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Omega Graduate School

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Submission Date:

April 30, 3023

20 Day Exercise Submission PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Write and submit to Dial in one document the following using the headings as listed, and using the prompt provided:

1. Problem and Purpose Statements (2 paragraphs) The problem is… The purpose of this action research project is to address the problem of…

Note: This section should be approximately 1 paragraph for each prompt. Start each paragraph with the prompt, then explain in more detail.

2. Significance of the Problem The problem is significant because…

Note: Start with the prompt provided, then explain in detail why the problem is significant. This should be 1 page in length.

3. Research Question How does (intervention) affect (problem) in a (site/ organization/ community)?

Note: Start with the prompt, then explain in 1 paragraph.

4. Professional Relevance (1-2 pages) This problem is relevant to my professional context because…

Note: The prompt should be followed by a detailed explanation of why, how, when, where, and whom this problem affects. Structure (Assignment evaluation includes the following structure below).

a. Download the “OGS APA Course Assignments Template 7th Ed 2021” template from the General Helps folder in the AA-101 The Gathering Place Course on DIAL. Using the template create the following pages.

b. Copy and paste the assignment instructions from the syllabus starting on a new page after the title page, adhering to APA 7th edition style (APA 7 Workshop, Formatting, and Style Guide, APA 7 Quick Guide).

c. Start the assignment on a new page after the copied assignment instructions.

d. Document all sources in APA style, 7th edition ( APA 7 Reference Example, APA 7 Quick Guide)

5. Submit through DIAL to the professor.

1. Problem and Purpose Statements (2 paragraphs)

The problem is that despite biblical studies some of the women at a medium-sized church in Culpeper, Virginia are seeming to gravitate toward false teachers. The church leadership has publicly addressed by name some well-known leaders of unbiblical trending movements such as Word of Faith and the Prosperity Gospel. However some of the women are drawn to other popular teachers that have not been addressed. These teachers promote eisegesis over exegesis, extra-biblical revelation, and unbiblical approaches to prayer. Some also involve syncretism with other, unbiblical practices either not found in Scripture or even directly contradicting Scripture. The women may also be unaware that some of the popular teachers they do follow have partnered with and endorsed some of the more controversial, well known unbiblical teachers.

The purpose of this action research project is to address the problem of gaps in biblical training and worldview discernment in the women at City Light Baptist Church. Addressing this issue involves consideration of several factors. It is unknown how long the women have been familiar with the Baptist tradition as stated and practiced at this congregation. It is also unknown what religious (or nonreligious) backgrounds the women have come from prior to City Light. Also important for consideration would be any formal or informal religious or worldview training any of them have had outside of a church context.

Note: This section should be approximately 1 paragraph for each prompt. Start each paragraph with the prompt, then explain in more detail.

1. Significance of the Problem

Note: Start with the prompt provided, then explain in detail why the problem is significant. This should be 1 page in length.

The problem is significant because it not only effects women, but a larger part of the Christian population. Although the leadership at City Light carefully vets its music and teaching materials, calls out false teachers, and has active discipleship activities for every age group, some of the women are promoting false teachers. While these women exhibit awareness of some of the more obvious false teachers, the fact that they are still unaware of some presents an opportunity to beef up discipleship training and discipleship. Observations show that it is those women from other churches who have come to City Light who are promoting teachers and leaders they are not aware are unbiblical. The women who follow these teachings may be harmed but also pass those teachings on to family members, who may then continue to pass them on to others. False teachings are harmful in many ways.

The problem points toward a larger trend of false teachers supported in women's groups in mainstream Christianity. Using the statistically validated American Worldview Inventory, the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University has conducted some recent studies on worldview in the United States. In 2020, they released a study titled, *Perceptions of God* (AWVI 2020 Results – Release #3: Perceptions of God 2020). It found that the number of women holding an orthodox, biblical view of God went down 25 points from what it was in 1991 (AWVI 2020 Results – Release #3: Perceptions of God 2020).

Some of the false teachers that the church has spoken against are involved with the Word of Faith movement, while others that have come up in the women's group are also involved but not as directly. In a study conducted in 2022, scholar S.E. Zaluchu defined the Word of Faith movement as, “a pattern formulated by Kenneth Hagin to teach that believers must ‘claim their spiritual heritage’ as children of God. The trick is to use a carefully articulated prayer as a declaration of faith through positive words (Zaluchu, 2022).” Zaluchu noted that the movement interprets the Bible through eisegesis rather than exegesis (Zaluchu, 2022). Some of the ones supported by these women do not openly promote Word of Faith theology but support, affiliate with, or fail to rebuke those that do.

3. Research Question How does (intervention) affect (problem) in a (site/ organization/ community)?

How does a basic, biblical worldview training course at City Light Baptist Church affect the discernment of the women in recognizing false teachings/teachers?

Note: Start with the prompt, then explain in 1 paragraph.

Biblical Worldview training based on the belief statement found at the church website, would aim to familiarize the women with the core beliefs of the church so they would be able to identify even subtle unbiblical teachings. A solid, biblical understanding of the Christian faith would ground the women with a concrete foundation so they know what the correct one looks like. In addition, a firm grasp of fundamental theological terms could be combined with the course to strengthen spiritual growth and understanding.

4. Professional Relevance (1-2 pages) This problem is relevant to my professional context because…

Note: The prompt should be followed by a detailed explanation of why, how, when, where, and whom this problem affects. Structure (Assignment evaluation includes the following structure below).

Why: This problem is relevant to my faith context because if affects brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as those outside the faith the Christians are called to share the Gospel with. Most specifically in this situation, it affects sisters in Christ. On a professional level it effects many of the students in the Virginia Community college system as well as people I work with in retail, both coworkers and and customers, because many of them attend churches led by these leaders and/or purchase their books.

How: The women at City Light Baptist Church will be assessed for Biblical worldview, and be instructed with a curriculum based on results of the assessment, then reassessed to see if the curriculum was affective.

When: Even though false teachings have been around as long as the church, they are still practiced today and still need to be addressed as soon as possible. The goal of the DSL project is to begin the research as soon as possible, once all the paperwork and forms are complete, and approvals have been obtained.

Where: In a larger context, one of evangelical America’s largest congregations is Lakewood church in Houston, TX, led by Joel Osteen, who is one of the leading prosperity gospel teachers (Cochran, 2021). He has affiliated with Oprah Winfrey and Daniel Floyd (Winfrey, 2012; *Pastor Joel Osteen: Next Level Thinking (Q&A)* 2019). Oprah is a false teacher because she claims to be Christian but promotes many unbiblical teachings and teachers. Apologetics scholar P. Tunnicliffe notes that Oprah promotes the lie that humans can be like God (Tunnicliffe, 2009).

One of the largest Churches in Virginia is Lifepoint, led by Pastor Daniel Floyd and headquartered in Fredericksburg, Virginia (*Locations* 2023). Lifepoint consists of its main campus in Fredericksburg, in addition to Spotsylvania, Stafford, Richmond, and Culpeper, as well as an online campus (*Locations*, 2023). The Culpeper, VA campus is just minutes away from City Light Baptist Church.

Whom: The sisters in Christ are affected because not only could it lead them down the wrong path but they could pass it on to others, especially their children and grandchildren. In addition, they could mislead nonbelievers in a number of ways. Either the nonbeliever will stay that way because even they see problems with the false teachings which reinforce their disbelief, or they will desire to come to Christ only to accept a false gospel from a Christian who does not know any better, and will be led astray.

Works Cited

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Zaluchu, S. E. (2022). Prosperity theology in the pandemic era. *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*, *12*(1), 185–193. https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8633/cgp/v12i01/185-193