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Hospitality and Seminary culture: a phenomenological study on the presence and practice of hospitality between Seminary leaders and students

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HOSPITALITY AND SEMINARY CULTURE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE PRESENCE AND PRACTICE OF HOSPITALITY BETWEEN SEMINARY LEADERS AND STUDENTS

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Approval of Dissertation

We, the faculty supervising the work of **Jesse M. Adams**, affirm that the dissertation, ***Hospitality and Seminary Culture: A Phenomenological Study On The Presence and Practice of Hospitality Between Seminary Leaders and Students,*** meets the high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by the EdD Program in Leadership Studies and the College of Education and Professional Development. The work also conforms to the requirements and formatting guidelines of Marshall University. With our signatures, we approve the manuscript for publication.

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Abstract

While hospitality is a major biblical doctrine and a requirement of Christian living and outreach, few ministers begin their ministries recognizing the essence and essentiality of hospitality in ministry or intentionally highlight and model it to those they lead. One root cause for this may stem from the seminaries in which our ministers train, that our seminaries have no apparent agreement on a formal framework for teaching hospitality and too few seminaries are marked by a culture of hospitality. This study seeks to establish a formal framework for hospitality in seminary education. Such a framework could be used to instigate cultural shifts in seminary education resulting in more hospitable relationships among school personnel, so graduates will be better able to employ hospitable relationships in their future ministries. The study proposes to do this by first developing a propositional framework based upon the literature and then building upon that propositional framework through recommendations gleaned from interviews with seminary administrators and professors, pastors, and missionaries.

Chapter 1: Introduction

NeiZi was in her 60s when I first met her, my wife's Great Aunt from a distant village. We picked her up from the bus station and brought her and my mother-in-law back to the house for dinner, tea, and a night's rest. Although my wife had shared the good news of Jesus with her in the past, NeiZi's life of hardship had kept her closed off and bitter to anything religious. That day, however, things changed. In the comfort of our home and over a table strewn with nectarine rinds and half-finished cups of green tea, NeiZi listened intently as my wife and I shared once more the truth that we are all born terribly distant from our loving Creator and that He has done something marvelous to welcome us back into his arms. That day, NeiZi confessed her need for forgiveness from a Savior who had paid for her sins and accepted God's welcome as his precious daughter.

This memory is one of many my wife and I enjoyed in our home and in the homes of neighbors, students, friends, and family during our decade of missions work in Asia. The influence that hospitality has played in our ministry---whether in our relationship building or in the eternal destinies of folks we have met along life's way---cannot be overstated. Yet as I look back on my life and training, I cannot recall a time when any of my pastors, teachers, professors, or mentors intentionally taught the importance of this biblical mandate. While some of my pastors and mentors in the past had exemplified hospitality, it was only through the natural processes of my own ministry in a limited-access country that I understood it for what the Bible shows it to be, the bedrock of effective ministry.

I share this experience to highlight the fact that this paper, a scholarly investigation of hospitality in seminary education, finds its roots not in educational theory but in my own ministerial experience. Hospitality is an intensely personal endeavor, so to approach it from anything but a personal interest is to unplug it from its power. Henri Nouwen (1986) writes:

> If there is any concept worth restoring to its original depth and evocative potential, it is the concept of hospitality. It is one of the richest biblical terms that can deepen and broaden our insight in our relationships to our fellow human beings. (p. 66)

Background

Hospitality has been a theme of growing import in Christian circles over the past several decades, and not merely as a theological or theoretical construct. Before it even became a popular topic of modern scholarly research, hospitality became action in communities like L'Abri, a collection of homes for religious seekers first founded in Holland in the early '60s by Francis and Edith Schaeffer, or L'Arche, Catholic communities that embrace individuals with disabilities first founded in France in 1964 by Jean Vanier. These communities find their inspiration from the life of Jesus Christ and the redemptive example of God Himself, as well as from such ancient teachings as *The Rule of St. Benedict*, drafted by the 6th century monk who styled his own life and ministries after Matthew 25:31-46 in which Jesus calls his followers to treat every stranger as if he were Christ Himself (see Bretherton, 2004, pp. 96-97). Authors like Christine Pohl (1999), Rosaria Champaign Butterfield (2018), Perry W. H. Shaw (2006, 2011), and E. L. Smither (2021) among many others base their writings about hospitality not merely on their depths of research but more importantly on their years of hands-on, life-on-life, influential practice of hospitality in ministry and missions.

While such examples of hospitable ministries have become more widely recognized, modern authors have also begun to embrace hospitality as one of the most important keys to ministry and mission (see Nouwen, 1986; Bernhard & Clapp, 1996; Oden, 2008; Willis & Clements, 2017; Butterfield, 2018; Hébert, 2021; and Smither, 2021). Theologians have plumbed the biblical depths to ensure hospitality's roots in the very character and mission of God (see Pohl, 1999; Koenig, 2001; Jipp, 2017). Since the mid-‘80s, hospitality has increasingly become an educational motif, not only in religious classrooms but in secular education as well (see

Newman, 2003; Bretherton, 2004; Siew, 2006; Gallagher 2007; Shaw, 2011, pp. 8-9; Stratman, 2013, 2015; Arrington, 2017, p. 28). John Brown University's Aminta Arrington (2017) and Jake Stratman (2013, 2015) have run pilot programs which emphasize hospitality in the college classroom (see also Siew, 2006) as others have done for the church (see Jordan-Simpson, 2009; Harris, 2011).

A wealth of literature exists on the importance and effectiveness of hospitality in education and ministry (see for example Bernhard & Clapp, 1996; Willis & Clements, 2017; Butterfield, 2018; Hébert, 2021; Smither, 2021), yet there still appears to be a gap between theory and practice, specifically in how the many seminaries fail to train future ministers in this ancient, biblical practice (see for example Shaw, 2006, 2011; Arrington, 2017), and how the culture of many seminaries inhibits their ability to exemplify this Christian lifestyle to their students (see James, 2001; Finke, 2002). The problem lies not only in the dearth of focused hospitality education in seminary but also in the culture of the seminaries themselves, cultures which unintentionally promote inhospitable relationships among students and staff.

Perry Shaw's article, "The Hidden Curriculum" (2006) highlights this failure, emphasizing how the structure and culture of modern seminaries as well as the pedagogical approaches of its professors unintentionally de-emphasize the importance of Christian hospitality. In generalizing such things as the cold aloofness of seminary professors and their classrooms or their student assessments based on knowledge, grades, and skills rather than on character, Shaw highlights how a lack of hospitality at all levels of seminary education negatively influences these men and women and their future of effective, personal ministry to their future congregations (see pp. 27-42). In offering 25 practical suggestions for how seminaries might adjust their methods and thereby revolutionize their cultures into something better resembling the

character of Christ, Shaw lays the foundation for a framework of hospitality from which any seminary could learn (see pp. 43-51).

Problem Statement

While hospitality is a major biblical doctrine and a requirement of Christian living and outreach, few ministers begin their ministries already recognizing the essence and essentiality of hospitality in ministry or intentionally highlight and model it to those they lead. One root cause for this may stem from the seminaries in which our ministers train, that our seminaries have no apparent agreement on a formal framework for teaching or exemplifying hospitality and that too few seminaries are marked by a culture of hospitality.

Purpose Statement

This study seeks to establish a formal framework for hospitality in seminary that could be used to instigate cultural shifts in seminary education towards more hospitable relationships between the school's personnel and its students, so that its graduates will then better employ hospitable relationships in their future ministries. It does this by first developing a propositional framework based upon the literature and then building upon that propositional framework through recommendations gleaned from interviews with seminary administrators and professors, pastors, and missionaries.

Research Questions

1. How is Christian hospitality defined by conservative Christian ministers who are active in a full-time Christian ministry?
2. How do conservative Christian ministers use Christian hospitality in their ministry?
3. How do conservative Christian ministers learn to use Christian hospitality in their ministry?

4. To what extent, if any, are the environments inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
5. To what extent, if any, are relationships inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
6. To what extent, if any, is modeling teaching/leadership behaviors inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
7. To what extent, if any, is student spiritual formation inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
8. What are some data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?

Significance

Students who attend seminaries anticipate receiving an education that befits their calling, an education that will prepare them holistically to evangelize the lost, shepherd their flocks, train their congregations, and minister to those whom the Lord brings across their paths. Holistic education strengthens not only the intellect, but also the character and behavior of students, influencing the head, heart, and hands of those in training. Ministries marked by hospitality ought to be a hallmark outgrowth of students graduating from this type of education, yet this is often not the case. Seminaries which would otherwise consider themselves as providing holistic education often maintain the cold and distant educational methods and standards of secular universities: distance in the professor-student relationships, lecture-style courses, independent learning and projects, merit-based grades, etc. Such educational styles negatively influence student learning.

While seminaries train their budding ministers both vocally and in print to love, to minister, to be Christlike, to reach their communities, to build relationships, and even to be hospitable, they evidence by example that it is far more practical to be knowledgeable and educated, to lead from a posture of superiority and independence, and to remain distant from those one teaches. They teach by example that a person attains godliness and the knowledge of the Lord through hard work and under the direction of a centralized authority figure. Upon graduation, seminary students then continue this style of learning and leading into their churches, often without having recognized the distance their education has created between them and their congregants (see Finke & Dougherty, 2002). Certainly, this is not true across the board, as many ministers eventually learn from mentors or by trial-and-error the importance of sharing their lives, time, and space with those to whom they minister. The question remains, however, why hospitality is absent in the culture of most seminaries? Why must our pastors unlearn the leadership principles they were taught through their school's "hidden curriculum"? Why must they depend on mentors and hard-fought experience at the front lines of ministry when hospitality could be part of the very fabric of their religious education? Again, Henri Nouwen (1986) writes:

> Students are not just the poor, needy, ignorant beggars who come to the man or woman of knowledge but...are indeed like guests who honor the house with their visit and will not leave it without having made their own contribution. To look at teaching as a form of hospitality might free it from some of its unreal heaviness and bring some of its exhilarating moments back into perspective. (p. 89)

Chapter 2: Literature Review

While hospitality may seem on the surface like a simple, easily defined topic, the literature on the subject is extensive, revealing the many nuances of an issue many think they already know quite intimately. This literature review investigates two major topics integral to this current study, both Christian hospitality and organizational culture. The first sections of this literature review cover the following topics regarding Christian hospitality: the definition of Christian hospitality, Christian hospitality in biblical history, Christian hospitality in ministry, and Christian hospitality in the seminary classroom. The remaining sections of this literature review cover the following topics regarding organizational culture: the definition of organizational culture, organizational culture in Christian ministries generally, organizational culture in seminaries specifically, and a discussion toward changing a seminary's culture.

Christian Hospitality Defined

Throughout my preparation for this study, I enjoyed numerous conversations in which the topic of hospitality arose, and, in most, I was surprised by the shallowness of people's understanding of it. To many, hospitality is nothing more than making a meal for a sick family member or saying, "*Mi casa, su casa*," when friends visit. "Hospitality" seems to be, for most, merely a synonym for "entertaining," though entertaining is but a small part of true Christian hospitality.

This chapter reviews the literature on hospitality in general, hospitality in ministry, and hospitality in the seminary classroom by emphasizing the biblical underpinnings of hospitality as a great metaphor for God's relationship with rebellious humanity. First, however, it is necessary to distinguish true Christian hospitality from counterfeit versions like those mentioned above (see Butterfield, 2018, pp. 215-216) by settling on a definition of the term.

Authors Dustin Willis and Brandon Clements (2017), pastors both, wrote a short book titled, *The Simplest Way to Change the World,* in which they propose that hospitality as a means of evangelistic outreach *is* that simplest way. They recognized that most Christians misunderstand this word — even to the point of *not* using the word in their book's title! — writing that "the idea of hospitality feels yawn-worthy to many in our [American] culture" (p. 69). From where does such a sentiment come? In part, we have the hospitality industry to blame, that impersonal travel/tourism/hotel industry that has all but monopolized the term and wrung it nearly dry of meaning. In part, too, are the cooking shows and recipe blogs that have turned the term into something solely about food and décor. Although hospitality might often include entertaining, it is not a synonym for entertaining. Hospitality is not merely the act of having someone over for dinner or taking them to lunch. Hospitality is certainly not the act of making vacationers feel at home in some far-flung resort!

Hospitality, thus, proves difficult to define. How one defines "hospitality," in fact, may very well depend upon their tradition and context. Bretherton (2004) attests to this fact: "While hospitality can be seen as a generic term, clearly it does not have a universal definition. ...While the practice of hospitality has been central to many cultures and philosophies, it can only be understood within a particular tradition" (p. 92). Still, it behooves a writer to define his terms, at least within context, from the outset. I will do this by first noting several useful definitions for Christian hospitality that exist in the literature.

Nuances abound in the many definitions and descriptions of hospitality, but one essential aspect is common among many, the bringing together of or relational connection among host, guest, and God. This triangular relationship does not mean that every hospitable act need be overtly evangelistic or even overtly religious, but that true Christian hospitality welcomes both

God and the other. Note this theme in the following five definitions: "Radically ordinary hospitality is this: using your Christian home in a daily way that seeks to make strangers neighbors and neighbors family of God" (Butterfield, 2018, p. 31). "Hospitality is the Christian imperative...of welcoming the stranger to our table, and, in so doing, serving as a living metaphor for the salvation God extends to all of us, welcoming us as sinners to his table of abundance" (Arrington, 2017, p. 27).

- At its core, biblical hospitality means making room for others. We invite others, especially strangers, to enter our space (our homes, our dinner table), care for their physical needs by offering food and drink, and also care for their souls by listening to them and sharing our hope in Christ. (Smither, 2021, pp. 3-4)
- Hospitality is the attitude and practice of providing the atmosphere and opportunities, however risky, in which strangers are free to become friends, thereby feeling accepted, included, and loved. The relationship thus opens up the possibility for eventual communion among the host, the stranger, and God. (Bernhard and Clapp, 1996, p. 17)
- At its core, the practice of hospitality is obeying the command in Romans 15:7 to 'welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you.' It's receiving others into our lives---into relationship and, yes, even into our homes. It welcomes Christians as a way to walk in the truth that we've been made family through the Gospel, and it welcomes non-Christians in an attempt to model and extend the gracious invitations we've received from God in Christ. (Willis & Clements, 2017, pp. 26-27)

A simplified working definition of hospitality emerged from these definitions which emphasize this triangular relationship of host, guest, and God: hospitality is the attitude or act of opening oneself, time, and property to others for the sake of building friendships and helping to strengthen their personal relationship with God.

Christian Hospitality in Biblical History

A proper literature review cannot ignore what is arguably the greatest collection of historical literature in existence, the Holy Bible. This collection of 66 books by no fewer than 35 authors spans a writing period of roughly 1,500 years. While most authors were Jewish, these men lived and wrote within cultures distinctly nomadic, Jewish, Egyptian, Babylonian, Roman and more. Understanding hospitality within its biblical context will allow us to recognize what

separates "Christian hospitality" from other forms of casual or cultural hospitality, and such an understanding is foundational to our overall study of hospitality in the seminary classroom. This section will consider hospitality in the following three contexts: hospitality in the Old Testament, hospitality in the ministry of Jesus, and hospitality in the Early Church.

Hospitality in the Old Testament

Hospitality in the Old Testament is best displayed in two ways, through God's hospitality to humanity and through Israel's hospitality to the stranger. This section will explore each in turn.

The first Old Testament aspect under consideration is God's hospitality to humanity. "The Bible opens with an act of hospitality – creation" (Shaw, 2011, p. 9). The very first words of Scripture say, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" [English Standard Version Bible (ESV), 2016, Gen. 1:1], and goes on to describe how He created it all in preparation for his final and most important creation, mankind. Within the six days of creation, God formed through the power of his voice not only the vast universe filled with its heavenly bodies, but also our Earth covered with water and dry land and filled with fish, birds, creeping things and other animals, not to mention the plants of all kinds (see Gen. 1:3-25).

While God called everything "very good," He saved his most unique creation for last, as if everything He had made had been in preparation for Man, Gods' guest of honor. Rather than speaking Man into existence, however, God crafted him by hand from the dust of the newly created Earth, then breathed life into his lungs. God created this first human (and eventually his wife; see ESV, 2016, Gen. 2:18-25) in his own image – with spirit, personality, self-will, and creativity – and God welcomed them, giving them the entire planet to manage and rule (Gen. 1:24-26), with this invitation:

> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. (ESV, 2016, Gen. 1:28-30)

Willis and Clements (2017) celebrate this invitation this way: “The word every or everything appears repeatedly in [Gen. 1:28-30]. Genesis 1 reads like the most gracious Host in the world is welcoming you into His castle, and He says, 'Look! It's all yours. Everything!'" (p. 38).

The first couple's rebellion against God, however, through the temptation of a fallen angel named Satan, destroyed what could have been a perfect and eternal relationship between God and humanity (ESV, 2016, Gen. 3:1-13). Although this single act of disobedience separated sinful humanity from our holy God and brought a curse upon the world and everything in it, God also sought reconciliation from that very instant and prepared a way to make it possible (Gen. 3:14-19; see also Rom. 5:12-21). Edward L. Smither (2021) calls God "the first missionary in Scripture" (p. 119), and so He is! In his promise to Eve, the salvation of Noah, his call to Abraham, his protection of Joseph and countless other events woven throughout Old Testament history, God planned to provide a Savior, His own Son Jesus, who would pay for humanity's sin and make reconciliation with God possible for all who believe (see John 3:16; Luke 19:10; John 12:32; 2Peter 3:9).

Threads of this promised Messiah run throughout the Old Testament, as do examples of God's desire for us to feast and dwell with Him forever. Amy Oden (2008) notes: "It's striking how often the words 'home,' 'dwelling place,' 'abide,' and 'belong' are used in Scripture to talk about our life in God. (Exodus 29:45-46; 2Sam. 7:14-17; Ps. 23; Jer. 7:3-7; John 1:14; Eph. 3:16-

17; 1John 4:11-13)" (pp. 110-111). Referencing the most familiar passage, Psalm 23, Smither (2021) notes how "David sang of God's [missionary] hospitality" (p. 119):

> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
> you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
> and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (ESV, 2016, Psalm 23:5-6)

Further, the prophet Isaiah prophesied of a future banquet feast, which Smither (2021) describes as "Christ's joyful feast at the end time" (p. 40):

> On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” (ESV, 2016, Isa. 25:6-9)

Joshua W. Jipp (2017) sees hospitality in this feast: "God's climactic act of salvation for his people will come...through shared hospitality" (p. 19). Cathy Ross (2015) equates God's invitation to salvation with his invitation to this banquet:

> There is space for all to come in; the divine invitation is that whoever believes may have eternal life. The expansiveness of the invitation reminds us of the theme of the Great Banquet, where all are invited, where all may come in, and where, ultimately, we may be surprised at just who is feasting at God's table. (p. 179)

Missionary-scholar Perry W. Shaw (2011) summarizes God's hospitality towards humanity: "The Old Testament records story after story of our passionate God reaching out to his rebellious people, and repeatedly the reconciling heart of God is physically demonstrated in a meal shared with his people" (p. 10). Because God's hospitality toward humanity began at Creation, will culminate at the Great Banquet, and will then continue throughout all eternity, authors Willis and Clements (2017) suggest: "The entire Bible is a story about God's hospitality" (p. 37).

The second Old Testament aspect under consideration is Jewish hospitality to the stranger. In response to this divine hospitality, God's people learned by example and by law the need to show hospitality to the stranger. This section briefly looks at God's promised hospitality to all people through Abram (ESV, 2016, Gen. 12), Abram's example of hospitality to the angelic visitors (Gen. 18), and God's commands to the Jewish people through Moses and the Law.

The first three verses of Genesis 12 contain what biblical scholars call "the Abrahamic covenant" and are an important hinge to biblical history:

> Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (ESV, 2016, Gen. 12:1-3)

Willis and Clements (2017) write of this passage: "This pronouncement shows that God's purpose for picking Abraham's family to represent Him was so that He could use them to be hospitable to every other nation" (p. 39). God remained faithful to these promises, giving Abram (whom God renamed as Abraham) and his offspring the Promised Land of Canaan, preserving them as a nation throughout the ages, and, as noted above, blessing the world by giving his own Son Jesus through the Jewish line, making salvation available to "all the families of the earth" (v.3).

Abraham believed God, yet as he and his wife advanced in years, Sarah remained barren, and the promise of a nation seemed all but impossible. In Genesis 18:1-5, three men visit Abraham's tent, and he responds hospitably, inviting them in for a feast, unaware that these men were in fact the Angel of the Lord and his angelic messengers. Bernard and Clapp (1996) note the importance of this hospitable response:

> Abraham offers hospitality without being aware of the divine presence. That hospitality is consistent with the practice in the Ancient Near East. ...Had Abraham and Sarah refused hospitality to the strangers, they would have shut themselves off from the blessings God

intended – not just the blessing of a son but also the blessing of God's presence. (pp. 21-22)

Perry Shaw (2011) notes how the timing of this hospitality matters: "Repeatedly we see this principle of reciprocity at work in the Scriptures. The angels' promise of Isaac's miraculous birth (ESV, 2016, Genesis 18:1-10; cf. Exodus 24:9-12) came only after Abraham had inflicted upon the angels several hours of lavish Bedouin hospitality" (p. 21). Smither (2021) highlights how Abraham's treatment of these strangers influenced his family culture for generations thereafter: "More than a Near Eastern cultural habit, Abrahamic hospitality became a religious duty for the Jews" (p. 13).

Many generations later, God formalized this religious duty for Israel in the Law He delivered to Moses following 400 years of slavery in Egypt. Consider, for example, the following commands:

- "You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt." (ESV, 2016, Ex. 22:21)
- "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." (ESV, 2016, Lev. 19:33-34)
- "And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.” (ESV, 2016, Lev. 23:22)

Keisha L. Harris (2011) writes: "The biblical customs of welcoming the weary traveler and of receiving the stranger into one's midst established the matrix out of which hospitality and

all its ancillary aspects developed into a highly esteemed virtue in Jewish tradition" (p. 46). This tradition of Jewish hospitality would be best exemplified nearly 1,500 years after the giving of the Law during the short ministry of Jesus the Messiah. As Smither (2021) writes, "If Abraham was the paradigm for biblical hospitality in the Old Testament, then Jesus becomes that model in the New Testament" (p. 32).

Hospitality in the Ministry of Jesus

Liberal theologians of the previous two centuries have sought to undermine the authority of Jesus Christ as the virgin-born Son of God by uncovering the so-called "historical Jesus "(e.g. see Koenig, 2001). This exercise in futility refuses to take the New Testament at its word, parsing the life out of every clause, leaving the New Testament in tatters and Jesus but the shadow of someone real, the figment of too many imaginations (e.g. see Collins, 2008). When one accepts by faith, however, the supernatural inspiration and preservation of the Bible by God Himself, he need only to read the accounts of Christ in their context to view Him as He really was, a perfectly divine human on mission from God to represent this fallen race in his death and resurrection, to achieve victory over sin and Hell, and to provide reconciliation between God and mankind and an eternal home in Heaven. It requires no stretch of the Truth to recognize that hospitality is a major theme in this salvific work and that hospitality was a major part of Christ's ministry on Earth, both in his example and in his teaching.

First, consider how Jesus exemplified hospitality. No study of Christian Hospitality can ignore the example of Jesus Christ, and certainly, whole books have been written on this subject (see for example: Koenig, 2001; Pohl, 1999; Jipp, 2013; Jipp, 2017). Essential to the study, however, is an examination of the biblical text itself, viewing how the anticipated Messiah behaved in unanticipated ways.

The Second Member of the Trinity came to the Earth He created, yet in human form (see ESV, 2016, Phil. 2:5-8), and in so doing evidenced Himself as the consummate Host-Guest. Though God, He came humbly to this world as a human, ultimately to be rejected and murdered by His own creation (see John 1:1-14). Though Creator and Provider, He ministered to His people nomadically, a stranger and traveler with "no place to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). Though the Giver of every good thing, He enjoyed the support of friends for the continuation of his ministry (see Luke 8:1-3). Though the great Miracle-worker who could feed thousands with a few loaves and fish, He feasted often in others' homes (Luke 19:1-10; 11:37-54). Though sinless and holy, He purposefully sought the tax collectors and sinners, the prostitutes and demon-possessed, like a Physician pursuing the sick (Luke 5:27-32). Though Master, Jesus, "the perfect model of a host" (Harris, 2011, p. 50), served his disciples, giving them an example at the Last Supper for how all his followers must live and serve (John 13:1-17).

These examples from Jesus' incredibly short three-year ministry characterize His mission: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (ESV, 2016, Luke 19:10). This pursuit continues even to this day, as our risen Savior now seated at the right hand of God (e.g. 1Peter 3:22) pursues the lost by His Spirit (John 16:4-11), promising to every soul what He promises to the seven churches in Revelation: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20).

Second, consider how Jesus taught about hospitality. Jesus entered the homes and lives of sinners and religious leaders alike, dining with them as a Guest, yet hosting them with his teachings and offering them the Living Water (ESV, 2016, John 4) and the Bread of Life (John 6:32-51). Newman (2003) writes: "We could describe Jesus' own life as a kind of courageous hospitality. Others have pointed out how Jesus, in his practice of hospitality, was both guest and

host, and the 'roles' were continually being reversed throughout his life" (p. 86). Smither (2021) also notes: "While often a physical guest, [Jesus] becomes the spiritual host through his teaching and proclamation of the kingdom of God" (p. 43).

Through parables like "The Good Samaritan" (ESV, 2016, Luke 10:25-37) and "The Great Dinner" (Luke 14:12-14), Jesus used the language and situation of hospitality towards strangers to describe the Christian's love for neighbor and pursuit of them to bring them into the Kingdom of God. Of these parables, Bernhard and Clapp (1996) write:

> Jesus challenges us to reach out with hospitality to those who would otherwise stay outside the circumference of our relationships and the life of the church. If we take that parable and the Parable of the Good Samaritan seriously, then we will find ourselves reaching out to many persons we would have otherwise overlooked. (p. 105)

Jipp (2017) notes about the "lost" parables of Luke 15:

> Jesus tells these stories as a response to Pharisees and scribes who were angrily complaining about his extension of hospitality to the wrong people. ...(Extending hospitality to sinners and tax collectors) is exactly what Jesus Himself had described as the very purpose of his mission. (p. 23)

Perhaps no other passage in the New Testament solidifies the necessary role of hospitality in the life of the Christian as does Christ's description of the judgment of the so-called sheep and goats in Matthew 25:31-46.

> When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?” And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”
>
> Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me no food, I was

> thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?" Then he will answer them, saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (ESV, 2016, Matt. 25:31-46)

Just as Abraham in the Old Testament welcomed and served guests whom he did not know to be the Angel of the Lord Himself and his messengers, so Jesus taught his followers that to treat every stranger---especially those in the greatest physical need---with an active love is to do the very same for Christ Jesus Himself. Virtually all authors in this study emphasize this passage (e.g Smither, 2021, p. 119; Oden, 2008, p. 37; Bretherton, 2004, p. 97; Ross, 2015, p. 179; Willis and Clements, 2017, p. 140), a passage which formed the basis for the Rule of Benedict (see Oden, 2001, p. 77), but Bernhard and Clapp (1996) highlight best its application to the life of a believer, that Jesus shares this to show:

> The certainty of the end time and to answer the question of who will be judged as righteous. Persons who are hospitable to strangers are doing those deeds as if the other person were Jesus Christ himself. (p. 24)

Hospitality in the Early Church

In following the example of Jesus and in obedience to his commission that they go and make disciples of all nations (ESV, 2016, Matt. 28:18-20), Jesus' small band of followers (Acts 1:15 reports a mere 120 persons in total), empowered by the promised Holy Spirit, soon spread the message of his salvation throughout the Roman Empire and eventually the whole world. From that first day when 3,000 people were added to the church (Acts 2:41), the Lord continued to add to their numbers (Acts 2:47), and then to multiply them (Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24), a process that has resulted in the salvation of potentially billions ever since. Their process was simple, as Acts 2:42-46 describes:

> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. (ESV, 2016, Acts 2:42-46)

The early church reflected that hospitable ministry of Jesus so fresh in their minds, devoting themselves to fellowship, sharing all they had, breaking bread together daily and in each other's homes, and living in such a way that "all the people" (v. 46) looked on them favorably.

