to Ephesus so their act of kindness of his staying and working with them would continue. Of course, this kindness extends to the congregation as the missionaries did not need to live on the donations of the congregations.

Caldwell, and Ndalamba (2017) defined kindness as treating people as individuals and not as objects, or merely relegated to the organizational construct. Paul had a healthy reputation by the time he crossed paths with Priscilla and Aquila in Corinth. Like them, he chose to work as a tentmaker, funding his mission work. He was not just a renter but worked with them and that Corinthian experience. They hosted him for an extended stay, not just as a fellow tentmaker but as a fellow Christian. Furthermore, Luke records Priscilla and Aquila by name, not just the name of the collective household, which aligned with how Paul treated them since marriage does not remove individuality from the partnership. Paul treated them as fellow workers in Christ which expressed the kindness of not seeing them as hosts but at the individual level. Similarly, Priscilla and Aquila, together, did not reach for Paul to grasp at Paul as an avenue to fame but as fellow sufferers in their diaspora.

### *Integrated Principle 5*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each partner must exude kindness towards each other recognizing individuality and the collectivity of their experiences.

## VII. OPTIMISM

Nguyen (2013) posited that Priscilla and Aquila left Rome after the Claudius edit in 49 AD and travelled to Corinth, then to Ephesus and finally returning to Rome in 54AD after the death of Claudius. This meant that the couple were optimistic in their decision to leave Rome but not their faith where faith provided a peace that they were compelled to share even as they lost their home. This would afford others the opportunity of religious freedom, especially in Corinth and Ephesus. Another optimism in this cycle is that when the duo decided to do the right thing and maintain their faith, that they had hope that they would be able to return home, after all, they did not have to return to Rome, especially considering the Christian reception in Ephesus. Förster (2014) posed the possibility that Roman legal practice made it possible that the Claudius edict was not enforced. This is a key difference between the Tiberius Edict,

which was enforced, with this latter possibility that it might not have been. If indeed the Claudius edict was not enforced, this makes the optimism of returning to Rome more reasonable.

During their stay in Corinth, Paul's harangue convinced Crispus, the synagogue leader to believe in Jesus Christ as the messiah (Wire, 1986). Priscilla and Aquila were present when this conversion and its aftermath took place. Apart from his former role, another important thing to note is the name change of the ex-synagogue leader since Crispus meant unsteady and Sosthenes meant steady strength. When this person became a believer, he was severely beaten by his former compatriots. Acts recorded that the Romans took no part in this religious squabble) and it does not record Sosthenes recanting his newfound freedom. Even after this incident, Priscilla and Aquila stayed in Corinth for a little while before leaving. They were Jews living in Rome at one point so them staying in Corinth in this volatile situation put their own lives at risk again, which Paul acknowledged later. This speaks to optimism of immediacy since they did not pack up their bags immediately and set sail. They were the religious minority and this tragic event did not convince them to abandon Christianity as they pursued similar interactions in Ephesus.

Notice also the behavior in Ephesus. While the Ephesians were more receptive of this new belief system, Paul expressed a certain optimism in parting ways with Priscilla and Aquila (Wolter, 1987). By contrast, Pilette (1992) affirmed that Paul neither recruited them as co-workers nor did he give them orders. Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila were living in Corinth during the Jewish riot so that reputation between them would have been established enough for them to also travel to Ephesus together. This indicates that when Paul left them in Ephesus to continue to the next leg of his missionary journey, that he was optimistic enough to move on without providing them specific instructions of how to build on the work that was done. Similarly, when Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollo's oratory in Ephesus, acted on optimism when they chose to instruct him on the complete gospel. This optimism is further bolstered by Oh (2002) with the suggestion that the Bible presented no evidence of the theological background of Priscilla and Aquila while records indicated that Paul and Apollo were theologically educated; the couple instructed Apollo and he received their instruction.

Stander et al. (2015) research showed that even in under-resourced and non-mature organizations, optimism existed at higher levels in the context of authentic leadership. Consider the context of this pericope, and how this couple responded to the challenges. Priscilla and Aquila left their home because of a Roman edict, having no idea when they would return home. They were Christian Jews, who were the minority in Rome, in Corinth, and in Ephesus. In those challenging situations, they retained their newfound faith and continued practicing their occupation as tentmakers. They maintained a presence in each of these locations such that Paul did not provide them with specific instructions. As such, their optimism shows in such austere conditions for surely they were under-resourced and Christianity was still in infancy; and yet, they continued to share their faith, chose to be associated with Paul and the perils that came with that, and they instructed Apollo.

### *Integrated Principle 6*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, each party must choose to remain optimistic for the struggle that they find themselves in.

## VIII. TRUST

Torrey (1911) argued that the primitive Christian congregation consisted of predominantly females. While this can be contested since no gender has monopoly on religion and the concept of primitive church borders on naive, he posed that women formed the backbone of the early church and this has some semblance of truth since the New Testament mentions many women by name. This means that even from the very beginning, women formed a core part of the Church Universal. Consider that Mary (the mother of Jesus) was visited by the angel before God told Joseph. If nothing else, this shows that God trusts women and men; prime examples being Priscilla and Aquila. Men and women limit themselves when they specify gender stereotypical roles instead of God-specific roles.

Ward (1959) focused on chronology noting that Paul arrived in Corinth from Athens in 50AD and leaving with them to Ephesus in 52AD. He also noted that Paul left Ephesus, but Priscilla and Aquila remained. Coffelt (2007) recognized that Paul, being male, affirmed other females as well such as Phoebe, and Junia. This indicates that Paul looked beyond gender to understand how people contributed to the work of Christ. Maness (1998) reasoned that Priscilla and Aquila functioned efficiently, regardless of Paul's presence. They were successful tentmakers for if they were not, their occupation would not be as portable as it was. One can argue that it took them as a pair to be effect but remember that often paired with others, and rarely did solo work.

Horton (1932) posited on the level of trust since Paul had already lived and worked with them so was aware of their sound judgement and mature character. Again, no distinction is made segregating Priscilla from Aquila (or vice versa). He reminisced that sufficient trust was established between the duo and Paul such that Apollo accepted instruction from them. This speaks volumes to trust in at least three directions in this rather delicate and austere time for Christianity; Paul trusting the couple (after all he lived and worked with them), Priscilla and Aquila trusting Paul even when he was abrasive, them trusting Apollo to take instruction and Apollo trusting that he was receiving correct instruction. In contrast, note that the Bible in its current form did not exist at that time in history. Cenac (2011) claimed that the Holy Spirit is given to emergent leaders to give them extraordinary faith, boldness, and power for the good of the people. It seemed to be the case for Priscilla and Aquila. While the Bible does not reveal that they practiced glossolalia, or that they were theologians or philosophers, but they spent time with the likes of Paul and Apollo which suggests an unexpected boldness. That they used this boldness, together, effectively also indicates God trusting them and them trusting God.

### *Integrated Principle 7*

To have an effective cross-gender partnership, one must be willing to trust. Building and maintaining trust takes time so this is a long-term investment in moving towards an objective.

## IX. SUMMARY

This article was about cross-gender partnership and women in leadership from the Acts 18 pericope. Luke started the narrative with the edict from Claudius Caesar which motivated the Jews in Rome to leave. As part of that diaspora, Priscilla and Aquila set up their tentmaking business in Corinth. When Paul arrived in that city, he stayed with the couple, earned his keep as a tentmaker, and debated with the local Jews at their synagogue which started a religious riot as the synagogue leader converted. Roman soldiers stationed there did not intervene. After some time, Paul travelled with Priscilla and Aquila to Ephesus, where the reception was much warmer. Again, he stayed and worked with them. While the Ephesian Jews wanted him to stay, he left for his next missionary journey while Priscilla and Aquila stayed, which gave them the opportunity to educate Apollos on the completeness of the Christian message.

From a contemporary leadership theory perspective, literature indicated that scholars do not still have a consistent definition of authentic leadership, but certain aspects seem to percolate (listed here in alphabetical order): Accountability, Altruism, Fairness, Honesty, Kindness, Optimism, and Trust. Furthermore, the actions of the leader need to match their words as this forms the perception of the followers. Therefore, the lens of authentic leadership was applied to the behavior depicted by Priscilla and Aquila in exploring cross-gender leadership during the infancy of Christianity.

This passage encourages that successful cross-gender partnership and leadership requires accountability within and without the partnership, leveraging altruism because hardship should be expected, fairness of the talents that each person brings regardless of their gender identity, expression of honesty in intent, motivation, and action, kindness in stepping into delicate situations to provide corrective action, optimism in continually evolving situations, and finally trust within the partnership understanding that trust itself is fragile; taking a long time to build and easily ruined.

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### About the Author

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## WHEN DIVINE HISTORY TRANSFORMS LIVES: A SOCIO- RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ESTHER 7

Kimberly A. Gentry

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The purpose of this paper examines the intricacies of the cumbersome transformational leadership style to provide insight into the details and how to implement the style into one's personal leadership methods. Looking into the biblical examples, the inner texture of Esther 7 demonstrates how Queen Esther utilized transformational leadership to initiate change and innovation, in order to save the Jewish people in the Persian Empire. All four "I's" of transformational leadership behaviors are explained and seen within the inner texture of Esther 7, and the paper productively contributes various methods of how one could learn and adapt the example into one's personal leadership style. The correlation of the story of Esther and transformational leadership truly displays divine history and the work of God to provide biblical examples for his followers to utilize.

*Keywords:* Transformational Leadership, Esther, Inner Texture, Biblical Application

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership populates the drive for their followers to grow, innovate, and pursue renown ideals in order to change and elevate themselves individually or a whole organization. However, this style of leadership takes a great deal of specialized detail to hone in what it makes the characteristics of transformational leadership so productive within the organization. Trying to find excellent examples of transformational leaders in history may be tough for aspiring leaders, and it is crucial for biblical leaders to learn by example from the models given in the biblical text. Throughout history, numerous accounts of leadership styles and methods have been recorded to understand effective ways of leading; the Bible contains various examples

of leadership that scholars may take and learn from to better comprehend different leadership styles. Reading the text within the narrative and assessing the context in the literary meaning provides a research lens into the text (Bachmann, 2014). Therefore, it is crucial to work through the research that has been studied to address the problem of what sets apart transformational leaders from other leadership styles.

Studies have shown that transformational leadership fixates on empowering their followers to grow in new ways; Imran et al. (2016) asserts that transformational leadership plays an essential role in the capability the organization's learning and management styles. Therefore, scholars are interested in what specific ways that the leader can utilize different tasks to greater increase the organization's capacity. This results in competitive advantages, employee retention, and follower engagement increasing to better the organization as a whole. Leaders work hard to establish their leadership style in ways that can be easily seen and understood by their followers. However, studies have helped these leaders decide what, when, and how to implement leadership traits within their own organization, and there have also been numerous studies detailing the reactions that the followers have towards transformational leaders. Kirkman et al. (2009) found that the perceptions of transformational leaders is directly correlated to the power distance within the organization, but every culture is unique in many ways and reactions will vary based on organizational culture. Therefore, studies comparing and contrasting the transformational leadership style across cultures would be useful in understanding what specific characteristics make the style of transformational leadership stand out from other styles. Knowing these traits will help leaders determine when to utilize this leadership method, but looking into the biblical examples of transformational leadership may work as a learning platform for the leader use as a tool. With both the cultural comparisons and the biblical examples, a leader has the resources to strengthen or adapt their leadership style.

Research Question: Based on the story of Esther, what key factors does a transformational leader comprises that sets them apart from other leaders in order to make a difference, and does the position of the leader impacts the outcomes of the situation?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational leadership is known to be one of the most popular leadership theories in today's society; Yukl (2013) explains transformational leadership as a heightening of the follower's moral values to generate more energy and efficiency within the organization's production. This style of leadership focuses on empowering their followers to reach and meet new organizational standards; transformational leaders work hard to make sure that all of their followers feel valued and apart of the organization. The way these leaders achieve these goals is through team innovation tactics; Eisenbeiss et al. (2008) share that transformational leaders encourage innovation and design an environment for worth. This allows the freedom where followers can come up with new and creative ideas in terms of the organization's success. Transformational leaders utilize behavioral tactics to maneuver the desired results from their followers while still seeking the best interest of the followers. Some of the fundamental ideals that transformational leaders stress are team engagement and

coaching/ mentoring. With all of these goals in mind, transformational leaders must figure out ways to appeal to the mission and vision of the organization in order to stimulate an atmosphere within the organization that is forward-thinking.

### *Charisma*

Leaders that demonstrate the qualities of charisma tend to focus on ideal in a way that enthusiastically motivates their followers to exhibit the same level of passion towards that same ideal. Chilson (2015) explained that transformational leaders might demonstrate charismatic qualities in order to foster a sense of loyalty and enthusiasm through the followers and the organization. Loyalty within the followers provide the transformational leader room to innovate and establish new systems to push the organization to new levels. The comfortability factor between the leader and their followers all comes down to trust, confidence, and beliefs. In order for loyalty to be prevalent within the organization, both parties must feel comfortable. With this stated, Bass (1990) asserted that charismatic leaders demonstrate a high level of influence that followers strive to identify with. Therefore, this helps cast the vision of what is expected and seen within the organization. Friedman (2001) asserts that leadership is not what one may contain but to lead in truth and virtue empowering their followers through charisma. One best method of displaying charisma as a transformational leader may be seen within the four behaviors of leadership or best known as the four "I's". Each of these "I's" have distinct characteristics that demonstrate charisma as well as common behaviors that transformational leaders use within their organization. Just like every other leadership style or personality, these four behaviors are the centralized focus of the majority of transformational leaders, because these "I's" have been deemed competent implementing charisma in producing change.

### *Four I's of Transformational Leadership*

To truly understand the impact that a transformational leader contains, it is essential to identify and comprehend the four behaviors of transformational leadership. Each of these key identification behaviors is the backbone of what makes up a transformational leader; as previously stated, inspiration and motivation intrinsically are the difference between transactional and transformational leadership. Organizations must understand the difference between each leadership style because transactional leadership works on the basis of a hierarchy with a contingent reward. However, transformational leaders would be less effective with a hierarchy system; because these leaders would not be able to inspire and motivate their followers productively (Chen et al., 2013). The reason being is that there would be a higher power distance between both parties, and the result would ultimately turn into transactional versus transformational. Therefore, the best way for leaders to transform their followers and organization as a whole would be through the incorporation of the four key transformational leadership behaviors that make up this style.

*Individualized Consideration.* The first transformational leadership behavioral characteristic is the ideal of individualized consideration, and this is where

transformational leaders have the ability to identify differing key characteristics among their followers (Bass, 1990). Understanding the differences that make up the uniqueness of each follower allows the platform for the leader to step in through a mentoring role to finesse each quality in a way that is best for the follower and organization as a whole. Yukl (2013) asserts that the behavioral characteristic of individualized consideration solely focuses on providing support to the follower, and this can be conducted in various number of ways, including encouragement tactics, coaching, mentoring, and developmental pieces of training. By providing support, the purpose is not only to focus on benefitting the organization but to grow each individual follower specializing in their specific needs. However, transformational leaders must be aware of the organizational cultural surroundings to know when, where, and how to implement supporting tactics to show individualized consideration for their followers. When timing and specific characteristics gel together in a way that works in harmony establishes the connection for individualized consideration within each individual employee.

