

Beeson Divinity School  
Doctor of Ministry Studies  
**Summary of Turabian Style  
For Dissertations**  
Based on the 7th Edition



**SAMFORD UNIVERSITY**

**July 2011**

**Note:**

*The guidelines in this book are largely taken from the 7th edition of A Manual for Writers by Kate L. Turabian. On points at which this guide differs from the Turabian Style Guide, D.Min. students should follow this guide. For areas not covered in this summary, follow the guidelines in the Turabian manual.*

*Suggestions of additional information that should be included in this guide in future editions should be directed to the D.Min. office.*

## Front Matter

---

The front matter of the dissertation should appear in this order:

- title page
- blank page
- approval sheet
- dedication page (optional)
- table of contents
- list of tables (if any)
- acknowledgments (optional)
- abstract

Front matter is paginated with lowercase roman numerals (i, ii, iii) centered at the bottom of the page. Although page numbers are counted beginning with the title page, *they should not appear* on any pages that precede the table of contents. For example, although the title page is counted as page i, no page number will appear on it. The table of contents should be the first page with a visible page number. See Turabian A.1.4 and example at the end of this summary.

### Title Page

The title of the dissertation should be two inches from the top of the page and centered. All text on the title page should be in all caps. The title should be followed by the student's name, the name of the divinity school and university, and the projected month and year of the student's graduation. The bottom page margin should be one inch. See sample title page in appendix.

### Approval Sheet

The approval sheet follows a blank page. The words "APPROVAL SHEET" should appear two inches from the top of the page, followed by the dissertation's title, the student's name, and blanks for their committee's signatures. No page number should appear on the approval sheet. Make sure that the dissertation title on the title page exactly matches the title on the approval sheet. See sample approval sheet in appendix.

### Dedication Page

A dedication page is optional. It should simply say "To \_\_\_\_\_" rather than "Dedicated to \_\_\_\_\_." This is not a complete sentence and should not be followed by a period. No page number should appear on a dedication page.

### Table of Contents

The first page of the Table of Contents should be labeled "CONTENTS." If the table of contents runs to more than one page, do not repeat the label. No pages that precede the table of contents should be listed in it. For example, "APPROVAL SHEET" should *not* be an item in the table of contents.

The Table of Contents should be the first page of the dissertation with a visible page number, though the previous pages should be counted in the page numbering.

For additional formatting specifications, please see the table of contents example in the Appendix.

### Abstract

The Abstract must be less than 100 words. It should be single-spaced and written in complete sentences. It should state the dissertation's thesis, method of research, and result.

Below the abstract, there must be a paragraph granting permission to publish the abstract in the ATLA index (follow example in Appendix).

### Abstract

Acknowledgements should be double spaced and formatted to match the text body of the dissertation. See Turabian A.2.1.

### **Text**

---

All text in the body of the dissertation should be 12 point Times New Roman or comparable font. Footnotes should be 10 point font (If your word processor automatically numbers your footnotes in superscript, that is acceptable as long as the notes themselves are in 10 point font).

In spite of the fact that for many years, students been told to put two spaces after a period, the current Turabian style dictates only one space after a period.

Text should be double-spaced, except for block quotations (see below). Each paragraph should be indented, and there should *not* be an extra blank line between paragraphs.

### **Headings and Subheadings**

---

When chapters are divided into subheadings, the format of each subheading should indicate to the reader the level of subheading.

Chapter Title: CENTERED IN ALL CAPS

First level: **Centered and Bold in Headline-style Capitalization**

Second level: Centered in Headline-style Capitalization

Third level: **Left-justified and Bold in Headline-style Capitalization**

Fourth level: Left-justified with sentence-style capitalization

There must be at least two subheads at any level. Never end a page with a heading or subheading.

There should be two blank lines between each subhead, or between the subhead and the text. In most word processors, you will have to change from double space to single space to achieve this spacing.

See the example in the Appendix.

### **Block quotations**

---

Quotations that run to five or more lines should be in block quote format. This means single spacing the quote and indenting the entire quotation the same amount that you indent the

beginning of each paragraph. Leave a blank line before and after the quote. Do not add any punctuation such as quotation marks, but leave the punctuation as it is in the material you are quoting.