As the Early Church transitioned from being Jesus' followers to being his representatives on Earth, they maintained his outreach to the outcasts and strangers. Jipp (2017) writes:

> Luke's Gospel and his second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, are filled with the language and elements of hospitality---food, meals, houses, and traveling---in order to express something significant about Jesus' identity, namely, how God's hospitality is extended to his lost, broken, needy, and often stigmatized people. (p. 17)

It was not merely the example of Jesus, however, that helped solidify the Early Church's emphasis on hospitality, but also their own identity as strangers. Regarding the Diaspora---those Jews not living in Jerusalem but elsewhere throughout the Empire---Smither (2021) quotes Amos Young:

> While seeing themselves as missionaries the early Christians [Diaspora] nevertheless recognized their status as aliens and strangers, guests who needed to conduct themselves in an honorable and blameless manner amidst their hosts (e.g. 1Peter 2:12). Perhaps it was precisely because of this precarious situation that they took hospitality seriously (e.g. 1Peter 4:9; c.f. 1Tim 5:10). (p. 52)

Just as Jesus served as Host even while being welcomed as the Guest, so too did the Early Church live out their permeable host-guest roles (see Butterfield, 2018, p. 12). John Koenig (2001) calls attention to the fact that this permeability was actually written into the language of the New Testament:

> In many of the encounters with strangers recorded by our New Testament witnesses the roles of guest and host tend to reverse themselves or break down altogether. This

> potential for fluidity is contained within the Greek language itself, for the noun *xenos* denotes simultaneously a guest, a host, or a stranger, while the verb *xenizein* means 'receive as a guest' but also 'surprise' and hence 'to present someone or something as strange.' Correspondingly, *philoxenia*, the term for hospitality used in the New Testament, refers literally not to a love of strangers per se but to a delight in the whole guest-host relationship, in the mysterious reversals and gains for all parties which may take place. (p. 8)

Christian Hospitality in Ministry

Just as Abraham set an example of hospitality for Israel in the Old Testament, and just as Jesus set an example for the Early Church, so should each of these be our own examples for how Bible-believing Christians ought to behave and interact with the family, friends, neighbors, and strangers around us. These examples must be reflected in our ministries, both corporately as churches and individually as followers of Christ.

Hospitality in Church Ministry

Paul describes the local church as "the temple of God" (ESV, 2016, 1Cor. 3:16) and "the Body of Christ" (1Cor. 12:27). As such, we continue to represent the Lord here on Earth and must therefore reflect his character and love. We are to do this both externally and internally. Externally, we represent Christ through active obedience to the commission He gave to his Apostles, by making disciples, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe everything He commanded (Matt. 28:18-20). We do this internally by maintaining unity and fellowship with each other in love (Eph. 4:1-6). There is, in fact, a unique bond, the Holy Spirit of Christ, that ties God's family together, whether they be from across town or across the world. Those who might otherwise be strangers are in fact brothers and sisters in Christ, and the hospitality we show to fellow believers is but welcoming family members home. Arrington (2017) writes that "The era of world Christianity mandates...that all Christians are world Christians, and thus all have the requirement to engage multiculturally if they are truly to 'love thy neighbor as thyself'" (p. 27).

Of course, it is easy to speak ideally of such roles and ignore the reality that the Church is but an imperfect representation of the Savior, a collection of forgiven sinners, yet sinners nonetheless. Any discussion of what the church *should be* must also consider what the church *is*. Too often, we fail to live up to the ideal example set forth by Christ. This failure to be as hospitable as our Savior comes in part because of our innate selfishness that – while we may no longer be slaves to it – we still battle daily. It also comes from a weak understanding of hospitality. Amy Oden (2008) recommends this wise shift in our perspective:

> When we talk about hospitality we usually think first of how we welcome others. To cultivate a spirituality of hospitality, we need to back up a bit, and focus first on God as the source of any welcome we offer. This shifts our attention slightly, reframing the starting place for hospitality. When we focus first on God's welcome, instead of our own, we begin to pay attention in new ways and to see God's welcoming work as our source. (p. 53)

With such a perspective, that any welcome we can give is actually God's welcoming the other through us, we can begin to develop a proper ministry of hospitality in the church. The following paragraphs will discuss hospitality in the culture of the church, in the mission of the church, and in the celebration of the Lord's Table.

Bernard and Clapp (1996) devote an entire chapter to the concept of hospitality as part of the church's very culture:

> The practice of hospitality won't transform your congregation if it is viewed as only one more in a series of programs to strengthen the church. The majority of the congregation must, at a fundamental level, come to feel that hospitality is a core part of our responsibility as Christians and come to share a vision of the congregation as a truly welcoming place. (p. 35)

The same authors warn that "Hospitality is not itself a strategy for church growth" (pp. 17, 32), though some may view it as such. It is not enough just to bring people into the church (or into one's home) but to make them feel at home, to feed them, and, as my own definition for hospitality states, to help strengthen their relationship with God. Oden (2008) warns that "If

we're not careful, we'll get really good at inviting people over but have nothing to feed them when they arrive" (p. 12). In her dissertation on the need for hospitality in her own congregation, Keisha Harris (2011) asks this poignant question of the supposedly welcoming church: "Who watches the back door while we are loading the front door?" (p. 10).

We need only look as far as the Great Commission in assessing hospitality as part of the church's mission. While the church is a community of believers, it also has the responsibility to reach out to the lost with the message of salvation. This too follows the example of Christ who Himself "came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Edward Smither, Dean of the College of Intercultural Studies at Columbia International University, has been a missionary to Muslim peoples in North Africa, Europe, and the U.S. In his book, *Mission as Hospitality: Imitating the Hospitable God in Mission* (2021), he expounds upon why "hospitality – both welcoming people to [his] home or visiting others in their home – became [his] family's primary approach to ministry" (p. 7). Regarding the intentional mission of new church plants, he writes: "While established churches are emphasizing shared meals and table fellowship, new church plants – sometimes known as missional communities – are launching through intentional biblical hospitality" (p. 104). My own experience in churches new and old, in the United States and elsewhere, acknowledges this trend, and Smither offers a challenge to the complacency that fills too many of our churches today, stifling their missional responsibilities:

> While we struggle to open our homes as welcome spaces, we also have little time for people in our schedules. We fill our days (and often nights) with work. After work, we crash or fill the time with leisure or sports, including TV and live entertainment. ...The ministry of hospitality...requires resettling our schedules and choosing to do less at work and plan to make space for neighbors and strangers. (pp. 126-127)

Bretherton (2004) places the church's hospitable responsibility in the proper context of Gospel-centered mission:

> The foundation for welcoming strangers is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To warrant hospitality the stranger neither has to be deserving in some way, nor do they have to earn the right to it, nor must they possess some innate capacity that renders them worthy of acceptance among the human community, nor is welcome dependent on a well-meaning humanitarian impulse on the part of the giver. ...Hospitality of the stranger constitutes part of the church's witness to the Christ-event, especially the hospitality each sinner has received from God in and through Christ. (pp. 101-102)

Much has been written regarding hospitality in the church's celebration of the Lord's Table. At what's called "the last supper," a meal Jesus arranged for his closest followers, Jesus provided his disciples an example of service and sacrifice that his churches still remember to this day (see ESV, 2016, Matthew 26:26-30; John 20:13-20; 1Cor. 11:17-34). Perry Shaw (2011) calls the Last Supper “a powerful educational drama through which Jesus in action taught the meaning of the cross – in which the divine host feeds his people through the giving of his own body and blood" (p. 11). In what churches today also call "communion," "the Lord's Table," or "the Eucharist," believers gather regularly to partake of bread (representing Christ's broken body) and wine or grape juice (representing his shed blood) in remembrance of Him, to evidence His death until He returns.

Christ's hospitality is magnified in this non-salvific memorial by his promise in Matthew: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (ESV, 2016, Matt. 26:29). The Lord's Table is not merely an act of remembrance of things past, but one of anticipation of things to come, faithfully embracing the prophecies of the Great Banquet in Isaiah 26:6-9, also called "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb" in Revelation 19:6-9. When the church welcomes to this special table all faithful followers of Jesus, we celebrate together the salvation He secured in his death and resurrection, and we look forward to his imminent return: "and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1Thes. 4:17).

Hospitality in Individual Ministry

While the church can reflect the many biblical examples and principles of hospitality in its corporate gatherings and ministries, each individual believer too is responsible to follow the examples of Christ and the early Christians. Hospitality is not merely something that happens inside the church on Sundays, and it's not even something that happens generally, outside the church on Mondays through Saturdays. Hospitality happens through real encounters in real homes. Willis and Clements (2017) write:

> We may rightly understand that we are to make disciples as a part of the Great Commission...but that all feels very separate from what we do at our houses. We think of mission as something that happens outside the four walls of our home. ...In doing so, however, we waste a powerful and God-ordained means of changing the world. (p. 18)

"Hospitality means paying attention" (Ross, 2015, p. 176). This is a theme that flows throughout the literature, a theme that emphasizes how believers intent on living the hospitality of Christ are open in all places and all times to share their time, possessions, and selves in order to help strengthen others' relationship with God. Amy Oden (2008) writes of Gospel hospitality: "We do not learn to embody welcome by reading the right book or hearing the right sermon or taking a course in hospitality, though all of these may help. Rather, Gospel hospitality as a way of life emerges from the discipline of paying attention" (p. 54).

The ability to ask questions and listen is also emphasized in the literature. Bernhard and Clapp (1996) write: "We need to learn from children how to recapture a fascination with life and with the people whose paths cross ours. Our questions as adults should reflect genuine interest rather than a probing and evaluating attitude" (p. 42). Smither (2021) agrees:

> Good listening goes hand in hand with asking good questions. ...While the goal of asking good questions should not be to manipulate a conversation toward evangelism, asking good questions and listening can lead to authentic opportunities to share around the table. (p. 125)

The role of individual hospitality matters, too, because hospitality ministers to individuals. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1954/1993) writes in his book on Christian fellowship:

> Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is, the more extractive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation. (p. 112)

Christian hospitality from one individual to another has the power to remedy such isolation, if not in bringing the other back into community (especially the community of the church), then at least back into relationship with another person. Where can more fertile soil be found for the Gospel seed to be planted than in an attentive, listening, loving relationship in the intimacy of one's own home?

Henri Nouwen (1986), a Catholic priest and prolific writer on the pursuit of Christ-like living, defines hospitality this way: "Hospitality, therefore, means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place" (p. 71). While I fundamentally disagree with his elaboration, that this creation of a free space "is not a method of making our God and our way into the criteria of happiness, but the opening of an opportunity to others to find their God and their way" (p. 72), still this idea of creating a free space for the sharing of ideas and the possibility of spiritual change is at the center of individual hospitality. This change is not self-focused, though, as if the host is seeking a convert or that he wants this guest to join his church, but is rather other-focused, in that he seeks for the guest what he needs most, a changed heart, as the Lord promises in Ezekiel, "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (ESV, 2016, Ezek. 36:26).

Christian Hospitality in Seminary Education

Thus far, this literature review has defined hospitality and looked at its role both in biblical history and in corporate and individual ministry. This final section will bring the issue into the realm of this paper's overall focus, the role of Christian hospitality in seminary education. To do this, consideration must first be made of hospitality in general higher education before looking more closely at hospitality in seminary education.

Hospitality in General Higher Education

In describing the role of hospitality in higher education, I do not refer to a particular course or even a curriculum. Instead, I refer to the mindset of a professor or educational leader or, optimally, to the culture of an entire institution. Hospitality as an educational motif displays itself not merely in the subject matter being taught but in the way a professor approaches teaching it or in the way an institution prepares its learning environment. For the sake of simplicity, I will discuss in this section only the professors who use the hospitality motif in their classrooms, though the same considerations apply departmentally and institutionally. Foundational considerations for a professor seeking to create a hospitable classroom include the professor's own educational style, course design, and how he or she views and maneuvers through professor-student relationships.

Viewing hospitality as an educational motif is nothing new, as the growing body of literature suggests (see Arrington, 2018, p. 28; Shaw, 2011, pp. 8-9). In his article "A Welcome Guest: Ministerial Training as an Act of Hospitality," Perry Shaw (2011) highlights major discussions among secular scholars regarding educational shifts where educators seek to engage not only their students' heads but also their hearts (p. 9). Among secularists, these shifts include

moving away from classical styles of education and towards more liberal styles, the basics of each which Shaw describes the following way:

> **Classical education** is subject oriented. ...[It] relies primarily on didactic instruction...emphasizes obedience, conformity, and discipline...[and] conducts assessment primarily by means of teacher-set examinations. ...**Liberal education** tends to be student-centered. ...[It] generally focuses on learning through discovery and experiment. ...Liberal educators tend to emphasize creativity, self-expression, confidence, and individuality. ...Assessment is self-directed and diagnostic. (pp. 13, 15; emphasis mine)

Both broad-stroke styles of education have their place in different learning environments, of course, though either can also be taken to an extreme and thereby prove detrimental to the students' learning experiences. Jacob Stratman (2015) writes: "In my experience, student-centered learning can be just as ego-centric as teacher-centered learning. As co-investigators, truth remains in the center" (p. 31).

All professors must carefully evaluate and balance their own teaching methodologies with student needs, their institution's requirements, and the topic of study. In this, they can settle upon educational styles that work best for their situations and that result in the greatest opportunity for student formation, that is, in the spiritual development of student character.

A hospitable approach to education would suggest that professors involve their students in this process, not as empty vessels waiting to be filled or robots needing to be programmed, but as guests longing to be heard and participants capable of adding to the conversation. Simple changes within the classroom can greatly affect a professor’s educational influence. Several authors recommend, for example, physically inviting students to the conversation by adjusting the classroom's geography (see Shaw, 2011, pp. 20, 28; Stratman, 2015, p. 31). Yau-Man Siew (2006) writes that "The quality of class dialogue is directly related to the physical setup of a class. ...Students sit in a semi-circle in all my classes because this arrangement is the most conducive to conversation and dialogue" (p. 83).

Jacob Stratman's 2015 article, "What's in a Name? The Place of Recognition in the Hospitable Classroom," emphasizes the importance of a professor knowing his students' names, even before they arrive at the first class, as a way of promoting intimacy and acceptance from Day One. Stratman also notes the limitations of classical education to be formative in students' lives: "By playing the strict roles of teacher and student (entertainer and entertained), learning may (and often does) occur, but transformation may be stifled" (p. 19). By inviting student-guests into classroom dialogues, investigations, and reflection, however, a hospitable professor can help students grapple with the issues central to the course and thereby enjoy active involvement in their own transformation.

Much of a classroom's culture depends not only on the professor who leads it but also on the professor's course design. Eugene Gallagher (2007) calls course design "the fundamental skill of effective teaching," believing it "needs to be infused with an ethos of hospitality" (p. 139). One method for infusing one's class with such an ethos of hospitality is to challenge student thinking, not simply with what is true (what to believe) but also why it is true (and why they should believe it). Stratman (2013) explains: "Teachers sometimes struggle to allow students to be confused, uncomfortable, or even lost when they explore new ideas. But these times of confusion and wandering can be the most beneficial for student learning" (p. 33).

Consideration of the professor-student relationship is also important for a professor seeking to develop a hospitable classroom. "It has now been well established," writes Shaw (2011), "that the quality of relationships that exist between instructor and students is one of the foremost characteristics of excellence in teaching" (p. 19). He continues: "As in any hospitable encounter, when we learn to recognize the gift that others have to offer...we can rediscover the educational encounter as a context in which both teacher and students bring gifts to be shared

with one another" (p. 22). Yau-Man Siew (2006) quotes an item from the University of Singapore that describes the professor as being a "guide on the side, not a sage on the stage," a metaphor Siew appreciates "because it implies that the teacher is not the only one with knowledge in a class" (p. 85). Dennis Fox calls this approach to teaching “the traveling theory” which “treats a subject as a terrain to be explored with the teacher as the expert guide” (James, 2001, p. 61).

Just as the roles of host and guest often cannot remain static within a truly hospitable environment – the host sharing his time, property, and self with the guest, while the guest shares his life and stories with the host – so too can the roles of professor and student blur inside the context of a truly hospitable classroom. Jacob Stratman (2015) references the work of Zygmunt Bauman and his typology of forms of togetherness (see Bauman, 1995) by stating:

> I desire a student-teacher relationship that appropriately transcends static modes of operating in academic discourses. This is what Bauman (1995) calls 'being-for.'...As an act of hospitality, the being-for relationship resists the traditional host/guest paradigm, where it blurs the student-guest and teacher-host roles. (p. 29)

Professors who view their role in the classroom as "being for" students, and not as "being with" students, have a much greater opportunity to leave a lasting, formative mark on the lives of their students. Such an educational method can exist and thrive within a classroom marked by hospitality.

Hospitality in Seminary Education

Leaving a mark on students' lives and positively influencing their formation as students and adults are high ideals and major responsibilities for any professor. When seminary professors recognize these same students might soon be responsible for the care and spiritual formation of future congregants or other souls as pastors or ministers, the responsibility multiplies, and the import deepens. One is left to wonder how these young pastors, missionaries, mentors, and

educators will learn to exemplify warm, hospitable ministries to the people they serve, if all they have learned in coldly academic seminaries is head knowledge from relationally distant professors. As the following paragraphs will reflect, a student's years in seminary must not only educate him in individualistic study methods and language or doctrinal facts, but also in love, relationship-building, cooperation, multi-way-communication, and patient tolerance of other cultures and personalities. As noted above, such education need not come through a specific course or curriculum but must be embedded in the personality and methods of the professors, the climate of the department, or the culture of the school, as each of these represents in its own way the approach of wise spiritual leaders, the means of growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, or the expected interaction of fellow saints.

The final focus of this section considers the same three foundational considerations for professors seeking to create hospitable classrooms as listed above: their educational styles, course designs, and the way they view and maneuver through professor-student relationships. The key difference is that these are now set more precisely within the seminary context.

It may be a truth so simple that it bears articulating lest it be forgotten, but a seminary professor's educational style need not be confined to a specific educational model, like the Classical or Liberal model described above. Of the liberal model, for example, Shaw (2011) states: "In essence liberal education models are not Christian, but empiricist and existential" (p. 15). In fact, the educational model a seminary professor might develop based upon the hospitality motif might not even fit within the framework of a recognized model, for its roots are biblical and its goals are spiritual. Shaw summarizes that "Developing hospitable space in the classroom is more than merely an issue of methodology; it is in itself an essential theological act" (p. 9).

The hospitable professor's educational style will be most easily identified through both the course design and the relationships built with students. The seminary professor should anticipate and encourage student involvement in all discussions and investigations. Gallagher (2007) writes: "Teachers need to figure out how to design a course as an intellectual experience that welcomes the newcomers – their students – into the conversation and helps them to claim their own places within it" (p. 138). By inviting the students into the conversation, whatever that conversation might be, the seminary professor exemplifies the role of the hospitable minister, not lording his position over his hearers (ESV, 2016, 1Peter 5:2-3) but listening to them, guiding them, and representing Christ to them. Gallagher (2007) further notes:

> The essential act of hospitality that teachers perform is to invite their students to join a variety of conversations about fundamental issues, questions, and problems concerning the analytical understanding of certain religions, multiple facets of such religions, and 'religion' in general. (p. 137)

Part of this process is not merely the regurgitation of information already found in textbooks or journals, but the personalization of the course based upon the professor's own experiences and struggles. In their report, "How Pastors Learn the Politics of Ministry Practice," Robert Burns and Ronald Cervero (2002) summarize their investigation of eleven career ministers and their processes of learning. Among their many insightful conclusions comes this about what aspects of seminary stuck with graduates the longest:

> The pastors in our sample did not criticize traditional theological education. ...At the same time, there was a constant refrain among participants that they were politically naïve once they entered the ministry. ...A primary memory about ministry preparation in seminary was not the technical information the participants received, but the personal sharing from professors about their practical ministry background. (p. 308)

Burns and Cervero later conclude that ministers continue to learn in the following four ways, and that seminary professors would do well to anticipate each of these in their own course preparations:

1. "reflection-in-action" which takes place "on the go...through the political reality of daily ministry" (p. 309);
2. "reflection-on-action" (p. 311) or the intentional process of thinking through events in ministry;
3. "mentors and models," where a mentor is "a wise and trusted person who acts as a guide on the educational journey" and a model is "an individual or church that serves as an example for imitation and comparison" (p. 311); and
4. "negative experiences" or "learning the politics of ministry through pain and disillusionment...the hard way." (p. 312)

Perry Shaw's 2006 article, "The Hidden Curriculum of Seminary Education" in the *Journal of Asian Missions* has influenced my thinking on this issue of hospitality in seminary education more than perhaps any other piece of literature to date. He writes: "Theological education can only be effective when the hidden curriculum is intentionally designed rather than unintentionally accepted" (p. 25), for when the explicit and hidden curricula are in conflict, students will learn more from what is implicitly embedded than what is explicitly taught (p. 26). He defines these differing curricula this way:

> The “explicit” curriculum [are] those publicly known, stated, and planned educational events that are commonly understood by all those who are participating. …The hidden curriculum are those pervasive environmental features of education that include such things as the nature of behaviors which are encouraged, the type of relationships modeled, and the values emphasised in the learning community. (pp. 25-26)

In challenging the negative aspects of the hidden curriculum in most seminaries, he names such things as the following:

- "schooling = education" (p. 27) which suggests that head knowledge is more important than character;

- "an academic approach to ministry" which suggests "that knowledge can only be found in books and an academic approach to thinking" (p. 30);
- "knowledge-centered hierarchy" which, despite our acceptance of the priesthood of the believer (ESV, 2016, 1Peter 2:5-9), "teaches that there is a new priestly hierarchy with us academics comfortably seated at the top" (p. 33); and
- "ministry is about competition not cooperation," stating that "Virtually all the assignments we set are solitary and individualistic, and our students learn loud and clear that ministry is about individual competition rather than cooperation in community" (pp. 36-37).

Shaw then concludes his article with 25 practical suggestions for how seminary leaders can intentionally redesign their hidden curricula (see pp. 43-51), and seminary professors desiring a hospitable approach to their course designs would do well to take each of these recommendations to heart.

The final consideration for a seminary professor seeking to create a hospitable classroom is how one views and maneuvers through professor-student relationships. In a later article, Perry Shaw (2011) again writes that "The actual way we relate to students in the classroom irrespective of the content being delivered is one of the most significant elements in the educational formation of the students. And the key word is hospitality" (p. 9). This relating involves knowing, respecting, and engaging with students by inviting them into the conversation. When discussing hospitality as a Christian virtue, Christine Pohl (1999) describes this approach of engagement as "treating people as equals" and goes on to write that "Recognition involves respecting the dignity and equal worth of every person and valuing their contribution, or at least their potential contributions, to the larger community" (p. 61).

Thus far, this literature review has sought to highlight the importance of Christian hospitality by properly defining it, evidencing its divine origins and biblical importance, describing its role in both corporate and individual ministry, and by emphasizing its importance to higher education, particularly, seminary education. The following sections build upon this important requirement of hospitality in seminary education by investigating another important topic, organizational culture and the possibility of changing a seminary's culture so that it can become one marked by hospitality. Specifically, these sections will cover the definition of organizational culture, organizational culture in Christian ministries generally, organizational culture in seminaries specifically, and end with a discussion toward changing a seminary's culture.

Organizational Culture Defined

Much like with the term "hospitality" as described at the beginning of this chapter, the term "culture" carries with it nuances that make it hard to pin down. Understanding what culture is, though, is necessary for developing a workable definition of organizational culture (a.k.a. "corporate culture"; Finzel, 1989, p. 16). Before getting muddled down in more technical definitions, I point to this simple comparison from Edgar Schein (2016) to summarize much of what might get lost in lengthier definitions: "Culture is ultimately a characteristic of a group, just as personality and character are ultimately characteristics of an individual" (p. 102).

Because organizational culture has grown into such a large field of study, many authors and researchers have already completed the leg work of gathering and summarizing definitions from across the field for both "culture" and "organizational culture." In his dissertation on creating healthy organizational culture in the local church, for example, Matthew Curtis McCraw (2015) noted a common thread among his list of accrued definitions: "Each [definition of

culture] refers in some way to things that are assumed, expected, valued, and taught" (p. 15). In his dissertation focusing on the organizational culture of missionary organizations, researcher Hans Walter Finzel (1989) filtered a vast array of definitions for both terms, summarizing them this way:

> There are two major schools of thought on the definitions of culture. One, the **adaptationists**, view culture as that which is **external** to the persons, that which can be observed about the members of a group through their **behaviors, speech and material objects**. ...Another group of theorists, the **ideational** school, defines culture as that which the community shares **in their minds**. ...This would be the group of theorists who hold that organizational culture is limited to **beliefs, values and basic assumptions**, those **unseen realities** that bond groups together. (Finzel, 1989, p. 29; emphasis mine)

It is within this second school of thought that Edgar Schein, whom many view as the founding theorist of organizational culture, would fall. In 1985, Schein published his first edition of *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* a textbook that set the stage for an entire field of scholarly and practical inquiry and which remains in publication, now nearly 45 years later. In his "dynamic definition of culture," Schein (2016) writes:

> The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration; which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems. This accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness. (p. 21)

While each of the above definitions and descriptions of "culture" and "organizational culture" help ground the concepts, I defer to Andrew Clayton Hébert's definition in his 2021 dissertation, "Shaping Church Culture: Table Fellowship, Teaching, and the Spirit in Luke-Acts," as his emphasis likewise blends these two important concepts of biblical hospitality and organizational culture within Christian ministry. Hébert writes: "Organizational culture includes an organization's **artifacts** (observed behavior), **espoused beliefs and values** (ideals, goals, ideologies), **and basic underlying assumptions** (unconscious beliefs)" (p. 12; emphasis mine).

Hébert's definition is important, because, while beliefs, values and basic assumptions are the very heart of culture (Finzel, 1989, p. 29), evidence of their existence *must* be expressed in behavior (what Hébert above calls “artifacts”). An institution might value the importance of hospitality, unconsciously believing that, because they hold such an ideal, hospitality exists as part of the institution's very fabric; but until the institution displays hospitality in action, their beliefs, values, and basic assumptions about it remain mere ideals, not proof of a hospitable organizational culture (see Poe, 2020, p. 182).

Organizational Culture in Christian Ministries Generally

The above section described some of the important elements which influence organizational culture and settled on this definition for the term: "Organizational culture includes an organization’s artifacts (observed behavior), espoused beliefs and values (ideals, goals, ideologies), and basic underlying assumptions (unconscious beliefs)" (Hébert, 2021, p. 12). This section seeks to show how organizational culture, although generally a secular study, has its place in the interpretation and development of Christian organizations as well, specifically in local churches and what are known as "parachurch ministries," those ministries or organizations that function alongside yet outside the established local church (see Bloom, 2020).

In Hébert’s dissertation published through the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (2021), he suggests that a biblical pattern exists for shaping church culture (p. 173). Specifically, he delineates from Luke's two New Testament writings how Jesus and his followers shaped the culture of the church through their development of relationships—specifically through table fellowship, teaching, and a reliance on the Holy Spirit—whereby they were able to affect change in the behaviors, values, and beliefs of the people to whom they ministered (p. 172). Hébert's paper contributes well to the focus of this paper, that hospitality is a practice both rooted in

Scripture and proven by God Himself to be a key component in the expansion and health of the church. That this biblical practice is proven to be first exemplified by the Teacher and then passed on through continued teaching and example supports this paper's premise, that shifts in seminary culture towards hospitable relationships among leadership, faculty, staff, and students is not only possible but biblical and therefore necessary. In fact, Hébert's fourth recommendation for future research touches on this fact, although he references research in the context of modern churches rather than seminaries, and he recommends research that measures the effectiveness of changing a church's culture in these specific ways:

> Fourth, further research could be done to assess the effectiveness of this biblical model of shaping culture in the context of modern churches. Research could be conducted in a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed–method project to develop and apply assessment tools to measure how effective it would be to attempt culture change through the means described in this dissertation. If a leader tried to change a measurable belief, value, or behavior in a congregation through table fellowship, teaching, and intentional prayer, it would be helpful to measure how effective the results would be. A "real world" application and assessment of these biblical principles in a modern church context would further substantiate the relevance of the present research. (Hébert, 2021, p. 176)

Hébert's dissertation also highlights the fact that, while the secular study of organizational culture is relatively new, the processes for developing and changing such culture is not, and this study of Jesus' own process can prove insightful for Christian and secular organizations alike (2021, pp. 174-175). From the other perspective, Hans Walter Finzel (1989) notes how Christian organizations (like the parachurch organization he studied) can and must learn from secular research in the area of organizational culture: "As the secular body of knowledge in these disciplines increases, those in Christian work need to keep up and use that which can be helpful in their pursuits" (p. 70). In fact, he praised the trend in the late 1980s of organizations beginning once more to recognize the humanness of their employees as a trend with biblical nuances:

> The trend toward the human side of organizational life is a trend toward a much more biblical view of man as a unique, individual creation of God to be respected in his or her work. … Christians should above all others hold to the extreme value of all men

> and women and the total dignity of each of God's created beings. To wrestle with issues of organizational culture is to get into the depths of how these people try to see their assumptions worked out in the organizations of which they are a part. (pp. 70-71)

Matthew Curtis McCraw (2015) conducted a qualitative study of three churches within a single church network in order "to determine what works, for real churches, to create culture that thrives" (p. 46). McCraw concludes his study by expounding upon the seven best practices he uncovered from these churches for fostering a healthy church culture. These best practices include the following, progressing from the most frequent to the least:

1. Community
2. Gospel
3. Bible
4. Training/Education
5. Empowerment
6. Humility
7. Modeling (pp. 82-83).

The disparity between McCraw's results and those from his literature review are interesting, a disparity he blames on the technical terminology of the literature which was not the same as that being used by respondents. Most importantly, for the purpose of this paper, "Community" (which would include relationships and, likely, hospitality) was marked as the most important best practice of influencing church culture within his network, while "Modeling" (a.k.a. "Leadership") was marked as the least important best practice, albeit still a best practice. Modeling's lower ranking here is surprising, especially when considering the constant emphasis in the literature (as will be seen later) on the leadership's role in creating, developing, and sustaining the health of the organization's culture. It must be noted, however, that the leaders in these churches were not absent from but actually part of the community of the church, suggesting

their presence within community (i.e. on an equal plane in the daily living out of community) played a more important role in creating a healthy church culture than did their positional modeling of it. As Ryan S. Poe (2020) writes: "Church leaders should see themselves as curators of environments where spiritually nourishing relationships can flourish" (pp. 30-31). This is best accomplished when leaders nourish such relationships from within the community rather than merely modeling them from without.

