

ABSTRACT

INITIATING A MISSIONAL MINDSET: THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE'S EIGHT CORE VALUES AS IMPETUS FOR MISSIONAL LIVING

by

Kenneth R. Ott

For two-thousand years people have been asking, “How do you make a Christian disciple?” Western Christianity has offered innumerable programs and methods in answer to this question. However, statistics indicate that churches are dying and Christianity in North America is waning, especially in light of the rapid growth currently seen in Asia and Africa. Church growth experts, denominational leaders, and theologians have proposed countless theories to explain the cause for this dichotomy, one of the most recent being that the Western church has abandoned its missional calling. These same authorities insist that “missional churches,” “missional leadership,” and “missional communities” are the cure for the anemic Christian faith in the West. However, as Jesus demonstrated, discipleship happens best in personal relationships, not through institutions. Yet so little of the missional movement is currently focused on personal discipleship. Could the decline of Western Christianity be a result of a vital, mission-oriented component missing in our individual spiritual lives?

This research project examined the potential of the International Leadership Institute’s (ILI) *Eight Core Values* for initiating a missional mindset and impetus for missional living in the Christian faith. This dissertation offers a qualitative evaluation of the ILI Regional Conference training program and assesses the impact of the *Eight Core*

Values in the lives of those who embrace them. Using the Critical Incident Technique in three phases of data collection, this project identified persons whose Christian beliefs and behaviors had been impacted by embracing the *Values* as a way of life. While the transformed beliefs and behaviors did not definitively ascribe to the definition of missional living, they demonstrated the potential of the *Eight Core Values* as a pedagogical construct to introduce a missional mindset in Christ-followers.

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by
Kenneth R. Ott

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Chapter one begins with an autobiographical introduction explaining how the curiosity for this research was borne, followed by a statement of the problem and the three overarching questions of this project. Next, the rationale for this project and its implications are presented, followed by key terms used throughout, and the delimitations of the project. Then will be a summary review of the relevant literature, both Biblical and non-biblical, followed by the analytic framework of the project. The chapter ends with an explanation of the methods in which data was collected, including a description of participants, type of research, data collection process and analysis, and generalizability of the project.

Autobiographical Introduction

For more than twenty-five years I have been troubled by the anemic Christianity often seen in North American churches, especially when compared to the infectious, culture-changing faith of the first followers of Christ one reads about in the New Testament. While some might point to hypocritical faith as the cause for this dichotomy, I feel strongly that the true reason is much deeper. I have a sense that a vital component is missing in a person's spiritual life who claims to be Christian yet holds their faith close, never living it out or sharing it with others.

I first became aware of this contradiction in 1993 when my family and I attended a small United Methodist Church not far from our home. While I had made a profession of faith twenty years earlier, I had only recently returned to the church and discovered

within me a yearning for spiritual growth. Our pastor was an older gentleman who had no formal Christian education, but he had a heart for those who did not know Christ. He continually challenged us to “go beyond the walls” of our church and share our faith in every part of our lives—home, work, school, recreation. He was also part of a para-church ministry that taught “lifestyle relational evangelism,” a method of growing the local church through relationship building and home visitation. At the pastor’s invitation I regularly accompanied him during his visits in the surrounding neighborhood and even traveled with him on several occasions to teach other congregations the process. However, while our little church was indeed growing numerically, I was experiencing very little spiritual growth and felt that the true purpose of the church was more than to simply increase attendance.

In the 1994 I attended a Christian retreat called The Walk to Emmaus, resulting in my embracing a personal relationship with Christ for the first time since professing my faith as a teenager. On that retreat I also began to practice the spiritual disciplines that would deepen my faith and discovered within myself an urgent need to serve in whatever way God desires.

In 2000, after much prayer, our family moved to a contemporary church plant that emphasized spiritual growth and Christian service. Hope Church was the first church I had experienced that sought to address needs in the community and sent out short-term mission teams. Soon after joining Hope I served on my first short-term mission team, but while I couldn’t articulate it clearly at the time, something didn’t feel right about what we had accomplished. Our team of twelve served in Venezuela for ten days with a three-fold purpose: 1) conduct a dental clinic, 2) construction of a local church’s education wing,

and 3) hold a Vacation Bible School for a mission community of the local church. By all measures—number of patients seen, amount of construction completed, number of times the Gospel was shared, number of professions of faith, attendance at VBS, and testimonies of team members—our efforts had made an impact in the community and on each of us. Yet it felt as though something was still missing in our efforts. For months afterwards I asked myself, “Did we really help those people and further God’s kingdom?” and “Are the lives of the team members any different as a result of serving on this mission?” In hindsight, I can unequivocally answer, “No” to both questions.

That same year I entered full-time pastoral ministry as Hope’s associate pastor and experienced the frustration wanting to inspire people to “be” the church though it seemed most of them were only interested in coming to church. Over the next twelve years serving in small, medium, and large churches, I found that the majority of Christians prefer to keep their faith private and too many ministries are inward focused. This is not to say that there is not many, many followers of Christ who have dedicated their lives to serving God and others, for I have met hundreds of them; but I have also come to believe that the way the majority of American Christians live out their faith dimly resembles the teachings of Jesus. Similarly, ministries are failing in their purpose of “making disciples of all nations” (Matt 28.19), but it is not because of a lack of programming, for there is a multitude of Bible studies, books, and programs designed to inspire and motivate the church for Christian service. Unfortunately, they do not seem to be working. Unlike the early church, who, “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2.47), Christianity in the United States is in decline. In fact, the religious landscape in the United States is shifting. According to a recent report from

the Pew Research Center, the percentage of Americans who describe themselves as Christian declined 7.8% from 2007 to 2014, while the percentage Non-Christian Faiths increased 1.2% and the religiously “Unaffiliated” increased 6.7% over the same time period (Cooperman). Could this be a result of the American church abandoning the mission of Jesus Christ and the insipid faith of his followers?

An outpouring of missional-oriented thinking from authors, theologians, and missiologists over the last several decades is shaping the view and mission of the Christian church in North America. Perhaps it is a new understanding of the church as missional and Christians who live missionally that are the missing pieces of the puzzle. If so, how do I as a pastor help my congregation discover a missional mindset and embrace their part in God’s ongoing redemptive work?

Statement of the Problem

Despite the countless discipleship, evangelism, and mission programs of the church over the last two and a half centuries, Christianity in the United States today is in decline and bears little resemblance to the counter-culture, life-changing ministry of Jesus Christ. However, since David Bosch’s text, *Transforming Mission* was published in 1991, theologians, scholars, and pastors have engaged in an ever evolving discussion about the *missio dei* (God’s mission in the world) and its implications for the Christian faith as a possible correction to Western Christianity’s current quandary. The term “missional” has risen out of these discussions to describe aspects of Christianity that are aligned with the *missio dei*. Texts like Reggie McNeal’s *Missional Renaissance* have helped to define the “missional church” for us, and leadership coaching networks like Alan Hirsch’s *Future Travels* have helped redefine leadership in missional terms. However, institutions are not

entities unto themselves apart from the people who form them. If an institution desires to change, must not the transformation begin at the individual level? Nor are leaders formed in a vacuum separated from the life experiences of the person. So if leaders are to be formed in a particular way, must not it begin personally? Theologians and scholars are addressing needed change at the institutional and leadership levels of Christianity in the West. However, few have focused on faith development of individuals that will purposefully align their lives with God's mission.

Research Questions

This research was undertaken in the belief that Christianity is both relational (with God, others, and self) and purposeful (the Church and believers are used by God to redeem creation), and that both are vital in the life of an authentic Christ-follower. Additionally, Jesus' mandate to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt. 28.19-20a NIV) cannot be accomplished through specialized programs of evangelism, discipleship, missions, worship, etc., as western Christianity has done. Missional theology offers a corrective to this situation and calls the Church, its leaders, and individual Christians to embrace a more holistic faith. If the postures and practices of Christians who live missionally could be identified and qualified, it seemed that a pedagogical model might be developed that would form disciples who live more fully aligned with Jesus' teachings and the *missio dei*. Two existing models hold promise for making missional-living disciples and were considered for this research.

The first is *FaithWalking*, the leadership development curriculum used by Mission Houston with the expressed purpose of forming “functioning missional communities...who are journeying together in authentic community and working to restore God’s intended design in a specific place and/or among a specific people” (Herrington, Capper, Taylor 2). *FaithWalking* is an extensive, multi-faceted program, described in the “Course Overview” of their website as follows:

FaithWalking 101 – A two-day retreat where “participants hear presentations about being fully human and fully alive according to God’s design and how that makes a difference in their world. They also spend time in solitude and share experiences in a small group.”

FaithWalking 201 – “A 24-week biweekly seminar series that provides participants with practical and conceptual tools for partnering with God in doing the work of spiritual formation in your life...you will be given a set of tools that are designed to help you engage a lifelong journey of personal transformation that leads to missional living.”

FaithWalking 202 – Thirteen virtual seminars “to assist participants to more fully integrate the transformational practices that were introduced in FaithWalking 101 and 201. A secondary purpose is to train new leaders to serve in the FaithWalking community.”

FaithWalking 301 – Virtual mentoring sessions designed to put into practice the learning from FaithWalking 101 and 201, with the purpose of initiating missional living in missional communities.

The second model in consideration is *The Eight Core Values* as taught by The International Leadership Institute (ILI). The *Eight Core Values* are the heart of ILI's ministry, mission, and vision. They are viewed by ILI as the "qualities of Christian leaders who are changing history" and "create a powerful foundation for living a meaningful and purposeful life." They are defined as follows (*Regional Conference*, 4–8):

1. Intimacy with God – God looks for consecrated men and women who lead from an intimate relationship with God.
2. Passion for the Harvest – God looks for men and women who share a passion for those without Christ. Jesus came to "seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19.10). God desires that everyone be reached with the life-transforming power of the Gospel.
3. Visionary Leadership – God looks for men and women who are biblically committed to cast vision, set goals, mobilize the Body of Christ, and overcome obstacles in order to reach the nations for Christ.
4. Culturally Relevant Evangelism – God looks for men and women who live and teach the Gospel with cultural relevance, sensitivity, and power, so that the eternal truth of the Gospel will be understood and received in every culture of the world.
5. Multiplication of Leaders – God looks for men and women who disciple, coach, and mentor other leaders, who in turn become leaders of leaders who effectively train others.
6. Family Priority – God looks for men and women who are convinced that the family is God's building block for society and who make their family a priority in developing others.
7. Faithful Stewardship – God looks for men and women who are faithful stewards of finances, time, and spiritual gifts in their personal lives and leadership with the result that people are reached with the Gospel.
8. Integrity – God looks for men and women of integrity who live lives and who are accountable to God and to the Body of Christ. Integrity glorifies God, protects leaders from stumbling, and encourages growth.

The *Eight Core Values* are taught by ILI in four different formats:

1. National Conference – a six-day training experience in which ILI teams and local leadership partner together to teach interactive sessions.
2. Regional Conference – a three-day leadership training experience led by ILI trained local leadership through fourteen individual sessions.
3. History Makers – a two- or six-day leadership training experience designed for emerging leaders between the ages of eighteen and thirty.

4. Christian to the Core – a twelve session resource for individual study, small groups, or entire congregations to equip Christians to live more vibrant and fulfilling lives.

Each of these models was evaluated for applicability in this study. While *FaithWalking* has the expressed end-purpose of creating missional communities, FW301, the missional living component was still under development when this research began and could not provide a sufficient sample size who had completed all levels of training. On the other hand, the *Eight Core Values* have been fully developed and taught since 2000 and ILI estimates that over one-thousand persons have been trained at a *Regional Conference* in the United States alone, and making it more applicable for this research project.

This study will explore the following research questions to better understand the effectiveness of the *Eight Core Values* in initiating a missional mindset and impetus for missional living.

Research Question #1

How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one's beliefs about the Christian life?

Research Question #2

How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?

Research Question #3

In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?

Rationale for the Project

The first reason this study matters is because the followers of Jesus Christ have a Biblical mandate to share their faith with others, both in word and in deed. From the Gospel of Matthew, "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing

them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28.18–20). Much can be said about this mandate, however four aspects of it bear directly on the topic of missional living. In Jesus’s selection of action words—“go and make...baptizing...and teaching”—we see that the Christian life is meant to be intentional and active. Because Jesus is sending his disciples to “make disciples of *all* nations” we also see that the mandate is inclusive. It is also transformative in the life of its adherents—“baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”—because we are made new in Christ (2 Cor. 5.17). Finally, Jesus calls for a particular way of living—“teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”—that aligns with God’s will and purpose (cf. John 15.9–17).

The second reason this study matters is because the American Church is falling short of Jesus’ mandate in its own nation. Whereas research on the growth of the global church indicates that “we are living in the time of the greatest ingathering of people into the Kingdom of God that the world has ever seen,” the number of Americans who self-identify as Christian has decreased steadily over the last several decades (Johnstone 25).

The third reason that this research matters is because the western Church, by creating specialized and compartmentalized programs of evangelism, missions, and discipleship, has strayed from Jesus’ example of holistic living that encompasses all of these and more, ultimately resulting in the Church also being unfaithful to the *missio dei*. While numerous authors, theologians, missiologists, and scholars are addressing the problem at organizational and leadership levels, there are few focusing on the need for personal transformation and even fewer (if any) seeking to qualify missional living on the

personal level. Without this understanding, what is the impetus for leaders to be missional or the people of the church to live missionally?

Definition of Key Terms

Terms associated with the subject of missional living have been used in various ways and with diverse definitions, depending on the author and context. Therefore, I have defined the following key terms so that the intended meaning of this research project might be better conveyed.

Eight Core Values

The *Eight Core Values* or *Values* are the foundational teaching of the International Leadership Institute and are described by ILI as, “the qualities of Christian leaders who are changing history” (*Regional Conference*, 2). The *Eight Core Values* are Intimacy with God, Passion for the Harvest, Visionary Leadership, Culturally Relevant Evangelism, Multiplication of Leaders, Family Priority, Faithful Stewardship, and Integrity.

Missio Dei (God’s mission)

For the purpose of this research I will use The United Methodist Church’s understanding of the missio dei. From “Theology of Missions” on the Global Ministries website, “God’s Mission reclaims the life of all creatures and redeems all creation for God’s intended purpose. Holy Scriptures bear witness to mission that begins with God, belongs to God, and will be fulfilled by God at the end of time. The Spirit of God, which moved over the waters of chaos at creation, and the Word of God, which became Incarnate in Jesus Christ, leads on to fullness in God’s purpose.”

Mission/Missions

Mission and missions are any work intended to fulfill Jesus' mandate to "go and make disciples of all nations" together with the tasks that lead to that end.

Missional

The term "missional" is part of an ongoing conversation around a theological awareness on the part of Christians in the West that mission is not a specialized endeavor of the church, but a result of God's initiative to heal and restore creation. For the purposes of this research missional is defined as "the essential nature and vocation of the church as God's called and sent people" to join God in this redemptive work (Guder, *Missional Church* 11).

Missional Living

Missional living is characterized by the whole life of a follower of Jesus Christ and occurs when he or she intentionally aligns his or her life to be an agent of God's redemptive action in the world.

Delimitations

This project was undertaken with the following delimitations:

1. This research and analysis was considered from a Christian perspective and understanding; more specifically, as a Christian whose faith has been shaped primarily by the theology and practice of Methodism in the United States.
2. Though there are certainly other experiences and learning that might inspire one to live missionally, this research only examined the impact of *The Eight Core Values* of Christian living as taught by The International Leadership Institute (ILI).

3. While ILI teaches *The Eight Core Values* in many countries around the world, this project focused solely on participants from the United States.
4. Because *The Eight Core Values* are taught in various formats, to ensure participants had received quality training from an ILI-affiliated trainer, only persons whom had attended a *Regional Conference* in the United States were invited to participate in this research.
5. Invitations to participate in the initial phase of this research were sent to only those *Regional Conference* participants for whom ILI had an email address.
6. Research participants self-selected to participate in each phase of the project as follows:
 - a. Phase 1 was an online survey designed to identify persons who experienced a change in their beliefs and behaviors as a result of learning the *Eight Core Values*. Potential participants were persons who had attended a *Regional Conference* in the U.S. and for whom ILI had an email address. Any respondent who indicated a “definite” or “substantial” change in both beliefs and behaviors and agreed to complete an online questionnaire were invited to participate in Phase 2.
 - b. Phase 2 was an online questionnaire designed to qualify the change in beliefs and behaviors in those persons who embraced the *Eight Core Values*. Respondents who felt that they were living more missionally as a result of the change in their beliefs and behaviors and agreed to be interviewed were invited to participate in Phase 3.

- c. Phase 3 was a virtual interview (via FaceTime or Skype) designed to understand the specific nature of the changes in beliefs and behaviors and identify the impetus for that change.
7. This research considered *only* the possible effects of embracing the *Eight Core Values* for Christian life. Because other demographic, cultural, or systemic factors were not considered and participants were self-selected, there was no emphasis placed on ensuring a diverse sample of people.
 8. Though principles discussed in this project may be found to be common with and applicable to other cultures, this research will only address Western Christianity as experienced in the United States.

Review of Relevant Literature

The catastrophic devastation of World War I created disillusionment in the hearts of many Christians in the West, resulting in a paradigm shift in the Western church's theology of mission. Prior to this time, mission efforts had focused largely on proclaiming the Gospel to unreached people groups. John Mott's 1904 book, *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation* was indicative of pre-WWI mission thought. However, since around the time of the 1928 World Missionary Conference (WMC) there has been ongoing discussions about missions and theology, ushering in a more holistic, comprehensive approach to communicating the Gospel in both word and deed (Goheen and O'Gara 18). At the 1961 WMC, discussions focused for the first time on a true integration of church and missions with debates led by Karl Barth and Karl Hartenstein about the mission of God (*missio dei*). Over the last fifty-plus years, contemporary theologians such as Newbigin, Bosch, Guder, and Goheen have influenced

and joined with the voices of modern-day practitioners such as Stetzer, Hirsch, Roxburgh, and Mancini as Western Christianity seeks to not only understand the theology of mission, but to also live out the Christian faith grounded in a “missional theology.”

Along with this shift in Western theology came a re-appropriation of the primacy of scripture. Guder, in his work *Missional Church*, explains:

“As theologians of Protestant traditions, we have been guided by a shared conviction that the Scriptures are the normative and authoritative witness to God’s mission and its unfolding in human history. This shared conviction has not prevented us from discovering a stimulating breadth of interpretive approaches within our little group, which reflects the breadth and diversity of the perspectives in the Scriptures themselves. Yet, we now agree that one must read Scripture from a missional hermeneutic.... With the term *missional* we emphasize the essential nature and vocation of the church as God’s called and sent people. (author’s emphasis) (10–11)

Guder further suggests that mission is appropriately understood as sending and that God’s sending takes on a similar, though unique nature in the Old and the New Testaments, while in both it is God who is the primary agent of mission.

Scripture reveals that the missional function for God’s people can be understood as covenantal in nature as God’s people are chosen to be a light to the nations and as God (not the people) assumes the missionary role, drawing the nations to Godself. The biblical narrative reveals four principal covenants, each of which was initiated by God as a sign of God’s grace and enacted by reciprocal commitment. The nature of all four is best described as covenants of election and blessing. Election, however, should not be considered synonymous with privilege or elite; instead, “The purpose of election is service, and when this is withheld, election loses its meaning” (Bosch 18–19).