For more information, see Turabian 25.5.2

#### *Example of a Block Quote*

The success of a preacher or a sermon should not be judged solely by the congregation's response. Bryan Chapell warns against this danger:

Public ministry true to God's purposes requires devoted private prayer. We should not expect our words to acquaint others with the power of the Spirit if we have not met with him. Faithful preachers plead for God to work as well as for their own accuracy, integrity, and skill in proclaiming his Word. Success in the pulpit can be the force that leads a preacher to from prayerful dependence on the Spirit. Congregational accolades for public excellence may tempt one to put too much confidence in personal gifts, acquired skills, or a particular method of preaching.<sup>5</sup>

The most effective preachers are more concerned with bringing glory to God than they are with bringing glory to themselves.

### **Pagination**

---

Pages should be numbered with Arabic numerals beginning with the first page after the abstract. The page number should be centered at the bottom of the page on the first page of each chapter. For all pages that do not begin a chapter, the page number should be in the top right. See formatting guide on page 10 for a guide to paginating in MS Word.

### **Source Citation**

---

The numbering of footnotes should start over with each chapter. Footnotes should be separated from the rest of the text by a short line (this is an automatic feature in MS Word). Footnotes should be single spaced with a blank between each footnote.

Beeson D.Min. dissertations should cite sources in "Bibliography Style" footnotes (See Turabian 16). There should be a corresponding citation in the bibliography at the end of the dissertation. Examples of footnotes and bibliographic notes:

#### Book by One author:

footnote:

1. Gerald Bray, *Creeds, Councils, and Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1984), 45.

Bibliography citation:

Bray, Gerald. *Creeds, Councils, and Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1984.

### Book by Multiple Authors

Footnote:

1. Fisher Humphreys and Philip Wise, *A Dictionary of Doctrinal Terms* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1983), 187.

Bibliography citation:

Humphreys, Fisher, and Philip Wise. *A Dictionary of Doctrinal Terms*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1983.

### Two Books by the Same Author

Footnote:

1. Allen Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory* (Grand Rapids: Kregel 2006), 65.

2. Allen Ross, *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 131.

Bibliography citation:

Ross, Allen. *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

———*Recalling the Hope of Glory*. Grand Rapids: Kregel 2006.

### Single Contribution in an Edited Book

Footnote:

1. James Earl Massey, “Faith and Christian Life in the African-American Spirituals” in *God the Holy Trinity: Reflections on Christian Faith and Practice*, ed. Timothy George (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 59.

Bibliography citation:

Massey, James Earl. “Faith and Christian Life in the African-American Spirituals.” In *God the Holy Trinity: Reflections on Christian Faith and Practice*, edited by Timothy George, 57-68. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

### Edition Other Than First

Footnote:

1. Fisher Humphreys, *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology Has Changed and What It Means To Us All*, rev. ed. (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2002) 23.

Bibliography citation:

Humphreys, Fisher. *The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology Has Changed and What It Means To Us All*, rev. ed. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys Publishing, 2002.

### Journal Article in Print

Footnote:

1. Mark DeVine, "Open Theism: Roots, Realities, and Reckonings," *Theology for Ministry: Contemporary Movements in American Christianity* 3, no. 1 (May 2008): 49.

Bibliography citation:

DeVine, Mark "Open Theism: Roots, Realities, and Reckonings." *Theology for Ministry: Contemporary Movements in American Christianity* 3, no. 1 (May 2008): 47-56.

### Journal Article Online

Footnote:

1. Jan Verbruggen, "Of Muzzles and Oxen: Deuteronomy 25:4 and 1 Corinthians 9:9," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49, no. 4 (December 2006). 703, <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.samford.edu/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=9&sid=75034c96-4caf-4700-bdce-6425403f9f56%40SRCSM2> (Accessed March 30, 2009).

Bibliography citation:

Verbruggen, Jan "Of Muzzles and Oxen: Deuteronomy 25:4 and 1 Corinthians 9:9." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49, no. 4 (December 2006). <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.samford.edu/ehost/pdf?vid=3&hid=9&sid=75034c96-4caf-4700-bdce-6425403f9f56%40SRCSM2> (Accessed March 30, 2009).

For more information, see Turabian 17.2.7

### Dissertation

Footnote:

J. Norfleete Day, "The Woman at the Well: Interpretation of John 4:1-42 in Retrospect and Prospect" (Ph.D. diss., Baylor University, 1999), 12.

Bibliography citation:

Day, J. Norfleete. "The Woman at the Well: Interpretation of John 4:1-42 in Retrospect and Prospect." Ph.D. diss., Baylor University, 1999.