McCraw's conclusion following his study offers insights into how Christian ministries must approach the creation of healthy organizational culture, at once acknowledging the secular research on the topic, but more importantly holding fast to the examples and teachings of Scripture. He writes:

> It is noteworthy that these churches take less of a technical approach, and more of a biblical approach to creating a healthy church culture. The leaders of these churches are not so much interested in artifacts, values, and beliefs; they are more interested in the gospel, the Bible, and building a godly community. (2015, p. 85)

Organizational Culture in Seminaries

The development and nourishing of a healthy organizational culture within a seminary is not dissimilar from that of other Christian ministries, though several facets do set it apart. These include the seminary's relationship with churches and its training of church leaders without being a church itself, its goal of spiritual formation as well as theological and practical education, and its potential for unique mentoring-styled relationships between faculty and students. This section will discuss each of these facets in turn.

A Seminary Is Not a Church

First, while a seminary often maintains social, spiritual, and financial relationships with churches that share its theology and tradition and is deeply committed to the training of leaders that will one day serve within these same churches as either ministers or lay leaders, the

seminary is itself not a church. This distinction is important, for it introduces potential pitfalls for graduates transitioning from seminary to ministry, such as the following common considerations:

- How have graduates prepared to shift from a seminary community of intellectual peers to a church community where they might feel intellectually superior?
- How will graduates relate to their future congregations: as they have learned from the Word (as pastor to flock) or as has been modeled throughout their training (as professor to students)?
- What local church involvement have the graduates had throughout their seminary experience, and has this involvement been relational and complimentary or dutiful and self-focused?
- What expectations will graduates have of their congregants, daily in-depth Bible study and regular Christian community as they themselves have enjoyed throughout their years of training or Sunday-only commitment from congregants burdened with full-time secular employment? (M. Olson, personal communication, April 30, 2022).

Admittedly, answers to these questions will depend upon the individual character of each graduate, but the seminary's culture of education and spiritual formation will also influence the direction its graduates are inclined to move when it comes to relating to their congregants.

In their 2002 article, "The Effects of Professional Training: The Social and Religious Capital Acquired in Seminaries," Roger Finke and Kevin D. Dougherty employ this concept of "social capital" to describe the negative influence seminary training can have on a graduate's ability to relate to his congregation. They write:

> Whereas the seminary-trained clergy rely on professional networks (i.e., other clergy provide social support, a point of reference, and advancement opportunities), the lay

> clergy are more tightly embedded in the social networks of the local congregation. Thus, seminary education increases the social closure of the clerical profession but decreases the social closure of the local congregation. The result, we argue, is that seminary-trained clergy will be more restrained by the norms of the profession and less restrained by the distinctive norms of the local congregation. (p. 116)

At play in this discussion too, though on a broader scale, is the seminary's theological orientation, something which "research has consistently shown...helps to shape the seminary's curriculum and culture, and has a lasting influence on students" (Finke, 2002, p. 108). In contrasting schools with either "conservative" or "liberal" orientations, for example, Finke and Dougherty (2002) summarize several important studies this way:

> In his pioneering work on seminaries, Jackson W. Carroll (1971) found that seminaries promoting a "Mastery of the Christian Tradition" and "Spiritual Formation" produced graduates with a conservative theological orientation, while those promoting a "Mastery of the Christian Tradition" and "Secular Awareness" held the most liberal theological orientations. Building on Carroll's work, using a sample of United Methodist clergy, Dallas A. Blanchard (1981) replicated Carroll's results on theological orientation and found that pastors graduating from seminaries promoting "Christian Tradition" and "Spiritual Formation" gave greater preference for local church and pastoral roles. In contrast, those graduating from seminaries promoting "Christian Tradition" and "Secular Awareness" gave more attention to social activism. (p. 108)

While the focus of this present project is seminaries within conservative theological traditions, the important point to note here is that even a school's broadest theological worldviews will influence its culture, just as much as do its more minor considerations like leadership and the individual character of its faculty. The seminary's culture, in turn, influences the students who then move on to influence local churches.

In Ellen Charry's review of the book, *Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Schools* by Carroll, Wheeler, Aleshire, and Marler (1997), she writes: "There is no doubt that, positively or negatively, theological schools do form students. The questions this book leaves readers with is: On what basis are they being formed and to what end?" (1997, p. 1073). As these traditions, worldviews, and personalities interact, they create an environment

which either fosters or hinders a student's spiritual growth, affecting his future either as a distant leader who, while capable of feeding the flock (ESV, 2016, 1Peter 5:2; 1Timothy 4:13-16), is unable to model genuine Christian fellowship because he cannot relate to them (1Timothy 4:12), or as a personable minister able to relate to his congregants as he mentors and guides them by example (1Peter 5:3). The former type of church leadership is one easily acquired through education, the latter through education plus spiritual formation.

Education Plus Spiritual Formation

Seminaries not only emphasize theological and practical education but also the spiritual formation of its students. Spiritual formation has been defined as "the process by which a person becomes mature in matters of personal religion, faith, or sense of purpose... [implying the] imitation of Christ and an effort to obey Christ's twofold command: love of God and love of neighbor as self" (Hunter, 1990, p. 1217). While most churches also emphasize these same three aspects of Christian living (theological education, practical education, and spiritual formation), few do so in such a concentrated manner as seminaries do and none have graduation as their goal.

Because no two seminaries are alike, the emphases just named necessarily exist on sliding scales and with great overlap, yet models for discerning a seminary's organizational culture do exist, audits which seminary leaders can use to gauge their effectiveness in these and other areas (see Finzel, 1989). Finke and Dougherty (2002) write:

> Despite giving far more attention to passing on knowledge of the religious culture, seminaries also attempt to strengthen the clergy's attachment to the religious culture through courses and experiences focusing on spiritual formation. Yet seminaries vary widely in the attention they give to spiritual formation. (pp. 109-110)

This paper seeks to encourage seminary leaders, at minimum, to begin the dialogue about how effectively it engages in the spiritual formation of its students, especially regarding their

experience with and mandate for hospitality in ministry, though mere dialogue is but the first step. Health-checks like the model Finzel (1989) has drafted can help lay bare the gaps in seminary training that have previously gone unnoticed, and such recognition can then stimulate change in the culture overall.

One such gap might be educational, a seminary unable to pinpoint where it falls in the pendulum-swing between clerical and academic education. Douglas Lee James (2001) introduces this idea in his informative dissertation, *Theological Teaching and Spiritual Formation: How Seminary Faculty Relate Beliefs about Teaching, Learning, and Spiritual Growt*h:

> Underlying the recent debates about the purpose of theological education is the pendulum that swings back and forth between two paradigms: the "clerical paradigm" (which educates students to perform the professional functions required of ordained ministers) and the "academic paradigm" (which provides students with formal theological knowledge to evaluate issues theologically from a Christian worldview). (p. 29)

Without regular reviews of its own philosophy or intentional implementation of its vision and goals, a seminary's mission and practice can become misaligned, resulting in what James calls "fragmentation." Quoting previous research on this topic, he writes:

> This problem of fragmentation was identified over forty years ago in the AATS and Carnegie Foundation research study on theological education conducted by H. R. Niebuhr, D. D. Williams, and J. Gustafson. They articulated the most significant problem associated with theological education as follows: *The greatest defect in theological education today is that it is too much an affair of piecemeal transmission of knowledge and skills, and that, in consequence, it offers too little challenge to the student to develop his [or her] own resources and to become an independent, lifelong inquirer, growing constantly while he [or she] is engaged in the work of the ministry*. (James, 2001, p. 31; Neighbor, Williams & Gustafson, 1957, p. 209)

While this gap between theological and practical education is important for seminaries to recognize and address, another gap exists that also influences the future success of its graduates, the gap between education and spiritual formation. Again, James highlights the potential dangers of seminaries failing to emphasize the spiritual formation of their students:

> I and others argue that following the clerical paradigm does not guarantee theological education will be effective in fostering the Christian identity formation necessary for lifelong service as a Christian minister in service to the Church and world. … Theological schools run the risk of producing seminary-trained ministers whose ministry flows only out of perceived professional "role expectations," rather than from their own Christian identity or spiritual formation. This lack of personal, spiritual formation...is an urgent problem which frequently appears only later in the career cycle of ministers as observed in tragedies such as pastoral burnout, moral failure and suicide. (James, 2001, pp. 27-28)

If what Finke and Dougherty (2002) say of seminaries is true, that they must "shape the personal piety as well as the intellectual beliefs of their students" (p. 116), then it behooves each seminary not to be satisfied merely with the intellectual development of its students quantified in grades and time served in extension ministries or internships, but even more so with the genuine spiritual formation and character development of its students qualified in the personal relationships formed between students and faculty.

Faculty-Student Relationships

Seminaries differ from other Christian ministries in their potential for unique mentoring-styled relationships between faculty and students, relationships that allow for frequent interaction while they last, yet that are also short-lived, being generally limited to the duration of a student's time in school. This paper argues that such life-on-life relationships within seminary are the bedrock upon which truly hospitable ministries are built, once students graduate and begin to replicate this closeness within their own congregations. Barbara G. Wheeler (1998) writes that "Students remember faculty more than they remember anything else about their education" (p. 106), adding that:

> Faculty play a pivotal role in students' lives, not only imparting information and demonstrating how to think, but also teaching by example how to treat people, what to wear, what jokes are funny and what art and music is good. Students adopt some of the ideas and habits of their teachers, reject some, and adapt some to their own circumstances. (p. 106)

This section will tackle this issue of student-faculty relationships by discussing first the students and then the faculty. Regarding students, it will briefly introduce the types of students educated in seminaries, then borrow from secular lists of principles for quality education that highlight the need for strong professor-student interactions. Then, regarding faculty, it will describe two essential qualities of seminary faculty, that they live by example as servant leaders and that they develop mentoring-styled relationships with their students.

Regarding the types of students that enter seminary, author Christopher H. Evans (2007) has written an insightful article titled, "Rethinking Classroom Diversity: Three Student Cultures in a Mainline Seminary." Evans delineates the following three types of seminary students:

1. "The Church Seminarian" - This student is often older, having already served in pastoral ministry for several years, and views seminary mainly as a means to an end, "a requirement in their pursuit of their chosen vocation in ministry" (p. 226). While this type of student brings maturity and insight to the classroom, potential challenges include passive attitudes towards learning and a "checklist" approach to schooling (p. 226).

2. "The New Paradigm Seminarian" - This student is often younger, viewing the traditional church as irrelevant or dying and bucking against denominationalism while focusing on cultural relevance and finding "new" ways of doing church. While this type of student can help challenge seminaries to think creatively, potential challenges include confrontational attitudes to the status quo and nonconformity to or rejection of biblical doctrines and long-standing traditions (p. 228).

3. "The Vocational Seminarian" - This student is often younger, having neither a certain vocational goal in mind nor a desire to create a new way of doing church. Instead, this student sees "seminary as a means of gaining their bearings in life, while at the same time displaying a profound desire to one day make a difference in the world" (p. 229). These students bring a longing for learning and application to life that is often lacking in the first two types, though they may not have goals to serve in traditional full-time ministry roles (p. 229).

That seminary students differ in age, gender, background, goals, philosophies, etc. may go without saying, yet this reality is an essential starting place for the seminary leadership and faculty who desire to build relationships with their students as individuals, not merely with their

classes as groups. These paradigms from Evans help highlight especially the differences in philosophies and goals.

Regarding principles for quality postsecondary education, James (2001) highlights two lists from secular sources that he argues are just as applicable to theological education as non-theological (p. 64). Many researchers hold to the first list of traits, a list that has been dubbed the "Seven Principles for Good Practice":

> Good teaching in postsecondary settings does the following:
> 1. Encourages student-faculty contact
> 2. Encourages cooperation among students
> 3. Encourages active listening
> 4. Gives prompt feedback
> 5. Emphasizes time on task
> 6. Communicates high expectations
> 7. Respects diverse talents and ways of learning (p. 64).

For the purpose of this paper, I highlight only the first point in this list, that good postsecondary teaching encourages student-faculty contact. The Education Commission of the States expanded this list of seven principles to twelve, the twelfth being that "quality instruction builds in...out-of-class contact with faculty" (James, 2001, p. 65). While contact in these recommendations from secular sources does not necessarily imply relationship, the principle for which this paper argues still applies: quality education requires out-of-class communication between faculty and students, communication that can bud into deepening relationships, if this is part of the school's culture.

There are two essential qualities of seminary faculty. The first to note is that faculty ought to lead by example, especially as servant leaders. James (2001) writes: "It is clear in both written materials and practice that theological schools rely upon their faculty as a primary means in helping students to achieve goals in both academic and spiritual growth" (p. 45). Implied in this remark is that the faculty help these students not only in word within the context of the

classroom but also in deed outside of the classroom. For example, when assigning a service-learning project, extension ministry, or internship which the students must conduct while also balancing their other responsibilities, the professor exemplifies such balance of responsibilities by himself remaining active in local church ministry, handling the teaching and grading of multiple classes, leading his family, enjoying his hobbies, and building relationships with the students under his care. Even when not consciously aware of the example standing before them in the classroom, students watch the faculty and learn from them, and even more so when there is intentional interaction outside of the classroom.

This leading by example has another name, which R.K. Greenleaf coined and eventually popularized in his 1977 book, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. The topic of servant leadership is vast and has become a field of study unto itself, but the concept has divine and ancient roots in the teachings and example of Jesus (see Russell, 2000). A quick survey of Jesus' words in the New Testament Gospels will suffice:

- "Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (ESV, 2016, Matthew 7:12).
- "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (ESV, 2016, Matthew 20:26-28).
- And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (ESV, 2016, Mark 9:35).
- "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done for you" (ESV, 2016, John 13:13-15).

Jesus was Lord and Teacher, and yet outside the proverbial "classroom" of synagogues and mountainsides, he lived by example the life of a true Servant-Leader. In following his example, seminary faculty and leadership do not forfeit their positions of honor but rather

enhance them, for in their obedience they show that this is a position achieved through character and action, not merely through knowing the right things or having earned the right degrees. This nonverbal, perpetual example will speak volumes to the students and future leaders who follow.

Ebener and O'Connell (2010) describe this lifestyle and its influence on the behavior of others who share in the organizational culture (in the context of this paper, students watching faculty). Notice the shades of hospitality evident in these qualities of the servant leader:

> The servant leader is more inclined to serve than to be served, recognize rather than to be recognized, and empower rather than to flex positional power by commanding and controlling the response of followers. If leaders place themselves in humble service to their organization, recognize the gifts and talents of others, and call them forth through empowering actions, then the people will respond with organizational citizenship behaviors by helping each other, taking initiative, participating in various activities, and taking responsibility to continuously develop themselves as potential leaders of their organizations. (p. 332)

Finally, for this section on organizational culture in seminaries, the second essential quality of seminary faculty to note is their development of mentoring-styled relationships with students. In the dissertation, *Developing Persons in Christian Organizations: A Case Study of OMF International*, Shelley G. Trebesch (2008) describes the two ancient models of mentoring, both the Greek and the Hebrew:

> The classroom setting with a teacher delivering information to passive listeners is the Greek model. This model emphasizes the transfer of information and is primarily cognitive and academic. The Hebrew model, on the other hand, focuses on developmental relationships where the mentors invite the mentorees to participate in their lives. The mentors demonstrate principles, give verbal instructions, allow mentorees to experience situations, and provide feedback and accountability. (pp. 166-167)

With these two models in mind, the mentoring-styled relationships for which this paper argues and to which seminary faculty must aspire is the Hebrew style, particularly with an emphasis on this participation in the students' lives.

Within this dualistic framework, Trebesch (2008) also paraphrases a list of nine different types of mentoring composed by J. Robert Clinton (1991), each of which can have its place in a faculty-student relationship. Trebesch's paraphrase reads thus:

1. **Discipler**—provides empowerment for the basic foundations of following Christ.
2. **Spiritual Guide**—provides accountability for spiritual growth and maturity as well as discernment for needed areas of growth.
3. **Coach**—enhances skill development for ministry including feedback and follow up.
4. **Counselor**—gives timely advice and perspective regarding life and ministry.
5. **Teacher**—imparts knowledge and motivation for its application in the life of the mentoree.
6. **Sponsor**—offers guidance, protection, and connection to opportunities for the emerging leader.
7. **Contemporary Model**—provides modeling and a life worthy of emulation.
8. **Historical Model**—a passive way of learning for the life and ministry of former leaders.
9. **Divine Contact**—offers timely guidance or discernment and is seen as an intervention from God (p. 166; emphasis mine).

The nuances involved in this array of mentoring typology allow for faculty to feed into their students' lives in many ways, depending upon each other's personalities, the makeup of the class, the opportunities available outside of class, etc. Allowing for the likelihood that some seminary leaders and faculty members have charge over hundreds of students in a given semester, and that students come and go on an annual basis, there still remains no reasonable excuse why they cannot function as one or more of these mentoring types to at least some of their students. Along with the need for leading by Christian example as a servant leader, the development of mentoring-styled relationships with students is an essential quality of seminary faculty.

Towards Changing a Seminary's Culture

This chapter thus far has reviewed some of the pertinent literature on the definition of organizational culture, organizational culture in Christian ministries generally, and organizational culture in seminaries specifically. This final section concludes with a discussion towards changing a seminary's culture. Specifically, it will discuss the relation of culture creation to culture change, the process of culture change, and three key considerations for culture change.

The Relation of Culture Creation to Culture Change

Due to the similarities in both philosophy and process between the intentional creation of organizational culture and organizational culture change, much of the literature dealing with one procedure can be applicable to the other. The key words here are intentional creation of organizational culture, because while organizations themselves require intentional creation, the cultures they naturally possess from the outset do not. Culture exists automatically within an organization based upon the members' basic assumptions and values – and, of course, when these assumptions and values are misaligned, that culture will not be one marked by health! As McCraw (2015) puts it: "Internalization of values, or building of consensus, is a marker that serves to identify those organizations that are healthy" (p. 27).

Of *organizational* creation, Edgar Schein (1991) writes: "Organizations do not form accidentally or spontaneously. They are 'created' because one or more individuals perceive that the coordinated and concerted action of a number of people can accomplish something that individual action cannot" (p. 14). Of *organizational culture* creation, on the other hand, Hébert (2021) writes that "Organizational culture creation is the **intentional or unintentional** shaping of an organization's beliefs, values, and behaviors" (p. 12; emphasis mine). Thus, creating or changing a culture will involve the same thought processes and

steps *if* both are approached with intent. Any seminary reviewing its culture with the intent to change would do well to learn not only from the literature on culture change but also that on intentional culture creation.

The Process of Culture Change

When it comes to changing the culture of an institution, it must be restated that the aforementioned "artifacts…beliefs, values, and assumptions" (Hébert, 2021, p. 12) are often the target of organizational culture change. Within this list, however, basic assumptions have historically been the most difficult to change. As Finzel (1989) writes:

> Values are repeated ways of observable behavior but can change from time to time and vary from one person to the next, whereas the basic assumptions, "Have become so taken for granted that one finds little variation within the cultural group". ...Basic assumptions are so deep, ingrained and taken for granted that they are by their very nature nonconfrontable and nondebatable. (pp. 86-87)

Finzel goes on to delineate the following five "Basic Underlying Assumptions Around Which Cultural Paradigms Form," based upon Edgar Schein's typology:

1. Humanity's Relationship to Nature
2. The Nature of Reality and Truth
3. The Nature of Human Nature
4. The Nature of Human Activity
5. The Nature of Human Relationships (See Finzel, 1989, p. 87).

Although Schein's was not a religious work, these basic assumptions essentially make up the core of religious belief (particularly both "The Nature of Reality and Truth" and "The Nature of Human Nature"). Because most seminaries are founded upon a certain biblical worldview or religious tradition, and because most require applicants to agree to a list of foundational

doctrines that substantiate this worldview, the basic assumptions just named will likely not be among the targets of organizational culture change for a seminary.

With this in mind (that the targets of organizational culture change are the artifacts, values, and beliefs of the group), we turn now to two among dozens of processes for how an organization can change, both highlighted by McCraw (2015). First is Aubrey Malphurs' list of five stages for creating new church culture:

1. **The conception stage**. In this stage, the leader lays out the foundation on which the superstructure of the church will be built.
2. **The development stage**. This stage involves the development of a staff and a group of core members who share the vision for the church and its culture.
3. **The birth stage**. This is the point where the culture goes public.
4. **The growth stage**. At this point, the church grows and begins to share a common history and culture.
5. **The reproduction stage**. During this stage, the church focuses on using what God has done in its unique culture to reproduce other churches that can effectively minister to others (p. 38; see also Malphurs, 2013, pp. 122-126; emphasis mine).

While this process deals with the creation of church cultures specifically, the steps also reflect the process necessary for any institution to change its current culture: recognition of the need for change, preparation for change, implementation of change, growing through the process of change, and considering how this change can then be replicated or, if necessary, reworked.

Second is John Kotter's list of eight steps for successful organizational culture change:

1. Increase urgency
2. Build the guiding team

3. Get the vision right
4. Communicate for buy-in
5. Empower action
6. Create short-term wins
7. Don’t let up
8. Make change stick (McCraw, 2015, p. 36; see also, Kotter & Cohen, 2012, p. 7).

Implied in this process are the necessary elements of leadership, cooperation, communication, and dedication. Any seminary seeking to change its culture requires each of the elements in abundance, else the attempts at change come across haphazard, accidental, or misguided.

Three Key Considerations for Culture Change

Finally, there are three key considerations that must be made regarding changing a seminary's culture. These considerations are organizational leadership and their influence on culture, the reality of competing values within different organizational types, and the likely existence of both macro-cultures without and subcultures within any organization.

First, much has been written about the influence that leaders have on an organization. There seems to be a consensus among experts that an institution's leader—be it Founder, President, Pastor, General Director, CEO, etc.—is not merely "the keeper of the culture" (Finzel, 1989, p. 32) or the curator of the environment (Poe, 2020, pp. 30-31) but also the creator of it. Hébert (2021) quotes an earlier edition of Schein: “Culture is ultimately created, embedded, evolved, and ultimately manipulated by leaders" (p. 35). In viewing the situation from the other direction, McCraw (2015) succinctly writes: "An organization's culture emerges from the leadership it follows" (p. 15), later adding that "Leadership and organizational culture are inseparable" (p. 18). All this suggests that whatever an institution's current culture

might be, the leadership is to be thanked or blamed. Likewise, the final hope for shifting or drastically changing the culture of that institution is in the hands of either the organization's current leadership or its future leadership. As Edgar Schein (1985) bluntly stated: "The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (p. 2).

Second, regarding the reality of competing values within different organizational types, Ryan S. Poe (2020) summarizes well the work of Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Framework (2011), which suggests that there are four types of organizational cultures marked by specific leadership styles which influence an organization's internal collaboration, cooperation, and operation:

1. **A clan culture** is collaborative and typically led by those with a tendency toward facilitation, mentoring and team building. The value drivers of a clan culture are commitment, communication and development.
2. **An adhocracy culture** has a creative orientation, with leadership who are innovators, entrepreneurial and visionary. The value drivers of an adhocracy are innovative outputs, transformation and agility.
3. **A hierarchy culture** tends to be controlling and is led by those with a predisposition to coordinate, monitor and organize. The value drivers of a hierarchy are efficiency, timeliness, consistency and uniformity.
4. **A market culture** is oriented toward competing. Leaders in a market culture are hard driving, competitors and producers. The value drivers of a market are market share, goal achievements and profitability (Poe, 2020, pp. 152-153; see also Cameron & Quinn, 2011; emphasis mine).

Because an overlap of characteristics from all four of these culture types will likely exist within a given institution, assessment tools like Cameron and Quinn's own Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) would be useful in diagnosing that organization's unique cultural style (2011, pp. 26-29). With such an assessment in hand, institutional leadership might then be better situated to recognize its current culture, including both its positive and its negative aspects, and be better prepared to make adjustments necessary towards positive cultural change.

Finally, it is important to look at the likely existence of both macro cultures without and subcultures within any organization. Edgar H. Schein (2016) describes macro cultures as "nations, ethnic groups, and occupations that have been around for a long time and have, therefore, acquired some very stable elements, or 'skeletons,' in the form of basic languages, concepts, and values" (p. 66). He argues leaders must consider the influence macro cultures can have on an organization, especially if the makeup of the organization is multicultural or, by implication, if the leader himself is not from around here. Included in Schein's development of these considerations are "the major ways in which language, reality, time, space, truth, human activity, nature, and relationships can be categorized" (p. 83).

As macro cultures can influence organizational cultures from without, so can subcultures influence them from within. Edgar Schein (2016) also acknowledges that, as an organization ages and grows, it experiences "differentiation and the growth of subcultures" in which "it inevitably creates smaller units that begin the process of culture formation on their own with their own leaders" (p. 157). While these changes occur naturally, Schein notes the danger that exists when the leadership delegates away its responsibility of culture management: "The worst examples of culture mismanagement are organizations where the leaders turn over the responsibility for culture management to the human resource function or to consultants.

Subcultures cannot coordinate themselves" (p. 167). Finzel (1989) also recognizes the existence of subcultures and describes them in the context of the internal conflict that can often occur when these subcultures clash:

> Groups within organizations conflict on a cultural level: Organizations are often made up of many smaller units—subcultures—divided by function, space, location, skills, rank and other factors. Conflicts between them are often in the deep assumption and value arena, and need to be viewed as such to help them get along. (p. 75)

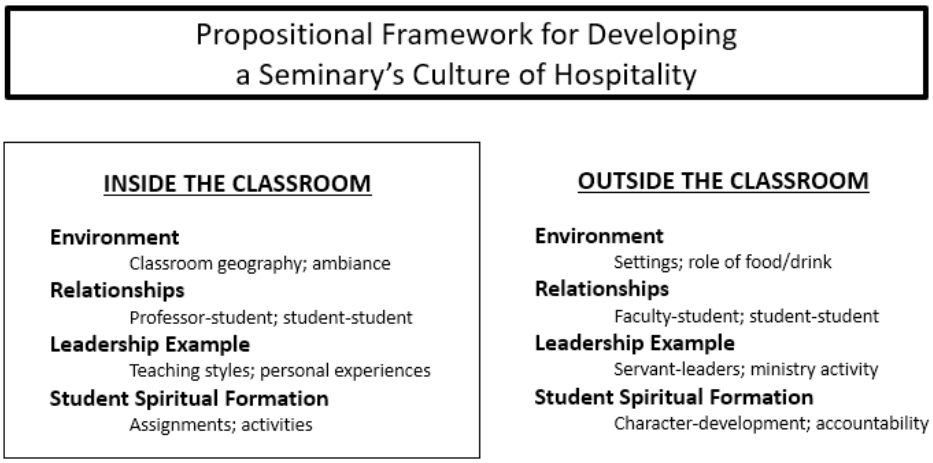
Recognizing the need for cultural change within any organization is but the first step toward accomplishing change. Taking the nuances of leadership, competing values, and macro/subcultures under consideration can help seminary leadership wisely maneuver the difficult landscape of organizational culture change.

Propositional Framework for Developing a Seminary's Culture of Hospitality

This literature review has investigated two topics foundational to the progress of this study, both Christian hospitality and organizational culture. With these findings in place, it is now possible to develop a "Propositional Framework for Developing a Seminary's Culture of Hospitality" (Fig. 2.1).