Christopher Wright, in *The Mission of God’s People*, adds that election also has a purpose—for blessing—as he insists, “If we are to speak of being chosen, of being among

God's elect, it is to say that, like Abraham, we are chosen for the sake of God's plan that the nations of the world come to enjoy the blessings of Abraham" (72). It would be inaccurate however to see God as forcing this state of chosen-ness on God's people. As Schwanz and Coleson explain in *Missio Dei*:

The covenant defined the nature of the relationship...[and] was often summarized by the expression, 'I will be their God and they will be my people.' That relationship could not be authentic if the covenant were only 'imposed' by God...[and if the people had not] responded, 'All which the Lord has spoken we will do.' Thus the covenant relationship is characterized by mutuality. (44–45)

As the biblical narrative moves to the New Testament, the gospels reveal the *missio dei* to be Trinitarian in nature and incorporating the people of the body of Christ, as opposed to election and blessing prominent in the Old Testament covenants. Sending as mission becomes a function of all three Persons of the Trinity and the Three-in-One who empowers and sends the church. Wright insists that "sending" is reciprocal in nature within the Trinity, identifying the Father as Sender of the Son and the Spirit, the Son as Sender of the Spirit and the Apostles, and the Spirit as Sender of Jesus and the Apostles, accentuating "Only God the Father [as] the unsent sender" (210–211). God has chosen to do this through a covenantal people who are chosen and blessed so that through them the world will be blessed. The ultimate manifestation of this blessing is the New Covenant offered through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, God's sending action should not be seen as unidirectional, whereby God the Father is detached from the world and sends first the Son and Holy Spirit, and then the church to accomplish God's mission. God-in-One, through the three Persons of the Trinity is the principal missional agent whom the church is called to join.

Holding scripture as the foundation for missional theology and interpreting them with a missional hermeneutic has corrected and given rise to the certain theological concepts. Paul De Neui, in his article “Christian Communitas in the *Missio Dei*,” reminds his readers, “Mission is not something the church owns, but it is a role to which she is called by God, for God, and to God” (93). Okesson in his lecture titled, “Transformative Mission: Public Mission,” at Asbury Seminary points an accusatory finger at the Western church saying:

We have made ‘mission’ what we do (not who God is, or what God is doing), too specialized (what only particular ‘spiritual’ people do in specific locations—over there), and too limited in salvific intent (to save souls, but not the rest of humanity), and too narrow in scope (to humans, but not to the public places where people live: work, leisure, economics, power, governance, etc.).

Bosch, in his seminal text, *Transforming Mission*, correctly expresses the relationship between missions and *missio dei* when he writes:

Mission is *missio Dei*, which seeks to subsume into itself the *missiones ecclesiae*, the missionary programs of the church. It is not the church which ‘undertakes’ mission; it is the *missio Dei* that constitutes the church...The *missio Dei* is God’s activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate. (author’s emphasis) (391, 519)

Van Gelder and Zscheile offer a further perspective on the relationship of the *missio dei* and the church:

The church is not a collection of individuals who choose to associate primarily to have their spiritual needs met or to do some good in the world. Rather, the church is a community of mutual participation in God’s own life and the life of the world – a participation characterized by openness to others. Just as the Trinity’s interdependent, communal life is generative and outward reaching in love, so too must the church’s life be focused toward others and the world. (107–108)

In *Shaped by God’s Heart*, author Mildred Minatrea further connects the church with the *missio dei*, saying that:

A missional church is a reproducing community of authentic disciples, being equipped as missionaries sent by God, to live and proclaim his Kingdom in their world. The community does not own the mission; they are, however, invited to share its marvelous wonder. (12)

Moreover, Volf connects the *missio dei* with the personal life of Christians, offering:

In my view, true followers of God are called to live in the world and not be of the world (see Mark 16:15; John 17:14-16). They are to love God above all things and follow Jesus Christ as their Lord; that is their difference from the rest of the world – whether they think and act the same way, in a similar way, or in a completely different way from others. Christianity is not a ‘culture’ or a ‘civilization’; it is a way of living centered on Christ *in* many diverse cultures and civilizations. (author’s emphasis) (143–144)

Other authors and theologians have correlated and synthesized traditional theological doctrines of the Trinity, incarnation, *missio Dei*, and *imago Dei* into a coherent theology of missional living. For instance, Thomas Noble, in his essay *The Mission of the Holy Trinity*, ties together Trinitarian missiology, the *missio Dei*, and the *imago Dei* asking:

If we are to be ‘in the image of God,’ does that not mean that *who we are to be* is to be shaped and formed by *who God is*? And what about the great missionary text we call ‘The Great Commandment’? It is about mission...but it is also about the Holy Trinity...How could we miss the close connection? (author’s emphasis) (Schwanz and Coleson, 77)

Also, Alan Hirsch, pastor and founding director of the Forge Mission Training Network, in his book *The Forgotten Ways* reveals the inherent, immutability of the *missio dei* within the *imago dei*, confessing, “I now believe that the idea of latent inbuilt missional potencies is not a mere fantasy; in fact, there are primal forces that lie latent in every Jesus community and in every true believer” (15). Hirsch goes on to insist that these are the same “potencies that energized the early Christian movement” (*Forgotten Ways* 22) and that “the mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community

of faith that adheres to Jesus. To obstruct this is to block God's purposes in and through his people" (*Forgotten Ways* 82).

Darrell Guder, in his Presidential Address for the American Society of Missiology, summarized the current thought on missional living—that God's mission is the vocation of Christians:

It is apostolic vocation that defines Christian purpose...That vocation is implemented by the Holy Spirit through the gathering, upbuilding, and sending of the witnessing community. Baptism is ordination to apostolic vocation. The Lord encounters us at his table to restore us, to nourish us, to equip us, and to send us out as his body, bearing his love into the world...This vocation is an essential dimension of Christian salvation, the witness to what God has done in justifying and sanctifying his people. And this vocation continues into the world as every member, bearing a flame of the Spirit, is sent into the mission field as light, leaven, and salt, to be Christ's apostolic community at work. (*Missio Dei*, 72)

Analytic Framework

While this research is generally qualitative in nature, portions of phase one and two of data collection used both quantitative and qualitative techniques, and therefore data analysis incorporated both types as well. Overall, data analysis of this research attempted to define and summarize the data, detect relationships between variables, compare and classify the differences between variables, and predict outcomes.

Analysis of phase one (survey) included the following steps:

1. Plot the average strength of the *Values* in participant's lives, as rated by the participants, before and after attending the Regional Conference.
2. Plot the average and percentages of perceived change in participant beliefs.
3. Plot the average and percentages of perceived change in participant behaviors.

4. Plot the demographic breakdown of the sample group—gender, age, years as an active Christian, and time since attending Regional Conference.
5. Describe and codify the nature of change in beliefs from narrative answers.
6. Look for relationships and comparison between descriptions in belief changes.
7. Describe and codify the nature of change in behaviors from narrative answers.
8. Look for relationships and comparison between descriptions in behavior changes.
9. Look for and classify preliminary themes within patterns and categories.

Analysis of phase two (questionnaire) included the following steps:

1. Describe and codify the nature of change in participant knowledge (3 questions), using their narrative answers. Identify statements that will be used as quotes (if any).
2. Look for relationships and comparison between descriptions of change in knowledge.
3. Look for and classify themes within patterns and categories.
4. Repeat Steps 1–3 with three questions about change in beliefs.
5. Repeat Steps 1–3 with four questions about change in behaviors.
6. Identify preliminary themes within patterns and categories in all three sections of questionnaire.

7. Compare themes from survey in phase one with themes in phase two, looking for commonalities and variance.
8. Make preliminary observations about predicted outcomes.

Analysis of phase three data (interview) included the following steps:

1. Describe and codify the responses to four questions under Research Question #1. Identify statements that will be used as quotes (if any).
2. Repeat Step 1 for response to questions under Research Questions #2 and 3.
3. Identify preliminary themes within patterns and categories in all three sections of interview questions.
4. Compare themes from survey and questionnaire from the first two phases with phase three results, looking for consistency, commonalities, and variances.
5. Predict outcomes.

Data Collection Method

Data collection occurred in three phases—online survey, online questionnaire, and interview—designed to identify persons whose beliefs and behaviors about the Christian life were positively effected by embracing the *Eight Core Values*. In an effort to increase the randomness of participants and minimize selection bias, the process was designed to include only self-selecting participants, i.e. those who met the minimum criteria (ability to articulate changed beliefs and behaviors) and responded to the invitation to participate in each subsequent phase.

Participants

The participants in this study were persons who had engaged and embraced the *Eight Core Values* after attending one of ILI's Regional Conferences in the United States. Approximately one-hundred alumni were invited to participate in the first phase of the study by completing an online survey designed to identify changes in their beliefs and behaviors after attending the Conference. Of the sixty-five survey respondents, thirty-five indicated a "definite" or "substantial" change in both their beliefs and behaviors, and were invited to participate in phase two, an online questionnaire. The phase two questionnaire was designed to qualify the changes in beliefs and behaviors, of which fifteen respondents describe the changes in terms that indicated a more missional life. All fifteen were invited to participate in the final phase, one-on-one interviews consisting of ten questions designed around the three research questions. Ten of the fifteen respondents were interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to identify the impetus for the changes in the beliefs and behaviors of the participants.

As stated in Delimitations, this research focused only on the effect of embracing the *Eight Core Values*, other demographic, cultural, and social factors notwithstanding. See Appendix A for participant statistics.

Type of Research

This research project was qualitative in nature and used the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) with volunteer participants who had attended one of ILI's Regional Conferences in the United States. The CIT was chosen for following reasons:

- CIT uses a "flexible set of principles that allow data to be sorted into patterns and relationships, and then summarized and described effectively" (Radford 70).

- It has the capacity to identify important aspects of an activity, while minimizing stereotypical or expected results.
- CIT relies on narrative descriptions of realistic situations, allowing respondents to tell their own story of faith without feeling pressured to respond in a specific way.
- It is a qualitative research methodology that seeks to identify recommendations for effective practices, adding value to an established program.
- Because CIT is also a cognitive technique, “focusing on the acquisition or use of knowledge or information,” it can be used to qualify the effect of learning new constructs, such as the *Eight Core Values* (Hettlage and Steinlin 4–5).

Every research method has its advantages and limitations and the Critical Incident Techniques is no different. Those particular to this project include (Hettlage and Steinlin 6–7):

Advantages

- CIT encourages interviewees to respond openly and honestly in sharing their own story in the construct of a larger ideal.
- Interviewees are challenged to think conceptually, often activating tacit knowledge that can be transferable.
- Because CIT relies on potential abilities and former experiences of the interviewee, it makes ideas tangible and empowers the interviewee.

Limitations

- Similar to most qualitative methods, the CIT does not produce hard, quantified data.

- Sorting and classifying the data can be difficult because it is inductive and subjective, opening the results to added critique (Radford 70).
- Because the researcher is likely to have a more in-depth knowledge of the subject than the interviewee, he or she is in danger of biasing the results through sampling procedures or structuring of questions.

Data Collection

Data collection began with a comprehensive review of both the Biblical and non-biblical literature to form a baseline and gain a more thorough understanding of current thought on the theology of missions and the role of Christians and the Church in missions endeavors. The development of ILI's *Eight Core Values* and its training program was then researched to evaluate its potential as a pedagogical framework for developing missional living in Christians, as well as validate applicability to this project. Finally, ILI's founder and international director was consulted to ensure the goals of this project were possible within ILI's abilities.

While all of ILI's training is built on the *Eight Core Values*, not all formats are led by ILI affiliated instructors, giving rise to the possibility of inconsistency of training. Therefore, only *Regional Conference* (RC) alumni from the U.S. were invited to participate in this research. Additionally, because *Regional Conference's* have been held throughout the country, this project used virtual research tools and environments.

Research was conducted in four steps:

Step 1: Identification of RC alumni in the U.S. by ILI. Invitations to participate in the study were limited to those alumni for whom ILI had an email address.

Step 2: Phase 1 - initial screening of RC alumni using an online survey designed to identify persons who experienced a significant change in their beliefs and behaviors about the Christian life as a result of learning the *Eight Core Values*. Respondents who indicated “definite” or “significant” change, could articulate the nature of the changes, and agreed to participate in an online questionnaire were invited to participate in Phase 2.

Step 3: Phase 2 – an online questionnaire designed to qualify the change of beliefs and behaviors in those persons who embraced the *Eight Core Values*. These questions were answered in narrative form so as to better understand the nature of the impact from their participation on their lives. Respondents who felt that they were living more missionally as a result of the change in their belief and behaviors and agreed to be interviewed were invited to participate in Phase 3.

Step 4: Phase 3 – one-on-one interviews via FaceTime or Skype. The interviews consisted of ten open-ended questions addressing the three research questions and designed to qualify the changes in beliefs and behaviors of the respondents as well as identify what role, if any, the *Eight Core Values* played in initiating missional living.

Email invitations to participate in this research along with the questions from the survey, questionnaire, and interviews are in Appendices B through G.

Data Analysis

Data was collected using a “funneling” schema to identify a particular group of persons whose beliefs and behaviors had been transformed by embracing the *Eight Core Values* and resulted in them living missionally. Analysis of the data was conducted using

the Critical Incident Technique, comparing their responses in all three phases of data collection, and looking for the emergence of patterns and schema within the collective narratives. The interview responses, along with the survey and questionnaire responses by the same persons, were analyzed by focusing on antecedent information, detailed descriptions of events, and the outcome of the event. This allowed an evaluative scheme to emerge from the data in an attempt to understand if embracing and living according to the *Eight Core Values* could be seen as a tool to develop a missional mindset and equip Christians for missional living.

Generalizability

Even though the principles and precepts found in the *Eight Core Values* are not inimitable, the construct within which they are presented is unique to ILI, thereby limiting the external generalizability of this research to whatever theories might be applicable to the individual values, in and of themselves. However, because the *Eight Core Values* are the central teaching of ILI there is internal generalizability. First of all, because all the participants were first exposed to the *Values* more than two years ago, this research can provide feedback on the long-range impact of the Regional Conferences, thereby allowing ILI to adjust and improve the quality of training. The findings might also be applicable to ILI's other training formats—National Conferences, History Makers, and Christian to the Core. Additionally, this research can provide a new perspective (mission as evangelism) of the effect of ILI's training in the lives of those who embrace the *Values*. Ultimately the findings of this research have the potential to effect every setting in which the *Eight Core Values* are expressed in the lives of ILI alumni.

References Cited

References cited in this research include both Biblical and non-biblical literature, scholarly journals and articles, virtual sources such as websites and online publications, as well as surveys, questionnaires, and personal interviews.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter begins with a thorough discussion of the biblical and theological foundations for missions and missional living. The section on biblical foundations will show that scripture reveals the nature of mission as the vocation of God's people individually and corporately. The section on theological foundations will discuss the *missio dei* (God's mission) and its implications for missions, the church, and individual Christians. The biblical and theological foundation considered in light of one another, confirm that missions does not exist apart from God's mission, that the church is God's chosen instrument in the *missio dei*, and that every follower of Christ is called to live missionally within the context in which they find themselves. The chapter ends with discussions about the how the current body of literature does not directly address the concept of missional living and the design of the qualitative research undertaken in this project.

Description of Literature Surveyed

Even though its biblical foundations are prehistoric, missional theology has emerged in Western Christianity in its current form in only the last fifty to sixty years. Therefore, the scope and breadth of scholarly literature around the subject of missional living are not as extensive as one might hope. Even though theologians like Keller, Newbigin, Barth, and others challenged the predominate understanding of missions in the twentieth century, it was David Bosch's *Transforming Mission*, released in 1991, that shifted the paradigm of mission/missions for Western Christianity and gave rise to

missional theology. The propositions in this seminal text are still being realized by contemporary theologians and mission practitioners. Since then, much has been written about the missional church and missional leadership while only a small portion of current literature directly address missions on the more personal level of missional living.

Therefore, in an attempt to be as thorough as possible, the body of literature used for this project included a wide range of scholarly texts, periodicals, academic lectures, scripture, popular books, training materials, web sites, blogs, and databases.

Biblical Foundations

Theologian and missiologist, Darrell Guder advocates that to truly understand the intent of God's mission, Scripture must be read with a "missional hermeneutic." Guder posits:

As theologians of Protestant traditions, we have been guided by a shared conviction that the Scriptures are the normative and authoritative witness to God's mission and its unfolding in human history. This shared conviction has not prevented us from discovering a stimulating breadth of interpretive approaches within our little group, which reflects the breadth and diversity of the perspectives in the Scriptures themselves. Yet, we now agree that one must read Scripture from a missional hermeneutic... With the term missional we emphasize the essential nature and vocation of the church as God's called and sent people. (*Missional Church* 10–11)

Guder further insists that the nature of mission is best understood as "sentness," saying:

We have come to see that mission is not merely an activity of the church. Rather, mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation. '*Mission*' means '*sending*,' and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God's action in human history. God's mission began with the call of Israel to receive God's blessing in order to be a blessing to the nations. God's mission unfolded in the history of God's people across the centuries recorded in Scripture, and it reached its revelatory climax in the incarnation of God's work of salvation in Jesus... God's mission continued then in the *sending* of the Spirit to call forth and empower the church as the worldwide witness of God's good news in Jesus Christ... We have learned to speak of God as a

‘missionary God.’ Thus we have learned to understand the church as a ‘sent people.’ (emphasis mine) (*Missional Church*, 4)

God’s “sending” nature is unique in both the Old and the New Testaments, while at the same time similar, in that God is the primary agent of mission throughout.

Generally speaking, the Old Testament narrative reveals God’s sending in the following ways:

1. God sends chosen people as God’s emissaries (e.g. Abram in Gen. 12; Joseph in Gen. 45.5; Moses in Exod. 3.9–12; Gideon in Judg. 6.14; King Saul in 1 Sam. 15.18).
2. God sends prophets to proclaim God’s word (e.g. a “Man of God” in 1 Sam. 2 & 1 Kings 13; Elijah in 1 & 2 Kings; Nathan in 2 Sam. 12.1; Isa. 8.6–9; Jer. 19.14; Ezek. 3.4).
3. God sends angels to guide and protect (e.g. Exod. 23.20–23).
4. God’s word is sent to direct the people (e.g. Ps. 147.15).

As Guder suggests however, the nature of God’s mission revealed in the Old Testament cannot be seen as God sending God’s people to proclaim God’s love to others. They are instead chosen to be a light to the nations as God (not the people) assumes the missionary role, drawing the nations to Godself. The missional function for God’s people in the Old Testament is best understood as entering into a covenant of blessing for the purpose of blessing others. Hahn, in *The Mission of God and a Covenantal People*, explains, “God began with a person in order to gain a nation. [God] then worked with that nation to gain the whole world. The word ‘covenant’ describes God’s act of entering into relationship with that person, that nation, and the world” (Schwanz and Coleson, ed. 40).

The whole of the biblical narrative reveals four principal covenants—with Abraham, Moses, David, and through Jesus of Nazareth¹—each of which was initiated by God as a sign of God’s grace and enacted by reciprocal commitment. The nature of all four is best described as covenants of election and blessing.