*Inspirational Motivation.* According to Wais Mohammad, et al. (2017), this type of transformational characteristics is fixated on the idea of casting a relatable vision that sparks all the interest of the followers. However, transformational leaders must maneuver the vision in an optimistic and reachable setting, and the followers naturally will tend to drift towards the same outlook of the vision or how to complete the organizational goals. Patterns may be seen within inspirational motivation because leaders that incorporate patterns within their vision casting will have a higher rate of investment from their followers. With this being said, inspirational motivation contains crucial meaning behind what distinguishes a transformational leader over a transactional leader. Due to the fact that a transformational leader does not only focus on a contingent reward but also shares the why behind the meaning. Followers strive to find meaning within their own work, and transformational leaders provide the layout of that desired connection. This is why inspirational motivation is so crucial to the style of transformational leadership because the drive of the following group stems from the confidence of empowerment in which inspirational motivation feeds off of. Leaders must be able to read the situation from the followers to know when and how to incorporate inspirational motivation.

*Idealized Influence.* The crucial third behavior of transformational leadership deals with the power of influence over the following group. Yukl (2013) explains idealized influence as the method for which followers identify with their leader due to the example set before them. This behavior demonstrates how the transformational leader is able to set shared strategic priorities that the followers may identify quickly and efficiently that set the direction he or she desires their followers to go. By setting this example, the followers understand what is expected of them and can perform productively (Miller, 2009). Identification plays an integral part in making sure that the following group may be easily influenced by the vision and mission of the organization. This helps the transformational leader lead across the organization competently, and this behavior makes the trusting process in their leader easier based on the example set

in front of them. Therefore, everyone within and outside of the organization understands the expectations and identifications in consideration of that transformational leader.

*Intellectual Stimulation.* The last transformational behavioral characteristic is intellectual stimulation, and this is where the leader challenges the follower's way of thinking to look at something in a new way that may spark innovation and change. According to Robinson et al. (2016), intellectual stimulation fosters a greater sense of adaptable creativity than inspirational motivation or idealized influence, and the reason being that when the follower is intellectually stimulated in new ways. Their mind is open to new ideas and systems that grow the organization, and it is with the stimulated mindset that the follower can make adjustments and changes within the systems of the organization. However, it is crucial for the leader to take into account the cultural aspect of the organization, because based on the cultural setting inside and outside of the organization sets up the framework to the extent that the followers will become intellectually stimulated. Arnold et al. (2013) suggest that, on top of considering the cultural context of the organization, the leader should also acknowledge gender differences within the follower set when trying to stimulate the group intellectually. Male and females both think in different ways and leaders that can effectively tie in both viewpoints while also challenging the mindset of their followers demonstrate a true level of transformational leaders.

#### *Holistic Viewpoint*

All four of the key transformational leadership behaviors provide multiple angles in which the leader may meet any need the follower has, and this becomes the basis for the leader to have various avenues to help their followers. Based on Mwambazambi et al. (2014), there are four dimensions to organizational transformation including spiritual, intellectual, moral and socio-political dimensions. With this being said, it is essential for transformational leaders to take a holistic approach in order to empower the following group to reach new levels truly. Parolini et al. (2009) assert that the leader focuses on the needs of the entire organization and takes a look into every aspect in a holistic approach to understand how each factor affects each other. There are moving parts to an organization and each individual follower; taking a holistic approach to lead within an organization forms a greater connection and relationship between the leader and their followers. Relationships can be grown or fostered through individualized consideration because this behavior makes every follower feel valued and apart of the team. Coordinating the follower's value creates a vision that looks holistically at the style of transformational leadership. Unlike other leadership styles, the holistic view is one of the key factors that sets transformational leaders apart.

#### *Transformational Leadership versus Transactional Leadership*

Scholars have often considered both transformational and transactional leadership to be very similar in nature, and sometimes the two may get confused in which one works best in certain situations. According to Groves et al. (2011), transformational leaders are much more focused on how the individualized growth of

their followers affect the whole organization. On the other hand, transactional leaders look at the organization's growth and how it will affect the followers. Both angles look at the same connection, but it is indifferent viewing lenses that make each leadership style unique. Yukl (2013) asserts that transactional leaders motivate their followers with a contingent reward to reach new organizational goals and standards. Transactional leadership in nature is much simpler than transformational because transactional does not take the time and consideration to recognize/ mentor each follower. Therefore, organizations needing a more practical leader pushing motivation through a contingent reward would want a leader to implement transactional leadership, but an organization wanting to invest in their follower's personal and professional growth would want to incorporate transformational leadership instead. With this being said, organizational leaders should look into the needs or desires of the organization to know either to implement transformational or transactional leadership.

### *Biblical Perspective and Application*

The Bible gives researchers and scholars great examples of leadership styles and scenarios that demonstrate the effectiveness of the leadership styles. In the time of the Persian Empire, the Jews were God's chosen people and He used the community in different ways (Talmon, 1963). Even though God is not mentioned within the Book of Esther; Leder (2011) states that Queen Esther successfully demonstrates leadership characteristics which challenge the societal norms. Transformational leadership is known to be a popular style of leadership, and this can be displayed throughout the biblical text. According to Grossman (2009), the book of Esther strategically utilizes a dynamic analogy so that the readers trying to learn leadership principles must try to find more insights embedded in the unknown. As Christian scholars, it is imperative to consult the Bible when learning about various leadership qualities, especially when considering one's leadership style within an organization. A method for analyzing the biblical text is to conduct a socio-rhetorical criticism analysis of exegesis, and the purpose of socio-rhetorical criticism is to provide a viewpoint to literature that focuses on merit, positions, and beliefs (Robbins, 1998). There are several textures that socio-rhetorical criticism contains that include inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture. Each texture provides different angles that show the reader various lenses of the meaning behind the text. One great example for an aspiring Christian leader to learn from is the story of Esther and her own leadership style. By conducting a socio-rhetorical analysis of exegesis on the book of Esther, a researcher may recognize how Queen Esther utilized the transformational leadership style to help have her people through the four behavioral characteristics.

### III. INNER TEXTURE ANALYSIS OF ESTHER 7

According to Robbins (1998), the inner texture analysis of a biblical text focuses on the words as an instrument for communication, and multiple kinds of inner texture looks at the words in the texts in different meanings. Every kind of inner texture utilizes differing methods that allow the reader to understand another lens of the text, and these kinds include repetitive, progressive, narrational, opening-middle-closing,

argumentative, and sensory- aesthetic texture (Robbins, 1998). Keeping this in mind, taking a look into the inner texture of Esther 7 explains how Queen Esther put her life on the line to save her people through transformational leadership, because King Xerxes' mind was transformed by the intellectual challenging stimulation from the Queen (Ellis et al., 2018). This becomes the basis of how scholars can take the stories from the Bible and leadership theories displayed within the story to apply them to life today, because understanding the meaning or the why behind these biblical examples allow the reader to comprehend the actual impact. Osborne (2006) explains how meaning can differ per the culture one is reading the pericope through the lens of, and this idea demonstrates the importance of studying the inner texture of the passage for the truth. The various kinds of inner texture portray this desired meaning, and each figure shares the words in the literature and how crucial understanding the signification within the lines of the biblical text. Knowing the impact, leaders can personally utilize the examples from the story of Esther to provide leadership examples to their followers today.

Figure 1

*Repetitive Texture and Pattern*

1	King			went
		Haman		
			Queen Esther	
2	King			asked
			Queen Esther	
3			Queen Esther	answered
			my people	
4	my people		my people	sold to be deystroyed, killed, and annihilated
5	King Xerxes			asked
			Queen Esther	
6	Esther		Esther	said
		Haman		
7	King			got up in a rage
		Haman		beg
			Queen Esther	
8	King			returned, exclaimed
		Haman		falling
			Esther	reclining
9				said
	King			said
		Haman		
			Mordecai	
10		Haman		impaled
			Mordecai	
	King			fury sibsided

*Note.* This figure demonstrates the repetitive kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

In Figure 1, the repetitive texture shows the layout of Esther 7 and how King Xerxes is a main character within the inner texture. His name is consistently repeated, showing the conversation between Him and the Queen, and his name becomes

interesting to the reader. Due to the fact that King Xerxes is the person that Queen Esther is wanting to influence in changing his mindset. Jamieson et al. (2000) suggest that the repetitive texture shows the level of importance the Jews were in the eyes of King Xerxes. The reason being is that expressions and verbs demonstrated within the inner texture show passion in the conversation between the King and Queen. For example, the repetitiveness in the inner texture lays out all of the harsh actions taking place that include destroyed, rage, and fury. Culturally, the repetitive texture demonstrates the methods of how important the actions were of the characters (Moyer, 2010). Therefore, the repetitive inner texture solidifies this ideal that Queen Esther was utilizing transformational leadership to influence King Xerxes into changing his mindset, and by changing his mindset, Queen Esther was able to save her people from being destroyed.

Figure 2

*Progressive Texture and Pattern*

1	King	Haman	Queen Esther		Banquet	
2	King		Queen Esther		asked	request, petition granted
3			Queen Esther		answered	"grant me my life"- this is my petition
4				I, my people	sold to be destroyd, killed, and annihilated	
5	King Xerxes		Queen Esther		asked	"who is he"
6			Esther		said	
7	King	Haman			terrified	
		Haman			rage	
8	King	Haman	Esther		begged	
					exclaimed	
9				Harbona		
10	King				said	
		Haman			impaled	

Note. This figure demonstrates the progressive kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

Figure 2 explains the pattern of progress within King Xerxes' emotions and feelings. At the beginning of the passage, the King is pleasantly enjoying conversation at the banquet; then, the passage takes a turn to questioning and the King trying to understand the complexity of a problem and at the end of the passage the King in furious ultimately killing one of his trusted advisors. Throughout these ten verses, the King's emotions took an extreme turn from one point to another point; Brown (2003) explains how this can occur because the King was used to trust one viewpoint or one ideal. When all of a sudden, what someone might think is the truth turns to be a lie that can spark a significant emotional shift in mindset on that subject. Analysts can see the implications of the progressive texture easily, as well as how important it was for Queen Esther to work on adjusting the mindset of King Xerxes. Intellectually Esther focused challenging the King to change his mind on a subject (Clines, 1991). Especially during the time of the Persian empire, Queen Esther must have utilized the transformational leadership behavior of intellectual stimulation to make sure the King's mind was

challenged enough to comprehend all sides of the situation. Analyzing the progressive texture allows scholars to see how the repetition and patterns of the literature provide the meaning, and in this case, specifically King Xerxes' emotional progression.

*Figure 3*

*Narrative Texture and Pattern*

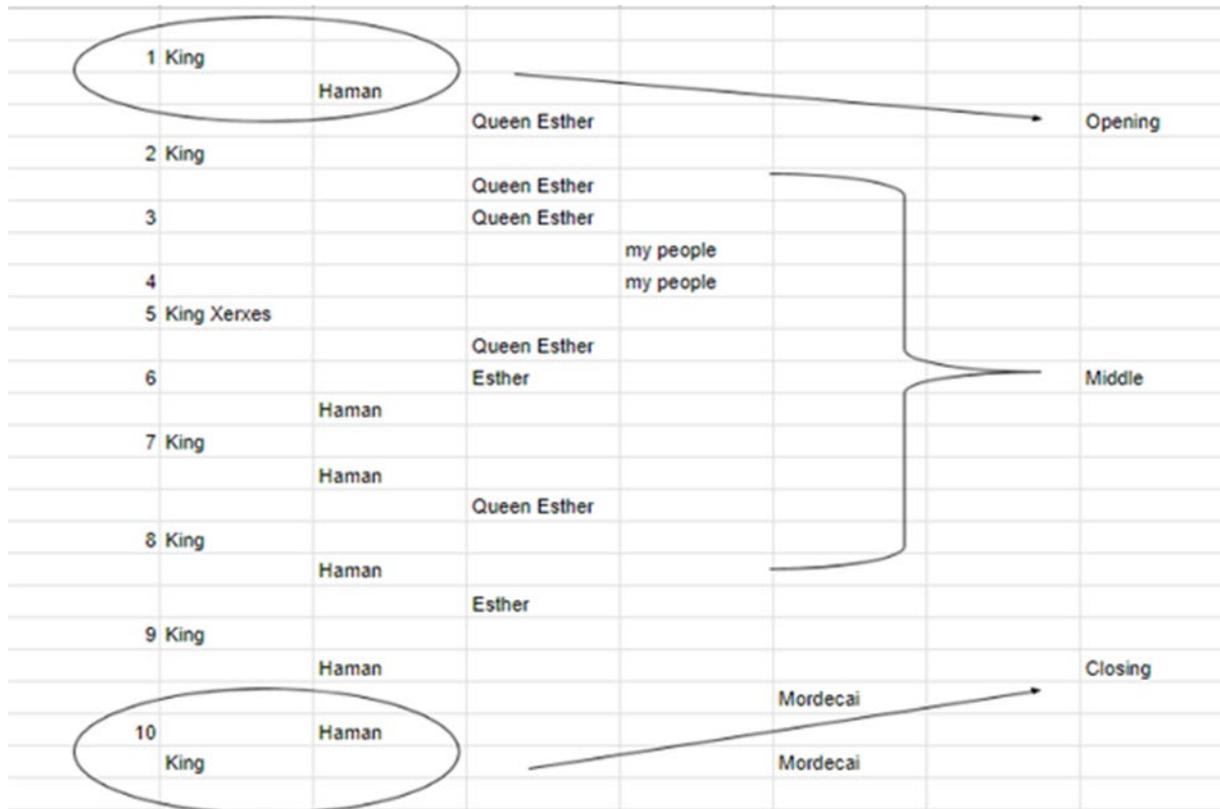
1	Narrator		
2		King Xerxes	
3			Queen Esther
4			Queen Esther
5		King Xerxes	
6			Queen Esther
7	Narrator		
8	Narrator	King Xerxes	
9		King Xerxes	Harbona
10	Narrator		

*Note.* This figure demonstrates the narrative kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

The narrative type of inner texture displays the pattern of who is actually speaking in the text, and Figure 3 shows four speakers throughout the passage (Robbins, 1998). The narrator contains a strong presence within the passage and displays the narrative inner texture (Berlin, 2001). Besides the narrator setting the stage for the passage and finalizing the passage at the end, the main conversation within the passage was between both King Xerxes and Queen Esther. Culturally at this time, it was a big deal for Queen Esther to challenge the King and directly speak to him about kingdom matters, but Esther knew that before she could speak about the situation, she must please and get favor from the King. Within the passage, she exposes Haman's plan about persecuting the Jewish people, and the King decides to switch Haman's plan on himself. One key factor within the narrative texture that poses a question is the fact that Haman actually does not have one voice within the passage, but a minor character of Harbona does have a small voice. Grossman (2012) explains that this literally factor provides a greater level of intensity between the relationship of the characters within the passage. The narrator explains that even though Haman is present in the passage, his voice does not have the worth to be noted or even explained within the scenario, and this displays that King Xerxes was solely focused on Queen Esther and the situation at hand.

*Figure 4*

*Opening-Middle-Closing Texture and Pattern*



*Note.* This figure demonstrates the opening-middle-closing kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

In Figure 4, the path of the pattern scheme inside the texture displays that the passage starts with the King and Haman and ends with the King and Haman, but in the middle, King Xerxes and Queen Esther make up the bulk of the passage. Robbins (1998) explains that the opening-middle-closing texture utilizes all of the previous patterns of texture to make up the passage. One may find it interesting that in the narrative texture, Haman actually never had a voice. However, in the opening-middle-closing texture, Haman begins and ends the passage with King Xerxes. With the strong presence Haman contains at the beginning of the passage, Queen Esther kept her identity a secret to not become a large target (Carruthers, 2009). Once Queen Esther began her proposal and story to enlighten the King, then the King's focus switched to solely on listening to his Queen to hear her complete story. Through the use of intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, Queen Esther was able to reach the King and show her identification with the Jewish people by calling them "my people". Opening-middle-closing inner texture provides a picture framework for a scholar to layout the main characters seeing how they intertwine together to make up the story of the passage.