Figure 2.1

Propositional Framework for Developing a Seminary's Culture of Hospitality



This framework proposes the same fourfold considerations for both inside the classroom and out. These considerations are enumerated as follows:

1. **Environment**: *Inside the classroom,* this refers to the classroom geography and general ambiance of the room, whether there is music, snacks, games, etc. *Outside the classroom,* this refers to the settings where faculty and students might meet outside of class times (for example coffee-shops, restaurants, leisure events, or homes) and what role food or drink play in these meetings.
2. **Relationships**: *Inside the classroom,* this refers to the formality level of student-professor interactions in class as well as the friendships among students that might be nurtured as part of the classroom culture. *Outside the classroom,* this refers to the formality level of student interaction with the school's entire faculty because of the school's culture, as well as their interactions with the full student population.
3. **Leadership Examples (Modeling)**: *Inside the classroom,* this refers to teaching styles employed (for example textbook lectures, in-class dialogue, learning by discovery, etc.) and the level of personal experiences shared by the professors. *Outside the classroom*, this refers to the faculty's life-examples of servant leadership and ongoing ministry commitments.
4. **Spiritual Formation**: *Inside the classroom,* this refers to the level to which both the classroom assignments and required activities (like service-learning projects, extension ministries, and internships) are holistically designed and implemented. *Outside the classroom*, this refers to the school's emphasis on continued character-development through mentorship, organized activities, and other opportunities, as well as its encouragement of individual student growth and accountability.

Conclusion

This literature-based framework serves as a propositional framework, one that the co-investigator used as a basis for discussion with the study's participants and later built upon following these discussions. The following chapter discusses the methods for this study.

Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study was to establish a formal framework for hospitality in seminary that could be used to instigate cultural shifts towards more hospitable relationships between the school's personnel and its students in seminary education. Having first developed a propositional framework based upon the literature (see Fig. 2.1), this study built upon that propositional framework through findings gleaned from interviews with seminary administrators and professors, pastors, and missionaries. This chapter will describe the study's research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

To glean the data necessary to propose an evidence-based framework, this qualitative study required a phenomenological design in which data were gathered through interviews with participants who met the population inclusion requirements (see McMillan, 2015, pp. 304, 317-318). This design was chosen for its ability to supply rich narrative descriptions directly from participant quotations (2015, p. 304). The data were then synthesized, mainly by following McMillan's recommended Steps in Inductive Data Analysis (2015, p. 306).

Participants

To be included as participants in this study, study subjects were required to hold to a conservative Christian theology, be seminary graduates, and be currently active in a full-time, relational ministry. Preferred participant attributes included having served in full-time ministry for a minimum of five years, having attended only one seminary in their schooling career, having some cross-cultural ministry experiences, and being married with a spouse also active in ministry. This study sought to obtain interviews with 20-30 such individuals, while ensuring

representation from those currently employed as seminary administrators or faculty, those who are active pastors of churches within the United States, those who are missionaries in foreign contexts, and those who hold full-time roles in church associations, fellowships, or mission agencies.

The initial group of participants was identified through convenience sampling, followed by a mixture of snowball sampling and emergent sampling of participants who met the study's criteria (see McMillan, 2015, pp. 128-129). This approach allowed both for slight leeway in the criteria and for new participants to be discovered as the research unfolded. To acquire the starting population, the co-investigator sent a study-recruitment e-mail with the Study Abstract attached to all 29 administrators and faculty members of one conservative Christian seminary. Of these 29 individuals, nine declined, seventeen were non-responsive, and three accepted. Following each acceptance, the co-investigator sent a copy of the Interview Protocol, *Perceptions of Full-time Ministers Regarding Christian Hospitality* (Appendix C), and an invitation to schedule the interview. Snowball and emergent sampling continued through recommendations of other potential interviewees gleaned from these initial participants and from the co-investigator's own extended network of ministry contacts.

The interview subjects (N=21) were composed of 19 males and 2 females within the following age brackets: eight subjects reported as being 36-45 years old, six as 46-55 years old, five as 56-65, and two as 66 or older. The subjects were composed of eighteen Caucasians, one Filipino/Caucasian, one Hispanic/Caucasian, and one African.

Many participants wore multiple hats, though they were able to distinguish between their primary and secondary ministry roles. The primary ministry roles for the subjects selected included 10 Pastors, 6 missionaries, 4 seminary faculty members, and 1 "in between ministries."

The secondary ministry roles for these same 21 subjects included 2 Pastors, 5 missionaries, 5 seminary faculty members, and 9 involved in other ministries. Thus combining these primary and secondary roles, the participants represent 12 pastors, 11 missionaries, and 9 seminary faculty members. The interviewees had also been serving in full-time ministry for a mean of 24.9 years and median of 24, the longest duration being 55 years and the shortest only one.

Instrumentation

Consistent with the parameters of a phenomenological design, this study used a semi-structured interview protocol to collect data. The semi-structured interviews allowed for some flexibility but maintained uniformity by following a researcher-developed interview protocol (see McMillan, 2015, p. 345), *Perceptions of Full-time Ministers Regarding Christian Hospitality* (Appendix C). This protocol was developed in cooperation of the Investigator and Co-investigator and provides an alignment of the interview protocol with the eight research questions guiding the study.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation

After pilot testing the interview protocol and adjusting where needed, the co-investigator collected data through 21 interviews with the study's participants. The co-investigator took field notes during the interviews but also recorded and transcribed the interviews using a third-party transcription app called MeetGeek (see https://meetgeek.ai/). The co-investigator then reformatted the transcripts and edited them, both to remove participant names and to add field notes, providing what McMillan (2015) calls "thick descriptions" (pp. 342, 346). Data analysis continued as the researcher analyzed and encoded the printed transcripts, added this information to a computer app for reanalysis, reprinted the information, reanalyzed it for final emerging themes, added it to the computer once more, and then used the interpreted results for the

completion of this study. The result was the development of an evidence-based framework for the inclusion of hospitality in seminary culture and education.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

As an ordained pastor and church-planting missionary who now holds a leadership position in a mission agency in the United States, the co-investigator has 17 years' experience in full-time relational ministry, both at home and abroad. With this comes an opinionated disposition, biblically grounded yet biased nonetheless, that hospitality is an essential part of true Christian ministry. While this study seeks not to answer *if* hospitality is needed in seminary but rather *how* it can be used, this emphasis in no way diminishes the co-investigator's ethical responsibility to maintain reflexivity throughout the process.

The processes involved in this study lead to the trustworthiness of the data gleaned from the interview subjects. These processes include the following: 1) the requesting and receiving of permission to record and transcribe interviews after the interviewees have read and understood both the study abstract and the interview protocol; 2) the invitation for member checking by providing each participant with a copy of the interview transcript before any deep analysis took place; 3) multiple levels of data analysis; and 4) the consistent use of direct quotations from the interview subjects.

This study is not without its limitations, both in participant characteristics and in methodology. Regarding limitations in participant characteristics and external validity, it must be noted that, although this study's participants consisted of conservative Christian seminary administrators, faculty, and graduates, the results of this study may not be generalized to all conservative Christian seminaries due to possible bias in the sample selection. The sample of seminary graduates who participated in this study did so voluntarily, and the results therefore

might not be representative of all conservative Christian seminary administrators, faculty, or graduates. Regarding limitations in methodology, this study greatly depended upon participant recollections of their seminary experiences, recollections that could very well have been influenced by ministry and other experiences in the ensuing years or even decades since they sat in seminary classrooms.

Chapter 4: Findings

Chapter 4 presents the study findings organized broadly into four themes that emerged organically during analysis. The first theme, related to Research Question 1, investigates how study participants defined Christian hospitality. The second theme, related to Research Questions 2 and 3, investigates how study participants described Christian hospitality. The third theme, related to Research Questions 4, 5, 6, and 7, investigates how study participants recalled encountering Christian hospitality in their seminary experiences. The fourth theme, related to the framework development of Chapter 2, investigates how study participants plan to use and teach Christian hospitality. Before delving fully into these themes, however, it is necessary first to reference two introductory thoughts that will bring context to the ensuing discussion: a reminder of the study's purpose and two challenges faced within the pool of interview subjects regarding how the study was received.

Introductory Thoughts

The first introductory thought is in regard to the study's purpose as stated in Chapter 1:

> This study seeks to establish a formal framework for hospitality in seminary that could be used to instigate cultural shifts in seminary education towards more hospitable relationships between the school's personnel and its students, so that its graduates will then better employ hospitable relationships in their future ministries. It does this by first developing a propositional framework based upon the literature and then building upon that propositional framework through recommendations gleaned from interviews with seminary administrators and professors, pastors, and missionaries.

One key emphasis to note here is that the study sought not to answer *if* hospitality is necessary in seminary education but rather *how* hospitality can be enhanced within seminary education. A possible lack of clarity on this point may have led to the two challenges discussed below.

The second introductory thought involves two challenges the co-investigator faced within the pool of interview subjects regarding how the study was received. These challenges include

the opinion that hospitality is merely a trend in Christian circles and a confusion of semantics regarding hospitality's role in the seminary classroom.

The first challenge involves how one participant called hospitality a trend in Christianity, a comment with negative connotations that seemed to deemphasize its importance as a fundamental aspect of Christian life:

> We have to keep hospitality in balance with other factors of Ministry. Right now, it's trendy in Evangelical circles. The whole idea of hospitality is this trendy topic. And maybe because of Rosario Butterfield's book about hospitality, everybody says, 'Oh cool! Yeah! We all want to do this!' You have to keep it in balance with other things in ministry. And it's not the most important thing in ministry that you do above all else. It's part of a whole group of characteristics and ministries you ought to have.

When querying later participants on their thoughts about hospitality being "trendy," respondents disagreed with the negative sentiment yet from different angles. One participant suggested culture has influenced our understanding of the word and thus our responsibility to show it:

> In the Southern United States [there's] a preexisting cultural tradition that calls itself 'hospitality' but which is something extremely different [from Christian hospitality] … People, number one, don't understand what you're talking about when you talk about 'hospitality', and it makes it real easy to say something like, 'Hospitality is a fad,' because you're thinking about garden picnics… And then number two, it makes it easier for people to think that they're doing it when there's no love and no patience and no humility. Because they're just doing the cultural thing, which is not Christian at all.

Another participant accepted hospitality as trendy in Christian circles yet praised this view as a return to our roots, not as an unhealthy imbalance, saying: "Hey if the church has the spotlight on it right now in a major way, that's not a bad thing, you know? Let's ride that wave." Yet another participant suggested the current state of the world and the apparent lack of neighbor-to-neighbor love evidences failure in our Christian hospitality and it is emphatically not a Christian trend:

> If hospitality is a fad... [then] it's quite difficult to explain the level of alienation and despair that is occurring throughout...North American society... If hospitality is a fad, it's difficult to explain the unbelievable crisis that's occurring in substance abuse... [and] mental illness.

These responses highlight the importance of both defining Christian hospitality and describing the attitudes and actions that make it thus. It is the co-investigator's opinion, however, that, since hospitality is a biblical command (see Rom. 12:13), a characteristic of Christ Jesus (see Luke 7:34; 10:25-37), and a redemptive theme of Scripture (Is. 25:6-9; Matt. 26:29; Rev. 19:9), its recent emphasis in Christianity (even to the point of so-called trendiness) is nothing short of a return to biblical obedience. Most certainly it must be kept "in balance with other things in ministry," yet its absence removes with it all love, compassion, generosity, sacrifice, service, and a dozen other Christlike characteristics that would deplete the Church of its power and make it a non-entity in the world.

The second challenge involves a confusion of semantics with one participant that threatened to derail the interview even before it began. This confusion is essential to describe at the outset of this chapter, because the opinion of this participant likely represents that of many readers who do not understand the importance of hospitality as a Christian quality or its importance in seminary education.

After jokingly stating the only place one could ever go to study Christian hospitality is in some guy's D.Min paper on hospitality, this professor went on to describe the welcoming of students as guests as having no place in seminary education:

> That wasn't the point of the classroom. I wasn't a guest. I was a student. I paid tuition and…that dynamic, wasn't a part of seminary. Nor was it a part of my classes, frankly. I mean, [my students] came to get an education. They paid their money and they sat and they enrolled in the class, and away we went from there. From my vantage point, I would say that's just not applicable.

When probing further to ask what disagreement he might have with a professor who did seek to welcome his students and pursue personable relationships with them, he stated:

> Well, I mean, that's not hospitality. That's just a part of mentorship, trying to establish rapport with the students. That's a part of life-on-life mentorship. I wouldn't call that hospitality. You know, the students came in and it was more than just communicating

> with them a body of facts. It was about life-on-life and trying to encourage them in their future vocation. Trying to help them discern the will of God for their life. Trying to help them reach you know their goal and God's goal for their life. Mentorship. You know, I wouldn't call that hospitality.

Even when the co-investigator pointed out that a previous interview subject and former student of this professor had highly praised him as the greatest example of hospitality from his seminary career, the professor responded that his relationship with this former student did not reflect hospitality. Rather, “That's mentorship. You know, I'm not sure what you're thinking. It almost sounds like you're confusing mentorship and hospitality."

These comments came halfway through this professor's interview, and they caused alarm, because they called into question the possible lack of clarity within the study abstract and interview protocol. As the interview progressed, however, the melding of both mentorship and hospitality took place. In his concluding remarks, this professor acquiesced to the study's viewpoint regarding hospitality, stating:

> I just think [hospitality] is an important topic to consider… I don't want to say it came naturally to us, but [it's] something we did all the time and we felt strongly about it… It was just a part of how we tried to live before our students… I mean, [hospitality and mentorship are] one and the same thing.

The Findings

With these introductory thoughts established, it is now fitting to move into this most important section of the study, the findings. These findings are organized broadly into the following four themes that emerged organically during analysis: how the study's participants define Christian hospitality (related to Research Question 1), how the participants describe Christian hospitality (related to Research Question 2-3), how the participants recall Christian hospitality from their own seminary experiences (related to Research Questions 4-7), and how the participants plan to display Christian hospitality in the future. The organic development of these themes through the process of analysis came because the co-investigator recognized both

overlap and disparity in the participants' definitions, descriptions, recollections, and plans. Thus, by combining their agreements and highlighting their disagreements, it is possible to uncover solid data about how seminary graduates now serving in full-time ministry recognize hospitality in both seminary and ministry.

How Participants Define Christian Hospitality

Prior to defining Christian Hospitality, each participant was first asked to define hospitality in general terms. The reason was to have participants think beyond any surface, food-focused definitions that relate more to hosting or entertaining than to the topic at hand. For that reason, this section dealing with Research Question 1 will first look at a compilation of definitions for the generic term before bridging the gap and building a more coherent definition of the Christian term.

Generically, study participants feel the term hospitality requires four key ingredients: openness, welcome, care, and generosity without expectation of return. First, regarding openness, participants emphasized that hospitality is focused not only outward towards the guest but also inward towards the host, so the guest feels welcomed into both the home and the life of the host. Second, regarding welcome, the participants used terms like "welcoming", "belonging", "making someone feel at home", "inviting", and "engaging", all terms which suggest both the host's intentions and the guests' emotional response. Third, some participants emphasized the motivation behind this openness and welcome as “care”, or "extending care… so that someone can be… encouraged." Finally, if openness and welcome are the intent and if care is the motivation, then generosity is the means or action by which hospitality plays out, most often shown without any expectation of return. Considered collectively, the participants' generic

definition of hospitality might be: "Generously opening yourself and your home to others and welcoming them into your life because you care."

Bridging the gap between generic and Christian hospitality requires two things: highlighting their differences and emphasizing what Christian hospitality is not. First, almost half the participants highlighted the differences between Christian and generic hospitality, though their word choices were not quite the same. Six participants stated Christian hospitality has a different "ground", "sphere", "methodology", "emphasis", "application", or "outcome"; and five agreed that it has a different "purpose" or "motivation". These differences suggest both the reasoning behind and goals for showing Christian hospitality are broader than what might be found in generic hospitality.

Second, participants were quick to define Christian hospitality by emphasizing what it most certainly is not. The following is a summary of their remarks (with the number of participants who made similar comments in parentheses): Christian hospitality is not "entertaining…mixed up with how nice…our house is or how fancy the meal is" (3); Christian hospitality is "not just looking to their material needs" (4); and Christian hospitality is not superficial in that it is "not just making other people feel welcome" and "not just a ministry technique" (3). One participant also suggested Christian hospitality is not limited to a single group: it is "not just…[shown] to neighbors and friends… or people you're just getting to know [but]…often includes those who you don't know at all."

Bridging generic hospitality to Christian hospitality makes it easier now to define the latter term. Like generic hospitality, Christian hospitality also includes openness and welcome, as this participant definition suggests: Christian hospitality is "to open up who we are and invite people to come and see who Christ is." Also, like generic hospitality, Christian hospitality

includes aspects of care, though guest identity matters, especially whether they are a brother or sister in Christ or not. For example, one participant showed hospitality to an unbeliever "to build that relationship to share the Gospel with them." Another participant showed hospitality to fellow-believers as a means of "enjoying that fellowship and encouraging one another in their walk with the Lord." Whether the guest is a fellow believer or not, however, most participants suggested Christian hospitality focuses on how the host can serve the guest, as this definition says: Christian hospitality is "engaging with them and dealing with them at the point where their greatest needs and concerns are and helping meet those." Finally, like generic hospitality, Christian hospitality also stems from generosity, or as one participant said, "sacrificial giving…without any expectation of return."

Unlike generic hospitality, though, Christian hospitality also has three main ingredients that were all but ignored in definitions of generic hospitality: love, Christlikeness, and obedience. Although one participant did describe generic hospitality as "practical love," he was the only participant to use this all-important four-letter word, while several kept love a key ingredient for Christian hospitality, describing it for example as "the love of Christ for all people." This Christian love bleeds into another key ingredient in Christian hospitality, that of Christlikeness, or as one participant described it: "Making people feel at home with Jesus [because] my life so reflects Christ." The final ingredient of obedience also easily distinguishes Christian hospitality from generic hospitality, as one participant stated: "God commands welcoming and care for the foreigner and for the widow… [so it's] reflecting Christ...reflecting the Gospel...[and] showing people God's love and care for them as fellow images of God." Three participants used Jesus' so-called "Golden Rule" in their definitions, the loving command that says loosely: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Luke 6:31). Another participant succinctly added to the

end of his definition: "I'm not sure I'd want to detach Christian hospitality…from just what Christianity should be in general…It's an element of everything else we do."

With all these differences and ingredients in mind, an all-encompassing definition from the 21 participants of Christian hospitality might read thus: "Sacrificially opening your home and yourself in Christlike love and obedience for the encouragement of others." How this definition relates to Christian hospitality described in action is the focus of the next topic.

How Participants Describe Christian Hospitality

The data for this section naturally formed into three distinct groupings. Participants described how and why they show hospitality, and also how they have seen others show hospitality. These three groupings will focus primarily on the descriptions of Christian hospitality in general, reserving all discussions of hospitality in seminary education for the following section.

Participant Methods for Showing Christian Hospitality

The responses recorded in this and the following section primarily address the second research question, "How do conservative Christian ministers use Christian hospitality in their ministry?" The dozens of descriptions of how participants personally show Christian hospitality were organized into external actions and internal approaches for analysis.

Regarding their external actions, almost every participant described the relational benefits of opening their homes to others (most often to fellow-believers, though occasionally to neighbors or people on the fringe as well). One pastor expressed the sentiments of many respondents: "We see our home as a ministry tool." Food plays a key role in this process of hosting others in the home, as one missionary put it: "We find that food quite often greases the skids…If you're willing to feed people, they're willing to listen and talk to you and then open up

and talk themselves." While likely a tool employed by many Christians, this aspect of hosting others for meals at home was paramount among the pastors represented in this study, one pastor stating: "Sometimes people invite us into their homes. Not a lot, but of course, I'm a pastor, so I'm often taking the initiative for that sort of thing." Three pastors in the study mentioned intentionally purchasing homes with larger living and dining rooms and extra guest rooms for the sole purpose of habitual hospitality. Another pastor shared poignant examples of the fruit derived from such efforts, in one instance allowing his board-game hobby with an unsaved friend to turn into a Bible study and that friend's eventual salvation. In another instance, his family invited a couple who were long-time church members over for Sunday lunch and Bible study, after which one guest tearfully remarked: "What we just did, you can't do that sitting in a pew. You can't do that listening to a sermon. We really need this kind of interaction with each other."

Several participants pointed to how hospitality is a family affair, the spouse needing to be fully on board and sometimes the children as well. One female participant said: "Ironically, I'm married to a guy who likes to cook and show hospitality. So he gets to…make them feel comfortable in their bellies, and then I like to do the talking." Another pastor spoke of children: "We've observed…just a few adults dominating [the conversation] and the children are…ignored." His genius solution was for everyone to write a question (silly or serious) on a card which could be then pulled randomly from a hat for discussion by the whole group over dinner. Several participants also mentioned taking people out for coffee or lunch, what one pastor described as his "restaurant ministry," while others emphasized the importance of being a good guest when invited elsewhere, as one missionary described it: "On occasion we go to their home, which is hospitality as well, because you're accepting the relationship with them."

Regarding their internal approaches, the most frequent quality recognized among most participants was their intentionality (what some called "purposefulness"), a quality that informed virtually every decision they made. As one pastor put it: "It has been a personal exercise to think about [the spiritual practice of the dinner table] and realize that there's a lot of intentionality that can be brought to this moment." Another pastor tied this intentionality to prayer, saying: "When I know we're having someone over, I want to think about it intentionally, and so I pray about it ahead of time." Involved in this intentionality is sacrifice for the sake of the guest, even if it cuts across the host's own grain. This sacrifice is best evidenced in the host's selflessness, as one participant said, "If you're in it for how it makes you feel, then that's not really hospitality." This selflessness extends into thinking from the guest's point of view, as one missionary so poignantly described: "I try to think from the other person's perspective: what is hospitable to them? How are they interpreting hospitality? [Because]…hospitality is not hospitable unless it's hospitality from their point of view."

Another quality tied to this intentionality and selflessness is the discipline required to forego one's own comfort in exchange for meeting the needs of others. One missionary bore this out honestly:

> Oftentimes our home is [a] place of escape, and so when you come home from spending a day out talking with people, ministering to people, engaging people and then you come home and you just feel like you need to---to breathe. That you need to rest. You need to get away from people for a while. And then somebody comes and knocks on your door and it's kind of like, “Do I even go and answer the door?”

While he and other participants admitted such need for occasional respite from ministry, this missionary also quickly acknowledged how dangerous it can be to feed this need too often, stating: "The times I am least hospitable is when I have begun to focus more on me than…on Christ."

One final internal approach still tied to intentionality is how one participant described directing the conversation, steering it not only away from topics of conflict but also away from the guest's own "story," those anecdotes from the past that have come to define them. While this certainly requires having heard the stories before and an intimacy of knowing which stories define them, this intentionality is important, as the participant described, for "helping people out of their story…so rather than looking back, [they're] maybe looking forward."

These descriptions of external actions and internal approaches highlight several important traits that help enhance the definitions discussed in the previous section. First of course is intentionality, that purchases are made, gatherings are planned, and conversation topics are selected to enhance the spiritual influence of the hospitality displayed. This intentionality then plays itself out in other traits like prayerfulness, sacrifice, selflessness, discipline, and direction as just described. Second is generosity, the outlook that a minister's home, possessions, time, and even hobbies are to be viewed as tools for ministry. Third is family involvement, that a minister's spouse and children ought to be as invested in the process as the minister himself. Fourth is genuineness, that the guest must feel welcomed and comfortable but not outclassed by the family, home, and food.

Participant Motivations for Showing Christian Hospitality

Beyond the above descriptions of the internal and external methods of showing Christian hospitality are the motivations for doing so, the "Why?" behind it all. The participants each answered a question specifically about their goals for showing Christian hospitality, but they also implied their motivations throughout the discussions. The following paragraphs will describe four motivating factors for showing Christian hospitality: personal growth, personal relationships, evangelism, and discipleship.

The first motivating factor reported by participants was personal growth, specifically in the areas of Christlikeness and obedience. One participant stated this clearly: "[We] certainly want to stretch ourselves… We want to grow in our Christlikeness." Another participant stated more bluntly: "There's not like an end goal here other than to show Christ." Another participant stated his goal as: "To display the image of God, the character of God and how He would treat other people…[so I can] assist others to be able to do what God intends for them to do." Attention to one's own growth in Christlikeness should also result in obedience to the words of Christ. For example, one pastor noted: It's "Jesus saying, 'Here's the two greatest commands: love God with all your heart, strength, and mind and then love your neighbor as yourself' and going into, 'Who's my neighbor?'" Several pastors referenced "the Golden Rule," one of whom stated: "I don't always attain to that goal [of the Golden Rule], but…that's on my mind as I'm dealing with people." Such intentions for personal growth, Christlikeness, and obedience are important for full-time ministers such as the participants in this study. One participant acknowledged:

> You train yourself to be more receptive to people. And I know that that's something I have to guard against. I can be very comfortable just being self-sufficient, content to sit inside, do quiet things, you know, read a book, watch TV, hide behind a screen… I don't feel like I'm completely alienated from people because of my professionality, but I know I could do better. I have to guard against not just being in the ivory tower.

The second motivating factor emerging from participant interviews was the development of personal relationships. One pastor tied this to his personal growth by saying: "When you're being hospitable to other Christians, you're training yourself to be more accessible to people in general…rather than being cold, withdrawn, isolated… Hospitality keeps me engaged with people." To ensure that Christian hospitality does result in improved personal relationships, two key ingredients are required: respect and selfless love. About respect, one professor stated:

> I try to operate ethically on the principle of "all human beings are created in the image of God the Creator, and to honor them and respect them is to honor and respect Him."... Hospitality, graciousness, gratitude, compassion----all those things are the expression of how you operate with respect for the image of God in another human being.

About love, one pastor said: "Our goal for hospitality is that people feel…welcomed. That they feel that they're loved... valued... important." Another participant described it this way:

> I guess when I think of hospitality, I think of just...that sense of openness that I'm not afraid of being hurt by somebody, because I'm not in relationships for what I'm going to get out of them. I get tons out of it, but it's a byproduct of God's love in me splashing out all over to everybody else. And then I get the joy of seeing those relationships as people grow to know him more.

The third motivating factor identified by participants was evangelism, as one pastor clearly stated: "My ultimate motive is that people would know Jesus and they would know the Gospel. That they would see Jesus expressed through me so that my life would be a witness of that." Another pastor said: "Hospitality isn't necessarily evangelism. They're not synonymous, but they can happen simultaneously. I think it's hard to be truly evangelistic without being hospitable." The blessing of "God's love in me splashing out all over to everybody else" (as described in the previous paragraph) extends even to those who do not yet know Him, though several participants were quick to point out that evangelism through hospitality will not work properly if ever the person feels more like a project than a guest. One pastor put it thusly: "Too many Christians…really only see unsaved people as like a project or a goal… True hospitality has no other goal then hospitality… We would because we should and because the Lord did." Another Pastor said similarly:

> [The unbelievers I have into my home] are not a notch to be added to a belt. They are not a number to be put on an end of the year report. They are not a story to brag about to other people. They are my Friends and I love them.

Such genuine love is a key ingredient for showing Christian hospitality to unbelievers. One pastor stated his goal especially well:

> That we express the truth in love. That we're not just some family showing hospitality, but it's because of the life we're living in Christ that this is happening... We're not just being nice, but that we're trying to share something that's much more profound than just the resources.

Several participants emphasized their love for and acceptance of unsaved guests would remain unchanged even were those guests to refuse the Gospel and show no interest in spiritual things, as one participant said: "Even if they reject [everything about the Gospel], at the end of the day, they need to know that I love them," adding that such a loving approach to friendship "preps the soil so that when you go to plant the seed or water the seed, it is highly, highly effective."

The final motivating factor noted by participants was discipleship. Some viewed discipleship as both a pre- and post-conversion process, as one pastor describes it: "The idea of disciple-making has been a significant impact on our thinking about hospitality, because our time and our meals and our family and our house are all things that God has put in our hands to use for redemptive relationships." Most participants, however, viewed discipleship in strictly believer-to-believer terms.