Election, rightly understood in the Old Testament narrative, is not what one might expect and should not be considered as synonymous with privilege or the elite. Bosch posits:

The purpose of election is service, and when this is withheld, election loses its meaning. Primarily Israel is to serve the marginal in its midst: the orphan, the widow, the poor, and the stranger. Whenever the people of Israel renew their covenant with Yahweh, they recognize that they are renewing their obligations to the victims of society.... Furthermore, there has been the conviction that God’s compassion embraces the nations also.... On the one hand they are Israel’s political enemies or at least rivals; on the other hand God, himself brings them into Israel’s circle of vision...as Yahweh’s compassion reaches out to Israel and beyond, it gradually becomes clear that, in the final analysis, God is as concerned with the nations as with Israel. (*Transforming Mission* 18–19)

In other words, God’s covenant and Israel’s election is not *just for them*, because through them God is *choosing one for the other* so that all might receive God’s blessings. This is clear in God’s call of Abram as God issues him two commands (though the scriptures do not use the word “covenant”)—one of election and one of blessing. In the first command (election), God calls Abram to “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing” (Gen. 12.1–2). The second command (blessing),² promises, “I will bless those who bless you [and his

¹ Gen. 6.18 and 9.9-17 also reveal God entering into a covenant with Noah, his sons, “every living creator with you” on the ark, and “the earth;” however this was a covenant to never again destroy all life on earth (v6), whereas the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and new covenant in Christ are redemptive in nature.

² Not all English translations of Genesis 12.3 translate the imperative as a command.

nation], and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen. 12.3). The promise is reinforced when God renames Abram as Abraham, telling him that God will make him fruitful and he will be the father of many nations (Gen. 17.4–7) and established circumcision of Abraham and every male descendant as a physical sign of the covenant (Gen. 17.9–14). Clearly, God’s intention was not only to bless Abraham and the nation who would come from him, but all the nations through him. Christopher Wright, in *The Mission of God’s People*, makes a concise correlation between election and blessing, insisting:

Election of one is not the rejection of the rest, but ultimately for their benefit.... God’s election of Israel is instrumental in God’s mission for all nations.... If we are to speak of being chosen, of being among God’s elect, it is to say that, like Abraham, we are chosen for the sake of God’s plan that the nations of the world come to enjoy the blessings of Abraham. (72)

However, it was the next covenant, with Moses and the people held captive in Egypt, which would be the instrument by which the Abrahamic covenant might be realized.

Like the covenant with Abraham and his descendants, the Mosaic covenant begins with election as God chooses Moses to leave his home and go to Pharaoh as God’s representative to free God’s people held as slaves in Egypt (Exod. 3). Still, only after the people have been freed and come through the desert to arrive back at Mount Sinai with Moses is the nature of blessing in the covenant revealed. God tells Moses to tell the people:

You yourselves have seen what I did in Egypt, and how I carried you on eagle’s wings and brought you to myself. Now if you will obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.... The people all responded together, ‘We will do everything the Lord has said.’ (Ex 19.4–6a, 8a)

The *Interpretation* commentary offers further insight saying:

The best sense [of Exodus 19.5] may be captured in the translation: ‘*Because* all the earth is mine, so you, you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ This suggests that the phrases relate to a mission that encompasses God’s purposes for the entire world. *Israel is commissioned to be God’s people on behalf of the earth which is God’s.* (author’s emphasis) (Fretheim 212)

Though one might see God as imposing this covenant on Israel, it was a promise inaugurated by grace as God restored the Israelites before asking them to participate in God’s mission to restore others. However:

The Mosaic covenant set in place a comprehensive way of life by which Israel would be restored and become missional people of God in the world. The covenant defined the nature of the relationship...[and] was often summarized by the expression, ‘I will be their God and they will be my people.’ That relationship could not be authentic if the covenant were only ‘imposed’ by God...[and if the people had not] responded, ‘All which the Lord has spoken we will do.’ Thus the covenant relationship is characterized by mutuality. God saves, God promises, and God commands. Israel promises, Israel obeys, and Israel becomes sharers in God’s holiness and God’s mission (Schwanz and Coleson 44–45).

The means by which God would accomplish the missional purpose of the Mosaic covenant would come through another man, David.

The Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic covenants are alike in that they each begin with an individual. However, only the first and third covenants include the promise of fulfillment through each man’s descendants. 2 Samuel 7 records God’s promise to David that comes through the prophet Nathan and, similar to the Israelites in Sinai, begins with God reminding David how God has “been with you wherever you have gone” and “now I will make your name great” (v9), “your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me, and your throne will be established forever” (v16).³ David’s acceptance of the covenant and response recorded in vv18–29 make it clear that he understood God’s

³ Though the word “covenant” is not used in 2 Sam 7, the promise from God is called a covenant in 2 Sam 23.5 and Ps 89.3.

promise was a fulfillment of the covenant at Sinai. However, the promise of the Davidic covenant would be called into question after the destruction of the temple and the Babylonian exile. Moreover, its true missional character would not be realized until one of David's descendants would arrive as the long awaited Messiah to usher in the New Covenant.

Though the people of God had almost summarily broken each of the preceding covenants, God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah of a new covenant in which Godself would bring fulfillment. Even in the midst of destruction and exile, Yahweh reminds the people of his promise:

‘The time is coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand and lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,’ declares the Lord. ‘This covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,’ declares the Lord. ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.’ (Jer 31.31–33)

Though this would be a “new” covenant, the difference was not in its content. The covenant was now a more intimate and relational bond realized through the person of Jesus Christ, the Father's own son and the people's Messiah, giving new meaning to the themes of election and blessing.

As the biblical narrative moves to the New Testament, the gospels reveal the *missio dei* to be Trinitarian in nature and incorporating the people of the body of Christ, as opposed to election and blessing prominent in the Old Testament covenants. Unlike with the Old Testament, and though it will be described in various ways, few people have argued against the missional nature of the New Testament, with its clear theme of

“sending.” Sending as mission in the New Testament is a function of all three Persons of the Trinity and the Three-in-One who empowers and sends the church.

The Johannine texts offer the most succinct interpretation of the sending nature of God. From its opening, John’s Gospel insists that the Son of God did not simply arrive on the scene, nor did he inhabit the body of an existing human; Jesus, the Son, was sent by the Father and was profoundly aware of his sentness (John 1.14; 3.16–17, 34; 4.34; chs. 5–8; 11.42; 17.18; cf. also 1 John 4.9, 14). Though not as prominently, the synoptic gospels and Pauline writings support the Johannine text in this assertion (Matt .15.24; Luke 4.18, 43; Mark 1.38; Acts 3.20; Gal. 4.6). On the second person of the Trinity, while it cannot be said that the Spirit has ever not been present in the world, the Scripture reveals that the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit as part of God’s salvific mission (John 14.26; 15.26; 16.7,13; 20.22; see also Luke 24.49, Acts 2.33, and 1 John 2.1). The Scriptures then connect the Trinity as One God–Father, Son, and Holy Spirit–sending the disciples, apostles, and church into the world to join in God’s mission (John 17.18; 20.21–23; cf. also Matt. 28.18–20; Mark 13.10; Lk 24.45–47; see also Mark 14.9; Acts 1.8; 13.2–3).

Over the past several decades, theologians, missiologists, and academicians, including Barth, Hartenstein, Bosch, Vicedom, Noble, and others have discussed the Trinitarian implications in missions. While though they do not all agree, each of them adds to a more complete understanding by all. For instance, Stephen Seamands, in *Ministry in the Image of God*, stresses the second Person of the Trinity, saying, missions is “the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son, to the Father, through the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the church and world” (author’s emphasis) (15). Christopher Wright argues for a

more reciprocal nature, identifying the Father as Sender of the Son and the Spirit, the Son as Sender of the Spirit and the Apostles, and the Spirit as Sender of Jesus and the Apostles, accentuating “Only God the Father [as] the unsent sender” (*The Mission of God’s People*, 210-211). Though all do not agree in the nuances of the Trinitarian influence of *missio dei* and its implications for the church, it is reasonable to postulate that most would support Wrights’ assertion that:

The mission of God’s people, then, is not some external structure built by the church itself – a program or a strategy devised by an institution. Sending in mission is a participation in the life of God. The mission of God’s people, in this dimension of sending and being sent, is to be caught up with the dynamic sending and being sent that God the Holy Trinity has done and continues to do for the salvation of the world and the revelation of his truth. (211)

Finally, “sentness” for the Body of Christ continues to be fulfilled by its members “going.” While this may be obvious, and even a bit trite, it is faithful to both Jesus’ command to his disciples and the nature of God’s covenant with Israel. While many others have more skillfully exegeted the Great Commission of Matthew 28.18–20, it bears remembering that Jesus’ charge to his followers to “go” is recorded as the Greek aorist participle *poreuomai*, carrying with it the sense of “while you go,” “in your going,” and/or “as you go.”⁴ Understood missionally, this reading implies that the Great Commission is not a call to a program of evangelism, but a way of being and believing that God is already at work in the lives of the people in our communities and is inviting us to join him in the *missio dei*. However, this should not be understood as a completely new way of living out one’s faith, instituted in the New Covenant. This way of life was

⁴ The exact nature of this participle is highly debated due to the various uses of Greek Participles. Some have understood this participle to be in the “Attendant Circumstance” position in which it would take upon the imperative nature of the main verb. See Daniel Wallace’s “Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics” for an in-depth discussion.

just as true for Israel—the people of the old covenant—whom God commanded to live their faith publicly, for all to witness. This is seen most clearly in the central prayer of the Jewish faith, the Shema (Duet. 6.4–9). These words, spoken by Yahweh through Moses to the people, called them to a faith that was lived out holistically and openly—in their family (heart, children, homes), in their work (hands), in their public life (along the road, on your head), in hospitality (doorframes, gates), and in their political and economic spheres (city gates), the implications being that the commands were to be remembered at all times (Okesson).

The Scriptures, read through a missional hermeneutic, clearly reveal God as a “sending” God to accomplish his mission of redemption and salvation for the world. God has chosen to do this through a covenantal people who are chosen and blessed so that through them, the world will be blessed. The ultimate manifestation of this mission is the New Covenant offered through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, God’s sending action should not be seen as unidirectional, whereby God the Father is detached from the world and sends first the Son and Holy Spirit, and then the church to accomplish God’s mission. God-in-One, through the three Persons of the Trinity is the principal missional agent whom the church is called to join.

Theological Foundations

In the hearts and minds of the Western church, missions has become a purely human enterprise, restricted in agency, focus, and possibility, which the church does for God using a select group of people who have the passion to evangelize and the willingness to go to other cultures. Gregg Okesson said it well in his lecture titled, *Transformative Mission: Public Mission*, at Asbury Theological Seminary:

We [Christians in the West] have made ‘mission’ what we do (not who God is, or what God is doing), too specialized (what only particular ‘spiritual’ people do in specific locations—over there), and too limited in salvific intent (to save souls, but not the rest of humanity), and too narrow in scope (to humans, but not to the public places where people live: work, leisure, economics, power, governance, etc.).”

The opposite view, that missions is synonymous with everything the church does, is also incorrect. As Stephen Neill is often quoted as saying in his *Creative Tension: The Duff Lectures*, “If everything is mission, then nothing is mission” (81). What then *is* missions and what role does the church and its members play in missions?

As revealed in the previous section, God is a “sending” God, and God’s people are “sent” into the world with God’s blessing so that through them God will bless the nations. With this biblical foundation one can now see the theological foundations of missions. This section will discuss the true nature of the *missio dei* as originating from God, empowered by God, and to serve God’s purpose of redeeming all of creation. From the *missio dei* is derived a right understanding of the church as a missional community and the power for Christians to live missionally. Finally, missional living is revealed to be initiated by *missio dei*, made possible through the *imago dei*, and practiced incarnationally.

The Missio Dei and Missions

Professor, pastor, and missiologist Paul De Neui, in his article “Christian Communitas in the Missio Dei,” declares, “Mission is not something the church owns, but it is a role to which she is called by God, for God, and to God” (93). However, one does not have to look far or dig deep to see how the church does not always take such a theocentric approach to missions. *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (NIDB), widely used by preachers, pastors, seminarians, and Bible teachers, says of missions:

The term “mission” summarizes various nouns (e.g. apostle, disciple, evangelist, good news, herald, witness, worker) and verbs (e.g. announce good news, convince, declare, go proclaim, profess, send, serve, teach, witness), some with a metaphorical meaning (fisherman, harvest, seek, way, build, plant), that describe the missionary activity of the early Christians. Mission is best understood as the activity of a community of faith that distinguishes itself from its environment both in terms of religious belief (theology) and in terms of social behavior (ethics), that is convinced of the truth claims of its faith, and that actively works to win other people for the convictions and for the way of life of whose truth the members of that community are convinced. (Sakenfeld Vol. 4, 111)

This ecclesiocentric, uninspiring description suggests that mission is not only irrelevant today (“activity of the early Christians”), but also that its only focus is the evangelization of non-Christians (“actively works to win other people”). The NIDB goes on to assert that mission was instituted and commanded by Jesus, claiming that there is no Old Testament evidence of God’s call to :

actively spread the truth about Yahweh to people of other faiths with a view to integrate them into the commonwealth of Israel. The salvation of the nations is not a task that Israel is commissioned to carry out but a hope promised by the prophets (112).

Though technically correct, given the prominence of discussion around the topic of missions of the church and the *missio dei*, one might reasonably expect that this latest version of NIDB’s definition, published only six years ago, would include some reference to the connection between mission(s) and *missio dei*.

“Mission” and “missions,” rightly understood, are inseparable from the *missio dei*. Therefore, all missionary work happens by invitation from and out of the heart of God. Bosch, in *Transforming Mission*, offers a correction to the relationship between the *missio dei* and what Western Christianity has historically described as “missions” when he writes:

Mission is *missio Dei*, which seeks to subsume into itself the *missiones ecclesiae*, the missionary programs of the church. It is not the church

which ‘undertakes’ mission; it is the *missio Dei* that constitutes the church...The *missio Dei* purifies the church. It sets it under the cross – the only place where it is ever safe...The *missio Dei* is God’s activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate.” (author’s emphasis) (Bosch 391, 519)

Because “the *missio Dei* constitutes the church,” mission then is who the church is, its very nature, and not just something the church does. Mission is *the* aspect that distinguishes the church from other entities and organizations that seeks to do good. Untold numbers of civic groups and charity organizations seek to improve their communities, help the less fortunate, fight for injustice, and address world poverty. However, it is the Body of Christ whom God has chosen as ambassadors who bring shalom to broken and dark places. David Wesley’s essay, *The Church as Missionary*, makes the correlation well, saying:

Mission is the most identifiable aspect of the body of Christ. Mission is not a program or plan of the church; neither is it a slogan or mission statement that gives administrative direction. Mission is the very nature of the church, seeking first God and his kingdom. It flows directly from God. A living relationship with the God of mission distinguishes the church as a living organism, as opposed to a mechanistic (and secular) organization. Being in this relationship, we truly can say that the church does not *support* a program of missions; rather, the church *is* the missionary. (author’s emphasis) (Schwanz and Coleson 21)

The Church as Missional Community

If God’s mission is realized as “sending” through the covenants of election and blessing, and as a function of the three Persons of the Trinity, who then are the “new” elect of the new covenant? They are the Church universal, the members of the Body of Christ who have been chosen by God (cf. John 15.16) and accepted God’s offer of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Alan Hirsch, founder of the Forge Missional Network, posits:

Because we are the ‘sent’ people of God, the church is the instrument of God’s mission in the world. As things stand, many people see it the other way around. They believe mission is an instrument of the church; a means by which the church is grown. Although we frequently say, ‘the church has a mission,’ according to missional theology a more correct statement would be ‘the mission has a church.’ (*Defining Missional*)

The Acts of the Apostles records the emergence of the people of the new covenant and the birth of the church. Luke begins the follow-up to his gospel account with these words, “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen” (emphasis mine) (Acts 1.1–2). These few words set the stage for the narrative that follows and convey to the reader that God’s mission is not yet complete. John Stott says of Luke-Acts:

The contrasting parallels [the author] draws between his two volumes was not between Christ and his church, but between two states of the ministry of the same Christ. In his *former book* he has written *about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, ...*[and] in this his second book (he implies) he will write about what Jesus continued to do and to teach after his ascension, especially through the apostles whose sermons and authenticating ‘signs and wonders’ Luke will faithfully record. Thus Jesus’ ministry on earth, exercised personally and publicly, was followed by his ministry from heaven, exercised through his Holy Spirit by his apostles.” (*The Message of Acts*)

This continuing work “to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1.8b) led to the birth of the church and the faith called Christianity. Luke’s words serve as a continual reminder that the *missio dei* endures through God’s sending the church into all the world in both word and deed, and that the church cannot *be* the church apart from missions, nor can the followers of Christ participate in the *missio dei* apart from Christ and his church.

Van Gelder and Zscheile offer an appropriate perspective on Jesus’ command for his followers to be his witnesses. They write:

The church is not a collection of individuals who choose to associate primarily to have their spiritual needs met or to do some good in the world. Rather, the church is a community of mutual participation in God's own life and the life of the world – a participation characterized by openness to others. Just as the Trinity's interdependent, communal life is generative and outward reaching in love, so too must the church's life be focused toward others and the world. This is clear in Jesus' prayer in John 17:21b-23: 'As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them. So that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.' (*The Missional Church in Perspective*, 107–08)

What then is the nature of this mission of “openness to other” to which the church is called in the ongoing *missio dei*? Is it acceptance? Inclusiveness? Or something more? God's mission of redemption is described in two theological concepts—the bringing of shalom and the in-breaking of God's kingdom.

When the church lives as a missional community aligned with the *missio dei*, it becomes God's instrument of healing and restoring wholeness to all of creation in every dimension—spiritual, physical, social, economic, psychological, political, environmental—and is best characterized by the Jewish notion of *shalom*—“well-being; safety; peace and justice” (Sakenfeld Vol. 5, 213). Theologian Cornelius Plantinga expounds on shalom as not just peace, but:

Universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight – a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. (*Not the Way It Supposes to Be* 10)

When the church lives as missional community, it also bears witness to God's kingdom. Author and priest Stephanie Spellers, quoting an essay by Hunsberger, describes the three facets of the church that is a bringer-of-shalom and finds its identity in the in-breaking of God's kingdom. She writes:

First, the church is the *community of the reign of God* where people would find ‘a body made up of many cultures and expressions, groups once divided by oppression and violence now reconciled and unselfishly seeking each other’s well-being, living into the dream God longs to make real through the whole creation.’ The church is also the *messenger of the reign of God* that leaves ‘no ambiguity about the identity of the God who is moving all of life toward divine *shalom*.’ Finally, the church is the *servant of the reign of God* whose ‘hands...hearts and ...resources simply must be devoted to action that participates in the justice and wholeness of God’s reign.’ (author’s emphasis) (*The Church Awake* 34–35)

Although Western Christianity has historically seen mission and missions as a specialized program of the church, the church as missional community insists that *all* Christians are sent to move beyond the stained glass buildings and participate in the *missio dei*. David Wesley, in his essay *The Church as Missionary*, expounds:

Mission is not the church’s response to the Gospel; it is the church’s origin and it is the church’s purpose to equip its members. The ‘business’ of the church...is to train missionaries to go and live out the gospel in their spheres of influence. The missional church, therefore, does not shape programs around consumerist Christian desires. The missional church designs ministries that equip people to show the gospel to the nonbeliever. This is not done as a program but as a lifestyle. (Schwanz and Coleson, 23)

Minatrea further offers:

A missional church is a reproducing community of authentic disciples, being equipped as missionaries sent by God, to live and proclaim his Kingdom in their world. The community does not own the mission; they are, however, invited to share its marvelous wonder. (*Shaped by God’s Heart* 12)

If Christianity in the West is to embrace its biblical purpose of being a community used by God to bring shalom and establish God’s kingdom, those who lead it must question everything the church does and who they claim to be. This question should be from a missional hermeneutic that focuses on aligning the church’s ministry with what God is doing within its context. It will not be enough, however, for pastors and leaders to design new programs if they do not train the people to live missionally.

