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AN EXAMINATION OF CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE PROGRESSIVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

BY

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ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION OF CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE PROGRESSIVE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

BY
Edward Thomas Hayes
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This project was to begin the implementation of contextual theological education to pastors, ministers, and Christian workers in their geographical locales, and to fulfill the mandate for theological education within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Its initial focus is Progressive Primitive Baptists residing in the jurisdiction of the Primitive Baptist State Convention of Florida. The project consisted of three years of preparatory work which led to the establishment of an extension unit in Tallahassee, Florida (August 2012).

Preparatory work began through the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Congress in April 2005. Members of the Church School Congress provided the dialog to ascertain the needs of the Convention. Those needs were examined in light of the historical origin of the Progressive Primitive Baptist movement before and immediately following the institution of slavery in North America. Surveys and lectures that dealt with both secular and theological education were used to measure the desires of the initial focus group whose number was one hundred and fifty plus persons.
Near the end of the project a lecture series was held in Tallahassee, Florida at the site of the proposed extension in order to share the mandates for accredited contextual theological education. The lectures were done with participation from the educational leaders from the two associations that govern the Tallahassee, Florida region churches. Their focus was theories of education, the mandate for theological education, and contextual theological education. The number who participated in the lectures totaled about thirty persons per night. The three nights totaled ninety persons.

Following the lecture series twenty persons signed up for classes. The initial class enrolled six students with the expectations of a large increase for the second semester. Documentation is in place to record the progress of the unit as well as the project.
You can not lead where you do not go,
You can not teach what you do not know.
Study the word, study the word.
Elder Moses General Miles

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, father, mother, children, grandchildren, and
I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, father, mother, children, grandchildren, and members of the Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church of Milton, Florida. This work is also dedicated to the memory of my father, mother, grandparents, and Dr. Edward Smith. Finally, this work is dedicated to the many brilliant professors, advisors, mentors, students, and friends who have made the journey worthwhile and to the glory of God through Christ Jesus Our LORD.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During the course of this project, many kind people provided support, assistance, and prayer. These persons are acknowledged here for their contribution to this work.

First, to my wife of forty-two years that has encouraged me through her smiles, prayers, and finances. Your faithfulness to God has been revealed through this journey.

The counsel of my dissertation committee—Dr Edward Smith [deceased], Dr. Michael Johnson, Dr. Riggins Earl, Jr., and Dr. Alvin Cleveland [President of Selma University]—was invaluable.

The support and counsel offered by Dr Henry Mitchell, Dr Michael I. E. Dash, and Dr Marsha Haney is much appreciated.

To my faithful friends [Elder John Dees, Jr., D. D. and Elder Elijah Weatherspoon] that gave encouragement and resources to complete this work for the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches of America, and Dr. William T. Gladys whose labors provided the rich histories of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches of Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

To the students at Selma University who have refreshed in me the joy of acquiring new information and skills, especially those students that assisted with typing, planning for the conferences, and sharing intimately the theologies they developed.
To the Ministers' Alliance of Pensacola and Vicinity that have supported the efforts of the extension units through their prayers and financial support, and to Moderator Bernard C. Yates whose support made the project a reality for members of the local Primitive Baptist Association.

Finally, Dr James Chester and Dean Minnie Likely who gave their support through arranging the curriculum of the State Church School to address the needs of theological education and their lectures. Finally, thanks goes to Pastor Terry Price and the members of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church in Tallahassee, Florida for their kindness in sharing their facilities and reflections in order to make the project possible.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

How can accredited contextual theological education be provided to a community that previously has not met with success in meeting the mandate of its founders? The need for contextual theological education within the author's community of faith has caused the leaders of that community to seek ways for its provision. It is the author's desire that the tool for making this possible can be found in this project. This work has become an act of ministry for the author. It is done in order to provide contextual theological education within the geographical areas of those doing ministry. A successful project will begin the provision of accredited theological education within the contextual and geographical boundaries of bi-vocational pastors and Christian workers in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church\(^1\). For the author this is an act of ministry.

It was during the second semester of doctoral Studies, at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia that the author met face to face with challenges of this ministry project. A fellow student from the Presbyterian faith who was a pastor in Merced, California, began to question the enormity of the task ahead. Little did the

\(^1\)The author will use Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in most instances. Primitive Baptist Church is the original name of the author's faith community, but in 1907 several associations came together to form the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The difference in the two is that the Primitive Baptist Church (also known as hard shell) does not have Sunday Schools, pianos, drums, or any other items that will take away from what they perceive as pure worship. Their governance is restricted to the associational level, whereas, Progressive Primitive Baptists participate in State and National Associations (known as conventions). A copy of the covenant and articles of faith of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church will be included in the appendix.
author realize that because of the structure of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church—associational autonomy—the difficulty of fulfilling the mandate of the founders of the National Primitive Baptist Convention would prove improbable but not impossible. The dissertation will show the steps taken and work done in order to establish accredited theological education within the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention as a model for its implementation nationally. It also shows the difficulties encountered and how they were overcome. The praxis of the project was wrought with difficulties. Those difficulties were overcome by the persistence of the researcher to challenge the artificial boundaries encountered. One of those boundaries was the context of the theological education. Dr. Carter G. Woodson in his work *The Mis-Education of the Negro* shared:

> The minister had attended a school of theology but had merely memorized words and phrases, which meant little or nothing to those who heard his discourse. The school in which he had been trained followed the traditional course for ministers, devoting most of their time to dead languages and dead issues.²

In order to avoid those pitfalls, mentioned above, the author looked extensively into the theology and practice of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Through its own theological language, the author has found an avenue to share the purpose of the project to the leadership of both the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention and the National Primitive Baptist Convention. For the cultural and philosophical boundaries encountered the researcher utilized Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's theory of the *Volksgeist*. That theory asserts:

> As the spirit of a particular people is real and its freedom exists under natural conditions, it exists finally in time, and as regards its range and scope, its reality has essentially a particular principle of development, --a history. But as a limited

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spirit it passes into universal world history, the events of which exhibit the
dialectic of the particular national spirits, the judgement of the world.³

The *Volksgeist* theory helps to answer the cultural hurdles experienced by the researcher,
because it explains how a people is unified around through the universal spirit that
unconsciously guide the people’s praxis. According to Hegel the mind/spirit consists of
the subjective, objective, and absolute. It is in the absolute where the mind knows itself
and its goals.⁴ The researcher is driven not by convention but by the mind of the people
being served. The people of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church have shown
through their praxis that they are progressive and favor education of her people. Two
examples are Mr. Tony Smith—the former assistant county administrator of Palm Beach
County, Florida and Ms Helen Woody—the former CEO of Bush Gardens of Tampa,
Florida. Both of these persons were educated through the Florida A & M University in
Tallahassee, Florida. As young people they were encouraged by the Progressive
Primitive Baptist Churches they attended to achieve at a high level. Secular pursuits and
attainment have yet left the church searching for the means for the churches survival.
This has been the activity of her mind. According to Hegel

The development of Mind (Spirit) is in three stages:

(1) In the form of self-relation: within it it has the *ideal* totality of the Idea—i.e. it
has before it all that its notion contains: its being is to be self-contained and
free. This is *Mind Subjective*.

(2) In the form of *reality*: realized, i.e. in a *world* produced and to be produced by
it: in this world freedom presents itself under the shape of necessity. This is
*Mind Objective*.

(3) In that unity of mind as objectivity and of mind as ideality and concept, which
essentially and actually is and for ever produces itself, mind in its absolute
truth. This is *Mind Absolute*.⁵

⁴http://www.hegel.net/en/e33.htm (assessed November 12, 2012)
The mind/spirit of the people of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church now seeks the answer to the survival of the church as they know it.

There was a time when all (science) was a science of God. It is the distinction of our age, by contrast, to know each and every thing, indeed to know the infinite mass of objects, but only of God to know nothing. There was a time when [one] cared, was driven indeed, to know God, to fathom his nature—a time when spirit had no peace, and could find none, except in this pursuit, when it felt itself unhappy that it could not satisfy this need, and held all other cognitive interests to be of lesser import.⁶

The pursuit of other ways to wholeness has left the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church with the task of re-evaluation and re-examination of her commitment to the wishes of her founders.⁷ One of those wishes was the developing of theological training within her context for those in ministry. The author affirms that ministry is an all-consuming work. Much work is done grasping an understanding of the language used to define the terms. Therefore the author will share some definitions used in order that the reader will have a clearer view of the project.