Interview responses suggested three ingredients to Christian hospitality as discipleship among believers: edification, encouragement, and fellowship. One professor summarized the edification ingredient this way: "The goal would be that we would both grow through the experience...where there is an exchange of ideas and just the mutual building up of each other." Another participant summarized the encouragement ingredient this way: "For brothers and sisters...expecting to be honest with each other, speak the truth and love toward each other, and encourage each other." Participants described the fellowship ingredient both in general terms and more broadly. One pastor described general fellowship as "The encouragement of biblical community and fellowship, where we are not just sitting there listening to a sermon once a week, but our lives are interconnected in a meaningful way." Broadening this idea out beyond one's

friends from church, he described it as "Trying to encourage community in general...to focus on people that are maybe on the fringes that you're trying to kind of pull in and people who might have a hard time building relationships." Another participant put it this way:

> I think of what the Apostle Paul says...about unity… As we bring other people in, we're going to be consciously stripping away the barriers that tend to separate people (class or race or culture or language)…and we're doing so out of a sense of the love of Jesus Christ for all people and the unity of the church.

These descriptions of participant motivations highlight three more important traits necessary for Christian hospitality that also help enhance the definitions discussed in the previous section. It could be argued these traits are also all strung together by that key word "intentionality." First is Christlikeness, which plays out in one's own personal pursuit of consistent spiritual growth and obedience to the Word of God. Second is respect for all fellow-human-beings, no matter their beliefs, age, race, gender, etc. Third is a selfless love that genuinely seeks the good and comfort of the other person. Spiritually speaking, this love results either in that person's salvation (if unsaved) or in that person's edification through fellowship and encouragement (if already a fellow believer).

Participant Models of Christian Hospitality

This section has thus far detailed participant descriptions of both their own methods and motivations when showing Christian hospitality, leaving one more sphere of descriptions to investigate, that is, how they have witnessed Christian hospitality being modeled by others. This sphere helps answer in part Research Question 3, "How do conservative Christian ministers learn to use Christian hospitality in their ministry?" Again, this discussion focuses on only those instances outside of seminary education and will be broken down into these three sections: being a recipient of hospitality, watching others use Christian hospitality, and considering cultural roadblocks to Christian hospitality.

First, several participants spoke of receiving hospitality from others throughout their ministry. One missionary spoke of his experiences raising financial support: "The deputation trail [is] a humbling experience. And to be in other people's homes across the country...more than anything has provided...clear, actionable [examples] of what hospitality looks like." Another missionary concurred: "The people we stayed with [as missionaries] were the hospitable ones. They were the families in the church that wanted to reach out and...be a blessing. So yes, I saw many, many models of kindness, love, taking care of, concern." One professor spoke of his experiences traveling with a ministry team: "We traveled a lot…[and were] in people's homes all the time... We saw all kinds of versions of hospitality and saw what we would not do and what we definitely would do... I feel like I learned a lot without even recognizing it."

Second, most participants shared experiences of watching others use Christian hospitality, finding examples within three main groupings: family, pastors and mentors, and the church body. Most participants mentioned witnessing their families lead as examples of hospitality, one missionary stating: "My family was always [the] recipient of guests, from the earliest age I can remember. I've done it all my life." Pastors and mentors were also a guiding influence for one-third of the participants, one recalling this example: "[One pastor] was instrumental when I was a teenager…how they connected with people…not only for incidental things like meals, but they would frequently have people stay in their home or live with them for extended durations." Others referenced watching pastors and mentors take others with them into ministry activities, for example joint Bible studies, helping with sermon preparation, and joining for hospital visits.

The church body also positively influenced many participants, both in the programs they developed which encouraged intentional relationship-building through hospitality or the examples of fellow-church members. Some of the programs included a motorcycle ministry that

sought to build bridges between the church and community, testimony times dedicated to members' stories of reaching out to neighbors, and life groups that highlight the intimacy of connecting in homes. Some models of fellow church members stood out, for example, those who organized block-parties for their neighbors or invited them on daily walks or bike rides. One pastor emphasized how he has seen hobbies being used redemptively in his congregation, adding this encouragement: "Hospitality could be as simple as that, something you love to do by yourself, but instead you choose to do with other people."

Third, several participants noted the importance of recognizing the cultural roadblocks which Americans face in our relatively weak concept of hospitality, especially when viewing its use in non-Western cultures. This lengthier discussion will be broken down into segments on how hospitality is a way of life to many non-Western cultures, how non-Western cultures can put American hospitality to shame, and how American Christians can learn hospitality from these other cultures.

Reflecting on hospitality as a way of life in many non-Western cultures, one participant explained her experiences this way:

> I've learned hospitality (the art of)…in China and then working with Muslims... You cannot outdo a Muslim in hospitality. I don't care how Christian you are, you probably are not going to outdo them… Lavish generosity. Huge sacrifice. The guest is more important than anyone. The guest is more valued than my stuff, so I'll spend money I don't have to make sure that my guest is welcome. Kindness... I've never been in a Muslim or a Chinese home where I felt like I wasn't wanted or that they were looking at the clock to get rid of me... Genuine interest... They would drop everything to sit down and talk with me... Everything, all the activity they did was focused on me.

Several other participants shared the same views: "With Middle Easterners or Muslim-background people, hospitality is almost the highest virtue" and "As you interact with other cultures, you can't avoid the topic of hospitality... Hospitality is such a big part of [Muslim,

African, or Eastern] cultures." One professor with a background in Louisiana explained his experiences this way:

> Cajun culture is very hospitable. And so I had arrived in Egypt with my family thinking, "We know hospitality. We do hospitality."... [But quickly] I learned hospitality from Arabs, because they do hospitality, they do graciousness, they do receiving of outsiders WAY better than we do in the South… My Arab friends, many of them didn't have material things, but they showed hospitality that made you welcome with their lives, with their interests, with their families, and in non-concrete ways...using time, giving time as an expression of being hospitable.

Still another participant praised his grandparents who adapted to the local culture while serving as missionaries on a Native American reservation in the Midwest:

> They were the first people in the history of that mission that really had much success in reaching people for Christ, because they were the first people on the mission that didn't treat their house as a fortress or a castle. They treated their house as a...ministry opportunity.

One mission professor had much to say regarding how non-Western cultures can put American hospitality to shame. He began by suggesting: "We [Americans] see hospitality as a mutual exchange…more as just politeness or nicety, not as an end unto itself." He later expounded on this thought:

> Americans in general don't understand the overall value of community interaction... I tell my students: "Everybody thinks that they're wrestlers (me and the other guy), but we're all playing...soccer and it's a team effort. Everything in Christianity...is meant to be a team effort." And that applies very much to hospitality… Americans plan hospitality, but for most people around the world, hospitality is more spontaneous. Americans are typically sparing in their hospitality, whereas other peoples are lavish in their hospitality. And I want [my missions students] to understand that they have to become like the people are going to serve. Otherwise there's always this barrier.

Several other participants held similarly strong views regarding how American Christians can learn hospitality from these other cultures. One said:

> The American Church has a lot to learn about hospitality...from just the global community. Spend time in any Muslim country and you're going to learn a new form of hospitality that just puts anything we do to shame.

Another referenced a personal conversation he had with author Nik Ripken:

> [Hospitality is still] part of the Middle Eastern culture... [Nik Ripken] talks about how one of the biggest things we're missing out on as Christians is that hospitality is really a wonderful way to reach Muslims...because it is 100% of their culture.

Finally, one pastor highlighted how hospitality, as a biblical edict, ought never be hindered by cultural barriers, saying: "If it's biblical, it's got to be doable in China, it's got to be doable in the United States, it's got to be doable in South Africa... It doesn't matter what culture you go to."

These descriptions of how participants have witnessed Christian hospitality on display in others highlight four more traits that help enhance the definitions discussed above. First is the recognition of personal and/or cultural roadblocks that might be preventing one from making full use of hospitality's potential in ministry. Second is the willingness to learn from both good and bad examples in order to enhance the effectiveness of one's own hospitality. Third is sensitivity to the kindnesses of others whenever one is in the guest role. Fourth is the need to be openminded to both the simplicity and breadth of forms that hospitality can take beyond merely "a meal at home."

Unintentional Hospitality

Before moving on to the next section on participant recollections of hospitality in seminary education, there is one final note to make regarding what the co-investigator called being "unintentionally hospitable." The question in the Interview Protocol was: "Can you describe any instances when you might be unintentionally hospitable?" This question, intended to shine light into hidden corners of participant memories, was often met with the participants repeating the words "unintentionally hospitable," followed by a marked pause, and then by their confused comments, like this from one missionary: "I can't think of a way that I would, by accident, be hospitable to someone." Seven participants agreed, saying such things as: "Because hospitality is a form of showing love to people, it would be hard to be unintentionally

hospitable…to accidentally love someone"; and "I don't know how you're unintentionally hospitable---spontaneously hospitable [maybe]." This last comment highlights both the confusion and yet another important reminder, that hospitality---be it in one's travels or when likely facing unexpected drop-ins in ministry from church-members, neighbors, and strangers---requires intentionality, preparedness for the spontaneous and the unexpected. One participant put it this way: "[It's] just being prepared…like people knocking on your door, you have to be accommodating...gracious...agreeable, willing to listen, see how you can meet people's needs." Similarly, another participant noted: "Anybody can be hospitable if they choose to purposefully bring other people into their lives."

How Participants Recall Hospitality from Their Own Seminary Experiences

The preceding sections detailed both the participants' definitions and their descriptions of Christian hospitality in ministry. This third section will delve more fully into the participants' recollections of Christian hospitality from their seminary experiences. It will seek to answer Research Questions 4-7 by detailing participant experiences of hospitality, both inside and outside the classroom, in terms of environment, relationships, modeling, and spiritual formation. By way of transition, however, these four discussions will first be preceded by nine participants' descriptions of their own use of hospitality as professors or leaders in seminary.

Seminary-Involved Participants' Use of Hospitality

These nine participants are or have been seminary faculty or administrators and, during the interviews, described their own use of hospitality both inside and outside the seminary classroom. The following paragraphs will highlight some key descriptions of how they have demonstrated hospitality to students in the classroom, to students outside the classroom, and to

their seminary colleagues. This section also helps answer in part the study's second research question, "How do conservative Christian ministers use Christian hospitality in their ministry?"

Four professors described being hospitable to students inside the classroom in three main ways: by showing respect, by showing care or mercy, and by keeping the classes informal. One professor said: "I would show respect by not talking down to the student, but recognizing that this is a human being made in God's image…the kind of words you use, that tone of voice…so there's that mutuality and that exchange of ideas."

This same professor said the following about care: "I'm more on the hospitable side…because I am in the lives of my students, because I know that there's so many factors that could cause them not to excel." One pastor/professor said the following about mercy: "I'm a pastor first. The hardest thing for me is like grading and holding students' feet to the fire and all that. I'm a mercy-shower. They might as well be in the church as much as in the classroom." Another professor explained his process for keeping classes informal: "I try very hard to be informal, so often we'll just sit together in a circle and have more of a discussion. I have stuff that I'm going through, whatever, but it's more discussion-based [and] interactive. It's less lecture." One former seminary administrator and adjunct professor summarized the importance of building relationships with students in class: "If they're going to receive the content I have, I have to be a person to them first."

Six professors described being hospitable to students outside the classroom in three main ways: by meeting with them outside the classroom generally or in homes specifically, by caring for them, and by having long-term relationships with them. Several professors mentioned having an "open-door policy" for their offices, yet one professor noted its limitations: "To some extent, I can show hospitality in my office just in the way I interact with people, but it's never quite the

same as getting someone into a more personal setting." He then expounded on the benefits of opening even his home to students: "Anytime I can get students [or staff] over to my house or off campus somewhere…there's a different dynamic... It opens up avenues of discussion and friendship that aren't going to happen just in an office or the classroom."

Several professors had much to say about caring for students outside of class. For example, another pastor/professor stated: "The [lasting relationships] were the ones that I was able to show in some way that I cared about them. You tried to show that with all the students, but some students are more receptive to it than others." Another participant added: "If you see a student struggling, you always step in…whether they're in your small group or not. I mean, I never said, 'Well, he's somebody else's responsibility.' He was within my grasp. I would try to help him." Another interviewee concurred: "That just gives you a much better relationship when students are more motivated to learn and they feel like you actually care about them, not just about the material." One professor from a smaller seminary commented about having long-term relationships with students: "Certainly, we do all kinds of things with alumni… You just mentor them. You keep loving on them. You keep trying to encourage them. It's just an ongoing relationship." Another pastor/professor felt relationships with students inside the classroom are greatly enhanced when there is also a relationship outside the classroom: "Most of the hospitality/mentoring I do is with students that go to my church... Certainly we're a lot closer and it's a lot more personal in terms of the weeds of their lives, personal struggles, and decisions."

Four seminary professors and leaders also described being hospitable to their seminary colleagues. One professor described it as a regular, natural occurrence: "We regularly had my colleagues in our home… We just had people in our home all the time." Another seminary leader described it as an intentional goal he had each semester: "I make it a point [to eat with my

professors]...at least once a semester... It's not about the job or about responsibilities... I want to have an interaction with them friend-to-friend." One former Dean consider hospitality a prerequisite for new hires: “We didn’t have a template that we looked for...in experience or in educational background… We were looking for people who were marked by hospitality, by compassion, by empathetic inclinations.” One pastor/professor decried the fact that busyness in ministry prevents him from deepening his relationships with colleagues, a sentiment which also introduces one potential roadblock to hospitality's place in seminary education (i.e. busyness):

> [We have good relationships] but I would say overall: We're all so busy in ministry… We have this little meeting by the lake that we do every once in a while---and we just shoot the breeze... And we're always like, “Wow, we need to do this more often”… We're comrades in arms. But sometimes we don't see each other very much at all.

These recollections highlight three more traits that can help enhance the definition above: care, interaction, and sacrifice. Care for the students in these examples happens both inside and outside the classroom and involves such things as respect, mercy, empathy, and love. Interaction with students can begin with informality inside the classroom and out, meeting often and in various locations including the home, and intentionally maintaining the relationship for the long-term through communication, love, and encouragement. Sacrifice includes a willingness to spend time with others, even when other responsibilities of work and family vie for one’s attention.

Hospitality in Seminary Environments

This section presents findings about participants’ hospitality experiences as students in seminary environments, in response to the study’s fourth research question: “To what extent, if any, are the environments inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?” The following paragraphs will describe participant experiences both inside and outside the classroom.

When asked if participants ever felt like a welcomed guest inside seminary classrooms, the responses were split, with thirteen suggesting “yes” and twelve suggesting "no." Several respondents implied both “yes” and “no,” depending on the school, class, or professor. A typical positive response was immediate, the participant recalling a particularly welcoming professor or course. One respondent clumped everything together by saying of one seminary: "Definitely… The faculty [at my school] were just awesome... That's the most hospitable environment I've ever been in." A typical negative response was also immediate, though several participants expounded on these sentiments. One said: "The word 'challenged' [not ‘welcomed’] was the regular, daily experience." Another played with the words *welcomed guest* from the question: "I perceived myself as having a right to be there, because I purchased a seat to be there. So I would not say that I felt like a guest in a classroom, but welcomed, certainly."

Four elements inside the classroom helped make for positively hospitable environments: the classroom banter, the classroom geography, the classmates, and the professors. First, classroom banter was often referenced as a welcoming element, one participant saying: "The freedom to ask questions, the freedom to have discussions, the banter before class I think was helpful." Another participant commented, however, that such banter was not enough for building relationships: "[The] classroom setting is institutional by nature... You're participating in that class as much as possible…[but there's] very little opportunity to build relationships." Still others recalled no banter at all: "There were some professors that, when you got there, you knew that you were there to do nothing but hear him lecture." Second, classroom geography was a key element for several participants, as one put it: "Sometimes the structure of the [classroom] made it more welcoming. I can recall a Greek reading class, where we got rid of the normal setup…[and] made a circle of chairs." Third, interaction with classmates (enhanced no doubt by

geography and banter) was also a key element of in-class hospitality for some, as one participant stated: "The welcome comes from the other students."

The fourth element in the presence or absence of hospitality inside the classroom, the professors, was a much larger topic of discussion among participants, specifically regarding professors' personalities. Most participants agreed, if a classroom felt hospitable, it was due to the professor's personality, as this statement testifies: "I don't think [any professor] was hospitable for the sake of a learning tool. I think it was just naturally who they were." One student recalled a Church-history class that felt "almost like a fireside chat," and another recalled one professor's "personality and his willingness to be himself that made it feel like: 'This is a place I want to be.'" One professor looked back with fondness to a particular professor's class:

> You did just relax and you just felt it was a joy to be in that class... We'd have the best class, the best conversations... He was just a real loving professor... Looking back, I'd say probably that was the closest I would ever have said, "You know, it's just like … spending time with friends."

Another remarked:

> There's some [professors] who come in and it's just business... There are others, they'll come: "How has everybody been?... Would you like us to pray for something?" [etc.]… And so those are the ones that I felt were really interested in us as students. The others were just so task-oriented.

One pastor referenced an historical challenge that seminaries face in this regard:

> [Seminaries were] so geared towards that contemplative personality type, they really had a hard time getting [the driver-type] to come... Your contemplative type person who wants to parse Greek all day might not be the person who thinks about hospitality.

Interestingly, there were strong views on both sides in these discussions about the professor's role in providing a welcoming atmosphere for students. Some believe (as previously quoted) that students have bought their seats, and that the classroom is for learning, not relationship-building. One participant emphasized the following regarding the shared responsibility of learning in the classroom:

> The student is half the learning equation. And if he doesn't engage himself, the professor---no matter how good he is----he can't do anything. If the professor's poor and the student engages himself, then the student can still get stuff from it, because professors...may not have skilled communication habits, but they can communicate, if the student is willing to exert himself to learn from them... I don't lay all the blame on lack of communication on the professor.

On the other hand, several more participants emphasized that, yes, professors do bear the load of responsibility for making the classroom an interactive and relational learning environment. One participant described the responsibility in the following manner:

> If [a] professor has a tendency to be a little more isolated, withdrawn, then he's maybe not being as hospitable as he could be… If [a] professor doesn't feel like that's part of his personality---he needs to figure out a way to bridge it, if he really wants to make [his class times] effective.

Another shared a more emphatic anecdote from his years as a professor:

> A [fellow] professor...made some bizarre statement...like: "Students should not be asking questions in class. They've come here for me to teach them, not for them to ask questions." And I said, "That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard. … This is exactly the moment in their life when they should be asking hard questions. So if you don't [stop] your lecture, because a student asked a life question that you could speak into, then you're just a fool." … The whole atmosphere should be bent towards that kind of interaction with students.

When asked about their experiences with hospitality on their school campuses outside of the classroom, participants made references revolving around four main themes: school size, hindsight, the hierarchical nature of seminary culture, and student-professor interactions outside the classroom. Those who commented on the role of hospitality on seminary campuses suggested that the smaller the school the more it felt like a family. One participant described the small school environment in the following manner: "My seminary was smaller and so it was a much more tightknit atmosphere... Our school had a small cafeteria…and it was a place where the faculty and staff and the students kind of naturally came together." Another said: "Because of the size…that opportunity to engage outside of class, lunch together or tea together or just a time of fellowship together…always felt very welcoming…[with classmates, professors] and sometimes

even with the administrative staff." About hindsight, one participant who was an international student, commented during the interview:

> As we've been talking, I just realized that I was shown a lot more hospitality when I was studying abroad than I realized... Just recognizing that there are people who enabled me to engage in new experiences in a safe way... I think that idea of hospitality is far more important than we think it is.

Another participant commented on recommendations he has made since graduating many years ago: "[Hospitality] is something I've actually recommended to our seminary that they should do…even getting the wives involved, and I'm like, 'You're missing a wonderful opportunity here to pour life into these students.'"

Several participants noted how hospitality had not been a part of their schools' culture either inside or outside the classroom due to the hierarchical nature of that culture. One professor described the sparse personal interactions between professors and students: "[It] was just like going to a lecture class and there was very little interaction with the professor outside of class. It might happen casually, but there was much less sense of camaraderie or friendship." Another professor remarked: "It wasn't necessarily a negative thing, but back in that era, there was a very clear 'authority' kind of an emphasis… There wasn't a lot of emphasis on relationships with your professors or an atmosphere of like a family." Another added these qualifiers: "That's not to say it wasn't a good experience… Teachers were nice…and they want you to learn, and they're loving, but…it's a hierarchy there." Another graduate agreed, calling his school's atmosphere "academic" and "formal" but "not so formal that you couldn't talk… Anytime we wanted to, we could make an appointment and talk to [the professors] in the office. But that was the extent of the contact." Another graduate commented on the atmosphere: "Anytime I was in the seminary building, I felt a little bit like I was outside the principal's office… 'Sterile.' That's the word."

Participants also referenced the importance of student-professor interactions outside the classroom as evidence of hospitable seminary environments. Often referenced were these three main elements: a school's small groups, break times between classes, and the openness of faculty to welcome students into their homes. One graduate said about small groups: "[My seminary] really did a good job… And if students didn't feel that way, they just [weren't] involved in it." One graduate explained his school's "coffee break" this way:

> [My seminary had a] family atmosphere... After Chapel, there is an intentional half-hour break in the schedule before the next class. And the professors all sit down in a breakroom-kind of area, and the students sit down alongside of them. They talk about non-classroom things. They are willing to answer any questions, interact with you... This is just having a conversation because we're two believers in the same place.

Another graduate remarked on the impact of such a break time: "Those are some of the best times. We get into these interesting theological discussions that you wouldn't have time for in the classroom. So it was really, really nice." Another graduate particularly appreciated the his school's break time placed after chapel: "You were not just getting the information [from chapel]... There was time to talk about it, time to reflect." This same graduate noted how hindsight has only enhanced the effectiveness of these times: "I didn't see it in the immediate, but then stepping away…I realized that…[these times] did not just keep the professors as standing up there professing, but [as] actual people." About the openness of faculty to welcome students into their homes, one graduate referenced its effectiveness when one particularly demanding professor had him over for ice cream: There was a "personal aspect [as you got into his life and he into yours]…that helped, I think, break down some perceived barriers... [He] was modest and unassuming and there was just something that was comforting about that."

This section on participant perceptions of hospitality in their school's environments highlight three more traits that help augment the definitions discussed in the first section. First is interaction, something that can be enhanced inside the classroom through banter, questions,

dialogue, informal engagement among classmates and with the professor, and the layout of the classroom. Interaction can also be enhanced outside the classroom through small groups, break times, and invitations to professors' homes. Second is intentionality, either institutionally in the way the school seeks new hires, creates space for interactions, or schedules times for faculty-student engagement, or through the faculty themselves in how they manipulate what space and time they have to welcome and engage the students around them. Third is personality, that seminary faculty whose cerebral or task-oriented natures do not overshadow their displays of love and care for or genuine interest in their students.

Hospitality in Seminary Relationships

Following the above discussions regarding hospitality in seminary environments, the discussions then shifted to hospitality in seminary relationships, both inside and outside the classrooms. Whereas the seminary environments might have included ingredients (i.e. in-class interactions) and activities (i.e. meals at a professor's home) that helped foster relationships, this section discusses the relationships themselves with both classmates and faculty. This section addresses the study's fifth research question, "To what extent, if any, are relationships inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?"

The initial focus of this portion of the interviews was on relationship-development inside the classroom. Participant responses can be broken down into the following categories: relationships with classmates, relationships with unbelievers, and relationships with professors.

Regarding relationships developed with classmates inside the classroom, participants were mostly split, with 9 able to recall some positive examples and 10 unable to recall any examples. Those who recalled some positive examples identified small-group projects as part of

the course design, though one participant was quick to note that these "relationships" were often shallow: "We would do a collective preparation and presentation within the class, so that would draw us together as small groups. I wouldn't necessarily say that there were deep relationships that came out of that." Several professors noted the benefits of assigning group projects in class, one saying, "Mostly because of the difficulties with group projects where there's going to be somebody who doesn't pull their weight or you might have differences of how to approach it. Even that gives good opportunities to work through problems." Generally, however, any relationships formed among classmates occurred organically and not by assignment, as one participant said: "I think we oftentimes identify those who are in similar seasons and experiences of life...in the seminary community...[and through that] you begin to connect."

Those who recalled negative examples of relationship development among classmates in seminary classrooms were mostly emphatic in their responses, using "individual" to describe their seminary experiences. Participants elaborated on the idea in the following manner: "Every project was kind of an individual project [in seminary]"; "We were all very much independent creatures when it came to study and that kind of thing"; and "[Even] Expository Sermon Prep…was very much teacher-led and not student cooperation… That was very much an individual, 'You do your work, you get your grades, and you move on.'" One pastor commented on why he thinks seminaries work this way: "The focus was, 'You're going to be a pastor and you're going to be the only [pastor] at your church. You're not really going to work in a group, most of you, so you don't need that group dynamic.'" The era in which many participants schooled and the track of study they pursued are two factors to consider related to this individualistic approach in seminary. One pastor described the era influence as follows: "[The lack of emphasis on relationships] wasn't just in the seminary, that was in culture… It was later

in American culture where the whole group dynamic became trendy." A missionary participant noted the following about the study track: "It's possible that there was a whole bunch of good stuff that was happening in the pastoral track that I just missed because I studied theology instead… There must have been [ministry] stuff I wasn't getting." He also added: "I think that's an important thing to mention because it's easy to like criticize people that you disagree with."

This emphasis on individualism does have its drawbacks, according to at least one participant. First, because isolation is already a danger, a pastor needs to combat it not embrace it: "There's [many] pre-COVID things that are creating a huge amount of loneliness and de-socialization and despair among people (particularly among men)… This is becoming a more and more urgent thing for church leaders to give their attention to." Second, individualism in these conservative Christian seminaries finds its roots not in the Bible but in Fundamentalism, particularly American Fundamentalism: "Sociologically, there's a very high power-distance between [teacher and student]… I think this is an artifact of Fundamentalism. There was a very high power distance within the classroom in my seminary experience. And that tends to make hospitality tricky." He later expounded on this thought:

> Because American Fundamentalism is essentially an American cultural interpretation of Christianity...there are a lot of these like American elements that creep in... One of the things that's the most prominent is individualism: American culture is extremely individually oriented. And so because fundamentalism doesn't actively work against that...you tend to come out at the other side more American than you came in, to the degree that your theological studies themselves did not relativize you... Christianity comes into sharp conflict with American culture in quite a few places…and when those cultural elements are not specifically contradicted by the Scripture...then those elements are going to tend to be solidified and perpetuated in the lives and in the ministries of graduates.

Regarding an emphasis on relationship-building with unbelievers as part of the course design, four participants recalled this being emphasized and five participants did not. One recalled it negatively as being an organized program in school: "The entire seminary...would go

to [a park] and just find somebody sitting under a tree or walking on the street and share the Gospel---It was terrible. I'm sorry. I hated it. I found it very unnatural." One missionary referenced an emphasis in Southern Baptist schools called "Servant Evangelism" which was intended to force interactions with unbelievers through acts of kindness, a process they encouraged to become a regular part of church life. Another pastor recalled having to log weekly hours of interaction with unbelievers for a course in seminary, a requirement which caused him to be more intentional about noticing and relating to the unknown people around him. One professor noted that evangelism is part of ministerial training, but "It's not a technical skill that you learn. It's a life-on-life… It's personality-driven, how some [people] are gregarious and some are introverted and some are intellectual and some are not, and you just engage them where they're at." Those who could not recall such emphases in school said things such as the following: "I would say no, [relationships with unbelievers] was not a big focus" and "I can't recall it being an emphasis." Two participants noted how this is more the role of the church than of the seminary to teach, saying: "We did all that stuff through church, so it really didn't matter [that]…there was nothing within seminary that specifically had [evangelism] as a main component"; and "[That came] more through the Sunday School class I was in… That's one of those things that it's difficult to learn in a classroom, especially a Christian classroom."

When asked about relationships developed with professors inside the classroom, participants had two major points to make apart from all that has been discussed in the previous section. First, relationship-development between professors and students begins with respect. As one professor said, "Respect for [my professors] in the classroom is what enabled these relationships to develop… They were good at their subjects, and I value people who are not mediocre." Second, such relationships with professors can help with recall many years or

decades down the road, as one participant noted after saying she remembered her professors far more than her classes: "[But] as soon as I remember the professors, then I remember [the classes]… [With professors] I didn't like or...we didn't really form a relationship, then I don't remember what those courses are until I look at my transcript."

The second focus of this portion of the study on relationships is on relationship-development outside the classroom and even beyond the seminary experience. Participant responses can be broken down into two categories: relationships with classmates and relationships with seminary faculty.

Participants again had very little to say regarding relationships with classmates outside of the classroom setting. References made centered on the benefits of small-group meetings, like the monthly "faculty chapel" as described by one participant: "You meet with your faculty advisor…and interact with…[and] pray for the students who are in that group. And because you met together in that way once a month, you kind of connected with them outside of that too." Another participant highlighted the genuine relationships that came from meeting classmates outside of class: "[Our small group] would turn into just a strictly social event…[which] contributed very much to the formation of relationships, to genuine spiritual relationships which continued."