Missio Dei, Imago Dei, and Incarnation as Missional Living

Missional living must be the central focus of the church if it is to be a missional community. This way of living is not a choice for authentic Christ-followers. It is the calling and vocation of all believers. Missional living is inherent and immutable in those who have found a new identity in Christ because it is derived from the *missio dei*. Therefore, missional living is the natural manifestation of the *imago dei* in each person.

Thomas Noble's essay, *The Mission of the Holy Trinity*, coalesces the doctrines of *missio dei* and *imago dei*, and includes incarnation by asking:

If we are to be 'in the image of God,' does that not mean that *who we are to be* is to be shaped and formed by *who God is*? And what about the great missionary text we call 'The Great Commandment'? It is about mission...but it is also about the Holy Trinity [and incarnation]...How could we miss the close connection? (author's emphasis) (Schwanz and Coleson 77)

The doctrine of incarnation provides a theological lens through which the call to missional living for every Christian is clearly revealed in the scriptures. The Gospel of John proclaims both the divine and the human natures of Christ as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1.29) *and* as the "example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13.15). Jesus, the "Word [who] become flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1.14) and whose desire was to align his will with the Father's will (Matt. 26.36–46; Mark 14.32–42; Luke 22.40–46), is the paradigmatic model for missional living.

One aspect of this way of living which Jesus exemplifies is the proclamation of the in-breaking of God's kingdom (c.f. Matt. 28.19; Acts 1.8;). Darrell Guder, in his Presidential Address for the American Society of Missiology, avers that living missionally is the:

Apostolic vocation that defines Christian purpose. ‘You shall be my witnesses.’ That vocation is implemented by the Holy Spirit through the gathering, upbuilding, and sending of the witnessing community. Baptism is ordination to apostolic vocation. The Lord encounters us at his table to restore us, to nourish us, to equip us, and to send us out as his body, bearing his love into the world. The Word is proclaimed apostolically, prophetically, evangelistically, pastorally, and instructively ‘to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the Body of Christ.’ This vocation is an essential dimension of Christian salvation, the witness to what God has done in justifying and sanctifying his people. And this vocation continues into the world as every member, bearing a flame of the Spirit, is sent into the mission field as light, leaven, and salt, to be Christ’s apostolic community at work. (*Missio Dei* 72)

However, this way of living should not be thought of as a burden or duty, but as a natural response of a grateful child of God who has been saved by Christ’s sacrifice and empowered by the Spirit.

Following his example and doing what Christ has done begins when his followers realize that they have a new identity in Christ (John 1.12; Rom. 6.6; Eph. 1.5; 1 Cor. 6.17; Gal. 3.27–28; Col. 2.9–10; 3.1–3; 1 John 3.1–2) and embrace Jesus’ command to “o and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28.19). McPhee rightly states:

God’s people do these things [missions] not out of obligation but out of a new identity. When Jesus said, ‘You will be my witnesses’ (Acts 1:8), he was not issuing a command but making a statement about the nature of his followers. Likewise, the New Testament’s metaphors for believers – salt, light, fishers, stars, letters, ambassadors, good seed – are never made into imperatives. They are always indicative, attesting that mission is the natural activity of the church [and those who follow Christ]. (*The Missio Dei and the Transformation of the Church* 9–10)

Hirsch in, *Defining Missional*, further insists that “Every disciple is to be an agent of the kingdom of God, and every disciple is to carry the mission of God into every sphere of life. We are all missionaries sent into a non-Christian culture.”

Another aspect of this way of life is the call to live in the world, but not be of the world (Mark 16.15; John 17.15–19). The imperative for self-sacrifice is an expression of

God's love to all people (c.f. Matt. 10.38, 16.24–25, 26.39; 1 Cor. 9.19–23; Phil. 2.5–8).

This profound way of living requires Christians to not be passive in living out their faith, but to live alongside others and so aligned with God's mission that unbelievers will come to faith in God (1 Pet 2.12). Milfred Minatrea's *Shaped by God's Heart*, posits:

Among the most poignant implications of this lifestyle is the movement away from self and toward another. It is a lifestyle that involves placing the need of another above one's own desire. It is sacrificial and service-oriented; it can be uncomfortable, and it is not always safe. This missional lifestyle, like the incarnation of Christ, may include movement across barriers and into disparate cultures. (81)

The incarnation also reveals that missional living is not a one-size-fits-all program, but it must be personalized in the life of the individual believer and in the context in which he or she lives. Minatrea, director of the Missional Church Center in Dallas, TX, asserts, "Wherever believers are, those among whom they live and work constitute the mission field. Being missional is not first about ministering among those we do not know, but living authentically among those we do know" (*Shaped by God's Heart*, 92). Theologian Miroslav Volf, whose work seeks to reveal the sacred in the secular realm, affirms the contextualized nature of missional living, saying:

Christians never have their own *proper* and *exclusive* cultural territory – their own exclusive language, values, practices, or rationality. They speak the language they have learned from others, though they metaphorize its meaning. They inherit the value structures of the culture at large, yet they change more or less radically some of its elements and refuse to accept others. They take up the rules of a given culture, and yet they subvert them, change them partly, refuse to obey some of them, and introduce new ones. To become a Christian means to divert without leaving. To live as a Christian means to keep inserting a difference into a given culture without ever stepping outside that culture to do so. (author's emphasis) (*A Public Faith*, 93)

Volf goes on to affirm that while missional living must be contextualized, it is always a life centered on Christ. He writes:

In my view, true followers of God are called to live in the world and not be of the world (see Mk 16:15; Jn 17:14-16). They are to love God above all things and follow Jesus Christ as their Lord; that is their difference from the rest of the world – whether they think and act the same way, in a similar way, or in a completely different way from others. Christianity is not a ‘culture’ or a ‘civilization’; it is a way of living centered on Christ in many diverse cultures and civilizations. (143–44)

No longer can faithful Christ-followers deny that *all* Christians are sent into the world as missionaries and that Jesus’ command to “make disciples” is a call to align their lives with God’s ongoing mission in the culture and society in which they find themselves. Leslie Newbigin, author and missionary to India, insists that even new believers are participants in the *missio dei*. Each time he received converts into membership of the church, Newbigin would give them the commission:

Now you are the Body of Christ in this village. You are God’s apostle here. Through you they are to be saved. I will be in touch with you. I will pray for you. I will visit you. If you want my help I will try to help you. But *you* are now the mission. (author’s emphasis) (Goheen, *As the Father* 36)

This way of living, aligning one’s life with God’s redemptive action, is the very essence of being Christian. Alan Hirsch speaks of the immutable nature of missional living, proclaiming, “I now believe that the idea of latent inbuilt missional potencies is not a mere fantasy; in fact, there are primal forces that lie latent in every Jesus community and in every true believer” (*The Forgotten Way*, 15). Hirsch further insists, that “the mission of God flows directly through every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. To obstruct this is to block God’s purposes in and through his people” (82).

Missional living is the vocation of those who follow Christ. It is also the outward expression of what it means to be made in the likeness of God. The creation account in Genesis is a reminder that God made humankind in God’s likeness and he gave them the role of being “imagers” of God (Gen. 1:26; 2:7; 5:1–2; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; Jas. 3:9). Even

though the relationship has been damaged through sin, it is the image of God (*imago dei*) inside every person that makes missional living possible. The NIDB states, “Image of God is what human beings *are* by virtue of a divine decision, quite apart from anything they *have done or will do*. Nor can human beings decide they will no longer be in the image of God; *image of God is who they are*” (emphasis mine) (Vol 3, 19). Missiologist and professor Gregg Okesson further explains that there are four considerations if one is to “live in faithfulness to God’s image”:

1. Remembering that we are similar to God, having the “privilege and high status” of imaging God through our person(s).
2. Realizing that we are different than God and are not God.
3. Operating from a “functional ontology” in which “God provides the ethics by which we think, act, and relate to the world” and “we ‘image’ God by being dependent upon him.”
4. Being “derivational,” knowing that “we have no intrinsic ‘right’ to be the image of God; it is an honor bestowed upon us by God...a gift. When we use it wisely, it grows. (*Transformative Mission*)

As followers of Christ embrace and embody the *imago dei* they are drawn into participation in the *missio dei* as their hearts become broken for what breaks the heart of God. David Wesley in his essay, *The Church as Missionary*, confirms, “Being missional is being desperate for an authentic relationship with God that results in participating in *God’s* passion – *God’s* mission-nature – reaching to ‘the nations’ in every activity of our lives” (author’s emphasis) (Schwanz and Coleson 27). Minatrea more explicitly adds:

Missional Christians find that as they are shaped by God’s heart, objects of his love, they genuinely love other people. Experiencing his love

motivates them to fulfill the rest of the Great Commandment, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ [However, they] are not content simply to love people; they desire to see every person become an authentic disciple of Jesus Christ. (*Shaped by God’s Heart* 18–19)

Every person who claims to follow Christ has as their primary calling to dwell in God’s presence, allowing the Holy Spirit to form and transform them, revealing the *imago dei* and aligning them with the *missio dei*.

Gaps Analysis in Literature

As stated earlier, the scope and breadth of missional focused literature is not extensive due to the recent rise of missional theology. Most of the contemporary literature has concentrated on missional theology and its consequences for the church, programs of the church, and church leadership. A smaller percentage of the total body of work addresses the subject of missional living on the personal level and even less which offer a pedagogical framework from which persons might discover a passion for missional living and pastors/teachers might disciple others. This research project sought to bridge that gap.

Research Design

Research for this project was qualitative in nature, using the Critical Incident Technique with volunteer participants who have been trained in ILI’s *Eight Core Values*. While all of ILI’s training is built on the *Eight Core Values*, not all formats are led by ILI affiliated instructors, giving rise to the potential of inconsistency of training. Therefore, only *Regional Conference* (RC) alumni from the U.S. were invited to participate in this research.

Data was collected in three phases using a “funneling” schema to identify a particular group of persons whose beliefs and behaviors had been transformed by

embracing the *Eight Core Values* and leading them to live missionally. To minimize selection bias, the process was designed to include only self-selecting participants, i.e. those who met the minimum criteria (ability to articulate changed beliefs and behaviors) and responded to the invitation to participate in each subsequent phase.

Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

The CIT is a qualitative research methodology that relies on the narrative descriptions of real life situations and seeks to identify best practices and process, thereby adding value to and improving established programs. Because data is collected in a narrative format, respondents are able to tell their own story without feeling pressure to give “the right answers.” Because CIT is also a cognitive technique, designed to identify, acquire, and use experiential knowledge, it is well suited to qualify the effect of learning new constructs, such as the *Eight Core Values* (Hettlage and Steinlin 4–5).

Phase 1 - Online Survey

The initial phase began with identification of RC alumni by ILI. Invitations to participate in the study were limited to those alumni who were trained in the U.S. and for whom ILI had an email address. The online survey was designed to identify persons who had experienced change in their beliefs and behaviors about the Christian life as a result of learning the *Eight Core Values*. Respondents who indicated “definite” or “significant” change, could articulate the nature of the changes, and agreed to participate in an online questionnaire were invited to participate in the next phase.

Analysis in phase one sought to describe and codify the extent and nature of the changes in RC participants’ beliefs and behaviors, as well as identify relationships and

differences within the sample group. Next, preliminary themes were classified within patterns and categories.

Phase 2 – Online Questionnaire

The second phase of data collection was devised to qualify the change of beliefs and behaviors in those persons who embraced the *Eight Core Values*, making them part of their lives. Answers were solicited in narrative form to better understand the nature of the impact of the *Values* on their lives. Respondents who felt that they were living more missionally as a result of the change in their belief and behaviors and agreed to be interviewed were invited to participate in the final phase.

Analysis in this phase described and codified the nature of change in participant knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors, as well as identifying possible relationships and differences between the descriptions of each category. Then preliminary themes were identified and compared to results from phase one.

Phase 3 – One-on-one Interviews

Interviews were conducted via FaceTime or Skype. The interviews consisted of ten open-ended, high-gain questions addressing the three research questions and designed to qualify the changes in beliefs and behaviors of the respondents, as well as identify what role, if any, the *Eight Core Values* played in initiating missional living. Analysis of this data set again sought to describe and codify the responses and identify preliminary themes and patterns. Finally, the themes across all three phases of data collection were compared, looking for consistency, commonalities, and variances.

Final Data Analysis

Final analysis was conducted using the Critical Incident Technique, comparing responses in all three phases of data collection and looking for the emergence of patterns and schema within the collective narratives. The interview responses, along with the survey and questionnaire responses by the same persons, were analyzed focusing on antecedent information, detailed descriptions of events, and the outcome of the event. This method allowed an evaluative scheme to emerge from the data in an attempt to understand if embracing and living according to the *Eight Core Values* could be seen as a tool to develop a missional mindset and equip Christians for missional living.

Review of Chapter

This chapter has shown that the idea of being “missional,” whether as a church, community, or Christian, is not an entirely new one. The emerging missional theology and praxis is biblical in its origins and ancient in its practices. The scriptures reveal that since the fall of humanity, God has been on mission to redeem creation and restore shalom. The way one can understand God’s actions in accomplishing the *missio dei* is in God’s “sending,” first seen in God’s calling of Abraham to leave his home and go to a land that God would show him. The purpose of this choosing and sending was that God would make Abraham into a “great nation” who would be God’s elect, and God would bless them so that they might be a blessing to others. In a real sense God filled the role of the missionary, using the blessing of the Jewish nation to draw other nations to Godself. This “sending” motif took on a Trinitarian nature and was central to the institution of the new covenant as God the Father sent the Son to bring salvation and forgiveness to the

world and both God the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit to empower the followers of Christ, who are now sent into all the world as God's instrument in the *missio dei*.

From the *missio dei* the Christian church finds its identity and purpose as a missional community. The church is God's chosen instrument to bring shalom to a broken world and proclaim the in-breaking of God's kingdom. Missional living is also born from the theological construct of *missio dei* and is the vocation of all true believers. Missional living is inherent in those who have found a new identity in Christ because it is derived from the *missio dei* and is the natural manifestation of the *imago dei* in each person. This way of living is exemplified most clearly in the life of Jesus Christ, the incarnate God and man.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Chapter three begins with a brief evaluation of the value of the *Eight Core Values* as a discipleship tool and revisits the three research questions that guide this project. Next is a discussion of the significance of using the *Values* as a tool to initiate missional living in the life of Christians followed by a description of the context in which the *Values* are currently taught. In the second half of the chapter is a description of research participants and the selection process used to recruit them, the ethical considerations of this project, an explanation of why the Critical Incident Technique was chosen for data collection and analysis, and a discussion of the factors effecting the reliability of this study.

Nature of the Ministry Research Phenomenon

The biblical narrative, read with a missional hermeneutic, clearly reveals that to be an authentic follower of Jesus Christ is to participate in God's ongoing mission of redeeming creation. Both the Old and New Testaments confirm that God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, calls, equips, and sends Christians into the world to bear witness by both words and deeds to the *missio dei*. However, after more than two thousand years of practicing the Christian faith, the Church has been ineffective in fulfilling the Great Commission it received from Jesus Christ. A growing number of theologians and faith practitioners argue the reason for this failure in Western Christianity is that the church has segregated discipleship into specialized programs of education, missions, evangelism, ministry, stewardship, worship, etc. This segregation is contrast to Jesus's whole-life assertion that, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny

themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9.23) and “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28.19-20a). These theologians and pastors further argue that the corrective to the church’s shortcoming is to embrace a missional theology, which would shape the church, its leaders, and its members to live missionally. One pedagogical construct that embraces the precepts of missional theology and offers the potential to stimulate missional living in Christ-followers is the *Eight Core Values* taught by the International Leadership Institute (ILI).

This study is designed to evaluate and qualify the efficacy of the *Eight Core Values* in the lives of those who embrace them. More specifically, if aligning one’s life with these tenets initiates a missional mindset and serves as an impetus for missional living. To answer this general question, this project is built around three specific research questions, each one intended to build upon and further qualify the answers of the previous question.

Research Question #1

How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one’s beliefs about the Christian life?

This question presupposes that a change in one’s beliefs will result in a permanent change in behavior (verified in RQ#2). The answer to this question relies on the respondents’ perceived change in their understanding about living as a follower of Jesus Christ after learning and living by the *Values*. Respondents are encouraged to describe

the change by naming the specific beliefs that were impacted and describing the beliefs before and after attending an ILI Regional Conference.

Research Question #2

How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?

This question, like RQ#1, presupposes that changed beliefs result in changed behavior and relies on the respondents' perceived connection between the two. Respondents were encouraged to not only describe the changes, but to give examples of times the changes have been most evident.

Research Question #3

In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?

The answer to this question is derived by a series of high-gain questions intended to cause the respondents to view their experience with the *Values* in a new way by comparing their beliefs and behaviors over against the definition of missional living. They were encouraged to tell the story of transformation and describe an example of when they felt most aligned with the *missio dei*.

Conceptual Significance of the Learning about the Phenomenon

Research, no matter how carefully conducted, can be skewed in its findings if one's underlying assumptions are inaccurate. Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study—concepts, assumptions, beliefs, and theories—have been carefully examined and are stated as follows (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014).

Biblical Assumptions

Assumptions concerning the Biblical text which inform this research project begin with the belief that the Bible is a sacred text inspired by God through which God speaks

to humankind. The Bible has three sources of authority: 1) The writers were inspired by the Spirit as they recorded the truth to the best of their knowledge; 2) God was at work in the process of canonization of the Scriptures; and 3) God's Spirit works in the reader by our thoughtful study of the Scriptures. Furthermore, while Scripture holds primacy for theological reflection, it is informed by tradition, experience, and reason (Koehler 80–81).

In addition, it is this researcher's belief in a Biblical theology that embraces the diversity of the various biblical texts while embracing the unity of the canon as a whole. Individual texts are properly interpreted in light of their place in the whole of Scripture. Joe Dongell says of Biblical theology as a lens to scripture interpretation, "Often times the text reveals insights that cannot be proven inductively. The unity of scripture is generated within us by the witness of the Spirit as we sense God speaking and arises out of the unity of God, God as One. We ultimately end up with a synthetic vision of the message" which informs one's interpretation (*Seven Challenges*).

This project is also informed by the belief that the Scriptures must be read with what Guder calls a "missional hermeneutic." Guder explains, "Scriptures are the normative and authoritative witness to God's mission and its unfolding in human history...one must read Scripture from a missional hermeneutic...[which reveals] the essential nature and vocation of the church as God's called and sent people" (*Missional Church* 10–11).

Theological Assumptions

Embracing a Biblical theology and reading the text with a missional hermeneutic give rise to certain theological assumptions that inform this project as well. The first of

these assumptions concerns the relationship between the *missio dei* and missions. The *missio dei* or mission of God describes God's ongoing redemptive work of restoring all of creation to its original, God-intended state. "Mission" and "missions," rightly understood are inseparable from the *missio dei*. Therefore, all missionary work happens by invitation from and out of the heart of God, is empowered by God, and serves God's purpose of redeeming creation.

