Avondale College of Higher Education

School of Ministry and Theology

BAPTISM BLUEPRINT:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BAPTISM STRATEGIES

IN THE CONTEXT OF

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

An Honours Project

Presented in Partial Fulfilment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Bachelor of Ministry and Theology (Honours)

by

William T. Iererua

October 2012

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ABSTRACT

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by

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Adviser: Barry Gane

ABSTRACT OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Thesis

Avondale College

School of Ministry and Theology

Title: BAPTISM BLUEPRINT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BAPTISM STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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Date completed: October 2012

Problem

A number of Christian churches practise baptism as the believer's baptism by immersion. Within these denominations, church leaders have a variety of philosophies and practices regarding baptism. Subsequently, individuals who experience baptism are assimilated through a diversity of strategies.

Method

A study of baptism strategies in Australia and New Zealand will investigate a sample of Baptist Churches and Seventh-day Adventist Churches through a mixed methods approach. Their philosophies and strategies of baptism will be compared

with each other, and also compared with the findings of the literature review and theology of this study.

Six churches from Australia and New Zealand participated in this study. Altogether, 145 church members and 6 church pastors were included in the group of respondents.

Results

The qualitative results reveal progressive levels of the four components of a baptism strategy. These four components are bible learning, mentorship, church involvement, and faith development. The quantitative results reveal the use of these components, as faith development and church involvement are prominent in the practice of the sample, but the components of mentorship and bible learning are less practised. Baptism usually occurs during the second level of faith development (relationship with God) and church involvement (participation), while it occurs in the first level of mentorship (friendship) and bible learning (gospel).

Conclusions

Baptist Churches have a stronger emphasis on church involvement, and Seventh-day Adventist Churches have a stronger emphasis on biblical learning in their baptism strategy. Both denominations have a stronger emphasis on faith development, and have a weaker emphasis upon mentorship. With the support of the earlier chapters of this study, it is recommended for baptism to occur at the second level of each component of a baptism strategy.

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A number of individuals should be mentioned for their valuable contribution towards this study.

To my family, I would like to acknowledge Beatrice and Kevin's patience during the entire process of this research. Thank you for reminding me of the important things in life. Also to Myra, Ity, Kirabuke and Sian - thank you for your support and belief throughout this project.

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Finally, I acknowledge the chief Encourager and Advisor of this project – Jesus. Much prayer has gone into this work, so I gladly return thanks "to God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen" (Jude 25).

DEDICATION

To Myra – a wonderful mother and treasured friend.

Of whom I pray will be welcomed and nurtured through the best baptism strategy.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Baptism is experienced in many Christian churches. While the event reflects an immediate occasion, baptism also features a gradual impact upon believers, as it traces "across the arc of our lives to mark us as God's own."[1] This description extends an understanding of baptism as an ordinance, into an enduring and nurturing process. Such a process could be seen as a strategy of baptism, which would be implemented from a local church. The practice of baptism strategies will be examined in this study by identifying strategies which are currently practised in Australia and New Zealand. The following sections of this chapter will outline the background, task and expectations of this study. These will be followed by a definition of relevant terms which will be used in this study, a description of its limitations, and an outline of the investigation.

Background of the Task

Baptism is practised through various modes, with a variety of candidates. One of the modes of baptism is by immersion, and one of the types of candidates is a

[1]Paul Galbreath, *Leading through the Water* (Herndon, VI: Alban, 2011), 113.

believer.[2] Due to the differing denominations which adhere to a believer's baptism by immersion, a range of philosophies and methods emerge from their practice. Thus, baptismal candidates are being baptised through a diversity of strategies. This issue applies to the Baptist Church, Church of Christ and Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand.

Statement of the Task

This study will investigate the current practice of baptism strategies in the Australia and New Zealand. The denominations which will be examined are two which consistently practise the believer's baptism by immersion. These denominations are the Baptist Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A sample of these churches will be selected for this study, and they will be examined because of their use of common factors of a baptism strategy. Data will be gathered from the sample of churches, and will be analysed to determine their practice of baptism strategies.

Expectation of the Thesis

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how baptism is practised in Australia and New Zealand, and to determine why these strategies are being practised in such a way. It is expected that this research will generate three areas of new knowledge. Firstly, the study will determine the current practice of baptism in the Baptist Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and

[2]This type of a subject for baptism is usually known as a "believer's baptism," and will be further discussed in the third chapter of this study.

New Zealand. The baptism strategies from each denomination will be discussed and compared with each other.

Secondly, this research project will reveal areas that need development in the practice of baptism. Through a comparison of the positions from church pastors and church members, various recommendations may be made to enhance the practice of baptism strategies and initiation.

Thirdly, it is expected that a recommended formula of practising baptism in Australia and New Zealand will be created according to the findings of this study. This strategy will include the use of components for a baptism strategy, and will define an appropriate method of implementing them.

Definition of Terms

This research study has adopted a range of unique expressions regarding baptism throughout its chapters. To assist a reader's understanding of these expressions, the following definitions are provided.

Baptism Strategies

This expression refers to a church leader's method of practising baptism. A typical strategy of baptism would include factors which may occur before a baptism, and factors which may occur after an individual is baptised.

Components of a Baptism Strategy

Within a baptism strategy, a combination of factors would be implemented by a church leader. These components may occur either before or after an individual is baptised. Examples of such components are repentance, bible study, mentorship etc.

Four core components will be identified in this study, and will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Believer's Baptism

A common area of baptism in literature, which is not a focus of this study, concerns the mode of baptism. While many defend the practice of infant baptism, the contrasting practice is a "believer's baptism." This refers to individuals who choose to be baptised, which may also be referred to by the description, "adult baptism."

Limitations

The limitations of this investigation emerge from its process of collecting the data, and from its theory of analysing the data.

Research Collection

A primary limitation of this study is the imbalance of data between Australia and New Zealand. The sample of churches was selected from both countries, but more churches from New Zealand have participated. Of the six churches, only two of them were from Australia.

Each church has been carefully investigated, but the churches are not a perfect representation of the surrounding churches from the subsection. This is because all churches differ according to their size, demographic, and location. Each group features a Seventh-day Adventist Church and a Baptist Church. These churches are homogenous to each other, but may be non-homogenous to the surrounding churches of the same denomination.

The first limitation of this project's theory relates to the area which this study is investigating: Australia and New Zealand. Though the findings of this project are relevant to church practice outside of Australasia, they are only directly related to churches in Australia and New Zealand.

A second limitation that arises from the theory of this study relates to the specific mode of practising baptism. The findings of this study may shed light on many denominations that are interested in assimilation and initiation. These results, however, must be interpreted within the context of the restricted sample of Baptist and Seventh-day Adventist churches. As mentioned in previous chapters, these churches only practise a believer's baptism by immersion.

The third limitation that arises from the theory of this study relates to the age and gender of the sample. While an analysis of the data has considered the denomination and country of the respondents, it has not considered their age and gender. This exclusion of analysis has occurred as the data has no direct correlation to the age and gender of the respondents.

Outline of the Study

The first chapter begins by outlining the background of this research topic, and will discuss the tasks and expectations of the overall study. It will further provide a definition of the key terms which relate to the discussion of this thesis, the limitations the study, and an overview of each chapter.

Chapter two examines the relevant literature regarding this investigation. This review will be categorized in the areas of baptism strategies and the practice of baptism in Australia and New Zealand.

The third chapter presents a theology of baptism, which begins by discussing the meaning and purpose of baptism from a survey of biblical occurrences. This chapter will extend its discussion by defining the doctrine of baptism, with a particular emphasis upon baptism strategies.

Chapter four describes the "mixed methods" methodology of this study, and will provide a rationale for its use in this investigation. The design for this investigation will also be discussed by outlining the sample, instruments and mixed data – qualitative and quantitative.

The fifth chapter will present and examine the qualitative data, by discussing the responses from the unstructured interviews with church pastors and the focus group interviews with selected church members. This section will further highlight the findings of this qualitative component.

Chapter six will discuss the quantitative data, by presenting the results from the questionnaires which were distributed to church pastors and church members. This will be followed by an analysis of the key findings from the quantitative results.

The seventh and final chapter will conclude this study by outlining the findings of this investigation. This will be followed by discussing the recommendations of this study. Furthermore, a formula will be presented as a strategy of implementing baptism, which will be developed from the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The topic of baptism has been widely discussed in literature, mostly regarding the mode of baptism, subjects of baptism, and regeneration or re-baptism. This chapter, however, will focus on a less common matter, the strategies of practising baptism. The review will be presented through the fields of baptism strategies, their practice in New Zealand and Australia, and membership assimilation.

Baptism Strategies

The baptism strategies which are employed by churches may be interpreted through one or other of two lenses. Firstly, baptism strategies are interpreted through the components that comprise a strategy according to literature. Secondly, baptism strategies are interpreted through the specific formulas of current denominations which their literature outlines regarding the practice of baptism. A rationale of these formulas will also be considered through a historical outline of the Baptist Church, the Church of Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Faith Experience

The first component of a baptism strategy is of an experiential nature. From a Baptist perspective, Jimmy Milikin describes it as an "act of belief or repentance or such personal experience which indicated conversion and profession of faith."[3] This principle reflects a personal belief where an individual accepts the standards and principles of a Christian faith. A similar position is held by the Reformed Tradition, which highlights the expected outcome of a faith experience through "tangible signs of faith and repentance in the candidate."[4] As these results are expected from an individual, this component is further determined as a prerequisite for baptism, where "only those who have professed faith"[5] can be baptised.

Instruction

With the experience of conversion, an element of biblical learning is usually included in the process of baptism. For Seventh-day Adventists, this factor would cover "the fundamental teachings and related practices of the church so they will enter the church on a sound spiritual basis."[6] An evangelical position extends the

[3]Jimmy A. Milikin, *Christian Doctrine for Everyman: An Introduction to Baptist Beliefs* (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2010), 119; The principles of faith and repentance are also supported by Baptist author, Travis Monday in his book *Basic Baptist Beliefs*, 3rd ed. (Raleigh, NC: Lulu, 2008), 43-45.

[4]James V. Brownson, *The Promise of Baptism: An Introduction to Baptism in Scripture and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 187.

[5]Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University, 2009), 39; Bruce Shelley further describes personal faith as an "objective experience" for a baptism candidate in his book *Why Baptism?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1987), 5.

[6]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 18th ed. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2010), 44.

importance of instruction, and is illustrated by Vaagenes' statement: "to baptise without teaching is to fulfil only half of our responsibility."[7] According to this position, sound biblical instruction appears important for a candidate of baptism. David Wright explains this significance from a Baptist position, by highlighting the purpose of instruction in bringing a new believer to a "faith in Christ for their salvation."[8] This motive for instruction draws a connection with the faith experience of an individual and their involvement in church activity.

Church Involvement

In a previous study, Adrian Fleming recognised the impact of an individual's "church life" upon their baptismal readiness.[9] The third component of a baptism strategy reflects this idea of church involvement, which is discussed in literature. While Fleming described this as a post-baptismal factor, one Pentecostal branch insists on church involvement to occur prior to baptism,[10] through regularly attending church services. The significance of church involvement is also recognised in a candidate's overall relationship with a church community. Thomas Schreiner expresses this idea from a Baptist perspective, as it allows a candidate to become "united to the congregation by covenant and fellowship in the gospel."[11]

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[7]Morris Vaagenes, *Baptism: God's Activity of Grace* (Minneapolis, MN: Kirk House, 2006), *22*.

[8]David F. Wright, ed. *Baptism: Three Views* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 2009), 50.

[9]Adrian J. Fleming, "The Optimum Age and Readiness for Baptism of Adolescents" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Andrews University, 1983), 78.

[10]This position is written by author of "The United Holiness Church of Jesus Christ," Jaerock Lee, who emphasizes a "Catchism" period before an individual in baptised in his booklet *Catechism and Baptism* (Seoul, Korea: Urim, 2011).

[11]Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, eds., *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 336-337; This thought is also supported by J. M. Pendleton in his book *Church Manual Designed for the Use of Baptist Churches*

Mentorship

The fourth component of a baptism strategy is that of mentorship, and this has been least discussed in the literature. One descriptive policy regarding mentorship is found in a Presbyterian guide for adult baptism:

> Since I began aiding youth in their decision of baptism and journey of discipleship, I have intentionally formed mentor relationships for each youth. The results have been incredible. The intergenerational impact of the mentor relationship fostered youth to engage in other future church events beyond what was designated.[12]

In the case discussed above, mentors were assigned to baptism candidates before they were baptised. This proved to be a successful factor for baptism practice with Christopher Wilson. On the other hand, the Seventh-day Adventist policy is to assign spiritual mentors after an individual is baptised.[13] Both methods uphold mentorship as a valuable component of a baptism strategy, and agree that a mentor's role is "to discuss issues of faith and life"[14] with a candidate for baptism.

Four factors have been highlighted as components of a baptism strategy: faith development, bible instruction, church involvement and mentorship. Each component is presented through literature that represents various denominations.

(Since 1867) (Memphis, TN: General Books LLC, 2010), by relating Church involvement with themes of initiation and organisation.

[12]This personal testimony is written by Christopher W. Wilson, in his book *Passage into Discipleship: Guide to Baptism* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 2009), 60.

[13]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2009), 167.

[14]This statement is an Evangelical position from Thomas F. Best, from his book *Baptism Today: Understanding, Practice, Ecumenical Implications* (Geneva: WCC, 2008), 93; The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook* (Silverspring, MD: Ministerial Association General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists), 167, also supports this by saying "new members need the support, friendship and encouragement of established members of the church."

Formulas of Baptism Strategies

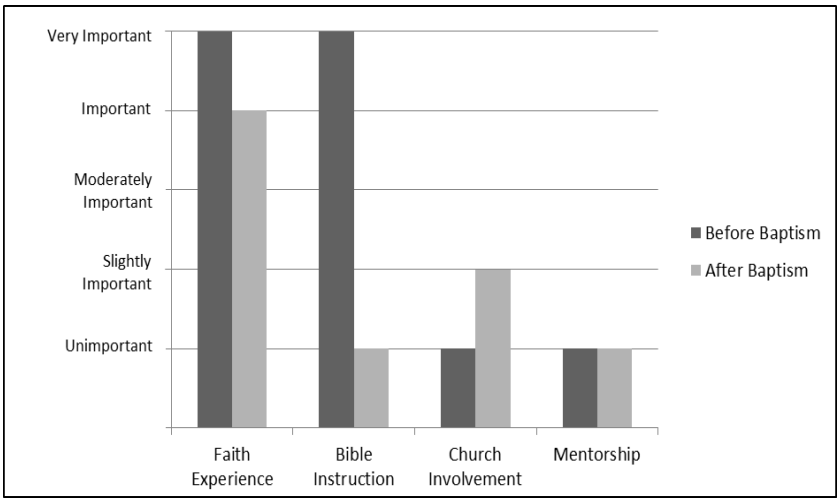
The guides and policies of Christian denominations reveal their formula of practising baptism, through their combination of employing the four components of a baptism strategy. The following strategies of baptism are concluded regarding the practice of the Baptist Church, Church of Christ, and Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Baptist Church

The Baptist Church expresses an emphasis on the faith experience of a candidate for baptism, both before and after the ordinance occurs. Biblical instruction is highly regarded as a prerequisite for baptism, while the candidate's attendance at church is expected after he/she is baptized. This review found no Baptist publication, which discussed mentorship in the process of baptism. The following diagram illustrates this strategy, as generated from guidelines found in Baptist literature.[15]

[15]This Baptist Strategy is generated from guidelines presented in J. M. Pendleton, *Church Manual Designed for the Use of Baptist Churches* (General, 2010); Derek Tidball and Gerald Ball, *Baptist Basics* (North Sydney, NSW: Baptist Foundation of NSW, 1996), 6-15; The Canadian Baptist Federation, *Canadian Baptist Manual for Worship and Service* (Canadian Baptist Ministries, 1984); M. L. Moser, *Baptist Handbook for Church Members* (Challenge, 1983); Gordon G. Johnson, *My Church: A Manual of Baptist Faith and Action Evanston* (Harvest Publications, 1973); George E. Simpson, *Basic Baptist Beliefs* (Church Leadership Unlimited, 1991).

Fig. 1. Baptist Church Baptism Strategy

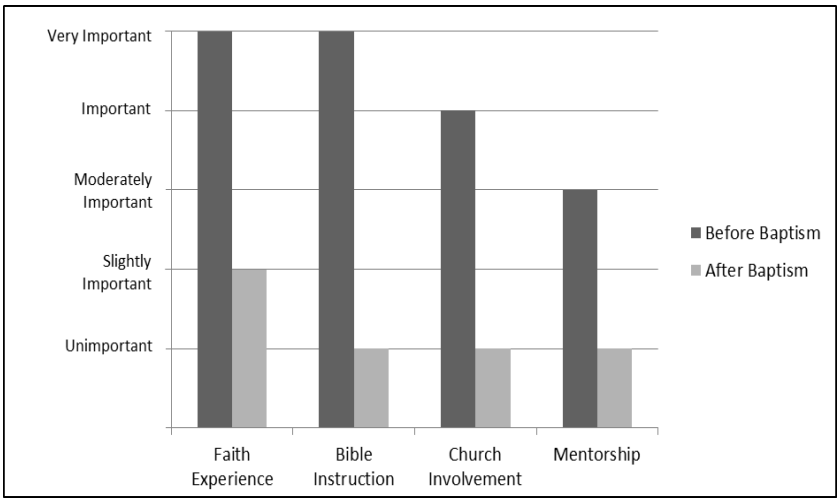


The Church of Christ

The Church of Christ is largely independent in their church practice, which means determining their practice regarding baptism may be a difficult task. Policies from the Church of Christ's national councils of North America and Australia have provided a general strategy, which encourages all four components of a baptism strategy to be applied before baptism. A particular emphasis is placed on bible instruction and the faith experience of an individual, but all components feature a much weaker importance after a candidate is baptised. The following diagram illustrates this strategy, as it is based on the literature.[16]

[16]The Church of Christ strategy is generated from guidelines presented in John D. Castelein and John H. Armstong, eds., "Christian Churches/Church of Christ View," in *Four Views on Baptism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2007, in section; Christopher W. Wilson, *Passage into Discipleship: Guide to Baptism;* Craig Brown, *Churches of Christ: The Journey of Baptism* (Council of Churches of Christ in Australia, 2010), under http://cofcaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/baptism_booklet_print.pdf (accessed April 4, 2012).

Fig. 2 Church of Christ Baptism Strategy

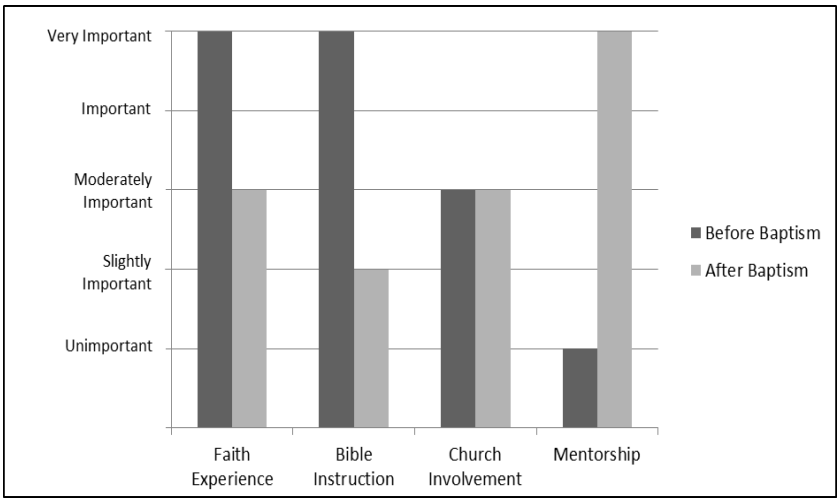


The Seventh-day Adventist Church

The strategy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is developed from their publications, which state their specific policies regarding church practice. Biblical instruction and faith experience are both highly regarded as prerequisites for baptism, with a weaker emphasis after a candidate's baptism. Church involvement features a moderate importance both before and after baptism, with mentorship having a strong emphasis only after an individual has been baptised. The following diagram illustrates these findings. It is based on the literature cited.[17]

[17]The Seventh-day Adventist Church strategy is generated from guidelines presented in General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Church Manual*; General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, *Seventh-day Adventist Minister's Handbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2009).

Fig. 3 Seventh-day Adventist Baptism Strategy



As the literature indicates, all four components of baptism are employed in the strategies of these denominations, but according to their own formula. The policies and components fail to clearly indicate, however, the outcomes that these strategies produced. Also, with such a difference of strategies, the question may be further asked: How did the believer's baptism come to be practised with such variance? Understanding the development of these denominations and their baptism strategies will shed light on this question.

Historical Development

A history of baptism strategies will trace the origin and development of the Baptist Church, the Church of Christ, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with a particular focus on their understanding and practice of a baptism strategy. The historical development of baptism will be limited to these denominations as they each practise the believer's baptism by immersion only.

Baptist Church

Baptist roots originate from the Separatist movement in England during the seventeenth-century when various groups of people 'separated' from the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.[18] John Smyth and Thomas Helwys were instrumental in the "General Baptist" movement, but Smyth eventually sided with a Puritan variety of the movement named the "Particular Baptists." By the 1700s, the Particular Baptists took their Calvinist theology of baptism to the shores of North America. Samuel Waldron describes a natural decline of Particular Baptist adherence in America over the past few centuries. This was due to several factors,[19] such as freedom of religion, the mergence or syncretism of beliefs, and extreme responses (legalistic and liberal) to the Baptist revivals of eighteenth-century America.

Despite the decline of Baptist theology, Baptist history is believed to have retained a balanced theology and practice of baptism via the Particular Baptists. This is reflected through the theologies of John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes and Thomas Goold, who collectively identified the influence of the church, the believer's life, and the searching of scripture in the process of baptism.[20] This theology explains the development of a baptism strategy from an 1849 American Baptist Publication named "The Practical uses of the Ordinance of Baptism."[21] The manual upholds Church

[18]For further reading on this movement see Chris Traffanstedt's article "A Primer of Baptist History: The True Baptist Trail," from *The Reformed Reader* (1999), http://www.spurgeon.org/~phil/history/trail.htm (accessed April 19, 2012); and H. Leon McBeth's book *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness*," (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1987).

[19]Samuel E. Waldron discussed these factors in his book *Baptist Roots in America* (Boonton, NJ: Simpson, 1991).

[20]These pillars of American Baptist history have been recently discussed in Sheila D. Klopfer's article "The Betwixt and Between Baptismal Theology of Baptists in Colonial America," *Baptist History and Heritage* (2010): 9-16.

[21]American Baptist Society, "The Practical Uses of the Ordinance of Baptism," in *The Baptist Manual: A Selection from the Series of Publications* (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Society, 1849), 4-51.

fellowship as an important factor, but did not consider it as a requirement for a baptism candidate. This factor included an obedient experience and truthful understanding of Baptist Orthodoxy. This model aligns with and explains the modern Baptist strategy, shown in Fig. 1.

Church of Christ

The development of the Church of Christ began from the Stone-Campbell movement in America during the late eighteenth century. After the Revolutionary War, America became largely unresponsive to structured religion within mainline churches, but developed an interest biblical authority, particularly from the New Testament. This evoked a new position towards baptism, upholding its strong relationship with salvation.[22] The Campbell wing began from a Scottish father and son, Thomas and Alexander, who began a revival of camp meetings and gatherings throughout several states in America. This began in 1809, with a vision for a "deeper reform movement" amongst Baptist and Presbyterian circles.[23] Barton Stone, a Presbyterian minister of Kentucky, also embraced Campbell's vision at the time, and became a leading spokesman for the "restoration movement."

By the 1830s, Campbell and Stone merged their churches, and in the process, developed a shift in their understanding of baptism, largely because of its association with the remission of sins.[24] After the Civil war, however, a variety of differences emerged between the movement's leaders. As a result, the Campbell movement chose

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[22]Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers and D. Newell Williams eds., "Baptism" in *Encyclopaedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 65.

[23]Schreiner and Wright, *Believer's Baptism*, 293.

[24]Ibid., 58.

an organised structure and became the "disciples Church/Church of Christ" wing under the restoration umbrella. Due to this development of the Restoration movement, their understanding of baptism is interpreted in various ways. However, their theology can be identified, from a 1982 World Council of Churches tract named "faith and baptism". A leading contributor of this tract was from the Church of Christ. Key components which were highlighted in this tract were the necessity of faith, a lifelong growth in faith, congregational reaffirmation and nurturing.[25] These principles reveal parallels to the modern baptism strategy of the Church of Christ (Fig. 2), and explain how a modern strategy can be interpreted in differing ways.

Seventh-day Adventist Church

A history of the Seventh-day Adventist position of baptism begins in their early responses towards infant baptism. In 1861, B. F. Snook defended the Adventist position of the believer's baptism, based on the linguistic and thematic grounds of the Bible. The church leader argued that baptism was a memorial, was strongly related to salvation, and must be "preceded by repentance."[26] In the late 1800s, the General Conference president, E. J. Waggoner, continued to uphold baptism's mode of immersion with a particular emphasis on its symbolism: "Baptism signifies the death and resurrection of Christ; but it signifies our acceptance of that sacrifice, and that we

[25]This document was recognised as a representative of the Church of Christ in Richard M. Tristano's book *Origins of the Restoration Movement: An Intellectual History* (Atlanta, GA: Glenmary Research Centre, 1998), 109; This position of the Church of Christ is also affirmed in this commission in "UCC Affirms Common Agreement of Baptism," in *Christian Century* August 9 (2011), http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2011-07/ucc-affirms-common-agreement-baptism (accessed April 24, 2012).

[26]Hebert Keisler, *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology: Commentary Reference Series,* vol. 12 of *Commentary Reference Series,* ed. George Reid and Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 591.

actually share His death and resurrection."[27] The roots of the Seventh-day Adventist theology of baptism emerge from their biblical defence of its mode and meaning.

The use of baptism strategy components is seen as early as 1932 in the Seventh-day Adventist Church manual. It stated that instruction of the fundamental teachings, experiencing new birth, and having close attention to candidates of baptism are the prerequisites for baptism.[28] Even from the early 1900s their modern baptism strategy has included a comparable formula of components. Seventh-day Adventism has also followed a similar position as the Swiss reformer, Zwingli, who understood baptism as a memorial. Beach and Reid agree with this, saying "baptism marks the believer's break with the old life and entrance into a new life,"[29] as a new member of Christ's body.

Australia and New Zealand Practice of Baptism

The current practice of the believer's baptism in Australia and New Zealand will now be examined from the literature. Though publications regarding this area are limited, conclusions can be drawn from the history and practice of those churches that only practise the believer's baptism[30] in Australia and New Zealand.

[27]E. J. Waggoner, "Baptism – Its Significance," *The Bible Students' Library* 79 (March 1891): 5, http://www.temcat.com/L-4-Reference-Library/Answers/BAPTISM.pdf (accessed April 25, 2012).

[28]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Silver Spring, MD: The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1932), 73-78.