Nineteen of 21 participants could recall at least one positive experience with a seminary professor or faculty member outside of the classroom setting. It must be noted, however, that such a high response rate hides the fact that these singular memories stood out due to the abnormality of meeting a professor characterized by warm hospitality. The theme that ties virtually every positive comment together in this regard is exposure, that the more time students were exposed to professors, the more opportunities relationships had to blossom. Exposure

helped lessen the power-distance (as mentioned previously) between faculty and students, and it came in two major forms, as will be discussed in the following paragraphs: professional exposure and personal exposure.

Participants experienced positive professional exposure to seminary faculty in three ways. First, students who took multiple classes from a single professor experienced a stronger bond with that professor, something that led one pastor to say of his professor: "I was able to [have]…discussions about ministry just outside of a purely classroom perspective, so we developed somewhat of a friendship through that." Another commented: "I had [some professors] for multiple classes, so it was easy to have developed relationships." Second, students who took part in small-group activities hosted by professors, often in their homes (as previously mentioned), enjoyed more intimate conversations and deeper relationships than they did with most other professors. One professor named two activities that were particularly meaningful during his seminary career, a "Dead Preacher's Society" hosted in professors' homes during which students and professors mingled to discuss great preachers and sermons from the past, and a regular missions gathering, where a missions professor invited missionaries and students to his home to discuss ministries and methods. Third, participants who had the opportunity to travel with faculty members on mission trips, ministry teams, or to conferences, remarked on the powerful impact such trips had on leveling out their relationships as co-laborers. One participant described it this way: "In class…[it's] a student-professor kind of relationship. And then if you go your separate ways, it doesn't go deeper than that… If you can travel together, that kind of ramps up the level of relationship for sure." Another describes joining his professor on a missions trip:

> That was a really wonderful experience. His heart, his leadership, his kindness. Yeah, very different from the lectures... Living with him for a couple months and just being on

> the road, day in, day out. Challenges that come up and seeing him lead through that. And so ever since then, we've had a much closer connection.

Participants also experienced positive personal exposure to seminary faculty, which helped students feel like people and not just numbers. Participants experienced this personal exposure in the following four ways. First, students who attended the same churches as their seminary faculty often enjoyed greater exposure to these men, which then helped deepen their relationships. One participant described the relationship in this manner: "We had good relationships. We went to church with some of them… Those kind of relationships were very crucial for even encouraging us to be confident that we were on the right track, that God could really use us." Second, students who were exposed to the families of faculty members felt a much deeper relationship with the faculty as a result. One participant made this clear: "I really remember those professors that allowed me access to their families. So it wasn't just a classroom relationship... Thanksgiving, Christmas, things like that. It wasn't just a teacher-student relationship." Third, participants whose professors took on a mentoring role in their lives during seminary experienced deeper and longer-lasting relationships.

While some schools attempted to create such mentoring relationships programmatically, they more often grew organically through the interactions of students and faculty. One professor described it this way: "Professors come and go, so the deck got shuffled some. Certain students gravitated sort of to certain professors, and so...oftentimes that professor became their mentor." One participant saw this as an element of her seminary's culture, made up by the collective intentionality of the professors: "I loved my professors… [They] were not necessarily staying in their office. They were the ones who invested in students and were very outward-focused."

For several participants, the relationships developed with professors during seminary have continued through the ensuing years. One participant noted: "I would say that the seminary

professors became more hospitable after graduation." Another remarked: "I still have great friends [at my seminary] and I can't think of one seminary professor that I did not develop personal relations [with]." Another described his former professor: "We formed a very deep friendship from [an opportunity to minster together and] still we're participating in all kinds of ministry together. Now we meet regularly to encourage each other."

The positive experiences just described do not negate the fact that most student-professor relationships were not marked by hospitality and did not result in short- or long-term depth. One participant recalled his seminary being filled with "Professors that were just...professors and then they weren't really available... 'I'm here to teach you and then after hours, don't bother me.'… It was an educational relationship, not a relational relationship." While most participants did not openly share their negative recollections of seminary, several made a point to reason why their professors were less than hospitable in their relationships with students outside of class. Such reasonings came in two forms, the practical reasons and the emotional reasons.

Practically, professors simply cannot develop relationships with every student due to the sizes of their classes and the busyness of their own schedules outside of teaching hours. One participant remarked: "I've taught a lot, and I know it can be difficult to find a way to reach everyone... If you've got a class of like 40 or 50 students...good luck." Another described how even small schools can be a deterrent to relationship-development: "Everybody was overextended [at my seminary] and I do think it's hard to be hospitable when you are overextended, which is probably why half the professors didn't really invite people over." Another participant reinforced the impact of busyness:

> [Many of my] professors had full-time church ministries...so they're trying to teach and they're trying to have church ministries as well... They're trying to balance all that and they're trying to spend time with their family, so it's gotta be tough for them, figuring out how to divide their time between all these places.

Emotionally, professors must deal with baggage both culturally and among their students that prevents them from going deeper in their relationships. On the one hand, professors must balance their own personalities with those of their students, and roadblocks often exist in such instances as this participant describes from his seminary experience:

> My personality probably prevented it... They're always this lofty, bright seminary professor. How can I have a relationship with them?... I'm not their peer... It wasn't anything that they conveyed per se… It wasn't intimidation because they were intimidating. It was intimidation because of my own personality.

On the other hand, professors may face cultural roadblocks that seem insurmountable, a frustration this pastor faced, and a challenge which is as true for a pastor in the church as it is for the professor in the classroom:

> A vast majority of pastors say they don't have a good friend in the congregation. I was actually told that in seminary, that "Be careful about having friends in the congregation."... I was like, "That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard." I disagreed… I know what they were saying:…don't have a favorite in the congregation… That's a killer. But to not have friends?! Jesus had friends. Right?

These recollections of how participants perceived hospitality in their school's relationships highlight four more traits that help enhance the definitions discussed in the first section. First is an awareness and exploitation of incidental exposure between students and faculty, whether that comes in the form of personal connections with each other or regular contact through having multiple classes together, traveling together, or by attending the same church. Second is an awareness and exploitation of intentional exposure between students and faculty, which might come in the form of invitations to the home, the gathering of families, or the organization of regular and welcoming small groups. Third is the willingness to minimize feelings of hierarchy or power-distance between faculty and students in seminary and to encourage cooperation, accountability and Christian co-dependence among classmates rather than perpetuating unhealthy forms of independence which can lead to distance and superiority in

ministries following seminary. Fourth is the willingness to recognize and overcome some of the roadblocks to relationship-development in seminary like class sizes, busyness, and varying personalities.

Hospitality Modeled in Seminary

Following the above discussions about hospitality in seminary environments and relationships, the interviews then shifted to the modeling of hospitality both inside and outside the seminary classroom. This section investigated how seminary faculty and administrators served as either positive or negative models to their students, examples of which will be discussed in the following paragraphs. This section addresses the study's sixth research question, "To what extent, if any, is modeling teaching/leadership behaviors inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?"

The positive modeling examples fall into two distinct categories, both personal and professional. Participants were able to recall positive personal examples from their seminary experiences, mainly in terms of the faculty's character and their level of engagement.

When study participants were asked about the positive character elements of seminary faculty members, one key word stands out, genuineness. Faculty members described as positive role models were genuinely interested in their students, an attribute described by one participant as follows: "I felt that [my professor] was really interested in me as a person and wanted me to succeed as a student, so he was a good role model." Another participant recalled: "[One professor] was very good at…making you feel comfortable…and finding those bridges of communication… You genuinely felt like he was interested in you as a person and seeing you become the best that you could be." Included in this genuine interest is the ability of faculty to

listen and to engage with their students, as this participant recalled of some professors: "The ones that were willing to listen, to ask questions... There's some that were very sensitive… They would kind of draw it out of me and so…[I remember most] those that noticed what was happening in my life." Another recalled "Several professors…[who] modeled hospitality well… The willingness to listen, and to respond rather than to react to people, and to look at the person before jumping to conclusions about the words or the attitudes."

Positive models were also genuinely personable with their students, as this participant recalled of a professor: "[He was a] brilliant scholar. And then he can talk with just anybody, a simple person who had very little education...just his heart. [He] loved getting down on their level, connecting with them." Positive models were also genuinely godly, as this participant recalled of a professor: "You cannot come to any conclusion other than: he deeply loves God. I mean, he's a Doctor, but all of his study has just helped him to love God more. It's overt. It's right out front." One pastor/professor summarized his own thought-processes in this regard of genuineness:

> To me it gets past the “doing what I'm paid to do” and “doing this because I'm concerned about you.” When I'm in the classroom teaching…[the students] are thinking, “He's doing this because I paid him to do this.” But when you go outside of that to, “Hey, I'll pay for your lunch,” or “Hey, come over to our house on Friday night, let's---" and you just have a conversation about their goals and dreams and struggles. That student all of a sudden says, “You know, they really care about me. They're willing to listen to me. They're not doing this because I'm paying them.”

Participants mentioned other positive character attributes as well which seminary faculty displayed, as one participant summarized: "Patience. Wisdom. Humility. A quiet confidence. A willingness to hear differing ideas without speaking in response." About patience, one pastor said: "I had my probing, curious questions, and [my professors were]...probably getting worn down... But I never look back and see them getting exasperated or not making the time… That

accommodation, that patience needs to be reflected with me." About humility, one participant said:

> [This professor] taught [theological humility] in the class, but he also modeled it with his life, because he was not a defensive person... He was a man of humility... What I do today and who I am today rests a lot on who he was and how he taught, and I think for the better.

Another participant provided an observation about the integrity of his seminary faculty: "It wasn't part of the curriculum. I would say just the integrity of my seminary professors was outstanding." Another recalled their blamelessness: "[Being] morally above board was a big part of [my professor's example]… There is a consistency of character of: what you see in front of people is what you see behind the scenes."

Study participants identified three main categories of some seminary faculty engagement: engaging neighbors, engaging the community, and engaging local churches outside the seminary. One participant recalled: "Seeing [this professor's] hospitality. Specifically, when he would share about having neighbors and unbelievers in his home, that was a significant example, a model that I looked up to." Another commented: "You saw them building relationships with their neighbors and taking time to do it. [One administrator] would get to know his neighbors and earn a right to have a hearing." Several participants cited the same examples of community engagement in which professors became involved in the Civil Air Patrol, jail ministries, and serving as police chaplains. One missionary recalled:

> [One professor's] willingness to be engaged in people's lives at all levels of society---way up in the Administrative echelons of government and politics to way down the level into the meanest kind of people in the community. He was really exemplary of being able to fit across those different cultural divides.

Many interviewees also remarked on the benefits of seeing their professors either in the pulpit or in the pews on Sunday, and others remarked on the positive models of seeing their professors actively involved in the ministries of struggling churches in the community.

Beyond all these personal examples, participants were also able to recall positive professional examples from their seminary experiences, mainly in four ways: their preparedness, their treatment of students, their teaching styles, and the experience which faculty brought to the classroom. One participant noted the following about faculty preparedness: "One particular prof…[was] very professional, very good at what he was doing, good at his work, very polite. Just---he kind of just stood out from the rest." One school's full faculty also received this praise:

> They were really good. They were prepared…[and] would give it their all in the classroom. You could see: even if they had only two students, you could see they had spent hours preparing because they wanted to give us the best. For me, I think that was the entry point. Once I saw that, then I was drawn to them, and then [I] realized they have so many other good qualities.

Participants noted professor-student engagement (as described at length in the previous section) and the importance of the professor knowing student names as important aspects of how students are treated:

> I had one teacher who, within two weeks, had memorized every one of his students' names. And the fact that he went to the effort to do so really impressed me. And so I've endeavored do the same thing… I thought, "Hey, that professor cares about me. I'm not just the seat number over there. He knows who I am."

One participant noted the insightfulness of one particularly difficult professor's exemplary teaching style: "He can seem kind of intimidating…but there's some very rich things about him… [He's] very challenging, insightful. And I always wanted to be somebody who, if I was teaching on something, the lights would be coming on for people." Other participants spoke of how they have sought to follow the teaching models of certain professors: "[It's] something I actually do as a teacher now... Few of my classes are ever lecture-based. I'll present something, but then I immediately…[ask] open-ended questions and getting people to think about things and then having a discussion." One participant openly regretted his failure to pay better attention to his favorite professor's teaching style, saying: "If I had [him] later in my studies or had him now,

I would be much more focused on learning from him how to do what he's doing, not just learning what he's teaching." One professor then made this poignant observation about a professor's absolute if not intentional role as a model to students:

> Every teacher is a speech teacher, whether they realize it or not. They're communicating how to communicate. And by the same token, if we made hospitality something that was on the forefront of our thinking, I feel like we would model that a lot more and we'd be teaching it all the time in every class period and [it would] be one of the things that they would come away [with], whether they realize they were learning.

Regarding the experience that seminary faculty bring to the classroom, participants were especially influenced by those who brought either their missionary experience or their pastoral experience into the classroom. One participant commented on the missionary experience that some professors brought to the classroom: "I felt very blessed because [at] my seminary almost every professor...had missions experience overseas, and so it flavored a lot of how they taught." Another agreed:

> A big selling point [was that]…almost every single professor there had had some kind of overseas experience... They brought kind of a non-Western element to their teaching... They were thinking outside the box and…in terms of the nature of hospitality, I feel like our professors had a greater understanding of that, having traveled or lived overseas.

Several participants noted the pastoral experience that some professors brought to the classroom as a defining characteristic of some who taught them. One stated: "[There was a] difference in the men who were pastors...the way they taught and…approached the students… You really picked up on that heart and just the openness to dialogue…their lives, their integrity, their heart, their work." Others commented: "[Professors who are also pastors] are not just thinking about this in theory, but they have some practical experience that they can bring to the classroom"; and "If they served previously in the ministry somewhere…it helped bring the teaching to life and make it more practical." Two participants praised the same professor by name, one saying: "His

teaching (while academically excellent) was very pastorally infused… He was the exception to…that sterility." The other provided these details:

> Intelligent guy, but you can see...he wasn't just touching one guy's life, he was mentoring multiple people on purpose at the same time. And he never said it. But you could tell it. You could tell that there's an intentionality about his living. It's not just his pastoring of a church outside, but it's his pastoring of the next generation of men, faithful men.

Despite these many positive examples of personal and professional models in seminary, participants described some negative models as well. Although few of the participants were quick to speak negatively of their seminary experiences or of the professors who taught them, twelve were able to recall at least some negative examples or anecdotes from their seminary years. As one participant noted: “It would be easier to [remember]…’What would a godly leader *not* do.’ Shooting people down or making them feel like idiots… It would be easier to remember, but I really didn’t see that.” The negative models can be categorized loosely into two groupings: generalizations and specific anecdotes.

The generalizations about negative models from seminary were the likely result of participants' hesitancy to speak negatively about any former professors. Several participants remarked, for example, their professors demonstrated many good qualities, just not hospitality, one saying: "I would look at a lot of my professors as models, just not in this way of hospitality." Another recalled one professor with a laugh: "Old tough as nails kind of guy, but just loved his students. But I mean it was not a hospitable class!" For some participants, this lack of hospitality had its drawbacks, as this professor recalled: "I found that the ones that modeled [hospitality] are the ones that I remember... Unless they were bad teachers, then I would remember that, because I don't want to teach like them, so they're my negative examples."

As happened previously, when considering negative examples, many participants fought to give grace to their professors and reason out why they may have lacked this particular trait.

One common remark was that seminary, as an academic institution, neither needs nor attracts personable personnel. Several examples of their remarks will suffice: "There are professors that…could teach the Greek and the Hebrew, but they're just not very personable people." "[For both professors and] students who came to the seminary, there [was] a certain sort of personality…'I like to be in my room and study with my books more than I like to be out engaging.'" "[Some] were just brainiacs…and could talk circles around you and write papers that you could barely understand… [One] just didn't have those natural personal skills of sitting down at a table, eating a meal, and talking life."

As the generalizations continued, some traits associated with bad models began to emerge from participant interviews. Words like "arrogant," "standoffish," "harsh," and even "caustic" were used to describe professors from their past. Again, however, several participants came to the defense of even these personality types, not to justify or approve of their behaviors, but to suggest they had their reasons. A professor noted: "I've seen professors that are really unkind to students and embarrass them or are sarcastic. Caustic… I think some of that was generational, like this idea of power-distance between professor and student." The suggestion that the root of such behavior is generational was not unique to this professor (or even to the participant who referenced American Fundamentalism above) but was repeated several times. As one interviewee put it: "Every student runs into…a generational thing…the way that [older professors] are pretty firm on how they give grades, or firm on 'You must learn this skill or this idea in this particular way.'" Another referenced how the impact of this generational style of teaching leaves its mark not merely on seminary students but also on the pastors those students then become:

> I know some older pastors in town, like, you walk into their office and everything's situated where they're seated higher than you…and there's a very clear distinction

> between Pastor and congregant. And I don't think anybody at the seminary was wired to think that way, but I think they were part of just the leftovers of that culture.

This last remark highlights yet another generalization often referenced in discussions of negative examples, the attitudes of superiority among seminary professors which participants viewed as bad models. One participant felt this attitude more than witnessed it outright: "[With some professors] there was a distance. You know, they're the experts, they're the authorities and so it wasn't anything specific that they did most of the time. It was just more of the general atmosphere." Another participant recognized great intentionality in one professor's negative demeanor: "One of the greatly feared professors…[was intent on] not making the students feel welcome, but making the students feel that they did not know it all… That was his purpose…and he has manifested that publicly." This issue of superiority bleeds out from generalizations and into the more specific anecdotes with this final quotation, followed by a final section on three categories of specific anecdotes:

> The seminary [President] (who definitely had that like superiority thing and certainly looked down on people)… In his pastoral class, everything was related as like, “You're the pastor. These are the sheep.” And you know, the sheep analogy has its place, but sometimes it can end up becoming a derogatory thing… I remember somebody going on so long about how stupid sheep are and just made you think, like, “How can you spend so much time talking about this and not then have it affect how you look at the people who you're going to minister to?” And there's definitely that idea of almost “Messiah complex” of “As the pastor, I'm the smartest person in the room."

Other specific anecdotes of negative models in seminary can be broken down into these three categories: attitudes, actions, and being. Participants provided three anecdotes, among others, regarding negative attitudes. "I remember one time meeting a professor in town and he almost acted offended that I recognized him. Like, 'Don't bother me. I'm not on duty' kind of a thing. And that always stayed with me." Another recalled: "One...has been rather opinionated…and confrontational... He could also come across as dismissive or even sometimes

belligerent. It kind of diminished the respect and influence he might have otherwise had…but that boorishness has limited his impact." Yet another noted:

> I recall…being at an event with [one professor] and having him tell me, “You know, I hate these kinds of things. I don't like big groups at all. I'd rather just be in my office by myself.” And what made it memorable is, I was relating my experiences of teaching in [Europe] and I started to tell a story about something that I ate... And he said, “Stop! I don't want to hear this! Don't say anything more. I don't want to know!” And, you know, just that hard “Shut up!” This is not making me feel like we have a relationship.

Participants provided several anecdotes regarding negative actions. One shared: "I had one professor who…wore his glasses way down on the end of his nose, and when he would look up from his notes…it was not to encourage you. It was to admonish you." Another recalled:

> I was still working on [a test] and the professor came by and just took it out of my hand and walked away. And I mean…he was within his rights. He wasn't angry. He was just, “Time’s up”…[and] *Foomp*... It didn't make me want to hug him.

Still another shared a similar anecdote:

> When I was Dean, I got a report from a student that he had had a challenging set of circumstances in his life and walked into a major exam and he answered the questions and turned it in... The professor took a look at the front page...and flipped it over his shoulder away from the student and...said, “I don't even know if I'm going to read that.” Well that's not hospitable.

Participants also provided negative examples of being. One recalled a bitter period of internship:

> Sometimes bad examples are good examples. It's a good example of what not to do. And when I was very young in ministry, I worked with a guy. And just about everything he taught me was what not to do. It was a horrible experience, but it was a good experience... I went to see the director of ministerial training, and I said, “I just can't work with this guy.” And the man said, “Look, unless he's doing something sinful, you ought to stay with him for the semester.” Which I did. And it was good advice, and it was unfortunate, but I learned a lot of things not to do in ministry.

Another participant recalled his childhood pastor becoming a professor in his seminary:

> He was not a strong pastor even when he was pastoring---smaller church, more bookish than anything, and much better fit as a professor than a pastor. And it was funny, because for me as a student, like, I'd hear about what was being taught. And then I'd think back about my childhood and be like, “Well, what about your church? Like, this wasn't featured in your church.”

In summary, these recollections of both positive and negative models in seminary education highlight numerous traits that help enhance the definitions discussed in the first section. They are broken down into three categories. First, the personal traits include the following: genuine interest displayed in both listening and engagement; personability; and godliness shown through humility, integrity, patience, and blamelessness. Second, the professional traits include: obvious ministry engagement with neighbors, the community, and local churches; confidence; preparedness; insightfulness; and the ability to utilize previous ministry experience for the benefit of one's hearers. Finally, the negative traits to be avoided include: inhospitality, being antisocial, or being standoffish, harsh, caustic, unkind, arrogant, or marked by an attitude of superiority.

Spiritual Formation in Seminary

The previous sections have presented participant recollections of hospitality in their seminary environments, relationships, and through models. This fourth section will present participant recollections of how seminary influenced their spiritual formation both inside and outside the classroom. Spiritual formation inside the classroom will be discussed in the context of specific classes, with influential professors, and because of personal choices. Spiritual formation outside of the classroom will then be discussed in the context of seminary itself, in small groups, and through ministry opportunities. The section will then conclude with discussions regarding seminaries' emphasis on practical ministry and the benefits of internships in seminary, topics which have bearing on hospitality's role in seminary education. This section helps answer the study's seventh research question, "To what extent, if any, is student spiritual formation inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?"

Participants identified at least six seminary class types which positively affected their spiritual formation: classes on counseling, evangelism, preaching, prayer, theology, and spiritual formation. One pastor remarked: "The counseling course when you have to do self-counseling, I think that's a really difficult thing and…[it] forces you to look at yourself really, really deeply." Another recalled "A personal growth project…[which required] identifying a personal area of weakness and working through it from a counseling perspective and watching you seek growth on that…[was] very significant."

Reflecting on evangelism classes, one participant said: "That [Personal Evangelism] class was the most convicting to me… You were required to share your faith and document it... It just reminded me of the importance of not hiding this light that I have under a bushel." One pastor recalled a significant example from courses on preaching: "Preachers and Preaching. Just learning…[what] drove some of these men. Reading about some of the past preachers and then having the professor give anecdotes... That was really moving. And just seeing the importance of preaching in the church." Reflecting on classes on prayer, this same participant recalled: "It wasn't just because we talked about prayer theoretically, but the professor…had us log prayer time, because he's like, 'Look, I don't want you…thinking about prayer but I want you to be praying.'"

Participants had even more to say about classes on theology. For example, one participant said: "Formative for me...both professionally and spiritually were my Old Testament and New Testament theology classes…understanding how to look at Scripture and form theological conclusions and doctrinal conclusions from Scripture itself… Stuff I still lean on today." Other participants recalled particularly formative assignments from their theology courses. One recalled a professor who required students "To write a hymn. And so that seemed to really bring

the theology rather from just a knowing, but actually into your affections of 'What does this class mean?'" Another recalled a professor who assigned "A theological book summary, then required us to also write a sermon…based on that. Because he's like, 'Let's not just talk about the theory here. You need to think about how you would practically apply this to people.'" Another participant recalled two especially formative assignments: "One is related to hospitality…writing a theology of Amos…[whose key burden is] care for the poor... [Also a] journaling assignment that…came at a very specific time in my life spiritually… That was very, very helpful."

Participants had mixed reactions about classes on spiritual formation. Some merely referenced their existence without commenting on any particular benefits. One professor noted: "In [the early 90s], there was no class on spiritual formation…. They introduced one early in my tenure here, so students were taking a spiritual formation class early on in their training. And I think that that's a good thing." Another recalled: "In [my] first two seminaries, there was always a spiritual formation class. I don't remember any other class that was targeted towards spiritual growth…and I don't recall doing such a class in my PhD." Two participants commented on the ineffectiveness of the Spiritual Formation class in their seminary: "I had a Spiritual Formation class, but I felt like it was more focused on knowing"; and "We had one class on spiritual formation…and it was the worst class in seminary." Notable in this discussion were the positive comments made about one denomination's Spiritual Formation course, which one participant called "foundational." Another described it this way:

> [I had] a class called "Spiritual Formation"…[which] focused on personal discipleship, personal devotion, scripture-memorization, on personal engagement and local ministry…[and] writing about…the things that you had studied and learned as an individual as opposed to just those things that you were learning in the classroom.

Finally, in this discussion on spiritual formation in classes, several participants also made remarks about other courses beyond the specific ones just described. One mentioned a portion of

a course that had a huge impact on his later ministry, saying: "It isn't just about how much you know. This is about who you are. This is about your walk with the Lord." Another mentioned virtually all the courses he took in seminary, saying: "[For] most of the courses…it wasn't just academic, it was application. It was trying to reach your heart or show you the connections to your heart… Spiritual formation was definitely a priority." One missionary remarked about his seminary experiences: "It was mostly focused on knowing, not really on growing… Not much in the way of mentoring or even discipling the students. It was more about the grades and the academics and…the practical skill." He later added: "I think that the growing was more assumed that it was going on... The focus was the academic because that's what you're paying the money for… The academics was good. I learned quite a bit." One negative remark came from a participant who left one seminary in favor of another due in part to this issue of spiritual formation: "[The first school] was zilch. Zero... There was zero development of the student in any way. It was pure knowledge... There was no grad student Chapel. There really was nothing as far as student life."

Apart from the above remarks about specific classes and assignments that helped influence participants' spiritual formation, several participants also mentioned how influential professors had a positive impact on their spiritual formation. Professors accomplished this through their examples, their direction, and their application of the material. One participant recalled: "The truth these professors were teaching, there's a lot of academia to it, but it really affected who they were… A lot of the guys were very overt about it." Another said: "[What] helped me grow spiritually were…conversations with professors or questions you would ask in class… It wasn't more what they taught, it was more how they taught. If they were encouraging and relational." One participant noted the following about the professor’s direction in class:

"[One professor] was very much focused on, not just how to execute Revelation, but 'Who is God through this?'" Another recalled: "One teacher talked a lot about, kind of, the motivations for the study and having Christ at the center of everything." Several participants recalled positive examples of how seminary professors applied the material they taught. Two professors also spoke of how this need for application influences their own approaches to teaching. One described it this way: "My midterm and my final...questions are all practical, having to do with how you would apply the content of that passage to real life Ministry... So I'm trying to encourage my students…'These things…have practical value.'" Another said:

> The first time I taught [Bible Doctrines], I thought to myself: "Most of the students would agree with everything that's taught here, but they don't actually do anything with it. It doesn't really change anything." So for every topic now, I always have a "So what?" section… And I've had a lot of students over the years say that's what they end up remembering…the application…because that's where students are in their head: they're sitting there---half of them are bored, because it seems just like something they've already heard before. But even the ones who are trying to pay attention, I know, they're wrestling with "Does this even matter?" And "What about people who think something very different?"

Apart from the above discussions on classes and professors who positively influenced the spiritual formation of participants, several participants also mentioned recognizing their responsibility as students to choose to grow spiritually during seminary, no matter the external influences around them. One participant began by voicing his disagreement with the underlying assumption from the *Interview Protocol* that seminary education tends to be more focused on knowing than on growing. His remarks are shared at length here:

> I struggle a little bit with the assumption of the question that there is a division between knowing and growing... There is a direct connection between knowing and spiritual formation... I understand where this question is coming from…but to be frank, I probably grew more in my Christian life going through a theology proper class, learning about God...than myriads of sermons or the Christian-growth kinds of books… Every bit of academic learning that I took in had some kind of a practical focus. And it's not just "Who is God?"… It's "What does this mean for how I live?" So to me, it's not the content, it's not a separation between knowing and growing. It's a separation between knowing without the intention of growing and knowing with the intention of growing... Ultimately

> it's up to the student, [though] yes, I think professors can encourage the application of things.

Another participant, a missionary, noted the challenges that face seminary students in this regard: "Students [are] so intent on their Bible study for their coursework that there is no Bible study for personal growth… Missionaries grow dry and weary over a period of time because they've lost their personal devotional life." Another remarked how students need to know their purpose for even being in seminary: "Are you here just to get another piece of sheepskin, or are you here to actually become a better servant of the living God?... [Grades matter little] if [students] have been changed spiritually as a result of their education." Two participants provided the following testimonies: "A lot of that spiritual formation and learning took place just of my own making because it's like, 'Oh, I'm in ministry, I need to use this'"; and "A lot of my spiritual formation...was just God getting me outside of my own way of thinking and doing things."