A second theological assumption informing this project is the understanding that the church is God's chosen instrument of redemption. The *missio dei* and mission coalesce in God's Spirit calling the Church into being for the purpose of mission. The nature of this interaction is best understood as "sentness." God is a "sending" God and the Church is God's people "sent" into the world as God's instrument of blessing and reconciliation in God's redemptive work. God's "sending" nature is unique in each the Old Testament and the New Testament, yet also similar in that God is the primary mission agent in both. In the Old Testament God's people are "sent" in the sense of entering into a covenant of blessing through which God will also bless the nations (e.g. Gen. 12.1–3). "Sending" in the New Testament is a function of all three persons of the Trinity and the Three-in-One who empowers and "sends" the church to announce the in-breaking of God's kingdom (e.g. Matt. 28.18–20; Mark 13.10; 14.9; Luke 24.45–47; John 17.18; 20.21–23; Acts 1.8; 13.2–3). Guder affirms the nature of mission as "sentness," saying:

Mission is not merely an activity of the church. Rather, mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation. *'Mission' means 'sending,'* and it is the central biblical theme describing the purpose of God's action in human history. (*Missional Church* 4)

When the church lives as a missional community aligned with the *missio dei*, it becomes God's instrument of healing and restoring wholeness to all of creation in every dimension and bears witness to God's kingdom.

A third theological assumption that must be acknowledged is that missional living is inherent and immutable in authentic Christians because it is derived from the *missio dei* and is the natural manifestation of the *imago dei* in each person. To be an imager of God is the outward expression of what it means to be made in the likeness of God, shaped and formed by who God is. Missional living is ultimately expressed by the Incarnate Christ as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1.29) *and* as the "example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13.15). Jesus, the "Word [who] become flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1.14) and whose desire was to align his will with the Father's will (Luke 22.40–46) is the model for missional living.

Historical Assumptions

From the historical perspective, this project assumes that the true nature of missions has not changed even though Western Christianity changed its understanding of mission. Bosch, in his text *Transforming Mission*, represents advocates of missional theology who offer a correction to the relationship between the *missio dei* and what Western Christianity has historically described as "missions." He writes:

Mission is *missio Dei*, which seeks to subsume into itself the *missiones ecclesiae*, the missionary programs of the church. It is not the church which 'undertakes' mission; it is the *missio Dei* that constitutes the church...the *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate. (author's emphasis) (391, 519)

Cultural Assumptions

This project does not assume that missional living is universally expressed in every context. Rather, missional living must be personalized in the life of the individual believer and in the circumstance in which he or she lives. Christianity itself is not a culture; it is a way of living centered on Christ that happens in many diverse societies.

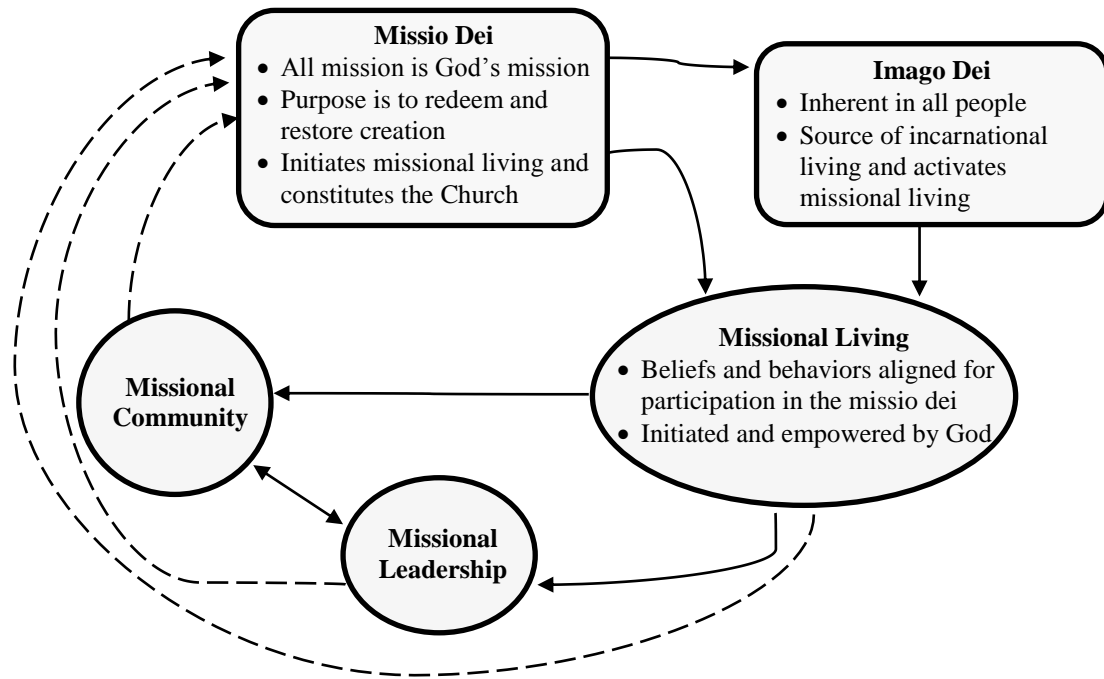
On the other hand, this project does not assume that the learning and implications of its findings are transferable in every culture and context. While the principles taught in the *Eight Core Values* are universal in nature, and even though they are taught around the world, this project only considered their correlation to missional living in the context of Western Christianity as expressed in the United States.

Theoretical Assumptions

The following theoretical assumptions are made within the construct of this research project:

- Change in a person's beliefs will result in some degree of changed behavior.
- God's Spirit works through the imago dei to reveal a person's role in the missio dei and empowers them for participation in mission.
- A Christian begins to live missionally when his or her beliefs and behaviors become aligned with God's ongoing redemptive action in the world.
- Christian leaders practice missional leadership only after learning to live missionally.
- As individual Christians begin to live missionally together under missional leadership, a missional community is formed which God uses in the missio dei.

The theoretical framework for these assumptions is represented graphically below.



Missional Living
Figure 3.1

Ministry Context While Observing the Phenomenon

The *Eight Core Values* were developed in 2000 and have been taught in various locations around the world in four different formats:

1. National Conference – a six-day experience focused on leadership development led by ILI teams and local leadership.
2. Regional Conference – a three-day leadership training experience led by ILI trained local leaders.
3. History Makers – a two- or six-day training experience designed for emerging leaders between the ages of eighteen and thirty led by ILI trained leaders.
4. Christian to the Core – a twelve session resource for individual study, small groups, or entire congregations led by pastors/leaders in a local congregation.

To ensure study participants had received consistent, quality training from an ILI-affiliated trainer, only persons whom had attended a Regional Conference in the United States were invited to participate in this research.

Participants Sampled About the Phenomenon

In an attempt to not impose geographical limitations and ensure an adequate sample size for the interview phase, online tools and video software were used throughout data collection. Invitations to participate in the initial phase of this research were sent to only those Regional Conference participants for whom ILI had an email address. See Figure 2 for sample size and Appendix A for participant statistics.

Criteria for Selection

Selection was conducted using a “funneling” schema in which each participant met the minimum criteria and self-selected to participate in each phase of research, ultimately identifying a defined group of persons whose beliefs and behaviors had been transformed by embracing the *Eight Core Values* and resulted in them living more missionally. Potential participants for Phase One, an online survey designed to identify persons who experienced a change in their beliefs and behaviors as a result of learning the *Values*, were persons who had attended a Regional Conference in the U.S. and for whom ILI had an email address. Any respondent who indicated a “definite” or “substantial” change in both beliefs and behaviors and agreed to complete an online questionnaire were invited to participate in the next phase of research. Phase Two was an online questionnaire designed to qualify the change in beliefs and behaviors in those persons who embraced the *Values*. Respondents who perceived that they were living more missionally as a result of the change in their beliefs and behaviors and agreed to be

interviewed were invited to participate in Phase Three. The final research phase was a virtual interview (via FaceTime or Skype) designed to understand and further qualify the specific nature of the changes in beliefs and behaviors and identify the impetus for that change.

Description

The participants in this study were persons who had engaged and embraced the *Eight Core Values* after attending one of ILI's Regional Conferences in the United States. Approximately one-hundred alumni were invited to participate in the first phase of the study by completing an online survey designed to identify changes in their beliefs and behaviors after attending the Conference. Of the forty-seven survey respondents, thirty-five indicated a "definite" or "substantial" change in both their beliefs and behaviors. These respondents were invited to participate in the second phase, an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to qualify the changes in beliefs and behaviors, with thirteen respondents describing the changes in terms that indicated a more missional life. Twelve of the thirteen agreed to participate in the final phase, an interview consisting of ten questions designed around the three research questions. Ten of twelve respondents (two did not respond in time) were interviewed to further qualify the changes in the beliefs and behaviors of the participants.

	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
	n	n	n
Invited	101	35	12
Responses	47	13	10

Study Participant Selection
Table 3.1

This research considered *only* the possible effects of embracing the *Eight Core Values* for Christian life and because participants were self-selected, there was no emphasis placed on ensuring a demographically diverse sample of people. Overall, the percentage of male and female was almost equal, the median age was between fifty and fifty-nine years old, median time (in years) as an active Christian was greater than thirty, and median time (in months) since completing Regional Conference was greater than twenty-four. See Appendix A for participant demographics.

Ethical Considerations

Respondent participation in this research project was voluntary. The initial invitation to participate in phase one was sent to ILI Regional Conference alumni via email by ILI's administrative staff, thereby eliminating potential researcher bias in identifying the prospective pool of candidates. Participants in phase two were self-selected by being able to articulate the nature of change in their beliefs and behaviors and volunteering to continue. Similarly, phase three interviewees self-selected by further qualifying the changes in their beliefs and behaviors as well as volunteering to be interviewed. Additionally, potential participants were asked to agree to a Consent and Confidentiality Statement prior to participation (see Appendixes B through G for invitations and Consent and Confidentiality Statements).

The survey, questionnaire, and interview questions were formulated around the three research questions with special consideration to avoid offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language. Each set of questions were initially vetted using test participants as well as review by ILI leadership to ensure their applicability and validity. Based on feedback, phase one and two questions received minor revisions. However, the

method for phase three was changed from focus groups to one-on-one interviews because in the test focus group participant responses seemed to be effected by groupthink, leading the researcher to believe that not all responses were genuine.

Confidentiality, privacy, dignity, and anonymity of participants was held as paramount. Both the online survey and online questionnaire were formatted using Google Forms, stored on the researcher's personal Google Drive, and password protected. Audio and video recordings of the one-on-one interviews were stored on the researcher's password protected personal computer in a password protected file. Also, each participant was assigned a Participant Number to further disassociate their responses with personal information. Lastly, the researcher sought to acknowledge the work of other authors and researchers throughout this project.

Procedure for Collecting Evidence from Participants

Research for this project was qualitative in nature and conducted using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) with volunteer participants who have been trained in ILI's *Eight Core Values*. Only Regional Conference (RC) alumni from the U.S. were invited to participate in this research. Data was collected in three phases and was designed to identify a group of persons whose beliefs and behaviors had been transformed by embracing the *Eight Core Values*, leading them to live more missionally. To minimize selection bias, the process was been designed to include only self-selecting participants, i.e. those who met the minimum criteria (ability to articulate changed beliefs and behaviors) and responded to the invitation to participate in each subsequent phase. Data collection via CIT used a narrative format designed to identify, acquire, and use experiential knowledge. Phase One began by identifying alumni who have attended a

Regional Conference in the U.S. and whom ILI has an email address. This group was invited to complete an online survey designed to identify persons who have experienced change in their beliefs and behaviors about the Christian life as a result of learning the *Eight Core Values*. Respondents who indicated “definite” or “significant” change, could articulate the nature of the changes, and agreed to participate in an online questionnaire were invited to participate in the next phase. Phase Two was an online questionnaire that sought to qualify the change of beliefs and behaviors in those persons who make the *Values* part of their lives. Answers were solicited in narrative form so as to better understand the nature of the impact of the *Values* on their lives. Respondents who felt that they were living more missionally as a result of the change in their belief and behaviors and agreed to be interviewed were invited to participate in the final phase. Phase Three involved one-on-one interviews conducted via FaceTime or Skype and consisted of ten open-ended questions addressing the three research questions designed to qualify the changes in beliefs and behaviors of the respondents, as well as identify what role, if any, the *Eight Core Values* played in initiating missional living.

Procedure for Analyzing the Evidence Collected

Overall, data analysis of this research attempted to define and summarize the data, detect relationships between variables, compare and classify the differences between variables, and predict outcomes. Analysis of phase one data described and codified the extent and nature of the changes in RC participants’ beliefs and behaviors, as well as identified relationships and differences within the sample group, and included the following steps:

1. Plot the average strength of the *Values* in participant's lives, as rated by the participants, before and after attending the Regional Conference.
2. Plot the average and degree of perceived change in beliefs.
3. Plot the average and degree of perceived change in behaviors.
4. Plot the demographic breakdown of the sample group—gender, age, years as an active Christian, and time since attending the Regional Conference.
5. Describe and codify the nature of change in beliefs from narrative answers.
6. Identify relationships and comparisons between descriptions in belief changes.
7. Describe and codify the nature of change in behaviors from narrative answers.
8. Identify relationships and comparison between descriptions in behavior changes.
9. Identify and classify preliminary themes within patterns and categories.

Analysis of phase two described and codified the nature of change in participant knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors, as well as identified possible relationships and differences between the descriptions of each category, and included the following steps:

1. Describe and codify the nature of change in participant knowledge (3 questions), using their narrative answers. Identify statements that will be used as potential quotes.
2. Identify relationships and comparisons between descriptions of change in knowledge.
3. Identify and classify themes within patterns and categories.
4. Repeat Steps 1–3 with three questions about change in beliefs.
5. Repeat Steps 1–3 with four questions about change in behaviors.

6. Identify preliminary themes within patterns and categories in all three sections of questionnaire.
7. Compare themes from survey in phase one with themes in phase two, looking for commonalities and variance.
8. Make further observations about predicted outcomes.

Analysis of the phase three data again described and codified the responses and identified preliminary themes and patterns. Finally, the themes across all three phases of data collection were compared, looking for consistency, commonalities, and variances, and includes the following steps:

1. Describe and codify the responses to four questions under Research Question #1.
Identify statements that will be used as potential quotes.
2. Repeat Step 1 for response to questions under Research Questions #2 and 3.
3. Identify preliminary themes within patterns and categories in all three sections of interview questions.

Final analysis used the CIT to compare responses in all three phases of data collection and looked for the emergence of patterns and schema within the collective narratives. The interview responses, along with the survey and questionnaire responses by the same persons, were analyzed by focusing on antecedent information, detailed descriptions of events, and the outcome of the event. This method allowed an evaluative scheme to emerge from the data in an attempt to understand if embracing and living according to the *Eight Core Values* could be seen as a tool to develop a missional mindset and equip Christians for missional living.

Reliability and Validity of Project Design

Qualitative research and the Critical Incident Technique were well suited for this project for several reasons. First, the CIT's capacity is to identify important aspects of an activity, while minimizing stereotypical or expected results. Additionally, because CIT relies on narrative descriptions of realistic situations, respondents were empowered to tell their own story of faith without feeling pressured to respond in a specific way. CIT was selected also because it uses a "flexible set of principles that allow data to be sorted into patterns and relationships, and then summarized and described effectively" (Radford 70). Furthermore, CIT "focus[es] on the acquisition or use of knowledge or information," that seeks to identify recommendations for effective practices, adding value to an established program such as the *Eight Core Values* (Hettlage and Steinlin 4–5).

Furthermore, Critical Incident Technique was chosen because it offers benefits for research participants. CIT encourages interviewees to share their story openly in the construct of a larger ideal and to think conceptually, often stimulating implicit knowledge that is transferable from one construct to another. Additionally, CIT makes concepts tangible and empowers the interviewee because it relies on the abilities and former experiences of the interviewee (Hettlage and Steinlin 6–7).

Finally, to minimize bias in participant selection, the data collection process was designed to include only self-selecting participants, who met the minimum criteria of being able to articulate changed beliefs/behaviors and responded to the invitation to participate in each subsequent phase.

Review of the Chapter

Chapter three has described the research process of this project, beginning with the researches questions guiding this study, the conceptual significance for using ILI's Eight *Core Values* to motivate Christians for missional living, as well as an explanation of how they are currently taught. Next was a description of the study participants and the process by which they were selected. The chapter ends with an explanation of the project's ethical considerations, procedures for data collection and analysis using the Critical Incident Technique, and a discussion of the reliability and validity of this study.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Chapter four begins with a description of how data was analyzed using the Critical Incident Technique from three phases of data collection. Next, is an explanation of how Phase One evidence was used as a preliminary check to verify that ILI's *Eight Core Values* hold the potential for changing the beliefs and behaviors of Regional Conference participants in the U.S. Then, evidence from Phases Two and Three is outlined around the three research questions, before presenting a summary of major findings.

Analytical Procedure: Decoding Evidence

Data was collected from firsthand accounts of ILI Regional Conference in the United States who had learned the *Eight Core Values* and incorporated them into their lives. Data was analyzed using methods consist with the Critical Incident Technique as outlined in the previous chapter. A summative evaluation along with verbatim quotes is presented below.

Phase One of the study served primarily to verify that the *Eight Core Values* have the potential to affect change in the beliefs and behaviors of Christians who embrace them. Therefore, it addressed only Research Questions #1 and #2 and made only preliminary predications about the *Values* as a potential impetus for missional living (see Appendix H for a correlation of survey, questionnaire, and interview questions to the Research Questions). First phase data collection was accomplished via an online survey intended to identify ILI Regional Conference participants in the U.S. who experienced

some degree of change in their beliefs about the Christian life, which in turn served as impetus for changed behavior. Analysis of this data sought to accomplish five goals: 1) identify the demographic breakdown of the sample group; 2) confirm that ILI's teaching of the *Eight Core Values* affect some degree of change in participants' lives; 3) quantify the degree of perceived change in beliefs and behaviors; 4) initially qualify the nature of these changes; and 5) make preliminary predictions.

Phases Two and Three served to further qualify the evidence and make informed predications. Data collection in Phase Two was via an online questionnaire that addressed three areas: 1) knowledge of the Christian life which shapes one's beliefs, 2) behaviors resulting from one's beliefs about Christianity, and 3) the perceived purpose for one's life in relation to the mission dei. Analysis of this data sought to accomplish two goals: 1) qualify the perceived changes in beliefs and behaviors of those who embrace the *Values*, and 2) make further observations about the potential of ILI's *Eight Core Values* to empower and equip Christians for living missionally.