[29] Best, ed, *Baptism Today*, 170.

[30]As previously discussed, these recognised Christian denominations are the Baptist Church, Church of Christ and Seventh-day Adventist Churches in New Zealand and Australia.

Australia

History

The first Baptist Church service was held in Sydney in 1831, which was conducted from English gatherings of the reformed movement. Since then, considerable growth has occurred in Baptist Churches in societies which enjoy informal worship.[31] A similar background belongs to the British origins of the Church of Christ in Australia, [32] whose first appearance was in South Australia as early as 1846. Some four decades later, the Seventh-day Adventist Church also made its mark on Australian soil through the evangelistic endeavours of several Americans in 1885,[33] among whom was Stephen N. Haskell.

Practice

The mode of baptism is clearly defined in the Australian websites of the Baptist Church, the Church of Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.[34] All policies endorse their practise of baptism by immersion, but their discussion of baptism components is minimal. The Baptist Church and the Church of Christ consider faith experience as a prerequisite of baptism, which is expressed by the candidate "choosing" and "confessing" their faith. The Seventh-day Adventist Church

[31]Philip J. Hughes, *The Baptists in Australia* (Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth, 1996), 79; Ian Breward, *A History of the Australian Churches* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1993), 28.

[32]First influence was by Thomas Magarey of Northern Ireland, who came via New Zealand, as stated in *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, 47.

[33]Gary Land, *Historical Dictionary of Seventh-day Adventists* (Oxford: Scarecrow, 2005), 28.

[34]Australian Baptist Ministries, "What We Value," http://www.baptist.org.au/About_Us/What_We_Value.aspx; Churches of Christ in Australia, "Who We Are," http://cofcaustralia.org/about/; Local Seventh-day Adventist Church, "The Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church," http://toronto.adventist.org.au/about-us#nine (both accessed April 20, 2012).

shares the same component with the inclusion of making baptism a declaration towards their community, which reflects an element of church involvement. As this data reveals, the Australian strategies of practising the believer's baptism from all three denominations are not clearly addressed in the literature.

New Zealand

History

The origins of the churches that practise the believer's baptism in New Zealand are very similar to those of Australia. The Baptist Church was established through the efforts of missionaries from England, Scotland and Ireland.[35] This British influence was also significant in the establishment of the Church of Christ, which opened their first church in Nelson in 1844.[36] The Seventh-day Adventist Church began in 1887, shortly after its early appearance in Australia.

Practice

The findings of current baptism strategies employed in New Zealand[37] feature a similar trend to those of Australia. According to the website policies, Baptist Churches and Church of Christ Churches uphold none of the components of a baptism strategy, but boldly outline their practice by immersion. On the other hand, the

[35]Robert Withycombe, ed, *Australian and New Zealand Religious History 1788-1988: A Collection of Papers and Addresses* (Philip, ACT: Copy-Qik, 1988), 27.

[36]*The Rhetoric of Sir Garfield: Christian Immigration and the Dream*, 26.

[37]Baptist Churches of New Zealand, "Our Beliefs," http://www.baptist.org.nz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=926&Itemid=106; Church of Christ New Zealand, "CCNZ," What We Believe, http://www.church.ccnz.org.nz/about/default.asp?id=213&page=6; North New Zealand Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, "Fundamental Beliefs," http://www.nnzc.org.nz/fundamental-beliefs (all accessed April 20, 2012).

Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Zealand has mentioned how the "faith experience" and "church involvement" components are included in their strategy of practising of baptism.

Assimilation

Baptism strategies refer to a process of assimilating new members into a church. Due to this, the literature's discussion of membership assimilation offers much relevance to the area of baptism strategies. This section will consider the factors of membership assimilation which are presented in literature, and merge these factors into the findings of this review.

Factors of Membership Assimilation

Membership assimilation is examined by understanding the factors that assist church members in joining their congregation. A leading voice in the discussion of membership assimilation is Thom Rainer, who raises three foundational areas as influential for membership assimilation: expectations, relationships and involvement.[38] An analysis of the factors which influence membership assimilation will be viewed through these three lenses.

Expectation

When a new believer joins a church, it is important that he/she understands the benefits and limits of his/her decision. This issue relates to the principle of expectation, where the member and church should understand and agree upon each

[38]J. D. Payne, *Missional House Churches: Reaching our Communities with the Gospel* (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster, 2007), 85.

other's expectations arising from the decision to be baptised. Such a process allows the member to feel their membership is a right,[39] and invokes a sense of belonging as a new member. According to Stetzer and Dodson, "Churches with high membership requirements and expectations grow faster…than those without high expectations."[40] This is because it features an effective goal to guide a new member from being aware of their role, to practising their role through church attendance and ultimately becoming active members.[41] Without this process of assimilation being applied, baptism candidates may be unprepared for their commitment, and may feel that they don't meet the requirements of their church.[42]

The principle of expectation is often addressed in the early stages of assimilation through a structured class for a baptismal candidate. As well as teaching the church's beliefs to the individual, these classes can also inform baptismal candidates how they might serve in a ministry in their church.[43] This guidance is mainly found in the weekly gatherings, which usually occur outside of the church service after the individual is baptised (eg, bible study, Sabbath/Sunday school, small group).[44]

[39]Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches turned around and yours can too* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2007), 126.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Roger N. McNamara and Ken Davis *The YBH Handbook of Church Planting: A Practical Guide to Church Planting* (Baptist Mid-Missions, 2005), 422.

[42]Bonnie Appleton and Simon Taylor, *Closing the Back Door of the Church* (Cambridge: Grove, 2010), 8.

[43]Gary H. Woolverton, Church Ministry by Design: Designing Effective Ministry for Tomorrow's Church (Mustang, OK: Tate, 2011), 143.

[44]Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer III, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 213.

Ministry Involvement

In addition to a new member's understanding of his/her role, the practice of their role is a crucial factor in the process of assimilation. This is the stage where an individual becomes personally involved with a form of ministry in their local church. Such activity, however, will only be sustainable when it meets the needs, interests and gifts of the individual.[45] Del Danavant stresses how this process can't be learned from a book, but must become a procedure of "real discipleship" for the new believer,[46] as an experience with their church.

While this factor appears somewhat natural and straightforward for a church, the difficult element is to assist the individual to discover their place in church life. Chuck Lawless has presented an effective model of achieving this, by helping members determine their DESIGN[47] (desire, experiences, spiritual gifts, individual style, growth phase, natural abilities) for a ministry in church. Furthermore, the new church member can be motivated to participate in ministry, and may see themselves as "ministers and priests"[48] of their congregation.

Relationships

The final factor which Thom Rainer highlights regarding membership assimilation refers to the social relationships between a new member and the church community. While this factor has no direct effect on an individual's faith in God, it

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[45]Tom Ehrich, *Church Wellness: A Best Practices Guide to Nurturing Healthy Congregations* (New York: Church, 2008), 2.

[46]Del Dunavant, *From Membership to Discipleship* (Lincoln, NE: AdventSource, 2006), 56-57.

[47]Chuck Lawless, *Membership Matters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 115.

[48]Bob Russel and Rusty Russel, *When God Builds a Church: 10 Principles for Growing a Dynamic Church* (New York: Howards, 2000), 193.

can cause separation from a Christian community. This would create a permanent barrier from learning and serving God through a local church. In his book "A Churchless Faith," Jamieson describes the gradual nature of a person's decision to leave a church, saying that it "may have already been operating at a subconscious level for quite some time."[49] This negative outcome of the relationship factor may be avoided by involving new members in regular fellowship with the church before their baptism.[50]

The makings of healthy church relationships are built upon authenticity – a characteristic which is believed to be considerably lacking in many churches.[51] Furthermore, the relationship between the church leaders and members should be maintained at a genuine and open level. The leaders and members of each church must practise such a bond, by making themselves available and "open"[52] for communication. Church leaders must support this process towards baptism candidates, by nurturing long-term connections.

The factors which have been discussed paint a picture of the ideal practice regarding membership assimilation. The literature promotes an implementation of Rainer's three components of assimilation, which is demonstrated in the following diagram:

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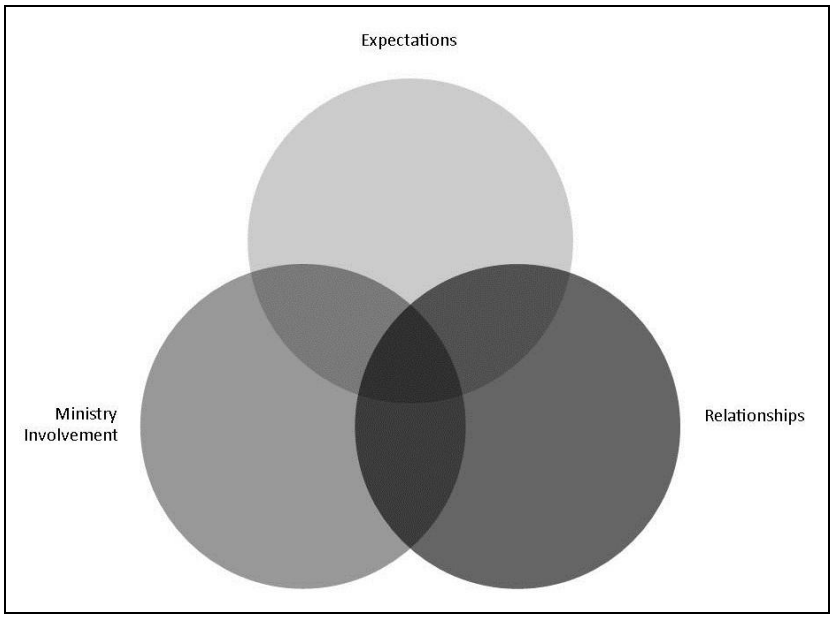
[49]A Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys Beyond the Churches* (London: SPCK, 2002), 35.

[50]Hartman Rector Jr, *Already to Harvest: A Guide to Converting Thousands to the Gospel of Christ* (Spingville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2011), 100.

[51]This position is taken by David Frederickson in his book, *When the Church leaves the Building* (2006).

[52]Bruce P. Powers, *Church Administration Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 247; Peter Rudowski, *Connecting the Dots: Ministering to your Congregation through its organisational system* (2009). 229.

Fig. 4. Factors of Membership Assimilation



Summary Statement

It is fitting to first summarize the three sections of this chapter. Then, the areas which remain silent in the literature will be highlighted as they propose a need for further research.

Summary to Literature Review

Baptism Strategies

Baptism strategies are determined from a combination of four common components: faith experience, instruction, church involvement and mentorship. The Baptist Church, Church of Christ and Seventh-day Adventist Church use each of these components through their own formula of practice.

Baptism Strategies in Australia and New Zealand

The Baptist Church and Church of Christ became active in Australia and New Zealand during the early nineteenth century, which was influenced by British missionaries. In the late nineteenth century, the Seventh-day Adventist Church made its mark in Australia and New Zealand, through an evangelistic influence from North America. The development of baptism strategies from each denomination explains their current practice in Australia and New Zealand.

Membership Assimilation

Literature has revealed three key areas of membership assimilation which are currently practised: expectations, ministry involvement and relationships. It appears that the spiritual development of an individual is not included in any of Rainer's three principles. Perhaps this component is not important in this discussion, however the findings of a Canadian investigation[53] prove the significance of spiritual practices in the effective process of assimilation.

Silent Areas in Literature

In the discussion of baptism strategies, a collection of theories and policies were discovered from the churches that practise the believer's baptism by immersion. A specific strategy however, which defines their combination of components, is rarely presented in publications.

A theology of baptism is widely discussed from Churches in New Zealand and Australia – namely, the mode of baptism and the subjects of baptism. Their method of

[53]Bruce G. Fawcett and Leslie Francis, "The Relationship between Baptismal Status and Spiritual Practices among committed Baptist Youth," *International Association for the Study of Youth Ministry* (2009).

practising baptism however, has not been clearly stated in the policies that have been cited from their websites. Therefore, a defined baptism strategy remains unclear for the believer's baptism in Australia and New Zealand.

The factors of membership assimilation have no direct relationship to baptism. Furthermore, the literature regarding membership assimilation is a reflection of church practice from North America. Practices and methods regarding membership assimilation from Australia and New Zealand have not been obtained from literature.

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGY OF BAPTISM

Introduction

Chapter three contains a biblical survey of the meaning of a theology of baptism. The chapter will also explore the doctrine of baptism, and present a systematic theory of its practice. Furthermore, baptism strategies will be discussed by outlining the existing components and formulas of baptism from the New Testament.

Biblical Survey of Baptism

The biblical understanding of baptism is initially defined through an understanding of its meaning and role. In exploring the meaning of baptism, we will discuss baptism's association with cleansing from sin, a candidate's union with Christ, and a candidate's expressed faith in Christ. This will be followed by discussing the role of baptism through its purpose as an entrance into membership, an "ordination" into ministry, and a covenantal sign.

Cleansing from Sin

When John called people to be baptised, it was described as a "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4). The water did not provide cleansing, but it symbolized a cleansing and forgiveness that was experienced as a result of repentance.[54] The act of baptism presupposes a spiritual cleansing, which occurs in the heart of an individual. Therefore, when someone is baptised, he/she experiences an inward "washing of regeneration" (Tit 3:5), which is commemorated when a person is baptised. For this reason, baptism upholds the root meaning to "immerse," as it symbolises complete forgiveness through an immersion into water.[55] Peter confirmed this symbolism by saying that baptism "now saves us" (1 Peter 3:21), as it affirms an individual's "good conscience towards God," because of their forgiveness from sin.

Union with Christ

When a person is baptised, an association is made between their life and the life of Jesus Christ. Rom 6:5 describes this two-fold union as being baptised "in the likeness of His death" and "in the likeness of His resurrection." This union is

[54]Acts 3:19 supports this as sins are promised to be "blotted out" because of a previous act of repentance and conversion. Other authors who identify with this ideal are Herbert Keisler, who said "baptism essentially symbolizes cleansing from sin," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology: Commentary Reference Series,* vol. 12 of *Commentary Reference Series,* ed. George Reid and Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 588; and George Beasley-Murray, who said "The purpose of the sacrificial death of Jesus is described as the forgiveness of sins," in *Baptism in the New Testamant* (Devon: Paternoster, 1994), 49.

[55]Kiesler affirms this by noting the Greek word, "baptizo," literally means to "immerse," in the *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology: Commentary Reference Series*, 583.

exclusive, as it is made only between the individual and Christ. Paul highlighted this exclusivity in saying there is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph 4:5) for a church member. Similarly, Christ commissioned His disciples to baptise new believers in the name of the triune God (Mat 28:19). Therefore, baptism is a reminder of the "new eschatological reality that has been obtained with the death and resurrection of Christ."[56]

Faith in Christ

Baptism is also related to the new and growing faith of the individual. In His final commission to the disciples, Jesus reveals how an individual's faith works in the process of their baptism: "he who believes and is baptised will be saved" (Mark 16:16). This is supported in Acts 18:8, which says that the Corinthian church "believed and were baptised" after hearing Paul preach. For someone who is seeking baptism, the act would declare their acceptance and belief in God's plan of salvation, which is "on His terms, not ours."[57]

Role of Baptism

Entrance into Membership

Through faith in God, an individual is "baptised into Christ" (Gal 3:27). As this union is made with Christ, a simultaneous union is made with a local faith community – His body. Paul also makes the assertion in 1 Cor 12:13, that "we were all baptised in one body." Two entrances are observed from this understanding.

[56]Schreiner and Wright, *Believer's Baptism,* 89.

[57]Jeff McFadden, *One Baptism* (Raleigh, NC: Lulu, 2006), 64.

Firstly, baptism serves as an entrance into a local body, as with those from the Corinthian church. Secondly, the act of baptism marks an entrance into the "universal church of all true believers."[58]

Ordination into Ministry

Jesus' ministry on earth was initiated at His baptism. After the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove, He was prepared to be "led up by the Spirit" (Mat 4:1), and declared that "the Spirit of the LORD is upon me" (Luke 4:18). This occurred because Jesus' baptism "constituted his ordination to his public ministry."[59] In a similar manner, baptism is a time when an individual receives "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). This process authorizes their "ordination"[60] into the royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9) of Christian discipleship.

Covenantal Sign

At an individual's baptism, an outward confirmation is made regarding their inward covenant with God. Previously, circumcision was the outward expression of this covenant, and circumcising the "foreskin of your heart" (Deut 10:16) was the inward confirmation. The New Testament maintains this inward confirmation of a covenant, but declares an outward "circumcision of Christ" (Col 2:11) is expressed

[58]Best, ed. *Baptism Today*, 77.

[59]Thomas C. Oden, *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 341.

[60]Monsignor D. Bohr and Timothy M. Dolan, *The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2009), 155.

through the act of baptism. This ritual upholds the covenant that "righteousness will be given on the basis of faith"[61] for an individual.

Doctrine of Baptism

A theology of baptism is also examined through a dogmatic lens, which considers its doctrinal meaning from biblical and theological perspectives. The doctrine of baptism is largely discussed in the area of ecclesiology. This section will outline a theory of baptism through understanding it as a symbol and as a type of sacrament.

Baptism as a Symbol

The previous section briefly discussed the various "meanings" or symbols of baptism. These symbols highlight baptism's meaning of an individual's cleansing from sin, union with Christ, and declaration of faith. Due to these areas of symbolism, strong implications emerge regarding the mode, subjects and effect of baptism.

Mode of Baptism

Two modes of baptism currently exist in Christian practice: sprinkling and immersion. While baptism by sprinkling usually reflects a Catholic or Anglican practice, immersion is commonly practised by Protestant denominations (eg, Baptist, Church of Christ and Seventh-day Adventist). A primary argument in support of immersion is that of linguistics. This argument would uphold the literal translation of the word "baptizo," as "dip" or "immerse." Although various Protestants are content

[61]Gregg Strawbridge, ed. *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), 94.

with this claim, Bannerman opposes it in suggesting that the root word is used in several senses, which could denote "washing" or "purifying" in general sense.[62] While Bannerman's argument may be accurate, the idea of "washing" would not relate to baptism's symbolic meaning of a union with Christ.

Further evidence is used in support of immersion from a theological and historical perspective. Theologically, the account in Acts 8 describes a picture of baptism by immersion as the Eunuch "went down into the water" and "came up out of the water" (verses 38-39). From a historical position, Richard Rice discusses how ancient Christian buildings were "clearly designed to accommodate immersion"[63] through the baptisteries which they contained. Such evidence does not deny the existence of baptism by sprinkling, but proves that baptism by immersion was largely practised during the first Century after Christ.

Subjects of Baptism

The subjects of baptism relates to the appropriate age for an individual to be baptised. Two common groups of subjects of baptism in Christian practice are infant baptism and believer's baptism. Alternate terms for these two groups are pedobaptists, which refers to infant baptism, and credobaptists. Several places in the New Testament are used in support of a believer's baptism. Such passages describe baptism candidates to have "received his word" (Acts 2:41), "believed" (Acts 8:12), and "received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 10:47). For those that adhere to a believer's

[62]This thought is expressed in lengthy footnote of D. Douglas Bannerman, in his book *The Scripture Doctrine of the Church: Historically and Exegetically Considered* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976), 369.

[63]Richard Rice, *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1985), 299.

baptism, these texts are used to defend the requirements of a personal faith for a baptism candidate. This position of the believer's baptism is shared by many Protestants,[64] and is primarily suggested by this biblical defence.

A second area of discussion for the subjects of baptism is through its symbolism. As the ordinance reflects a process of being "baptized into Christ" (Rom 6:3), it suggests that only those who can exercise their own faith may achieve a union with Christ. Two pedobaptist responses emerge against this position. One response refers to the use of "household baptisms" from the New Testament (Acts 16:15; 16:33; 1 Cor 1:16), which is assumed to include children. Beasley-Murray answers this response in suggesting that exercising faith for another's salvation is "inconsistent" with the New Testament.[65] The second response refers to the sacramental understanding of baptism, as a requirement for everyone to receive salvation. While salvation is available for everyone, the means of receiving it is limited to a personal and voluntary faith.

Effect of Baptism

The outcome of an individual's baptism is also defined from an understanding of its symbolism. As a baptism experience reflects an individual's union with Christ's death and resurrection (Col 2:12), a significant commitment to the Christian faith is displayed. John Ziziloulas supports this idea in saying "the believer places their security in what they can have no confirmation of."[66] This notion was clear in the

[64]Fritz Guy, *Thinking Theologically: Adventist Christianity and the Interpretation of Faith* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1999), 63.

[65]G. R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism Today and Tomorrow (New York: St. Martin's, 1966), 121.

[66]John D. Zizioulas, edited by Douglas H. Knight, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 35.

baptisms of the first Christians, as they were asked to substitute their identity for the Christian faith. When an individual is baptized, he/she receives a new identity in Christ.

A second effect, which is initiated by baptism, relates to an individual's relationship with a community of faith or a church. As someone from the church baptizes a person, the event would also be conducted before the community. Hans Küng extends this thought in saying that an individual is also baptized "for the community."[67] This is because he/she becomes a member of the church, and is included in their communion as a forgiven body of saints.

Baptism as a Type of Sacrament

Baptism is also defined through its various sacramental themes. This is not to suggest that baptism is a sacrament, but a symbol which is "charged with a rich and irreplaceable meaning,"[68] which strongly relates to the ideas of a sacrament. This section will discuss these sacramental themes and their implications upon the necessity, experience and administration of baptism.

Necessity of Baptism

The ordinance of baptism may also be viewed as a necessity for a Christian believer. This is not to say that baptism is a necessary means to receive salvation, but is a necessary event for an individual's Christian experience if an opportunity permits. The Medieval church, however, developed an understanding that baptism was directly

[67]Hans Küng, *The Church* (London: Search, 1976), 209.

[68]William G. Johnsson, *Clean: The Meaning of Christian Baptism* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1980), 83.

related to salvation. Spinks explains this position by suggesting that it developed from their understanding that baptism was a "ritual pattern."[69] Though baptism was a form of ritual, Moltmann affirms that baptism is a necessity because of its sacred meaning,[70] as a command from Christ for all to believe in Him.

It appears that using the term "necessary" when discussing the meaning of baptism can cause much misunderstanding. While it is opposed as a prerequisite for salvation, it is defended as an indispensable experience for a Christian believer. Beasley-Murray discusses this paradoxical notion and offers a practical solution in saying:

> "But is it not better to recognize positively that God has graciously given us sacraments for our good and that it is our part to receive them gratefully? Is it not customary for us to argue whether it was 'necessary,' or in what sense, that Christ should have become incarnate…that He should have been born a Jew, that He should have died on a cross and risen from the dead…"[71]

While believers are encouraged to willingly experience baptism, Beasley-Murray argues the pointless nature to debate upon its necessity. This idea of baptism as a gift allows an individual to uphold its meaning for salvation, and obediently receive it like a sacrament.

Experience of Baptism

The event of baptism provokes various responses in an individual's Christian experience. While the ordinance of baptism is not a sacrament itself, it functions as a sacrament as an individual's faith is developed during its process. This development

[69]Bryan D. Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism: From the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 45.

[70]Jürgen Moltmann, translated by Margaret Kohl, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology* (London: SCM, 1977), 235-236.

[71]G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1976), 304.

of faith has been called "half of the baptism event,"[72] which as White summarizes, may include components of self-reformation, repentance, human decision, and a response to grace.

An experiential component of baptism also occurs in an individual's relationship and union with Christ. Karl Barth adopted an extreme version of this union in describing baptism as "holy and hallowing" testimony which God has pledged to an individual. This definition was developed from Barth's understanding that during baptism God would supply every need for an individual's Christian life. [73] This view of baptism's symbolism is refined by Spinks who concludes that: "baptism points back to what God has done, proclaims what God is doing, and looks towards what God will do."[74] Thus, it is the meaning of baptism which affirms Christ's sacramental work on behalf of a believer.

Administering Baptism

A leader of a church usually administers sacraments. Baptism does not reflect this administering practice however, as the New Testament presents no specific guidelines regarding administration of baptism. One perspective considers that church members are a priesthood of believers (see 1 Pet 2:4-10), and would encourage all mature believers as eligible baptisers.[75] Augustus Strong supported this claim during

[72]R. E. O. White, *The Biblical Doctrine of Initiation: A Theology of Baptism and Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1960), 274.

[73]Karl Barth, trans by Ernest Payne, *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*. English Translation (London, SCM, 1948), 14.

[74]Bryan D. Sprinks, *Reformation and Modern Rituals and Theologies of Baptism: From Luther to Contemporary Practices* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 162.

[75]Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1994), 983.

the late nineteenth-century in stating how churches should avoid being "absolutely dependent"[76] on the pastor on this matter.

As baptism acts as a sign of entrance into a church, it is also appropriate to designate a representative of a church to administer the ordinance. Wayne Grudem also affirms this idea in saying "there seems to be no reason why a church from time to time, and where it deems it appropriate, might not call on other church officers."[77] Therefore, the sacramental understanding of baptism would encourage church officers and/or mature church members to administer the ordinance.

Baptism Strategies

The Bible discusses baptism strategies in an indirect manner. While it doesn't reveal specific guidelines of practising baptism, various components and formulas can be determined from the New Testament. The components that will be discussed are repentance, belief and discipleship. Key "formulas" will be examined from the baptism commission of Mat 28:18-20, the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:30-39, and the baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his household in Acts 16:30-34.

[76]Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology*, vol 3 (Philadelphia, PN: Griffith & Rowland), 917.

[77]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 984.

Repentance

At the close of Peter's sermon at Pentecost, he gave the instruction to "repent and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38). This suggests that the act of baptism must follow an experience of repentance, or a change of thought, by an individual. The idea of repentance is unique in Acts, as a "change of thinking towards Jesus."[78] This component is further supported by Paul's expression, a "baptism of repentance" (Acts 19:4), which defines repentance as a prerequisite[79] for baptism.

Belief

Another prerequisite for baptism, which is identified from the New Testament, is a personal faith in God. As previously discussed, Jesus' final commission in Mark 16:16 reveals a component to "believe," before an individual is baptised. James Brownson summarized this thought in saying baptism "summons and requires from us a response of faith."[80] Various occasions in Acts (8:13, 37; 18:8; 19:4) also support this component of belief, and uphold it as a necessity for baptism.

[78]Guy D. Nave suggests this thought in his book *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts* (Leiden, The Netherlands: The Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 199. In this publication, Nave comments on Luke's use of repentance as a change of thought towards other people.

[79]Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 224.

[80]Brownson, *The Promise of Baptism*, 87.

Discipleship

The idea of being a disciple is also raised in the context of baptism in Jesus' final commission in Mat 28:19-20. Jesus instructed His followers to "make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them…" (v.19). A disciple is one who "learns"[81] or who is a pupil of distinctive teachings. A candidate for baptism is therefore expected to be a student of the Bible and especially towards the related teachings of a church. If an individual is baptised without such teaching, Vaagenes says it fulfils only "half of our responsibility."[82]

Strategy Formulas

Baptism Commission

A careful analysis of the context of Mat 28:19-20 must consider whether discipleship is presented as a requirement of baptism. The original text recognises a progression of participles that cooperate together as supplementary imperatives:[83] "Go therefore and *make disciples* of all nations, *baptizing* them…" (v.19). As the verb "make disciples" occurs before "baptizing", it indicates that baptism is exclusive to disciples. A level of discipleship, however, is undefined, as a phase of learning is further encouraged after a person is baptized ("teaching them to observe all things that

[81]Eric Russ, *Discipleship Defined* (Maitland, FL: Xulon, 2010), 24.