**Definition of Terms**

In order to understand the subject the words of the title will be examined separately. First, the adjective “A” is used instead of the definite article “the” because the project is not meant to be restrictive. The Primitive Baptist Church is the author’s focus, but all Christian bodies that periodically evaluate and examine their ministries can glean from the project. While the definite article “the” is restrictive in its usage, the indefinite article “a” is not.


⁶Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 86-87.

...connotes a thing not previously noted or recognized, in contrast with the, which connotes a thing previously noted or recognized.  

The project is the first effort to establish accredited theological education within the ministry setting. The Northeast region of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church began an Institute in Cleveland, Ohio. This work has ceased to function. Also the Birmingham, Alabama region sought to train its ministry workers through the efforts of the Elder Gipson. That work also has ceased to operate. The Huntsville, Alabama region has been successful in developing an Institution (Huntsville Bible Institute) to address the need for theologically trained ministers. It has its accreditation through the Association for Biblical Higher Education. The author is in conversations with the President of Huntsville (Dr. John Clay) to seek a means to extend its programs to reach areas that are not served by an accredited institution.

The term examination has applications to previous efforts as well as current needs. The author does not take an exclusive look at the ministry problem. Rather the project is simply bringing to fruition the efforts of past ministers who addressed the issue. A completed project will put in place a mechanism that can be used by the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church to constantly monitor its projects as well as make the desirable corrections for particular congregations and district churches. The tool evaluates as well as examines.

Evaluation is necessary in order to assess the worth or quality of contextual theological education to a particular age and/or community. The message of Jesus in

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9Neufeldt, 470.
Matthew 28:19 KJV to "teach" involves the idea of evaluation. Effective teaching involves dialogue as expressed in Plato's *Republic*.\(^{10}\) Through dialogue the message can be interpreted through the language of the student and therefore an evaluation can take place to ascertain whether the message of Christ has been received and understood by the student. This idea is what Osmer calls *integrity*.\(^{11}\)

Maintaining the message of Christ is not the only area where the project will need evaluation. The other area of challenge was obtaining measurements to ascertain the changes taking place within the ministry setting. Since the initial introduction of the project, there has been an aggressive move by pastors and Christian workers within the ministry setting to achieve advanced training in the field of theology. Most of the training has been contextual, but lack the accreditation component. Therefore, the recipients can not replicate the information in a user friendly format—that is, education that can meet the stringent requirements of accreditation agencies, which control the access to financial and professional opportunities. The internal evaluation of the project will also be assessed for its ability to pass external evaluation.

The external evaluation of the project is being done by Selma University as it partners with the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention. Guidelines have already been put in place for the planting of the project in other geographical areas. A previously scheduled project for August 2010 was the West Palm Beach, Florida extension program. The student numbers (20+) could not be achieved by that date. Therefore, that site


\(^{11}\)Osmer, 179.
implementation has been delayed. Tallahassee, Florida [Fall 2012] replaced West Palm Beach in the order and has become the site of the project.

Upon the introduction of the project in the Tallahassee, Florida area, local pastors were invited to give some external evaluations of the needs of the project for their area and ministries. These evaluations were used to study previous efforts to bring such a project to fruition, and how such a project can be done more effectively in the future. This will call for an examination of the project to date.

Examination,…investigation; inspection; checkup; scrutiny; inquiry; testing, will be done carefully in order to look at the attempts of past generations to institute such a project in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. What was done can be summarized by the definition of examine [to look at or into critically or methodically in order to find out the facts, condition, etc. of] Careful examination of the project should yield fruit for the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church of Florida as well as all Christian bodies and any deliberate body, which desires to pass on its tenets to future generations. Tenets that must be shared in the context of the neophyte of his/her particular body.

Context is important to any transference of knowledge. For this project context is defined as the culture, religious tradition, and experiences of the people who make up the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Freire uses context as the foundation of his argument for dialogical methodology in pedagogy. Freire’s work was done with the

12 Neufeldt, 472.
13 Neufeldt, 472.
peasants of Brazil whose faith tradition was Roman Catholic. Their culture was a mixture of native South Americans, mulattos, and former African slaves. Freire’s began to teach the pupils with a methodology called *Conscientizacoa*16 which Freire called critical consciousness. Freire’s goal was to arouse in the peasants the desire for agency by using their won language to educate them about other subjects pertinent to their growth as responsible beings. The author uses contextual in order to communicate effectively the goal of the project—that is to bring accredited contextual theological education within the geographical areas of those being served. The traditions of the Progressive Primitive Baptists are unique to members of the Baptist faith per se. Therefore, it is from within the Progressive Primitive Baptist body that the project originates.

Therefore, special attention can be given to the needs of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in light of her particular beliefs. Those beliefs will be examined more fully latter in the work. The tradition of the ministry setting also has unique aspects that are separate from mainline churches. One particular experience is the effects of slavery on Progressive Primitive Baptist membership. The majority of the churches of the State Association were organized prior to or immediately following the abolishing of slavery. Those churches planted in the free territories were formed by family members of those whom had experienced the institution of slavery. Institutional slavery had a definite influence on the theology of Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.


16Paulo Freire, 19.
Theology is defined as one’s language about God. William Hordern states:

“Theology” comes from the Greek words: Theos, meaning God, and logos, meaning word or rational thought. Therefore theology is a word or rational thought about God.

The definition the author chooses to use is the former by Dr. Riggins R. Earl, Jr. as the one relative to the project. The language of any people is particular, that is, it is understood by the community without any formal translation needed. Without Christian workers being adequately trained in the language of those whom their ministry is focused, the thought about God cannot be properly conveyed. The goal of the project is to produce a clergy and clergy staff that can meet the needs of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. At present the majority of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches have clergy whom are not trained in their own language about God. That training is the educational component of the project.

Education is vital to the project because of the needs of the student. Each student’s knowledge of the self and community is vital. In the project the idea of education will be translated “to educate” since that is the method the author uses to reach the appropriate goal. The goal will be fully discussed later. Webster’s definition of educate is “to train by formal instruction and supervised practice esp. in a skill, trade, or profession; to develop mentally, morally, or aesthetically esp. by instruction.” The ministry project

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17 Riggins R. Earl, Jr, Lecture on Theological Education (Pensacola, FL: Selma University Extension, 2010).


will equip the student to gain a fuller knowledge of the traditions, culture, and experiences of the particular community he/she represents and performs acts of ministry. For the project the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is that community. It will be adequately defined in the section the writer calls the ministry setting.

Methodology

The method used to carry out the project is one that was set forth by Evelyn Eaton and James D. Whitehead. Their description of a proper model for ministry is shared below.

The method describes the dynamic or movement of the reflection. It outlines the stages through which the conversation proceeds. The initial stage (attending) involves seeking out the diverse information residing, often in a partly-hidden fashion, in personal experience, the religious tradition, and the culture. An intermediate stage (assertion) instigates a dialogue among these sources of information in order to clarify, challenge, and purify the insights and limits of each. The final stage (pastoral response) moves the reflection from insight toward personal and communal action.21

The practice of ministry is where the project begins and ultimately ends. Since accepting the call to ministry the author has been shockingly aware of the difficulty of a tool to provide for the nurturing of neophytes in the Gospel work. Many of those in the denomination who answer the call to ministry are limited in the choices of educational pursuits. They are aware that whatever secular field of study already achieved is insufficient for dealing with the total being they are required to serve. Every noted profession requires the successful matriculation of a curriculum designed to prepare the

20Frederick C. Mish, ed, Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Miriam-Webster Inc, 1990), 396.

student for licensure such as medicine, law, education, etc. Therefore, in order to overcome obstacles for adequate preparation for the ministry, the author argues for an examination of contextual theological education in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.

The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church suffers from a lack of cadre (those who provide the leadership for the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church) who are equipped for the survival of the church that was instituted in 1907. For over a hundred years the church has struggled with its identity. Now the 21st century has introduced challenges that the church struggles to adequately address. Some of those are more educated congregants, influence from the mass media (television, radio, cellular devices, etc.), and under-prepared clergy. One major sign is that many Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches are struggling to maintain their memberships and ministries.

The loss of membership and ministry can be directly attributed to a leadership that suffers from what the author calls spiritual atrophy.

During the September (2012) session of the School of Religion of the Mount Zion Primitive District Association, the Assistant Superintendent (Mrs. Jacqueline Smith) of the Zion Hope Primitive Baptist Church complained about the failure of ministry to fully address the needs of persons whom join the fellowship but become disillusioned because their basic needs are not adequately addressed by church leadership. This she says causes persons to come through revolving doors into the fellowship but soon leave. She pleaded for the District to address the need for adequately trained clergy and Christian workers.