### Figure 5

#### Argumentative Texture and Pattern

Thesis	3	Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life - this is my petition. And spare my people - this is my request.
Rationales	4	For I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed, and annihilated. If we merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king.
Events	8	Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, "Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?"
	9	As soon as the word left the king's mouth, he covered Haman's face.
		Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king."
Conclusion	10	So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.

*Note.* This figure demonstrates the argumentative kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

Figure 5 demonstrates how Queen Esther needed a favor from the King and that she has to first please the King with a banquet honoring him. The thesis turned out to be proven true by the events occurring to make the conclusion the outcome desired by the thesis, and this all stemmed from the successful banquet that Queen Esther put together. Tomasino (2019) asserts that feasts or banquets are significantly important in the culture of the Persian empire and that these banquets are a critical factor in what helps make up the structure of the passage. Banquets set the stage where everyone comes together for the feast, and this is where the King feels comfortable and pleased. Therefore, in verse 3, Queen Esther first confirms the pleasure in the sight of the King before making her request, and socially this created the perfect atmosphere in front of Haman for the Queen to expose his plan to the King. The argumentative texture shows how crucial it is for certain events to take place in order for the thesis to come true by the conclusion. Robbins (1998) explains that sometimes the events within the argumentative texture can sometimes either be logical in order or personality reasons of the characters in the passage, and inner texture analysis utilizes the words of the text to present and solidify the argument.

Figure 6

*Sensory-Aesthetic Texture and Pattern*

1	King	Haman	Queen Esther		Banquet asked answered sold asked asked said	→ The passage begins with a lot of questions so the reader and characters understand the situation as a whole.
2	King		Queen Esther			
3			Queen Esther			
4				I, my people		
5	King Xerxes		Queen Esther			
6		Haman	Esther		terrified rage begged exclaimed said impaled	→ The passage then goes into extreme feelings where the main characters are experiencing terror, rage, and hate shown in their action.
7	King					
8	King	Haman	Esther			
9				Harbona		
10	King	Haman				

*Note.* This figure demonstrates the sensory-aesthetic kind of inner texture for Esther 7.

The last kind of inner texture is shown in Figure 6 is the sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern, and this texture works on tying in all of the senses found within the text that includes feelings, speech, and visions (Robbins, 1998). At the beginning of Esther 7, the sensory texture makes one feel that the air is light and fun with the Queen holding a banquet for the King and one of his advisors, but then Esther starts to inform the King about her request. The sensory feel turns into more of a questioning/ informative setting when the King starts to begin to ask questions. Gregory Stone et al. (2004) explains that there is a distinct focus that a transformational leader holds, and it is the focus on organizational objectives/ goals. In Queen Esther's leadership style, her sole focus was on to save her people, and therefore, the display of informative conversation occurs at the right precise moment. This moment occurred once the King was pleased and comfortable within the banquet setting. Burns (2006) explains that within this time period a communal festival was culturally pleasing allowing the King's viewpoint to change. Once he learns the truth about Haman and his plan, then the atmosphere at the banquet turns extreme, adjusting the feelings to more of an anger scenario. Hence, the reader will feel a wide range of sensory emotions throughout the passage because the sensory-aesthetic texture becomes so extreme within different parts of Esther 7.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The story of Esther paints an interesting picture about bravery, trust, and deliverance. Scholars today study the story of Esther and how the impact of resiliency within her leadership style helped save an entire population from destruction. A great deal of people take the time to determine what style of leadership does Esther utilizes in order to refresh the mindset of King Xerxes. Through the process of socio-rhetorical criticism, the inner texture method provides an outlook on the leadership style of Queen Esther through the literature. The chapter of Esther 7 captures all of the behavioral qualities of transformational leadership to assume the presumption that Queen Esther was indeed a transformational leader, and these transformational leadership behaviors include inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence. All four of these behaviors are seen in Esther 7 within the different kinds of inner texture.

In Esther 7: 1-10, the passage shows the status and rank that Queen Esther operates in the state and to King Xerxes. The position of power Esther held gave her a limited influence on the King's affairs in this cultural situation. However, through the act of individualized consideration, Queen Esther set up to hold a banquet in the King's honor, because she worked hard to understand the needs and wants of the King. Knowing that the banquet would please him and give her favor, Queen Esther grasped the implications of hosting a banquet that would make the King feel appreciated and valued. By incorporating the transformational leadership behavior of individual consideration, Kark et al. (2003) suggest that transformational leaders empower the followers through individualized consideration, and Queen Esther was utilizing this

distinct behavior to empower and build confidence within the relationship between her and the King. The progressive kind of inner texture displays the growth pattern in the action verbs, and in Esther 7, the action verbs demonstrate Queen Esther's individualized consideration with examples such as verse two with asked, answer, request, petition, and banquet. Therefore, Esther set the scene to implement other transformational leadership behaviors to empower the King to change his mindset.

The purpose of chapter 7 in Esther is for Esther to have a conversation with the King to spark intellectual stimulation and change his outlook about the situation involving the Jewish people. The political position that was bestowed on Esther provided the place for moral excellence in leadership influence (Lacocque, 1999). However, King Xerxes did not know the full extent of the situation, and the conversation turned more informative but also challenging. At the time of the Persian empire, it was a big deal for the Queen to question the King about the affairs of the kingdom, and Baxter (2011) explains that Esther was essentially putting her life on the line by confronting the King for the Jewish people. Socially, the argumentative texture of Esther 7 portrays the importance of how crucial and sensitive the conversation/ confrontation was. Therefore, Queen Esther had to strategically approach the conversation in a way that intellectually stimulated positively that did not offend the King because through empowerment King Xerxes was able to consider Queen Esther at as an equal understanding her point of purpose with the conversation. The fact that Esther was able to effectively and positively change the mindset of the King through the transformational leadership behavior of intellectual stimulation.

The third transformational behavior that Queen Esther portrayed within the passage of Esther 7 is inspirational motivation, and the narrative inner texture interprets the social relationship linking both the King and the Queen; the narrative inner texture analyzes who is actually speaking within the document, and besides the narrator, the only characters with voices are King Xerxes and Queen Esther. By not giving Haman a voice in the narrative displayed the extent of confidence and respect between the two. By having the foundation of admiration, Queen Esther was able to stand firm on using inspirational motivation for a goal to push the King in a way to drive change for the Jew's persecution. The inner texture of Esther 7 centers on the historical event where the Jews were under oppression of annihilation from Haman, one of the King's trusted advisors. With this historic event being the main factor of concern, Esther was able to inspire and motivate the King to foster change and save the Jewish people. Henning (2017) asserts that the reason Esther was so effective is the act of leading by example because she took part in every action that she requested the Jewish people to take action in. Leading followers through inspiration underlies the drive to motivate the following group, where the action effectively impacts their lives.

One of the most productive methods of leading is through hands-on examples and setting the standard that the leader desires all of their followers to strive for, and idealized influence is the behavior that transformational leaders utilize in order to create an example for their followers. Henning (2017) explains that Esther used a multifaceted approach to saving the Jewish people in which she was connected with, and this

approach included a community effort of fasting and praying to set the stage for her second method of confronting the King about Haman's plan. Coming together as a community to prepare for the conversation was a crucial part of Queen Esther's plan because she knew that the implications for the moment were important to not only her but her people. Saving the Jewish community should be a group effort, and Esther took the lead to set an example for her followers. Therefore, the Jewish community was able to learn from how Esther considered employing everyone in the plan, knowing that teamwork and a group effort provides a collective drive into completing the mission; idealized influence is the behavior in which transformational leaders spark innovation and set the measure for what is expected to come.

### *Implications for Future Research*

The transformational leadership style works on empowering followers through intellectual stimulation to inspirational motivation, and in order for this specific leadership style to work effectively, there are various moving parts that must work together in cohesion. One topic of future research would be to evaluate the system in which all of the parts work in the style. Evaluation systems are crucial in knowing the why and reason of the purpose behind transformational leadership. Therefore, future research should analyze the evaluation methods between different transformational behaviors. Another focus of future research involving transformational leadership might be to learn the adverse side effects or outcomes from implementing this style of leadership. The idea or implementation of transformational leadership mostly has a positive outlook, but sometimes there might be scenarios that occur and develop negative results. Future researchers may want to look into qualitative studies that provide adverse outcomes examples from transformational leadership. Both evaluation systems and adverse side effects can be correlated together to create an exciting subject of topic for future research that would benefit leadership studies moving forward.

## V. CONCLUSION

Leaders throughout history have strived to finesse their leadership styles in order to reach a shared goal or vision. Followers desire to admire their leaders working on completing specific tasks for the mission, and one of the popular styles of leadership to complete this is transformational leadership. There are numerous amounts of transformational leadership examples, but as previously explained, the story of Esther was a truly remarkable one. Berkman (2016) explains this level of remarkability by displaying the biblical impact the book has on the Jewish community, and utilizing the inner texture analysis of socio-rhetorical criticism, one can conclude how the historical event of saving the Jewish people from persecution indeed was a divine work from God. The progressive, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic pattern of texture all provide insight into how socially Queen Esther was able to employ transformational leadership within her efforts to put her life on the line to save her people. All four transformational leadership behaviors are explained within the inner texture, and the analysis clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the transformational leadership skills in challenging/ changing the mindset of King Xerxes. Aspiring Christian leaders that want to incorporate

the charisma and individualization of transformational leadership must consider studying the story of Esther and how culturally she changed the scene to save her people.

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### About the Author

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## THE AMERICAN WORKING WOMAN: A CENTURY IN REVIEW

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M. JAKE AGUAS

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The past century has witnessed many changes in our society and in the workplace specifically. This essay reviews the last 120 years of American women in the workplace and discusses their journey as their roles in American society continue to change. It will then identify ways women can thrive in the workplace and in their leadership potential today, as well as how this is expressed specifically in the lives of Christian women. Thriving at work is not to be achieved at the expense of not thriving at home. Thriving should include the whole person and include all areas of a woman's life.

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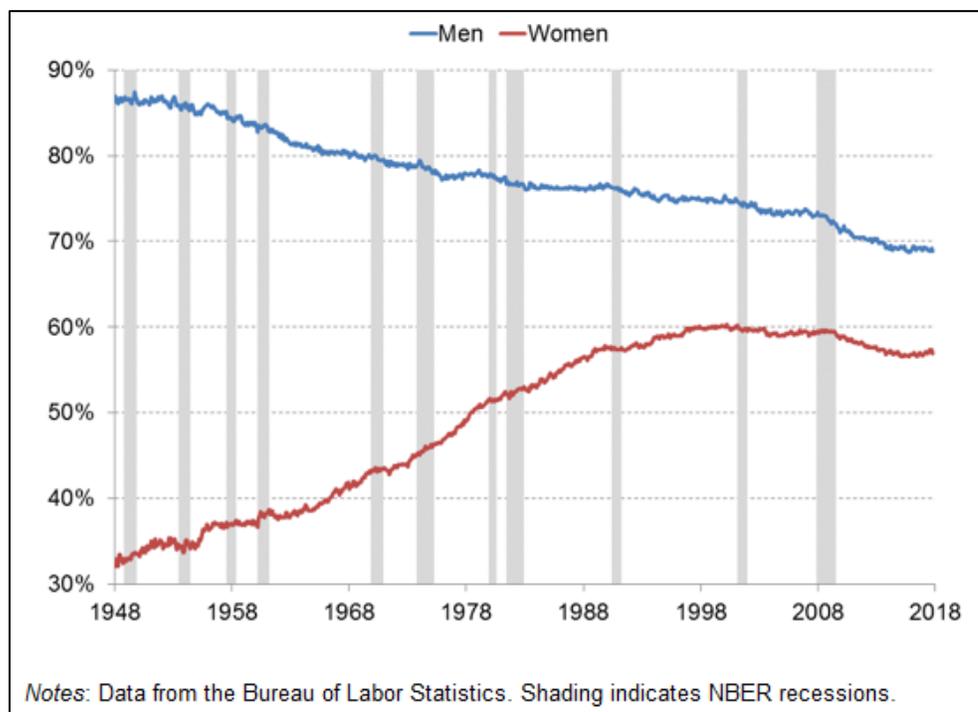
### I. INTRODUCTION

With all the talk about culture and women in the workplace, one would think that great strides are taking place for women and that more women are building careers in numerous industries. Therefore, it is surprising to see that the labor force participation rate of women in the workforce has only slightly increased in the last three to five years after a 20-year decrease, according to Albanesi and Sahin (2018) and a recent Gallup research study (Miller & Adkins, 2017). In an analysis of the previous six decades (1940 - 1999), the United States experienced a continuous increase in the female labor force participation rate—the number of women available for work as a percentage of the total female working-age population. In 1999, this rate reached an all-time high of 60%. Then, from 1999 to approximately 2015, the female participation rate trended downward until 2016, where it once again began another gradual lift (see Figure 1). Meanwhile, the

total number of women of working age—the total female labor force—had grown steadily the entire time from 66.3 million women in 2000, making up 46.5% of the total labor force, to 73.5 million in 2015, representing 46.8% of the total labor force. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that in 2024, the female representation will grow to 77.2 million, increasing female representation to 47.2% of the total labor force population (Toossi & Morisi, 2017). Havens (2013) posits that “Corporate America is interested in recruiting and retaining female talent due to its strong positive impact on the financial bottom line” even though women continue to face “harsh structural economic and workplace obstacles” (p. 7).

## Figure 1

### *Men’s and Women’s Labor Force Participation Rates in the United States*



What factors are fueling these trends, and what in the past century has contributed to our current workplace environments, specifically for women? This essay aims to review this period of American women in the workplace, discuss their changing roles throughout the decades, and identify how women overall, and Christian women specifically, can thrive in their leadership potential. The Bible provides us several examples of women in leadership roles and the effect their work had not only on those around them but on entire nations. In the end, it is not just about thriving at work but thriving as a whole person in all areas of life. Perhaps in the past, this was simply called “balance,” but this term paints a more reactive picture than a proactive one.

## II. WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

It is hard to imagine that 100 years ago women in the United States did not have the right to vote, there was no such thing as television, and, in many areas, when making a phone call, you had to ask the operator who answered when you picked up the phone to make the call for you. Among the many changes that we now enjoy, the role of women in the workplace has also experienced a significant reshaping in the United States. Political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) factors have heavily influenced their role in the American workplace (See Appendix). Perhaps the most convincing evidence is present in the overall level of the female labor force participation rate, which is currently at 57% compared to 33% in 1948 (Schiller & Hill, 2014).

### *Past*

Before World War I (1914-1918), women were primarily homemakers and cared for numerous children, which left little time for employment outside the home. Approximately 40% of single women were employed versus the fractional five percent of married women. This 35% gap persisted for many years. Unmarried women worked in clerical roles or as teachers and left the profession upon getting married to be full-time wives and mothers instead (Barnett, 2004; Schreiner, 2017). Educated middle-class married women were affected by *marriage bars*, the practice of restricting the employment of married women, which allowed men to gain the opportunity to provide for their families. This particular practice primarily targeted native-born white women. Women who did work were teachers, clerical operators, and midwives—assisting other women with in-home childbirths and receiving compensation through the barter system. Other career options included dressmaking, nursing, and domestic service. Lower class women and women of color who took jobs in manufacturing, waitressing, and domestic servants were less likely to be affected by *marriage bars*.