[82]Vaagenes, *Baptism: God's Activity of Grace,* 22.

[83]Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28,* vol. 33b of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Columbia: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 886-887.

I have commanded you" v.20). Throughout the process, Matthew's gospel "joins baptism with discipleship."[84]

Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch

The baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch reflects a unique formula of the practice. Before his baptism, he read a passage from Isaiah, and received a sermon, as Philip "preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35). This was followed by the Eunuch's renowned question in verse 36: "What hinders me from being baptized?" Such a question proved the man was "responsive to the gospel," as he made a confession of his belief (Acts 8:37). It is also noted that the Eunuch's question was not concerning his acceptability as a disciple, but concerning his physical defilement.[85] This scene ended with the Ethiopian being baptized, which was followed with an element of belief as he "went on his way rejoicing" (verse 39).

Baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his Household

The baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his household features another unique strategy of baptism from Acts 16. The scene begins with the Jailer's supernatural and frightening experience in the prison. As a result, he asked a question in verse 30 which confirmed his repentance: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" In response to his question, he was instructed to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 31), and "they spoke the word of the Lord to him and all who were in his house" (verse 32). These events reveal that the Jailer expressed his belief and discipleship. Before he was

[84]Joel B. Green and Scott McKnight, eds., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 58.

[85]Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 79.

baptised, and made a public confession of his faith,[86] he also displayed an act of repentance by washing the "stripes" (verse 33) of Paul and Silas. The scene ended in Acts 16:34, where the baptized household rejoiced in their belief in God.

Conclusion

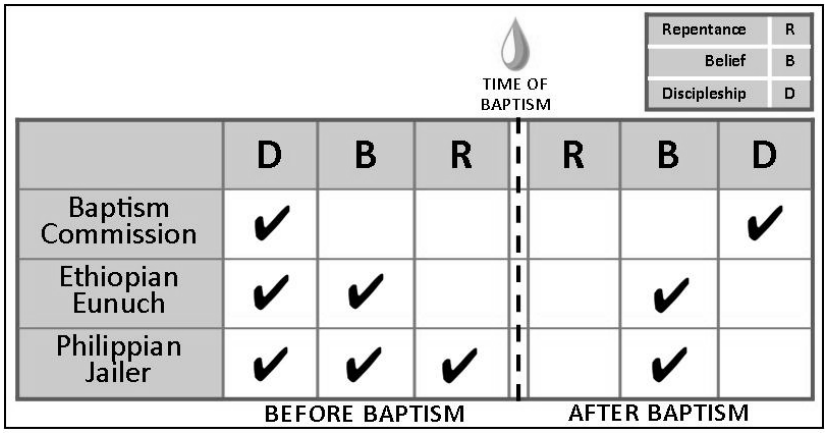
When people are baptised, they participate in a symbol of forgiveness from sin, they are reminded of their new union with Jesus, and they confirm their faith in Him. The experience of baptism indicates their entrance into the local and universal body of Christ, ordains them for involvement in Christian ministry, and expresses the inward covenant they have made with God.

A doctrine of baptism outlines its symbolism towards the mode, subjects and effect of the ordinance. Furthermore, an understanding of the sacramental themes of baptism gives insight to the necessity, experience and administration of baptism.

The New Testament presents repentance, belief and discipleship as components of a baptism strategy. Jesus' baptism commission upholds discipleship both before and after baptism, as a formula of practising the ritual. The Ethiopian Eunuch's baptism upholds Philip's strategy of requiring belief and discipleship. Finally, the Jailer and his household were baptised with the appearance of all three components appearing beforehand, and belief being expressed after their baptism. A harmony of these three strategies of baptism is illustrated in the following table:

[86]John Phillips, *Exploring Acts: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1986), 333.

Fig. 5. New Testament Baptism Strategies



Each baptism occasion reveals a different strategy for baptism. These New Testament strategies suggest that baptism is not limited to a specific formula, but should feature an appropriate measure of components before and after an individual's baptism.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

After discussing the theology and literature of this study, it is appropriate to consider its methodology. The method which has been selected is "mixed methods" research. This approach will be defined by examining its development, purpose and process. A rationale for choosing this methodology will also be provided, by identifying the benefits of mixed methods and its relationship with this study. Furthermore, the process of using this methodology will be presented through the research design. The research design will provide an overview of how the methodology will be implemented, how the previous chapter will inform the data, and will define the sample and instruments of the investigation.

Definition

Sociological research can investigate an issue via the qualitative or quantitative method. Mixed methods, however, is becoming more common, and develops its theory from both qualitative and quantitative components of data. An understanding of the origin, purpose and process of mixed methods will define this method.

Origin of Mixed Methods

Mixed methods research had its earliest appearance in social sciences in the late twentieth century, through the fields of anthropology and sociology. Three evaluationists, named Greene, Caracelli and Graham, first discussed the method's label. Their philosophy of mixed methods was stated in 1989:

> In this study, we defined mixed-method designs as those that include at least one quantitative method (designed to collect numbers) and one qualitative method (designed to collect words), where neither type of method is inherently linked to any particular inquiry paradigm.[87]

Through these writers, a basic understanding of mixed methods became known and was accepted in sociological research.

Since then, mixed methods research has experienced a development of its meaning and practice.

Table 1. Development of Definitions for Mixed Methods[88]

AUTHORS (S) AND YEAR	FOCUS OF THE DEFINITION
Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989)	Method Philosophy
Tashakori and Teddlie (1998)	Methodology
Johnson, Onwuegbuzie (2007)	Qualitative and quantitative research Purpose
***Journal of Mixed Methods Research* (call for submissions)**	Qualitative and quantitative research Methods
Greene (2007)	Multiple ways of seeing, hearing, and making sense of the social world
Creswell and Plano Clark (2007)	Methods Philosophy
***Core characteristics*, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011)**	Methods Philosophy Research Design

[87]Jennifer C. Greene, Valerie J. Caracelli and Wendy F. Graham, "Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-Method Evaluation Designs," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 11 (1989), 256.

[88]Adopted from John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark's book *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), 3.

As demonstrated in table 1, a mixed method approach was developed by 1998, which saw the approach as a methodology in its own right. This definition evolved over the next decade, as it combined the quantitative and qualitative components by their own purposes and methods. Greene considered the practical nature of this method in 2007, as it "actively invites us to participate in dialogue about multiple ways."[89] Finally, Creswell and Plano Clark extended the definition by including a philosophy and research design with the method's process of data analysis in 2011.

Purpose of Mixed Methods

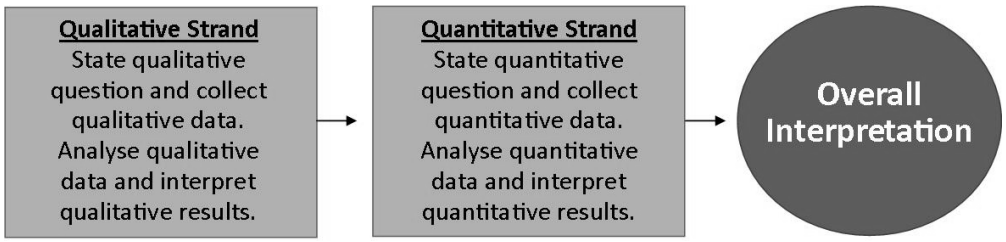
Like all research designs, mixed methods aims to discover a theoretical model, which is developed from a process of analysing data. The role of mixed methods is to merge the statistical and thematic techniques of analysing data, which would combine a wide range of findings into a single theory. This can be achieved through one of two mixed method designs: fixed and emergent. Fixed mixed method design is a study which has planned the use of data before the research is started. In contrast, an emergent method would add a quantitative or qualitative element during the process of the study. This study will adopt a fixed design.

Process of Mixed Methods

Mixed method interprets a collection of quantitative and qualitative data. These two components of data are called strands:

[89]Jennifer C. Greene, *Mixed Methods in Social Inquiry* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 20.

Fig. 6. Strands in a Mixed Methods Study[90]



As a researcher merges the strands, a certain design will be shaped, based upon the procedure of interacting between them. Four basic and common designs of mixed methods are the convergent parallel, explanatory sequential, exploratory sequential and embedded design.

The "convergent parallel design" reflects a separate and concurrent collection of data strands, which requires a complete understanding of the topic, and the validated quantitative scales. The "explanatory sequential design" analyses the data in a sequential manner, starting with the quantitative component. In contrast, the "exploratory sequential design" would begin with the qualitative component, before considering the quantitative component. Finally, the "embedded design" begins with a single component of data, and adds the alternate component as a supplement, either before or after the data is analysed.

This study will adopt a convergent parallel design, with a slight exploratory component. This study fits a convergent model because the research topic has already been developed, and the two forms of data will be individually analysed. The

[90]Also adopted from Creswell and Plano Clark's book *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 64.

exploratory element will be introduced as the qualitative strand will be analysed first, and may shape the quantitative strand.

Rationale

Mixed methods research has been specifically selected for this research, as its purpose and process will provide the most accurate theory for this study. A rationale for choosing this methodology is compared with Hesse-Biber's five reasons for considering mixed methods:[91] triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion.

Triangulation

The statistical practice of baptism strategies can be collected through quantitative methods. The type of baptism strategies can further be defined through various forms of qualitative data collection. If this study is limited to only one of these components, then the study will be compromised. Triangulation utilizes both components of data, which will enrich the conclusions of this study.

Complementarity

As the two components of data are correlated, the baptism strategies are understood more clearly. Qualitative data will reveal the various methods of practising a baptism strategy, whereas the quantitative data will reveal the regularity of such methods. In this sense, the merging of both components will develop a

[91]Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, *Mixed Methods Research: Merging Theory with Practice* (New York: Guildford, 2010), 3-6.

complementary understanding of baptism strategies, through a union of the numerical and narrative data.

Development

The two components of data which are gathered may also reveal areas of improvement in each other. For example, qualitative data of baptism strategies may guide the questions that the researcher may ask through quantitative surveys. In this sense, the method can produce a natural support for itself, as the qualitative component informs and shapes the quantitative component.

Initiation

This study will reveal a combination of qualitative and quantitative findings. These findings may introduce news ideas and questions to the discussion of baptism strategies. In the concluding remarks of this study, various recommendations will be made regarding the investigation, which may initiate deeper investigation into the practice and understanding of baptism strategies. Thus, the mixed method approach has the capacity to initiate new ideas to the study.

Expansion

Mixed methods can further reveal new or alternative areas of study regarding baptism strategies. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data regarding baptism strategies may produce detailed findings that promote future research. By employing mixed methods as the design of this project, a new investigation may be proposed, and a future use of mixed methods may be advocated.

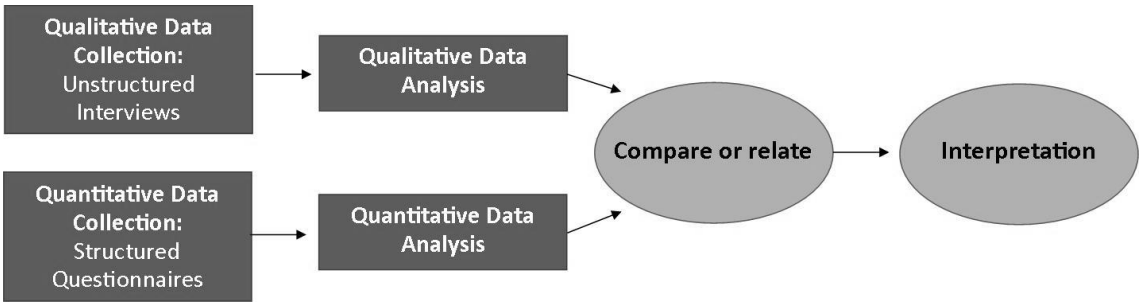
Research Design

The research design of this study is a "fixed convergent design" of mixed methods research. The particular shape of this design will now be outlined, including a discussion of how the literature review and theology will inform the data collection. This will be followed by an outline of the sample of this study, and the quantitative and qualitative components of data.

Design Shape

The convergent design has been selected as the data will be collected and analysed in a parallel form. After individual analysis occurs, the data will be merged. The following diagram illustrates the specific shape of this design within its phases of development:

Fig. 7. The Convergent Parallel Design[92]



In this study, qualitative data will be gathered through unstructured interviews with church pastors and a focus group from each church. These interviews will explore the practice and effects of baptism strategies. The quantitative data will be collected

[92]This shape has been also been adopted from Creswell and Plano Clark's book *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 69; and David L. Driscoll, Afua Appiah-Yeboah, Phillip Salib and Douglas J. Rupert, "Merging Qualitative and Quantitative Data in Mixed Methods Research: How To and Why Not," *Ecological and Environmental Anthropology* (2007): 20.

through structured surveys to discover the baptism strategies that have been implemented or received. The purpose of collecting both types of data is to utilize their results to gain greater insight into the research topic.

Informing the Research

Before data is collected for this research, the findings of the literature review and theology will be considered, and may inform the shape of each component of data collection.

Literature Review

The components of a baptism strategy have been determined through the literature review. These components have informed the shape of the quantitative data collection. The questionnaires, which will be distributed to church pastors and members, will reflect the findings of the literature review. The baptism strategies of each denomination will also be compared with the data of this study as final conclusions are considered.

Theology of Baptism

The findings from the theology of baptism have identified a biblical formula for practising baptism. This formula has largely informed the qualitative data collection. The researcher will include elements of this formula in the interviews with the church pastors and focus groups. The findings of this study will also be compared with the theology of baptism in the final conclusions.

Design Sample

This research design will collect data from Baptist Churches and Seventh-day Adventist Churches within Australia and New Zealand. This process will begin by discussing the project's ethical approval and its sample of churches.

Ethics Committee Approval

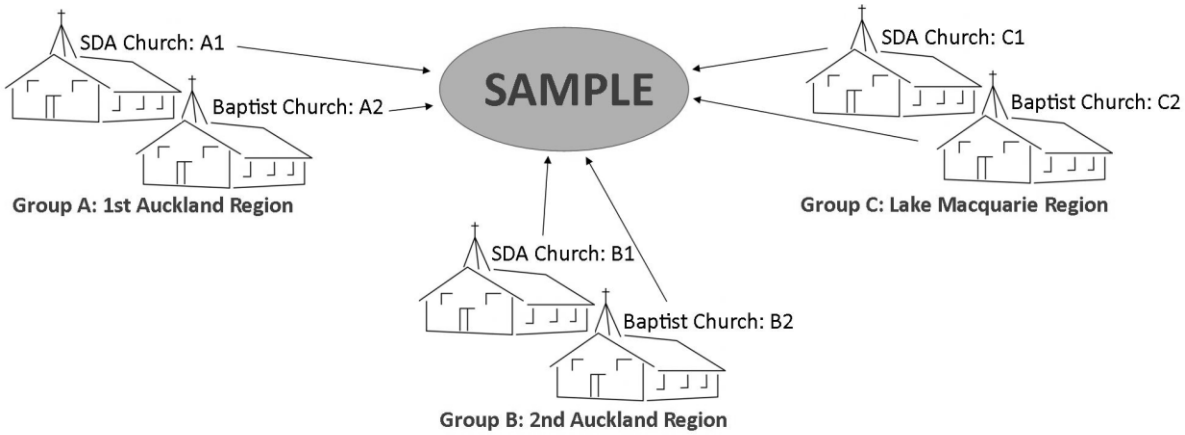
An application for this study was submitted to the Avondale College Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) in September 2011. This application included an information statement, and the templates of the instruments which would be used to collect data. The committee gave a final and revised application approval on 27 October 2011.[93] This approval stipulated complete anonymity and confidentiality for the respondents of this investigation.

Sample

A number of Baptist Churches and Seventh-day Adventist Churches from Australia and New Zealand are investigated in this study. A semi-stratified/convenience sample of six churches will be selected. The sample is stratified as it has been selected from two subsections, which are the Auckland region (New Zealand) and the Lake Macquarie region (New South Wales, Australia). The sample also reflects a "convenience" model, as groups were selected due to their availability and willingness to participate in this study. Four churches have been selected from the Auckland subsection, and two from the Lake Macquarie subsection. Within these two subsections, three groups of two parallel churches have been categorised.

[93]See Appendix 1 for a copy of this approval from the HREC, Avondale College.

Fig. 8. Sample of Churches



Three groups of churches have been specifically selected. Each group comprises a Baptist Church and a Seventh-day Adventist Church. These churches are "relatively homogeneous"[94] in their demographic, membership number and location. Questionnaires were available to 218 participants. These participants were above the age of eighteen and were baptised from the six churches. Of the questionnaires that were distributed, 145 completed questionnaires were returned. This response offers a high return rate of 67%, which weakens the nonresponse bias,[95] and strengthens the validity of the results.

Qualitative Component

An outline of the qualitative component of this study begins by defining the component's data collection. This will be followed by explaining the process of analysing the qualitative data.

[94]This expression of the sample fits the criteria for a stratified sample as defined by Anthony Onwuegbuzie and Kathleen Collins in their article "A Typology of Mixed Methods Sampling Designs in Social Science Research," *The Qualitative Report 12* June (2007): 285-287.

[95]Earl Babbie, *The Basics of Social Research*, 5th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2011), 289.

Collection

The qualitative data is collected through two forms of unstructured interviews. The first type of interview will be conducted with the pastors of each church, and will explore the baptism strategies that they implement.[96] This interview will begin with questions regarding the pastor's personal philosophy and practice regarding baptism. This will be followed by asking the pastor to respond to common uses of the four components of baptism strategy. One section of the pastors' questionnaire will also be collected as qualitative data, as it presents an unstructured question for the pastor to respond to, regarding their prerequisites of baptism.

The second type of interview will be conducted towards a focus group of 3-6 baptised members from a selected church. Four churches will be asked to participate in a focus group interview. Two churches will come from the first subsection, Auckland (churches A1 and B2), and two churches will come from the second subsection, Lake Macquarie (churches C1 and C2). These interviews are designed for the church members to discuss their experience and perspective of baptism strategies.[97] The participants will be asked to respond to the optimal use of the four components of baptism strategies, and will finally be asked an open-ended question regarding membership retention.

Analysis

The first phase of analysing this qualitative data is to transcribe each pastor and focus group interview. These transcriptions will also be analysed through various

[96]The questions which were used for these interviews are found in Appendix 1. A transcript of each of the six interviews can also be found in Appendix 1.

[97]The question used for these interviews are found in Appendix 1. A transcript of each of the four focus group interviews can also be found in Appendix 1.

lenses, to determine the key links between the participants' individual responses. Furthermore, the data will be analysed using a system of coding and categorizing.[98] The key words and phrases of each question and set of interviews will be highlighted and combined to consider the various theories and concepts they reveal.

Quantitative Component

An outline of the quantitative component of this project begins by defining the component's data collection. This will be followed an explanation of the process, which will be implemented to analyse the quantitative data.

Collection

Quantitative data is collected through questionnaires that have been prepared for church members and church pastors. Both questionnaires have a number of closed and structured questions for the participants to answer. Each questionnaire features three sections: demographic, before baptism and after baptism.[99] The quantitative data is designed to define the baptism strategies which are being implemented and experienced by the respondents. The first section of each survey seeks a demographic of the participants, and the final two sections ask questions regarding the events that occur before and after the participants' baptism. These final two sections have been orientated around the four leading components of a baptism strategy which were discovered in the literature review. These four components are bible learning, faith development, church involvement, and mentorship.

[98]An example of analysing the responses from a transcript can be found in appendix 1. Also, the phases of discovering categories and codes from the transcripts can be found in Appendix 1.

[99]See Appendix 1 for a template of the Pastor's and Member's Questionnaire.

Analysis

The analysis of the quantitative data will begin by entering the results from the questionnaires into a statistical computer program named “SPSS Predictive Analytic Software.” By using this software, a range of descriptive statistics will be initially determined for each question of the survey. This will be followed by a comparison of variables between the individual churches, denominations, and countries. Finally, the relationship between unique sets of variables will be determined. Such variables will be orientated around the four components of a baptism strategy.

Summary Statement

The appropriate methodology to investigate this study is mixed methods. This methodology will implement a convergent design of mixed methods, and will gather data from a semi-stratified/convenience sample of six churches within Australia and New Zealand. Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected and analysed individually in this process, and further merged to determine a common theory.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Introduction

The qualitative results from the sample of this study have been gathered first, and will be presented in this chapter. The two forms of interviews will be separately discussed in this chapter, which will be followed by an outline of the key findings from the entire qualitative component.

Data

The qualitative data has been collected through two unstructured interviews. One interview, which featured six consistent questions, was conducted individually with each of the six pastors from the sample. The other interview was corporately conducted, as a focus group, with a group of three to six members from four of the churches from the sample. The focus group interviews featured three consistent questions. Each interview was audio-recorded, and has been transcribed. The results of these interviews will be presented in the order of their questions.

Church Pastor Interview

The church pastor interviews were designed to discover the beliefs and practices of each pastor towards baptism. The first two questions discussed their

belief of baptism, and the final four questions discussed their practice of baptism. These final four questions asked the pastors to respond to common practices of three components of a baptism strategy which were discovered in the literature review (bible instruction, mentorship and church involvement). The six questions from the interview were as follows:

1. What is your theology of baptism?
2. What is your philosophy of practising baptism?
3. What is your response to other pastors who offer 20 or more bible studies before baptising someone?
4. What is your response to other pastors who organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?
5. What is your response to other pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?
6. What is your response to other pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?

These six interview questions will be initially discussed, followed by one open-ended question which was included in the questionnaire given to the pastors. This question was an extension of a closed question in the first section, which was worded as follows:

7. Does a person have to meet certain prerequisites before you baptise him/her? If Yes, what are they?

As all of the pastors responded positively to this question, its open-ended question will also be discussed in this section. The relevant answers and comments from all questions will be summarized here. These responses will outline the key beliefs and practices of the respondents who were interviewed.[100]

[100]See Appendix 2 for a table of answers from each question.

Question One: What is your theology of baptism?

This question was answered with many common features. Many pastors considered baptism as a symbol of forgiveness, and a response to an inward experience which has happened within an individual. It was also stated that believer's baptism reflects the "New Testament model," which was supported by certain bible passages (Rom 6:4-7; Mat 28:18-20; Gal 3). The church pastors also said that baptism reflects a strong union with Christ, through his life, death and resurrection.

This theology of baptism had various implications in the pastors' practice of baptism. Most of the pastors said they considered the experience to be an inward (spiritual) and an outward activity, and that it is the beginning of the Christian journey – not the end. One pastor also said that baptism "is a requisite of salvation… if they have the opportunity," while no other pastor supported this ideal. Another pastor also called baptism a "metaphor of relationship" between the individual and Jesus. This was widely supported as many of their conclusions saw baptism as "a natural process," of being born into Christ and His body of believers.

Question Two: What is your philosophy of practising baptism?

As each of the pastors belong to either a Baptist or Seventh-day Adventist tradition, their philosophies of practising baptism are very similar. Most of the pastors believe that baptism has a strong "connection with the church," thus marking the experience as an entrance into membership. Some of the pastors also highlighted their belief of baptism as a symbol of "what had already taken place" in an individual.

Each of the pastors affirm baptism's mode of total immersion in water. However, one pastor also stated his willingness to baptise an individual by sprinkling,

if the person was physically unable to experience baptism by immersion. Two of the pastors also mentioned the church's responsibility to nurture and support the decision of an individual – not just the pastor's responsibility. The process of baptising someone was also identified as the expression of an individual's commitment as a disciple with "one foot in God's kingdom."

Question Three: What is your response to other pastors who offer 20 or more bible studies before baptising someone?

Various opinions emerged in response to this question. While three pastors considered the positive outcomes of this strategy (understanding of faith; upholds tradition), all of them highlighted the negative factors of its practice by being "too robust," "not a prerequisite," and "preferential." One pastor even stated that he's "lost patience with this propositional approach," and concluded that baptism should be refocused as an "issue of discipleship."

On the other hand, the pastors did suggest how they may include bible studies in a less structured manner with an individual. They said they shouldn't "be rigid", but they should be conducted relationally, where the relevance of beliefs are outlined for an individual. The pastors further discussed the "sowing" nature of bible studies, as the attitude that a person develops towards scripture (as preparation or a requirement) will reflect their future practice. They agreed that sharing the "basics of faith" with a person is healthy, but must be done naturally and with an emphasis on their belief and practice – not just knowledge. Most of the pastors affirmed a continued use of bible studies, subsequent to baptism and an understanding of the gospel, which would outline the beliefs of the church and the practices of a Christian lifestyle.

Question Four: What is your response to other pastors who organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?

Each of the pastors responded positively to this question, by affirming the purpose of mentorship to nurture an individual's faith and involvement in the church. Two pastors also highlighted the scriptural basis for mentorship, through the model where disciples were sent out "two by two." Three pastors also expressed the difficulty of "engineering" mentorship, as there needs to be a correct connection between a mentor and a mentee, which is built on friendship and trust.

Though each pastor responded positively to the ideal of mentorship, only three of the pastors said they intentionally include mentorship in their church practice. One of these does this through the personal "one on one" model, where a mentor is selected by the church. The other two pastors practise mentorship through small groups, where a high level of accountability and nurture is initiated between each group member. Two other pastors also expressed their informal use of mentorship through various connections which are made through the fellowship of their church. Most pastors agreed that direct mentorship must follow fellowship, which may further develop into a "coaching" relationship, as the individual becomes more independent.

Question Five: What is your response to other pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to be involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?

The pastors responded positively to this notion. Five pastors considered the ideal to be very important for church members, and said that all new members should be particularly encouraged to become involved in a ministry. The other pastor also

considered this model as important, but felt that it should not be made a "requirement" for a new member.

With regards to practising church involvement, most pastors highlighted the need for church members to discover "their own path of ministry." This process would involve the church leaders encouraging them to pursue areas of ministry which they feel "convicted to do," and to assist them to discover their own spiritual gifts for ministry. Furthermore, the pastors highlighted how this model is effective for "kingdom building," and for nurturing a new believer to grow in their service. Each of the pastors also agreed that church involvement must evolve naturally, which begins with the individual's regular attendance, and may develop into participating with and leading various ministries.

Question Six: What is your response to other pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?

Each of the pastors responded very positively to this question, with various personal comments made regarding their practice towards encouraging church attendance. Four of the pastors encourage and expect all new believers to attend church services regularly. These pastors support this ideal because they highlight the need for church members "to be a part of a family," and to develop "social connections." Another pastor affirmed the need for community, but said he would rather emphasize their affiliation with a small group, as opposed to the weekly church service.