This loss of membership can be seen in the local churches as well as the district associations, which comprise the state of Florida Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches.

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22 Thomas W. Samuels, *God Has Kept Us* (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Convention, 2008), 11.

The period from 1984 to 2012 saw a loss of churches in the South Florida Association of four. That same trend can be seen in the East Florida Association over the same period of time. Those two associations were chosen because they represent the two largest regions in the State of Florida—Miami and Tampa/St. Petersburg. The author argues that those losses can be attributed to a lack of theologically trained pastors and Christian workers. The South Florida Association has three pastors out of nineteen with theological training and the East Florida Association has four out of eighteen. Since 2012 two churches in the East Florida Association have called two pastors with theological training. One studied at Morehouse College and now the ITC. The other has a degree from American Baptist College in Nashville, Tennessee. The South Florida Association called a pastor who has a Doctor of Ministry degree from the ITC in 2013. Education is important for the growth and survival of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Dr. Riggins Earl, Jr. stated “a community can survive without formal theological education but that same community will not operate at its full potential.”24 An effective community has the ability to replicate its cadre/leadership in order to assure its survival as a definite entity within the larger complex of peoples. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church desperately needs to address these obstacles in order to insure its survival as a member of the family of faith.

The author argues that the peoples who look to the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church for their ground of belief will survive only by establishing contextual theological

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education for its leaders. According to Popkewitz context (culture, religious traditions, and experiences)\textsuperscript{25} is primary.

...the study of power in schools has been to identify the origin of power; that is, the actors who control and in whose benefit the existing arrangements work. These actors are often identified in critical traditions as belonging categorically to class, bureaucracy, race, and/or gender. The inherent principal is that if one can change the actors who rule, a more equitable and just society will be produced.\textsuperscript{26} The power arrangements existing in this age requires that the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church produces her own leaders who will be equipped to prepare the cadre/leadership for subsequent generations. It is important that a cadre be prepared for subsequent generations because the author has an experience that makes the need clearer.

The author's experience with inadequate resources for ministry gives rise to the project. He was reared in a Christian home with parents who held to the Baptist tradition. His father served as both a deacon and treasurer of the local church. The paternal grandfather was an ordained Baptist minister and pastor in the state of Mississippi. The maternal grandfather was a deacon and treasurer of a local Missionary Baptist congregation in the same State. Because of this the author's father constantly talked about the need for preparation in order to do ministry. He was reminded of the now defunct Natchez College, which prepared Baptist preachers for the work of ministry.

Ministry to the author became synonymous with prepared service. Anyone accepting the call to ministry is expected to seek preparation for the task according to the traditions of the author's community. This presented an obstacle for the author because when the call to ministry was accepted there were no accredited programs that would meet the needs for his tradition. One institution (Pensacola Christian College) would accept the

\textsuperscript{25}James D. Whitehead, 6.

\textsuperscript{26}James S Popkewitz and Lynn Fendler, eds. \textit{Critical Theories in Education} (New York: Routledge, 1999), 5.
author as a student if and only if the author denied the faith and adopted the faith traditions of their institution. To enter that institution would have been antithetical for the author. According to Paulo Freire

...critical pedagogy is concerned with the development of conscienticização, usually translated as “critical consciousness.” Freedom, for Freire, begins with the recognition of a system of oppressive relations, and one’s own place in that system. The task of critical pedagogy is to bring members of an oppressed group to a critical consciousness of their situation as a beginning point of the liberating praxis...the greatest single barrier against the prospect of liberation is an ingrained, fatalistic belief in the inevitability and necessity of an unjust status quo.27

That truth led the author to envision an institution that would be able to prepare men and women for ministry within their context.28 This is important for institutions where the author serves. Since its inception the National Primitive Baptist Convention planned for an institution that would be responsible for the education of its cadre/leadership.29 The vision has not been lost because this project, along with other efforts, continues to make it a reality. When the community actualizes it’s potential to provide its own pedagogy then implementation will proceed without interference from within. The author is aware that power arrangements will come into conflict with these efforts since they represent the freeing of the minds of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church who have endured the effect of institutionalized slavery and have come forth victorious as free moral agents.

Within the National Primitive Baptist Church one Association developed its own Institution for training in 1986. The year, 1987, saw the first class entering the Huntsville


29Thomas W. Samuels, God Has Kept Us (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Convention, 2008), 35.
Bible Institute. Since that time the Institute has grown to over one hundred students and its name was changed to Huntsville Bible College. The college is ecumenical serving Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Christian Methodists, and Seventh Day Adventists. Its students, president, and board of directors are from the membership of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches, Missionary Baptists, and other minority churches that represent people of color. The college became accredited in 2007 by the Association of Biblical Higher Education and offers bachelor degrees and a Bachelor of Theology degree for students whom hold bachelor degrees in areas other than theology. The goal of the college is to provide theological training for persons in ministry in the Huntsville, Alabama area. This project is designed to provide contextual accredited theological education throughout the state of Florida within a fifty-mile geographical area from the student. Huntsville’s project does offer some insight into the difficulty of introducing the idea of accredited theological education to a community that formerly did not actualize the idea.

National Primitive Baptist Elders developed a project to provide accredited theological education in 1978 under the leadership of the President, Elder Forest Livingston. Elder John Dees, Dr. V. Castle Stewart, Elder Forest Livingston, and Dr. Carl Malbury developed the program called “School without Walls.” The project was presented to the joint faculties of Garret Theological Seminary and Northwestern University in May of 1979. The project was never actualized by the convention due to several difficulties. One was that the Convention did not approve the project because the Elders did not see the project as a priority at that time, and the failure to see the future

role of technology as it has developed.\textsuperscript{31} Another reason is that there is yet some residual from those who despise formal theological education. During slavery the education of the Negro was considered a taboo. This same attitude can be seen in men of color who fail to educate their sons due to the inherent fear of retribution from past decades. Even though fear existed among the members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches, several other attempts were made to implement accredited theological education in other regions of the Primitive Baptist Church. Birmingham, Alabama and Cleveland, Ohio had institutes that never attained full accreditation. The failure to reach full accreditation has affected the ministry in the National Primitive Baptist Convention, but the effects are more noticeable in the State Convention of Florida because it is the largest of the state conventions comprising the National Primitive Baptist Convention.

Since the State Convention of Florida is the largest Association within the Progressive National Primitive Baptist Convention, the author’s focus is Florida. Also the author is familiar with the polity of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in Florida because of serving there for the last thirty-two years. During that time the author has taught in the State Church School Congress, served as the Church School President, served on Boards of Directors and other offices. The State Convention of Florida receives its mandate from the \textit{Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church}.\textsuperscript{32} It states:

\begin{quote}
There shall be a State Convention in each State wherever the Primitive Baptists are located. The purpose of the State Convention shall be to bring fraternal relationship among churches of the said state, to foster the cause of Christian Education,...Every State should have an institution of learning therein, owned and
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church}. Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 2002.
operated by the Primitive Baptists of the said State. The State Convention shall
levy a tax or taxes for the purpose of operating a school, where the English
language will be taught, complying to the standard of the Education Board of the
said State in which the school is located...The said school shall teach both
academic and theological studies; theological for ministers...It can not be
understood how a Minister who says that he has been chose(n), called and sent to
preach the Gospel to a crooked and perverse generation, fight education...Christ's
Apostles had three years of training under the greatest teacher the wor(l)d has
ever known. St. Paul, the greatest preacher and an earnest predestinarian, could
not have defended the cause against the Stoics and Epicureans Philosophers, and
proved beyond a reasonable doubt, that the grace of God was sufficient to save
man's soul without theological training.33

A successful project in Florida will be the model for contextual accredited theological
education throughout the Convention's domain. The project will actualize the vision of
the convention elders in their 1907 document.34

The Initial Attending Process

The project began as the desire of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School
Congress to give its pastors and Christian workers an accredited course of study. The
author began the process of gathering a consensus from the body to set forth a study to
ascertain the desires of the Congress. After three years research an institution was found
that met the needs of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Congress. The
State Convention voted to adopt the Bachelor of Theology Program in cooperation with
Selma University.35

Throughout the process the body was asked to share its desires for accredited
theological education through the use of questionnaires and written responses.