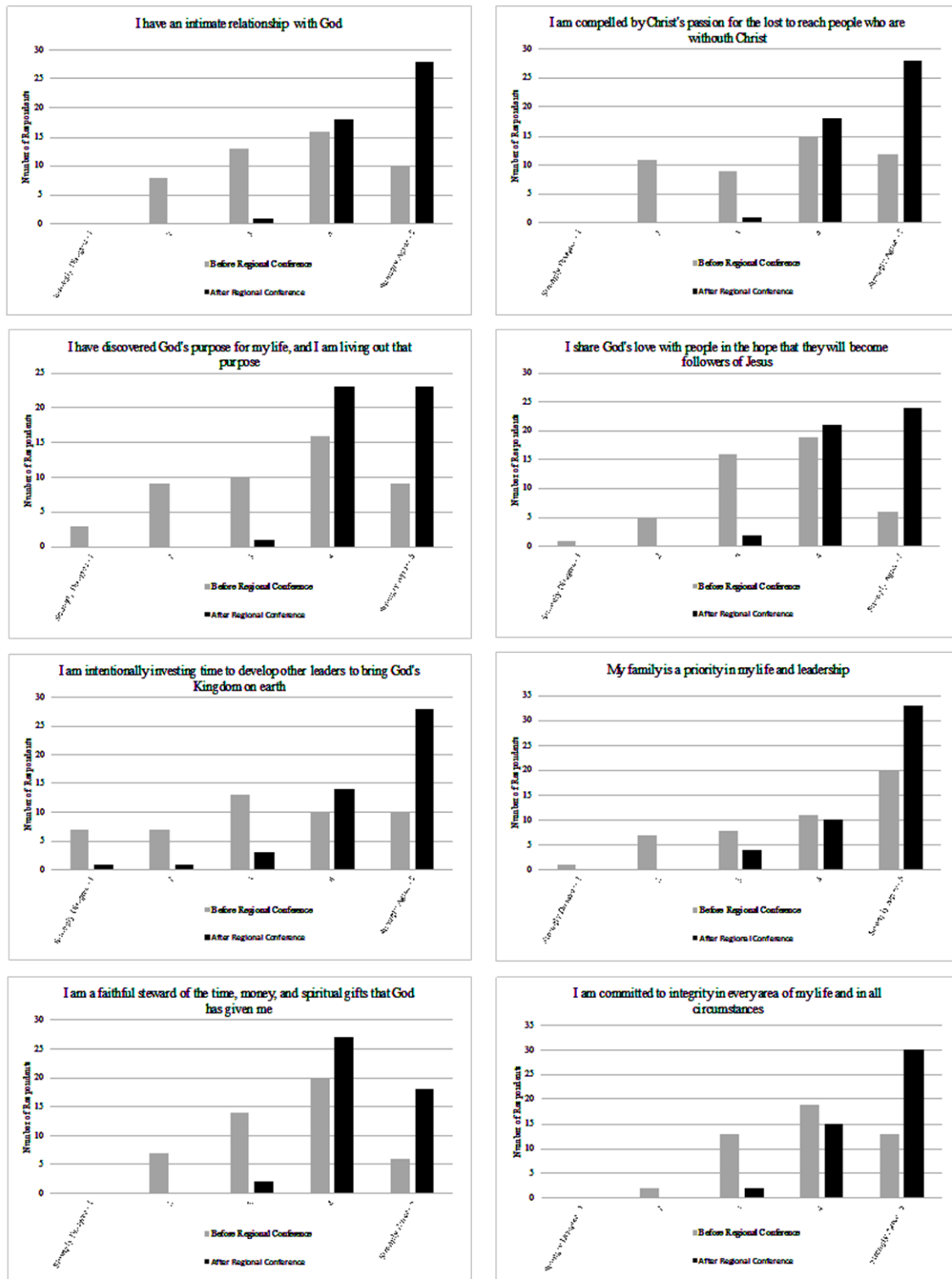
Phase Three data was collected via one-on-one interviews, using ten questions designed to further reveal the nature of change in the participants' beliefs and behaviors about the Christian life. Analysis was again qualitative in nature and compared responses from all three phases. Themes were compared for consistency, commonalities, and variances. Finally, emerging patterns and schema were identified.

Phase One: Preliminary Evidence and Verification

For the reasons stated earlier, invitations to participate in the initial sample group was limited to only Regional Conference attendees in the U.S. Because participants "self-selected" for involvement through each phase of the study, there was no guarantee of

obtaining a demographically diverse sample group. Therefore, only rudimentary demographics pertinent to this research were collected. One-hundred and one ILI Regional Conference attendees were invited to participate in the first phase of this project, of which fifty-one completed some part of the survey. Three respondents did not complete the survey, and one did not provide contact information. Of the forty-seven respondents who completed the survey, there was an almost equal number of males and females and just under 75% were between the ages of forty and seventy. Eighty-one percent have been active in the Christian faith for more than sixteen years, and almost three-quarters of them attended a Regional Conference more than one year earlier (see Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of participant demographics in each phase of data collection).

The first step toward verification that the *Eight Core Values* have the potential to affect change in the lives of persons who embrace them was accomplished by asking the survey respondents to compare the strength of the *Values* in their life before and after attending the Regional Conference. Members of the sample group were asked to reflect upon their beliefs and behaviors about being a Christian before being trained in the *Values* and then rate the validity of a statement about each *Value* from “1-Strongly Disagree” to “5-Strongly Agree.” They were then asked to rate the same statements for their current beliefs and behaviors. The statements were chosen specifically because of their likeness to similar self-evaluations done at Regional Conferences in the hope that familiarity might foster more in-depth answers in the open-ended questions that followed. Data indicated an overall positive change for 51.9% of respondents and 36.8% indicated no change (see Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1).



Strength of the Values Before and After Attending a Regional Conference
Figure 4.1

<u>Core Value Statement</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>+</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>-</u> <u>Change</u>
I have an intimate relationship with God.	36.2%	63.8%	0.0%
I am compelled by Christ's passion for the lost to reach people who are without Christ.	34.0%	44.7%	0.0%
I have discovered God's purpose for my life, and I am living out that purpose.	34.0%	42.6%	2.1%
I share God's love with people in the hope that they will become followers of Jesus.	29.8%	48.9%	0.0%
I am intentionally investing time to develop other leaders to bring God's Kingdom on earth.	29.8%	48.9%	0.0%
My family is a priority in my life and leadership.	53.2%	46.8%	0.0%
I am a faithful steward of the time, money, and spiritual gifts that God has given me.	40.4%	59.6%	0.0%
I am committed to integrity in every area of my life and in all circumstances.	<u>40.4%</u>	<u>59.6%</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Overall Average Impact	36.8%	51.9%	0.3%

Impact of Regional Conference on Participant Beliefs About the Values
Table 4.1

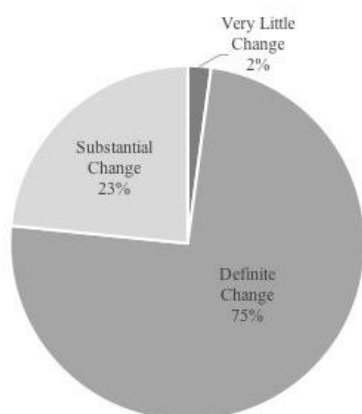
On average, the greatest changes occurred in the values of “Multiplication of Leaders” and “Visionary Leadership,” closely followed by a tie between “Intimacy with God,” “Passion for the Harvest,” and “Culturally Relevant Evangelism.” The least amount of change indicated by this sample group was a tie between “Family Priority” and “Integrity” (see Table 4.2).

<u>Core Value Statement</u>	<u>Before RC</u>	<u>After RC</u>	<u>Change</u>
I have an intimate relationship with God.	3.6	4.6	+1.0
I am compelled by Christ's passion for the lost to reach people who are without Christ.	3.6	4.6	+1.0
I have discovered God's purpose for my life, and I am living out that purpose.	3.4	4.5	+1.1
I share God's love with people in the hope that they will become followers of Jesus.	3.5	4.5	+1.0

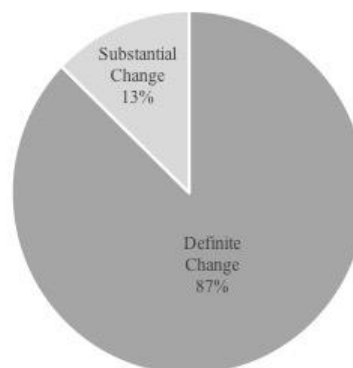
I am intentionally investing time to develop other leaders to bring God's Kingdom on earth.	3.2	4.4	+1.2
My family is a priority in my life and leadership.	3.9	4.6	+0.7
I am a faithful steward of the time, money, and spiritual gifts that God has given me.	3.5	4.3	+0.8
I am committed to integrity in every area of my life and in all circumstances.	3.9	4.6	+0.7

Average Rating of Values Before and After Attending a Regional Conference
Table 4.2

To further understand the difference in participant beliefs and behaviors, survey respondents were asked to reflect on the extent to which their beliefs about being a follower of Christ had changed and rate the change as, “1 – No Change at All,” “2 – Very Little Change,” “3 – Definite Change,” or “4 – Substantial Change.” Ninety-eight percent indicated a perceived change in their beliefs of “Definite” or “Substantial Change,” with only one respondent specifying “Very Little Change” in their beliefs (see Figure 4.2). All of the respondents indicated a perceived change in their behaviors of “Definite” or “Substantial Change” (see Figure 4.3).



Perceived Change in Beliefs
Figure 4.2



Perceived Change in Behaviors
Figure 4.3

However, overall averages do not reflect the true impact of an event on a person's life. To determine impact of the *Core Values*, individual responses were compared to determine how many of the value statements were rated higher after attending the Regional Conference when compared to the ratings before attendance (see Table 4.3).

	n	%
Change in every value	6	12.8
Change in 7 values	13	27.7
Change in 6 values	6	12.8
Change in 5 values	4	8.5
Change in 4 values	4	8.5
Change in 3 values	4	8.5
Change in 2 values	5	10.6
Change in 1 value	3	6.4
No Change	2	4.3

Change in Values Ratings Before & After
Regional Conference
Table 4.3

The individual before and after ratings were then compared to each participant's perceived change in beliefs and behaviors (Figures 4.2 and 4.3), looking for consistency and contradictions, to determine the degree of impact on each participants understanding of the Christian life. Twenty-five (53.2%) of participants indicated a Substantial Change (increased rating of 6 or more values), twelve (25.5%) of participants indicated a Definite Change (increased ratings of 3 to 5 values), eight (17%) of participants indicated Little Change (increased ratings of 1 or 2 values), and two (4.3%) of participants indicate No Change.

After establishing that perceived change in participant beliefs and behaviors had occurred, data analysis then sought to qualify the changes. This was accomplished by first reading respondent descriptions of how their beliefs and behaviors were different,

looking for common words or phrases and general themes, then assigning preliminary codes to phrases within the responses. Next, was a more careful review of individual responses to revise codes and identify relationships and comparisons between the descriptions. Finally, the nature of change in each area was described and codified.

Description of Preliminary Evidence for Research Question #1 – “How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one’s beliefs about the Christian life?”

Because this project held the premise that changed behaviors are preceded by transformed beliefs (c.f. Rom. 12.2), changes in respondent beliefs were examined first. Forty-five of the survey respondents provided descriptions of how their beliefs were now different. Twenty-two respondents implied that their beliefs were now more in agreement with what they understood to be God’s desire or purpose for their lives. Though they did not use terms like “saintness” or “incarnation,” the overall tone of the descriptions was consistent with the biblical and theological foundations presented in earlier in Chapter Two. A layperson who had been a Christian for more than thirty years, shared:

God is intentionally developing your purpose for his kingdom. Focusing on the eight core values provides one with clear direction to stay on the Lord’s course. Focusing on remaining intimate with God and continually revisiting his vision has been helpful in my walk of faith.

Similarly, a director of missions at a large church, said of learning the *Values*:

I have a better understanding of the interconnectedness of my beliefs and my behavior for God's overall plan for my life and for his Kingdom. The deeper definition of ‘integrity’ as a life that is fully committed and aligned in priorities gives me something to continually strive for. Even as I often fail, I better understand through the training that this ‘alignment to Christlikeness’ is God's desire for me and is attainable through his power.

Another four respondents clearly described this change as a corrective to what they had once understood to be the purpose of the Christian life, consistent with the critique of

Western Christianity by Bosch, Hirsch, Guder and others as was discussed previously. A participant who had attended the Regional Conference only one year earlier, stated:

Before learning the eight core values I was going through the motions of being busy in events and programs in the church while burning out and putting activity and to-do lists before my family. I got caught up in doing, instead of being and lost my intimacy with God... My view of church was so narrow and I didn't see beyond the four walls of the church programs and planning for the next event. ILI training opened my eyes to the bigger picture of God's kingdom and family!

Nineteen respondents distinctly correlated the changes in their beliefs to a better understanding God's purpose for their lives. A ministry leader who had attended a

Regional Conference within the past six months, insisted, "The core values have sharpened my vision and sense of call, and have shaped the ministry God has called me to. It is hard to overstate the influence they have had, and are having, as I press forward in ministry." A seasoned pastor and long-time ILI alumni further added, "After years as an ordained minister and more years as a believer, I finally have a vision statement!"

Non-clergy persons employed outside of the church or para-church organizations described similar changes. "The ILI core values have shown me what it looks like to live a consecrated life for Christ," said a working mother who became a Christian less than six years earlier, "[ILI training has] given me a framework...woven into every aspect of my life from my work to my family to my ministry." Three others connected agreement with God's purpose to spiritual growth, and said, "The intentional revisiting of this material is vital to the longevity of Christian maturity," "[The *Values*] are elements that continually lead me toward maturity with passion in my life and ministry," and "[Since learning the *Values*] I am learning to trust Jesus more and pray more, hence I see much more of the Holy Spirit and his leading in my life." These descriptions aligned with the theological

principles of Christian vocation and incarnational living toward participation in the *missio dei*.

Description of Preliminary Evidence for Research Question #2 – “How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?”

As expected, because survey respondents’ beliefs about the Christian life were different after learning the *Values*, many of them described changes in their behaviors as well. Although 100% of respondents stated a “definite” or “significant” change in their behaviors, seven of them did not provide a description of the change. The reason for this could not be determined, though three respondents did describe behavioral difference in their descriptions of changes in their beliefs.

Thirty-six of the respondents who described changes in their behaviors did so in terms that expressed a deeper desire and trust to be used by God for a greater purpose that could be attributed to the relationship of *imago dei* to the *missio dei* as described earlier. This was generally stated in a variety of ways, from an increased “consciousness of my behavior and use of time,” to “I strive to see others, believers and non-believers, the way the Lord sees them versus the way I see them through my worldly eyes,” and “Every decision I make is with my eyes on the goal of investment in the kingdom of God, instead of the kingdom of me.”

Sixteen participants in the survey shared that after learning the *Values* they had begun new behaviors which led them into a deeper relationship with Christ; this was not unexpected since “intimacy with God” is primary in the *Values* and is stressed throughout ILI’s teaching. Five people used general terms to describe a new emphasis on intimacy with God such as a twenty-plus year Christian who stated, “I am more convicted and excited about the time I spend with God each day” and a pastor who shared his new

appreciation for spiritual self-care, “I have become very aware of the importance of going deeper in my relationship with God, and actively cultivating this on a daily basis.” A layperson spoke of intimacy as her priority and said, “My commitment to intimacy with God is #1. It is through intimacy that everything else is possible with Christ.” Eleven others were more specific and named their behaviors that foster intimacy with God as devotional time, personal study of scripture, serving others, and personal time in prayer:

- “My quiet time with God is now a daily occurrence...[after] realizing I want time with God as much as God wants time with me.”
- “I now spend 3-4 weeks a year on international missions ministry.”
- “More time is spent in hearing him through fellowship, personal study, and prayer as I respond to Christ’s call to discipleship.”
- “Learning and digesting the eight core values has resulted in a deeper, more abiding prayer life; I am sensing the Lord speak to me more.”
- “The eight core values inspired me to improve my prayer and devotional time.”

Besides those who articulated new behaviors that nurture a personal relationship with God, twelve more respondents stated that structuring their lives around the *Eight Core Values* had equipped and enabled them to live into their life’s purpose. These findings correlate directly to the *Value* of “Visionary Leadership” and the theological precept of Christian vocation. While only four of the respondents specifically named what they believed their purpose to be, all of them describe it in more general terms, such as:

- “I know my purpose and everything I do is geared toward my calling, especially using my time more appropriately.”
- “I no longer say ‘yes’ to all events and programs of the church. I have learned to make sure that what I am spending time in is fitting with the way God has made me to serve and his direction for me.”
- “I now have a comprehensive platform [through the *Values*] that allows me to live into my purpose as a Christian.”
- “I want the Kingdom of God to be make known and more real than I want ‘my’ church to grow.”

Overall, the forty-five survey respondents clearly perceived a positive change in both their beliefs and behaviors as a result of embracing the *Eight Core Values*. These respondents could articulate the qualities of those changes. Phases Two and Three of this study sought to further qualify the beliefs and behaviors of smaller sample groups and compare them to the definition of missional living.

Phases Two and Three: Qualifying the Evidence

Phases Two and Three of this study involved participants from the Phase One survey who stated that they had experienced “definite” or “significant” change in their beliefs and behaviors as a result of embracing the *Values*, could articulate the nature of the changes, and agreed to participate to the subsequent phase of data collection. Thirteen respondents from Phase One also responded to the questionnaire in Phase Two (See Appendix E for questions). This group consisted of seven males and six females; all but one (92.3%) of them were between the ages of forty and seventy. Two had been a Christian less than fifteen years, one less than thirty years and the remainder (76.9%) for more than thirty years. The majority of the group (69.2%) had attended ILI’s Regional Conference more than two years earlier, one within the last two years, three within the last year, and one less than six months earlier.

Ten of the participants from Phase Two agreed to be interviewed in Phase Three (See Appendix G for questions and interview script). The group had an equal number of males and females and all were between forty and seventy years old, the largest percentage (50%) being between fifty and fifty-nine. All but one of the group had been an active Christian for more than thirty years. Seventy percent had attended a Regional

Conference more than two years earlier, one within eighteen months and two less than one year earlier.

Description of Evidence for Research Question #1 – “How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one’s beliefs about the Christian life?”

All of the participants in Phase Two indicated that their beliefs about the Christian life had been impacted by the *Eight Core Values*. Just over half (seven out of thirteen) expressed the impact as strengthening or clarifying their already held beliefs. One respondent correlated his understanding of redemption as “the clear thread throughout the Core Values.” Another said, “My beliefs have become clearer, more vivid, through a deeper walk with Christ.” Another respondent describe how her understanding of evangelism had been broadened, becoming more consistent with incarnational living as part of the *missio dei*, saying, “Evangelism isn’t just the guy preaching on the street corner, but also the person who intentionally shares their faith in the natural relationships in their life.”

The other half of respondents expressed a definitive change in their belief about the Christian life. One described the change in terms of intimacy with God, the first *Core Value*, saying he now has “a deeper understanding of who [God] is, who we are, who I am, and my role in each of those relationships.” Five respondents expressed the change in their belief about the Christian life in ways that are consistent with a missional theology and spoke of cooperation with God in the *missio dei*:

- “I once felt that we were saved only because of God’s grace. I now feel that being saved also demands we take up our cross daily and follow him, become examples of him, and realize we are nothing without him.”
- “I have come to a comprehension of the significance of the Body of Christ, of how God has chosen to work through the Church as his instrument of reconciliation and restoration.”

- “We are ALL created in the image of God and we are ALL given a vision for how the power of the Spirit manifests in and through us for the work of ministry.”
- “The central role the church plays [in God’s redemptive action] has been more fully brought to my attention through the teaching of the Eight Core Values.”
- “The Eight Core Values have shown how we can play a part in God’s work to reach every person in the world.”

Factors such as age, length of time as a Christian, and length of time since attending a Regional Conference were not a potential indicator of change in beliefs.