The pastors also shared a similar philosophy towards this question, as they each highlighted the importance of fellowship for a new believer. One pastor also encourages personal responsibility for church members to maintain their attendance at

church services and related gatherings. He feels that they must be given freedom for their decisions as a church member. Another pastor also emphasized the difficulty that comes for a new believer to "belong" to a church. He referred to the difficulty for a newly baptised member to be socially welcomed in a church, by calling it "the hardest doctrine" to accept.

Question Seven. Does a person have to meet certain prerequisites before you baptise him/her? If Yes, what are they?

This question was answered very briefly by all the pastors, and features many common answers from their completed questionnaires. Five of the pastors highlighted the experiential component of being prepared for baptism, by being "born again." This encompasses various factors which were mentioned as "accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour," "confessing Jesus as Lord and Saviour," and "believing that they are a sinner and they need Christ." One pastor also discussed the "bible learning" component as a prerequisite for baptism, where the candidate should understand the beliefs of the church.

Many of these pastors practise these prerequisites by seeking evidence that an individual has been "born again," or has experienced a "conversion." One pastor also included how he would want to meet with the person, and ensure that they understand the meaning of baptism. In summary, the respondents said that what a pastor requires in an individual who is seeking baptism, is to see the expression of an individual's new life with Christ, and commitment to be His disciple.

Focus Group Interview

The focus group interviews were designed to discover the practice of baptism strategies from the perspective of church members. This was structured through three open-ended questions. The first two questions were directed towards the area of baptism strategies, asking them about their experiences and a position relating to what occurs both before and after baptism. The third question was directed towards the long term effect of baptism strategies, asking about their perspective towards membership retention. The questions which were asked are as follows:

1. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?
2. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?
3. What helps a baptised church member to stay in the church?

The relevant comments from each of these questions will now be presented. These answers will outline key beliefs and experiences which emerge from the interviews.[101]

Question One: What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

This question was answered with various similarities and differences. The biggest similarity saw understanding as a prerequisite for baptism. One focus group discussed understanding baptism itself, while others commented on understanding the commitment, and learning the beliefs of the church. Two groups also highlighted the experiential component as a prerequisite, which would include an acceptance and faith in God. This component may reflect a conversion experience in an individual who seeks a relationship with Jesus. One focus group also commented on the importance of meeting with a church leader before their baptism.

[101]See Appendix 3 for a table of answers from the focus groups towards each question.

These positions were extended as the focus groups recalled their own experience, which allowed them to further list repentance, belief and trust as prerequisites for baptism. One focus group also stated the importance for an individual to display evidence of his/her faith, as it confirms their decision to follow Christ. This evidence of an individual's faith would to be expected to appear through their church involvement. One group also declared the role of a pastor to "have no right in deciding a time of baptism." All groups consider such prerequisites to be vital as they reveal an individual's "personal decision," and "adoption" of a new life.

Question Two: What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

A diversity of responses emerged from this question. One group summarized all factors in saying that what follows a baptism "should be a continuation of what happened beforehand." Two focus groups determined one key area of this continuum as being involved in church ministry. Two focus groups also highlighted the need to grow in the knowledge of the Bible, and in their faith (devotional time; sharing faith). These groups also highlighted the need to have a committed relationship with God before they share their faith. The component of mentorship was also considered by one group, as an important experience to occur after an individual's baptism.

The focus groups also defined these components which should occur after a baptism. For faith development, one group said that an individual should gain a "personal relationship with Jesus." Other groups highlighted the component of church involvement. They discussed this component, saying that an individual should become active within small groups and personal witnessing. These comments were

presented because the groups believed that a person should acquire accountability, a development of faith, and a sense of belonging after he/she is baptised.

Question Three: What helps a baptised church member remain in the church?

The answers for this question give insight into the effect that baptism strategies may have on a candidate. Two groups believe that a strong spiritual component must exist in an individual if he or she is to remain as an active church member. One focus group discussed certain disclaimers in recognising membership retention. One of these disclaimers was that church members must be allowed to "develop in their own time," as their growth should be "natural" – not forced. Two groups also highlighted the importance of close relationships between the church leaders and members, and for new members to retain a strong sense of belonging. One group also emphasised the need for involvement, where members should feel that they are "needed" for ministry.

The focus groups also discussed the importance of mentorship and pastoral care to continue throughout a church member's experience. It was also recommended for a church member's involvement in ministry to be related to their interests and spiritual gifts. These elements will allow their service for God to be sustainable for an individual. In summary of the key comments which the focus groups made towards this question, church members need to be socially and spiritually nourished, and should be active to remain as a healthy church member.

Discussion

The qualitative data will now be discussed, by combining the key factors and codes which have been discovered from the two types of interviews. For the benefit of merging the data, the qualitative data will be analysed through the same sections as the quantitative surveys: "before baptism" and "after baptism." Each of these will be discussed through relevant questions which were asked through the Pastor Interviews and the Focus Group Interviews.

Before Baptism

Pastor Interviews

Three questions from the pastor interviews relate to what occurs before a baptism strategy (questions 3, 6 & 7). The answers to these questions will be discussed and correlated to formulate the main response towards their practice before baptism.

The respondents agree that bible studies may be appropriate for an individual to receive before their baptism, but not as a prerequisite. The pastors highlighted that these bible studies shouldn't be conducted rigidly, or with the intention to qualify an individual for baptism. Instead, they should be relationally conducted, with an emphasis upon the tools of a bible study, so the individual may use them in the future. Baptism candidates are also expected to be regularly attending their church – by choice. If they refuse, it may indicate their negative position towards a local church. Pastors also uphold an experiential prerequisite for baptism, which expects an individual to believe, accept and confess Jesus, and to demonstrate an inward and outward expression of their conversion.

Focus Group Interviews

The first question which was asked each focus group relates to what occurs before a person is baptised. The answers from each focus group will be discussed and correlated to formulate the main response towards appropriate events before a baptism.

The strongest component which emerged from this question was of an experiential nature. The members from the focus groups affirmed the need for repentance, commitment and trust in Jesus before a person is baptised. It was also stated that their faith should display evidence of their decision. Another area of expectation is towards an individual's understanding of baptism, understanding their overall commitment, and understanding the expectations of the church they are choosing to join. A candidate of baptism should also expect to become involved in church ministry after their baptism, and to grow in their faith.

After Baptism

Pastor Interviews

Two questions from the pastor interviews relate to their practice after an individual's baptism (questions 4 and 5). The relevant answers from each interview will be discussed and correlated here to formulate the main response towards their practice after baptism.

The pastors agree that newly baptised church members should receive mentorship. This may be achieved through an individual or group environment. These modes of mentorship must feature regular communication, accountability, and a

natural connection between the individuals. Newly baptised members should also develop a sense of belonging by being involved in their church. This experience may grow, and should relate to the interests and spiritual gifts of the newly baptised individual.

Focus Group Interviews

The final two questions of the focus group interviews have strong relevance to what should occur after baptism (questions 2 and 3). The answers from each interview will be discussed and correlated now to formulate the main response towards what should occur after an individual is baptised.

A primary area, which all focus groups affirmed, is related to the relationships of a newly baptised church member. It is important for an individual who has recently been baptised to grow in his/her relationships within the church family. Also, they should be encouraged to develop their faith in God by being committed to personal devotions, small groups, and sharing their faith. Their involvement with the church should also include a high level of activity and guidance from the church leaders. The focus groups highlighted that an individual should sense that he/she is needed and cared for by their church.

Key Findings

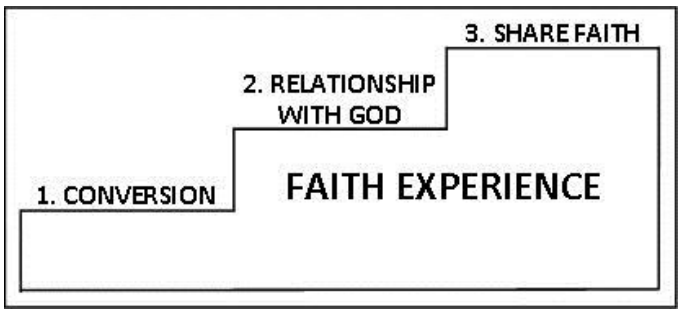
This section will outline the individual discoveries from each type of interviews, and combine them to determine the overall findings of the qualitative data. The two sets of interviews are already categorized by the four components of a baptism strategy, which will assist in drawing direct connections between the pastor

interviews and the focus group interviews. The following findings have been analysed[102] through these four components of a baptism strategy.

Faith Experience

According to the collective comments of the interviews, an individual's "faith experience" should be built upon a relationship with Jesus, which is naturally cultivated by God and the church leaders. Three sequential levels relate to this component of a baptism strategy:

Fig. 9. Levels of Faith Experience



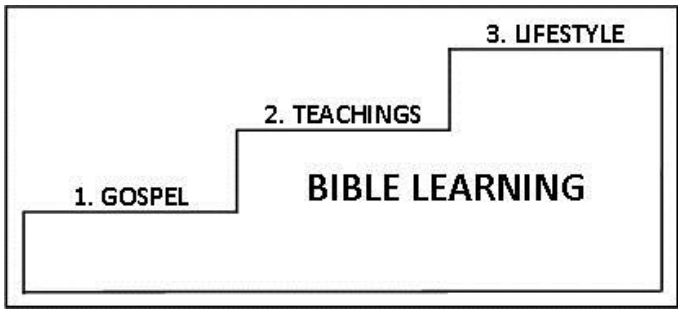
The first level of faith is the experience of conversion, which encompasses repentance, confession, acceptance, and commitment. The second level of faith relates to an individual's relationship with God. This would feature a development in their spiritual disciplines and devotional time. The third level of faith would be expressed by the individual's capability to share his/her faith through witnessing.

[102]See appendix 3 for a table of the analysis of the qualitative data.

Bible Learning

The levels of growth in bible learning should also be centred upon an individual's relationship with Jesus, and should consistently relate to their Christian life. Three sequential levels relate to this component of a baptism strategy:

Fig. 10. Levels of Bible Learning

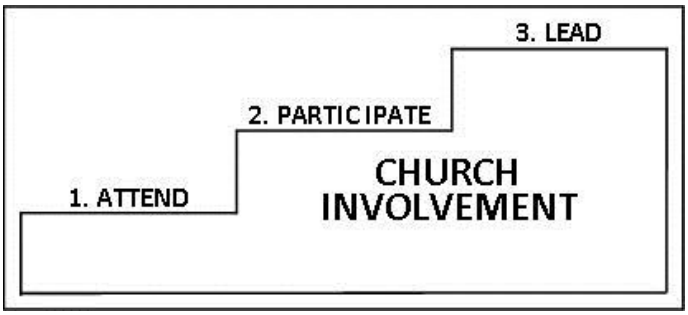


Level one of bible learning reflects an understanding of the gospel, including relevant Christian themes which are simple for an individual to understand. The second level of bible learning reflects an understanding of biblical teachings, which may encompass the beliefs of the church. The third level of bible learning relates to an understanding of the direct truths of the bible which will largely impact the lifestyle of an individual.

Church Involvement

The levels for church involvement should be a developing process for every church member, particularly those who are newly baptised. Three sequential levels relate to this component of a baptism strategy:

Fig. 11. Levels of Church Involvement



The first level of church involvement relates to an individual's attendance at church services. Before they support the church by being directly involved, they should be committed to attending the local church. The second level for church involvement is their participation in ministries within the church. It is strongly recommended for these areas of participation to be suited to an individual's interest and spiritual gifts – not just a job. The third level of church involvement extends their participation in a ministry, by leading a ministry in which they have gained experience and wisdom.

Mentorship

Mentors should carefully and naturally connect with newly baptised individuals in a local church. This is achieved by allowing the relationship to develop informally, where they share interests and personality features. Three sequential levels relate to this component of a baptism strategy:

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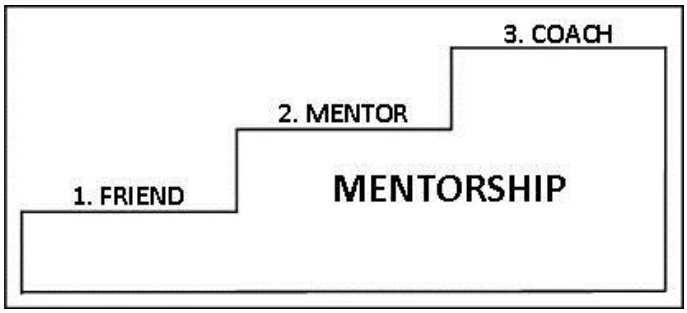
Fig. 12. Levels of Mentorship



The first level of mentorship is friendship, which may develop through the relationships which are made through church attendance and gatherings. The second level of this component is mentorship, which would feature a direct relationship between a new member and a mentor, and which would include accountability and regular contact. The third level of mentorship reflects a more supportive relationship from a peer through coaching. This level would include a regular contact, with less advising, and more listening and guiding.

Summary Statement

The qualitative data has been presented in this chapter, by initially outlining the answers from interviews with the pastors and focus groups. The key findings from the two types of interviews were further combined to determine appropriate "levels of growth" for each component of a baptism strategy. As this component of data has been discussed, it is now fitting to examine the quantitative results of this investigation.

CHAPTER 6

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Introduction

The qualitative component, which has been presented, will now inform the quantitative component. Quantitative data has been collected from the sample of this study. These results will be initially examined by outlining the answers from the surveys, and further discussing the overall findings from the data.

Data

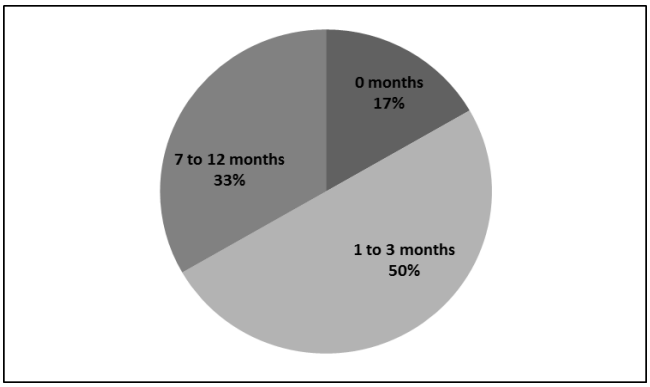
The quantitative data has been collected through two structured surveys, which feature twenty closed questions. One questionnaire was distributed to and completed by local church pastors, and the other questionnaire by members of the local churches. The results of these surveys[103] will be presented in three parallel sections: demographic, country, and denomination.

[103]The quantitative results were determined from cross-tabulation frequencies from the SPSS software. The tables which the software provided for such results can be found in Appendix 2.

Demographic

The church pastors who have participated in this survey are all male, and all but one pastor are above the age of 51, with the remaining pastor aged 31-40. Each pastor has agreed that baptism is an essential part of a Christian experience, where the following figure expresses the period they usually spend in preparing a candidate for baptism:

Fig. 13. Pastor Preparation Periods of Baptism



As figure 13 illustrates, half of the pastors typically spend 1-3 months in preparing an individual for baptism, and two spend 7-12 months. One of the pastors selected “0”, as he will instantly baptise someone whose faith in God is evident.

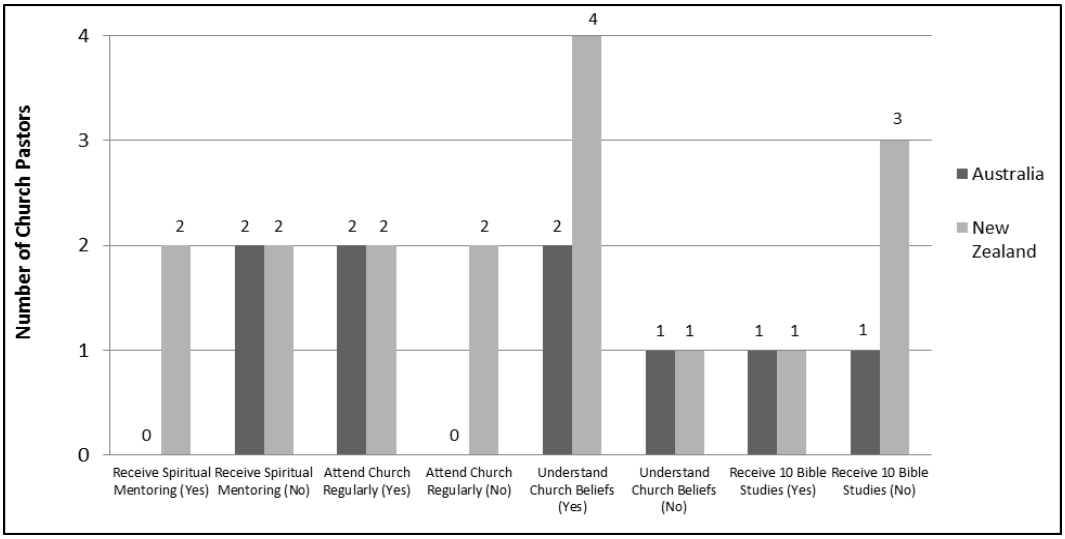
Country

Six church pastors from Australia and New Zealand were asked to participate in this survey. Two were from Australia, and four from New Zealand. Various comparisons can be made regarding the practice of baptism between these countries,

by presenting the consistent parallels between the pastors. A dominant comparison is made from their positions towards what occurs before and what occurs after a baptism.

Each pastor was asked to provide an answer to four true or false questions regarding what occurs before baptism. Most pastors responded negatively to all questions, with an exception of two pastors from each country who encourage individuals to attend church regularly. Also, one pastor from each country responded positively to encouraging individuals to "receive ten bible studies" before their baptism. Two pastors from New Zealand were the only respondents to answers that they encourage an individual to "receive spiritual mentoring" before he/she is baptised. The following graph illustrates these results:

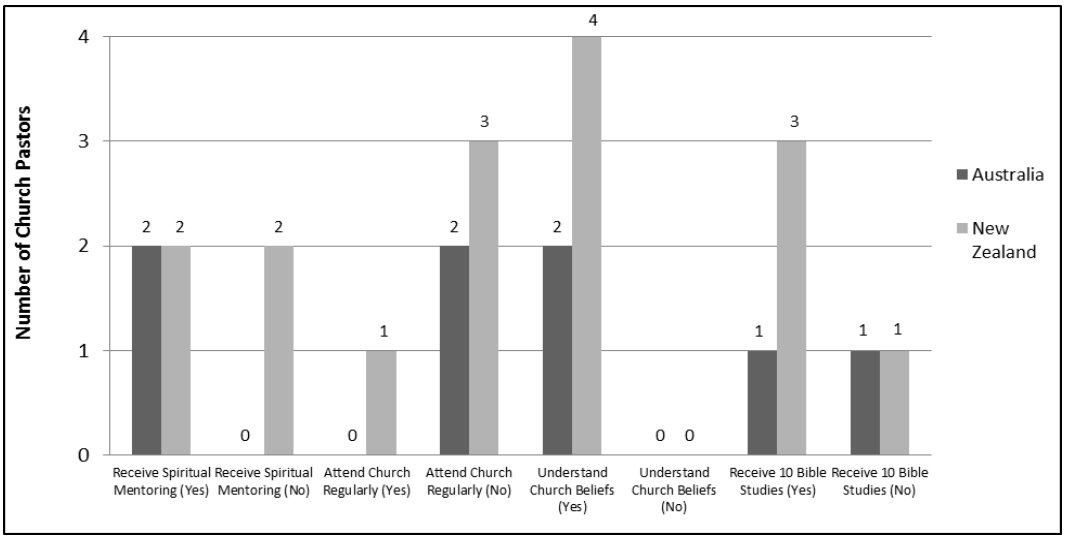
Fig. 45. Pastor Responses for Before-Baptism by Country



Most pastors responded positively to the true or false questions regarding what occurs after a baptism. The pastors from both countries encourage individuals to "receive bibles studies," "attend church regularly," and "receive spiritual mentoring"

after their baptism. The pastors from both countries also encourage church members to "understand church beliefs" after their baptism, yet more New Zealand pastors encourage individuals to "receive bible studies" after their baptism. It is also recognised, that the pastors do not encourage church members to "attend church regularly" after their baptism. The following table illustrates these results:

Fig. 15. Pastor Responses for After-Baptism by Country



Denomination

The pastors who participated in this survey were from Baptist Churches and Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Australia and New Zealand. Various comparisons can be made between each denomination's practices of baptism, by presenting the parallels between the pastors that represent each denomination. A primary comparison is regarding their emphasis on the following components of a baptism strategy.

Fig. 16. Pastor Questionnaire Responses by Denomination A

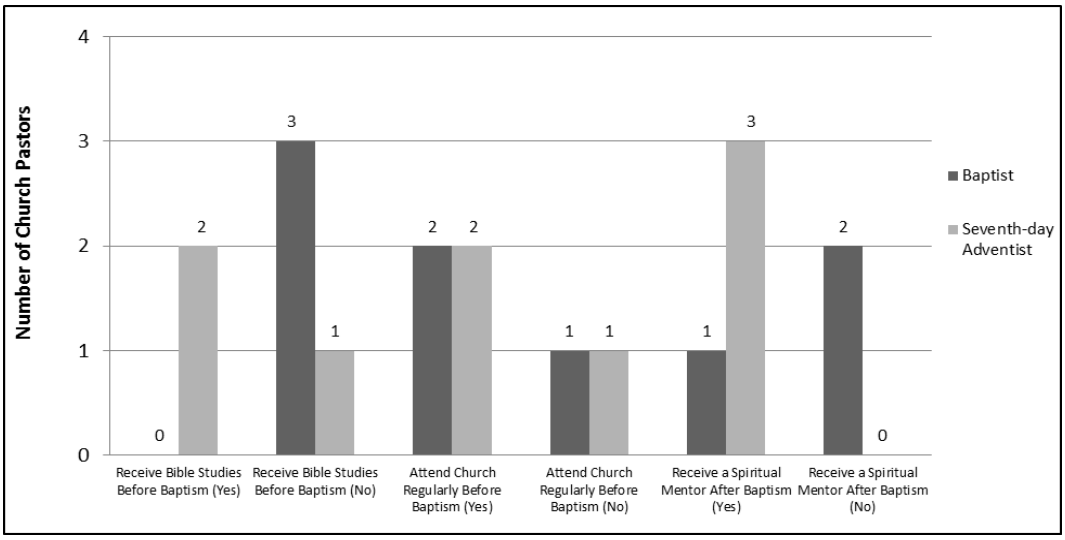
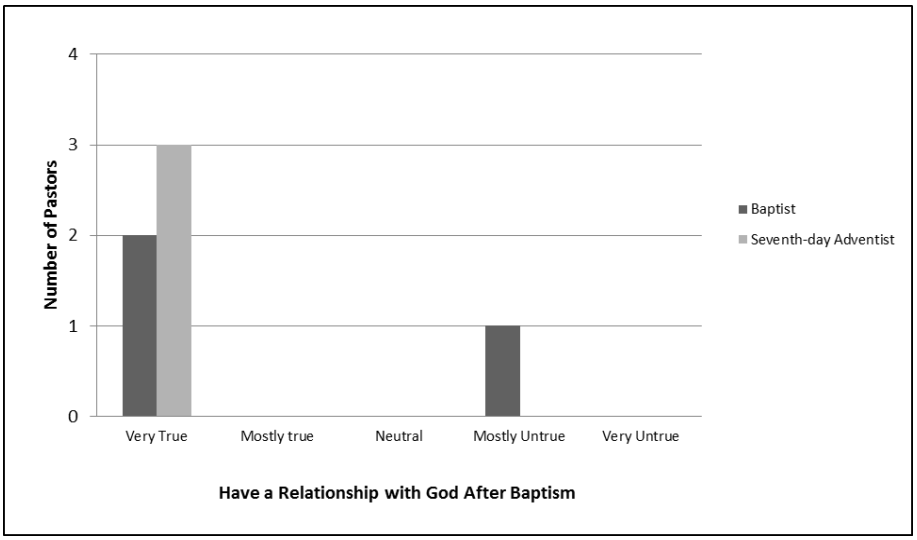


Fig. 17. Pastor Questionnaire Responses by Denomination B



As figures 16 and 17 show, the Seventh-day Adventist Church pastors responded more positively to the ideal of encouraging individuals to receive “ten or more bible studies” and “spiritual mentorship” during their baptism experience. The pastors from both denominations emphasize the importance of encouraging individuals to “have a

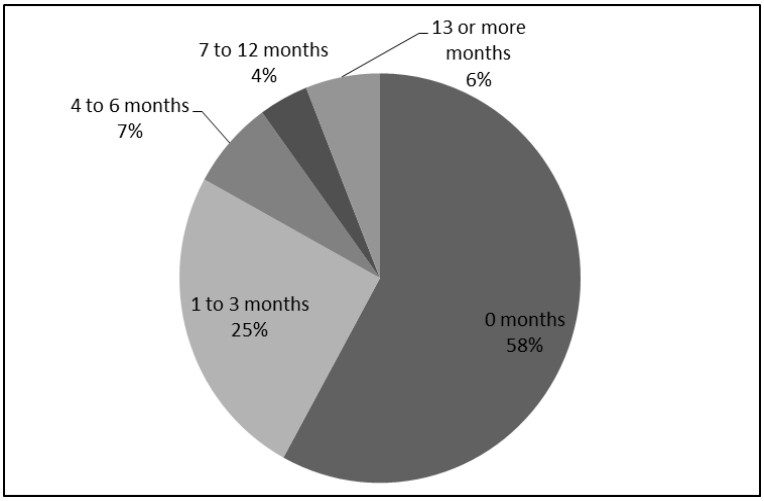
positive and personal relationship with God" and "attend Church regularly" during their baptism experience.

Church Member Questionnaire

Demographic

The church members who participated in the survey were 38% male and 62% female. Twenty-seven percent of these respondents were from Australia, and the remaining 63% respondents were from New Zealand. Sixty percent of the respondents are members of a Seventh-day Adventist Church, and 40% of respondents are members of a Baptist Church. Of all those who took part in this survey, 53% said they had been attending church their whole life. The remaining 47% said they hadn't. The following diagram expresses the time that each respondent spent preparing for baptism.

Fig. 18. Member Preparation Time for Baptism



As figure 18 illustrates, 58% of respondents spent 0 months in preparation for baptism. This result is inconsistent with the 17% of pastors who spend 0 months preparing an individual for baptism. Twenty-five percent of the respondents said they spent 4-6 months preparing for baptism, and the remaining 17% spent seven months or longer in preparation for baptism.