33 Discourse of the Primitive Baptist Church, 15-16.
34 Thomas W. Samuel. God Has Kept Us (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Convention,
2008), 14.
35 Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention: 107th Annual Session (Tallahassee, FL: Florida State
Primitive Baptist Convention, 2008), 86.
Associated with the annual program of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Congress were lectures that addressed the nexus of secular and theological education. Elder John L. Dees, Jr. was chosen as the lecturer because of his connection with the National Primitive Baptist Convention and its efforts to introduce the “School without Walls” project in 1978. Following the lectures the body entered into dialog with the presenter, Elder Dees. This methodology has allowed the participant to openly share their desires for the church as it ministers to the needs of all persons. Paulo Freire would call what was done here the dialogical method of teaching. The dialogical method differs from the traditional method of teaching used in Western Society, that is, the instructor stands and lectures with very little or no interruptions from the student(s). Freire calls this the banking concept of education.

The dialogical teaching method was introduced in the first class of students in the Pensacola Extension of Selma University. The researcher along with Dr. Michael J. Johnson, Sr. began the initial project with five students from the Primitive Baptist Church. That number has grown to thirteen. In addition to the number working toward the Bachelor’s Degree, there has been an increase in the number of pastors whom are working toward the Master of Divinity Degree. The numbers in the State Convention of Florida can be easily documented because of the author’s availability to the data. There are now six pastors in an accredited Master of Divinity program or higher, and eight who have earned the Master of Divinity and two the Doctor of Ministry from an institution

36John L. Dees, Jr.
that is not accredited. The importance of preparing a cadre/leadership for the work of ministry within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church drives the project.

Following this introduction the project will detail the ministry context, the conceptual framework, the ministry project explained, and the summary and conclusions. The information should give a clear understanding of this dissertation.

**Outline of the Dissertation**

1. Introduction
   a) Definition of Terms
   b) Methodology
   c) Outline of Dissertation

2. Ministry Context
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CHAPTER II

MINISTRY CONTEXT

This chapter will inform the reader of the context of the ministry project. In order to accomplish the task the ministry setting and the ministry issue will be discussed. To understand the intricate structures of learning faced in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, the presupposition of Piaget, the Swiss developmental psychologist, will be examined since it better express the process taking place in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The church was born out of slavery when few of its members were able to act as free moral agents. Even though this freedom was denied there were imbedded structures within their being that assisted them in their understanding of freedom. Barry J. Wadsworth analyses Piaget's idea of intellectual organization and adaptation.

To understand the process of intellectual organization and adaptation...four basic concepts are required...These are the concepts of schema, assimilation, accommodation, and equilibrium.\(^1\)

Schemata are the cognitive structures by which individuals intellectually adapt to and organize the environment.\(^2\)

Assimilation is the cognitive process by which the person integrates new perceptual matter or stimulus events into existing schemata or patterns of behavior.\(^3\)

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\(^2\)Wadsworth, 10.

\(^3\)Wadsworth, 14.
Accommodation is the creation of new schemata or modification of old schemata.\textsuperscript{4}

The "balance" between assimilation and accommodation is referred to by Piaget as equilibrium.\textsuperscript{5}

Piaget's work will be used as a tool to assist the author's community to appreciate the need for theological education within its own context.

First, Piaget's concept of schemata can be understood better with this excerpt from \textit{Dark Symbols, Obscure Signs}.\textsuperscript{6} Dr. Riggins R. Earl, Jr. quotes Harriet Tubman:

I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person now I was free. There was such glory over everything, the sun come like gold through trees, and over the field, and I felt I was in heaven.\textsuperscript{7}

With Tubman the organization of Tubman's new environment gives the picture of what Piaget meant by schemata. For Tubman the cognitive structures consisted of her hands, nature, the sun, and the fields. These things were within her power of perception. Structures were already in place to give a rational understanding of the sun, the moon, and the fields. What was new was this idea of freedom, which she had not experienced until that moment. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church faced the same dilemma when slavery was abolished in the South. Several Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches were already organized prior to emancipation (St. Bartley of Huntsville, Alabama and Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church of Warrington, Florida). These two were the exception rather than the rule. They were organized by Blacks who wanted independent worship.

\textsuperscript{4}Wadsworth, 16.

\textsuperscript{5}Wadsworth, 17-18.


\textsuperscript{7}Riggins R. Earl, Jr, 99. This quote was taken from Sarah Bradford, \textit{Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman} (Auburn: W. J. Moses, Printer, 1869), 27-29.
Release from the ravages of slavery forced upon Progressive Primitive Baptist Church the necessity of developing an understanding of their new privileges as well as responsibilities. Those responsibilities included the implementation of an education program that would include theological subjects. To accomplish the goal new stimuli had to be incorporated into existing schemata. Existing schema were the idea of family, the innate desire for freedom, and knowledge of nature. Two of those schemata were the concept of nature and freedom. The later was observed in the persons who held the slaves in bondage. That process includes what Piaget calls *assimilation*, the next step in the learning process.

For Tubman assimilation involved her resolution to make sense of the new experience of freedom. There was no joy from her freedom without the participation in that freedom by her family that was yet in slavery.

But to do dis solemn resolution I came, I was free, and dey should be free also; I would make a home for dem in de North, and de Lord helping me, I would bring them all dere. Oh, how I prayed den, lying alone on de cold ground, “Oh dear Lord,” I said, I haint got no friend but you. Come to my, help, Lord, for I’m in trouble.\(^8\)

Therefore Tubman resolved to brave the dangers of capture and loss of freedom in order to free her family from the ills of slavery. This process of assimilation involved Tubman incorporating the idea of family into the new schemata of freedom. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church was organized in Huntsville, Alabama in 1907 at the St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church. This church predated the emancipation of 1863. The members of the St. Bartley Church (1820) and members of Smyrna Primitive Baptist Church (1849) brought to this new entity the structures of religious freedom that both churches

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had enjoyed. Members (African Americans) of those churches understood that freedom brings with it not only privilege but responsibility for ones future. This responsibility for its success is found within the founding document of the National Primitive Baptist Convention. It states that every State Convention shall establish schools to teach that will teach the English language and meet the standards of the Boards of Education in the states where the schools exist. The school should teach both secular and theological subjects.9 Throughout its existence the National Primitive Baptist Church has made efforts, with little success, to meet the mandates of the founders. In August 2013 the President, Elder Bernard C. Yates, D. D., of the National Primitive Baptist Convention appointed a committee to examine the feasibility of establishing a school and (or) seminary for the National Primitive Baptist Convention to train its ministers and Christian workers. The process is on-going and hopefully lead to the step of accommodation.

Accommodation in Piaget's epistemological theory of developmental learning is the process of creating new schemata or modification of old schemata. For Harriet Tubman whom had once been a slave the new structure created was that of a conductor along the Underground Railroad. Tubman now developed structures that allowed her to successfully plan and coordinate the escape of countless numbers of former slaves. The process of accommodation allowed Tubman to find meaning in her new environment and self. It is this same process that is at work in the ministry project. The National Primitive Baptist Church is yet seeking to reach the place where she has accommodated the new schemata or made modifications to old schemata.

9Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 2002), 15-16.
The author notes that in the formation of the National Primitive Baptist Convention there was one college president among the leadership. Therefore, the author contends that because of the college president’s presence in the new body some modification of old schemata were present. Old schemata brought to the accommodation process by the medical doctor and doctors of philosophy were helpful in the learning process for the community of freed persons. The difficulty has been in making those old schemata adaptive to the ever-changing needs of the National Convention. When that is achieved the last step of what Piaget’s calls equilibrium could be achieved.

*Equilibrium* for Piaget is the balance between *assimilation* and *accommodation*. Tubman achieved this by making the freeing of former slaves her life’s work. By doing this each journey down South presupposed that she developed new schemata to deal with the ever-changing terrain and conditions created by the abolitionists and conductors of the Underground Railroad. Somehow Tubman created that equilibrium and her story has become legend. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church has been struggling to create an institution to take care of the needs to effectively train its members to adapt to the new freedoms of a New Age world. Presently this project and the Huntsville Baptist College represent current efforts to reach equilibrium. A successful project will see the continued operation of an institution to train Progressive Primitive Baptist parishioners to meet the challenges of this New Age. One challenge that affects a successful project is self-governance of associations separate from influence by the National Primitive Baptist Convention.

The Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention has struggled throughout its existence with the challenges that are created by the self-governance of local associations. It has
been a struggle to come to a consensus across associational boundaries for a program of education. Within the State of Florida the seven Associations are quite strong but normally support the efforts of the State Convention. Difficulties arise when programs presented are not beneficial to local Associations. For instance, the State Camp Site in central Florida does not meet the needs of the local Associations. Therefore, the support is not embraced in the same manner as the State Nursing and Convalescent Home in Tallahassee, Florida. Lack of support for the nursing home versus the camp site could be argued to be the number of Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches (62+) in the Tallahassee area versus the number (25+) in the central Florida area near the State Camp. With this knowledge Tallahassee was chosen as the initial site for the project. West Palm Beach, Florida was previously chosen for the project but the number of students could not be reached for a successful launch. Tallahassee, Florida brought an advantage for the initial launch. First the proximity to the author’s home (200 hundred miles), and secondly the number of Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches in the region give Tallahassee, Florida a distinct advantage over the other five districts. Pensacola, Florida’s district was not included because it was utilized for a test site before implementation to the other areas.

The chosen site is Tallahassee, Florida. This geographical area comprises two Progressive Primitive Baptist Districts. The first is the Middle Florida/Georgia Primitive Baptist Association, which is led by Elder Robert Gaines, D. D., whom is a graduate of Smith Bible College in Tallahassee, Florida. The second is the Old West Florida Primitive Baptist Association, which is led by Elder Harry Cloud. The two districts have
a combined total of sixty-two churches\textsuperscript{10} in the Tallahassee, Florida area. To give a clearer view of the setting, the culture, traditions, and experiences of the peoples whom comprise the church will be examined. Culture is defined by H. Richard Niebuhr as follows.

1) "the artificial, secondary environment" which man superimposes on the natural
2) human achievement
3) world of values (what is the good?)
   a) the temporal and material realization of values
   b) the conservation of values
4) Pluralism\textsuperscript{11}

The author opts to use Niebuhr's definition number three in defining culture in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.

The Tallahassee, Florida area has a culture that has been influenced by American Indians who were the first inhabitants of the region. During the 16\textsuperscript{th} century C.E. the Spanish explored and had capitals in both Pensacola and Saint Augustine.\textsuperscript{12} Tallahassee became the capital of Florida in 1845 and established itself as a slave trading center.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore the churches comprise persons who are a mixture of both African-American and Native American cultures.

Six chiefs (American Indian) who resided near the Apalachicola River and were reluctant to move down into the peninsula received small reservations of two to eight square miles and remained where they had settled.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{10}Official Proceedings 108\textsuperscript{th} Annual Session Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, Inc. (Daytona Beach, FL: Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, 2009), 115-123.


\textsuperscript{12}Carlton W. Tebeau and William Marina (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1999), 89.

\textsuperscript{13}Carlton W. Tebeau, 173.

\textsuperscript{14}Carlton W. Tebeau, 140.
The worship experience shows a difference between the members of the two Associations. Even though there is a difference in worship style, both Association hold to the doctrine of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, which is an advantage to implementing the project.

**The Assertion Process Begins**

The *Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church*\(^\text{15}\) contains what the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church believes and how she believes. Its basic doctrinal statement was patterned after the London Confession of 1689. It set forth the tenets of all Particular Baptists.\(^\text{16}\) The Articles of Faith (how she believes) of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church were given to the convention by Reverend J. W. Roberts whom represented the Particular Baptists Nassau, New Providence [Bahamas] at the initial session of the National Primitive Baptist Convention in 1907.\(^\text{17}\) The State Primitive Baptist Convention of Florida, which was organized in 1901, was a founding member of the National Primitive Baptist Convention and adopted the Articles of Faith as well as the goals of the Convention.\(^\text{18}\) One of those goals is the provision of schools to teach theology.

The traditions of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention involve a unique synergy of Presbyterian and Congregational polity. Within this context the churches maintain their sovereignty but their pastors are bound under the discipline of the presbytery, which exercises it authority within the district church. All other bodies above

\(^\text{15}\) *Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church* (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 2002), 1-5. A copy of the covenant and Articles of Faith will be included in the appendix.


\(^\text{17}\) Thomas W. Samuels, *God Has kept Us* (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Convention, 2008), 36.

\(^\text{18}\) *Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church*, 15-16.
the district church have no authority over individual or district churches because both are sovereign bodies. This tradition makes legislation of any unified program of education difficult. The structure of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention accommodates associational autonomy but it has impeded any national efforts to establish schools, which teach theology. In order to get consensus in establishing the project in the State of Florida every Moderator [district executive] was requested to accept the effort. Even though the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention adopted the ministry project in 2008, every Moderator is needed in order to initiate the project state wide. Of seven associations within the state of Florida, only one moderator has shown resistance to the project. The associations that make up the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention traditionally support the programs adopted by the State Convention.

Since the State Convention meets once a year in its annual session and two other times during the Summer/Winter Board meetings, presenting an argument for the implementation of the mandate for theological education is difficult but not impossible. Strong Associations have been able to do some progressive things. Both the East Florida and Old West Florida Associations have built their own buildings to house their annual meetings. There are no Associations with schools, but individual churches within two associations have Christian schools. During the attending process members from each association took part in order to get a consensus. The difficulty in implementation came when one Association’s leader was not fully convinced of the necessity for such a school.

Consensus can be gotten through an effective assembly of all churches during the annual meetings (District, State, and National) of each body. Even though local associations are not bound by actions of the national or state body, every deacon and
elders pledges their full support to the programs of those bodies before ordination. One hundred and seven years the National Church has been meeting. The State Church has one hundred and thirteen years of fellowship, and the District Church has one hundred and thirty-seven years. The author’s ministry setting in the State of Florida involves seven districts. Six are over a hundred years old and one is over twenty years old. Each church holds to its Particular Baptist tenets that originated in the Protestant Reformation but many members trace them back to the first century Jerusalem Church. They support these traditions with a belief in the infallibility of the WORD of GOD.

The proposed project for ministry is designed to accommodate the needs of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention. The convention comprises one hundred and fifty plus churches that are located primarily in the State of Florida. A few churches of the convention are located in the states of Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. The churches are both urban and rural. The majority are in urban areas. Two urban areas have Christian Schools, with accreditation, that teach theological subjects. Those schools are in Miami (Florida Memorial) and Jacksonville (Edward Waters). Only Florida Memorial could provide a contextual theological education since their faith is Baptist. This creates a problem in providing a contextual theological education within the geographical boundaries of all the churches and its members.

The members of the churches can all trace their heritage back to the churches of Alabama, North Florida, or Georgia. A few of those who do not have connections back to the churches noted above have been planted through the efforts of existing churches or

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20 See the appendix for the Articles of Faith for the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.
were divisions of those original churches. Each of the churches of the convention is also a member of one of the seven districts that form the state convention. There are a few churches of the state of Florida that are considered to be hard-shell. They only affiliate with associations that are like-wise hard-shell through correspondent delegates. Many of these associations are found in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, and in some cases a few northern cities. Those churches are not considered as the primary subject of the dissertation because their worship programs do not include Sunday Schools. This lack of emphasis on training makes the hard-shell churches not objects of the project even though the polity of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches is similar to the hard-shell churches. All Primitive Baptist Churches have similar polities.

The primary governmental body of Progressive Primitive Baptist churches is the District Association. The Association is governed by an elected Moderator and an Executive Board, which is comprised of ordained Elders. Those Elders, along with the Moderator, are empowered to act upon discipline within the body. They are empowered to announce an Elder or Church out of the fellowship, and to examine the qualifications of a candidate to be ordained an Elder or a church to become a member of the Association. This power gives the Moderator and Executive Board the authority to introduce business and to carry out the wishes of the Association. This proved to be an aid in establishing the pilot program in the Pensacola District. That unit had ten students from the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches to complete the five-year program. The doctrine of the students did not prevent them from study with students of other faiths whose doctrine was somewhat similar.
The Progressive Primitive Baptist and Hard-Shell Primitive Baptist Associations all hold to a form of Calvinist doctrine. They hold the doctrine of pre-destination and embrace church autonomy (this differs with Calvin). The polity of the bodies is congregational, and she gives some power to the authorities of the Association in settling matters referred to them by the churches, otherwise the matter is handled exclusively by the local churches. Some Associations have introduced the idea of Christian education to the State Convention, which gives support to both of those institutions.

Among the churches a strong fellowship exists. Within each district association the intermarriage of persons from sister churches testify to the strong bonds that have existed across the more than fourteen decades of many Associations' existence. The writer's Association (Mount Zion West Florida/Alabama/Louisiana Primitive Baptist District) has existed for one hundred and thirty-eight years and its two neighboring Associations have been meeting for over one hundred and forty-five years. Since 2006 the leadership (Dr. Bernard C. Yates) began to promote theological education for the ministers and elders of the Mt. Zion Association.