### Personal Email

Footnote:

1. Mark Searby, email message to the author, September 19, 2008.

An email need not be included in a bibliography.

### Website

Footnote:

1. Christ the King Church Vestry, "What We Believe," Christ the King Anglican Church, [www.ctkbirmingham.org](http://www.ctkbirmingham.org) (Accessed June 1, 2008).

Bibliography

Christ the King Church Vestry. "What We Believe." Christ the King Anglican Church. [www.ctkbirmingham.org](http://www.ctkbirmingham.org) (Accessed June 1, 2008).

### Reference Software

Footnote:

1. Walter Bauer, "δυναμις," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), BibleWorks. v.7.

Bibliography:

Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Edited by Frederick W. Danker. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. BibleWorks. v.7.

### Commentary (Written by One Author) in a Multivolume Work

Footnote:

1. Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, vol. 1B of *The New American Commentary*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 117.

Bibliography:

Mathews, Kenneth A. *Genesis 11:27-50:26*. Vol. 1B of *The New American Commentary*, edited by E. Ray Clendenen. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005.

See Turabian 17.1.4

### Book in an Edited Series

Footnote:

1. Beckwith, Carl L. *Hilary of Poitiers on the Trinity: From De Fide to De Trinitate*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 13.

Bibliographic Entry:

Beckwith, Carl L. *Hilary of Poitiers on the Trinity: From De Fide to De Trinitate*. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008.

See Turabian 17.1.5

## **Shortened Citations**

---

Full bibliographic information should only appear the first time you cite a source in each chapter. For each additional citation, only the author's last name, the work's title (without subtitle and shortened if the title is long), and the page number should be listed.

### Shortened Citations

First footnote:

1. Osvaldo Padilla, *The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts: Poetics, Theology and Historiography*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 144 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 23-27.

Each additional citation in the chapter:

1. Padilla, *The Speeches of Outsiders*, 29.

## **Ibid**

---

You may use “Ibid.” to replace the bibliographical information if you cite the same source in the footnote immediately previous on the same page. Do not use “Ibid.” to refer to footnotes that appear on a previous page.

### Use of Ibid.

Preceding citation:

1. Padilla, *The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts*, 29.

Same source, different page cited:

2. Ibid., 31.

Same source, same page cited:

3. Ibid.

## **Appendixes**

---

Most dissertations include appendixes. If, for example, the ministry praxis includes the preaching of sermons by the student, the notes for or texts of the sermons should be provided in the appendixes, not in the text of the dissertation.

Label the first page “Appendix” at the top (or Appendix A, Appendix 1, etc. if there are more than one) or provide a cover page for each appendix bearing only the appendix name. Do not repeat the title if the appendix is more than one page. Each different type of material (i.e. Sermons, database, case studies) should be a separate appendix.

“If the appendix consists of your own explanatory text, double-space it and format it to match the main text. If it consists of a primary document or a case study, you may choose to single-space the text.” (From Turabian A.2.3)

## **Bibliography**

---

See examples under Source Citation section. Sources may be categorized by type of source; if so, the section titles should be alphabetized as well as the authors last names within each category. See also Turabian 16.2, and Turabian figure A. 15 for an example.

### **Personal Data Sheet**

---

The Personal Data Sheet should be the last page in the dissertation. It should be labeled “PERSONAL DATA SHEET” with a one inch top margin. It should include the student’s name, date of birth, education (do not include the D.Min. degree), position(s) served, and any other pertinent information.

## **Formatting an MS Word Document for a Turabian-Style D. Min. Dissertation**

It is best to divide the dissertation into at least three documents: one document for the front matter before the Table of Contents, one for the front matter after the Table of Contents and a third document for the body of the dissertation.

### **Pagination of Front Matter**

The first document should include the title page, a blank page, the approval sheet, and a dedication page if you have one. Because no page numbers appear on these pages, you don't have to worry about pagination in this document, although you should count the number of pages so you will know what number the next document should start at.

The second document begins with the table of contents followed by the acknowledgements page and the abstract. Select Insert, then click on the little arrow in the lower right corner of the Page Numbers box. Select "Format page numbers." In the Format line, choose lowercase Roman numerals. Under Page Numbering, select "Start at" then enter the correct lowercase Roman numeral for the table of contents (based upon how many pages preceded it, including the title page). Click Okay. This should correctly paginate the rest of your front matter.