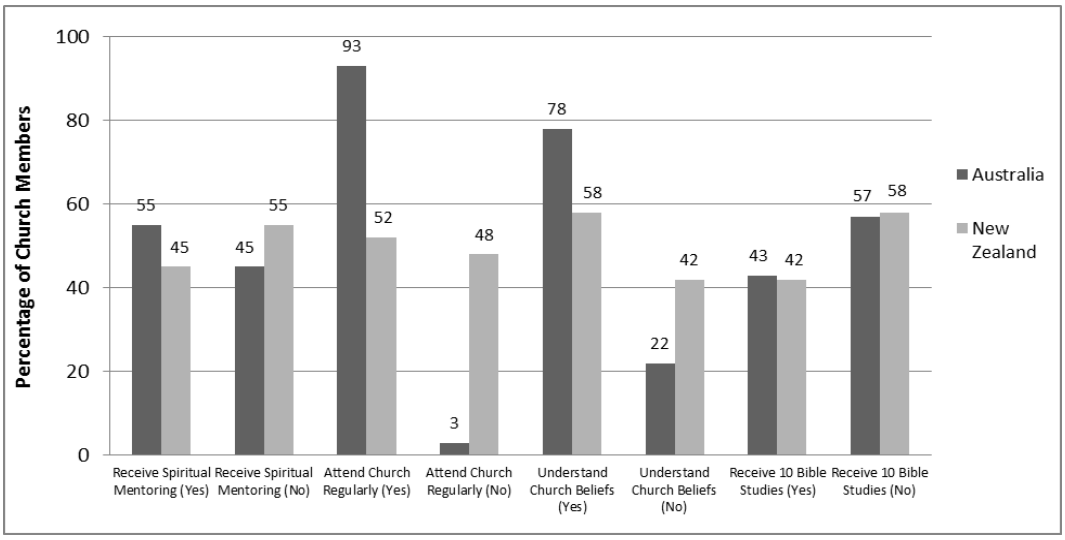
The ages of the participants of this study range through five separate groups. Nine per cent were 20 years or younger, 16% were 21-30 years, 17% were 31-40 years, 14% were 41-50 years, and 44% were 51 year or older. According to the results of this study, a narrow variance exists between the responses of each age group.[104] Therefore, the findings of this investigation will not consider the age groups of the participants.

Country

Various parallels may be drawn between Australia and New Zealand, regarding the experiences that church members have had, both before and after their baptism. In comparison to the results of the questionnaires given to the pastors, various differences emerge from members' position towards the "before" and "after" sections of a baptism strategy.

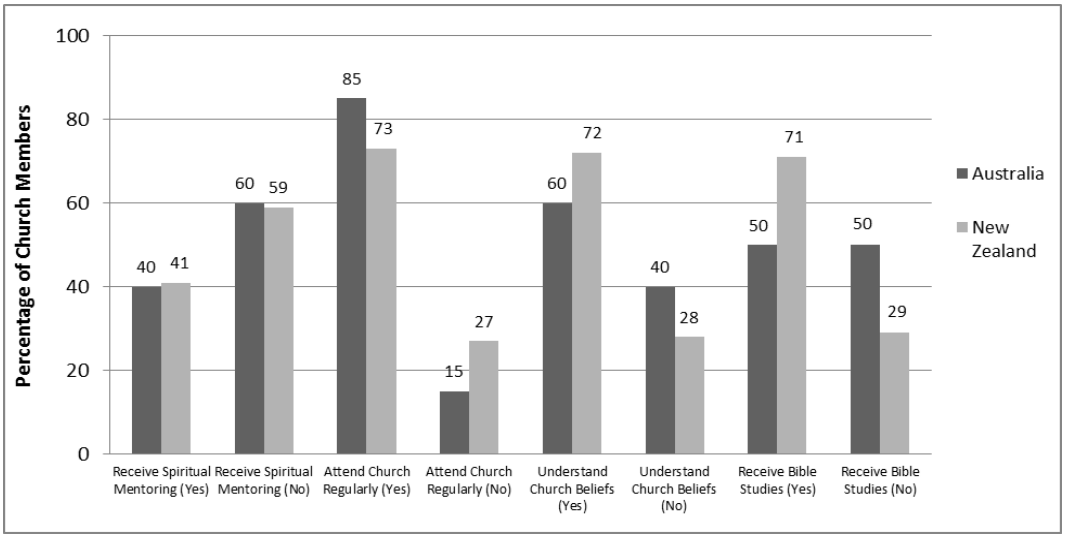
[104]See Appendix 4 for a table of the mean and variance of each age group's response to the questions.

Fig. 19. Member Questionnaire Responses for Before-Baptism by Country



The results reflect a difference to the pastor's surveys. The data reveals that church members from New Zealand respond more negatively to "attend church regularly" (52%) and "understand church beliefs" (58%) to those from Australia. The experiences of receiving "spiritual mentoring" (55% and 45%) and "ten or more bible studies" (43% and 42%) reveal similar responses of church members from both countries.

Fig. 20. Member Questionnaire Responses of After-Baptism by Country



These results reveal a contrast to the responses from the pastors. The members from both denominations responded very positively to "attend church regularly" (85% and 73%), "understand Church beliefs" (72% and 60%), and "receive bible studies" (71% and 50%) after the experience of baptism. With an acknowledgement that 63% of the respondents are New Zealand Church members, New Zealand members still reflect a greater emphasis on what occurs "after" a baptism.

Denomination

The six groups of church respondents that have participated in this study have come from three Baptist Churches and three Seventh-day Adventist Churches. Various parallels can be drawn between these two denominations, regarding the experiences of baptism by church members. One parallel is the emphasis of each church upon the components of a baptism strategy. The following table illustrates these parallels:

Fig. 21. Member's Questionnaire Responses by Denomination A

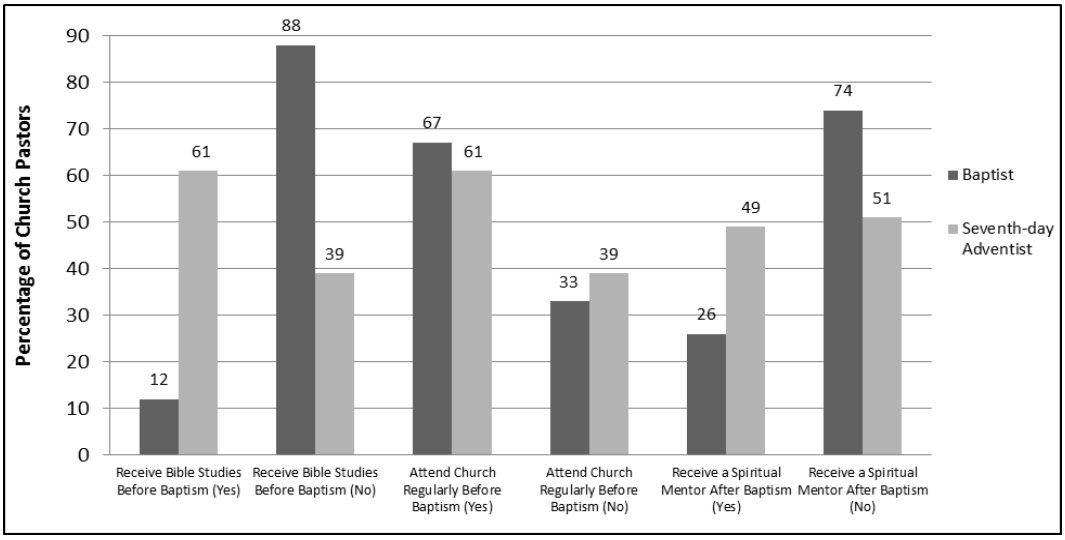
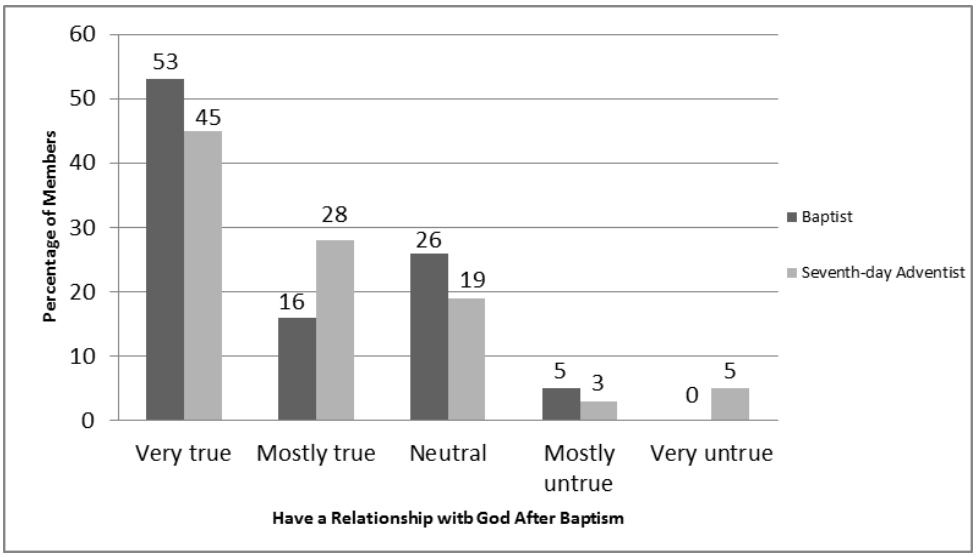


Fig. 22. Member's Questionnaire Responses by Denomination B



As figures 21 and 22 show, the Seventh-day Adventist Church members respond more positively to experiencing mentorship and bible studies in the process of a baptism strategy. Baptist Church members respond more positively to attending church regularly. The members from each denomination responded positively to having a "personal relationship with God" (53% and 45%) after their baptism.

Discussion

The quantitative results will now be discussed by drawing common findings from each type of survey according to the four components of a baptism strategy. The quantitative data will be analysed through the same categories as the qualitative data: before baptism and after baptism. Each section will be discussed from the perspectives of each group of respondents (church pastors; church members), which

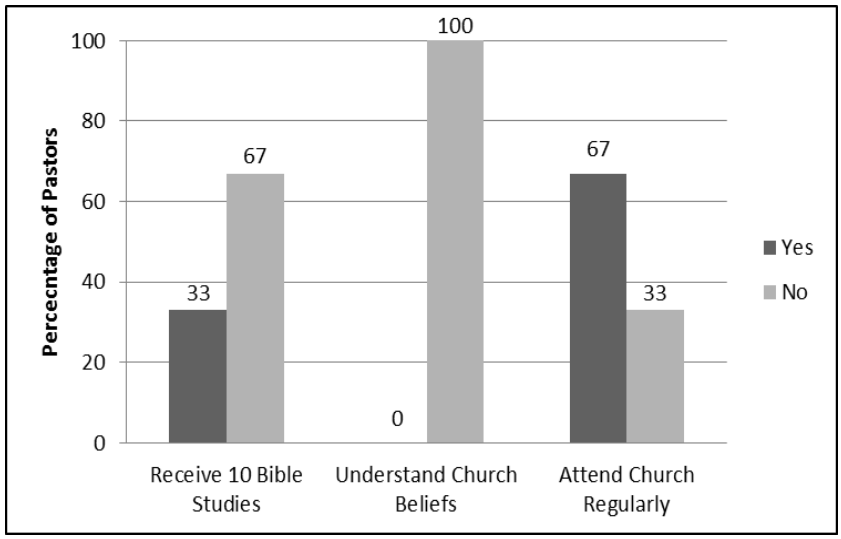
were discovered from their responses towards the four components of a baptism strategy.[105]

Before Baptism

Pastor Questionnaire

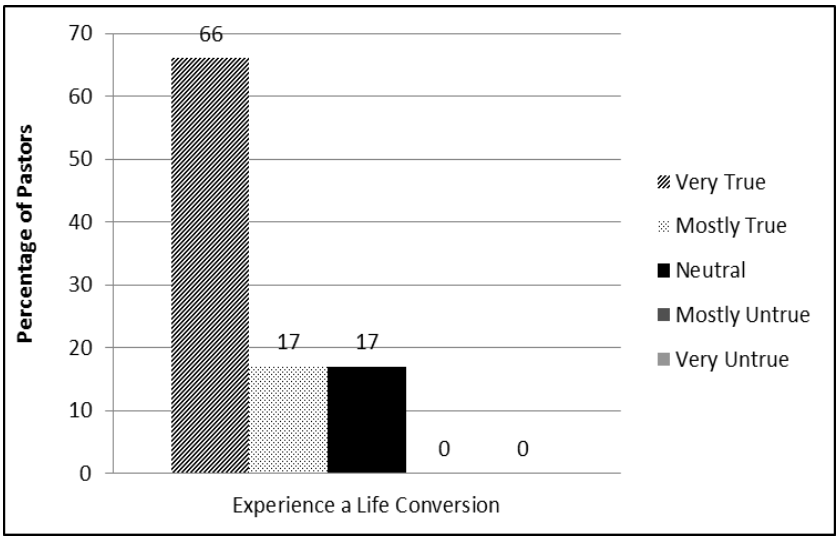
Each pastor completed a questionnaire regarding their "before" baptism practice. The following figures highlight their implementation of various components of a baptism strategy:

Fig. 23. Pastor Questionnaire Analysis Before-Baptism A



[105]These were analysed through a range of frequency descriptions from the SPSS software. The tables of such frequencies can be found in Appendix 3.

Fig. 24. Pastor Questionnaire Analysis Before-Baptism B



As figures 23 and 24 show, the pastors felt to "receive ten bible studies" (67%) and "understand church beliefs" (100%) were unsuitable prerequisites for baptism. Subsequently, to "attend church regularly" (67%) and "experience a life conversion" (66%) were positively responded to by the pastors.

Member Questionnaire

The following figure highlights the overall position of the church member respondents towards the "before" events in the process of baptism:

Fig. 25. Member's Questionnaire Analysis Before-Baptism A

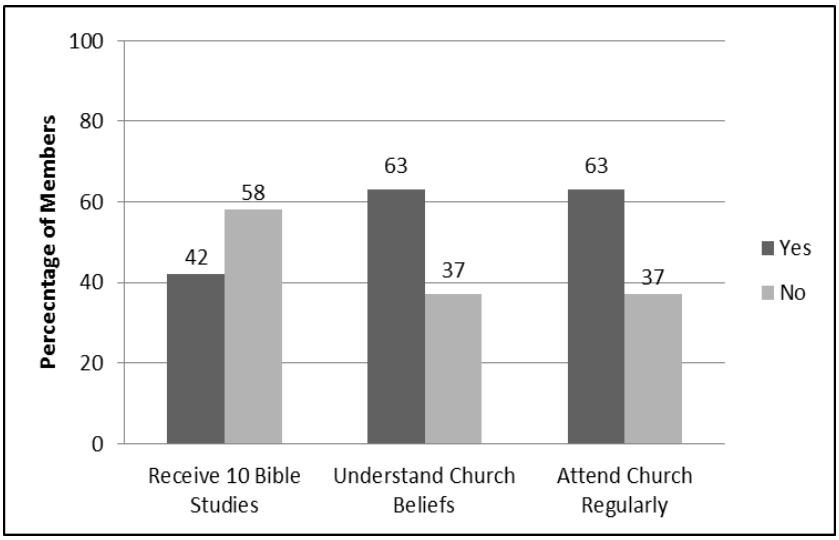
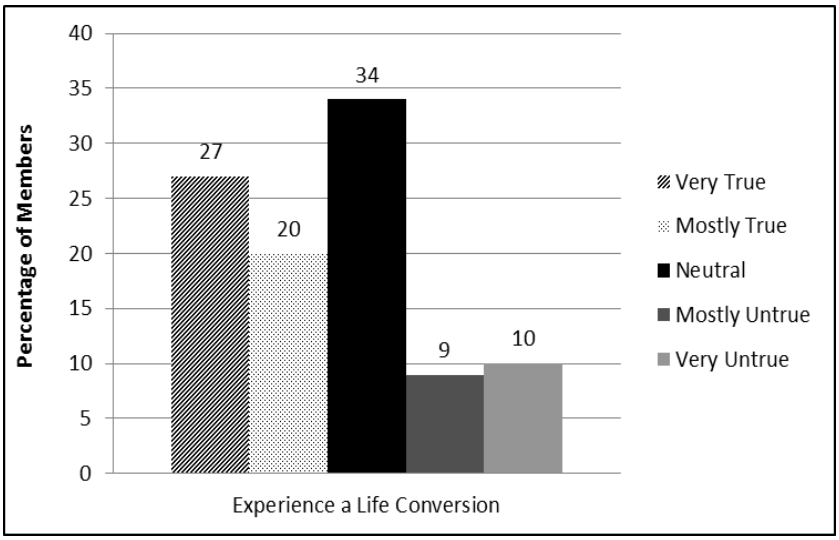


Fig. 26. Member's Questionnaire Analysis Before-Baptism B



In contrast to the results of the church pastors, figures 25 and 26 reveal that church members affirm the ideals to "understand church beliefs" (63%) and "attend church regularly" (63%) before their baptism. Also, the church members responded negatively towards "receiving ten bibles studies" (58%), but positively towards "experiencing a life conversion" (very true, 27%; mostly true, 20%) before baptism.

Pastor Questionnaire

The following figures outline the position of church pastors regarding components of a baptism strategy, which would be implemented after an individual is baptised:

Fig. 27. Pastor Questionnaire Analysis After-Baptism A

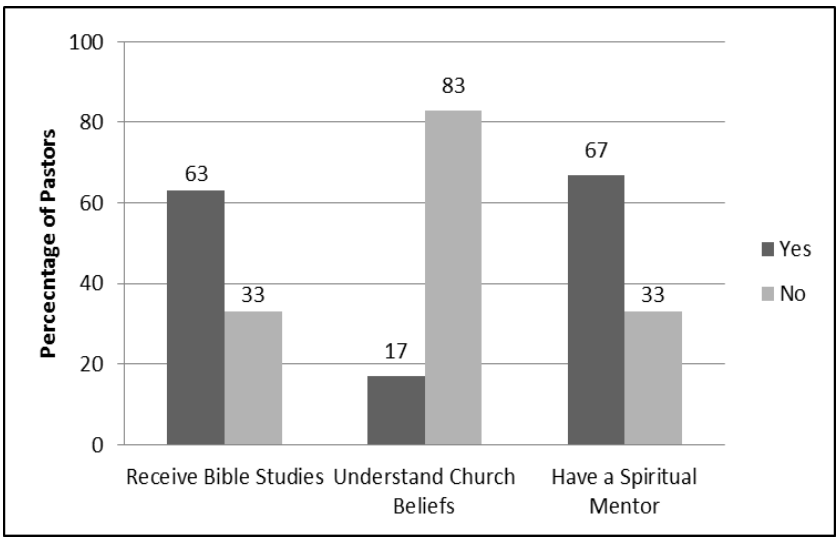
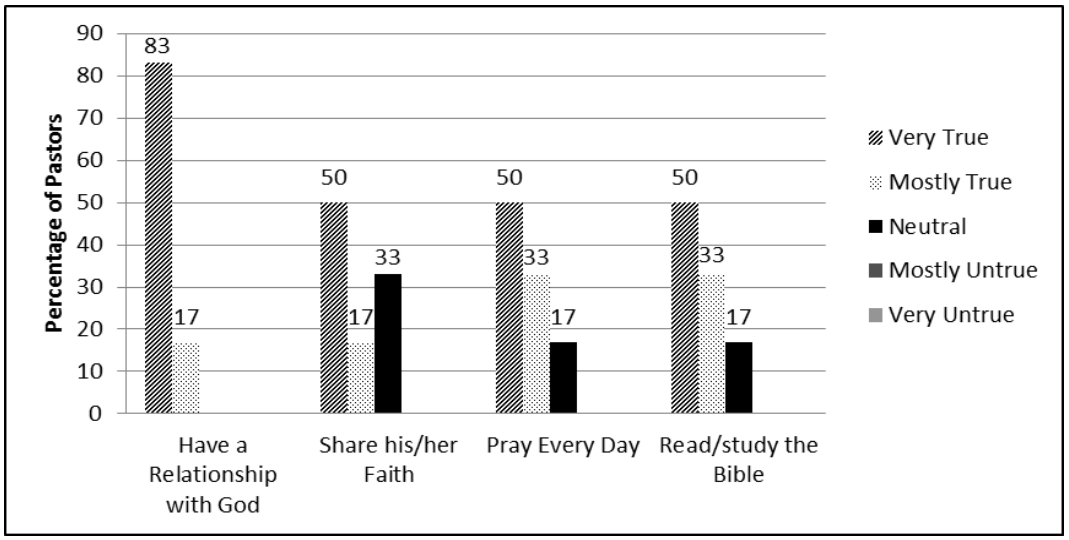


Fig. 28. Pastor's Questionnaire Analysis After-Baptism B



These figures reflect a positive response from the pastors towards the various components which occur after a baptism. Figure 27 highlights “receive bible studies”(63%) and “have a strong mentor” (67%) as common practices for pastors, where “understand church beliefs” (83%) was mostly objected to for their “after baptism” practice. Figure 29 expresses an importance in all areas of “faith experience” in the practise of church pastors, with a particular emphasis to “have a relationship with God” (83%).

Member Questionnaire

The following figures outline the position of church members regarding components of a baptism strategy, which would be implemented after an individual is baptised:

Fig. 29. Member Questionnaire Analysis After-Baptism A

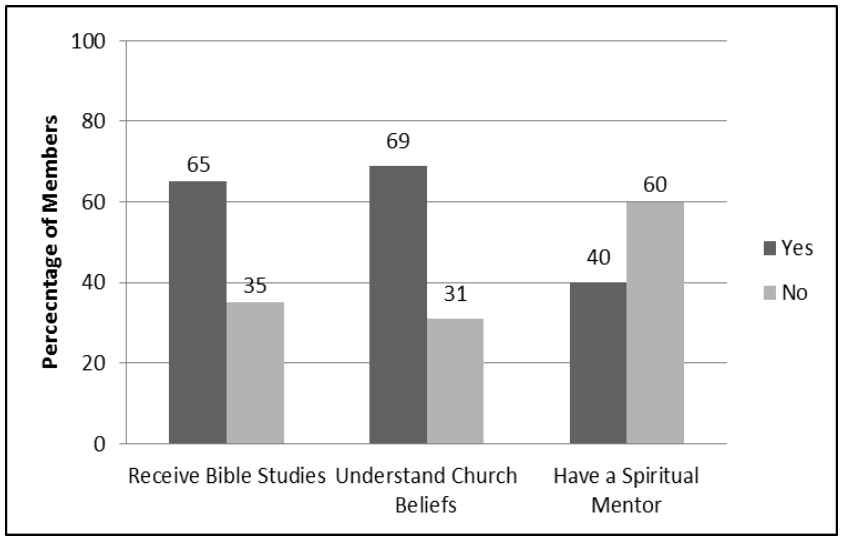
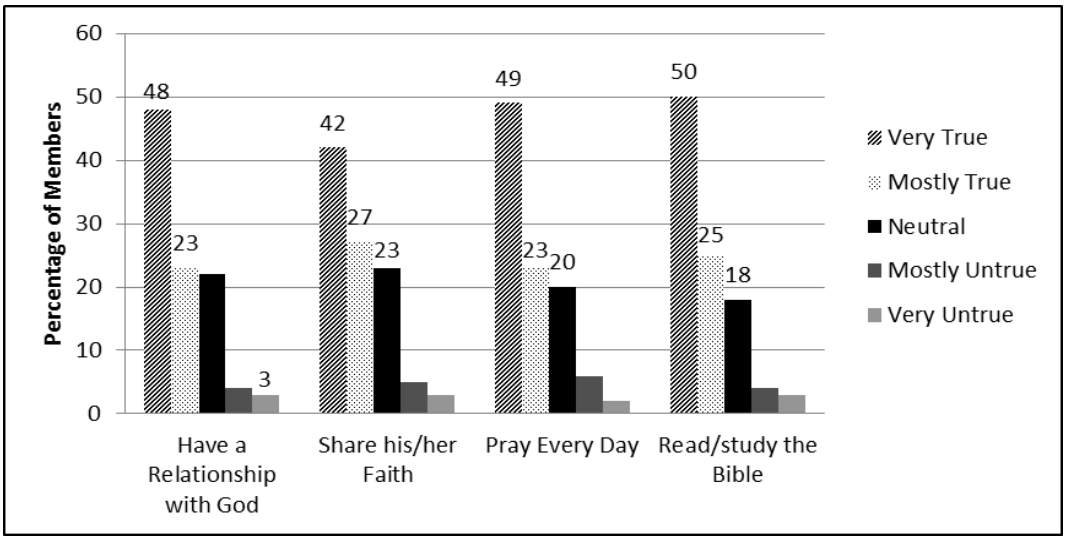


Fig. 30. Member's Questionnaire Analysis After-Baptism B



These figures reveal a strong agreement with the results from the pastors. This implies that a pastor's practice after a baptism is similar to the experience of church members. Figure 29 reflects a positive response from church members towards "receiving bible studies" (65%) and "understanding church beliefs" (69%). Sixty per cent of church members, however, said they didn't "have a spiritual mentor" (60%) after their baptism. Figure 30 expresses a positive response for each question, which examined the areas of a member's faith development.

Key Findings

The individual discoveries of each questionnaire will now be merged to determine the overall findings of the quantitative data. The two sets of questionnaires are analysed by the four components of a baptism strategy, [106] which will assist in determining connections between the quantitative and qualitative variables. The following findings will build upon the conclusions of the qualitative data. As the

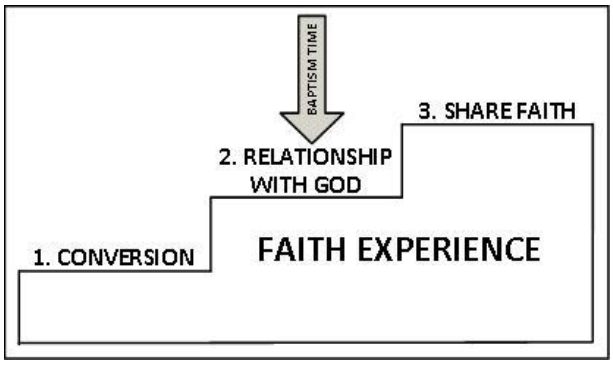
[106]See appendix 3 for a table of analysis of the quantitative data.

qualitative data outlined the stages of each component of a baptism strategy, the quantitative data will consider the most common "time of baptism" within each component, as directed from the questionnaires.

Faith Experience

Baptism is available for individuals who have experienced a first stage of faith, which would include repentance, accepting Jesus, and displaying evidence of their conversion. The responses from surveys indicate that "stage two" in their faith experience is a common time in which individuals were baptised.

Fig. 31. Time of Baptism in Relation to Faith Experience

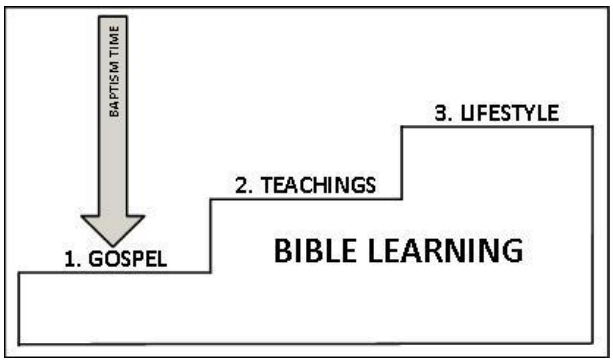


As figure 31 illustrates, the majority of church pastors and members are accustomed to baptism occurring once a candidate has an active relationship with God. It would also be expected for the individual to continue growing their faith after their experience of baptism, particularly regarding the third level of their faith experience – sharing their faith.