As the war effort increased, large numbers of women were recruited into factory jobs vacated by men who had gone off to fight in the war. Women commanded drill presses, used screw machines, operated cranes, and welded. They also became actively involved in non-manual labor opportunities such as production design, lab testing, warehouse work, and drafting rooms (Drury, 2015). When the war ended in 1918, men returned home and desired their jobs back. As men returned to the workplace, women became increasingly perceived as a threat. They faced discrimination, were paid less, and expected to produce the same quantity and quality of work as their male counterparts despite those challenges. This event, combined with a decrease in the demand for war production, set the stage for massive female layoffs.

A new decade began with the ratification of the 19th Amendment (1920), giving women the right to vote and expanding the Women's Suffrage movement. Electrification and the household appliance boom in the United States also made work around the house easier, leaving more time for women to consider school or work. Female representation in the armed services increased during World War II (1939-1945) as 350,000 women served in the U.S. Armed Forces, 100,000 in the Women's Army Corps (WAC), and 27,000 as members of the Naval Reserve program known as the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) (History.com, 2018). In addition,

60,000 Army nurses also served stateside and overseas during World War II. Recruited through popular songs, posters, and images of a woman factory laborer known as “Rosie the Riveter,” the “We Can Do It” slogan led women back into factory work as they took up positions in the war industry building ships, aircraft, military weaponry, and ammunition. They sewed aircraft upholstery, painted radium on measurement instruments, operated hydraulic presses, and served as aircraft inspectors. Still, others worked as chemists and engineers, developing weapons for the war. Notably, thousands of women worked on the Manhattan Project developing the atomic bomb at nuclear facilities in Tennessee, Washington, and New Mexico.

Women also continued in less labor-intensive roles like nursing, truck driving, and logistics. Outside the war industry, women worked in the metal, steel, and automobile industries (Weatherford, 2008), and a variety of civil service jobs. Unlike World War I, when the war was over, women remained in the workforce, pursuing careers in banking, textiles, electronics, and in clerical, secretarial, and assembly work. Jobs, however, continued to be segregated by gender, and routine repetitive work was categorized as “women’s work” in that they received lower wages for the same type of work that men performed.

Views on women in the workplace were consistent between men and women back in the 1930s. Based on a Gallup poll conducted in 1936, it was overwhelmingly believed that, if a woman was married and her husband made enough to support them both, she should not be out earning money. It was seen as a shame that she was taking the job of a man who might need that job to feed his family. This same Gallup poll was conducted again in 1972, and the outcome was flipped; the men and women surveyed approved of women in the workplace, regardless of her husband’s ability to support the family (Caplow et al., 2001).

### *Present*

While the first wave of the women’s movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century focused on suffrage issues such as gender equality, voting, and property rights (Fuller, 1845), the second wave, which began in the 1960s, addressed a wider range of topics including sexuality, family, and the workplace. Beginning in the early 1960s and lasting two decades, women were taking possession of their lives and careers and penetrated every layer of society (Time Magazine, 1976). They entered new fields, functioning with their sense of identity, integrity, and confidence. They began flooding colleges and graduate schools and entering professions in medicine, law, and business instead of education. In 1975, 25% of entering medical school students were female. Today, that number has doubled, and female matriculations have even exceeded that of men, 50.7% to 49.3%, even though the number of male applications remains slightly higher than females (Association of American Medical Colleges, 2018). Currently, academia continues to experience an increased presence in professorship, research, and student roles as women are outpacing their male counterparts, attaining more bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees. Chewning (2013) has accurately summarized the result of this crusade: “The feminist movement has encouraged younger women to believe in themselves: you are capable as men; you can compete on any and every front with the best of men” (p. 38).

In the public and private business sectors, Catalyst (2017) and Northouse (2019) posit that women are gaining momentum and representing more than half (51.5%) of managerial and leadership positions; however, they are still heavily underrepresented at the C-suite level in Fortune 500 companies, as they occupy a mere 5.4% of CEO positions (Brown, 2017). In the United States Congress, females represent 20% of the seats, slightly less than the global average for national legislatures, placing the United States' ranking at 101 of 193 countries (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017). As for the gender wage gap, Havens (2013) found that women receive 5% less in their first year out of college compared to their male peers even though they go to the same schools, receive the same grades, and major in the same subjects. This could be due to gender differences in negotiating salary and benefits at the time they were hired (Babcock, 2009). A more recent study by Artz et al. (2018) found that overall, women are asking for raises just as much as men, but are receiving them at smaller percentages. Their study, however, was centered on asking for a pay raise/promotion within an already established position, not necessarily a new hire.

Attitudes on whether someone would want a male or female boss has shown a preference shift. In a 1952 Gallup poll, men and women were asked who they would prefer as a boss: a man or a woman. This poll identified that 75% of the men said they would prefer a man, 21% were fine with either, and only 2% preferred a woman boss while 57% of the women in this study preferred a male boss and 8% preferred a female boss. This same study was repeated in November of 2017, and the results showed a dramatic shift. Men now preferred a male boss 19% of the time, 68% of the men were fine with either, and 13% preferred women. This study also showed that women now preferred a female boss 27% of the time, while they say that they had no preference for male or female 44% of the time, and preferred male bosses 28% of the time (Brenan, 2017). Gender bias in leadership preference can be rooted in the stereotypical expectations and perceptions of women in leadership roles (Northouse, 2019). These social stereotypes are dynamic, according to Diekmann and Eagly (2000). The authors assert that culture continues to embed new social characteristics that individuals then adopt as their own characteristics (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000).

Eagly and Karau (2002) discuss the balancing of feminine and masculine traits which women must carefully maneuver. They assert that "the role congruity theory of prejudice maintains that gender roles influence behavior even in the presence of a competing leadership role" (p. 590). Since women are seen to exhibit more *communal* (benevolent, trustworthy, moral) roles and men more *agentic* (competent, assertive, decisive), the balancing of these two could give the perception to others that they are less powerful, due to prejudice to a particular stereotype (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Current media today would have us think that many women are in executive positions around the country. Although there is a definite increase of women in middle management positions, the reality of the executive suite does not match the media's portrayal (Schwanke, 2013). This resistance to women in executive leadership roles could be exacerbated by the negative response exhibited toward women who exert high agentic behavior (Carli & Eagly, 2007).

Today, women are waiting longer to get married and have children. Some are choosing not to have children altogether, which has contributed to a decline in fertility rates—the average number of children born to a woman over her lifetime (Stone, 2018).

Women are continuing to work after marriage and have increased their earning power and leadership presence, as approximately 31% of heterosexual married or cohabitating couples report that women are the main household provider (Parker et al., 2017). Drucker (2018) believes that we are now in the midst of the third wave of the women's movement: an intersectional demonstration that considers the constructs of race, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, faith, and internationality concerning feminism.

### *Future*

What will be the trends in 2020 and beyond? It is hard to say. It would have been interesting to ask women in 1910 where they saw women in the workplace in the next 50-100 years. We have the privilege of hindsight to look at past trends. Also, we now have institutions that not only study what is happening but also make projections based on data they currently track. The Pew Research Center is one such organization that looks at the social and cultural trends here in America.

Based on Pew research from 2016, there seems to be growth in those occupations that require greater social and analytical skills such as analysts, engineers, and healthcare professionals. What is interesting is that these same occupations are the ones where wages are increasing at a faster rate. To make matters even more intriguing is the fact that women are the ones who make up a greater percentage of workers in these greater social and analytical skill occupations (Pew Research Center, 2016).

Another trend impacting the United States is the increasing representation of minority women in the labor force led by the Hispanic working population. The Hispanic women's labor force participation rate is estimated to be 57.4% by 2024, a 4.5% increase over 30 years. In the same time frame, the Asian women's labor force participation rate is expected to decline slightly from 56.9% to 55.7% as that of Black women, from 65.3% to 63.0% (Toossi, 2015). This has led to more languages, traditions, belief systems, and religions interacting together than ever before.

From an age perspective, the female labor force participation rate for females 55 and over are on the rise (Pew Research Center, 2016; Toossi, 2015). This is a stark contrast to the declining rate experienced by their male counterparts. Perhaps it is the result of the 2008 recession and those who thought they would retire earlier found it difficult to do so financially. Maybe it is the increasing lifespan, the fact that workers are delaying their retirement, or that there are now five generational groups interacting together. Whatever the cause, there will be a need for all the generational cohort-groups to work effectively together.

### III. THRIVING AS A WHOLE PERSON IN TODAY'S WORK ENVIRONMENT

Playgrounds back in the 1960s had these round metal disk merry-go-rounds called "roundabouts" that kids could climb on, and an adult or bigger kid would turn the disk around and around. Sometimes the kids would jump off, but there was no guarantee where they would land and how the terrain surrounding their fall would treat them. It seems that the role of women in the workplace is ever-evolving, and, as one

jumps off the roundabout and into the workplace, it is often hard to know what one will encounter.

How does a woman survive the terrain? Better yet, how does one thrive amid whatever culture they are placed? We will now review some of the literature that discusses this important question. One thought to consider is that the emotional strength of a person has much to do with their perception of their circumstances and how they respond to others around them. The term “emotional intelligence” (EQ) became popular in the 1990s (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995, 1998), although it has roots that go back to the 1930s (Virkus, 2009). Now, more than ever, EQ is crucial to their success and in their ability to thrive in life, whether at work, in leadership, at home, or in relationships with others and with God.

### *Thriving at Work*

Mercer conducted a study in 2016 that looked at women in the workplace across the world. The title of their report is a great summary of their findings: “When Women Thrive, Businesses Thrive.” The Mercer study was an international study and concluded that, across the world, women are less represented in higher career positions. This is not just an American phenomenon. Women represent the following globally: “33% of managers, 26% of senior managers, and only 20% of executives” (Mercer, 2016, p. 129). However, a study conducted by Nordea in 2017 concluded that “companies run by women perform far better than the market” (Nordea, 2017, p. 1). These women-led companies provided double the return of those companies run by men. Companies would be wise to look at the financial impact women can have on their performance. Yet, how can women themselves thrive at work?

### *Access*

For women to thrive in leadership roles, they first need access to senior leadership in order to participate in key roles within the organization. In the McKinsey/Lean-In.org report (Thomas et al., 2018), it was found that “[w]omen get less access to senior leaders than men do. Yet employees who interact regularly with senior leaders are more likely to ask for and receive promotions, stay at their companies, and aspire to be leaders” (p. 14).

### *Sponsorship*

Many women who have had the opportunity to rise through the ranks of an organization have done so because of the sponsorship given them by a senior colleague who coached them and went to bat for them when challenging opportunities were available for the women to shine (Hewlett, 2013). Sponsorship is having someone in their corner, who sees their potential and takes the responsibility to showcase their strengths, and is an advocate for their ability. This has typically been a male coming alongside a female colleague, whom he sees great promise in, and then providing the boost her career needs.

### *Flexible Schedules*

Because, for many women, work is not their only responsibility, having flexible schedules allows women to be fully present when working, knowing that their work time is being used for work; and they need to utilize their time well so they can focus on other responsibilities when they leave. Although this might keep them from a key leadership position at certain points in their career, it at least keeps them in the game, so that when other responsibilities lighten, they can take on more responsibility in the workplace and are positioned, with a seasoned track record, to do so.

In her study on women leaders and work/life balance, Brue (2018) found that 40% of the women surveyed felt that the boundaries they had constructed between work and home were clearly defined. Another 49% did not feel that they had set clear boundaries between work and home. Also, Brue (2018) found that women leaders who utilized sources outside the organization for social encouragement and mentoring had less “blurring” of home life and work life than those women who used internal sources of help. What was also enlightening in her research findings was that women often perceive work as the obstacle that interferes with family/personal life, as opposed to family/personal life interfering with work (Brue, 2018).

Research conducted by Kalysh et al. (2016) suggests that if companies begin to incorporate work-life policies, this would not only help alleviate some of the work/life issues for women but also hopefully provide more women the opportunity to advance. However, their work suggests that this was most beneficial for those women working in companies where there was a greater proportion of women in the workplace (Kalysh et al., 2016). These authors are also mindful that the result will not be evident immediately. The effects will not be seen for several years down the line.

### *Zero-Tolerance for Sexual Harassment*

Creating an environment with zero-tolerance for any sexual harassment is a non-negotiable characteristic of a company committed to an environment for women to thrive. This is modeled from the executive level down throughout the company. The days of looking the other way or excusing behavior are over. The #MeToo movement has brought to light the prevalence of harassment in the workplace that has transpired over the decades. Women need the freedom to do their work well and to know that they are safe at their place of employment. This is a definite game-changer in corporate culture on down to the small family-owned business.

### *Strong Pipelines*

Another finding from the Mercer study (2016) showed that companies are failing in their attempt (or aren't even attempting) to construct pipelines for women to rise in the ranks within their companies. In a phone interview for *Forbes*, Deborah Streeter expressed the following: “We're fine at one end of the pipeline; we just have a leaky pipeline” (Burns, 2017, p. 7). What is especially interesting about this is that women may be leaving companies not because of outside family responsibilities but because of a “leaky pipeline.” A *Harvard Business Review* article discusses a study conducted by

Pamela Stone from Hunter College. In this study, she concluded that, although 60% of the women continued to work after the birth of their second child, of those who left, “90% left not to care for their families but because of workplace problems, chiefly frustration and long hours” (Harvard Business Review, 2013, p. 1). In addition, she discovered that many women faced being marginalized in their work if they opted to work part-time. Divisions were created between full-time and part-time employees. This climate of work “classism” is part of the foundation for a culture that makes it difficult for women to thrive (Stone, 2013).

### *The Christian Woman and Purpose*

While Christian women face all the same concerns that other women in the workplace face, they hold both an additional disadvantage along with a helpful advantage. The local church traditionally has not encouraged women to step out of the home. Bock and Del Rosario (2019) report that “[a]lmost 80% of women over the age of 18 are working . . . and when you poll [working] women about the emotional support they feel from their local church, almost half would say they feel zero” (p. 222). Women are often made to feel that they are not taking care of their families in the most optimum way if they work outside of the home. What the church fails to accurately acknowledge is the example of the Proverbs 31 woman, who not only cares for her family in the most beautiful way, but who is also out in the workplace, wheeling and dealing successfully for the benefit of her family. She is a true 1 Timothy 5:8 woman: “Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (New International Version). This verse states it well: “anyone,” no gender identified. Some translations use the pronoun “he” and “his”; however, it is the Greek pronoun *tis*, which, although it is grammatically masculine, provides the most inclusive identifier to translate “everyone” or “a person” (R. W. Pierce, personal communication, September 16, 2019). The local church can be one to empower women wherever they are in the workplace and encourage them in the place God has them. We are not advocating that all women should be out in the marketplace. On the contrary, many are called to be at home, whether it be for a season or more. However, the church should encourage women and equip them to honor God wherever they are placed: at home, in the workplace, or balancing both work and home.

An advantage that Christian women possess is because they live their lives for the Lord, they add *purpose* in the work they do. As believers, our work is another form of how we worship our God. We are reminded in Colossians 3:23 that “[w]hatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (English Standard Version). Just as we worship the Lord in our day-to-day living, the time spent in the workplace is a major part of our week. We have the benefit of a greater purpose—to honor God in all that we do. The story of the bricklayers building a cathedral may often be used to illustrate perspective, and it is also representative of the purposeful mindset and engagement one can have in their work. Christopher Wren was the architect commissioned to rebuild St. Paul’s Cathedral after a fire destroyed the cathedral in 1666. The story has been told that he came across three men laying bricks. He asked the first man what he was doing and the man responded, “laying bricks.” When he asked the second man what he was

doing, he responded, “putting up a wall.” He then asked the third man what he was doing and was told, “I am building a cathedral to the Almighty” (Coker, 2012, p. 1).