The following paragraphs will discuss the context of seminary itself, small groups, and ministry opportunities related to experiences of spiritual formation outside of the classroom. When asked about seminary itself being a positive influence, one pastor remarked: "The whole experience…really helps you grow... It's kind of like this pressure-cooker thing… It really helped me to be dependent on God." Another commented on the benefits of having mature classmates: "[Seminary is valuable] because usually you have some more mature [classmates] that undergrad you just usually don't have... Those discussions really would bring out experiences, different backgrounds, and dialogues about what real, practical ministry is like." Several participants remarked on how shifts in their seminaries' cultures have made spiritual formation a more common, overall benefit. One participant commented on professors replacing retirees: "Some of those newer people had that same 'new blood' [in] them and were much more practice-oriented. They didn't want to know what you knew…[but] what you did… [This

resulted in] more practical-theology classes." Another commented on changes his seminary experienced under new leadership:

> [Spiritual formation] became one of the big emphases. And there was a shift in culture too. As seminaries we have been too bookish…and we haven't developed character. And so…a big shift…[was] to say, “An essential piece of your seminary education is a mentorship element…a spiritual life element...specifically focused on spiritual formation, knowing yourself."

One former dean remarked: "Over my 50 years of involvement in seminary life, we have become much more holistic, much more aware of the 'being' essence of ministry as opposed to the 'doing'… Both are important, but one is fundamental to the other."

Multiple participants agreed about small groups having a positive impact on spiritual formation during seminary. Some found special encouragement with peer-groups and friends with one participant saying: "We had…non-formal avenues for encouraging growth, as we sat together and shared our ministry experiences together and shared goals [for] our spiritual growth." Another shared the advice he tried to follow: "Emphasize…relationships with people who are purposeful about the Gospel…Christianity…[and] the Bible. And maybe you can be that kind of person to [others]... I choose people for connection that will have an impact on me spiritually." Others emphasized the importance of having mentors and mentoring groups, one recalling:

> Being in prayer groups with the professors, spending time in their homes...that kind of mentorship where they're just willing to share their life with us…happened a lot more than assignments of the classroom.

Many participants also referenced involvement in ministry during seminary as having a positive impact on spiritual formation. At issue in this paragraph is not ministers who attend seminary (an issue which will be discussed shortly) but rather students in seminary who then get involved in ministry, for example going on mission trips, working in on-campus jobs, or involvement in a local church. One participant said, "The mission trip was a really good

experience too, both in terms of relationships with the other team members...and also just exposure to a lot of different ministries and missionaries... So that was a very formative time."

Two participants shared about experiencing spiritual formation while working in on-campus jobs. One said:

> What was especially formative for me spiritually? [Managing the cafeteria]... My job became training leaders to train leaders. That was all I did. And that, in a Christian environment, meant I was making disciple-making disciples... There are very few things in my life that made me who I am more than that.

The other said:

> I would put [my role as dorm supervisor] at the top of the list… What I needed was more the people side [than the academic]. And so that really pushed me to, again, get out of my comfort zone and deal with a wide variety of guys and problems and just generally trying to be a friend of these students and help them along. So that was not the curriculum. It was…important in terms of pastoral work... That was a huge component of my training.

One participant said: "The most significant spiritual formation occurred for me, number one, in my church for sure." Another recalled: "Once I was in seminary and actually became a member of a church and was there for a long time, that was a huge shaping influence." This same participant, now a professor, said: "[At the seminary], we will regularly tell students: 'Seminary is not enough… You have to take the initiative to find a church, to join, to get connected, to get mentored'… We're constantly beating that drum." This sentiment that the local church ought to be a seminary student's main source of spiritual formation was held by at least two others who said: "[The seminary] really counted on [students] having this relationship with churches"; and "Honestly, if [students] are involved in the right kind of a local church, that's what their pastor ought to be doing with them."

These last two emphases, that some participants experienced spiritual formation by working in on-campus jobs or by getting involved in local church ministries, serve as a fitting transition to two final topics: practical preparation and internships. While the first topic, whether

participants felt prepared for practical ministry following their time in seminary, was specifically addressed in the *Interview Protocol*, the second topic, internships during seminary, was not, though it arose often enough throughout the interview process to warrant addressing here.

Regarding the issue of whether participants felt prepared for practical ministry following their time in seminary, most comments from participants came in response to this follow-up request in the *Interview Protocol*: "Describe whether you felt prepared or not for practical ministry once you left seminary." While most participants responded negatively that they did not necessarily feel prepared for practical ministry once leaving seminary, this did not diminish the value of seminary in their minds. A common negative response went thusly: "[Practically prepared] for pastoral ministry? That would be a pretty big 'No'… [Theology] and Bible study tools were fantastic, but as far as much of what ministry really is, day-in-day-out with people…I did not feel prepared." This praise of academics while at the same time bemoaning the lack of practical training was a common thread for most participants. One professor stated: "In terms of preparing me intellectually, that was good. But there really wasn't a lot of ministry skills. It was just more academics." One missionary felt differently: "[For] serving in a church and ministering, yeah, I felt prepared… Seminary…helped fill in more areas where I needed strengthening… In hindsight, I wasn't as prepared as I thought I was, but at the time I felt quite prepared." Still others got precisely what they had expected, as this professor describes:

> I don't know that I went to seminary to learn these practical kinds of things…how to be faithful or to be hospitable…. I would hope that a seminary would point me to be involved in a ministry where I would learn those things… Not that a seminary can't encourage these things and talk about these things, but there are parts of hospitality they can't teach in the classroom. Maybe they can model it outside the classroom. But there has to be local-church ministry involvement, I think, for it to be fully formed in someone's ministry.

Several participants provided examples of areas for which they were ill-prepared, once they began “real-life ministry”: "Dealing with the politics of church…with deacons or elders'

meetings, the kinds of personalities that would come against you… Baptizing… Preparing a budget… Dealing with difficult People… [These weren't part] of the practical courses…[in] seminary." Still others acknowledged that textbooks and classroom discussions might never have been able to prepare them for real-life ministry: "I mean, does anyone feel prepared? I guess if they don't know what they're doing they feel prepared." One pastor described it this way:

> I felt competent, prepared to be able to do the ministry, but by no means did I feel all of the practical issues were discussed at the level you're going to have to deal with them in ministry… [For example] you don't learn in seminary what it's like to sit next to someone when they're parent is dying in the hospital… You don't learn in seminary how to pray and comfort with a husband whose wife just left him… You're not going to learn [that] in a classroom setting.

The great divide among participants with regard to this issue of practical preparation for ministry was at what stage in life the participants had attended seminary, whether before or during their active ministry. Responses like those above tended to come from individuals who had attended seminary without ever having yet pastored a church or served in a full-time ministry overseas. Two participants noted the obvious, that practical application of one's seminary education is impossible unless it is being applied. As one put it: "Nothing beats experience, right?... Using the ministry degree is where head knowledge becomes practical knowledge." In fact, multiple participants were able to affirm their practical preparedness through seminary because they were either already involved in full-time ministry elsewhere (as pastors, missionaries, interns, etc.) or they had been in the past and were thus able to leave seminary fully recharged and prepared. An example of the latter can be found in this participant's response:

> I came to seminary after doing lots of practical ministry... So in some ways it deconstructed what I thought I knew of practical ministry and helped me build it back up again to be even better in practical ministry... It helped me to realize I wasn't as prepared as I could have been. And then launched me out again, even better prepared.

Several who served in some ministry capacity while studying in seminary used a key word to describe their experience, that seminary "enhanced" their understanding of practical ministry. One explained it this way: "[Pastoring while in seminary] enhanced it versus if I had gone right from bachelors to seminary without full-time ministry… To incorporate some of that into the immediate application of what I was doing…[gave me] a good framework." Another said: "I found that…[classes] in seminary were remarkably enhanced by the fact that I was putting this stuff to work the next day…and I could bring real-life application." For some, this ongoing ministry experience may have even tainted what appreciation they would otherwise have had for the more academic of courses: "I was involved in full-time ministry [throughout] seminary, so I was applying things practically... I was feeling the need to sharpen myself there [but] was not feeling a great need for parsing Greek verbs." Virtually every participant, however, emphasized the value of their seminary education and recognized that "preparation" is subjective and that balancing academics and practicality, study and experience is necessary. As one participant mused: "I definitely would have been unprepared if I had not had my education, but I would not have been fully prepared if I had only my education."

Many participants shared their thoughts and experiences about seminary internships, warranting at least a brief discussion. One participant described the value of the internships: "My year of internship was far more beneficial than my academic years... The academic years gave me good theology, but the internship gave me good practical application and growth." Some participants recall internships being a requirement in seminary, as noted by this participant: "Every seminary [I attended] had future pastors do internships. What's the point of an internship? It's to go learn these practical things. It's to put into practice what you're learning." Others did not see the need for requiring internships, as this participant recalls: "Maybe [the seminary] required

[internships], but I'm not sure. It would be kind of weird for someone not to be involved in all that stuff, and I wasn't particularly weird at the time." He later added that students are just "expected to be involved." One participant shared his seminary's emphasis that students, whether interning or being mentored, simply get involved: "They were really encouraging about guys being actively involved in the ministry and mentored by somebody." He later expounded:

> We had to report on our ministry service, not because they were making sure we got our hours in for the Lord…but they wanted to know that we were in a church where we were being mentored, working alongside pastors and other people and learning the ministry there, because that's the best place to learn it.

These recollections of spiritual formation highlight several more traits to consider for encouraging hospitality in seminary education. First is exemplary living, which for professors includes modeling the things they teach and pointing others to Christ through both words and actions. Second is holistic education, which connects not only the head and heart but also the hands through application. Third is ministry involvement, which for students includes active and genuine relationships with mentors and local church members.

How Participants Plan to Display Christian Hospitality in the Future

The study thus far has detailed the participants' definitions and descriptions of Christian hospitality in ministry and shared at length their recollections of hospitality in seminary education. This final section will relate how participants described their plans for better teaching and modeling hospitality in the future and will conclude with a collection of the traits they deemed essential for displaying Christian hospitality. While final conclusions about recommendations will be reserved for the next chapter, this section begins to answer the study's eighth and final research question, "What are some data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?"

Plans for Better Teaching and Modeling Christian Hospitality

The first portion of this section conveys participant responses to the following two questions from the *Interview Protocol*: first, "If you had a goal of teaching Christian hospitality in your ministry this year, how might you go about doing so?"; and second, "If you had a goal of modeling Christian hospitality in your ministry this year, how might you go about doing so?" Although these questions were separate and sought specific answers to each, participant responses were often mixed, as characterized by this comment: "The way we teach hospitality is to model it. And the way you model it is to do it. And the way you do it is just to do it." For this reason, this section will not be broken down into portions of "Teaching" and "Modeling" but rather into portions of "What I Do" and "What I Could Do Better." Each of these two sections will record responses from three perspectives: that of professors, that of pastors, and that of Christians in general.

When asked how they might improve their efforts in teaching or modeling hospitality, many participants responded with an attitude of "keep doing what I'm doing." For professors and teachers, this attitude was expressed in how they model hospitality, how they make themselves available to students, and how they pray for their students. About modeling, one professor said: "To teach…[hospitality] in the classroom, I would continue to do what I'm doing outside the classroom…[and then] have a little didactic moment where we'll just remind people why we do this." One retired Church History professor agreed: "Modeling is the best way to teach people how to do things... [You] can't model church history...but you can model Christian character and Christian kindness and Christian hospitality." One professor said: "[I could] set more time aside to come alongside students…[but] frankly, I'm doing that a lot anyway... I never say 'No' when somebody really wants to come together." Another professor attested: "I always ask students for

prayer requests…and I remember to pray for that and come back around and ask them a week later: 'How did that turn out?' And that goes a long way with students."

For many pastors, this "keep doing what I'm doing" attitude came out in at least some of the following ways. One pastor often reminded himself of his responsibility: "Everything I believe about church demands that I develop other people. Whether they are an Associate Pastor…[or] a 12 year old, it doesn't matter. My job is to inspire and equip believers to imitate Jesus." One retired pastor spoke of how he tried to model hospitality through simple acts of service: "When I was pastor, I deliberately…went last [in the food lines]. Afterwards, I would…refill people's coffee... Christian ministry is about serving other people and…I tried to set an example of serving." One pastor keeps this a regular part of his preaching ministry: "I talk very, very frequently on Sundays, particularly about using whatever God has given you…for redemptive relationships...and that includes your home... We don't usually use the word 'hospitality' [but]…it's very present in our church culture." Another pastor remarked on how his family's intentional hospitality is finally bearing fruit in the church:

> I feel like we're at the height of our hospitality, where it's [become] regular… [Last week a] deacon mentioned: “If we keep doing this, we're going to be changing the culture of this church.” It was really sweet, just that he's definitely caught on. And… yesterday's meal, he and his wife pretty much singlehandedly…took it over. So in us leading with the modeling, now I'm actually seeing it being enacted… It's really neat how our modeling of it has actually been reciprocated.

Some pastors seek to recognize and praise hospitality when they see it done in the church, as this pastor shared: "Other people in our church...model it too and so I make sure…to encourage them on that… Whenever I see somebody that is practicing hospitality, I want to let them know how important that is." Several pastors also referenced the importance of showing hospitality to other congregations and pastors in their area. One said: "I'm trying to create more fellowship first between pastors, but then secondly with actual church members, where we're not

just this independent church-island to ourselves... We're autonomous, but we fellowship and partner together for ministry."

Participants made fewer explicit statements about maintaining the "keep doing what I'm doing" attitude in their hospitality as Christians in general, mainly because they had already spoken at length about this in the section above, "How Participants Describe Christian Hospitality." One remark, however, from a participant whose recent bed-ridden month had proven educational for ministry stood out: "Through my illness, God's reminding me that I don't necessarily always have to be in-person with people to be hospitable." This statement implies the intentional interaction, genuine love, and sacrifice of time already described at length in the study, only with an entirely new perspective.

Having looked at some ways in which professors, pastors, and Christians in general have sought to maintain a status quo in their hospitality efforts, the following paragraphs will describe how participants hope to improve their hospitality in the future through teaching and modeling. As above, remarks will be categorized into professors, pastors, and Christians in general.

For professors, plans to improve their modeling and teaching of hospitality came in at least some of the following ways. One professor commented on gaining a new perspective about hospitality in the classroom: "I…haven't thought of [hospitality] as a centerpiece…[or] in terms of: people are visiting your classroom every time they come in… [I may consider ways to] exhibit this quality by the grace of Christ… I appreciate the discussion." Another spoke of her desire to improve her availability to students, saying: "[By going] beyond what I already think I'm doing…[and] opening myself up to…[students and] making them know that I'm available for them… [Also to] get over this hang up…that 'I don't have the gift of hospitality.'" Another professor named some ways he could better connect with students: "Simple things...[like]

knowing everybody's name… Take time to chat with students and ask them how they're doing. …Talk about stuff that's happening at home…to make it feel real." Others referenced their need to emphasize hospitality more in their teaching, particularly with the use of Scripture. One said: "[This involves] careful attention to specific passages in Scripture…[reflecting on] particularly the [New Testament] ones that help to create a distinctly Christian approach." Another said: "I'm a firm believer in integration. So I would probably look for that theme throughout the text…dig a bit deeper, and bring out different aspects: historical aspects, cultural aspects, and the biblical position." Some mentioned seeking out other books and theological studies on hospitality before teaching it, and one mentioned involving students in a brainstorming-type study about means through which they could show hospitality.

For pastors, plans to improve their modeling and teaching of hospitality came in at least some of the following ways. One pastor described how he hopes to take the initiative at his new church: "[I want to invite] all the families over to our house, not expecting them to send me the first invitation... Then once they see [we] care about them…then maybe they start opening up to [us] as well." Another pastor described one of his goals as: "To establish intentional relationships with people in the church... [so] that we can constantly be bringing people in and...trying to carry those relationships forward into Sundays." Several remarked on their need to model hospitality to their congregations better with comments such as: "I as a pastor have to model that… I usually try to lead [testimony times of God's working through evangelism and discipleship]... If I'm not doing it, how can I expect my people to do it?" He then added: "Being [deliberately] hospitable…is just part of being a pastor. Open your doors up to your people. You be in their home, they be in your home... There ought to be this interconnectedness." Another added this insightful point: "Part of modeling is not just doing it yourself. You're not modeling unless

somebody else is doing it too... [Stretch] them a little bit and multiply the hospitality opportunities and venues."

For Christians in general, plans to improve their modeling of hospitality came in at least some of the following ways. During their interviews, several participants admitted their failures in this department, suggesting a need for humility and admission of the need to change. One said: "The best way to sharpen myself…[is to admit] that sometimes I probably think I'm better at hospitality than I am…until I actually see somebody who gives so selflessly and shows how pitiful I really am." Another said: "Life gets busy and so that 9-foot lectern [dinner table], I don't use it nearly often enough… Setting a goal… Being purposeful…[to] take opportunities to invite people in our home."

Several participants also acknowledged their need to become more intentional in their hospitality, as this remark attests: "I would love…to be more intentional about connecting with people individually… I think hospitality is much more: you take the initiative as opposed to somebody has to contact you and then you show hospitality." Some recognized that change toward better hospitality will require sacrifice, as this participant noted: "Hospitality is giving and not taking and so I think that's really a goal: to be more ready to have my time and my schedules disrupted." In this pursuit of improving their hospitality, several participants (professors and pastors alike) referenced their need to improve their hospitality to those literally closest to them. One pastor described his goal this way: "Intentionally inviting our neighbors more often… None of our neighbors around us are saved. And again, that's our ultimate goal…but let's do some intentional hospitality and get them over here and just bless them." With a slip of emotion that admitted his need for improvement in this area, one missionary testified about his goal:

> Without a doubt, it would be getting to know my community better. My neighbors…I've had conversations with all of them. But to say that I've shown Christian hospitality, that I've invited them in? They all know who I am and what I do.

These participant descriptions of plans to improve their hospitality in school, ministry, and daily life highlight another list of traits that can help supplement the definition listed in this chapter. First is the thoughtfulness required to pray for others, connect with them in meaningful ways, and even to remember their names. Second is the humility required to admit one's failures in this regard; to dialogue with others about how to improve; and to take the initiative with neighbors, students, and fellow congregants despite one's own lack of hospitality in the past. Third is intentionality in one's interactions, planning, and sacrifice. Fourth is the obedience to Scripture to love others and to encourage further hospitality through recognition and praise.

Essential Traits for Displaying Christian Hospitality

The final portion in this record of the study's findings conveys participant responses to this question from the interview Protocol: "Considering all that we have discussed in this interview, what elements of character or behavior do you think are most necessary for a person desiring to show Christian hospitality?" The traits that the participants named in response to this question often echoed the comments and anecdotes they shared in the interviews, yet were more finely distilled, the results of having reflected for an hour on their own experiences in seminary and ministry. The three most prominent groupings of traits were intentionality, genuineness, and generosity, while all other traits fell into a spectrum of God-Others-Self, as will be described below.

As has been highlighted already throughout the findings of this study, intentionality or purposefulness is an all-pervasive requirement for true Christian hospitality. As one participant described it: "If it's just a mutual-admiration activity because you like to fish together, or bowl

together, or you like to make pasta together, whatever, that's generosity… Unless you're purposeful about it, hospitality is just generosity." Other participants shared similar thoughts, as this example shows:

> Christian hospitality is you're trying to encourage people to get closer to God, to know God, to grow in their walk with God. And so there needs to be some intentionality… Otherwise it just becomes a social gathering and there's like no point. It's not getting you anywhere. It's not getting them anywhere.

Involved in this intentionality is prayer for the person to whom one is showing Christian hospitality, as this missionary remarked: "[Seeing] them growing in their spiritual walk [is] enhanced by praying in advance… Pray for their visit...that your conversation will…approach a topic that will allow them to grow in their spiritual walk." One participant helped clarify what this intentionality might mean for a professor, that intentionality is an issue of being rather than merely teaching: "The people that model things the best are usually the people that are least intentional about teaching it. It's just part of who they are."

Beyond intentionality, genuineness is also a necessary trait for true Christian hospitality. Genuineness, also called sincerity, is most often expressed in love, listening, and empathy, though it also speaks to one's openness and lack of hypocrisy. About love, one participant said: "You gotta love people. You gotta genuinely desire to want to build a friendship with people just for the sake of that friendship. No ulterior motives." One professor applied this specifically to his relationship to students: "It's…genuine love for students. You care about them beyond the classroom. You want them to be successful. You want them to be involved in ministry. You want them to have healthy families… Genuine concern, genuine love for students." This same professor also described the importance of listening: "There also has to be…a willingness, and maybe even an eagerness to listen to students...not just teach them but learn from them and listen." About listening, another participant said: "You've got to be willing to listen. Less prone

to talk…[or] dominating the conversation. Don't be afraid of silence. Sometimes people need time to process." This listening includes empathy, as this participant noted: "Without empathy you may not even recognize that people are in need of hospitality, because people have masks all the time."

The person showing Christian hospitality must also be open to showing off their true self, without hypocrisy. One participant noted the danger hospitality poses to the hypocrite: "Even [in] hospitality, you can put on an act for a little while, but eventually your character is going to play out... You can have the right behaviors, but eventually your character is going to show through." Another participant said: "[You've] got to genuinely love people. You can only fake that for so long, and some people are very bad at faking it." Another participant described the process of openness this way:

> If you're having people in your house, they're seeing how you live… They're seeing that [family] interaction, and there's something healthy about that. If we're supposed to encourage people to follow us as we follow Christ, they kind of need to see us in different situations. Not just the classroom [or church]... It's not like, I'm one person at home, one person at church, and---you can't pull that off, because they're in your house.

This openness is especially important for those in ministry, as this pastor shared: "Sincerity and genuineness and real concern. Real Christian love for them. Loving them because Christ loved them...not because this is just some box I've got to check, because it says [elders are] 'given to hospitality.'" This same participant added this cautionary reminder: "If somebody's in ministry, especially pastoral ministry, and they're not given to hospitality, they're actually missing one of the qualifications of being a pastor."

Apart from both intentionality and genuineness, generosity was also an oft-repeated trait. One participant described it as "Your sacrifice of time and money," and another as being "Willing to give the resources that God entrusted to you, whatever they are." One participant expounded on this thought: "Having generosity of spirit, being generous with your time,

generous with what you've got... All you have is God's anyway. You have to have that foundational understanding and just not hold onto anything tightly."

Beyond intentionality, genuineness, and generosity, a slew of other traits necessary for true Christian hospitality fall into a spectrum of God-Others-Self. This spectrum was best described by one participant who said: "If I abide in Christ, I will be hospitable… I will be God-focused and others-interested." The God-focused, others-interested, and selfless traits drawn from the interviews will now each be described in turn.

Participants described the first part of this spectrum, being God-focused (or placing Jesus before oneself and others), in many ways, though one prominent method was using conditional clauses. One participant said: "If God isn't first, then there's no way you're going to be ready to love others... Through hospitality, the warmth, the love, the reception, the kindness...always comes from someone who's walking with the Lord." Another said: "If you're living your life to glorify God by meeting people's needs, then the hospitality fits right into that." Still another said: "If we are being transformed, if we are growing in maturity, if we're becoming more like Christ, we should be growing in hospitality… If we love God, we're going to love people and we're going to become more…hospitable."

This relationship with and transformation through Christ was another common theme among participants, as described here: "Love, humility and patience…are the top three… We're talking about Christian love…humility and…patience, not just this kind of like warm, openheartedness toward all humanity in general… We're subjecting ourselves to Christ and…his transformation." Another participant said of Christlikeness: "I have to be like Christ if I'm going to have people unlike Christ in my home. I mean, I am wildly unlike Christ, and he invited me into his family... [This is just being] a good disciple." One final God-focused theme was to view

God's image in others. One participant said: "[You need] a Christlike attitude…to see people the way God sees them... Every person (regardless of their cultural background…[or] life choices) [is] made in God's image, and we all have inherent value and dignity." Another said: "Hospitality, graciousness, gratitude, compassion---all those things are the expression of how you operate with respect for the image of God in another human being."

Participants described the second part of this spectrum, being others-interested (or placing others before oneself), in different ways as well, though several couched it in terms of The Golden Rule. Such an outlook of treating others as one would hope to be treated finds its roots in love, as this participant said: "Christian hospitality is a form of love… You can't displace it with related concepts like witness. Witness is crucial, but that's not fundamentally what's happening. It's fundamentally love." Two others stated: "Love is the foundation of all hospitality"; and "If nothing else, [people] need to know you love them." Tied closely to this issue of love is the selfless sacrifice required to seek the others' benefit not one's own through any hospitable endeavor, a point which multiple participants emphasized. One said, for example: "You practice hospitality because you want to show others 'You're important to me' not for what I get out of it." Another said: "You've got to focus on what those people need and not what you need to get done." Another participant explained: "True hospitality... doesn't try to get anything out of people... [and] isn't thinking about, 'What do I get out of this? What will people think of me? Oh, they'll go and tell really good stories about me someday!'" Still another put it this way:

> [Being] worried about my time...my money...about being taken advantage of... "Somehow I'm gonna lose in this interaction." [You] just have to forget all that and just be selfless and be more concerned with the other person than you are about yourself...about their growth, their prosperity.

Practically speaking, this approach of placing the needs of others first can impact one's understanding of human equality, as this participant noted: "That willingness to go across

[culture] and appearance...is a key quality of ministry...[and] hospitality, that you're hospitable regardless of what the other person looks like or what societal niche he happens to fit into." It can also help direct the flow of conversation when one shows hospitality: "Asking them questions...[and] trying not to dominate the conversation or talk too much about yourself, but always pushing it back to focusing on them."

Participants described the final part of this spectrum, being selfless (or placing oneself last), both negatively and positively. Negatively, two participants named what they thought was the very opposite of hospitality: "I think selfishness is the opposite of hospitality," and "I haven't thought a lot about hospitality in these terms, but I do think ego is the antithesis of hospitality in a lot of ways." Positively, they tied selflessness to love, saying: "Probably selflessness would be genuine love for others"; and "Selflessness and love…go together."

Participants also suggested that this selflessness requires patience and flexibility. Said one: "Patience [is needed] because these things tend to be very big investments, and then our impulse is to immediately be looking for results." Another said: "Patience is a big one... It kind of relates to tolerance in a way…[having a] willingness to listen." Another participant said: "With hospitality, there's got to be flexibility...a willingness to open your home. Let it get dirty. Especially if you're doing it cross-culturally... You can't be uptight. It's got to be welcoming." Finally, several participants also tied this selflessness in hospitality to humility and openness to the possibility of rejection.

These participant conclusions about what elements of character are necessary for one hoping to show hospitality offer another host of traits that can supplement the definition from the beginning of this chapter. First is intentionality, which includes prayerfulness and encouragement of others in their spiritual growth. Second is genuineness, which includes

sincerity, love, concern, listening, empathy, patience, openness, truth, obedience to the Word of God, and a lack of hypocrisy. Third is generosity, which includes sacrifice. Fourth is being God-focused, which requires that a person love God and seek his glory and which results in a life characterized by warmth, love, kindness, spiritual growth, transformation, Christlikeness, humility, patience, and the ability to see the image of God in others and treat them accordingly. Fifth is being others-interested, which requires that a person live according to the Golden Rule and be characterized by love, sacrifice, and the willingness to listen to others. Sixth is selflessness, which is characterized not by selfishness or ego but by love, patience, flexibility, tolerance, humility, an openness to rejection, and a willingness to welcome and listen to others.

Summary

This chapter has organized the findings gleaned from 21 participant interviews about their definitions, descriptions, recollections, and planning of Christian hospitality. This final section concludes with a summary of how these findings relate to seven of the study's eight Research Questions, the eighth being discussed at length in Chapter 5.

By comparing the many definitions of both generic and Christian hospitality offered by study participants, an all-encompassing definition emerged: "Sacrificially opening your home and yourself in Christlike love and obedience for the encouragement of others." In describing their hospitality methods, most participants referenced the external activities of opening their homes and tables to guests who are most often fellow believers and friends from church, but also sometimes neighbors and unbelieving acquaintances. Some referenced purchasing homes specifically for the sake of hospitality, while others referenced using their hobbies as a form of welcome. Many also referenced the internal attitudes necessary for Christian hospitality, including intentionality, genuineness, and love as well as the need for selflessness, sacrifice, and

a willingness to listen. Participants most often learned to use Christian hospitality by watching others, particularly family members or mentors whose personalities were marked by openness and personability, although such learning appears to have been implicit. Few participants described formal study or books as influential in their learning to use hospitality in ministry.