Bible Learning

According to the quantitative findings of this study, baptism should not require a structured set of bible studies for an individual– though it may be valuable. It was recommended, however, that individuals should make an "educated decision" to be baptised. Due to this finding, baptism is experienced in "stage one" of a person's understanding of the bible, according to the experience of the pastors and members of this investigation.

Fig. 32. Time of Baptism in Relation to Bible Learning

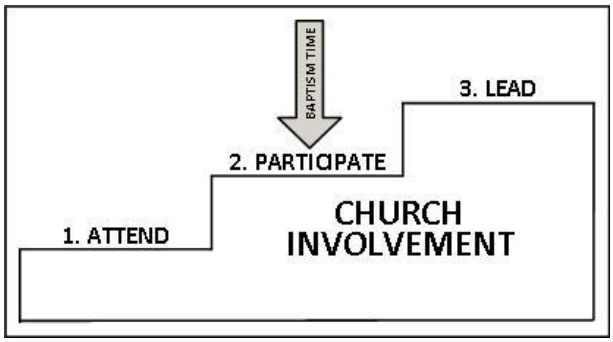


"Stage one" of this component would require an individual to learn and accept the gospel and the biblical view of baptism. It would also be expected for the individual to continue learning more from the bible once he/she has been baptised, which may include the teachings of the church and various principles of a Christian lifestyle.

Church Involvement

The time of baptism also relates to a candidate's relationship with the local church. According to the quantitative results of this study, baptism is commonly experienced by someone who is on a "stage two" involvement with a local Church.

Fig. 33. Time of Baptism in Relation to Church Involvement

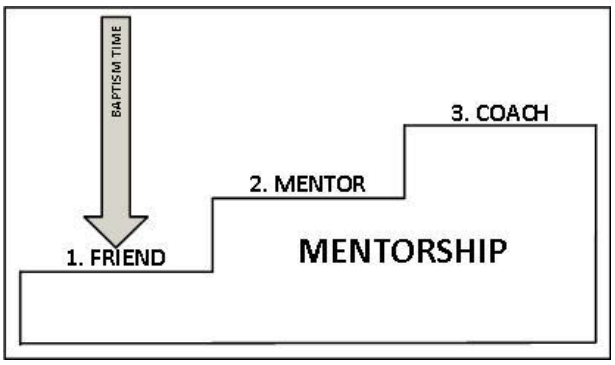


This stage would include regular attendance at the church service and church-related gatherings, and an interest in being involved in an area of ministry. It is also noted that an acceptance of the church community must be present for the individual who is seeking baptism.

Mentorship

The experience of baptism does not require any involvement of mentorship from an individual. It is recommended however, that someone who is seeking baptism develops close relationships with peers and role-models from their local church. With these factors in mind, the quantitative strand requires a "stage one" position in mentorship for a candidate of baptism.

Fig. 34. Time of Baptism for Mentorship



As expressed in figure 34, the respondents of this study would have no direct requirements of mentorship or coaching before an individual is baptised. Thus, the common time of baptism for an individual would occur once friendships are developed between the candidate and the local church.

Summary Statement

The quantitative data has been examined in this chapter, by separately outlining the results of the demographics, countries and denominations from the pastor questionnaires and church member questionnaires. The overall findings from both types of questionnaires were further combined to determine the appropriate timing for each component of a baptism strategy. As these phases are complete, it is appropriate to consider the overall conclusions of this investigation.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Introduction

The final chapter of this study will conclude and summarize its overall findings. An outline of the conclusions of the data will begin this process. This will be followed by discussing the limitations, recommendations, and areas of future research which emerge from this study. Furthermore, a formula will be presented as a strategy for practising baptism in the context of Australia and New Zealand.

Findings

The findings of this study are presented in three categories. Firstly, conclusions emerge from the parallels within the results of this study. Secondly, the overall findings from the qualitative and quantitative data reveal core conclusions. Thirdly, conclusions are reached from comparing the findings of this study with the literature review and theology of this investigation.

Country

The study reveals various similarities and differences regarding the baptism strategies which are practiced between Australia and New Zealand. Similarities are seen in that both countries responded positively to understanding their church beliefs before baptism, attending church after baptism, and understanding church beliefs after baptism. Further similarities are that both countries responded negatively to receiving ten bibles studies before baptism and receiving mentorship after baptism. Differences are seen in that the participants from New Zealand responded positively to regularly attending church before baptism and receiving bible studies after baptism, whereas the Australian participants responded negatively to these factors.

Denomination

Various conclusions emerge regarding the contrast of baptism strategies between the Baptist Churches and the Seventh-day Adventist Churches of this study. Similarities are found as both denominations responded positively to baptismal candidates attending church regularly before baptism, and having a personal relationship with Jesus after baptism. Another similarity is noted as both denominations responded negatively towards newly baptised persons receiving a mentor after a baptism experience. A key difference emerges as the Seventh-day Adventist participants responded positively to receiving ten bible studies before their baptism. On the other hand, most Baptist participants responded negatively to this factor.

Pastor/Member

A variety of similarities and differences emerge regarding baptism strategies between the practice of church pastors and experiences of church members. It is noted, however, that many church members may not have been baptised by the current pastor who participated in this study. This factor may reflect the many differences within this area.

Differences are initially found in the time of preparation for baptism. While 50% of pastors said they spend 1-3 months of preparation, 58% of members said they spent no months of preparation for their baptism. Other differences emerge regarding the events which occur before a baptism strategy. All pastors responded negatively for candidates to understand church beliefs before baptism, while 63% of members responded positively to this factor. Experiencing a life conversion before baptism was positively responded to before baptism by 66% of the pastors, while only 27% of members responded positively to this factor.

After a baptism occurs, 83% of pastors responded negatively to offering mentorship to individuals, while 69% of members responded positively to this factor. A similarity which emerges from this study is regarding the faith experience after an individual is baptised. This factor revealed that almost half of all pastors and members responded very positively to sharing faith, praying and reading/studying their bible.

Merged Findings

Components

The respondents of this study responded in various ways to the use of the four components of a baptism strategy. Before a baptism occurs, 58% responded

negatively to receiving ten bible studies. This was supported by most pastors that were interviewed, as they revealed how they avoid this method, because it reflects a rigid and knowledge-based faith. Sixty-three percent of participants, however, responded positively to understanding church beliefs and attending church regularly before a baptism experience. The comments from the focus groups which were interviewed explain this statistic by saying that an individual's commitment must be understood and validated before their baptism. Furthermore, 27% of participants responded with "very true" to experiencing conversion before their baptism. Though the "faith experience" is fundamental in the practice of the pastors of this study, it appears to be somewhat absent in the experience of baptism candidates.

After a baptism experience, over 60% of the participants responded positively to receiving bible studies and being involved in a church ministry. This statistic is supported by the interviews with the focus groups, who commented that learning from the Bible and being active in their church helped nurture their experience after their baptism. Sixty percent of the participants responded negatively to receiving spiritual mentoring after their baptism. This is because most pastors have moved away from practising the one-on-one method of mentorship. The faith experience of participants revealed approximately 50% responded by saying "very true" to the various factors of this component. Though the pastors discussed how they agreed with these factors, the majority of them expressed how they do not deliberately encourage faith development after an individual's baptism.

Formulas

The qualitative results of this study indicate that pastors and church members have a preferred method of practising and experiencing the four components of a

baptism strategy. These formulas feature a variety of methods from each church which was investigated, but an overall position can also be determined from the entire sample. According to the respondents of this study, the components of faith experience and church involvement are very important in the process of a baptism strategy. On the other hand, bible learning and mentorship are less important, as they usually occur after an individual is baptised.

The quantitative results of this study reveal the method of practising a baptism strategy, from the perspective of the respondents. These practises indicate a sequential understanding of each component of a baptism strategy, and feature a usual time that the participants would experience baptism within the components. According to the respondents of this study, baptism would occur during their second level of development for the components of faith experience and church involvement, which are a "relationship with God" and "involvement." The components of bible learning and mentorship, however, indicate that baptism would occur during the first level of their development, which are the factors of learning the "gospel", and having a "friend" in the church.

Comparisons

Literature Review

The findings of this study reveal the current practice of baptism strategies within Australia and New Zealand. These findings feature various comparisons with the current policies of the Baptist Church which were stated in the literature review of this study. While the review revealed how Baptists generally encourage bible studies before an individual's baptism experience, the Baptist Churches of this study have

negatively responded to this component. One similarity with the policies of a Baptist strategy is regarding their emphasis upon faith experience both before and after an individual is baptised. The Baptist Churches which have been investigated in this study reflected this similarity.

The findings of this study also feature comparisons with the current policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which were highlighted in the literature review. While the policies encouraged the practice of providing bible studies to individuals before their baptism, the Seventh-day Adventist Churches of this study did not entirely encourage this practice. The policy of the Seventh-day Adventist Church also encourages a strong practise of mentorship after an individual is baptised. The findings of this study reveal a different practise of mentorship however, as this component was moderately incorporated after an individual's baptism.

Theology of Baptism

The pastors interviewed in this study revealed a common philosophy of not baptising an individual who did not want to join a church. Most pastors, however, confirmed their understanding that candidates are only baptised into Christ, and not into His church. This position is in opposition to the biblical survey in the theology chapter of this study. Furthermore, all pastors agreed upon the theological symbolism of baptism as a cleansing from sin, and a union with Christ. Their positions, however, avoided any themes of sacrament in the meaning of baptism as outlined in the theology chapter of this study. This thought indicates a potentially incomplete understanding of baptism in the churches of Australia and New Zealand.

Recommendations

In response to the findings of this study, many recommendations may be made regarding the practice of baptism strategies in Australia and New Zealand. These recommendations are made for local churches within Australia and New Zealand, and also for the wider churches, that are interested in the practice of baptism and assimilation.

Local Church Recommendations

Learning from the other Denomination

Various differences emerge between the Baptist Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church regarding their practice of baptism. The Baptist Church reveals a stronger emphasis on the conversion experience of an individual, and their involvement in a church's activities/ministries. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, however, reveals a stronger emphasis on various types of bible learning, and mentorship. Perhaps each denomination may learn from and adopt effective methods of practising baptism from each other.

Church Pastor and Member Relationship

The respondents from each church have revealed many different preferences and experiences as members regarding their baptism in comparison to the strategies of the church pastors. This may be caused by the individual being baptised in a separate church to the one he/she currently attends. It is recommended, however, for church leaders to consider the feedback of church members in their practice of baptism.

Inconsistency of Policy and Practice

The literature review of this investigation reveals factors of practising baptism from policies which belong to the Baptist and Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia and New Zealand. According to the findings of this study, some of these factors appear nonessential to the churches from the sample of this study. These inconsistencies have related to a theology, use of bible learning, and mode of baptism. Though Baptist Churches function autonomously, it may be consistent for all local churches to incorporate the policies of their denomination into their practice of baptism.

The Need of Membership

In addition to the previous point, church members have also expressed various opinions regarding the factors of membership retention. According to church members, the two strongest factors which influence membership retention are church involvement and mentorship. In their own words, they believe that they will never leave a church when "their contribution is needed" and when their spiritual life is "nurtured."

Wider Recommendations

The wider recommendations may relate to the baptism practice of churches which differ from the country or denomination of the sample of this study.

Uniqueness of Baptism

Each experience of baptism is unique to the individual. While inclusive factors, such as the four components of a baptism strategy, may be comparable

between individuals, exclusive factors (previous church experience, age, culture etc.) may not be comparable. Therefore, we should guide people through an appropriate strategy of baptism, which correlates with the uniqueness of their background and experience.

Assimilate by Nurturing

A strategy of baptism is a matter of discipleship, and may impact the retention of a member. For each individual which is baptised, we must consider and act upon appropriate nurturing methods towards their growth as a disciple and church member.

Four Components of a Baptism Strategy

There are four components of a baptism strategy which are vital in the process of discipleship. These four components are bible learning, church involvement, faith experience and mentorship. Each of these components should be present in the experience of an individual seeking baptism, and should be evaluated according to their growth, by the church leaders. An appropriate level of applying each component will be presented in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Future Study

This study has investigated the practice and effectiveness of baptism strategies within Australia and New Zealand. Further studies could be conducted in a similar manner, in different locations, whether in Australia and New Zealand or elsewhere where baptism by immersion is practiced. Such studies may produce new knowledge, but may require an increase of a sample size, time and travel between the selected churches.

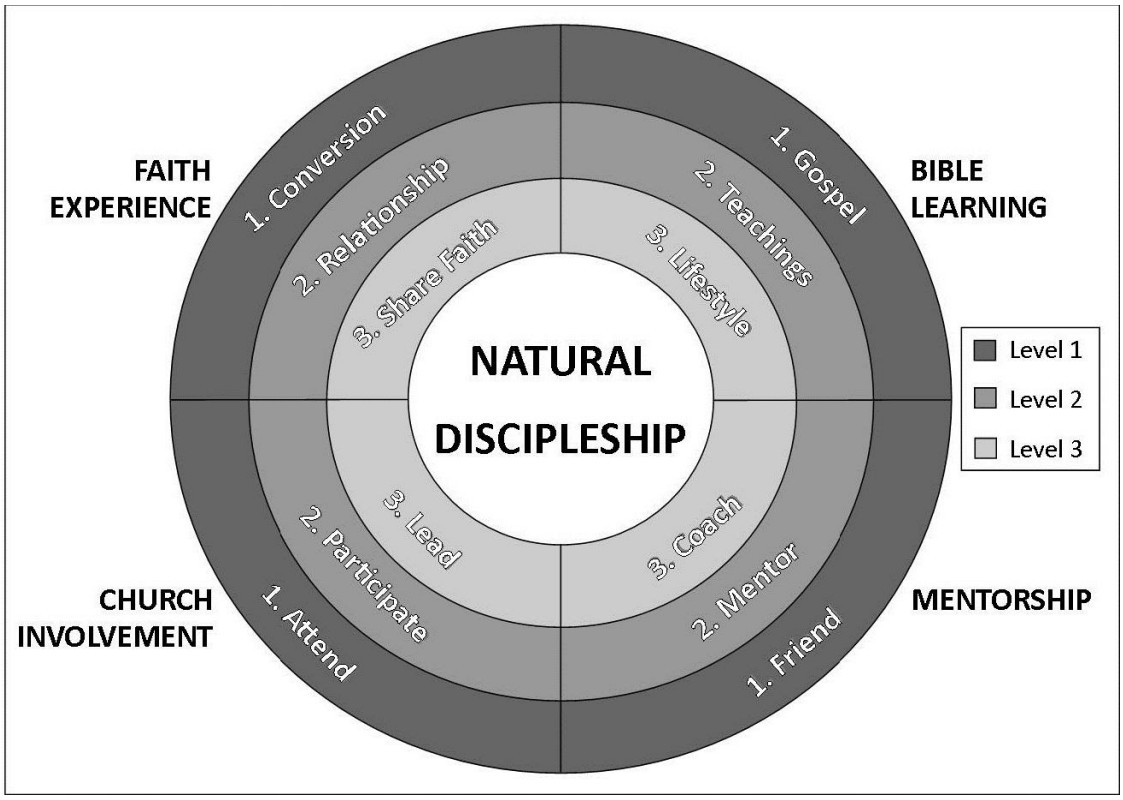
A second area of future study may consider the role of specific issues regarding the practice of baptism in Australia and New Zealand. This process would narrow the study of effective baptism strategies into a variety of relevant factors. Such factors may relate to the demographics of a church, which may include the age groups, cultures, church sizes and worship styles. Another factor may relate to membership retention or membership health of a selected church. These studies would be beneficial in developing acute theories of practising baptism in a variety of churches in Australia and New Zealand.

A further study could also be conducted in the overall area of assimilation, with an adoption of the tools and factors which have been discussed in this investigation. Though baptism strategies represent a form of assimilation, a wider investigation of the topic may allow the findings to be relevant for all Christian denominations.

Formula

For the benefit of future baptism strategies, a formula has been constructed to assist the decisions of church leaders. This formula is presented as a flexible guide, which may be applied to the experiences of a baptism candidate. The formula has been generated from the findings of this study, and expresses an appropriate use of each component of a baptism strategy. This intends to benefit the assimilation of a new member through a process which is guided by the theology and data of this investigation.

Fig. 35. Formula of Practising Baptism Strategies[107]



As figure 35 illustrates, each component of a baptism strategy can be viewed in three levels. It is expected that a person seeking baptism will meet the level 1 criterion for each component. If a church leader feels an individual requires a higher level of a component, this may also be implemented. Notice how the nature of each component is of a developing trend, which is needed to provide a nurturing environment for a church member. According to the findings of this study, level one of each component represents the minimal requirements for an individual to experience before baptism, and level two of each component represents the recommended experience of an individual.

[107]A larger scale of this figure will be shown in Appendix 4.

This formula may be adopted by any church which is seeking to evaluate their process of assimilation. Each level of a component can be strategically planned by a church, according to the needs of each individual.

Guidelines

For an appropriate use of this theory, baptism strategies should be practised with the assistance of the following two guidelines:

One: Natural Growth

A baptism strategy must be regarded as a unique and natural process. This formula does not constrain the strategy of a church leader, but allows them to guide the growth that God is nurturing in the new church member.

Two: Discipleship Focus

In the process of a baptism strategy, all components should relate to the individual's development as a disciple. This ideal was highlighted in the theology chapter of this study, and in the qualitative results from the interviews. A focus on discipleship will encourage an individual's growth through the three levels of each component of a baptism strategy.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the conclusions and outcomes of this study. A summary of recommendations and future areas of study followed, which emerge from this investigation. Finally, a formula has been presented as a tool to enhance the effective practising of baptism strategies in local churches.

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APPENDIX 1

Avondale
COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Human Research Ethics Committee
Telephone: 02 4980 2121
Fax: 02 4980 2117
Email: research.ethics@avondale.edu.au

31 October 2011

William Iererua
c/- A/Prof Rob McIver
School of Ministry and Theology
Avondale College
PO Box 19
COORANBONG NSW 2265

Dear William,

Thank you for submitting the revised application for ethical clearance of your project *Baptism Blueprint: an effective strategy of baptism for church growth in Australia,* as requested by the Avondale College of Higher Education Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), at its 27 October 2011 meeting.

After reviewing the revised documentation, I am pleased to advise that final approval is granted for your project *Baptism Blueprint: an effective strategy of baptism for church growth in Australia* for the duration of your project till 31 December 2012, (project number [2011:48]).

The following additional standard conditions apply:

1. That you notify the committee of any changes to circumstances or research design, which might require a review of the ethics approval.
2. That you provide an annual interim report of your progress to the committee, and a final report once this project is completed. The first report will be due twelve months from the date you commence the research.

We wish you well in this valuable research endeavour.

Sincerely

A/Prof Phil Fitzsimmons
Chair
Avondale Human Research Ethics Committee

BAPTISM BLUEPRINT

Church Pastor Questionnaire

Thank you for being a part of this research project. A number of church Pastors from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Baptist Church in New Zealand are supporting this research by completing this questionnaire. By answering these questions, you will help us understand more about the strategies used for baptism, and their effectiveness upon church membership. If you have NOT baptised church members in past four years, you need not complete this questionnaire.

Your answers are confidential and will be looked at by the research team and on one else. No other church Pastor or member from this church will see your answers. It is not compulsory that you answer any question you find troubling. You can withdraw from the survey at any time. Data from this questionnaire will be used in a research thesis and possibly in professional conferences and publications.

Marking Directions

i. Use a soft black pencil, or blue or black pen to fill in the circle around the answer that you choose.
ii. You may only select ONE answer from all questions on this questionnaire.
iii. Please mark the appropriate questions like this: ● If you make a mistake just X it out and fill in the circle of your choice.
iv. Please DO NOT marks the questions like this ✔

SECTION A: Demographic

In questions 1-5, please fill in the circle that is on the left hand side of the answer that you choose.

1 Are you male or female?
- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

2 How old are you?
- ◯ 20 or younger
- ◯ 21-30
- ◯ 31-40
- ◯ 41-50
- ◯ 51 or older

3 Does a person have to meet certain prerequisites before you baptise them?
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If Yes, what are they?

_____

_____

_____

4 On average, how many months do you spend preparing a candidate for baptism?
- ◯ 0
- ◯ 1-3
- ◯ 4-6
- ◯ 7-12
- ◯ 13 or more

5 Do you consider baptism as an essential part to the Christian experience for an individual?
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

SECTION B: Before Baptism

How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, answering whether is it true or false for you, NOT whether you would like it to be true or false. Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 False	2 True
1 A person is encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation before I baptise them	◯	◯
2 A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's beliefs before I baptise them	◯	◯

	1 False	2 True
3 A person is encouraged to attend church regularly before I baptise them	◯	◯
4 A person is encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from the church before I baptise them	◯	◯

How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, describing how much you agree with the statement and NOT how you would like to agree with the statement. Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 Very untrue	2 Mostly untrue	3 Neutral	4 Mostly true	5 Very true
1 A person is encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church before I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2 A person is encouraged to receive strong support from the church members regarding his/her baptism before I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3 A person is encouraged to experience a life conversion before I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4 A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God before I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5 A person is encouraged to share his/her faith before I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

SECTION C: After Baptism

There are a number of post baptismal practises encouraged by some churches. **How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, answering whether is it true or false for you, NOT whether you would like it to be true or false.** Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 False	2 True
1 A person is encouraged to receive bible studies after I baptise him/her	◯	◯
2 A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's fundamental beliefs after I baptise him/her	◯	◯
3 A person is encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after I baptise him/her	◯	◯
4 A person is encouraged to regularly attend church after I baptise him/her	◯	◯
5 A person is encouraged to have a spiritual mentor from church after I baptise him/her	◯	◯

There are a number of post baptismal practises encouraged by some churches. **How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, describing how much you agree with the statement and NOT how you would like to agree with the statement.** Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 Very untrue	2 Mostly untrue	3 Neutral	4 Mostly true	5 Very true
1 A person is encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry after I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2 The church members are encouraged to offer strong support to a person who has recently been baptised	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3 A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God after I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4 A person is encouraged to share his/her faith after I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5 A person is encouraged to pray every day after I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6 A person is encouraged to read/studied the bible every day after I baptise him/her	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

BAPTISM BLUEPRINT

Church Member Questionnaire

Thank you for being a part of this research project. Many church members throughout Australia and New Zealand are supporting this research by completing this questionnaire. By answering these questions, you will help us understand more about the strategies used for baptism, and their effectiveness upon church membership. If have NOT been baptised, you need not complete this questionnaire.

Your answers are confidential will only be looked at by the research team and no one else. No one from your church will see your answers. It is not compulsory that you answer any question you find troubling. You can withdraw from the survey at any time. Data from this questionnaire will be used in a research thesis and possibly in professional conferences and publications.

Marking Directions

v. Use a soft black pencil, or blue or black pen to fill in the circle around the answer that you choose.
vi. You may only select ONE answer from all questions on this questionnaire.
vii. Please mark the appropriate questions like this: ●f you make a mistake just x it out and fill in the circle of your choice.
viii. Please DO NOT marks the questions like this: ✔

SECTION A: Demographic

In questions 1-6, please fill in the circle that is on the left hand side of the answer that you choose.

1 How old are you?
- ◯ 20 or younger
- ◯ 21-30
- ◯ 31-40
- ◯ 41-50
- ◯ 51 or older

2 Are you male or female?
- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

3 Have you been attending church your whole life?
- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

4 How long were you regularly attending your church before your baptism?
- ◯ 0-3 months
- ◯ 6-11 months
- ◯ 1-3 years
- ◯ 4-6 years
- ◯ 7 or more years

5 How many members were attending the church that you were baptised in?
- ◯ 1-50
- ◯ 51-100
- ◯ 101-200
- ◯ 201-300
- ◯ 301 or more

6 How many months did you spend preparing for baptism?
- ◯ 0-3
- ◯ 4-6
- ◯ 7-11
- ◯ 12-17
- ◯ 18 or more

SECTION B: Before Baptism

How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, answering whether is it true or false for you, NOT whether you would like it to be true or false. Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 False	2 True
1 I was encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation for my baptism	◯	◯
2 I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs before my baptism	◯	◯
3 I was encouraged to regularly attend church before my baptism	◯	◯
4 I was encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from church before my baptism	◯	◯

How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, describing how much you agree with the statement and NOT how you would like to agree with the statement. Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 Very untrue	2 Mostly untrue	3 Neutral	4 Mostly true	5 Very true
1 I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church before my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2 The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3 I was encouraged to experience a life conversion before my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4 I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God before my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5 I was encouraged to share my faith before my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

SECTION C: After Baptism

There are a number of post baptismal practises encouraged by some churches. **How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, answering whether is it true or false for you, NOT whether you would like it to be true or false.** Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 False	2 True
1 I was encouraged to receive bible studies after my baptism	◯	◯
2 I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs after my baptism	◯	◯
3 I was encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after my baptism	◯	◯
4 I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	◯	◯

There are a number of post baptismal practises encouraged by some churches. **How true are the following statements for you? Mark one answer for each question. Be as honest as possible, describing how much you agree with the statement and NOT how you would like to agree with the statement.** Choose **one** of the following responses:	1 Very untrue	2 Mostly untrue	3 Neutral	4 Mostly true	5 Very true
1 I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church since my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2 The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3 I have been regularly attending church since my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4 I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God for the first two years after my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5 I was encouraged to share my faith since my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6 I was encouraged to pray (personally) every day since my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
7 I was encouraged to read/study the bible every day since my baptism	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

INFORMATION STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in this research project which is being conducted William Iererua. William is a research student in the Faculty of Arts (Ministry and Theology) at Avondale and his research project is being supervised by Associate Professor Robert McIver.

RESEARCH TITLE

Baptism Blueprint: An investigation into which currently employed strategies regarding baptism are more effective for long-term church membership retention in Australia and New Zealand.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THIS RESEARCH

The purpose of this study is to look at the current strategies which are being practiced regarding baptism, and measure how effective these are for Church membership.

WHO IS BEING INVITED OR SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participants who are eligible for this study are:

- Church members from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Baptist Church, who are above the age of 18, and have been baptized.
- Church Pastors from Seventh-day Adventist Church and Baptist Church.

WHAT DOES PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked complete a questionnaire. The survey will feature questions regarding your baptism or baptizing experience, and the strategies implemented before and after the event will be explored.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL IT TAKE?

It is anticipated that the questionnaire should take about 10 minutes to complete.

POSSIBLE RISKS OR INCOVENIENCES

The researchers are required to notify you of possible risks and inconveniences should you agree to take part in this research. It is believed that the only inconvenience will be the loss of time involved to complete the questionnaire. We appeal to you, as Church Pastor, to allow this questionnaire to occur before your weekly Church service.

BENEFITS

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise you any individual benefits from participating in this research we do however, hope this research will shed light on the relationship between baptism and Church membership.

CONFIDENTIALITY, ANONYMITY AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Your name will not appear on the questionnaire, and you will be allocated a numerical code which will be used for all observations, and survey data.