### **Formatting the Chapters of the Dissertation**

The third document should begin with the first page of the body of the dissertation. You may include all chapters in this third document, in fact it is good to do this so that your page numbers will automatically adjust if you add new material. You will, however, need to insert a section break between each chapter so that the numbering of footnotes will start over.

#### **To format the document for correct footnote numbering in MS Word 2007:**

- 1) Click on the References tab.
- 2) In the Footnotes section, click on the little arrow in the lower right hand corner to open the dialogue box.
- 3) In the Numbering box, select "Restart each section" and click apply. If you insert section breaks between each chapter, your footnote numbering should automatically start over in each chapter.

#### **To format the document for correct footnote numbering in MS Word 2003:**

- 1) Click on the Insert menu.
- 2) Choose References, then choose Footnote.
- 3) Under "Format" beside Numbering, choose "restart each section." Then click Apply. Now your footnote numbering should automatically restart each time you insert a section break.

#### **To insert a section break in MS Word 2007:**

- 1) Click on the page where you want the break to go.
- 2) Click on the Insert tab.
- 3) Click on the Page Break option. This will insert a section break and move your cursor to the next page. You may begin the next chapter here, and your footnote numbers will start over automatically.

**To insert a section break in MS Word 2003:**

- 1) Click on the page where you want the break to go.
- 2) Click the Insert menu.
- 3) Click Break
- 4) Under Section Break Type choose “Next Page.” You should automatically be taken to the next page. You may begin the next chapter here, and your footnote numbers will start over automatically.

Pagination of Dissertation Body in MS Word

Pagination is tricky because Turabian requires that the page number be bottom center on the first page of a chapter, then top right on all subsequent pages.

**To paginate a chapter in MS Word 2007:**

- 1) Click your cursor on the first page of the chapter.
- 2) Click on the Insert tab.
- 3) Look for “Footer” then click the little arrow underneath it. Select “Edit Footer.”
- 4) This will open a new Design tab with additional footer options. Check the box that says “Different First Page.”
- 5) Now look for the Page Number button, which should be near the top right of the screen. Click the little arrow underneath it, choose “Bottom of page” then “Plain Number 2.” This should give you a number 1 on the first page of your chapter with no subsequent pages numbered.
- 6) Now double click your cursor on the first page. This should get you out of header mode back into the regular document.
- 7) Scroll down to the second page of the chapter and double click.
- 8) Open the Insert tab.
- 9) Click the little arrow underneath the Page Number button. Choose “Top of Page,” then “Plain Number 3.” This should insert a number 2 on the top right of the second page and numbers on subsequent pages.
- 10) Proceed to the first page of the next chapter and click on it.
- 11) Click on the Page Layout tab.
- 12) Click the arrow in the bottom corner of the Page Setup section.
- 13) Next to Section Start, select “New Page.”
- 14) Make sure that “Different First Page” is selected under “Header and Footer.”
- 15) Next to Apply to, choose “This point forward.”
- 16) You may now repeat the steps you took to number the pages of your first chapter, beginning with inserting a number in the Footer, then inserting a break before the next page, and placing a number in the top right of the header of the second page of the chapter.

**To paginate a chapter in MS Word 2003:**

- 1) On the file menu, choose Page Setup
- 2) Choose the Layout tab
- 3) Under Section Break, select “New Page”
- 4) In the same tab, under Headers and Footers, choose “Different First Page”
- 5) Click “Okay”
- 6) Click on the first page of the chapter.
- 7) Click on the View menu.
- 8) Choose “Header and Footer”

- 9) Click in the Footer box at the top of the page.
- 10) Click on the Insert menu and choose "Page Numbers"
- 11) Choose Center, then click Okay
- 12) Click in the document body to hide the header and footer
- 13) Insert a section break at the end of the first page of the chapter (see instructions above)
- 14) This should automatically take you to the next page. Now click on the view menu.
- 15) Choose "Header and Footer"
- 16) Click in the header box
- 17) Click on the Insert menu and choose "Page Numbers"
- 18) Choose Right, then click Okay. The rest of your page numbers should now appear in the top right of the page.
- 19) Proceed to the first page of the next chapter and click on it.
- 20) Click on the Page Layout menu.
- 21) Click the arrow in the bottom corner of the Page Setup section.
- 22) Next to Section Start, select "New Page."
- 23) Make sure that "Different First Page" is selected under "Header and Footer."
- 24) Next to Apply to, choose "This point forward."
- 25) This chapter should now be numbered in the correct style.
- 26) Repeat instructions on the first page of each subsequent chapter.