Participant responses highlighted three traits necessary for fostering hospitable environments both inside and outside the seminary classroom. First is interaction, something that can be enhanced inside the classroom through banter, questions, dialogue, informal engagement among classmates and with the professor, and the layout of the classroom. Second is intentionality, either institutionally in the way the school seeks new hires, creates space for interactions, or schedules times for faculty-student engagement, or through the faculty themselves in how they manipulate what space and time they have to welcome and engage the students around them. Third is personality, that seminary faculty whose cerebral or task-oriented natures do not overshadow their displays of love and care for or genuine interest in their students.

Participant responses highlighted four traits necessary for fostering hospitable relationships both inside and outside the seminary classroom. First is an awareness and exploitation of incidental exposure between students and faculty, whether that comes in the form of personal connections with each other or regular contact through having multiple classes together, traveling together, or by attending the same church. Second is an awareness and exploitation of intentional exposure between students and faculty, which might come in the form of invitations to the home, the gathering of families, or the organization of regular and welcoming small groups. Third is the willingness to minimize feelings of hierarchy or power-distance between faculty and students in seminary and to encourage cooperation, accountability and Christian co-dependence among classmates rather than perpetuating unhealthy forms of

independence which can lead to distance and superiority in ministries following seminary. Fourth is the willingness to recognize and overcome some of the roadblocks to relationship-development in seminary like class sizes, busyness, and varying personalities.

Participant responses highlighted three categories of traits from teaching or leadership models that influence hospitality both inside and outside the seminary classroom. First, the personal traits include the following: genuine interest displayed in both listening and engagement; personability; and godliness shown through humility, integrity, patience, and blamelessness. Second, the professional traits include: obvious ministry engagement with neighbors, the community, and local churches; confidence; preparedness; insightfulness; and the ability to utilize previous ministry experience for the benefit of one's hearers. Finally, the negative traits to be avoided include inhospitality, being antisocial, or being standoffish, harsh, caustic, unkind, arrogant, or marked by an attitude of superiority.

Participant responses highlighted three inclusions necessary for enhancing spiritual formation both inside and outside the seminary classroom through hospitality. First is exemplary living, which for professors includes modeling the things they teach and pointing others to Christ through both words and actions. Second is holistic education, which connects not only the head and heart but also the hands through application. Third is ministry involvement, which for students includes active and genuine relationships with mentors and local church members.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This study sought to establish a formal framework for hospitality in seminary that could be used to instigate cultural shifts in seminary education towards more hospitable relationships between the school's personnel and its students, so that its graduates will then better employ hospitable relationships in their future ministries. This chapter relies entirely upon the data which go before it, both the data gleaned from extensive research into the literature and the data gleaned from 21 incredibly thoughtful and wise participants who sacrificed their time in interviews to share their thoughts and recollections of the role hospitality has played in their lives, education, and ministries. This chapter provides the purpose of the study, the problem statement, research questions, a summary of the methods, conclusions, and a list of data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality. Recommendations for further research are also included.

Problem Statement

While hospitality is a major biblical doctrine and a requirement of Christian living and outreach, few ministers begin their ministries already recognizing the essence and essentiality of hospitality in ministry or intentionally highlight and model it to those they lead. One root cause for this may stem from the seminaries in which our ministers train, that our seminaries have no apparent agreement on a formal framework for teaching or exemplifying hospitality and that too few seminaries are marked by a culture of hospitality.

Research Questions

1. How is Christian hospitality defined by conservative Christian ministers who are active in a full-time Christian ministry?
2. How do conservative Christian ministers use Christian hospitality in their ministry?

3. How do conservative Christian ministers learn to use Christian hospitality in their ministry?
4. To what extent, if any, are the environments inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
5. To what extent, if any, are relationships inside and outside the classroom viable elements of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
6. To what extent, if any, is modeling teaching/leadership behaviors inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
7. To what extent, if any, is student spiritual formation inside and outside the classroom a viable element of a framework for development of a seminary culture of hospitality?
8. What are some data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality?

Summary of Methods

This qualitative study required a phenomenological design in which data were gathered through interviews with participants who met the population inclusion requirements. This design was chosen for its ability to supply rich narrative descriptions directly from participant quotations. Participants were required to hold to a conservative Christian theology, be seminary graduates, and be currently active in full-time, relational ministry, for example serving as seminary administrators or faculty, pastors, or missionaries or in full-time roles in church associations, fellowships, or mission agencies. Convenience, snowball, and emergent sampling were used for recruitment. A total of 21 participants engaged in the semi-structured interviews between August and November of 2022. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts and field

notes allowed for categorization of the data into themes that helped answer the study's research questions, strengthen the study's propositional framework based upon the literature, and populate a list of data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality.

Conclusions

This section uses interview results to answer the study's eight Research Questions which fall into three categories: Research Questions 1-3 which ask *How* questions, Research Questions 4-7 which ask *To what extent* questions, and Research Question 8 which asks for data-based recommendations for seminary leaders as they pursue a culture of hospitality in their own schools. The second category will be broken down into eight subsections in order to settle upon a data-based framework for including Christian hospitality in seminary, while the third category will offer 22 recommendations for seminary leaders.

Research Questions 1-3

By comparing the many definitions of both generic and Christian hospitality offered by study participants, this all-encompassing definition emerged: "Sacrificially opening your home and yourself in Christlike love and obedience for the encouragement of others." In describing their hospitality methods, participants referenced the external activities of opening their homes and tables to guests who are most often fellow believers and friends from church, but also sometimes neighbors and unbelieving acquaintances. Some referenced purchasing homes or grills specifically for the sake of hospitality, while others referenced using their hobbies as a form of welcome. Many also referenced the internal attitudes necessary for Christian hospitality, including intentionality, genuineness, and love as well as the need for selflessness, sacrifice, and a willingness to listen. Participants most often learned to use Christian hospitality by watching

others, particularly family members or mentors whose personalities were marked by openness and personability, although such learning appears to have been implicit. Few participants described formal study or books as influential in their learning to use hospitality in ministry.

Research Questions 4-7: Framework for Including Christian Hospitality in Seminary

The following eight subsections reintroduce and interact with the propositional framework for hospitality in seminary education devised from data gleaned in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 (see Figure 2.1 and its enumeration on pages 57-58). They then settle upon a final, workable framework for including Christian hospitality in seminary.

Environments Inside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the classroom geography and general ambiance of the room, whether there is music, snacks, games, etc. While interviewees mentioned classroom geography several times, it was by no means a significant factor in whether participants felt welcome in the classroom setting. Instead, interviewees described the level of informality felt inside the classroom, implied by the demeanor and personality of the professor and his level of intentional engagement with the students including dialogue, questions, testimonies, prayer, follow-up, and general non-class-related banter. Never in the interviews was the use of music or games inside the classroom mentioned as part of the ambiance of welcome and only occasionally was food considered a fractional part of the equation. In such instances, it involved the professor changing the venue of a class time to a coffeeshop or restaurant.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality inside the classroom environment would include classroom geography; the professor's personality; the professor's intentionality; and the professor's personal, spiritual, and academic

interaction with students before, during, and after class. Also included would be the encouragement of student-to-student interactions in similar ways.

Environments Outside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the settings where faculty and students might meet outside of class times (for example coffee-shops, restaurants, leisure events, or homes) and what role food or drink might play in these meetings. Data from the interviews seem to uphold these propositions about place, but the weight of emphasis would be on time spent with professors in homes rather than in the other public venues, though even these "neutral locations" had their place. Instances where faculty or administrators could interact with students in homes was often the soil-bed for deeper and longer-lasting relationships. Also prominent in student testimonies of feeling welcomed by seminary employees on campus was the presence of faculty-student breakrooms where faculty and students alike could mingle and interact as brothers and sisters in Christ without the power-distance that the classroom often engenders. While coffee was often mentioned, food or meals played no real role in these gatherings outside of the classroom, not because they were not important but because they were not the point.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality outside the classroom environment would include seminary personnel inviting students into their homes primarily or out for coffee secondarily for the sake of interacting in a more comfortable environment and on a more level playing field. The most important aspect of such gatherings is the intentional and personal interaction between the seminary's employees and the men and women they are training for the work of the ministry. Such opportunities outside of class are particularly important for those professors whose personalities might prevent them from properly displaying the love and care they inwardly feel for their students.

Relationships Inside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the formality level of student-professor interactions in class as well as the friendships among students that might be nurtured as part of the classroom culture. Data from the interviews suggest that professors can adjust the level of formality in their class through greater personal exposure to their students, either intentionally through personal engagement or incidentally through connecting with students in class who also attend the same church or social functions or developing deeper relationships with those students whom the professor has taught before. Teaching styles, personalities, and banter also play a huge role in the depth of relationships developed inside the classroom. The data also emphasized the need to minimize feelings of hierarchy or power-distance in the classroom, while still maintaining respect within the Professor-student relationships. Among classmates, the interview data pointed to the benefits of encouraging accountability and edification through occasional cooperation on projects and emphases on small-group interaction and prayer, no matter the class sizes, though the strongest student relationships most often formed through the natural connection of personality types and shared experiences.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through relationships inside the classroom would include professors intentionally making personal connections with students, engaging them in conversations about shared experiences from outside class and reducing the power-distance through warmth, love, and conversation. It would also include fostering student relationships through communication, assignments, and encouragement to choose their own partners in group projects.

Relationships Outside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the formality level of student interaction with the school's entire faculty because of the school's culture, as well as their interactions with the full student population. Data from the interviews suggest that smaller seminaries were better able to involve interactions between students and the school's administrators and staff, while the school size had no real bearing on the interactions between students and faculty. What mattered for any of these interactions was the school's culture, whether it was open and hospitable or overly formal and hierarchical. Interview results showed that schools could enhance student-seminary relationships and especially student-faculty relationships through encouraging such things as mentoring, informal interactions in break rooms or the cafeteria, and especially small-group involvement that mixes seminary personnel and students. Whether these small groups should be required or optional is up for debate, but the participants seemed to suggest that the greater the requirement, the lower the impact. A student's own personal responsibility would determine his level of involvement, though options for involvement need to be available. Also impactful for the relationships under discussion were opportunities for travel, particularly ministry and mission trips mixing seminary personnel and students alike.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through relationships outside the classroom would include seminary personnel pursuing informal interactions with students in public areas or private homes, creating opportunities for personal engagement in small groups and travel opportunities, and decreasing the sense of formality and hierarchy in the school's culture while also nurturing relationships and mutual respect. Also included in this is the recognition of roadblocks to relationship-

development like class sizes, busyness, and personality differences and seeking ways to turn these challenges into assets.

Leadership Examples (Modeling) Inside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to teaching styles employed (for example textbook lectures, in-class dialogue, learning by discovery, etc.) and the level of personal experiences shared by the professors. Data from the interviews seem to uphold these points, particularly regarding in-class interactions and professorial experience. A professor's teaching style, personality, and experience appeared to have a large impact on student recall, not only of the professor himself but of the courses and lessons taught. Also clear from the interviews was the long-term effects that negative actions from or character qualities in a professor can have on students, including attitudes of superiority, arrogance, unkindness, or standoffishness.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through modeling inside the classroom would include hiring professors with ample ministry experience and personability whose teaching styles engage the students and help ensure interaction with and genuine learning of the material. Also important is guarding against negative personal qualities that can detract from one's reputation or teaching.

Leadership Examples (Modeling) Outside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the faculty’s life-examples of servant leadership and ongoing ministry commitments. Despite its importance in the literature, the issue of servant leadership was nowhere mentioned in the interviews. Instead, participants praised professors whose character and lives exemplified the lessons they taught, with an emphasis on their godliness, integrity, mentoring efforts, and ministry involvement outside of seminary.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through modeling outside the classroom would include integrity and character in the professors and their involvement in the lives of students as mentors. Also important is their active involvement in the community and in local church ministries.

Spiritual Formation Inside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the level to which both the classroom assignments and required activities (like service-learning projects, extension ministries, and internships) are holistically designed and implemented. Data from the interviews seem to uphold these points. One emphasis within the classroom assignments would be the value of students journaling about their own spiritual growth in areas outside the individual class. Also emphasized (in explanations if not always in word) was the need for more holistic education that involves the application, both spiritually and practically, of material generally considered academic, for example theology, Bible doctrines, and the study of the Bible itself. "Required activities like internships" is an aspect of spiritual formation better suited for the framework regarding spiritual formation outside the classroom, though discussion of ministry experiences during these internships are a necessary component of spiritual growth inside the classroom.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through spiritual formation inside the classroom would include holistic education that pursues the cognitive learning, spiritual reflection, and practical application of classroom material through dialogue, journaling, and accountability. Also important is the emphasis on discussing ministry experiences from outside the classroom in the context of in-class learning.

Spiritual Formation Outside the Classroom

In the propositional framework, this referred to the school's emphasis on continued character-development through mentorship, organized activities, and other opportunities, as well as its encouragement of individual student growth and accountability. Data from the interviews upheld these points with particular emphasis on the role that local churches and pastors play in the mentorship of students. Added to this would be the need for active ministry involvement, either through formalized internships or local-church membership and ministry. The most effective "organized activities" that participants described as beneficial to their spiritual formations were small groups, whether they consisted of classmates on or off campus or with seminary personnel and classmates in homes.

With these adjustments under consideration, a resultant framework for showing hospitality through spiritual formation outside the classroom would include the intentional connection between seminaries and local churches and pastors for the students' mentorship and ministry involvement. Also included would be the intentional and regular use of small groups that combine students with seminary personnel.

Research Question 8: Data-Based Recommendations for Seminary Leaders

Research Question 8 asks for data-based recommendations for seminary leaders regarding the development of a seminary culture of hospitality in their own schools. The following provides 22 recommendations which are listed here in no particular order of importance beyond point number one.

1. **Recognize God's hospitality as a fundamental doctrine of Scripture and Christian hospitality as both a key component of Christlikeness and an essential element of evangelism.**

2**. Offer a course on Christian Hospitality**. Develop a curriculum combining the scholarship (Scripture and literature) with the practice (examples and implementation) of Christian hospitality in ministry in both theological and ministerial programs.

3. **Require courses in cross-cultural ministry for all seminary students**. Because cross-cultural ministry requires relationship development, such courses often carry with them a strong emphasis on hospitality.

4. **Require courses in teaching and communication for all seminary students**. These courses would go beyond teaching practicums or graduate-assistant teaching opportunities and teach the skills necessary for connecting to students and communicating in speech, actions, and attitudes.

5. **Hire faculty with extensive ministry experience**. Virtually any course in seminary can be greatly enhanced when the professor teaches from pastoral or missionary experience.

6. **Hire faculty who demonstrate hospitality**. A school can get its greatest return on investment if its faculty not only know and teach the material but can engage the students through it as well.

7. **When hiring new faculty, get references from individuals they have mentored**. Knowing the ability of incoming faculty to model successfully life-on-life mentoring requires hearing *from* individuals they have mentored in the past, not merely *about* them.

8. **Renew the biblical vision that the local church is responsible for raising its leaders, and that seminary is but a supplement to that end**. Intentionally connect seminaries

to local churches and their pastors, particularly those in the immediate area and those from which the school receives its students.

9. **Take full advantage of the pastors and saints in local churches to connect with and mentor seminary students**. While seminary is but a supplement to the church, the church can in turn be a supplement to seminary education, allowing for regular interaction with day-to-day ministry.
10. **Avoid requiring students and/or seminary personnel to attend a single church, particularly a "campus church."** Encourage seminary faculty and students to seek out churches in the extended area around the school which they can join and get engaged in real-life ministry where it is needed most.
11. **Consider the balance between requiring and expecting student involvement in ministry**. While required internships have their place (especially with students freshly out of college), regular involvement in local church ministries should be a natural characteristic of students training for the ministry.
12. R**equire that students regularly report on their ministry involvement.** This need not be logs of minutes prayed, visits made, or people engaged, but journal entries of struggles endured, victories won, and lessons learned.
13. **Encourage student engagement in small groups where they share and discuss their ministry reports.** Lasting relationships can form through such student-led accountability groups which foster learning, engagement, and prayer.
14. **Encourage both organized and informal gatherings of students and seminary personnel in private homes and involve the families of students whenever possible.** Organized gatherings might include missionary meetings, book clubs, Bible studies,

and prayer groups engineered to foster sibling-to-sibling fellowship in the Body of Christ, no matter the titles of the people involved. Informal meetings might include simple dinners, game nights, and other informal get-togethers. Because many seminary students are married and some even have small children, prepare for this, and embrace it as an opportunity to influence an entire family for ministry, not merely one member.

15. **Develop means and opportunity for students and seminary personnel to mingle on campus between classes.** This may be a break room open to all, a cafeteria not segregated into faculty/staff and students, or lengthening the amount of time between chapel or lunch and the next class to allow for deeper conversations.
16. **Organize travel opportunities that include seminary personnel and students.** This may include mission trips, traveling ministry teams, retreats, or conferences, but such opportunities can provide opportunity for students to interact with seminary administrators, faculty, and staff in ways outside the normal seminary experience.
17. **Recognize the value of extended seminary-student careers.** A pastor who spends 8-10 years completing a seminary degree does so meticulously, remaining actively involved in full-time ministry and making full use of the material learned in class.
18. **Discover ways to encourage and promote this lifelong-style of education for those active in full-time ministry.** This may include different costs per credit-hour depending on the number of credits a student takes, the use of online education, block-class approaches, etc., and it may require adaptations within degree-completion plans.
19. **Intentionally mix the various types of seminary students, from the highly experienced to the freshly graduated.** Students on both ends of the spectrum can

enhance classroom dialogue and introduce classmates to aspects of ministry that might otherwise go unnoticed.

20. **Recognize the value of online education.** Online education can prove most beneficial for those students engaged in full-time ministry and allows for immediate application of the material in the local church setting, particularly if one requirement is accountability to another partner or mentor in ministry.
21. **Consider methods for balancing the demands of seminary employment with the duties of serving as examples for and mentors to students.** This might include job-shadowing, creative methods for follow-up and accountability like journaling or social media connections, or fostering relationships between students and contacts outside of seminary.
22. **Investigate ways to capitalize on classes of abnormal sizes.** For example, this may include breaking large classes into smaller groups that work together as units throughout a semester. It may also include giving special opportunities to students in smaller classes to develop and deliver lesson plans within the context of a course.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research on this topic of hospitality in seminary education might better distinguish between the tracks of study participants have pursued or over which they preside, for example post-graduate degrees related primarily to ministry versus those related primarily to theology. Future research on this topic of hospitality in seminary education might also consider expanding its focus beyond post-graduate schools to schools that offer undergraduate degrees in ministry and Bible as well, particularly Bible colleges and Christian universities. Future research on this topic might also repeat the format of this study yet with an intentional change of terminology, for

example, research that seeks to uncover the presence and impact of "relationship building" or "mentorship" in seminary education rather than using the more connotative term "hospitality."

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Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
www.marshall.edu

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755

FWA 00002704

IRB1 #00002205
IRB2 #00003206

August 22, 2022

Ron Childress, Ed.D.
Leadership Studies - COEPD

RE: IRBNet ID# 1944244-1
At: Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral)

Dear Dr. Childress:

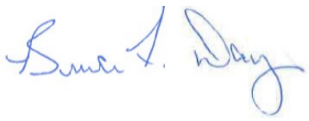
Protocol Title:	[1944244-1] HOSPITALITY AND SEMINARY CULTURE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE PRESENCE AND PRACTICE OF HOSPITALITY BETWEEN SEMINARY LEADERS AND STUDENTS
Site Location:	MU
Submission Type:	New Project APPROVED
Review Type:	Exempt Review

In accordance with 45CFR46.104(d)(2), the above study was granted Exempted approval today by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Designee. No further submission (or closure) is required for an Exempt study **unless** there is an amendment to the study. All amendments must be submitted and approved by the IRB Chair/Designee.

This study is for student Jesse Adams.

If you have any questions, please contact the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Coordinator Lindsey Taylor at (304) 696-6322 or l.taylor@marshall.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,



Bruce F. Day, ThD, CIP
Director, Office of Research Integrity

Appendix B: Consent / Recruitment Letter

Dear:

My name is Jesse Adams, and I am a 2005 graduate of Bob Jones University (B.A.) and a 2012 graduate of Liberty University (M.Div.) now serving as Area Leader to the U.S. Special Ministries for Biblical Ministries Worldwide (Lawrenceville, GA), having served nine years as a church-planting missionary in China with the same organization. As a doctoral candidate in the EdD Program at Marshall University in Huntington, WV, I am contacting you to request your participation in my dissertation research study investigating the role of hospitality in seminary curricula and culture. A study abstract is attached.

Specifically, I am requesting your participation in a semi-structured interview. This interview will focus on the topic of hospitality within the context of your own experiences as a full-time minister. For convenience, the interview will be conducted preferably via videoconferencing and should require 45-60 minutes of your time. Interviews will be recorded, and recordings will be destroyed following completion of interview transcription. Transcripts will be assigned a number and the code list of names will be retained on a password-protected computer file by the Co-PI. The success of this study is dependent on the willingness of professionals such as yourself to share their experiences and insights.

There are no known risks involved with participating in this study. Your willingness to be interviewed will imply both your consent and that you are at least 25 years of age. Participation is completely voluntary and there are no penalties or loss of benefits if you choose not to participate. You may also choose not to answer any question included in the interview protocol. The information you supply is confidential, and no individual will be identified by name or identifying information.

If you have questions about this study, you may contact Dr. Ron Childress (PI) at 304-545-0245 or rchildress@marshall.edu. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at 304-696-4303.

Please reply to this e-mail and let me know if you are willing and available to participate. If so, I will respond with both a copy of the Interview Protocol and suggested time parameters for scheduling the interview.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to consider participating in this study. My expectation is that one of the project deliverables will be a framework for how seminaries can better integrate Christian hospitality into their curricula and cultures. A summary of study findings will be shared with all participants.

Jesse Adams, Co-investigator
608-769-0029
adams528@marshall.edu

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Perceptions of Full-time Ministers Regarding Christian Hospitality

Name:_____ Title:_____ Date:_____

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. As a reminder, this research is being conducted through the Marshall University College of Education and Professional Development (MUCOEPD) to explore the presence and practice of Christian hospitality in seminary education. This interview will be recorded for the sole use of the co-investigator's analysis. The information you provide will be integrated with that of other interviewees and confidentiality will be always maintained. Participation is completely voluntary, and you can elect to stop participation at any time.

As a seminary graduate now involved in full-time ministry, your experiences and opinions will add a great deal to the growing body of data being collected for this study. I anticipate this interview will take 45-60 minutes.

General Demographics

1. Gender:
2. Race:
3. Age bracket: 26-35 / 36-45 / 46-55 / 56-65 / 66+

Ministerial Position(s)

1. How would you describe your current ministerial position or title?
2. What other roles might you have apart from that ministry?
3. How long have you been involved in full-time ministry?
4. What other ministerial positions or titles have you held in the past (if any)?
5. Could you briefly explain your seminary background, including school name(s) and location(s) and duration?
    - Describe whether you felt prepared or not for practical ministry once you left seminary.

Definitions

1. How would you define the word "hospitality"?
2. How might your definition differ if we changed it to "Christian hospitality"?

Using Christian Hospitality

1. How do you use Christian hospitality in your current ministry role?
    - Describe how you might intentionally use Christian hospitality in a given week or month.

- Can you describe any instances when you might be unintentionally hospitable (for example meeting strangers, having people drop in unannounced, etc.)?

2. Do you have any specific goals for yourself or for others when you show Christian hospitality?
    - If so, what are these goals?
    - If not, why not?
3. How do you see your methods of Christian hospitality helping you reach those goals?

Learning Christian Hospitality

1. Have you ever intentionally studied the topic of Christian hospitality before?
    - If so, what was the context for that study?
2. We all have different approaches towards showing Christian hospitality. Can you describe some of the ways in which you learned how to be hospitable?
    - For example: Bible study, book study, watching mentors or parents being hospitable, experiencing hospitality from others, etc.

The major focus of this study is on Christian hospitality in seminary culture, so I would like to focus the next series of questions on your own experiences in seminary. I will break these down into four topics, both inside and outside the classroom setting.

Environment

3. Thinking back to your time in seminary classes, can you recall ever having felt like a welcomed guest inside a classroom setting?
    - If so, what elements of the setting made you feel this way? Do you feel that your professor(s) intentionally designed the classroom environment this way, or was it more incidental as part of the professor's style or personality?
4. Thinking back to your time on the seminary campus, can you recall an atmosphere of welcome outside the classroom setting (i.e. from seminary leaders, other faculty, students associations, campus parents, etc.)?
    - If so, can you briefly describe what stood out most to you?

Relationships

5. Can you recall any seminary courses that emphasized cooperation or relationship-development among students or others as part of the course design?
    - If so, what courses, projects or assignments especially stand out in your memory and why?
6. Were you able to develop any personal relationships with faculty members outside the classroom, relationships that extended beyond Teacher-Student and perhaps even beyond your seminary years?
    - If so, can you briefly describe what made these relationships special?

Modeling

7. Had any of your teaching professors become a model for you personally for how you wanted to relate to those whom you would someday lead, teach, or even pastor?
    - If so, what traits especially stood out to you that you recognized as essential for how a godly leader relates to others?
8. Can you describe any observations of how professors or other leaders in your seminary related to people outside the classrooms and even outside the school that you recognized as especially good models?
    - For example, in their churches, in the community, in local sports leagues, on social media, etc.
    - Can you describe any especially bad models or anecdotes?

Spiritual Formation

9. Sometimes school (even seminary) focuses more on knowing than on growing. Do any lectures, assignments, textbooks, or classroom anecdotes stand out in your memory as things that helped you grow spiritually (not just intellectually)?
    - Can you briefly describe anything in the classroom setting that helped you better develop relationships with other believers or with non-believers?
10. Can you describe any other experiences in seminary (i.e. chapel services, student events, campus parents, etc.) that proved especially formative for you spiritually?

Encouraging Christian Hospitality

1. If you had a goal of better modeling Christian hospitality in your ministry this year, how might you go about doing so?
2. If you had a goal of teaching Christian hospitality in your ministry this year, how might you go about doing so?
3. Considering all that we have discussed in this interview, what elements of character or behavior do you think are most necessary for a person desiring to show Christian hospitality?

In Conclusion

I appreciate your patience throughout this interview and your thoughtful responses.

1. Do you have any final comments or observations to share?
2. Can you please share with me the names and contact information of 2-3 other seminary graduates now active in full-time ministry who might also be interested in taking part in this study?

Thank you so much for your time and willingness to be a part of this study.

Appendix D: Curriculum Vitae

Jesse Adams
E-mail adams528@marshall.edu

Education

Master of Divinity: Liberty University, Virginia, 2012

Master of Arts in Church Planting: Liberty University, Virginia, 2010

Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing: Bob Jones University, South Carolina, 2005

Employment

Area Leader for U.S. Members, B.M. Worldwide, Georgia (January 1, 2022 – Present)

Owner and CEO, Pathfinders Oriental, Hainan, China (July 1, 2019 – Present)

Educator, B.M. Worldwide, Georgia (January 12, 2012 – Present)

Curriculum Developer / Manager, Sanya Foreign Language School, Hainan, China (2015-2018)

Driver, Arctic Glacier Ice, Holmen, Wisconsin (2014, 2021-2022)

Group Home Supervisor, Lutheran Social Services, Wisconsin (2012-2014)

High School English and History Teacher, Faith Baptist School, Wisconsin (2010-2011)

Soldier (E4), U.S. Army [honorable discharge] (2009-2010)

English Teacher, IEEA, Haikou, China (2005-2008)

Graphic Design Artist, Games 2 Remember, Georgia (2006-2008)

Video Editor, HomeSat, Bob Jones University, South Carolina (2005)

Radio Host, Bob Jones University, South Carolina (2004 – 2005)

Licensure and Certifications

Clerical Ordination, FBC, La Crosse, Wisconsin (2014 – Present)

ESL Certified: The International TEFL Corporation (2013 – Present)

ESL Business English Certified: The International TEFL Corporation (2013 – Present)

Select Achievements and Publications

Host and Writer, HobbiesWithElliot.wordpress.com (2020-Present)

Host and Writer, TheLittleManReviews.wordpress.com (2011 – Present)

Guest Speaker, Trail Ridge Camp and Conference Center (2022-2023)

Author, “Guilt vs. Regret,” pinganlushang.com (2022)

Author, “Noisy Brain” (嘈杂的大脑), pinganlushang.com (2020)

Author, “Beneath the Waves”, hellosanya.com (2019)

Guest Lecturer on Literature, DuYi Bookstore, NingBo, China (2017)

Guest Lecturer on Management, LvYing Company, NingBo, China (2017)

Author, *Farmer Dillo Shapes Things Up*, JourneyForth Press, South Carolina (2009)

Author, *Farmer Dillo Counts His Chickens*, JourneyForth Press, South Carolina (2008)

Author, *Farmer Dillo Paints His Barn*, JourneyForth Press, South Carolina (2006)