In a 2015 Gallup employee engagement study, it was found that only 32% of those surveyed felt they were engaged in their work. Over half (50.8%) described themselves as unengaged, and even worse, 17.2% described themselves as “actively” unengaged (Adkins, 2016). Although admittedly, engagement can be defined in a variety of ways, even still, these numbers identify a tragedy in the workplace, and the impact of engagement needs further study.

Purpose matters and is the ingredient for greater effectiveness. In her work on vocation, Dorothy Sayers discusses the benefits of those who work for work’s sake and those who work with a higher purpose. She argues that those who have a greater purpose in their work, work with more enthusiasm because they are contributing toward a specific outcome (Sayers, 1942, 2005). Purpose could then contribute to greater enjoyment in one’s work, which could then spill over to one’s attitude and work ethic. This is a clear advantage for Christian women (and men) in the workplace.

Deborah is a biblical example of a woman who embraced her purpose and calling. The book of Judges tells us in chapter four that she was a prophetess, a wife, and that she was *leading* Israel (New International Version). Another translation says she was *judging* Israel (English Standard Version). She had a lot on her shoulders at a time when the people of Israel were not walking with the Lord. Deborah was not afraid to confront Barak when he was not doing as God had commanded him. He chose to obey, but only if Deborah would accompany him in the pursuit. Her tenacity to make sure God’s commands were followed, even if it meant she had to go into the battleground, was unwavering: “Barak said to her, ‘If you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go.’ And she said, ‘I will surely go with you’” (Judges 4:8-9, English Standard Version). Deborah had to then keep Barak on track. He was a military commander, but she was leading the efforts: “And Deborah said to Barak, ‘Up! For this is the day in which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the Lord go out before you?’” (Judges 4:14, English Standard Version). The actions that Deborah led brought the result that “that land had rest for forty years” (Judges 5:31, English Standard Version). She stayed on purpose with the call that God placed on her life and the results benefited the entire nation of Israel.

## *Thriving at Home*

### *Work-Life Tension*

It would be difficult to thrive in the workplace if a woman’s home life is not thriving as well. There has been much discussion over the years about work-life balance. This topic is especially relevant for women as they are typically responsible for much of the day-to-day responsibilities of home and, unlike men with stay-at-home wives to take care of the home details, many of these working women take on dual roles of working outside the home and caring for much of the responsibilities inside the home as well. McKinsey’s “Women in the Workplace” report (Krivkovich et al., 2017) found that over 50% of women surveyed were the ones who do the greatest share of the housework, many doing it all. If these women have children, it adds another layer of time and

diversion from the workplace. Russell (2010) discusses this word “balance” and its implication that everything is divided equally, and is therefore evenly balanced. This displays a pressure to make sure each piece of the pie is even, which adds extra stress along the way. In actuality, the slices are often different sizes, which is neither good nor bad. It is the perception that things should be evenly sliced that is faulty. Besides, there is no “one pie fits all.” Each woman is unique in her circumstances—her season of life, home responsibilities, workplace position/responsibilities, values, etc. To thrive and pursue balance, Russell (2010) reminds us that, just like other resources given to us, we must steward each area well. How we allot our time is no exception.

### *The Christian Woman and Values*

For the Christian woman, how she allocates her time can be viewed through the lens of biblical values and godly principles (Russell, 2010). If she is one who works out in the workplace, she helps provide financially for her family (1 Timothy 5:8). Yet provision is not limited to just the physical needs but can be extended to the emotional and spiritual needs of family members as well. The Greek word for provide is *pronoéo*, which develops the meaning “to foresee.” It takes foresight to anticipate the needs of the family and plan well so that needs are cared for. There are seasons in a woman’s life that can make this more challenging, but it is possible with a clear plan, and the ability to ask employers for what she needs to make it happen.

The woman portrayed in Proverbs 31 paints a picture of an industrious woman of commerce (Proverbs 31:13-14, 16, 18-19, 24), a provider for her family and workers (Proverbs 31:15, 21, 27), known for her wisdom (Proverbs 31:26), charity (Proverbs 31:20), kindness (Proverbs 31:26), optimism (Proverbs 31:25), preparedness (Proverbs 31:18, 21), hard work (Proverbs 31:27), and being a great wife on top of it all (Proverbs 31:10-12). Her reputation is known as a woman of integrity and a person you can trust. She would be an amazing mentor for those who wanted to learn from her work ethic, her expertise in negotiating, and running a household. Her example feels impossible to the woman of today, but it is a great reminder on how we are to conduct ourselves, that there is goodness in being in the marketplace, and that it is okay to have “maidens” (Proverbs 31:15) to help out. She’s realistic to know that she couldn’t do it without the extra help.

### *Thriving in Communication*

#### *Perceptions*

We are reminded by Stewart and Bennett (1991) that language is more than just a tool to communicate; the way we use it also sets up how one is perceived and represents how one thinks. Also, we must remember that communication is more than just the words spoken—it is also the non-verbal elements of body language, tone of voice, eye contact, distance, timing, and even the fashion one is wearing. The non-verbal is additional commentary on the actual words that are being expressed (Stewart & Bennett, 1991). It would be worth examining and identifying how many times women have not communicated effectively because of the non-verbal cues they unintentionally

send—without being cognizant of why their communication was adversely affected. This can, sadly, be as simple as the tone of voice used to the way one dresses in the workplace.

Just as there are non-verbal elements of communication being expressed, there are also written and oral communication skills that are critical for any manager to possess. In a study done by Smeltzer and Werbel (1986), it was determined that there was no distinction in communication effectiveness when it came to written communication. However, oral communication is a much richer form of communicating where one can excel or find trouble. Sometimes it is within themselves and how they choose to communicate, but, as Smeltzer and Werbel (1986) express, there is often stereotyping of gender communication; this makes it more difficult for women if those they are managing or reporting to have a perception of women as being more talkative and indirect.

Feldhahn (2009) expressed it well when she said, “We as women can be skilled, talented, highly educated, mentored, networked—and yet trade all that away by unintentionally undermining ourselves in our interactions with male colleagues” (p. 3). To understand how male colleagues think and feel in the workplace is one of the most empowering career skills a woman must develop to succeed and move up the ranks within an organization. Feldhahn (2009) conducted much research on male/female communication in the workplace. Her book, *The Male Factor*, provides a greater understanding of how men think and how women are perceived based on how they communicate. Feldhahn (2011) also found that men and women alike form impressions of the other based on how they communicate—both verbal and non-verbal—and that both sexes need to make an effort to understand and adjust any incorrect perceptions. Otherwise, these misperceptions hinder working relationships and the overall effectiveness that each can have in an organization. Feldhahn’s (2011) research identified that 66% of men agreed with the following question: “In your opinion, are there certain things that even skilled and talented women sometimes unintentionally do that undermine their effectiveness with men simply because they don’t realize how they are being perceived by the men they work with?” (p. 10). It is the *unintentionality* that can leave both men and women with faulty perceptions that hinder the workplace.

### *Psychological Barriers*

Krishnaveni and Thamaraiselvi (2008) identified potential psychological barriers that may be affecting women in their communication with others. They define effective communication occurring “only when the sender’s ideas or thoughts are transmitted to and understood by the intended receiver in the same sense” (p. 30). Understanding the differences in how the people around us think is critical to effectively communicate. Feldhahn (2009) quotes R. D. Laing in her book, *The Male Factor*:

The range of what we think and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And, because we fail to notice that we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change until we notice how our failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds (p. 2).

Acknowledging that people communicate differently, and observing those around us to identify how we can best communicate with them, requires observation, diligence, and humility. It is about learning to communicate effectively with others.

Krishnaveni and Thamaraiselvi (2008) found a significant correlation between self-awareness and communicative behavior for effective communication. The authors defined self-awareness as “observing one’s own inner feeling, thinking, experience and needs prior to the communication process” (p. 33). They then defined communication process as “the way of conducting the interactions in the workplace” (p. 33) and identified six dimensions of the communication process: building trust, considerateness, consciousness, emotions, participation, and recognition. These authors determined that to be effective in the workplace, each woman must understand how they themselves communicate. In addition, women must realize that how they communicate lays the foundation for their communication effectiveness. This is not unique to women; however, it is more difficult for women to change how they are perceived once they have communicated ineffectively in the workplace. The authors believe that, when it comes to interpersonal behavior, being self-aware has a greater contribution than how one interacts (Krishnaveni & Thamaraiselvi, 2008).

Based on the research by Feldhahn (2009) and Krishnaveni and Thamaraiselvi (2008), it is recommended that women not only be a student of those around them in the workplace, but it is imperative that they also be a student of themselves to be self-aware, and therefore, most effective in their communication.

### *What Does Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Have to Do With It?*

The increased demand for problem-solving work has placed a spotlight on the emotional intelligence, a leadership construct that addresses one’s own emotions, as well as the impact that those emotions and actions have on others and the surrounding environment (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995, 1998). Coined by Salovey and Mayer and popularized by Harvard educated psychologist and New York Times contributor, Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence is described as follows:

a form of self and social intelligence that involves the ability to accurately appraise and monitor one’s self and others’ feelings and emotions, using the information to guide thinking, action (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p.189), and the expression of those emotions (Goleman, 1995, p. 289).

According to Goleman (2011), research suggests that women are, on average, more effective than men at specific forms of empathy, while men do better than women when it comes to managing distressing emotions. For example, if a person is upset or emotions are strong, women’s brains tend to stay with those feelings while men’s brains quickly switch to other brain areas to try to solve the problem that is creating the disturbance.

Both men and women need to be aware of themselves as well as the social situations surrounding them in order to identify the useful and harmful emotions and reactions that may arise as they communicate and connect in the workplace. A man or woman with a strong EQ will be more self and socially aware and, as a result, be able to

communicate more effectively, defuse conflict, and serve as a mediator. A man or woman who responds (or reacts) in an ineffective way will invite negative perceptions and potentially make the situation even worse.

### *The Christian Woman and Wisdom*

As followers of Christ, we understand that God has uniquely wired each of us, male and female, as well as each woman, uniquely herself. God has been involved in our wiring from before we were born: “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well” (Psalm 139:13-14, English Standard Version). As believers in Christ, we have a model in Christ to follow, as well as God’s Word, which is rich with wisdom on how to communicate with others. Colossians 4:6 counsels us: “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person” (English Standard Version). How we communicate should be consistent with walking well before the Lord.

1 John 3:18 teaches us to “not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth” (English Standard Version). How Christians communicate in the workplace will be all the more effective and respected when the words that are communicated are consistent with the way their life is lived. When hard conversations that are often necessary in the workplace are communicated with love and care, speaking the truth in love, when backed up with a consistent walk, is impactful.

The book of Proverbs is full of practical communication wisdom: wisdom that God has given us so that we don’t hurt ourselves or others around us. Wisdom such as Proverbs 18:13—“If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame” (English Standard Version)—speaks practical truth and provides ways of communicating that set a positive perception in the eyes of coworkers, managers, and others we encounter in the workplace. This is just one of at least 25 verses in Proverbs that addresses how our speech can be most effective. No self-help books are needed here to know what the God of the universe thinks about communication. Again, the Proverbs woman stands out as one who communicates wisdom and kindness in her speech: “She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue” (Proverbs 31:26, English Standard Version).

### *Thriving in Relationships*

#### *Demographics*

Relationships at work can be encouraging, provide guidance, camaraderie, and a sense of place; yet, they can also be discouraging, stifling, and unengaging. Leadership can set the tone and make a difference, but research has shown that the company demographics can also be involved in setting the environment (Ely, 1994). In her research on demographics and social identity and their impact on the relationships women build in the workplace, Ely (1994) found that when there were few women in senior positions, three situations resulted: women were not as likely to view identifying with other women as a positive thing; women were not as likely to view these few senior women as role models with “legitimate authority”; and they were more prone to view

other women as competition and, consequently, these women did not support one another (Ely, 1994). With so few women in senior leadership, women looked at promotion possibilities as being a zero-sum game: only so many women would make it to the top, and if this other woman made it, then she could be taking your spot!

### *Relationship Barriers*

Webber and Giuffre (2019) discuss this as a potential “barrier to solidarity” (p. 1). In reviewing existing literature on women’s relationships with other women in the workplace, the authors sum up three themes they see rise to the surface as barriers to the support women could have for one another: “negative stereotypes about women at work, lack of recognition of gender inequality at work, and the devaluation of women’s working relationships with other women” (p. 2).

When there are few women in senior leadership, this can be viewed as “tokenism,” and when paired with a male-dominated corporate environment, negative stereotypes (such as “mean” and “bossy”) can emerge (Webber & Giuffre, 2019, p. 2). This can also lead to female expectations of how other women will behave. This type of environment perpetuates the “queen bee” syndrome, where women are more protective of their position and space and do not use their position to help other women rise to the top. This is prevalent in male-dominated spaces where it is more difficult for women at lower levels to advance (Webber & Giuffre, 2019).

Webber & Giuffre (2019) discuss literature that suggests that possessing masculine qualities is a requirement that allows women access to a higher status and greater power. This way of thinking devalues (at least in perception) affinity or networking groups for women in the company. Although some women may enjoy these groups (typically holding lower-level positions), others would avoid them. They would not want to be associated with the women and would look to connect with the men, distinguishing themselves apart from the rest of the women who may be viewed as needing “special help” by participating in an affinity or networking group.

### *Sponsors*

For many years, there was the idea that, if you wanted to advance, you needed to find someone to mentor you. Having a mentor who can give you wise advice is still a welcome and useful tool for any woman hoping to excel in her career. Yet what is needed also is a “sponsor.” As mentioned earlier, a sponsor is seen as someone who is an advocate for you within the company. They are the ones who see potential in you and will put your name in the ring when opportunities come about. Current research shows that many women in senior positions see someone who was their sponsor as having a pivotal role in helping them advance the corporate ladder of their workplace (Hewlett, 2013).

Davidson (2018) built on this to show that support for women in the workplace is necessary for women to be successful in their pursuit of leadership roles. He describes the organizational culture as having gendered expectations with leader stereotypes, and that relationships in the workplace can serve not only the individual but the organization as well. He references the relational-cultural theory from Fletcher (2007) and explains

that the focus of this theory is “the positive outcomes associated with connections that are characterized by *mutuality*. Mutuality refers to the belief that both parties believe that it is important to contribute to the other’s growth” (Davidson, 2018, p. 3). What a difference the culture of a business would take if they truly believed in mutuality, and if their growth was tied to the relationships they invested in.

### *Relational Advantages*

In his work, Davidson (2018) identified ten advantages of work-related relationships from qualitative research he conducted with women in varying levels of leadership: mutuality/reciprocity, fun, continuity, validation, support/comfort, clarity of ideas/knowledge/perspective, safety to ask for help, strategizing/problem-solving, opportunity, and benefits to the organization. These advantages, as reported by Davidson (2018), identify benefits to both the company and individuals—both men and women—within the organization. It would be interesting to conduct further research to see if the presence of these healthy work-related relationships resulted in low employee turnover, greater employee productivity, and more women advancing in typically male-dominated industries.