There were persons from 40 to 69 years old in both groups. The majority in both groups had been a Christian for more than thirty years. The length of time since attendance at a Regional Conference prior to this study was greater than 24 months for most persons in each group.

Ten participants from Phase Two responded to an invitation to contribute to the final phase of data collection. These participants were interviewed to further qualify and better understand the reason for changes in their beliefs and behaviors. When asked about their beliefs about being Christian with the *Core Values*, eighty percent directly named or implied that they now had a deeper, personal relationship with God. They all explained the change in terms consistent with the value of “Intimacy with God” as was seen earlier. A clergywoman insisted, “Everything comes out of intimacy with God; knowing who he is, what his will is, how to hear him.” When asked to further described the purpose of the *Values*, participants characterized them as the “essence of what it means to be intimate with God,” not for spiritual nurture alone but that they are also available to be used by God. Said the director of a para-church ministry, “God wants alignment of the heart before serving him. It is a fellowship with God and ministry from the inside-out.” A lay person who manages a small business insisted, “The values connect me with him first,

not for the sake of anything else, but just to be with him. Then my role and purpose in God's kingdom becomes clear." And a lay person on staff at a large church shared her belief, "As we embrace the eight core values they become an integral part of who we are as people of God and carriers of his kingdom on earth. Through applying the values, I have been enabled to participate in the vision and purpose God gave me for my life."

Description of Evidence for Research Question #2 – "How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?"

All of the Phase Two participants suggested that their behaviors had changed as a result of incorporating the *Eight Core Values* in their lives. Generally, these changes were stated in terms correlating directly to the *Values* and oftentimes in language consistent with the Regional Conference curriculum. The most common description of changed behavior involved increased participation in at least one spiritual discipline that fosters intimacy with God. Nine persons said that embracing the *Values* had inspired them to pray more and spend more time in scripture reading and study.

Of the six participants who stated a change in beliefs (RQ#1) that also led to transformed behavior, two expressed the change in non-specific terms, while four others offered more exact descriptions consistent with missional theology:

- "More devoted time to serve others in any capacity with the expectation that it's the Lord's prompting."
- "While my relationship with Jesus has long been intimate, I would say that I am more intentional about nurturing the relationship."
- "My prayer life, my financial giving, and my study time are all more focused on missions."
- "I learned that I am accountable to God not only with my actions and my finances, but also with my time. All facets of our life are accountable."

Similarly, those interviewed in Phase Three named changes in their behaviors in general terms consistent with the ILI Regional Conference training. The following three statements are typical of the sample group:

- “I now understand that the values are not ends unto themselves, but part of a larger process. As my beliefs have changed, my behaviors have changed, and I saw a change in the impact of my life.”
- “I now have the desire and discipline to make time for continually developing my relationship with God and preparing myself to be used by God.”
- “The values provide a touchstone or measuring-stick by which I gauge my spiritual life and a way to quickly identify which area needs attention.”

Description of Evidence for Research Question #3 – “In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?”

Participants in Phase Two were given the definition of missional living as “intentionally aligning one’s life with God’s redemptive action in the world” and asked to describe the ways they consider their beliefs and behaviors to be missional. Of the six respondents who had earlier indicated a change in beliefs and behaviors, one gave no answer while the other five gave answers that were clearly in line with missional theology:

- “I believe that the Great Commission is for all of us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; to go and make disciples is a clear and unequivocal mandate...this directive is one I seek to put into practice every day in every way. I consider everything I do as a follower of Jesus to be missional; he calls us to be like him, to do the things he did, to say that his Kingdom is at hand and to live in such a way as to demonstrate this. It is not a creed or formula – it is a way of life.”
- “Because of the studying, application, and teaching of the core values, my husband and I are in a place where we can go wherever we are called to go. I do not align with my desire for me, but with God’s purpose in how I fit into the Kingdom work.”
- “Because the spiritual disciplines align us with God, they are missional and call us into his redemptive action.”
- “We all have been given skills by God to reach the unreached for him. Each of us has to use our God-given talents to spread the Word.”

- “The very essence of the Gospel is missional. To be a follower of Christ is, therefore by definition to be a missional believer. My beliefs have helped me learn to come along side what God is doing and not taking the lead in what he wants me to do.”

All of the Phase Three interviewees consider the *Eight Core Values* as being “missional,” though they described them in various ways. Four of the ten interviewees believed the *Values* to be missional because they equip and inspire them to “share the Gospel,” consistent with the values of “Passion for the Harvest” and “Culturally Relevant Evangelism” from ILI’s curriculum. Two respondents insisted that the “Gospel itself is missional,” therefore because the *Values* are focused on spreading the Gospel, they are missional. Two others correlated “Intimacy with God” as missional, saying, “If you are intimate with God your heart will be broke for what breaks God’s heart” and “A desire to do what Jesus wants me to do flows out of being a Christ-like person.” Additionally, two interviewees connected the *Value* of “Visionary Leadership” to missional purpose, saying, “It’s not about me, it’s about obedience and using my full gifts for the Kingdom” and “I am convicted and joyfully aware that I am a part of something bigger than myself. But it means humbly submitting in obedience to God’s will.”

Summary of Major Findings

Preliminary evidence from Phase One of data collection indicated that understanding and embracing the *Eight Core Values* as presented in ILI’s Regional Conference did initiate change in beliefs about the Christian life for the sample group. Furthermore, the changed beliefs served as an impetus for behavior change. Because this early evidence revealed alignment of participant beliefs and behaviors with their understanding of God’s will and assisted them in better understanding their purpose as a

Christian, preliminary predications were that the *Values* do indeed hold promise as an impetus for missional living.

The aggregate evidence from Phases Two and Three for RQ#1 affirmed the preliminary evidence of Phase One and further indicated that understanding and incorporating the *Eight Core Values* into one's life did have a positive effect on the sample group's beliefs about the Christian life. This was best described as either affirmation of already held beliefs or alignment of beliefs to God's desire (as perceived by the participant). Furthermore, whether affirming or realigning the person's beliefs, almost all described the impact of the *Values* on beliefs as helping them discover and inspiring them to become involved in God's vision and purpose for their life.

Evidence from Phases Two and Three for RQ#2 also affirmed the findings in Phase One, that the changes in participant beliefs served to initiate changes in behavior as well. When answers to RQ#2 from all three phases of data collection were compared, behavioral changes were most frequently explained as becoming more cooperative with God's leading in two ways: 1) regular participation in practices that lead to a deepening personal relationship with God, and 2) embracing God's purpose for one's life.

Phase One of data collection did not address RQ#3. However, the sum of evidence in Phases Two and Three for RQ#3 revealed that most participants felt that the *Core Values* are missional in nature. Terms used to describe these changes were those normally associated with the Western constructs of separate programs of discipleship, evangelism, and mission, not terms clearly associated with missional theology. It is reasonable to postulate that this was due to ILI's emphases on leadership development

and on sharing the Gospel with unreached people groups, and their slight to no emphasis on mission.

Review of the Chapter

This chapter began with an explanation of the analytical procedure used in this study, employing the Critical Incident Technique of qualitative analysis for three separate phases of data collection. Phase One was then outlined as a verification phase that the *Eight Core Values* do in fact impact a person's beliefs about the Christian life in such a way that he or she was inspired to make behavioral changes. Next, Phases Two and Three were described, first by sharing participant's basic demographics, then presenting the evidence for research questions one, two, and three. The chapter ended with a brief description of the major findings.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Chapter Five begins with a presentation of the major findings from this study, arranged according to the three research questions, before offering the research implications for ministry. Next is an evaluation of the study, including limitations and unexpected observations, followed by suggested directions for further study in the area of missional living.

Major Findings

The major findings from this study are presented as answers to three research questions discussed in earlier chapters.

Findings for Research Question #1 – “How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one’s beliefs about the Christian life?”

Evidence presented in Chapter 4 revealed that ILI’s *Eight Core Values* positively impacted the beliefs about the Christian life of those who participated in this study. When asked to quantify the change in their beliefs, 98% of participants indicated a “Definite” or “Substantial Change.” This perceived change was verified by examining each respondent’s answers to the individual *Value* statements, of which 78.8% experienced a definite impact (positive change in 3 to 5 values) or substantial impact (positive change in 6 to 8 values). The difference in perceived change and impact was twofold: 1) 91.5% of those who indicated no change in the value statements before and after attending a Regional Conference, rated each statement as either a “4” or “5” and described the experience as “clarifying” and “affirming” their already held beliefs; 2) while the individual beliefs about the values were unchanged, the construct in which the *Values*

were taught had an impact as one participant explained, “The eight core values pull it all together as a model for discipleship.” The results of Phases Two and Three were consistent with Phase One, as the margin between perceived change and impact grew smaller each time. Evidence from Phase One revealed that a minimum of 43% of all respondents experienced change in at least one of the *Values*. The greatest number of people were impacted by “Intimacy with God” (63.8%) and “Integrity” (59.6%). However, the greatest average change was in “Visionary Leadership” (+1.1) and “Multiplication of Leaders” (+1.2). The reason for this difference was not apparent and would require more data collection and in-depth analysis to ascertain. In both Phases Two and Three the greatest number of people were impacted by “Multiplication of Leaders” (84.6% and 80%) and “Passion for the Harvest” (76.9% and 80%), which was consistent with the greatest average change in “Multiplication of Leaders” (+1.7 and +1.9) and “Passion for the Harvest” (+1.1 and +1.2).

Changes in participant beliefs were also quantified by asking the them to describe the ways in which their beliefs have changed. Descriptions regularly contained terms consistent with the Regional Conference curriculum and ILI’s mission of “Equipping Leaders. Spreading the Gospel.” Additionally, 80% of responses in Phases Two and Three described changes in beliefs directly connected to fostering an intimate relationship with God, in alignment with ILI’s emphasis of the primacy of the first *Value*. While none of the participant’s used words directly associated with missional theology, almost half of them described changes that are consistent with missional theology. Finally, it was clear from the words and phrases used by respondents in their answers to questions in all three

phases of data collection that ILI's training created a common language that alumni use when sharing or teaching the *Values* to others.

Findings for Research Question #2 – “How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?”

Study participants clearly indicated that embracing the *Eight Core Values* did impact their beliefs about the Christian life which further served as impetus for changed behavior. Since the major impact on beliefs was described in terms of the first *Core Value*, it was not surprising that the majority of the responses in each phase of data collection described behaviors that foster intimacy with God such as increased devotional, study, and prayer time. Over half of Phase One respondents further explained that a deeper trust and increased desire to be used by God grew out of their more intimate relationship with God, consistent with the *Value* of “Visionary Leadership.” All respondents in Phases Two and Three described changes in behaviors that foster intimacy, but with the purpose of being used by God. One respondent shared, “As my beliefs have change, my behaviors have changed, and I saw a change in the impact of my life.”

Findings for Research Question #3 – “In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?”

Overall, study participants' felt that the *Eight Core Values* assisted them in better understanding their purpose as a Christian and more aligned their beliefs and behaviors with what they perceived to be God's will. Fifty percent of the Phase Two and Three respondents described their new behaviors in terms congruent with missional theology such as, having a “mission to make disciples, “reaching the unreached,” “spreading the Word,” and “coming alongside what God is doing.” Though not all of the respondents

described their behavior as missional, all of them expressed the belief that the *Eight Core Values* are missional in nature. This was expected. As stated in chapter one, the Western church has historically program-ized Christian living into specialized skills of evangelism, missions, nurture, discipleship, etc. and missional theology is still an emerging conversation, not yet fully embraced by the churches and ministry organizations in the U.S. The International Leadership Institute's teaching of the *Eight Core Values*, though powerful in the lives of Christians, is a reflection of the Western emphasis on evangelism as discipleship. However, when considering the totality of this research, evidence indicates that the *Eight Core Values* do hold promise as a tool for equipping and empowering disciples of Jesus Christ who desire to align their lives with God's ongoing redemption of creation.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

The findings from this study revealed possible implications for theological development and practical ministry applications for the International Leadership Institute and local church ministry leaders.

Contributions to the Development of Missional Theology

The first implication of this study is that it contributes to the discussion of missional theology and its impact on Western Christianity. More specifically, while this study supports the larger understanding of missional leadership and missional churches, it supplements the limited dialogue of missions on the individual, personal level by adding the *imago dei* as a source for missional living alongside the purpose found in the *missio dei*. Though this project narrowly focused on a defined demographic within a particular program of one ministry organization, the *Core Values* themselves are universal in nature

and, if a missional emphasis were added to them, it would very likely be applicable within many cultures.

The Eight Core Values as a Missional Discipleship Model

Secondly, this study has revealed that ILI's pedagogical model built around the *Eight Core Values* has the potential to both inspire and equip Christians for missional living. The process begins with addressing one's beliefs about the Christian life and functions to either affirm already held beliefs or realign beliefs to God's desire (as perceived by the participant). Evidence from this study confirmed that impacting one's beliefs in this way can further serve as stimulation for behavioral change as one discovers and is inspired to cooperate with God's vision and purpose for his or her life. However, to become an impetus for living missionally the curriculum would need to be revised using a missional hermeneutic to incorporate the concepts of *missio dei*, "sent-ness," the church as missional community, incarnational living, and Christian vocation. Additionally, discussions about compassion, justice, and developmental ministries alongside ILI's emphasis on propagation of the Gospel and leadership development must be integrated in the curriculum.

Though all four of ILI's training models would benefit from the additional of a missional emphasis, *Christian to the Core* could perhaps have the greatest impact on the local church. Unlike the other three models, *Christian to the Core* is typically taught over twelve weeks (instead of 2 or 6 days) and in more intimate settings such as Sunday school classes or small groups (instead of conferences). It can also be incorporated as a church-wide emphasis that allows for deeper, more intentional exploration of the topics,

as well as offering the opportunity to apply the learning locally over an extended period of time.

The Eight Core Values in Spiritual Development

This study consistently revealed the language of transformation and spiritual development in the narrative answers and descriptions from participants. While the use of language alone is not indicative of transformation, over half of respondents described not just the change but also the reason for change. The overwhelming majority of respondents attributed changes in their spirituality to embracing the first *Core Value* of “Intimacy with God,” insisting that out of a deeper intimacy emerged an understanding of God’s will and desire for one’s life. Although respondents believed that all of the *Values* work together to transform and nurture one’s faith, “Intimacy with God” and “Integrity” are the most effective. Furthermore, all of the respondents who described changes in their beliefs also identified transformed behaviors that aligned his or her life with what he or she understood to be God’s will.

Evaluation of the Study

Limitations

Though the *Eight Core Values* has firm biblical and theological foundations and a multitude of persons who live missionally have never experience ILI training, no known research to date directly addresses the *Core Values* as an impetus for for missional living. Therefore, the limitations of this research are extensive. Furthermore, even though effort was taken to diminish research bias, because qualitative research is subjective by nature, my conclusions drawn from this project may not be consistent with similar research conducted by another person (Miles, Hubberman, and Saldana 2014).

One limitation was the narrow definition most respondents had of missional theology. Even though narrative descriptions and interviews were a significant part of this research, it was difficult at times to ask appropriate questions without so much commentary that their answers would be biased. The findings may have been more detailed and implications for ministry more conclusive if the respondents were familiar with current terminology.

Not included in this study were attendees from ILI's other three training programs—the National Conference, History Makers, and Christian to the Core. While limiting research to only Regional Conference attendees ensured that study participants had received high-quality, consistent training, it also reduced the potential pool of respondents and limited the demographics of the sample. Inclusion of History Makers, a program targeting 18 to 30 year olds, would have given a broader generational perspective.

This study also did not account for Christians whose faith has been developed in the non-Western Church. The decision to invite participants only from the U.S. was made because the lack of missional Christianity is predominately seen as a Western problem. It would be interesting to compare data from this project with similar research using non-U.S. alumni.

The length of time in training was also a limitation in this study. Almost all of the participants had attended a three-day Regional Conference. Consequently, application and reinforcement of the *Values* must be self-initiated. The National Conference and History Makers are also offered in intensive sessions, whereas the Christian to the Core curriculum, which teaches the *Core Values* over a twelve-week period, allows time for

participants to fully embrace the *Values* and apply them through new behaviors while being supported by a small group and leader.

Unexpected Observations

My first surprise was the absence of people under the age of forty. Though another of ILI's programs, History Makers, intentionally targets the 18 to 30 age group, I did not anticipate only 17% of total respondents being under forty years old.

A second unexpected observation was the high number of respondents who indicated no change in their answers to the *Value* statements after attending the ILI training. Almost thirty-seven percent of those who completed the Phase One survey rated themselves the same in every *Value* before and after attending the Regional Conference; even more surprising was that almost all were ratings of "4" or "5." This implies that almost forty percent of respondents felt themselves to be mature in each of the *Values* before ILI training and that the training had only marginal effect, at best.

Another unexpected result of this study was how participants indicated the greatest change in the *Values* of "Passion for the Harvest" and "Multiplication of Leaders" before and after training, and yet it was "Intimacy with God" that was overwhelmingly attributed to change in the narrative descriptions and interviews.

Future Directions for the Study

As stated at the beginning of this project, missional theology is an emerging conversation within Western Christianity, and most of the discussion is focused around the principles of missional leadership or the characteristics of a missional church or community. Some authors and practitioners are identifying the postures and practices of missional living, but few have focused on what it takes to develop this way of life in

those who have been shaped by Western Christianity. One organization that claims to do this is Mission Houston. They describe their *FaithWalking* program, outlined in chapter one, as “helping you and those in your community to master the work of spiritual formation, inner healing, emotional transformation and missional living.” Whereas ILI’s mission is to spread the Gospel and the multiplication of disciple-making leaders, *FaithWalking*’s mission is more focused on compassion and social justice ministries as a way of life. Perhaps future research similar to this project will be done with the Mission Houston curriculum, thereby adding a different perspective.

Another possible direction arising from this study for understanding the impetus for missional living is to delve into the impact of a growing, intimate relationship with God. The *Core Value* of “Intimacy with God” emerged as the consistent thread throughout all three phases of data collection and analysis, affirming its importance for the development of spiritual maturity. Future research might more thoroughly investigate the correlation between the imago dei, intimacy with God, and the missio dei.

This project also presents future possibilities for the International Leadership Institute. Perhaps similar research might be conducted with the other three of ILI’s training programs to compare their effectiveness and identify deficiencies, should ILI’s leadership decide to incorporate the principles of missional theology into their ministry. It would also be interesting to do similar studies with participants in History Makers to gain a perspective from younger Christians or with Christians outside the U.S. who attend National or Regional Conferences to gain a non-Western understanding.

Conclusion of the Study

For over two thousand years the Church has sought to fulfill Jesus' command to make disciples of all people, sometimes with success and poorly at other times. If the history of Christianity in the West is any indication, the key is not to be found in the programs of the church which have specialized the Christian vocation. Missional theology insists that the multiplication of disciples and propagation of the Gospel happens best when the Church remembers that it does not have a mission, other than to be the chosen instrument of God's mission. For the Church to fulfill this role, however, the followers of Christ must align their lives to become agents of and participants in the *missio dei*.

The *Eight Core Values* taught by the International Leadership Institute are one pedagogical construct that holds promise as an initiator of a missional mindset and impetus for missional living. This research affirmed that ILI's training has the capacity to change the beliefs and transform the behaviors of those who embrace the *Core Values*, which could possibly lead to a life lived missionally. The greatest limiting factor in accomplishing this is that ILI's training programs reflect the compartmentalized approach to ministry seen in the Western Church. However, in all fairness, missional living is not a stated goal of the International Leadership Institute. Nevertheless, through the course of this research project I have concluded that the *Eight Core Values* are an appropriate construct to which the precepts of missional theology can be incorporated, ultimately becoming an instrument which pastors and leaders can use to make missional disciples of Jesus Christ.