The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the School of Ministry and Theology of Avondale College. After 5 years, all hard copies will be shredded and electronic copies will be erased from discs, servers and hard drives.

All aspects of the study including results will be stored securely and only accessed by the researchers.

USE OF INFORMATION COLLECTED

The information collected will be analysed and reported in a thesis and possibly on professional conferences. Confidentiality of individual participants and organisations will be assured. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that individuals cannot be identified.

FREEDOM OF CONSENT

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Only people who give their informed consent will be included in the study. Even if you agree to participate you may withdraw at anytime without giving a reason. If you decide not to participate, you will not be disadvantaged.

Please read this information statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. After you have read this information, William Iererua will discuss it with you further or if there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, you can contact the researcher.

If you would like to participate, you will find a consent form for all participants to sign before completing the questionnaire.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like further information please contact either of the following researchers involved with this study:

Student Investigator: William Iererua
Avondale College, PO Box 19, Cooranbong, NSW, 2265
Email: william.iererua@gmail.com

Project Supervisor: Associate Professor Robert McIver
Avondale College, PO Box 19, Cooranbong, NSW, 2265
Phone: (02) 49802226
Email: rob.mciver@avondale.edu.au

Thank you for considering this invitation.

William Iererua

William Iererua

APPENDIX 2

CHURCH PASTOR INTERVIEW

Research Title: Baptism Blueprint: An investigation into which currently employed strategies regarding baptism are more effective for long-term church membership retention in Australia and New Zealand.

Researcher's Name: William Iererua email: william.iererua@gmail.com

Interview Information	
Church Pastor	
Date of Interview	
Time of Interview	

1. What is your Theology of baptism?

_____
_____
_____

2. What is your philosophy of practising baptism?

_____
_____
_____

3. What is your response to other Pastors who offer 20 or more bible studies before baptising someone?

_____
_____
_____

4. What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?

_____
_____
_____

5. What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?

_____
_____
_____

6. What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?

_____
_____
_____

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Research Title: Baptism Blueprint: The effect on Church membership in the New Zealand context of various strategies regarding Baptism.

Researcher's Name: William Iererua email: william.iererua@gmail.com

Interview Information	
Local Church	
Date of Interview	
Time of Interview	
Church Members	

Open Ended Questions:

1. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. What helps a baptised Church member stay in the Church?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

TRANSCRIPT CODES

KEY OF CODES		
CODE	**EXAMPLE**	**MEANING**
Underlined	Research	Unique comment
Bold	**Research**	Very important
Yellow	Research	Bible Learning
Turquoise	Research	Faith Experience
Bright Green	Research	Church Involvement
Pink	Research	Mentorship
Grey	Research	Theology
Dual coda	Research	Link of components

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church A1

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

It is a biblical concept; in the Old Testament it was a laver, after the altar of sacrifice - that was a sequential symbol of baptism.
In the NT, we have John's baptism, the baptism of Jesus, of course Jesus' instruction on baptism from John 3: "except a man be born again." It is a requisite for salvation, except for those who never have a chance to be baptised, they are covered by Jesus' baptism.

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

The whole Church has a responsibility of nurturing that person.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

It is very creedal, and there's no biblical formula for this – it's just a preferential requirement. In the bible, they didn't have to sit through 20 days of instruction.
I believe that baptism is the **beginning** of the Christian life, **it's not the end**. If the person has to be perfect (arrived at a certain level), what's the point of the rest. That's why we have many who are into this "behaviour modification"; where if they act a certain way, they are seen as a good person. This is living without the Holy Spirit – living for "me"
If the person has arrived at a certain status, they may fall away, don't realise it's the beginning/growing relationship. Many people think they're strong enough, and it is devastating when they fall into sin.
Had experiences where Information is given…and then the call isn't made to **accept Jesus**, but to be baptised and accept teachings.

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

That is vital. We don't have the perfect formula yet. We have come to the board and assigned people, and then respond by being in a ministry. Some don't follow up.
In their ministry team, we include a special spiritual component, to have a regular prayer life and involvement in Church ministry.
We encourage it, with spiritual growth, and individual spiritual formation – as a biblical principle
I believe mentoring is critical!
Effective is done according to their own personality and style. They need to be chosen well, so that power will not be held onto by the mentor.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

I support that. Straight away, not needing to prove anything. I've seen too many Churches where people will let people observe for a year, and then put them into an "assistant position." Jesus addresses that with the parable of the workers – and gave them all the same pay. There were those who were indignant, Jesus addresses that, and we can put that into Church ministry context.
Encourage them, make them perform, and it's all about the Church; about kingdom building!

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

To attend Church regularly, and encourage them to visit other Churches, but expect them to visit others. Be present three weeks out of the four if they are involved with a ministry. Give them the freedom.

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church A2

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

Baptism does not save a person, but I will baptise them because of their confession of Christ as Saviour and their commitment follow Him as Lord.
It is a question of **discipleship**, saying in the baptism that I identify Jesus as Lord, and are **prepared to get wet to prove it**.
It also speaks symbolically of the new start and new beginning, but it's not the point of salvation. It's a public declaration that the old life has gone and the new life has come – sin is washed off.
It must be a declaration, otherwise it becomes works!

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

Total immersion (as a Baptist), but I'm not so wedded to it.
In example, if I had someone who was dying in a rest home and wanted to be baptised, I would baptise them with a head over a basin, or pour water on their forehead – because it's the intent that is more important than the act itself.
[Not part of question]
Our architecture also denies our theology. We Baptist should have the baptistery at the front. It's not a graduation; it's an entrance into the Church.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

Any understanding of the faith is a good thing, that a person chooses to go into concentrated/concerted study is a good thing – really good thing. To make it a prerequisite for baptism – again, I would want to contest that I'm not convinced or committed (prerequisite) to that.
But the catechism of **preparing** an individual in the basics of the faith has always got merit and value.

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

Again I believe that the scripture testifies that Jesus said to go "two by two." The motion is also there in Pauline theology to respect the elder, and the elders are taught to teach the younger in the faith.
So the notion of mentoring and offering spiritual support is always a good thing – to have someone who is able to help.
This is why I like home groups, because there that sort of stuff happens informally, but its still happening as part of the teaching and to help people to **grow in the knowledge and love of God and how to live that out in life**.
We have a "men's group" which functions in this way, by discussing things and then asking "what does the scripture say about this? And how do we turn our lives around in bring it more under the Lordship of Christ?" This was a fortnightly gathering.
Anyone who comes to the Church, we encourage to become a part of a small group. 60% of the Church attendance belongs to a small group. That's where a whole lot of stuff you're talking about (bible study and mentorship) goes on.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

[Not part of question]

There is no point in having all this knowledge if it doesn't affect the way you live. If it doesn't bring you into a more committed, intentional, deliberate life as a disciple, and a person who knows the love of God.

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

I will always stress the nature of a relationship, that to become a Christian, you have to be born into a family; you have to be part of a family. Otherwise we're just asking for trouble. We need people to counsel us, to caution us, to encourage us, to mentor us, pray for us, to love us, to care for us…the way a family does.

For someone who approaches me, unless they can convince me otherwise, it would be unlikely for me to baptise them. It doesn't speak to me about the life of discipleship; it speaks to me of someone who is being mechanistic of the whole thing. It's not mechanistic view; it **comes out of the relationship** which follows the Saviour as a disciple.

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church B1

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

Baptism is the external expression of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and it is the affirmation of that personal relationship.
It is the prerequisite as laid down by Christ as entry into the Kingdom of God

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

The emphasis is on accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Rom 6 for me captures that we are buried together with Christ in His death, and as Christ is raised from too, to eternal life. It is the expression of a practical metaphor of the life and death of Jesus, and an acceptance of these, and entry in the kingdom.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

Lost patience with the propositional approach; which conditions church members to be pew sitting doctrinal believers, looking for a pat on the back every Sabbath. To being people in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, dependent on the Holy Spirit, for leading and guiding in their lives every day, and that every day is the coming of Jesus Christ in their life, in the personal relationship which they have with Him; rather than waiting for a second coming at some time in the future; not that that is important to us as Seventh-day Adventist; our theology, but I think we miss...it is the now that matters, it is today that matters.
We have to make a choice in a Church, as to where your focus in going to be: is going to be propositional, is it going to be relational? They talked about mixed model approach, I don't buy into that. They need to be placed in their right priority – it's an issue of discipleship and growing in knowledge; rather than a test of faith.
[For those who do give 20 bibles] it's entirely up to them, but they must just realise what they are doing. It has been my experience to come into the faith on that basis; for them it becomes their default method of coming into the Church. It's a dynamic walk of a Pastor and Leader and it should be one continual growth and enlightenment. Spirit Led, if one is true to the teaching of the word, you cannot come to any conclusion other than the New Testament model.
[Evangelistic Seminar] Again, personally, I would never make that a prerequisite beforehand. Because the moment you do, you've sown the seed for a future understanding of their spiritual life is about; and it takes me years, and some people never ever grow out of it. It's also something, because it becomes into the culture and the mental model of the Church (which all Churches have).

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

It's a fantastic idea, everybody needs a mentor. A mentor relationship is a brilliant one. Practically, have I really seen it working? No, not yet. Yes, in certain individual cases, but again it comes down to the issue of mentorship, there needs to be a correct connection between the mentee and the mentor, there needs to be elements of trust and friendship, and it's very difficult to engineer – it's got to be a **natural process**.
I've seen situations like that where people have basically found themselves on their own.
I believe mentorship happening at communities of practice, like a small group. In a small group, mentorship will happen, but it will not be a one on one relationship, it will be a group

relationship. You can also introduce the concept of peer mentoring into small groups, for all believers, that they will have a partner for accountability and life connection.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

It's critical; I think there's a window period of a **couple of years**, where if a person is not actively involved in a practical ministry, they are conditioned to be inactive members.
I firmly believe that the small group environment is Church, and that is the platform for ministry, to have a mission focus for the small group, to have a focus outside of the immediate group.
I'm a firm believer that you get people to do what they are convicted to do, rather than giving people jobs. Strategically, one finds purpose through the service component.

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

The first thing I try to do is get people into a small group, into that kind of fellowship. Most of recent baptisms (18) have come out the groups, so it is relational, and my evangelism tool.
In this setting they apply what they learn, and it is the Spirit of God that drives that.
It's less committed to being at Church every Sabbath, and being committed with your "growth group"
Baptism must be treated as a first step into the Christian walk – not a graduation. I will not baptise anybody, unless I'm completely convicted that that person is in a relationship with Jesus Christ. Then we let God do His work, and **stop** trying to do His job; and it absolutely works! Their behaviour modifies, they become spirit led, loving people. God takes over their lives.

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Church B2

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

Baptism has four significant meanings as a cleansing from sin, unity with Christ, entrance into a community and reception of the Holy Spirit.

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

Baptism is practiced as a believer's baptism, by full immersion. Also, in reading the ancient document the "didache", this practice was seen too.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

I would have little or no problem with it, but it's too robust for me.
This wouldn't be a natural process in coming to Christ.
For those who want to be baptised, I give them one study which includes principles of their faith and an understanding of baptism.

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

I response very positively to this, but it must be relational, and built upon support and community.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

I would not require church involvement from them; but would encourage them.
I would further recommend the member to move away from ministry as performance, but a service

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

Definitely good, but again, not a prerequisite in my eyes for baptism.
What would be recommended is for them to assume a **personal responsibility** in personal devotions and attending the home group. The home group setting is there to provide Study/Socializing/Service.

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church C1

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

It is an imperative which comes from Mat 28, where Jesus said about baptising and making disciples. Baptism is also mentioned in Rom 6, where Paul identifies and related baptism to death and burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's certainly centred in scripture, and it goes back to the example of Jesus, and John 3 where he spoke to Nicodemus about being "born again." Being born of water and of the spirit: physical and spiritual activity. Unless there's an experience, of believing.

When a person is baptised, they enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ; not something we see but believe. God puts within us a new heart and new experience

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

It's a very important part of a Christian experience, where they identify with becoming a Christian, and connect with the Church, as it says "added to the Church."

It's certainly something we need to **continue to practice**, and not become relaxed like other Churches.

I don't like the idea of a baptismal class. It's good for younger ones, where children can feel less threatened. But it's better to be one to one. You need to ask and see them demonstrate by talking about their faith, rather than saying "yes", and going through the motions.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

Depending on the person. If someone was a very mature/experienced person, they might only need application as to what our fundamental beliefs might be. Whereas with a younger person, it might be more relating of an experience – needing to gain a relationship with Jesus.

I do have a set of things I want to study, but I usually look at it **more in terms of time**. So if someone is only 12 or 13, I like to drag it out over a longer time. Because if you just have a set of studies – it's more on knowledge rather than experience.

For a standard adult, I like to look at six months or twelve months. I've never baptised anyone within two or three months.

[Added] People do learn from your studies, but not necessarily take it all in. It's to give people an overall view, so they can find it and study for themselves.

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

I think it's a great idea. I have done it and I haven't done it. I haven't always followed that process, depending on the person and their connections. If someone is already connected with a group; if people don't make close friendships within the Church, there's always a **danger not staying**.

Not necessarily a Spiritual mentor, but making sure they have friends in the Church.

The idea of someone who actually studied with them is good, as it's a bit harder for the pastor, as there are lots of people.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

Yes. We try to see that the youth members have something to do. We probably haven't identified their areas of ministry, but we make sure they have some sort of a role in ministry; so that they can be doing something.

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

Oh yes! If people aren't attending, there is always the danger of them slipping away.
I have refused baptism to some people who just want to be baptised and not become a member. I was happy with their level of experience, but I felt that they weren't becoming a member of the body.
Baptism and membership are associated.
I would expect them to regularly attend Church after and before baptism. Because that is not only the **spiritual connection, but it's also the social connection**. You can study with people to accept all your doctrines, but coming to Church to me, in those two front doors, is the hardest doctrine.
In mission programs, people accept the teachings, but **getting past the saints is the hardest part**. In the past, we weren't as pastoral as we should have been.
Bad practices will fall off themselves, we don't want to attack them, but rather see why these are problems.

PASTOR INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church C2

1. *What is your Theology of baptism?*

Baptism first and foremost is about a changed heart. There are a few passages in the scriptures that talk about baptism. Gal 3 which talks about "neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free…we're all baptised into Christ", so we're all one in Christ. Baptism is into what Christ has done.

If a person wasn't baptised, it has no bearing on their salvation, we trust we're immersed into Him. Paul often talks about being "**in Him**". Rom 6 talks about how "shall we go on sinning? I've died to it!" There a sense that baptism signifies there has been a death; the old person has died and I've been raised as a new person.

That image of *born again* is a very good image. I'm born again inwardly so that my body is wasting away, but inwardly I'm a new person. And that inwardly is that I belong to kingdom of God, so that's the struggle will with in this world: where we have one foot in this world (which is rebellious against God, and one foot in God's kingdom (which is living for Him).

And then Mat 28 talks about going into all the world and baptising, where there's a sense of proclaiming that salvation is found in Jesus, and being baptised as followers of Him.

So my theology is that water baptism is a symbol of what has already taken place inside.

2. *What is your philosophy of practising baptism?*

Because I believe that baptism is primarily about being "in Christ," and in a relationship with Christ, I don't pressurize people to be baptised, as if its needed to their salvation. I would encourage it in terms of their discipleship in following Jesus.

I want to make sure that the person has been born again inwardly. Sometimes I want people to say the words that I would use, so at some point, I need to be fairly sure that they are following and trusting in Jesus for their salvation. And that they know that they're sinful and they need Him and can't save themselves.

It's a **believer's baptism**.

3. *What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?*

Part of me says, that if that's important to them and their tradition: so be it. I guess I would as the question, if they went through the 20, are they qualified for baptism? Does their heart play any part?

4. *What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?*

We don't do that, but I can see the value in doing that. In terms of mentoring from a Church, while I meet with the people – most if any mentoring is done more informally. If someone's going to be baptised, they're not allocated a person.

5. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?*

My foundation comes back to an "inner baptism." So **whether a person is baptised or not**, they're allowed to be involved in ministry. The only positions required for membership are a deacon, elder or pastor. But any other position people can hold, as long as they're committed to the Church.

People want to attend a Church where they can connect, and feel they belong. The denomination doesn't seem to be a drama.

6. *What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?*

If baptism in a truer sense, is a symbolic representation of what's taken place inwardly, if a person isn't attending Church, then that's symptomatic of something deeper. If someone's recently been baptised and they're not attending Church, then there's some alarm bells going on.

The pastor in me would want to get beside them and understand why. Sometimes we can destroy a relationship; it's always wise to **allow the person to tell the issue**.

If someone had only been coming for a few weeks, I would say "I'd just like to get to know you more."

PASTOR QUESTIONNAIRE
OPEN QUESTION (Question A3) TRANSCRIPT

Question Seven: What prerequisites does a person have to meet before you baptise them?

1. *Pastor One (A1)*

Accept Jesus as Saviour
Have a desire to start or continue the Christian life

2. *Pastor Two (A2)*

Confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour
Acknowledge their salvation and promise from God
Live as a disciple

3. *Pastor 3 (B1)*

Show **evidence** of being born again

4. *Pastor 4 (B2)*

Have a meeting with the Pastor
Bible study or class about baptism

5. *Pastor 5 (C1)*

Understand the meaning of baptism
Evidence of a changed heart experience
Understand and accept our main beliefs

6. *Pastor (C2)*

Believe they are a sinner needing Christ
Give evidence of conversion
Understand their conversion and live by trusting in Christ

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church A1

7. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

A pastor has no right to make someone else's decision regarding baptism
You want to be an involved member of a Church, where the decision to join the Church is clearly defined as opposed to choosing to following Christ
They must a clear repentance, turning away from evil from their lives – stop sinning!
Making a decision to follow Christ
Not to have a complete understanding of the Church's beliefs, but to believe

8. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

Understanding what our Church's believe is important for newly baptised members and the whole church
We need to have mentoring programs running through the Church continuously, which includes those who have been newly baptised. From the kids to the adults, a well-balanced friend/peer would be great
After baptism, we are spiritually attacked, facing problems attacking our faith – this proves a real decision
Bible studies after baptism, to develop a personal relationship with Jesus
Choosing to follow Christ is different from **actually walking with Him**.
Being involved in Church ministry, and making them feel needed. Understanding that I can share my faith as well

9. What helps a baptised Church members stay in the Church?

Treating them in manners that they feel comfortable with – don't force their growth, but allow them to develop in their own time.
Develop a personal relationship with Jesus

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church B2

10. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

Bible study of understanding what it means to be baptised – educated decision
Meet with the Pastor on a one-on-one basis, to share about "why we wanted to be baptised"
Three months of waiting period, but wanted to put baptisms together
Have a special experience and commitment you wanted to make for Jesus
Make the personal decision to accept Christ

11. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

Be involved in a home group, which stops me from only thinking about God on one night of the week. It encourages me to keep reading my bible/praying in between that. We have accountability within these sessions too. These have leaders who we can talk to about stuff
Sharing faith needs to continue

12. What helps a baptised Church members stay in the Church?

Get them involved in ministries that really **interest** them, the stuff that they enjoy doing, and make all the ministry quite open for leadership. That's why I love my Church – I'm so involved
Keeping people accountable in what they're doing in their own time, because if that stops then you're not getting nourished at all
Could also set up a mentoring system as well, to get all the Church members available to meet with the person who's been baptised, and maybe encourage them, and talk to them about what they're going through
A good relationship with Pastor as well, and keep that going
Same for adults too

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church C1

13. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

Part of a small group or personal bible studies, to learn fundamental beliefs and relevant bible verses
Bible studies need to come from someone who has time, passion – not necessarily the Pastor, and isn't going to rush. Did it thoroughly, modelled in life, and showed application
Attend Church, and adopt Church's lifestyle and commitments
Being involved in Church (eg, with Church programs and doing bible studies)
Having a faith in God, and checked by Church leaders

14. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

Being involved in ministry, working for the Church and developing my own knowledge
Have a strong devotional life, recommended from Church family
Mentor into ministry – encourage to pursue in gifts and interested areas, where they believe in them, doing things together with them
Continued studying prophetic studies, and was always available for me
For younger people, encourage a better knowledge of the bible, and a relevance of faith
Encouraged to be witnesses in own friendships and community
Maintain the discovery of Jesus; encourage them to attend to for spiritual purposes
Practice my faith in ministry, through mentorship as well – throwing them into the deep end

15. What helps a baptised Church members stay in the Church?

Personal devotional time and friendships we have in Church (strong both angles of relationships)
Having a supportive and encouraging immediate family for younger ages
Involvement in the Church, and for the Church to model the faith in being active and working with the community etc
Being surrounded by a good community of believers that not only share their faith, but went out of their way to be transparent, share blessings – model the walk!
If it wasn't for the support, if would have been **dragged into another community**

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
Church C2

16. What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?

Not very many procedures in my case, as in classes, but I think there should be some interviews etc
They should understand baptism
You should believe and trust in Jesus
There shouldn't be any drilling or questioning
Should understand/how the Church works and expects
Talking with the Pastor may help, for the comfort of the candidate and for the Pastor to see evidence
Evidence that there has been a change in their lives
Getting a good understanding of ministry, and good of being involved in it

17. What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?

Finding a place of witnessing to others through the baptism (for that single occasion)
It's not anything to do with salvation, as a witness to others to taking that step
Not very different from what happens before, but they must be involved with fellowship, and retaining a sense of being a part of the Church

18. What helps a baptised Church members stay in the Church?

Fellowship must be experienced through the formal areas of Church life (eg, youth group)
Pastoral care would be needed if they were new believers in the Church
Giving pastoral care, or leading in the Church helps to stay in the Church
Fellowship, and trying to find the gift that they've got, which they can use in the Church, and take on as a responsibility. It's good to be able to say to somebody, "you could do well in this."
It's a question of balance. As we need a sense of belonging, we don't want to be pressured into or given too much attention. For me, if someone had given me too much attention, I would've been off! I don't like to be pushed into going to a home group or having a job. Other people may be into that, but not me (hang on).
I'm not heaps involved in Church, but I keep coming back because I still need God. I still have my struggles, but that's how I feel
Making sure that their needs are reached in the Church, by their appropriate age groups and culture

APPENDIX 3

ANALYSIS OF PASTOR INTERVIEWS

Question One: What is your Theology of baptism?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ OT symbol - laver ▪ Jesus' command	▪ New start/beginning ▪ Symbol of sun washed off	▪ External expression ▪ Buried and raised with Christ ▪ NT model	▪ Cleansing from sin ▪ Unity with Christ ▪ Entrance into a community ▪ Reception of the Holy Spirit	▪ Jesus' command – Mat 28 ▪ Identified with death and resurrection of Jesus – Rom 6 ▪ Born of water and the spirit	▪ About a changed heart ▪ One in Christ – Gal 3 ▪ What Christ has done ▪ Symbol of what's already taken place
Practice	▪ Requisite for Salvation by opportunity ▪ Mentorship is biblically modelled ▪ No biblical formula for using studies ▪ Many preferences	▪ Intent is more important than the practice ▪ Our architecture denies our theology (baptistery should be at the front door) ▪ Mentorship – two by two	▪ Continual growth and enlightenment ▪ Not a graduation ceremony ▪ Practical metaphor of relationship with Jesus	▪ Believer's baptism ▪ Full immersion under water ▪ Ancient document supports this from *Didache*	▪ Physical activity in water ▪ Spiritual activity of the spirit ▪ This must be continued in our Churches	▪ Inward experience ▪ Does not require qualifications ▪ Believer's baptism in Jesus ▪ No pressurizing into the decision
Outcome	▪ Born again experience	▪ Confession & commitment to Christ ▪ Born into a family	▪ Now matters, not the future	▪ Natural process of coming to Christ	▪ Must be an experience of believing	▪ New inward person

Question Two: What is your philosophy of practising baptism?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ Features a strong nurturing element	▪ Act itself is not important ▪ Entrance into the Church	▪ Practical metaphor of death and life of Jesus	▪ Baptism by immersion	▪ Connection with the Church	▪ Symbol of what has already taken place ▪ Inward change
Practice	▪ Whole Church has a responsibility – not just the Pastor	▪ Pour over head or sprinkle if physically unable to immerse ▪ Total immersion otherwise	▪ Emphasis on accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour	▪ Always full immersion, with understanding of the experience	▪ Must not be too relaxed ▪ Don't just go through the motions – talk to them	▪ Baptising followers only
Outcome	▪ It's the beginning, not the end	▪ Experience as a disciple	▪ Entrance into the kingdom	▪ Principles of faith understood by candidate	▪ Identify with becoming a Christian	▪ One foot in God's kingdom, one foot on this earth

Question Three: What is your response to other Pastors who offer bible studies before baptising someone?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ Preferential requirement ▪ No biblical formula	▪ Good to help understand faith ▪ Not a prerequisite	▪ Lost patience with propositional approach ▪ Issue of discipleship	▪ Too robust for me ▪ Must come to Christ through the bible	▪ People do learn, but not necessarily take all in	▪ So be it if it's important to their tradition ▪ Questions if it make them qualified for baptism
Practice	▪ Have baptism class ▪ Not be rigid	▪ I'm not committed a catechism before baptism	▪ Relational approach ▪ Ensure they develop a personal relationship with Jesus – use studies for this	▪ Give one study which includes principles of faith and an understanding of baptism	▪ Depending on the person: time not number ▪ If old, help them apply the beliefs ▪ If young, help them experience beliefs	▪ Doesn't do it
Outcome	▪ Can cause person to think they need to be perfect	▪ Prepares an individual on the basics of their faith	▪ Sews seed for future understanding of their spiritual life	▪ Wouldn't be a natural process for the bible student	▪ Given so they can find and study for themselves in the future	▪ heart must play an important role in this process

Question Four: What is your response to other Pastors which organise a spiritual mentor for someone after he/she has been baptised?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ That is vital ▪ Effective if it's done right ▪ It's a biblical principle that works	▪ Scripture testifies of this as going "two by two" ▪ A good thing to have someone who is able to help	▪ Fantastic idea – everybody needs one ▪ Does not always work ▪ Needs to be a correct connection – not engineered	▪ Very positively	▪ Great idea – it works and doesn't ▪ About friendship ▪ Danger of not staying if this isn't happening	▪ Can see the value in it ▪ Meeting with people is good
Practice	▪ We don't have a perfect formula yet ▪ Should feature a spiritual component ▪ Chosen according to own personality and style ▪ Power should not be held onto mentor	▪ Done through home groups, where people are taught and helped to grow ▪ We encourage all to be a part of a small group	▪ Happens with communities of practice ▪ We find this in our small groups, of a group relationship	▪ Must be done relationally ▪ Built upon support and community	▪ I've done it, and then I haven't ▪ Depending on the person and their connections	▪ We don't do it directly ▪ More informal mentors, but not allocated a person
Outcome	▪ Spiritually effective	▪ Grow in God's knowledge and love, and how to live that life out	▪ Accountability and life connection		▪ Need friends in the Church	▪ Meet with people informally