### *Mentors and Discipleship*

The *mutuality* described in Fletcher’s (2007) relational-cultural theory is reminiscent of a discipleship model. As believers, we are given examples of the benefits of discipleship (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10; Proverbs 27:17; Romans 15:14; Titus 2:1-8). Also, there are stories in the Bible where we see a mentorship type of relationship have a strong impact (Jethro/Moses, Deuteronomy 31 and 34; Elijah/Elisha, 1 Kings 19 and 2 Kings 2; Naomi/Ruth, Ruth 1-4; Elizabeth/Mary, Luke 1). This same model can be used for shepherding someone in the workplace and is a beautiful example of how our faith and work are intertwined. As well, seeking out another colleague who is wiser and who can provide advice is humbling and extremely useful in navigating the workplace.

Christian women could bring their personal gender stereotypes of leadership from the church into the workplace (Miller & Stark, 2002); this would be a mistake. This would also apply to Christian men who bring their gender stereotypes to the workplace; these stereotypes have a detrimental effect on women advancing. No matter what your beliefs are on women and leadership in the church setting, we are discussing the corporate environment. There are no biblical restrictions to where a woman can advance in the workplace. Although she has relational guidelines (marital, sexual, etc.), any other restraints are merely cultural, not biblical.

Many women fall back to societal, cultural patterns. 2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us that, as Christians, we have the Lord’s power, love, and self-control given to us by His Spirit. This should guide our relationships with both the men and women we encounter in the workplace. We are not to fear the relationships in the workplace but work in the power given to us by the Holy Spirit.

The relationship between Ruth and Naomi given to us in the book of Ruth in the Bible is a beautiful picture of a mentor relationship between women. The persistence of Ruth to stay with Naomi speaks volumes of the trust Ruth had in Naomi: “And when

Naomi saw that she [Ruth] was determined to go with her, she said no more” (Ruth 1:18, English Standard Version). Identifying a good mentor can be challenging. Ruth took hold of the opportunity to be with Naomi. Whether it was more out of obligation to her deceased husband to not let her mother-in-law go unaccompanied, or deep affection, we do not know. But even if that was the case, it shows the kind of woman Ruth was. Ruth took Naomi’s counsel throughout their journey back to Naomi’s homeland. She built a reputation that was admired and seen as deserving of honor. Ruth became known in the land as a “worthy” woman (Ruth 3:11, English Standard Version). The Lord blessed her to be King David’s great-grandmother and part of the line of Jesus Christ.

### *Thriving Through Abiding*

Our relationship with God is the most important relationship in our lives; this is irrespective of your gender and is true for all people. Time spent in nourishing our walk with the Lord is the most important appointment both women and men alike can schedule. To thrive in this way, we need to be connected to the vine. As Jesus taught His disciples in John 15:4-5,

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing (English Standard Version).

Thriving in our relationship with God requires abiding in the vine. Piper (2017) describes abiding in the following way:

Abiding in the vine means receiving and believing and trusting in the words of Jesus. It means receiving the love of Jesus from the Father and for his people and the joy that Jesus has in the Father and in us. It means sharing the joy, the love, the words with Jesus (p. 2).

As a believer, thriving includes knowing where our strength comes from and acknowledging that, whatever we possess, we are merely stewards; it is all His, whether physical abilities, successes, or possessions. Deuteronomy 8:17-18a reminds us what the Lord said to the Israelites: “Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth” (English Standard Version).

Having a proper perspective on who God is and acknowledging that He is at work in our lives is a critical perspective to thrive in our walk with Him. Knowing and trusting in His faithfulness, which is always at work in our lives, is key to thriving wherever we are in life. The Christian woman must live in the truth that He is good, He is love, and He knows what she needs. By trusting Him in His sovereignty and His timing, the woman of God has a clear advantage in the workplace when it comes to weathering work and life because she knows Who her God is and rests in His character—no matter what comes her way.

Huldah is a name many would not recognize, yet she is a biblical example of a woman God used because of her relationship with Him. The Bible tells us that she was a wife and a prophet. The story of Huldah begins in 2 Kings 22:8 when the Book of the Law is found and read to King Josiah. King Josiah was one who walked with the Lord (unlike his father and grandfather, which somewhat explains why the Book of the Law had to be “found”) and was grieved when he heard of the wrath of God upon Judah because the leaders who went before him had not obeyed God’s commands. King Josiah could have gone to other popular prophets of the day, Habakkuk and Zephaniah were contemporaries of Huldah, yet the King sought out Huldah. He sent his men to her for counsel. It most likely was related to her reputation for being one who walked with God. King Josiah was distraught, grieved to the point of tearing his clothes. It is times like these one would call in the best and brightest, the one with the best connection. He called upon Huldah.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The impact this past century has had on the American woman is a result of the myriad of changes in our world, and it has had a dramatic effect on the workplace. In reviewing the spectrum of factors contributing to the current work environment, it is clear that it will take both men and women working collaboratively to allow women to thrive in the workplace. Women need to be proactive in building their leadership potential. They need to be clear on what is right for them as they walk through each stage of their life. It is erroneous to think that there is a one-size-fits-all solution for women to thrive in the workplace. Each woman is unique, as are her circumstances. Women need to take inventory of who they are and what they need to thrive. To thrive in all areas of her life—understanding that each piece of her life may not be equal—she needs to be intentional and live according to the values she esteems. For women, thriving at work is a dynamic process that will hopefully be better understood and lived out in the years ahead.

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## APPENDIX

*Significant Events by Decade**1900s*


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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Women's Trade Union League founded to support working women (1903)</li> <li>● Mary Harris Jones leads a 125-mile march of child workers to bring the evils of child labor to the attention of President Roosevelt and the National Press (1903)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Gold Standard Act establishes gold as the only standard for redeeming paper money (1900)</li> <li>● The U.S. acquires the Panama Canal (1904)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Suffrage parades</li> <li>● Marie Curie becomes the first woman to receive the Nobel Prize for pioneering work in the field of radioactivity (1903)</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First Model T produced by the Ford Motor Company (1908)</li> <li>● First completely electric-powered washing machine introduced by the Hurley Machine Company (1908)</li> <li>● Wright brothers make the first controlled, sustained flight</li> </ul>

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*1910s*


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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National Association Opposed to Women Suffrage founded (1911)</li> <li>● World War I (1914-1918)</li> <li>● President Wilson states his support of the federal Woman Suffrage Amendment (1918)</li> <li>● The 16th (Tax Collection) and 17th amendments (Election of U.S. Senators) ratified (1913)</li> <li>● 25,000 women march up Fifth Avenue in New York City demanding the right to vote (1915)</li> <li>● The 18th Amendment (Prohibition) ratified (1919)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Federal Reserve System begins (1913)</li> <li>● The Federal Trade Commission created to promote consumer protection (1914)</li> <li>● First U.S. Income Tax collected (1914)</li> <li>● The United States Post Office Department officially begins its first regularly scheduled airmail service (1918)</li> </ul>

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Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Girl Scouts of America founded (1912)</li> <li>● The Woman Suffrage Parade in Washington, D.C. organized by Alice Paul for the National American Suffrage Association (NAWSA) (1913)</li> <li>● Women recruited to work in factories (drill presses, welding, operating cranes, screw machines, metalworking equipment, etc.)</li> <li>● Jeannette Rankin becomes the first woman elected to Congress (1916)</li> <li>● The immigration into the U.S. hits an all-time peak of 8.8 million immigrants over ten years (1901-1910)</li> <li>● Influenza Epidemic—The first cases of one of the worst influenza epidemics in history were reported at Fort Riley, Kansas, eventually killing more than 500,000 Americans and more than 20 million people worldwide (1918)</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first electric self-starting ignition was installed in a Cadillac by General Motors (1911)</li> <li>● First transcontinental telephone call (1915)</li> </ul>

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### 1920s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (women's suffrage) ratified giving women the right to vote (1920)</li> <li>● The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor is formed (1920)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sears, Roebuck, and Company opens its first retail store in Chicago (1925)</li> <li>● Worldwide economic crisis – stock market crash precipitates the Great Depression (1929)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● League of Women Voters founded (1920)</li> <li>● American Birth Control League founded by Margaret Sanger (1921)</li> <li>● Nellie Taylor Ross of Wyoming inaugurated as the first woman governor in the United States (1925)</li> <li>● Gertrude Ederle becomes the first woman to swim the English Channel breaking previously held records (1926)</li> <li>● Beginning of the Great Depression (1929)</li> <li>● Iconic Chanel N°5 perfume created by Coco Chanel (1921)</li> <li>● Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin (1928)</li> </ul>

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Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first round-the-world flight completed (1924)</li> <li>• John Logie Baird conducts the first demonstration of television (1926)</li> <li>• Charles Lindbergh flies the Spirit of St. Louis across the Atlantic in the first solo transatlantic flight (1927)</li> <li>• Amelia Earhart becomes the first woman passenger to fly across the Atlantic Ocean (1928)</li> </ul>
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### 1930s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World War II begins (1939)</li> <li>• Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas becomes the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband (1932)</li> <li>• The Social Security Act passed (1935)</li> <li>• The Fair Labor Standards Act passed setting the first minimum wage (1938)</li> <li>• The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission established (1934)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dust Bowl - drought conditions in Oklahoma and Texas force tens of thousands of families to abandon their farms and seek employment elsewhere (1933)</li> <li>• Economic interventionist policies increase in popularity as a result of the Great Depression and Keynesianism replaces classical economic theory</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3M begins marketing scotch tape (1930)</li> <li>• Amelia Earhart flies solo across the Atlantic (1932)</li> <li>• Frances Perkins sworn in as Secretary of State of Labor, becomes the first woman in the U.S. Cabinet (1933)</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Television sets produced and released commercially (1938)</li> <li>• Nuclear fusion discovered by Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, and Fritz Strassman (1939)</li> </ul>

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### 1940s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945)</li> <li>• World War II ends (1945)</li> <li>• United Nations founded (1945)</li> </ul>
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Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State of Israel founded (1948)</li> <li>● Korean War begins (1949)</li> <li>● The World Bank created (1944)</li> <li>● The International Money Fund created (1945)</li> <li>● General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established (1948)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Millions of women enter the workforce during WWII (1941-1945)</li> <li>● Women's Army Auxiliary Corp. established (1942)</li> <li>● The Diary of Anne Frank (1947)</li> <li>● Gandhi assassinated (1948)</li> <li>● Apartheid begins (1948)</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TV: Milton Berle, Ed Sullivan, Howdy Doody</li> <li>● First computer built (1945)</li> <li>● First atomic bombs detonated (1945)</li> <li>● First organ transplant (1949)</li> </ul>

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### 1950s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Beginning of the civil rights movement (1954)</li> <li>● Beginning of the Vietnam War (1955)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rise of global tensions due to the Cold War</li> <li>● Diners Club debuts as the first credit card (1950)</li> <li>● Nation begins to enjoy an economic boom giving rise to the American middle class</li> <li>● American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) established (1955)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rock n' Roll emerges from Gospel, Jazz, and R &amp; B</li> <li>● Color TV introduced and becomes a common household item in 8 million American homes (1951)</li> <li>● Hillary and Norgay climbs Everest (1953)</li> <li>● Jacqueline Cochran becomes the first woman to break the sound barrier (1953)</li> <li>● Hugh Hefner founded <i>Playboy</i> magazine</li> <li>● Rosa Park refuses to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama (1955)</li> <li>● Barbie doll introduced (1959)</li> <li>● TV Guide is the #1 magazine in the nation</li> </ul>

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Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TV: I Love Lucy, The Honeymooners, Father Knows Best, The Lone Ranger</li> <li>● DNA discovered (1953)</li> <li>● Dr. Jonas Salk polio vaccine introduced (1953)</li> <li>● Sputnik and the dawn of the Space Age (1957)</li> </ul>
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1960s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vietnam War continues</li> <li>● Civil rights movement continues</li> <li>● The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)</li> <li>● Equal Pay Act of 1963 – Amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act aimed at abolishing wage disparity based on sex (1963)</li> <li>● Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it illegal to exclude anyone from an opportunity based on gender (1964)</li> <li>● Shirley Chisholm becomes the first black woman elected to the House of Representatives (1968)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● American economy purrs along fueled by the Vietnam War</li> <li>● “Guns and Butter:” Congress and the Presidential expansion of social programs at home and in support of war efforts without raising taxes</li> <li>● Lyndon Johnson promises to wage war on poverty in his first State of the Union address (1964)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● John F. Kennedy assassinated (1963)</li> <li>● Cultural revolution in China (1966)</li> <li>● Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated (1968)</li> <li>● Robert Kennedy assassinated (1968)</li> <li>● Woodstock (1969)</li> <li>● Roughly 80% of married, childbearing-age women utilizing some form of contraception (by late 60s)</li> <li>● TV sets in 78 million in U.S. homes</li> <li>● TV: Leave it to Beaver, The Beverly Hillbillies, Bewitched, Ed Sullivan Show, Star Trek, That Girl, The Andy Griffith Show,</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first birth control pill goes to market (1960)</li> <li>● Moon landing (1969)</li> <li>● The first working video game console prototype completed (1968)</li> </ul>

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## 1970s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● U.S. Supreme Court rules unanimously that busing students may be ordered to achieve racial desegregation of schools</li> <li>● Row vs. Wade overturns state laws restricting rights to abortions (1973)</li> <li>● Watergate scandal (1973)</li> <li>● End of the Vietnam War (1975)</li> <li>● Laws restricting women from jury duty because of household duties eliminated (1975)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (1978)</li> <li>● Global energy crisis hits the global economy (1973)</li> <li>● Stagflation (high unemployment and high inflation)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Women's liberation demonstrations</li> <li>● <i>Time</i> magazine selects the "American Woman" as the "Man of the Year" (1975)</li> <li>● Margaret Thatcher appointed first woman British Prime Minister (1979)</li> <li>● Bill Gates and Paul Allen founded Microsoft Corporation (1975)</li> <li>● Steve Jobs and Stephen Wozniak founded Apple (1976)</li> <li>● AIDS identified (late 70s)</li> <li>● TV shows: The Brady Bunch, Sesame Street debuts, MASH, All in the Family, The Mary Tyler Moore Show, Charlie's Angels, Happy Days</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Motorola produces first handheld mobile phone (1973)</li> <li>● First personal computers built (1975)</li> <li>● Tandy and Apple make the first personal computers</li> <li>● Videocassette recorder (VCR) introduced</li> </ul>

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## 1980s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Iran-Contra affair (1985-1987)</li> <li>● President Bush and Soviet Premier Gorbachev release statements indicating that the Cold War may be ending (1989)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Economic recession as a result of the disinflationary policy adopted by the Federal Reserve (1980 and 1982)</li> <li>● Stock markets around the world plunge (1987)</li> </ul>

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## Social

- Farm Crisis continues and suffering is compounded by serious droughts (1986, 1988)
- The Reagan Revolution and Reaganomics (1980-1989)
- John Lennon murdered (1980)
- Sandra Day O'Connor becomes the first woman seated on the U.S. Supreme Court (1981)
- Sally Ride becomes the first American woman in space (1983)
- Geraldine Ferraro becomes the first woman nominated for vice-president by a major party (1984)
- World population hits 5 billion (1987)
- Uprising in Tiananmen Square (1989)
- TV: Roseanne, The Cosby Show, Married with Children, Dallas, Dynasty, Cheers, Family Ties, Magnum, P. I., The Golden Girls, Moonlighting, Hill Street Blues, Newhart, The A-Team
- Subscription television boom and bust (SelectTV, ONTV)
- Premium cable and satellite television popularized (MTV, Showtime, HBO, etc.)