Review of the Chapter

This chapter began with a discussion of the study's major findings around the three research questions, revealing that ILI's *Eight Core Values* can positively impact one's beliefs about the Christian life. Furthermore, the change in beliefs was shown to lead to transformed behaviors in more than half of the study participants. While the participants did not describe these changes as missional in nature, they said the changes were to align one's life with God's purpose. Next, the ministry implications from this study were considered. This research contributed to the development of missional theology for Western Christianity and affirmed the *Eight Core Values* potential as a missional discipleship model. Finally, an evaluation of this study was presented, including its limitations and unexpected observations, before offering three possible directions for future study in this area.

APPENDICES

- A. Research Participant Demographics
- B. Email Invitation to Participate in Online Survey
- C. Online Survey Questions
- D. Email Invitation to Participate in Online Questionnaire
- E. Online Questionnaire Questions
- F. Email Invitation to Participate in Interview
- G. Interview Script
- H. Correlation of Data Collection Questions to Research Questions

APPENDIX A

Research Participant Demographics

		Phase 1		Phase 2		Phase 3	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Male	27	57.4	7	53.8	5	50
	Female	20	42.6	6	46.2	5	50
Age (yr.)	< 20	0	0	0	0	0	0
	20-29	4	8.5	0	0	0	0
	30-39	4	8.5	1	7.7	0	0
	40-49	8	17	3	23.1	2	20
	50-59	16	34	5	38.5	5	50
	60-69	11	23.4	4	30.8	3	30
	70 >	4	8.5	0	0	0	0
How long have you been an active Christian? (yrs.)	< 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1-5	2	4.3	0	0	0	0
	6-15	7	14.9	2	15.4	1	10
	16-30	13	27.7	1	7.7	0	0
	> 30	25	53.2	10	76.9	9	90
How long since you completed the Regional Conference? (mo)	< 6	6	12.8	1	7.7	0	0
	6-12	6	12.8	3	23.1	2	20
	12-18	3	6.4	0	0	0	0
	18-24	3	6.4	1	7.7	1	10
	> 24	29	61.7	9	69.2	7	70

APPENDIX B

Email Invitation to Participate in Online Survey

Subject: Request for assistance in research of the impact of the *Eight Core Values*.

Dear brother or sister in Christ,

Greetings in the name of the Lord and Savior! My name is Kenny Ott, and I am a Doctorate of Ministry student at The Beeson Center at Asbury Theological Seminary. As part of my course work I am researching the impact of the *Eight Core Values* taught at *The International Leadership Institute's* (ILI) Regional Conference on those who have completed the experience.

You have been identified by ILI as a Regional Conference alumni, and I am hoping that you might be willing to complete a short, online survey that will assist in this research. It should only take 10-15 minutes of your time, and I assure you that your demographic information and answers will be completely confidential. Based on your responses to the survey you may be asked to participate in further research consisting of a questionnaire and/or interview. However, each part is completely voluntary and will always be confidential. Additionally, should you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time.

I hope that you will give consideration to this request and I am happy to answer any questions you may have. You may contact me by calling (number) or via email at kenny.ott@asburyseminary.edu. Additionally, I ask that you complete the survey no later than October 30, 2015.

To take the survey, simply click this link (URL). You may also copy and paste the URL into the address window of your web browser.

I sincerely appreciate your time and pray that you are being blessed in your ministry.

Peace,

Kenny Ott

APPENDIX C

Online Survey Questions

Doctoral Research Project

Thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in this research to understand the impact of the Eight Core Values presented in the Regional Conference as taught by the International Leadership Institute (ILI).

Please allow 10–15 minutes to complete this survey and please complete it in one session. Should you experience technical difficulties or have any questions, I can be reached at kenny.ott@asburyseminary.edu or by telephone at (number).

Thank you again for your valuable participation.

Kenny Ott

Consent and Confidentiality Statement

This study is being conducted by Kenneth Ott, doctoral student at Asbury Theological Seminary. By completing this survey I give my consent to participate in research conducted by Kenneth Ott. I understand that there is little to no risk to me and that all my responses will be completely confidential. I understand that should I be uncomfortable with any of the questions, I have the right to not answer them, discontinue the survey, and that my responses will not be included in this research. Additionally, I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. The director of the Doctor of Ministry Program is Dr. Ellen Marmon and she can be contacted by email at ellen.marmon@asburyseminary.edu.

- I DO consent to participate in this research.
- I DO NOT consent to participate in this research.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EIGHT CORE VALUES IN MY LIFE

The International Leadership Institute seeks to change history by training and mobilizing leaders of leaders to reach people with the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This training is centered around the Eight Core Values of the most effective Christian leaders.

The next two pages seek to understand the importance of these Eight Core Values for you personally, BEFORE and AFTER participating in the Leadership Beyond Conference.

BEFORE Learning the Eight Core Values

Reflect for a few minutes on your beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and habits about being a Christian BEFORE you were trained in the Eight Core Values and rate the following statements from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

I have an intimate relationship with God.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am compelled by Christ's passion for the lost to reach people who are without Christ.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I have discovered God's purpose for my life, and I am living out that purpose.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I share God's love with people in the hope that they will become followers of Jesus.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am intentionally investing time to develop other leaders to bring God's Kingdom on earth.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

My family is a priority in my life and leadership.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am a faithful steward of the time, money, and spiritual gifts that God has given me.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am committed to integrity in every area of my life and in all circumstances.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

AFTER Learning the Eight Core Values

Now, reflect for a few minutes on how your beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and habits about being a Christian may have changed since the time you were trained on the Eight Core Values.

Again, rate the following statements from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

I have an intimate relationship with God.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am compelled by Christ's passion for the lost to reach people who are without Christ.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I have discovered God's purpose for my life, and I am living out that purpose.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I share God's love with people in the hope that they will become followers of Jesus.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am intentionally investing time to develop other leaders to bring God's Kingdom on earth.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

My family is a priority in my life and leadership.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am a faithful steward of the time, money, and spiritual gifts that God has given me.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

I am committed to integrity in every area of my life and in all circumstances.
Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

THE EFFECT OF LIVING BY THE EIGHT CORE VALUES

The next two sections seek to understand the effect that living according to the Eight Core Values has had on your ATTITUDES/BELIEFS and BEHAVIORS/HABITS.

ATTITUDES/BELIEFS

Reflect on the EXTENT to which your attitudes and beliefs about being a follower of Christ have changed in the time since learning the Eight Core Values.

Rate the extent to which your attitudes and beliefs have changed from 1 (No Change at All) to 4 (Substantial Change).

- 1 – No Change At All
- 2 – Very Little Change
- 3 – Definite Change
- 4 – Substantial Change

Reflect on the SPECIFIC WAYS in which your attitudes and beliefs about being a follower of Christ have changed in the time since learning the Eight Core Values.

Describe the ways your attitudes and beliefs have changed. Be specific.

BEHAVIORS/HABITS

Reflect on the EXTENT to which your behavior and habits have changed in the time since learning the Eight Core Values.

Rate the extent to which your behaviors and habits have changed from 1 (No Change At All) to 4 (Substantial Change).

- 1 – No Change At All
- 2 – Very Little Change
- 3 – Definite Change
- 4 – Substantial Change

Reflect on the SPECIFIC WAYS in which your behaviors and habits about being a follower of Christ have changed in the time since learning the Eight Core Values.

Describe the ways your behaviors and habits have changed. Be specific.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

First Name:

Last Name:

Preferred email address:

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age

- ☐ Less than 20
- ☐ 20 – 29
- ☐ 30 – 39
- ☐ 40 – 49
- ☐ 50 – 59
- ☐ 60 – 69
- ☐ 70 or older

How long have you been an active Christian?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 15 years
- ☐ 16 to 30 years
- ☐ More than 30 years

How long has it been since you attended the Regional Conference?

- ☐ Less than 6 months
- ☐ 6 to 12 months
- ☐ 12 to 18 months
- ☐ 18 to 24 months
- ☐ More than 24 months

If selected to be a part of further research, are you willing to complete an in-depth online questionnaire?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

APPENDIX D

Email Invitation to Participate in Online Questionnaire

Dear (Name),

First of all, “Thank You” for recently completing an online survey about your experience in living according to the *Eight Core Values* as taught by the *International Leadership Institute*. As you remember, I am a Doctorate of Ministry student at Asbury Theological Seminary and am conducting research on the impact of the *Eight Core Values* as part of my studies. Your assistance so far has been very helpful and you indicated in the survey that you would be willing to continue.

Based on your responses on the survey you are a potential candidate for the second phase of my research. Below you will find a link to an online questionnaire that seeks to understand the impact of the *Eight Core Values* on your life, specifically in the areas of knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. Please allow 30-60 minutes to answer the questions in depth.

[Click here to access the online questionnaire](#) or cut and paste the following URL in your browser:

(URL to Google form)

Your demographic information and responses will be kept strictly confidential, and you may withdraw your participation at any time, should you decide to do so. Like before, I am happy to answer any questions you may have and can be contacted by replying to this email or by calling (number). Additionally, I ask that you complete the questionnaire no later than Dec 31, 2015.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Peace,
Kenny Ott

APPENDIX E

Online Questionnaire Questions

Doctoral Research Project – Phase 2

Thank you again for participating in the next part of my research on the Eight Core Values as presented by the International Leadership Institute.

Please allow 30-60 minutes to complete this questionnaire and plan to complete it in one session. Should you experience technical difficulties or have any questions, I can be reached at kenny.ott@asburyseminary.edu or by telephone at (number).

Thank you again for your valuable participation.

Kenny Ott

Consent and Confidentiality Statement

This study is being conducted by Kenneth Ott, doctoral student at Asbury Theological Seminary. By completing this questionnaire, I give my consent to participate in research conducted by Kenneth Ott. I understand that there is little to no risk to me and that all my responses will be completely confidential. I understand that should I be uncomfortable with any of the questions, I have the right to not answer them, discontinue the questionnaire, and that my responses will not be included in this research. Additionally, I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. The director of the Doctor of Ministry Program is Dr. Ellen Marmon and she can be contacted by email at ellen.marmon@asburyseminary.edu.

- I DO consent to participate in this research.
- I DO NOT consent to participate in this research.

KNOWLEDGE

The first three questions concern your knowledge and understanding of the theological concept of redemption—God's saving activity toward humanity and all of creation.

Reflect for a moment on how your understanding of redemption has changed as a result of living according to the Eight Core Values. Please be as detailed and specific as you are comfortable in sharing in each of your answers.

How has your understanding changed about the ways in which God is redeeming the world?

How has your understanding changed about the roles of evangelism, discipleship, and missions in God's redemptive action?

How has your understanding changed about the role of the universal church and individual Christians in God's redemptive action?

BELIEFS

The next three questions seek to understand how your beliefs about the Christian faith may have changed as a result of living according to the Eight Core Values. Please be as detailed and specific as you are comfortable in sharing in each of your answers.

In what ways have your beliefs about the Christian faith been transformed as a result of living by the Eight Core Values?

What other experiences or events have helped to shape these beliefs in you? Describe the experience /event and its effect on you.

Living missionally means that a person intentionally aligns his or her life with God's redemptive action in the world. In what ways (if any) would you describe your beliefs as being missional?

BEHAVIORS

The final four questions concern your behaviors. Reflect on the specific ways in which your behaviors have changed as a result of living according to the Eight Core Values. Please be as detailed as you are comfortable in sharing in each of your answers.

Which behaviors have you changed as a result of living according to the Eight Core Values?

What practices, habits or spiritual disciplines do you now believe are integral to living the Christian faith?

What effect has your regular participation in these practices, habits or disciplines had on your spiritual development?

Living missionally means that a person intentionally aligns his or her life with God's redemptive actions in the world. Which practices, habits or spiritual disciplines (if any) would you consider to be missional, and how so?

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

First Name:

Last Name:

Preferred email address:

If selected to be a part of the next and final phase of this research, are you willing to participate in a one-on-one interview (either virtual or live)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If "Yes" what is your preferred video conferencing software?

- ☐ FaceTime
- ☐ Skype

APPENDIX F

Email Invitation to Participate in Interview

Hello again (Name),

Thank you again for your contribution to my Doctorate of Ministry research. Your honest, in-depth answers to the online questionnaire have been invaluable in helping better understand the impact of the *Eight Core Values* in the lives of those who embrace them.

Based on your responses thus far, I ask that you consider participating in the final phase of data collection; an online interview via Skype or FaceTime. The interview will consist of ten questions and should last no longer than 30 minutes. So that we might interact more personably I would like to record our discussion, but please rest assured, like your responses to the online survey and questionnaire, the recording will be kept strictly confidential and used only for this project.

If you are willing to participate, I would like to schedule an appointment for sometime next week, (Dates). I respect your time and will make it a priority to be available when it is most convenient for you. If next week does not work for you, please tell me when you are available, and I will make arrangements.

To volunteer for this part of the research I ask that you reply to this email with three things:

1. A copy of the completed Confidentiality and Consent Statement you will find below. Please copy and paste in your reply and fill in your name and today's date.
2. Your preferred date and time for the interview. Please also indicate your time zone; I am in the Eastern Standard Time zone.
3. Your Skype or FaceTime contact information.

I will then confirm our appointment in a reply email. If you need clarification or have other questions, please contact me by replying to this email or by calling (phone number).

Confidentiality and Consent Form

I, _____, give my consent to be interviewed by Kenneth Ott as part of his research in fulfillment of the Doctorate of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary. I consent to be interviewed via Skype or FaceTime and give my permission for the interview to be recorded. I understand that there is little to no risk to me and that the recording and all my responses will be completely confidential. I further understand that should I become uncomfortable with any of the questions, I have the right to not answer them, discontinue the interview, and know that my responses will not be used in this research. Additionally, I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. The director of the Doctor of Ministry Program is Dr. Ellen Marmon and she can be contacted by email at ellen.marmon@asburyseminary.edu.

Name _____ Date _____

APPENDIX G

Interview Script

First of all, Thank You again for participating in my research about the impact of ILI's 8 Core Values.

- Are you able to see and hear me?
- As I said in the email invitation, I believe the interview will take less than 30 minutes. Are will still good?
- As opposed to doing an audio recording and transcription, I would like to record both the video and audio of our interview. This recording, like your responses to the survey and questionnaire will be strictly confidential, will be used only for this research and shared only in my dissertation and defense. Your identity will be protected by having an Interviewee Number assigned to you. DO I HAVE YOUR PERMISSION TO RECORD THIS INTERVIEW?

BEGIN RECORDING!

Today is (Date) and I am interviewing (Name) as part of my research at the Beeson Center at Asbury Theological Seminary.

- Thank you (Name) for your participation to this point and for your time today.
- You have emailed your Confidentiality and Consent Form to me and I have it on file. (Name), do you affirm your consent to participate in this interview? Thank You.

Because you attended ILI's *Regional Conference* training you were invited to participate in an online survey as part of a research project seeking to better understand the potential impact of the Eight Core Values on the life of those who embrace them.

When did you attend the *Regional Conference*?

In your survey responses you indicated that the Eight Core Values had a positive effect on you, and resulted in some measure of change in your beliefs or attitudes and in your behavior or habits. As a result, you were invited to participate in Phase 2 by answering an online questionnaire that further qualified those changes you described. Now in Phase 3 of the project, through a series of questions, I will be seeking to better understand the specific nature of the change that the Eight Core Values have had on your life and faith. Please answer as transparently and in as much detail as you are comfortable in sharing. Depending on your answers I may ask clarifying questions as well.

If you are ready, we will begin.

(RESEARCH QUESTION #1 - How does embracing of the *Eight Core Values* impact one's beliefs about the Christian life?)

1. In what specific ways has your understanding of the Christian life been transformed as a result of learning and embracing the *Eight Core Values* as taught by ILI?
2. What specific part or parts had the most impact on your beliefs?
3. To what end do you believe the *Eight Core Values* work together?
4. In what ways do you feel that living according to the *Values* aligns your life with God's bigger presence in the world?

(RESEARCH QUESTION #2 - How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?)

5. How has this change in your understanding of the Christian life resulted in changed behavior or habits?
6. What factors have been most helpful in sustaining your belief and reinforcing these new behaviors?

(RESEARCH QUESTION #3 - In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?)

7. In what ways, if any, do you see living according to the *Eight Core Values* as being missional?
8. The *Eight Core Values* directly address the theological concepts of worship, evangelism, discipleship, and stewardship. What role does mission and missions have in this construct?
9. In what ways do you feel that God's vision and purpose for your life is aligned with God's ongoing redemption of the world?
10. Describe a time when you felt most aligned with God's vision and purpose.

That is all of my questions, do you have any questions or comments?

Thank you again for your time and participation and God bless.

APPENDIX H

Correlation of Data Collection Questions to Research Questions

Research Question	Survey Question	Questionnaire Question	Interview Question
RQ#1 – How does embracing of the Eight Core Values impact one’s belief about the Christian life?	Before/After comparison of value statements.	How has your understanding change about the ways in which God is redeeming the world?	In what specific ways has our understanding of the Christian life been transformed as a result of learning and embracing the Eight Core Values as taught by ILI?
	Rate the extent to which your beliefs have changed from 1 to 4.	How has your understanding changed about the role of the evangelism, discipleship, and missions in God’s redemptive action?	What specific part or parts have the most impact on your beliefs?
	Describe the ways your beliefs have changed.	How has your understanding changed about the role of the universal Church and individual Christians in God redemptive action?	To what end do you believe the Eight Core Values work together?
		In what ways has your beliefs about the Christian faith been transformed as a result of living by the Values?	In what ways do you feel that living according to the Values aligns your life with God’s bigger presence in the world?
		What other experiences or events have helped to shape these beliefs in you?	
RQ#2 – How does this new belief manifest itself as transformed behavior?	Rate the extent to which your behaviors have changed from 1 to 4.	What behaviors have you changed as a result of living according to the Values?	How as this change in your understanding of the Christian life resulted in changed behavior?
	Describe the ways your behaviors have changed.	What practices, habits, or spiritual disciplines do you now believe are integral to the Christian faith?	What factors have been most helpful in sustaining your belief and reinforcing these new behaviors?
		What effect has your regular participation in these practices, habits, or disciplines had on your spiritual development?	

APPENDIX H (cont.)

Research Question	Survey Question	Questionnaire Question	Interview Question
RQ#3 – In what ways do these transformed beliefs and behaviors lead to missional living?		<p>Living missionally means that a person intentionally aligns his or her life with God’s redemptive action in the world. In what ways (if any) would you describe your beliefs as being missional?</p> <p>Living missionally means that a person intentionally aligns his or her life with God’s redemptive action in the world. In what ways (if any) would you describe your behaviors as being missional?</p>	<p>In what ways, if any, do you see living according to the Eight Core Values as being missional?</p> <p>The Eight Core Values directly address the theological concepts of worship, evangelism, discipleship, and stewardship. What role does mission and missions have in this construct?</p> <p>In what ways do you feel that God’s vision and purpose for your life is aligned with God’s ongoing redemption of the world?</p> <p>Describe a time when you felt most aligned with God’s vision and purpose for your life?</p>

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