**Assignment 1:**

**“Thesis Assignment”**

**Although the mainline church has good intentions, wanting to pitch a large tent, the mainline church has lost its gospel due to its positions on universalism and sin; this problem is evidenced by its decline and impact on society at large.**

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Omega Graduate School

COM 822-22: Persuasive Communication

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Thesis Statement:

**Although the mainline church has good intentions, wanting to pitch a large tent and wanting to reach a lot of people, sharing God’s love, the mainline church has lost its gospel due to its positions on universalism and sin; this problem is evidenced by its decline and impact on society at large.**

 The mainline church is well known for its political stances. However, mainline churches are some of the most purple[[1]](#footnote-0) churches. It involves a lot of variety in thought and praxis concerning religion. There are many people who do not “fall in line” with many of the political and theological stances of mainline faiths. Therefore, they have left. One such issue is its theological position on universalism. This is the theological position that a loving God would not send someone to hell. In fact, it could and does sometimes mean that hell does not exist. Therefore, everyone is “a ok” with God. Unfortunately, this has led many to wonder if the church is even needed. Sadly, this has created many social implications. Therefore, although the mainline church has good intentions, wanting to pitch a large tent and reach a lot of people, sharing God’s love, the mainline church has lost its gospel due to its positions on universalism and sin; this problem is evidenced by its decline and impact on society at large.

 The position on universalism was an answer to a legalistic and judgmental form of religion that basically said, “follow me or else you go to hell.”[[2]](#footnote-1) Churches and preachers were known for “hellfire and brimstone” sermons. In fact, one of the more well-known sermons within Christendom is “Sinners in the hands of an angry God” by Jonathan Edwards. The church wanted to respond and shift the focus away from judgment and damnation toward love and acceptance. Therefore, it started shifting away from difficult topics such as “sin” and telling everyone that they are “ok” or “just fine.” There is no need for a savior. Instead, Jesus is just a friend by your side. While Jesus does call us friends, there is a bit more to the story.

 Unfortunately, this type of messaging worked against the church. The mainline churches over corrected. It moved away from the idea that Jesus is needed to address our sin problem, to everybody is just fine. The implications of this move has created substantial decline. People have begun questioning if any of it is needed. Because of the decline, the church no longer has any real standing in social spheres. When the church speaks out or protests, even calls for mercy, these calls are trivialized as religious zealotry. This needs to change. This is the logic behind my thesis.

Michael: You have a great start here! It will be interesting to see how you define various terms you are using. Also, I will be looking forward to seeing the strongest arguments you can find against your argumentative thesis. Finally, your persuasive argumentative thesis statement feels like it needs a little more massaging to get it more succinct in expression for the reader and potential hearer. I am pasting below what I saved for you from the thesis generator:

1. Even though mainline churches are resilient, and they have stood the test of time, main line churches have lost their gospel because massive decline across denominational lines and lack of interest.

2. While mainline churches are resilient, and they have stood the test of time, main line churches have lost their gospel because massive decline across denominational lines and lack of interest.

3. Whereas mainline churches are resilient, and they have stood the test of time, main line churches have lost their gospel given that massive decline across denominational lines and lack of interest.

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1. This is an illustration merging the representative colors of red (Republican) and blue (democrat). [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. This is an incredibly oversimplified and generalized statement used for illustrative purposes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)