The writer's Association has been a part of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention for the entire one hundred and thirteen years of the Convention's existence. The convention has increased in numbers and churches over those years. In recent years the convention saw the creation of two new associations, the North Central District and the East Coast District, which are located on the east coast of the State of Florida. North Central Association's leader (Dr. Edward Buckner) began a Christian school at the Friendship Primitive Baptist Church in Cocoa Beach, Florida.

\[21\textit{Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church, Fifth Edition} \textit{(Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 2003)}.\]
The state convention has seen many changes over the years. One such change was the organizing of the Griffin School in Tallahassee, Florida with the assistance of the West Alabama Primitive Baptist Association, which had a school operating in Thomaston, Alabama. After integration the Griffin school was deeded over to Leon County, Florida to provide public education for the children of Leon County. Ceding control of the Griffin School to Leon County abolished the possibility of the school to provide theological education as a part of its curricula. Efforts have been made to correct this error by establishing schools to educate its parishioners. The convention still maintains a youth camp in Worthington Springs, Florida to provide recreational activities for the youth and educational opportunities for pastors of the convention. Another change over the years can be found in Tallahassee, Florida the official home of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention.

The Tallahassee, Florida area is the home of a hundred and twenty bed nursing facility (since 1975) and a forty-five apartment independent living facility (since 2005) operated by a board of directors from the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention. Since 2004 the convention has implemented an educational foundation in order to assist students in the pursuit of higher education. The foundation also has a provision to assist ministers who pursue graduate and post-graduate studies. This was made possible by the former President (Dr. Edward Buckner) who looked for tools to assist students in their pursuit of higher education. It was under Dr. Buckner’s leadership that the author was able to have the Doctoral Project adopted (April 2008) by the Convention.

Even though the Convention is progressive in its approach to meeting the needs of its members, integration of public schools marks a time when the convention left the
education of its members to the State. It was in the late 1950's and early 1960 that this 
re-evaluation of the church's role in providing the requisite training to its members 
occurred. Since that time the leadership of the churches has reflected a paradigm shift. 
The injury to public education for the members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist 
Convention can be heard through the Presidential addresses of the late Elder Moses 
General Miles.

The menaces we must face and eradicate from society are the drug problem, 
teensage pregnancy, sex misfits, dishonesty in government, and inadequate 
teaching in education. 

Elder Miles' annual addresses continuously spoke to the condition of inadequate 
education of pupils, especially those students of color, by the schools of the counties that 
comprise the State of Florida. Elder Miles' concerns were a mirror of the concerns of 
those persons who were in the leadership of the National Primitive Baptist Convention. 
They too faced the dilemmas of educating a people who were only three to four decades 
removed from chattel slavery. That leadership of the National Primitive Baptist 
Convention reflected the possibilities for a people who needed strong role models in 
order to overcome the effects of their past enslavement and oppression.

The early leadership of the National Primitive Baptist Convention [organized in 
1907] reflected the emphasis upon an educated clergy. The leadership was comprised of 
a medical doctor, two Doctors of Philosophy, a college president, and several Elders who 
possessed Doctor of Divinity degrees. It is the argument of the writer that those who 
relegated the education of its members to the state failed to discern the ramifications of 
not having the onus to produce a ministry that could not only preach but could develop

22Moses G. Miles, *Official Proceedings of the Ninetieth Annual Session Florida State Primitive Baptist 
curricula for the wholesome development of its members. That failure leads to the ministry issue of the project.

**Ministry Issue**

The question that is the ministry issue is “how can accredited theological be provided to members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church within the student’s geographical area and context?” This question has profound ramifications since the *Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church*\(^2^3\) requires that each State Convention shall have an institution of higher education to teach academic and theological subjects; theological for ministers.\(^2^4\)

The Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention has challenged its member churches through the State Church School Congress to provide for accredited theological education for its ministers and ministry workers. Because the lack of an educated clergy has been reflected in the secular education of its members whom struggle to overcome the effects of covert racism. That racism is made evident in the failure of many county school boards to adequately note the contributions of African-American or African in general to the success of America and more importantly the world. This is noted by the need to have what is known as “Black History month.” If African-American and African contributions were celebrated as European contributions, there would be no need for a dedicated month for such a focus. It is the author’s contention that the church should provide its leadership with contextual theological education so that other subjects will

\(^{2^3}\) *Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church, Fifth Edition* (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 2003).

\(^{2^4}\) *Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church*, 115.
have a ground. To achieve the desired grounding the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Convention took on the challenge under the leadership of the author.

The State Church School Responds

The State Church School Convention sought to provide training for the leadership of the Convention and churches. Some Associations affiliated with the Florida State Convention have found alternative means to acquire theological education, but they have not found an institution that has some form of accreditation. The Mount Zion District, which comprises Northwest Florida, parts of Alabama, and one church in Louisiana, partnered with Selma University to meet the desired aim of access to an accredited institution offering theological degrees. The need was satisfied [August 2007-present] with Selma University allowing the Primitive Baptist students to be taught their own church history and polity within the university. This model follows the pattern being used on the graduate level by the Interdenominational Center in Atlanta, Georgia.\(^\text{25}\)

Within the National Primitive Baptist Convention one Association developed its own Institution for training in 1986. The year, 1987, saw the first class entering the Huntsville Bible Institute. Since that time the Institute has grown to over one hundred students and its name was changed to Huntsville Bible College. The college is ecumenical serving Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Christian Methodists, and Seventh Day Adventists. The college became accredited in 2007 and offers bachelor degrees and a Bachelor of Theology degree for students whom hold bachelor degrees in areas other than theology. The goal of the college differs from that of this project, but it does offer

\(^{25}\text{Interdenominational Theological Center vol. XXII (Atlanta, GA: Interdenominational Theological Center, 1982), 18-19.}\)
some insight into the difficulty of introducing the idea of accredited theological education to a community that formerly did not embrace the idea.

National Primitive Baptist Elders developed a project to provide accredited theological education in 1978 under the leadership of the President, Elder Forest Livingston. Elder John Dees, Dr. V. Castle Stewart, Elder Forest Livingston, and Dr. Carl Malbury developed the program called “School without Walls.” The project was presented to the joint faculties of Garret Theological Seminary and Northwestern University in May of 1979\textsuperscript{26}. The project was never actualized by the convention due to several difficulties, which will be covered in the completed dissertation. Several other attempts were made to implement accredited theological education in other regions of the Primitive Baptist Church. Birmingham, Alabama and Cleveland, Ohio had institutes that never attained full accreditation. The failure to reach full accreditation has affected the ministry in the National Primitive Baptist Church, but the effects are more noticeable in the State Convention of Florida because it is the largest of the state conventions comprising the National Primitive Baptist Convention.

The lack of accredited theological training is one of the causes for churches of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention having a deficiency of qualified clergy and Christian workers to meet the needs of its parishioners. Those needs can only be named by persons with the requisite training. Persons educated in secular fields are ill-equipped to answer spiritual needs. Presently, within the Mt. Zion District Association there are only four Elders with Theological Education above the Bachelor’s level. Since the institution of the pilot project in the Pensacola District four pastors have entered training

\textsuperscript{26}John Dees, \textit{School without Walls: Project of the National Primitive Baptist Convention} (Huntsville, AL: National Primitive Baptist Convention, 1978).
for the Bachelor of Theology program at Selma University and two others are currently enrolled in Graduate studies. The churches of the Mt. Zion District have begun to ask for pastors whom have been theologically trained. There has also been a desire from ministers whom do not hold High School diplomas or GED’s to seek out direction from Selma’s faculty in order to become qualified to study at the institution. Also seven ministers and Christian workers have availed themselves of theological education through Selma University’s program operated by the author.

The author’s own experiences provide a primary view into the difficulties encountered when a lack of proper preparation for ministry exists as biblically mandated (2 Timothy 2:15 KJV). This project challenges the churches to look at the requisite skills needed by an individual that seeks to minister to persons. The problems of ministry encountered by the author did not go away, but the tools to address them were acquired through accredited theological training at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. In order to be an effective pastor in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, the author had to follow the directions of the church’s Discipline.

The Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church requires that each State Convention provides a school for theological training. The mandate was given in 1907, but the continuous existence of accredited institutions has not been realized. Being a member of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention since 1982, the author has knowledge of the need for accredited theological education. For the young minister the call to ministry should always be reflected upon as a call to preparation. The call to preparation was never seen by the author to be any less vital as the call to labor in any other field. The

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27Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church, Fifth Edition, 115.
author's observation of other professionals dealing with the human being was that their preparation for license in their areas required a minimum of three years of graduate studies. After the studies, each candidate is examined for proficiency in his or her field. It is the author's belief that ministry should have as high or higher requirement for practicing the craft, which one is called.