## Some Common Punctuation, Spelling, and Grammar Mistakes

1. Avoid **inconsistent capitalization**. If you choose to capitalize a word or phrase such as “the Word” or “the Law,” that word or phrase should be capitalized every time it is used.
2. Periods and commas should precede closing **quotation marks**. Question marks and exclamation points should precede the closing quotation marks if they are part of the quoted matter, but they should follow the closing quotation mark if they are not.

I said, “Absolutely not.”

John asked, “Have you read my book?”

Did John Newton write “Amazing Grace”?

3. Use the **active voice** rather than the passive voice.
4. Participial and prepositional phrases must modify a noun. Do not separate **modifiers** from the nouns they modify.

[Incorrect] Finding the bride missing, the wedding was cancelled.

[Correct] Finding the bride missing, the pastor cancelled the wedding.

[Incorrect] Walking away from the argument, my stomach was in knots.

[Correct] Kneeling at the pew, I confessed my sin.

[Incorrect] I was told that I won the prize by my mother.

[Correct] I was told by my mother that I won the prize.

5. Subjects and verbs must **agree in number**.  
[Incorrect] Each of the participants are volunteers.  
[Correct] Each of the participants is a volunteer.

6. Do not join **independent clauses** with a comma.

[Incorrect] It was simple to identify the problem, it was difficult to find a solution.

[Correct] It was simple to identify the problem; it was difficult to find a solution.

[Correct] It was simple to identify the problem, but it was difficult to find a solution.

7. A **pronoun** must agree in number with its antecedent.

[Incorrect] An overly protective parent will worry themselves sick.

[Correct] Overly protective parents will worry themselves sick.

[Correct] An overly protective mother will worry herself sick.

8. **Transliterated words** from other languages should be italicized.

The psalmist again refers to God’s *hesed*.

9. Know the difference between “**their**” and “**there.**”

10. Know the difference between “**its**” and “**it’s.**”

# **Sample Dissertation Front Matter**

} 2 inches

HUNGRY FOR SOLID FOOD:  
INSTILLING AN APPETITE FOR THE WORD OF GOD  
IN THE CONGREGATION OF NEW SONG COMMUNITY CHURCH

A MINISTRY DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

}

1.5 inches

ROBERT B. STEVENS

BEESON DIVINITY SCHOOL  
SAMFORD UNIVERSITY  
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

MAY 2011

} 1 inch



} 2 inches

APPROVAL SHEET

HUNGRY FOR SOLID FOOD:  
INSTILLING AN APPETITE FOR THE WORD OF GOD  
IN THE CONGREGATION OF NEW SONG COMMUNITY CHURCH

}  
1.5 inches

Robert B. Stevens


Read and approved by:

Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Second Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_

Third Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



To my grandmother, Hattie Sue Stevens, who taught me to taste and see the goodness of  
the Lord

1.5 inches

And to my children, that they may feed upon the living Word all the days of their lives

} 1 inch  
 CONTENTS } Two blank lines

	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vii
1. 5 inches	ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER		
1. INTRODUCTION .....		1
The Dilemma .....		1
The Desire.....		9
2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....		21
Old Testament Background .....		21
Amos 8:11: Famine of Hearing the Word		
Ezekiel 3: Eating the Scroll		
Nehemiah 8: The Restoration of the Law to Israel		
New Testament Background.....		35
Luke 4: Not by Bread Alone		
John 15: Abiding Word Bearing Fruit		
2 Timothy 3: Equipped by the Word		
2 Peter 2 and Hebrews 5: Craving the Word		
Historical Precedent.....		44
Brief History of Bible Reading Calendars		
Devotional practices of George Mueller, Charles Spurgeon, and John Wesley		
3. THE MINISTRY PRAXIS.....		58
Congregational Survey.....		58

	} 1 inch
Six-Week Sunday Evening Sermon Series.....	66
Forty Day Individual Bible Reading Program.....	75
Children’s Scripture Memory Program.....	80
4. EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS.....	83
Strengths and Weaknesses of Praxis.....	83
The Congregation’s Response.....	89
The Effect on the Project Director.....	91
5. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE MINISTRY.....	95
The Bible for Children at New Song Community Church.....	95
Annual Scripture Emphasis Week.....	100

APPENDIX

1. 5 inches

A. CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY ON BIBLE READING AND PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL PRACTICES.....	107
B. THE M’CHEYNE DAILY BIBLE READING CALENDAR.....	112
C. AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY BIBLE READING CALENDAR.....	116
D. SAMPLE SERMONS	
“Sweeter than Honey: Psalm 119”.....	120
“Not by Bread Alone: Luke 4”.....	130
E. CONGREGANT TESTIMONY.....	138
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	145
PERSONAL DATA SHEET.....	149

} 1 inch

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

] Two blank lines

I am deeply grateful to the people of New Song Community Church for allowing me the time and resources to complete this degree. The church staff, elders, and members were exceedingly patient and supportive. Thank you to all those who participated in the forty-day Bible reading program and to those who took the congregational survey.