## Technological

- The Space Shuttle Columbia is launched, marking America's first return to space since 1975 (1981)
- Formal tracking of AIDS cases begins (1983)
- Apple introduces the Apple Macintosh personal computer with a graphical user interface (1984)
- Scientists announce the discovery of a hole in the ozone layer over the Atlantic (1985)
- Challenger explosion (1986)
- Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster (1986)
- Exxon Valdez oil spill (1989)

## 1990s

## Political

- Berlin Wall comes down (1991)
- Desert Storm (1991)
- The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
- Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (1994)
- Apartheid ends (1994)
- Congress passes the Violence Against Women Act (1994)

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Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) becomes law (1994)</li> <li>● Economic recession resulting from the Savings and Loan Crisis (1990-1991)</li> <li>● Strong economic growth, steady job creation, low inflation, rising productivity, economic boom, and a surging stock market</li> <li>● Rapid technological advancements and sound central monetary policy</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Record-breaking number of women elected to Congress (1992)</li> <li>● Janet Reno becomes the first woman to hold the office of Attorney General of the U.S. (1993)</li> <li>● Timothy McVeigh bombs the Oklahoma City Federal Building (1995)</li> <li>● Madeleine Albright is sworn in as the first female Secretary of State (1997)</li> <li>● Princess Diana dies (1997)</li> <li>● J. K. Rowling publishes the first Harry Potter book (1997)</li> <li>● President Clinton/Monica Lewinsky White House intern affair (1998)</li> <li>● Columbine High School shooting, Colorado (1999)</li> <li>● Y2K scare (1999)</li> <li>● U.S. Women's soccer team wins the World Cup in the U.S. (1999)</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TV: The Simpsons, Friends, Seinfeld, Star Trek: The Next Generation, ER, South Park, X-Files, The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, Beverly Hills 90210, Fraiser, Boy Meets World</li> <li>● Cable: The Sopranos, Sex in the City</li> <li>● Internet accessibility &amp; the first web browser</li> <li>● Popularity of Google, YouTube, Wikipedia, eBay, Netflix</li> <li>● Scottish scientists cloned a sheep named Dolly (1997)</li> <li>● Anti-impotence drug Viagra is introduced to the market (1998)</li> <li>● The Dot-Com bubble, boom and bust (1994-2000)</li> <li>● Amazon founded (1994)</li> <li>● Google founded (1998)</li> </ul>

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## 2000s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corporate scandals (Enron, Arthur Anderson, WorldCom, Tyco) (early 2000s)</li> <li>● War in Afghanistan (2001)</li> <li>● War in Iraq (2003)</li> <li>● The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act is signed into law, protecting those who face pay discrimination (2009)</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sub-Prime Housing Crisis and the housing bubble</li> <li>● The Great Recession (2007-2009)</li> <li>● The collapse of Wall Street (2008)</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 9/11 terrorist attacks (2001)</li> <li>● Letters laced with anthrax poison mailed to media and government officials (2001)</li> <li>● Condoleezza Rice serves as the first African American Secretary of State (2005)</li> <li>● Hurricane Katrina hits New Orleans (2005)</li> <li>● YouTube posts first videos (2005)</li> <li>● Nancy Pelosi becomes the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives (2007)</li> <li>● TV: The West Wing, Survivor, Gilmore Girls, 24, American Idol, The Bachelor, Lost, Desperate Housewives, The Office, 30 Rock,</li> <li>● Cable: Mad Men, Entourage, Keeping up with the Kardashians, Curb Your Enthusiasm</li> </ul>
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rise of social media</li> <li>● Netflix begins streaming services</li> <li>● Space shuttle Columbia explosion (2003)</li> <li>● Apple introduces the first iPod to market (2004)</li> <li>● iPhone introduced (2007)</li> <li>● DVR replaces the VCR (2008)</li> </ul>

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### 2010s

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Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires specific private areas for nursing moms to pump breast milk while at work (2010)</li> <li>● Osama Bin Laden killed (2011)</li> <li>● Brexit referendum—withdrawal of the UK from the European Union (2016)</li> </ul>
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- The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 – requires that companies who settle a sex discrimination suit cannot claim payment as tax-deductible unless there is no non-disclosure agreement involved (2017)
  - Trump/Russia special counsel investigation (2017)
  - North Korean weapons testing (2017)
  - The first summit between the U.S. and North Korea and the first-ever crossing of the Korean Demilitarized Zone by a North Korean leader (2018)
  - College Admission Schemes discovered (2019)
  - Occupy Wall Street protests begin (2011)
  - Cost of War on Terror escalates U.S. debt (2018)
  - China surpasses Japan to become the World' second-biggest economy (2010)
  - The S&P downgrades the United States' credit rating from triple AAA to AA-plus following a debt ceiling crisis (2011)
  - The trend towards a cashless society continues as non-cash transactions and digital currency increase in favorability
- Economic
- The average life expectancy rate in the United States continues to decrease as a result of increasing deaths due to drug overdoses and suicides (2019)
  - Frequent mass shootings and bombings
  - World population reaches 7 billion (2011)
  - Hurricane Sandy in the Atlantic (2012)
  - #MeToo Movement (2017)
  - Hurricanes Harvey, Maria, Irma, and Dorian
  - TV: Big Bang Theory, Modern Family, Bob's Burgers, Parks and Recreation
  - Cable TV/Streaming: Game of Thrones, The Americans, Star Wars: The Mandalorian, Watchmen, Fleabag, Stranger Things, GLOW, Mindhunter, Breaking Bad, Narcos, Black Mirror, Westworld, and Homeland
  - Popularization of video and audio streaming services (Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, Amazon Prime, Spotify, Apple Music, etc.)
- Social
- 3d Printing, Automation, and Artificial Intelligence
  - iPad introduced (2010)
  - BP Gulf Oil spill (2010)
  - The end of the NASA shuttle space program (2012)
  - Ebola epidemic (2014)
  - Outbreak of the Zika virus (2016)
- Technological
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- Continued growth of the Mobile Application EcoSystem (2019)
  - Improvements in autonomous, self-driving vehicles and artificial intelligence (AI)
  - Movement towards Web 3.0, the Semantic Web (2019)
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### *The Year 2020 (January - June)*

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|-----------|---|
| Political | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● President Trump signs the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (January)</li> <li>● U.S. Senate acquits President Donald Trump on articles of impeachment (February)</li> <li>● U.S. drone strikes Bagdad International Airport killing Iranian general Qasem Soleimani (January)</li> <li>● Black Lives Matter protests caused by the killing of George Floyd break out across hundreds of cities in the United States and around the world (May)</li> <li>● Joe Biden announced as Democratic candidate for president (June)</li> <li>● The White House officially moves to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO) due to its handling of the Coronavirus pandemic (July)</li> </ul>   |
| Economic  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Global stock markets crash and oil prices plummet</li> <li>● The Federal Reserve cuts the federal funds rate to zero (March)</li> <li>● Schools close, restaurants shift to takeout/pickup only, events suspended/canceled, social distancing, and panic buying</li> <li>● Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economics Security (CARES) Act provides \$2 trillion in economic relief for American workers, families, and small businesses (March)</li> <li>● The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan program established to help businesses, self-employed workers, sole proprietors, non-profit organizations, veterans' organizations, and Tribal businesses (June)</li> <li>● Soaring unemployment rate—over 40 million Americans file for unemployment (July)</li> </ul> |
| Social    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Basketball legend Kobe Bryant and daughter Gianna die in Calabasas helicopter crash (January)</li> </ul>   |
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## Technological

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- Coronavirus outbreak: The World Health Organization (WHO) declares COVID-19 a global pandemic (February/March)
  - The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Japan suspend the 2020 Summer Olympics (March)
  - The United States records its highest ever number of daily COVID-19 infections, more than 65,000 cases in a single day (As of July 11<sup>th</sup>)
  - Number of COVID-19 passes 3.2 million cases and 134,000 deaths in the United States; More than 12.6 million cases and 561,000 deaths globally (July)
  - Influential soul singer Betty Wright, actress and Emmy award-winning writer Mary Pat Gleason, and American diplomat Jean Ann Kennedy Smith die
  - Katherine Johnson, mathematician and a black woman who helped power NASA's space travel in the early 1960s dies at 102 (February)
  - Shows: Tiger King, The Good Place, Hunters, The Outsider, The Last Dance, NCIS, This is Us, The Conners, Unsolved Mysteries, Greatness Code, Hamilton, The Baby-Sitters Club
  - Circumbinary exoplanet called TOI 1338-b is discovered by a high school intern at NASA on his 3<sup>rd</sup> day on the job (January)
  - SpaceX Dragon 2 is launched from Cape Canaveral (May)
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## WAS LYDIA A LEADER OF THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPI?

Peter Foxwell

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This article attempts to answer the question, was Lydia a leader of the first-century church in Philippi? The paper combines insights from the disciplines of organizational leadership, ancient cultural studies, and biblical theology. Acts, chapter 16 tells Lydia's story. Following her baptism, she opened her household to Paul, his co-workers, and the new Christian congregation. The research literature supports the idea that Lydia acted as a benefactress of the church in line with the Roman model of patronage. In the first-century Roman culture, female patrons were active and influential in the community's public life. As part of the new order that belongs to the new creation, Lydia was not subject to the same restrictions on women's leadership that were customary in the synagogue. The role of women in the ministry of Jesus models this new situation. As *domina* (the female form of the Latin word for master or owner) of her household and patron of the house church, she functioned as a congregational leader.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

This paper asks a simple question, was Lydia a leader of the church in Philippi? The answer is far from simple. While this article is narrow in scope, the hope is that it will serve the broader debate about women in church leadership. There is no attempt to explore every passage relevant to gender distinctions (if any) in the church. Instead, this paper aims to demonstrate that Lydia had a leadership function in the church that met in her home. Torjesen (1993) concludes that Lydia was the primary leader of the church. Is there sufficient evidence to make this claim?

This paper assembles insights from several sources, such as ancient Roman culture practices, an examination of relevant biblical texts, theological reflection, and

organizational leadership theory. When evidence from these diverse sources is combined, it may be reasonable to conclude that Lydia was a church leader.

Today, many women experience gender discrimination in church settings. It is a disheartening and unjust situation when women feel like second-class citizens in the Christian community (Strickland, 2011; Rudd, 2018). God created men and women in his image and with equal worth and dignity (Kilner, 2015). Irrespective of one's position on women leading in churches, there is every reason to respect and support women who contribute their gifts, skills, and wisdom to advance God's mission.

This paper consists of four sections: 1) Lydia's Story from Acts, chapter 16; 2) Women in the Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth; 3) Lydia and Roman Patronage; and 4) Insights from Organizational Leadership Theory.

## II. WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

### *Jesus Valued Women as Persons*

Women were among the earliest followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus treated women with warmth and respect as persons equal to men in their worth and intelligence (Spencer, 2005). Jesus did not follow traditional Jewish customs concerning women (Grenz & Kjesbo, 1995). He welcomed, spoke to, taught, touched, valued, and befriended women because Scripture, not custom, informed Jesus. He viewed women as "persons" (p. 73) and "did not perpetuate the widely held attitudes that favored men at the expense of women" (p. 74).

### *Jesus Included Women in His Ministry*

At the time of Jesus, women in Jewish society were limited mainly to domestic duties and did not study Torah or take an active role in the synagogue (Spencer, 2005). Jesus broke with convention and offered religious instruction to women (Witherington, 1987) including Mary of Bethany who, according to Luke 10:39, sat at Jesus' feet and listened to his word, which indicates that she "had joined the road of discipleship" (Green, 1997, p. 435).

Jesus included many women in his itinerant preaching ministry (Luke 8:3). They were taught, trained in ministry, and sent out to preach the Kingdom (Spencer, 2005). After the resurrection, while the eleven remaining apostles were in hiding, it was the female disciples that Jesus sent to announce the good news (Matthew 28:7-10; John 20:17). Such a commission defied Jewish convention that viewed women as unreliable and invalid witnesses in courts and legal matters (Spencer, 2005). Yet Jesus entrusted them with the most crucial testimony of all: "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18, NIV).

### *Jesus Commissioned Women as Good News Preachers*

After he rose from the dead, Jesus spent forty days instructing his disciples about God's kingdom (Acts 1: 3). Then, he ascended into heaven, and ten days later, he poured out his Spirit on his followers (Acts 2:1-4). While verse 17 indicates that it was God who poured out his Spirit, verse 33 provides more specificity: "Exalted to the right

hand of God, he (Jesus, see verse 32) has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). The New Covenant Pentecostal outpouring was part of the ministry of Jesus, and once again, he included women disciples in its benefits and empowerments.

### *Jesus Poured Out His Spirit on Women*

A group of 120 believers, which included both men and women disciples (Acts 1:15), was waiting to receive power to become Jesus' witnesses (Acts 1:8). Subsequently, they were *all* filled with the Holy Spirit, and they *all* began to proclaim the wonders of God (Acts 2:1, 4, 12). The apostle Peter interpreted the event through the lens of Joel 2:28-32. The passage predicts the outpouring of the Spirit on both men and women (Acts 2:17-18).

The Spirit of Jesus empowers both men and women disciples of Jesus to speak as God's representatives (Wright, 2005); that is, to prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams. Under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit possesses all of God's people, including women (Green, 2009) and, "Consequently, the Spirit is now at work freely in the church endowing whomever he chooses - both male and female - with whatever gifts he wills" (Grenz, 2005, p. 285).

### *Gifting Not Gender Matters in New Covenant Ministry*

Stott (1990) observes that there are no "social distinctions" (p. 74), such as gender, age, or status (cf. Galatians 3:28), to restrict those who can receive the Spirit; he is for all who follow of Jesus. Fee (2005b) asserts that the Spirit does not ever make "gender a prior requirement for certain kinds of gifting" (p. 241). The Holy Spirit, in Fee's view, is "gender-inclusive" (p. 254) and should not be subjected to artificial limitations on his ministry in the church. In the new creation in Christ, there is a new order in which all humans are one (Galatians 3:28) and "the value-based distinctions between people - ethnicity and status - no longer maintain" (Fee, 2005a, p. 178-9). Franklin (2008) agrees and notes that old structures no longer apply in the church; what matters are the Spirit's gifts and calling.

Witherington (1991) concludes his study with a list of roles filled by women in the early church: "teaching, preaching, prophesying, providing material support, hostessing church functions, etc." (p. 219). In other words, "women in the NT era already performed the tasks normally associated with ordained clergy in later eras" (p. 220).

### *Conclusion*

Jesus set the trend by including women in his teaching and ministry teams. The Holy Spirit levels the playing field by empowering women for ministry. In the New Covenant era, gifting, not gender, determines one's role in the church. What obstacles would have prevented Lydia from leading the church in her house?

## II. LYDIA'S STORY

### *The Roman Colony of Philippi*

Lydia was the first convert to the Christian faith in the colonial Roman city of Philippi (Acts 16:11-15), located in the district of Macedonia. In that Roman administrative region, Thessalonica was larger, and Amphipolis was the capital; nevertheless, Philippi is described as a leading or principal city (Bock, 2007), perhaps because it was considered a crossroads between Europe and Asia (Calpino, 2012). Philippi was administered according to the laws and constitution of the city of Rome (Bruce, 1980) and enjoyed the highest status a provincial town could have (Bock, 2007). All in all, it would have felt very Roman. The city's religious life followed the imperial cult and was a center for the worship of a variety of gods.