As a young pastor the author met resistance from members of congregations who professed the desire for an educated leader, but were too small in numbers to be able to keep that leader once the leader received the proper training. There exists a supply and demand problem within the faith. The churches needing leadership outnumber the pool of men and women who have adequate training for Christian ministry. Therefore, seeing the need the author and the members of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention Church School Congress began a dialogue of ways to solve the problem of the dearth of adequately trained persons for pastoral ministry and/or church leadership.

There has been a substitute of persons into the field of pastoral and church leadership by those whom possess degrees from secular fields. Those persons are resisting the theological training of pastoral and church leadership because it threatens the positions they occupy. Frederick Douglas was correct when he said:

“This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”

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It has been a struggle to bring to fruition Accredited Contextual Theological Education. That struggle has been found in the structure of the church as well as in its leadership that sometimes resists the education of the laity and ministry. The author sees that as a residual of slavery when a few African-American congregations were led by European-American clergy. An example of that structure is the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Dixons Mills, Alabama, which served with the Shiloh Baptist Church in the same community until emancipation. When the congregations separated there were no trained clergy therefore, a member of the European-American Church provided the ministry for the pulpit. Those members of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church overcame the effects of slavery and created their own institution (Thomaston Institute—Thomaston, Alabama) for training the ex-slave.

The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is not the only institution of color that faced the dilemma of educating the ex-slave. The African Methodist Episcopal Church always looked for pastors who were formally educated with at least a Bachelor's degree. They found in the last twenty years that the practice was not conducive to a healthy church. Therefore, she began to require that all ordained pastors would acquire at least a Master of Divinity degree. Secular skills were not adequate to guide the spiritual affairs of the church. Over the last twenty years the Progressive Primitive Baptist church has come to the same resolve—that is, secular education is not enough to guide the spiritual affairs of the church. This resolve by the church does not come without struggle against the old models of church. Some of the reservation for accepting a new paradigm is the fears that arise from change. Those fears revolve around the idea of how effective theological training enhances the life of the church. Most training that was previously

29Elder John Dees, Jr, Oral History of the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church (Dixons Mills, AL, 2014).
acquired by the pastors of the churches was not contextual. It was taught from the perspective of the dominant society and did not respect the genius of those from marginalized communities of faith. The project provides contextual theological education that celebrates the genius of its parishioners.

A successful project will assist the 21st Century Christian communities to evaluate the deviance that has taken place within it over the past century. Much of that deviance is the result of the institution of slavery. A failure to examine the effects of slavery will surely limit the desired results of the project. The project will provide an impetus for dialog concerning the state of the church on the level of parish ministry. The project will reflect the popular theological language of the parishioners.

Previous Efforts to Address the Ministry Issue:

Recognizing the popular language of the parishioner is where the breakdown has occurred when addressing the problem of providing accredited theological education for church leadership. The efforts to provide accredited theological education in the denomination can be traced back to the period after emancipation of the Negro people in North America. Dr. Carter G. Woodson recognized the difficulty involved in preparing men and women to minister to those within the community where they serve. For Woodson the community comprised the newly freed men and women of color. The first attempt to provide adequate training for the leadership of the Negro church created a stigma that has lasted to the present day.

The stigma involved a disconnection of the ministry with the community following training that was not contextual. Woodson explained the problem as the disconnection
between the trained minister and the untrained pew. The ministry was educated but not to effectively serve his/her community. Modern scholarship can address the problem faced by the church in Woodson’s day by addressing the breakdown in the intellectual formation that is a part of the learning process. When the training is not contextual it creates a ministry that is not in tune with its community. Within the community served by the author, the training received by persons in ministry has been rejected by those who have not received it from institutions honored by the community. For the last five decades the Black Baptist [both Missionary and Progressive Primitive] the leading pastors of the community were graduates of Selma University and American Baptist College in Nashville, Tennessee. One pastor had done work at Bishop College and one was a graduate of Morehouse College. These pastors lead the largest churches within the community. Three institutions of note that the author’s community revere are Bishop College (now closed), Selma University, and American Baptist College. Those Colleges have produced men and women who have been received by the community that this project addresses. It is not ironic that the last presidents of major religious bodies of the Baptist Faith [excluding mainstream European-American Institutions] were graduates of Bishop College. They are Doctors Thurston, Jemison, and Shaw. The President of the National Primitive Baptist Convention is also a Bishop College graduate. Their success can be traced to the contextual relevance of their education.

Besides Piaget’s work on the theory of learning, other authors who have addressed the problems existing in theological education are Charles R. Foster, G. Melton

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Mobley\textsuperscript{32}, Keith R. Birdson\textsuperscript{33}, and Oswald P. Bronson.\textsuperscript{34} These are a few authors whom have challenged the difficulty of training men and women to serve in ministry. It is the belief of the author that the efforts of this project will continue the work in the proper preparation of men and women to serve in this present age. The work is an on-going one that can be traced back to the days prior to Christ or the calling of Israel. Every age and people has struggled with the means to transfer knowledge that would lead to effective praxis within its community. Akhenaton in Egypt, Confucius in China, and Hammurabi in Mesopotamia all struggled with actions to bring about the common good.

Besides the ancient accounts the author argues that the development of leadership in the Church can be traced back to the prophetic schools of Elisha's day ca. 893 B. C. E. The schools of the prophets were certainly theological in their focus and were led by men of God (2 Kings 6:1-7 KJV). Luke-Acts gives the report of the pedagogy of Philip who instructs the Ethiopian eunuch on the road to Gaza (Acts 8:26-39 KJV). Instruction to those in ministry is biblical. Paul shares with Timothy the necessity to study in order to effectively guide men and women in the truths of the gospel (2 Timothy 2:14-15 KJV).

We will address some of the efforts of the Christian church to provide adequate training for those who serve its ministries and the biblical foundations of each group. Those biblical warrants will be supported by the various theories used to under-gird them.


\textsuperscript{34}Oswald Perry Bronson, \textit{The Origin and Significance of the Interdenominational Theological Center} (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1965).
Theories for ministry training were found from various ages and denominational groups. One particularly interesting to the author is one posited by John H. Leith who argues for a re-examination of the curricula of the seminaries.

The seminaries are deeply involved in the crisis of the church. The crisis is sufficient indication that the seminaries are not graduating ministers who are effective leaders in the life of the church. Why should it be otherwise, when seminary faculties no longer include persons who have been effective pastors themselves?\(^\text{35}\)

It is the contention of the author that the problems existing within the project's ministry location can be traced back to the same theories posited by John H. Leith. The equilibrium process in learning that Piaget talked about earlier in the chapter must be present in those whom wish to teach others. The Progressive Primitive Baptist church must train men and women from its ranks in order that there will be faculty available to promote the survival of the Primitive Faith. Presently, ministry within the Progressive Primitive Baptist churches is out of context, therefore a sufficient challenge exists to church growth and Integrity.\(^\text{36}\)

Maintaining the message that Christ gave to the church has met with formidable foes in this new age of post-modern thought. This exacerbates the problems faced by the academy as it translates the biblical truths to those in the pew.

The crisis in the church and the crisis in the seminary are closely related. Each has been distracted from its primary task in mission by enticements of a secular and cause-oriented society. The church has too frequently forgotten that it lives by the gospel of what God has done for our salvation, not by what human beings have achieved.\(^\text{37}\)


\(^\text{37}\)Leith, 6.
An especial difficulty exists in the age of post-modern thought. Within the community the project seeks to address the post-modern threat of nihilism.

Nihilism is to be understood here not as a philosophic doctrine that there is no rational grounds for legitimate standards or authority; it is far more, the lived experience of coping with a life of horrifying meaningless, helplessness, and most important lovelessness. The frightening result is a numbing detachment from others and a self-destructive disposition toward the world. Life without meaning, hope, and love breeds a coldhearted, mean-spirited outlook that destroys both the individual and others.38

The author's community grapples with clergy who are ill-equipped to handle the many challenges facing it. At the same time the community fails to make the connection of its lack of health to its failure to prepare leadership for the task. Nihilism is the root cause for the disregard of those who have the divine task to lead within the community. In the author's own parish, to abhor those in leadership is at an epidemic level. Programs introduced in the parish as a means to assist the youths are rejected if they do not arise from those whose agendas are anti-authority. A successful project will address ways to bring meaning, hope, and love back into the community.