It has been a privilege to know and learn from the faculty of Beeson Divinity School, especially my advisor, Dr. Peter Fisher. Thank you for helping me to refine my goals for this praxis, for reading and rereading my revisions, and for keeping me mindful

{

1.5 inches of why I had undertaken this project.

I could never have continued this long in ministry if I did not have such a capable, compassionate, and persevering wife. Julie has done more than anyone else to encourage me in the importance of this project, and her prayers sustained me. She is an excellent example to me and to the congregation of New Song Community Church of one who fears the Lord and feeds on his Word.

ABSTRACT

1 inch

Two blank lines

1.5 inches

New Song Community Church has a history of vibrant worship and close-knit community, but daily Bible Reading has not been a part of the devotional practices of many congregants. The Scriptures portray themselves as necessary for sustenance in the life of faith, and Christian history testifies that heroes of the faith spend time studying God's word each day. The Project Director undertook to preach on the importance of Scripture and to lead the congregation through a forty day Bible reading program with the goal that new habits will form and Bible reading will become central to the life of the church.

PERMISSION

I, the author of the above abstract, hereby give permission to the ATLA Index Board to edit and publish the above abstract and to use it in any information system with which the Index is affiliated. In addition, I certify that I have not assigned or granted my right to apply for a copyright, if any, in the above abstract.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If this abstract has already been submitted for publication, in what publication has, or will, it appear?

\_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

} Two blank lines

**The Dilemma**

} Two blank lines

This praxis director carried out this ministry praxis at New Song Community Church in Maycomb, Alabama. Maycomb is a former mining town with a history of racial division. The five thousand residents are roughly 53 percent Caucasian, 46 percent African-American, and 1 percent other races.<sup>1</sup> The local economy depends primarily on forestry and manufacturing. Maycomb ranks far below the national average in education; only 19 percent of adult residents have a college degree.<sup>2</sup> There are nine Protestant churches in Maycomb.

New Song Community Church, founded in 1970, is a non-denominational congregation of 320 members, with regular Sunday attendance of approximately 450 people. New Song's charismatic roots, relatively young congregation, and emphasis on music and prayer have earned it a reputation for vibrant and well-attended Sunday morning services. The praxis director discerned early on in his ministry at New Song that, in spite of the church's strong tradition of worship, the study of Scripture did not play a central role in the Sunday morning services or in the daily lives of New Song

---

<sup>1</sup> American FactFinder, "Maycomb, AL," United States Census Bureau, <http://factfinder.census.gov>. (Accessed August 26, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

congregants. Having been heavily involved in the Navigators campus fellowship during his college years and serving in Bible churches previous to his time at New Song, the praxis director had taken it for granted that all believers engage in daily Bible reading and some sort of regular Bible study, but this was not the case at New Song.

The praxis director believes that the lack of emphasis on education in Maycomb has contributed to the decentralization of the study of God's Word in Maycomb's other churches. By briefly surveying local congregations, the praxis director found that only two churches offer weekly Bible studies, and one of those offers studies exclusively for women. It is also common for Sunday morning sermons to be topical rather than expository.

The praxis director grieved that not only did his congregation lack the spiritual discipline of daily Bible study, they did not realize how much they were missing by depriving themselves of feeding on the word. The majority of New Song's members were like the Corinthians who contentedly filled their bellies with spiritual milk rather than with solid meat.

### **The Desire**

} Two blank lines

} Two blank lines

The praxis director sought to instill a hunger in his congregation for the Word of God. To this end, he planned to preach a six-week sermon series on the power of the Word while at the same time leading the congregation through a forty day personal Bible reading program. The church hired a full-time children's minister in the year that the director began his praxis; this allowed the congregation to begin a new Scripture memory program for elementary age children to complement the forty day Bible reading program.