Question Five: What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a newly baptised person to become involved with a form of ministry in his/her church?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ I support that ▪ They should do it straight away ▪ We should encourage all members to	▪ No point in having knowledge if it doesn't affect our living	▪ Critical ▪ There's a window period of a few years where they're conditioned	▪ I wouldn't require it from someone	▪ Yes ▪ We don't always identify their areas of ministry first (eg, spiritual gifts)	▪ All should be, and are allowed to be involved in ministry – whether baptised or not
Practice	▪ They don't have to prove anything ▪ Don't just give them assistant positions ▪ Make the new members perform and grow	▪ Need to be committed, intentional and deliberate for them as disciples	▪ Let them do what they're convicted to do ▪ Don't just give people jobs	▪ Would encourage them to pursue their own ministry path	▪ Make sure they have some sort of a role in ministry, so they can do something	▪ Can as long as they're committed to the Church
Outcome	▪ Kingdom building	▪ Determines if a person knows the love of God	▪ Helps find purpose through service	▪ No performance, but a service	▪ Something to do, being active	▪ Connect and belonging to the Church

Question Six: What is your response to other Pastors who encourage a baptism candidate to attend his/her church regularly?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Belief	▪ Good ▪ Should attend Church regularly	▪ I will always stress the nature of their relationship with the Church – need to be part of the family	▪ Get people into a small group for fellowship ▪ Relationships in the Church are important ▪ Apply learning in relationships	▪ Definitely good, but not a prerequisite in my eyes	▪ Oh yes – if they're not attending, they may slip away ▪ If baptised, they are a member of the body! ▪ Not just a spiritual connection, but also a social connection	▪ In its truer sense, baptism is a representation of what takes place inwardly ▪ If not wanting to attend, something deeper is happening
Practice	▪ For my Church, and encourage them to visit other Churches too	▪ You have to be part of the family ▪ I wouldn't baptise them if they didn't want to be part of the Church	▪ Less committed to being at Church; more committed to being at the small group	▪ Allow them to make personal choices in the home group and church attendance	▪ Expect them to regularly attend ▪ Need to be pastoral in welcoming them into the two front doors	▪ If not attending, get behind them and understand why ▪ Allow person to tell issues if so
Outcome	▪ Freedom but encouraged	▪ Life of discipleship	▪ First step in the Church	▪ Personal responsibility for faith	▪ Getting past the saints can be the hardest doctrine	▪ Symbolic representation

Question Seven: What prerequisites does a person have to meet before you baptise them?						
	P1 – A1	**P2 – A2**	**P3 – B1**	**P4 – B2**	**P5 – C1**	**P6 – C2**
Inward	▪ Accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour	▪ Confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour	▪ Born again		▪ Understand and accept our main beliefs	▪ Believe they are a sinner and need Christ
Outward	▪ Have desire to start and continue Christian life	▪ Acknowledge their salvation and promise from God	▪ Evidence of being born again	▪ Meeting with a Pastor ▪ Bible Study or class about baptism	▪ Understand the meaning of baptism ▪ Evidence of a Changed heart	▪ Give evidence of a conversion ▪ Understand their conversion
Outcome		▪ Live as a disciple	▪ New life		▪ Understand decision	▪ Live by trusting in Christ

ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

Question One: What are appropriate prerequisites for someone who is seeking baptism, and why?				
	FG1 – A1	**FG2 – A2**	**FG3 – B2**	**FG4 – C1**
Belief	▪ Pastor has no right in deciding a time of baptism ▪ Not have a complete understanding of Church's beliefs but to believe	▪ Educated decision ▪ Acceptance of Christ ▪ Usually has three months of a waiting period	▪ Learn fundamental beliefs and learn bible verses ▪ Have faith in God ▪ Attend Church	▪ Understand baptism ▪ Have a talk with Pastor about their decision ▪ Have some interviews with others before hand
Practice	▪ Clear repentance, stopped sinning ▪ Make a decision to follow Christ	▪ One bible study for understanding of baptism ▪ Special experience and commitment	▪ Belief checked by believers ▪ Bible teacher who has time and passion ▪ Witness Christian life in others ▪ Being involved in Church	▪ Believe and trust in Jesus ▪ Understand how the Church works and what it expects ▪ Church leader should see evidence of a conversion
Outcomes	▪ Choosing to follow Christ	▪ Personal decision	▪ Adopting new life	▪ Change in their lives

Question Two: What are appropriate follow-up steps for someone after he/she experiences baptism, and why?				
	FG1 – A1	**FG2 – A2**	**FG3 – B2**	**FG4 – C1**
Belief	▪ Understand what the Church believe – for the whole Church to know ▪ Mentoring programs running through entire Church ▪ Involved in Church ministry	▪ Stop from thinking just about Church services for spiritual things ▪ Keep sharing faith to others as lifestyle would help	▪ Involved in ministry ▪ Strong devotional life – for whole church ▪ Develop own knowledge ▪ Maintain discovery of Jesus	▪ It should only be a continuation of what happened before hand ▪ Not to do with Salvation ▪ Retain sense of being a part
Practice	▪ Bible studies after baptism ▪ Develop a personal relationship with Jesus ▪ Make them feel needed ▪ Sharing faith as well	▪ Get involved in a home group ▪ Encourage to reading bible and praying during the week	▪ Continue studies ▪ Encourage them to attend for spiritual purposes now ▪ Discover relevance of faith	▪ Witness to others through the baptism ▪ Strongly involved with fellowship with Church
Outcomes	▪ Are often spiritually attacked after baptism	▪ Maintain accountability	▪ Practice the new faith	▪ Sense of being a part of a community

Question Three: What helps a baptised Church member stay in the Church?				
	FG1 – A1	**FG2 – A2**	**FG3 – B2**	**FG4 – C1**
Belief	▪ Allow them to develop in their own time	▪ Keep them freely involved ▪ Keep mentoring system going ▪ Good relationships in Church, and with leaders	▪ Retain personal devotional time ▪ Close friendships in the Church ▪ Throw them into the deep end of faith	▪ Needs should be reached in the Church ▪ Sense of belonging, but don't give too much attention to the new believer ▪ Keep coming to Church because I still need God
Practice	▪ Treat in comfortable manner when asking to be involved ▪ Keep a close walk with Jesus	▪ Involved in ministries that really interest them ▪ Make ministry open for leadership ▪ Talk things through with members (eg, what they're going through etc)	▪ Receive support and encouragement from the immediate family ▪ Be in good surroundings with other believers ▪ Witness to own friendships and community	▪ Discover what their gifts are and how they can be used in the Church ▪ Needs should be reached within the Church ▪ Direct pastoral care for all, and giving pastoral care too
Outcomes	▪ Don't force their growth – let it naturally grow	▪ Nourished	▪ Keeping an active faith	▪ Experience fellowship

SPSS DATA
Pastor Questionnaire Results

Results by Country

Question	Country	False	True	Total
A person is encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation before I baptise them	Australia	1	1	2
	New Zealand	3	1	4
	Total	4	2	6
A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's beliefs before I baptise them	Australia	2	0	2
	New Zealand	4	0	4
	Total	6	0	6
A person is encouraged to attend church regularly before I baptise them	Australia	0	2	2
	New Zealand	2	2	2
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from the church before I baptise them	Australia	2	0	2
	New Zealand	2	2	4
	Total	4	2	6
A person is encouraged to receive bible studies after I baptise him/her	Australia	0	2	2
	New Zealand	2	2	4
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to receive bible studies after I baptise him/her	Australia	0	2	2
	New Zealand	2	2	4
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's fundamental beliefs after I baptise him/her	Australia	2	0	2
	New Zealand	3	1	4
	Total	5	1	6
A person is encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after I baptise him/her	Australia	1	1	2
	New Zealand	1	3	4
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to regularly attend church after I baptise him/her	Australia	0	2	2
	New Zealand	0	4	4
	Total	0	6	6
A person is encouraged to have a spiritual mentor from church after I baptise him/her	Australia	1	1	2
	New Zealand	1	3	4
	Total	2	4	6

Results by Denomination

Question	Country	False	True	Total
A person is encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation before I baptise them	SDA	1	2	3
	Baptist	3	0	3
	Total	4	2	6
A person is encouraged to attend church regularly before I baptise them	SDA	1	2	3
	Baptist	1	2	3
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to have a spiritual mentor from church after I baptise him/her	SDA	0	3	3
	Baptist	2	1	3
	Total	2	4	6
A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God after I baptise him/her	SDA	0	3	3
	Baptist	1	2	3
	Total	1	5	6

Church Member Questionnaire Results

Results by Country

Question	Country	False	True	Total
I was encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation for my baptism	Australia	23	17	40
	New Zealand	62	44	106
	Total	85	61	146
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs before my baptism	Australia	9	31	40
	New Zealand	45	61	106
	Total	54	92	146
I was encouraged to regularly attend church before my baptism	Australia	3	37	40
	New Zealand	51	55	106
	Total	54	92	106
I was encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from church before my baptism	Australia	18	22	40
	New Zealand	58	48	106
	Total	76	70	146
I was encouraged to receive bible studies after my baptism	Australia	20	20	40
	New Zealand	31	75	106
	Total	51	95	146
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs after my baptism	Australia	16	24	40
	New Zealand	30	76	106
	Total	46	100	146
I was encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after my baptism	Australia	6	34	40
	New Zealand	29	77	106
	Total	35	111	146
I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	Australia	24	16	40
	New Zealand	63	43	106
	Total	87	59	146
I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	Australia	24	16	40
	New Zealand	63	43	106
	Total	87	59	146

Results by Denomination

Question	Country	False	True	Total
I was encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation for my baptism	SDA	35	54	89
	Baptist	50	7	57
	Total	85	61	146
I was encouraged to regularly attend church before my baptism	SDA	35	54	89
	Baptist	19	39	57
	Total	54	92	146
I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	SDA	57	32	89
	Baptist	30	27	57
	Total	87	59	146

Question	Country	Very Untrue	Mostly Untrue	Neutral	Mostly True	Very True	Total
A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God after I baptise him/her	SDA	4	3	17	25	40	89
	Baptist	0	3	15	9	30	57
	Total	4	6	32	34	70	146

APPENDIX 4

ANALYSIS OF COMPONENTS

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS		
COMPONENT	**FACTORS**	**FACTOR TIME**
Bible Learning	*Before:* Should not receive consecutive bible studies, but may understand Church beliefs *After:* Should receive bible studies and understand Church beliefs	STAGE ONE: No specific bible knowledge required for baptism, but is always valuable ▪ Should not baptised without understanding of biblical gospel and baptism ▪ Commitment to learn more from the bible should be expected.
Faith Experience	*Before*: Should experience conversion *After:* Should have relationship with God, share faith, pray daily, read/study bible daily	STAGE TWO: Baptised once individual has experienced conversion ▪ Evidence of conversion should be displayed ▪ Commitment to grow with Jesus is should be understood
Church Involvement	*Before:* Should attend Church regularly After: Should be regularly involved with a form of ministry	STAGE TWO: Baptised once individual is accepting of Church family and attendance ▪ Church involvement should not be forced on an individual, but encouraged to develop
Mentorship	*Before:* Should not have a direct mentor *After:* Should have a direct mentor	STAGE ONE: No direct mentor required before baptism ▪ Mentor relationships should be considered during baptism, and friendships should exist

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS		
COMPONENT	**FACTORS**	**FACTOR LEVELS**
Bible Learning	Relational, Christ-centred, relate to spiritual life, gospel/basics of faith first, continue in prophecy/teachings after, and applies to lifestyle last, use studies for their walk with God, heart experience	1. Gospel studies 2. Teachings studies 3. Lifestyle studies ▪ Given relationally, with application to experience ▪ Don't separate experience in mind and heart
Faith Experience	Commitment as disciple of Jesus, begins with repentance, must naturally grow, features personal devotions (bible study/prayer), a desire to share your faith, confession that Jesus is Lord and Saviour, relationship with Jesus	1. Repent/Confess 2. Walk with God 3. Witness ▪ All based upon a relationship with Jesus and a commitment to being His disciple ▪ The growth must be naturally nurtured – not forced
Church Involvement	Maintain activity, increase responsibility, be intentional (plan), identify suitable ministries, as a service for their purpose, attending regularly from the start to services and gatherings	1. Attend 2. Participate 3. Lead ▪ Responsibility must be increased as they grow ▪ Assign according to their purpose and gifts
Mentorship	Spiritual, power should be slowly taken off (as a coach), community practice environments, done relationally, according to own personality and style, friendship is foundational,	1. Friendship 2. Mentor 3. Coach ▪ Done relationally and informally, with the right person ▪ Select according to personality and style

SPSS DATA FREQUENCIES
Pastor Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Are you male or female?	Male	6	100
	Female	0	0
	Total	6	100
How old are you?	20 or younger	0	0
	21-30	0	0
	31-40	1	16.7
	41-50	0	0
	51 or older	5	83.3
	Total	6	100
Does a person have to meet certain prerequisites before you baptise them?	Yes	6	100
	No	0	0
	Total	6	100
On average, how many months do you spend preparing a candidate for baptism?	0	1	16.7
	1-3	3	50
	4-6	2	33.3
	7-12	0	0
	13 or more	0	0
	Total	6	100
Do you consider baptism as an essential part to the Christian experience for an individual?	Yes	6	100
	No	0	0
	Total	6	100

Section B: Before Baptism

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
A person is encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation before I baptise them	False	4	66.7
	True	2	33.3
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's beliefs before I baptise them	False	6	100
	True	0	0
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to attend church regularly before I baptise them	False	2	33.3
	True	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from the church before I baptise them	False	4	66.7
	True	2	33.3
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church before I baptise him/her	Very untrue	3	50
	Mostly untrue	1	16.7
	Neutral	2	33.3
	Mostly true	0	0
	Very true	0	0
	Total	6	100

A person is encouraged to receive strong support from the church members regarding his/her baptism before I baptise him/her	Very untrue	1	16.7
	Mostly untrue	1	16.7
	Neutral	1	16.7
	Mostly true	3	50
	Very true	0	0
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to experience a life conversion before I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	1	16.7
	Mostly true	1	16.7
	Very true	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God before I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	0	0
	Mostly true	2	33.3
	Very true	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to share his/her faith before I baptise him/her	Very untrue	1	16.7
	Mostly untrue	2	33.3
	Neutral	1	16.7
	Mostly true	2	33.3
	Very true	0	0
	Total	6	100

Section C: After Baptism

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
A person is encouraged to receive bible studies after I baptise him/her	False	2	33.3
	True	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to have a complete understanding of the church's fundamental beliefs after I baptise him/her	False	5	83.3
	True	1	16.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after I baptise him/her	False	2	33.3
	True	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to regularly attend church after I baptise him/her	False	0	0
	True	6	100
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to have a spiritual mentor from church after I baptise him/her	False	2	33.3
	True	4	66.7
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry after I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	2	33.3
	Neutral	0	0
	Mostly true	2	33.3
	Very true	2	33.3
	Total	6	100

The church members are encouraged to offer strong support to a person who has recently been baptised	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	0	0
	Mostly true	3	50
	Very true	3	50
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God after I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	1	16.7
	Neutral	0	0
	Mostly true	0	0
	Very true	5	83.3
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to share his/her faith after I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	2	33.3
	Mostly true	1	16.7
	Very true	3	50
	Total	6	100

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
A person is encouraged to pray every day after I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	1	16.7
	Mostly true	2	33.3
	Very true	3	50
	Total	6	100
A person is encouraged to read/study the bible every day after I baptise him/her	Very untrue	0	0
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	1	16.7
	Mostly true	2	33.3
	Very true	3	50
	Total	6	100

Church Member Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
How old are you?	20 or younger	13	8.9
	21-30	23	15.8
	31-40	25	17.1
	41-50	21	14.4
	51 or older	64	43.8
	Total	146	100
Are you male or female?	Male	56	38.4
	Female	90	61.6
	Total	146	100
Have you been attending church your whole life?	Yes	78	53.4
	No	68	46.6
	Total	146	100
For how many months were you regularly attending your church before your baptism?	0	14	9.6
	1-3	18	12.3
	4-6	24	16.4
	7-12	12	8.2
	13 or more	78	53.4
	Total	146	100
How many members were attending the church that you were baptised in?	1-50	23	15.8
	51-100	44	30.1
	101-200	50	34.2
	201-300	17	11.6
	301 or more	12	8.2
	Total	146	100
How many months did you spend preparing for baptism?	0-3	85	58.2
	4-6	36	24.7
	7-11	10	6.8
	12-17	6	4.1
	18 or more	9	6.2
	Total	146	100

Results by Age Group: Mean and Variance

	20 or younger		31-30		31-40		41-50		51 or older		Total	
	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance
Have you been attending church your whole life?	1.23	.192	1.43	.257	1.36	.240	1.62	.248	1.52	.254	1.47	.251
How long were you regularly attending your church before your baptism?	4.08	2.077	3.48	2.988	4.20	1.333	3.67	2.533	3.83	1.827	3.84	2.042
How many members were attending the church that you were baptised in?	2.46	.769	3.04	.862	2.60	1.417	2.86	1.029	2.53	1.523	2.66	1.273
How many months did you spend preparing for baptism?	1.31	.397	1.39	.431	2.04	1.457	2.24	2.490	1.70	1.260	1.75	1.318

I was encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation for my baptism	1.31	.231	1.35	.237	1.48	.260	1.52	.262	1.41	.245	1.42	.245
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs before my baptism	1.62	.256	1.52	.261	1.80	.167	1.81	.162	1.55	.252	1.63	.235
I was encouraged to regularly attend church before my baptism	1.54	.269	1.70	.221	1.52	.260	1.76	.190	1.63	.238	1.63	.235
I was encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from church before my baptism	1.46	.269	1.57	.257	1.60	.250	1.57	.257	1.38	.238	1.48	.251
I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church before my baptism	3.08	1.744	3.65	1.601	3.16	1.723	3.33	2.233	3.19	1.742	3.27	1.770
The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	3.69	1.397	3.91	.992	4.00	.917	3.95	.948	3.59	1.324	3.77	1.155
I was encouraged to experience a life conversion before my baptism	3.23	.692	3.22	1.360	3.28	1.127	3.52	1.962	3.64	1.821	3.46	1.547
I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God before my baptism	4.00	1.000	4.48	.897	4.40	.750	4.14	1.829	4.08	1.565	4.20	1.305
I was encouraged to share my faith before my baptism	3.15	.808	3.30	1.494	3.52	1.343	3.29	2.214	3.19	1.964	3.27	1.690
I was encouraged to receive bible studies after my baptism	1.77	.192	1.65	.237	1.72	.210	1.67	.233	1.59	.245	1.65	.229
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs after my baptism	1.77	.192	1.57	.257	1.76	.190	1.71	.214	1.67	.224	1.68	.217
I was encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after my baptism	1.62	.256	1.70	.221	1.76	.190	1.76	.190	1.81	.155	1.76	.184
I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	1.31	.231	1.39	.249	1.44	.257	1.33	.233	1.44	.250	1.40	.242
I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church since my baptism	3.77	.859	4.09	.628	4.12	.777	3.62	1.148	3.81	1.298	3.88	1.047
The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	3.69	.731	3.83	1.059	3.80	.833	3.33	1.433	3.52	1.301	3.60	1.151
I have been regularly attending church since my baptism	4.38	.923	4.52	.534	4.60	.833	4.62	.448	4.56	1.107	4.55	.842
I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God for the first two years after my baptism	4.15	.641	4.30	.585	4.48	.760	3.76	.990	3.97	1.491	4.10	1.108
I was encouraged to share my faith since my baptism	3.69	.897	3.87	.846	4.44	.923	3.81	.862	4.03	1.332	4.01	1.103
I was encouraged to pray (personally) every day since my baptism	3.85	.641	4.09	.901	4.28	1.127	4.19	.762	4.11	1.369	4.12	1.088
I was encouraged to read/study the bible every day since my baptism	4.23	.526	4.04	.953	4.32	.977	4.10	.790	4.20	1.339	4.18	1.048

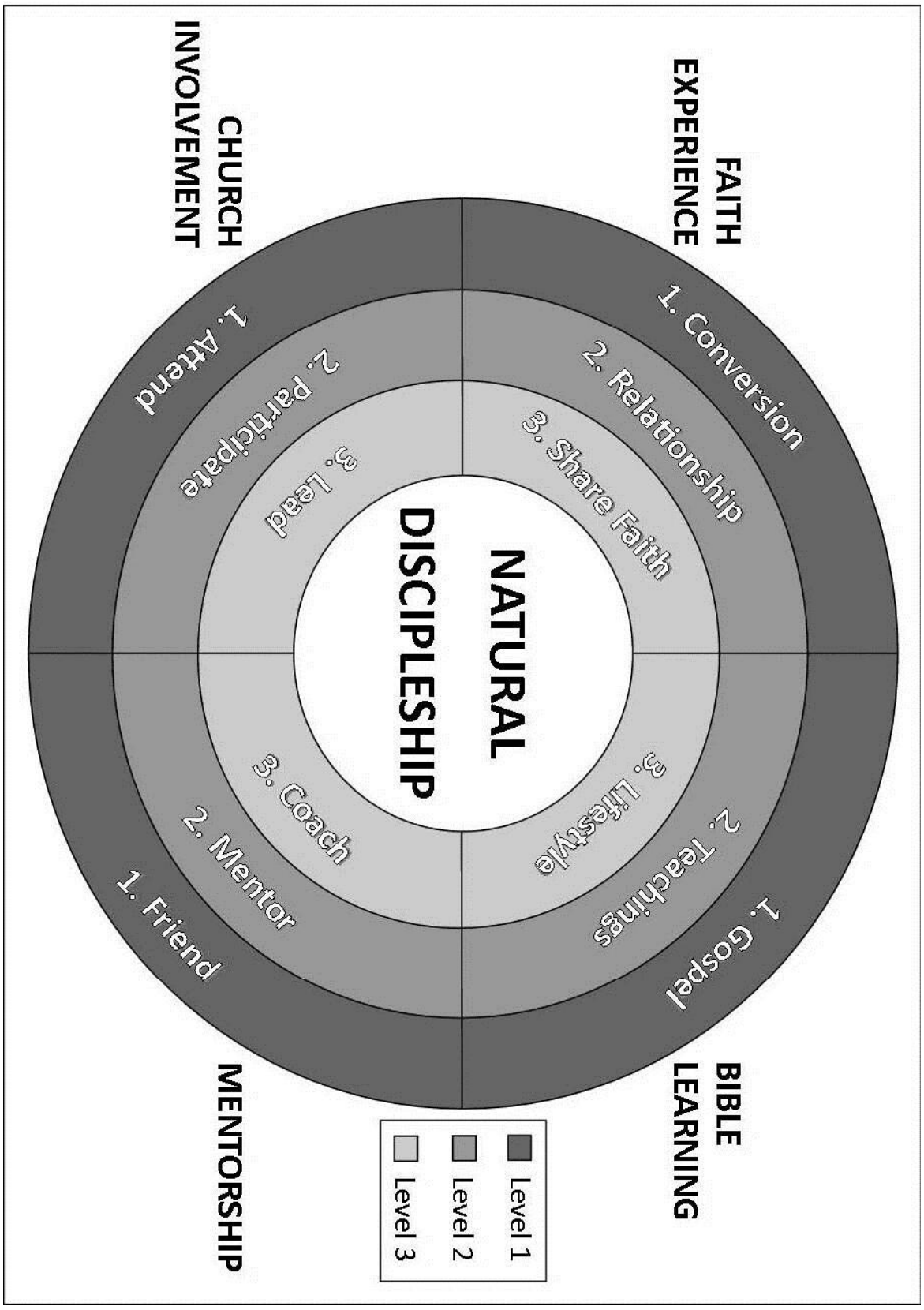
Section B: Before Baptism

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
I was encouraged to receive ten or more bible studies as preparation for my baptism	False	85	58.2
	True	61	41.8
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs before my baptism	False	54	37
	True	92	63
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to regularly attend church before my baptism	False	54	37
	True	92	63
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to receive spiritual mentoring from church before my baptism	False	76	52.1
	True	70	47.9
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church before my baptism	Very untrue	23	15.8
	Mostly untrue	16	11
	Neutral	35	24
	Mostly true	43	29.5
	Very true	29	19.9
	Total	146	100
The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	Very untrue	7	4.8
	Mostly untrue	9	6.2
	Neutral	35	24
	Mostly true	54	37
	Very true	41	28.1
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to experience a life conversion before my baptism	Very untrue	14	9.6
	Mostly untrue	13	8.9
	Neutral	50	34.2
	Mostly true	30	20.5
	Very true	39	26.7
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God before my baptism	Very untrue	8	5.5
	Mostly untrue	5	3.4
	Neutral	20	13.7
	Mostly true	30	20.5
	Very true	83	56.8
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to share my faith before my baptism	Very untrue	21	14.4
	Mostly untrue	14	9.6
	Neutral	46	31.5
	Mostly true	34	23.3
	Very true	31	21.2
	Total	146	100

Section C: After Baptism

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
I was encouraged to receive bible studies after my baptism	False	51	34.9
	True	95	65.1
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to have a complete understanding of my church's beliefs after my baptism	False	46	31.5
	True	100	68.5
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to regularly attend church related gatherings after my baptism	False	35	24
	True	111	76
	Total	146	100
I received spiritual mentoring from church for at least one year after my baptism	False	87	59.6
	True	59	40.4
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to be regularly involved with a form of ministry in my church since my baptism	Very untrue	7	4.8
	Mostly untrue	5	3.4
	Neutral	29	19.9
	Mostly true	63	43.2
	Very true	42	28.8
	Total	146	100
The church members were encouraged to offer me strong support after my baptism	Very untrue	7	4.8
	Mostly untrue	13	8.9
	Neutral	43	29.5
	Mostly true	51	34.9
	Very true	32	21.9
	Total	146	100
I have been regularly attending church since my baptism	Very untrue	5	3.4
	Mostly untrue	0	0
	Neutral	13	8.9
	Mostly true	19	13
	Very true	109	74.7
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to have a positive and personal relationship with God for the first two years after my baptism	Very untrue	4	2.7
	Mostly untrue	6	4.1
	Neutral	32	21.9
	Mostly true	34	23.3
	Very true	70	47.9
	Total	146	100

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
I was encouraged to share my faith since my baptism	Very untrue	4	2.7
	Mostly untrue	7	4.8
	Neutral	34	23.3
	Mostly true	39	26.7
	Very true	62	42.5
	Total	146	100

I was encouraged to pray (personally) every day since my baptism	Very untrue	3	2.1
	Mostly untrue	8	5.5
	Neutral	29	19.9
	Mostly true	34	23.3
	Very true	72	49.3
	Total	146	100
I was encouraged to read/study the bible every day since my baptism	Very untrue	4	2.7
	Mostly untrue	5	3.4
	Neutral	26	17.8
	Mostly true	36	24.7
	Very true	75	51.4
	Total	146	100

Formula of Practising Baptism Strategies