### *The Jewish Place of Prayer in Philippi*

Paul's missionary strategy included visiting local synagogues (cf., Acts 13:14; 14:1; 17:1), but there was no synagogue in Philippi, perhaps due to a lack of Jewish men there (Bruce, 1980). However, there was an informal place of prayer (Gk. *proseuchen*, sometimes means a synagogue, but not in this case, Bruce, 1980) attended, it seems, exclusively by women (Acts 16:13). Among the worshippers was Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth.

### *Lydia, A Woman of Status*

Lydia was from the city of Thyatira, located in Asia Minor in the region known as Lydia (Peterson, 2009). It was known for its "purple dye and textiles" (p. 460). Possibly Lydia sold cloth to wealthy clients in Philippi, and she should be considered a woman of status (Bock, 2007). Inscriptional evidence recovered from Philippi demonstrates that women undertook many leadership roles, such as offices in various religions (Calpino, 2012). They also paid for public works, such as statues on which they inscribed their names and status.

In the first-century Roman world, women owned and managed businesses, both large and small (Calpino, 2012). Mowczko (2018) notes that members of the senatorial (aristocratic) class were independently wealthy and did not engage in business, but members of the wealthy equestrian class did run businesses. Lydia sold a luxury item that would have required access to significant capital investment, which means she belonged to the equestrian class's provincial equivalent, or she was "a relatively wealthy commoner" (p. 4). Lydia was very likely an independent business owner since women occupied "a prominent place in Macedonian life" (Fee, 1995, p. 27).

### *The Conversion of Lydia*

When Paul first met Lydia, she was a "worshipper of God" or a God-fearer (Acts 16:14). Her Greek background would suggest that Lydia was a former polytheist. Now,

she was "believing and behaving as a Jew without having become one" (Stott, 1990, p. 263). When Paul spoke, the Lord worked through his message to open her heart to believe in Jesus (Acts 16:14). Stott remarks that "the message was Paul's, the saving initiative was God's (p. 263). Acts 16:15 mentions her conversion to the Christian faith. There, she claims to be a true believer in the Lord, and she and her household were baptized. She then persuades Paul and his companions to stay at her home. Paul and his entourage remain based at Lydia's house for the duration of their ministry in Philippi. The infant church also gathers there (Acts 16:40).

### *Lydia's Home and Household*

Details about Lydia's marital status and home life are scarce (Barnes, 1995). We do not know if she was married, single, divorced, or widowed. However, it is possible to glean some helpful insights from the biblical text. Notably, the author of Acts does not associate Lydia with a man. In ancient Roman culture, women were known through their men (Barnes, 1995). Luke may be communicating "that the God of the Gospel is not interested in traditional social barriers of this world, particularly those associated with the pivotal value, honor/shame" (p. 181).

In Acts 16:15, the word translated *household* and *home* is the same Greek term, *oikos*. It does not refer to a building but an extended family under Lydia's leadership and care. Spouses, children, household servants/slaves, laborers, even business associates, and tenants were considered members of an ancient Roman household (Towner, 1993). The house was held together through a bond based on "common economic, social, psychological, and religious factors" (p. 417). Belonging to the household gave its members "a sense of security and identity" (p. 417). Lydia's offer to accommodate and support Paul and his companions within her household, "suggests she owned a villa" (Fee, 1995, p. 26).

The head of the household had authority over its members and a duty to care for them. Lydia may have been the head (Latin, *domina*) of her house either because she was a widower, divorcee, or a single woman of means (Peterson, 2009). She demonstrates her authority by leading its members in Christian baptism, offering hospitality to Paul and his ministry team in her home, and making her home available as their base of operations and as a gathering place for the church (Calpino, 2012). In this way, Paul and his team, as well as the church, came under her protection (p. 285).

### *Conclusion*

Lydia was likely an independent woman, the head of her household, and the owner of a business requiring significant capital. How, then, would these qualities have translated into the Christian community in Philippi? Osiek (2009) suggests that women took part in all the ministries of the house church. Is this likely? The answer may lie in the customs and practices of first-century Roman society.

### III. LYDIA AND ROMAN PATRONAGE

We move now to an examination of the Roman model of patronage and its relevance to our study of Lydia.

### *Lydia and Luke's Agenda in Acts*

In Acts, Luke shows that the gospel message was given and received by men and women. He has an "interest in showing the advantages to various underprivileged groups in embracing Christianity" (Witherington, 1988, p. 149). Women were of equal importance in the church in contrast to their situation in the synagogue. In Jewish circles, Lydia, as a woman, would have played only a peripheral role, but in the new Christian community, she played a prominent role as, Witherington points out, the mother or benefactress of the church in her home, providing not only hospitality but a center for Christian growth and gospel dissemination.

### *How Patronage Worked*

Patronage appeared in Greco-Roman society as "networks of favor and loyalty" (DeSilva, 2000a, p. 767). Such *quid pro quo* relationships could exist between either social equals or social unequals. Patronage in the first-century Roman context "was an essential means of acquiring access to goods, protection or opportunities for employment and advancement" (2000b, p. 96). In a society where an elite few held property, wealth, and power, access to benefits unavailable in the public markets came from wealthy patrons. In return, they received their client's loyalty, political support, enhanced prestige, and promotion of their "reputation and powerbase" (2000b, p. 99). Patronage was a voluntary relationship that existed over time and formed what was often called friendships (Westbrook, 2005).

### *Paul and Patronage*

There can be little doubt that Paul was familiar with the patronage system and its workings; for example, Westbrooke (2005) notes that in Philemon 17, Paul used language borrowed from the practice of Roman patronage. Paul was the broker between Philemon and Onesimus, a relationship in which Philemon was the patron. Paul begs a favor on behalf of the runaway slave. Paul may also have been familiar with ancient Near Eastern patronage practices through his studies on the Old Testament. For example, Westbrook suggests a client-patron arrangement between the prophet Elijah and a widow (1 Kings 17:8-24). In return for shelter, Elijah intervened with God on her behalf. However, Westbrook concludes that there is minimal evidence of the Roman model in the ancient Near East.

### *Lydia and Patronage in Philippi*

Is it possible that Lydia acted as Paul's patron in Philippi? Women could indeed play prominent roles in Roman society (Grenz & Kjesbo, 1995). Inscriptions recovered from Philippi and other Roman cities suggest that women of various social classes held civic offices, accumulated wealth, and owned or managed business. They owned merchant ships and import/export businesses and led religious cults. Women also paid for the construction of public works such as statues, buildings, and marketplaces

(Calpino, 2012). Women in Philippi were active in civic life, including constructing temples, commanding armies, and acting as regents (Mowczko, 2018).

Roman women also served as patrons of various private and public causes. Calpino (2012) describes a Greek woman called Junia Theodora. She was a citizen of Corinth and Rome and was honored for her "commercial and political patronage" (p. 177). Junia provided hospitality to ambassadors. She also lobbied for her clients, both individuals, and cities. Junia brings to mind Lydia's apparent patronage of the infant church in Philippi. By hosting Paul and his ministry team as well as the meetings of the congregation (Acts 16:40), she lent them her "wealth, clout, and protection (Mowczko, 2018, p, 4). Whereas the formation of a Jewish synagogue required ten men, a new Christian community "could begin with a woman convert" (Grenz & Kjesbo, 1995, p. 78).

Fee (1995) believes that Paul and his team accepted patronage from Lydia. This partnership in the gospel (Philippians 1:5; 4:14-19) allowed Paul to focus on his ministry of evangelization without having to support himself, as he did in other cities, such as Thessalonica (2 Thessalonians 3:7-10). Belleville (2005) identifies Lydia as patron of the church in Philippi and as an overseer of the congregation. Lydia did far more than serving coffee to her guests or provide cash to cover expenses. "Homeowners in Greco-Roman times were in charge of all groups that met under their roof" (p. 38). Fee (2005a) agrees when he writes, "So when the householder was a woman (e.g., Lydia, Nympha), we may rightly assume that, as in all other matters in her own household, she gave some measure of leadership to her house church" (p. 184). Torjesen (1993) views Lydia as a primary leader in the house church meeting in her villa.

### *Conclusion*

In all probability, Lydia was the patron of the church in Philippi. Paul became her client when he agreed to stay in her home. Does Lydia's prominent function or leadership role in the church go against the grain of first-century Christian practice? Luke was eager to illustrate ways in which women advanced the Christian mission and Jesus of Nazareth promoted the leadership roles of women in his ministry teams.

## IV. INSIGHTS FROM ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY

### *The Church Leadership Conundrum*

The church, by any definition, is an organization requiring leadership (Yukl, 2013). However, there is little consensus about what, exactly, church leadership is. The puzzle is illustrated by the widely divergent models of church government in practice today. Grudem (1994) lists several models before remarking that "church history attests that several different forms of government have worked fairly well for several centuries" (p. 904). Culver ((2005) is equally non-committal, observing that, "No statement anywhere in the New Testament provides specific instructions on how the church local should be organized and governed" (p. 923). Jesus, Culver notes, provided no organizational chart nor any list of church officers. Fee (2005b) suggests a lack of information about the organization of the early churches, writing that the New Testament demonstrates "a general lack of concern" (p. 242) for its structures, including

offices. Biblical evidence supports almost any form of church government practiced today.

### *A Definition of Leadership*

Such ambiguity makes it difficult to decide if Lydia was a leader of the church in Philippi. Did she have a formal title? At what stage did Paul establish overseers and deacons in Philippi, in a congregation full of brand-new Christians (Philippians 1:1)? Did Paul's leadership preclude Lydia's in every way, or were some leadership functions still available to her? Was Paul willing to work against the grain of Macedonian culture? Since the biblical text does not provide direct answers to these questions, it might be helpful to propose a definition of leadership and compare it with Lydia's activities. Yukl (2013) surveys leadership definitions before offering his own:

Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (p. 9).

The definition offered by Northouse (2019) is similar but simpler: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 5). As the *domina* of her household and thus of the Christian gathering in her home, Lydia undoubtedly wielded the kind of influence mentioned in both of those definitions. One way or another, she functioned as a leader.

### *Leaders Without Titles*

In Acts chapter 16, Lydia does not receive a formal leadership title or office; for example, apostle, or prophet, or teacher, or overseer, or deacon. However, we do not know what happened after the formative events described there. She was indeed a novice Christian, newly converted and baptized; yet, no one in Philippi, excepting Paul and his companions, had been a Jesus-follower for longer than Lydia. Did Paul and his companions take on all the leadership functions, or did they share them with locals?

Philippians is addressed to the church "together with its overseers and deacons" (Philippians 1:1, NIV). Fee (1995) notes that the overseer was a primary leader responsible for the general care of the congregation while the deacon was active in "deeds of service" (p. 69). Fee notes that the titles refer to functions and not offices. Would Lydia have been counted among the overseers or deacons? We cannot tell from Philippians or Acts, chapter 16. Fee suggests that Euodia and Syntyche were members of Lydia's household and "most likely to be reckoned among these leaders" (p. 69).

Influencers do not require formal titles to lead in organizations (Sampson, 2011). Lack of official authority (such as title or rank) does not preclude informal leaders from leading. Yukl (2013) discusses seven kinds of power in an organization and identifies them as either "position or personal" power (p. 209). A leader may lack position power but have significant personal influence over others within the organization. Sources of personal authority include "influence based on friendship and loyalty" (p. 209). Factors such as communicating an inspiring vision, personal integrity, and a bias toward action

give people influence in an organization (Kouzes & Posner, p. 2017). Scroggins (2017) neatly summarizes the concept of personal power: “Leaders lead *with* the authority of leadership . . . or *without* it. The authority is largely irrelevant—if you are a leader, you will lead when you are needed” (p. 26). It is almost certain that Lydia was the kind of person (independent, wealthy, business owner, competent) who influenced others whether or not she held formal title, position, or authority.

### *Framing the Church*

Another possible way to understand Lydia’s role within the congregation is to examine the church in Philippi through a variety of lenses. These provide diverse perspectives or frames (Bolman & Deal, 2017). One’s frame will influence one’s understanding of church structure (Callahan, 2002), and thus one’s answer to the Lydia question.

Bolman & Deal (2017) propose four frames or perspectives through which to examine or understand organizations. Frames force us to see the same things from different angles, ask new questions, and arrive at new answers or solutions to organizational challenges. The four frames are as follows:

The structural frame emphasizes “organizational architecture” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 17), including planning, hierarchies, roles, and metrics. This perspective places a heavy emphasis on rules, policies, and procedures. Viewed through the structural lens, an organization is metaphorically a factory or machine.

The human resources frame views an organization as an “extended family” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 17). The emphasis is on matching the needs of employees with the needs of the organization. The goal is a psychologically healthy workforce achieved by providing employees with adequate pay, benefits, support, education, and resources, and empowerment.

The political frame recognizes that organizations are complex networks of relationships characterized by power, conflict, negotiation, and coalitions. The organization is like a “jungle” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 20).

The symbolic frame views organizations as “temples, tribes, theaters, or carnivals” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 18). Culture, symbols, ceremonies, and stories play critical roles in organizational life and success.

Each frame or perspective contributes something to the picture of Lydia’s involvement in the church. No doubt, there was a formal structure in Lydia’s household with roles defined by custom and Lydia’s leadership. Did she transfer her household policies and routines to the house church? Politically, did Paul assert his apostolic authority over Lydia’s household authority, or did they work together as a team, each contributing in distinct ways, for example, Paul by his teaching and Lydia by her management? Symbolically, did Lydia’s founder-story of being the first convert to Christ in Philippi give her extra influence in the congregation?

The human resources perspective leads one to ask, how would Lydia have contributed most effectively to the congregation? How would she have offered her gifts, background, experiences, skills, passions, and energy to advance Paul’s mission in Philippi? Lydia had formal authority over her household, and members of the home were members of the church. She had presumably shared the good news about Jesus

with her household and subsequently prepared them for Christian baptism (Acts 16:15). Lydia was a business owner with connections among the wealthy classes in the city, and she was Paul's benefactress.

Healthy organizations find ways to unleash their human capital (Bolman & Deal, 2017). They empower people by encouraging autonomy, influence, and participation so that, "The organization benefits from a talented, motivated, loyal, and free-spirited workforce" (p. 138). Bolman & Deal note that healthy organizations involve as many as possible in decision-making. Surely Lydia would have been motivated to contribute her full range of abilities to the church and the Christian mission. Would Paul have stood in her way?

### *Conclusion*

There is little evidence in Acts, chapter 16 to come to a firm conclusion on Lydia's leadership role in the fledgling church. From the perspective of the human resources frame, it is difficult to imagine that Lydia was anything but a leader in the church. She certainly had the influence and, given Fee's (2005a) observations about gifting over gender, it seems probable that there were no structural limitations to her influence among the church members.

## V. CONCLUSION

Admittedly, there is a lack of detailed information about Lydia and her role in the Philippian congregation. However, there are strands of evidence drawn from the ministry of Jesus, the evangelist Luke's agenda, Acts, chapter 16, the letter to the Philippians, ancient Roman history, and organizational leadership theory that, when combined, raise the strong possibility that Lydia was a leader in the church. The fact that she was a woman would not have impeded her role, provided the Holy Spirit had gifted her to lead in some way.

The Philippian congregation may well have functioned as a family, and Lydia led her extended family household. As a prominent, wealthy, independent businesswoman, she had the acumen and skills to lead. Lydia had not spent her life hidden at home as custom required some first-century women to do. Instead, she spent her time in the marketplace, connecting with wealthy clients, negotiating, overseeing employees, and leading her business. She a proven leader, and it would have been wasteful not to unleash her in the church's mission.

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