To summarize the ministry issue, empirical, theological, biblical, and theoretical literature has been examined to ascertain its relevance for the needs of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Specific attention was paid to Piaget's theory of the process of learning because it more closely represents the conditions in our discussion about the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church during the organizing of it in 1907. It is the author's contention that the step of equilibrium as evidenced in Piaget's theory of learning has not been reached in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. When that theoretical step is accomplished the realization of an institution to teach contextual

theological education will be complete. Empirical data for the project has been gathered from the writings of Charles J. Bernard, John B. Cobb, Jr., Kendig Brubacker Cully, F. W. Garforth, Henry H. Mitchell, Barack Obama, and Donald Vandenberg. Their writings encompass the ideas of intelligence, post-modern thinking, education, human rights, and teaching within the local church. Theological research covers a much broader area of research because of the focus of the project. A few of the authors being utilized will be noted here; the remainder of them will be found in the bibliography. Karl Barth, Clodovis Boff, Leonardo Boff, David J. Bosch, Emil Brunner, James H. Cone, Susan M. De Benedittis, John S. Mbiti, and Cornel West are a few of the authors examined for their theological approaches to the task of pedagogy.

Summary

The ministry context covers the broad field of the culture, experiences, and religious traditions of a people. The members of the Tallahassee, Florida churches have a unique culture that is borne from their heritage. Their experiences vary but have helped to shape their theological perspective. The project is laboring to assist the community in reframing their theological perspective so that they can effectively embrace an institution that answers some of the needs they have shared for an informed clergy. To accomplish the named task, the author has actively dialoged with the members of the area churches, researched and lectured on the desires that were set forth, and has actively established an extension unit of Selma University in Tallahassee, Florida. Pastor Terry Price and the members of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church have allowed Selma to use their facilities for the site. Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church has been the site where the conceptual framework of the project was actualized.

\[39\]Whitehead, 4-5.
CHAPTER III
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter begins with the research done in order to understand the task of pedagogy in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention as opposed to the primary models used since the time of Plato. The National Primitive Baptist Churches’ primary foundation of belief is that knowledge and understanding about God comes through revelation. There are some congregations that have begun to base their principles (how they believe) in Aristotelian reason. They make up the minority. The church embraced revelation as the ground of its faith.\(^1\) It is difficult to interject any program into the church body that is not sanctioned by the Word of God. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention prides herself in being a body that holds to biblical mandates. To do anything counter to the scriptures is frowned upon by its members. Training for ministry is an area for which the church can find scriptural warrants. An example of this is the training of Christ’s disciples. That training took approximately a three years period. The training done by Christ can be argued as not consistent with the schools of the 1\(^{st}\) Century C. E. In that day teachers were responsible for the pupils. Apostle Paul is an example. Paul shared that he studied under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3 KJV). Gamaliel was a noted

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\(^1\)See the appendix for the Covenant of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church and her Articles of Faith.
teacher and a member of Israel’s religious leadership. Therefore Paul’s teaching was sanctioned by Israel’s religious elite. On the other hand Christ’s teaching was without the sanction of the religious authorities. The new paradigm utilized by Christ was successful because Christ was the WORD incarnate. Because the author is not the Christ, the pedagogy of the project must meet the needs of the student according to the Word of God.

The author is introducing contextual theological education to students as close to their cultures, experiences, and religious traditions as possible. Students in the project area have previously been exposed to theological education but it was not contextual. This created the problem that Woodson talked about earlier. There was a disconnection between the pastor and congregation.\(^2\) Therefore, the introduction of theological training has been resisted. The resistance is partly a result of the effects of slavery, which the majority of all Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches experienced. Slavery’s negative effect on their lives can be heard in the testimonies of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church’s members.

Every year, we talk about a workshop for ministers—and that’s all, but this year I pray that the Church School Convention, along with the Association, will by some means have a workshop—for it is needed. It can be done; it must be done!...You can’t legislate ‘love’ in a man’s heart...preaching is the hope for a lost world.\(^3\)

This passage shows how the emphasis on pastoral development is not urgent. The effect on the slave is that he/she does not take responsibility for his/her understanding of the environment one must traverse in order to secure freedom. Freedom is not free. As the

\(^2\) Carter G. Woodson,

\(^3\) Payton Jones, “President’s Address,” in Official Proceeding of the One Hundred and Twentieth-First Annual Session of East Florida District Primitive Baptist Church School Convention (Ft. Pierce, FL: East Florida District Primitive Baptist Association, 1991), 11.
Progressive Primitive Baptist Church has progressed through the last one hundred years, her members have been active in secular fields of study. Those secular fields fail to address the spiritual part of the person. Dr. Carl Marbury is pursuing a curriculum that addresses the needs of the spiritual part of man's being.\(^4\) The spiritual part of man's being can only be addressed properly from a theological perspective and that in the individual's context. A student of Selma University speaks of Jesus in this manner:

I...confess that today Jesus is my Lord and my Savior, I've come to realize I never knew love until I experienced the love that Christ has for me. Jesus the Son of God, God Himself, saves me from myself on a daily basis. Jesus is Lord over me, I try daily to acknowledge Him and sometimes I forget and try and do things on my own, but as soon as the Spirit reminds me I began to consult Jesus and find that He's already worked things out in my life. He's King of King(s) and Lord of Lord(s), He's the one that walks by my side and comfort(s) me,...Jesus is everything to me.\(^5\)

Note that the student mentions the Spirit as the part of the God-head that keeps her focused in commitment to Christ. When theological subjects are taught in the student's context, there will be a strengthening of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches. The loss leaders and members to other denominations will be lessened.

Many of those members who were theologically trained left the National Primitive Baptist movement and now provide leadership in other denominations [Missionary Baptists, Southern Baptists, and Non-denominational movements]. Those who remain have experiences with many styles of learning. As a whole those styles were not accepting to pedagogy in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. It is the author's

\(^4\)Carl Marbury, Ph.D. (Conversations with Dr. Marbury concerning on-going projects that will address the needs of the African American community, 2014).

desire that this project will finally fulfill the needs of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in providing a pulpit that has been properly trained to meet its specific needs.

New ways of thinking about the mission and ministry of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church have arisen since 1907. The author is cautious of the approach utilized to inform this present age of Christ's mandate found in Matthew 28:19 (KJV). How to address the desires of the church in a changing age is not new. Paul Hansen addressed the difficulties.

What is to enable the church to be both progressive enough to address the positive potential of modern scientific discoveries and social movements, and prophetic enough to exercise the type of long-range critique which can warn against the myriad misapplications to which the most exciting of human achievements can be put? The beginning of a satisfactory answer to this question must be worked out in relation to the church's confessional heritage...6

Ways of approaching the difficulties found in pedagogy in the national church can be overcome through a full implementation of the project by the national church. Dr. Carter G. Woodson tells the experiences he had during the turn of the century in the local churches of the South. Observation drove him to conclude that the Negro had been mis-educated.7 For the project the author uses Paulo Freire's dialogical method of teaching, which uses what Freire calls problem-posing education.

In problem-posing education, men develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation.8

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6Paul D. Hanson, “The Identity and Purpose of the Church” Theology Today (October 1985): 343.
With the dialogical method the author is able to share with persons who are the off-springs of North American slavery. The author will now examine other teaching theories.

**Other Theories of Education**

General education developed and practiced by the Greeks ca. 300B.C.E. It included the seven liberal arts: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, dialectics (logic), rhetoric, and grammar. The Greek philosopher Plato saw education as a means to create the ideal society. Plato’s model was *The Republic*. Plato argued for public education (education by the state). Private education was considered to not be able to serve the interests of the masses. The author argues for education not controlled by the state due to the political reality of the 21st century. That reality is a public school system ill-prepared to educate its students.

The educational society is declaring “Back to the Basics.” Our children are ill-prepared; we need to teach more reading, writing, and arithmetic! Another theory of education was found in Augustine’s *City of God*. In it Augustine taught preparation of the student for life in the Heaven. This theory is not sufficient for the project because the church’s work is in this present world. Men and women who suffer because of the greed of un-Godly men and women need a church that can give

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clarity so that they may develop critical consciousness. This is necessary for the success of any project to provide contextual accredited theological education.

In nineteenth century America John Dewey developed a theory education. For Dewey:

Education was perceived largely as the process of formal instruction, primarily in the elements of literary and related vocational skills, and secondarily in the acquisition of a general range of knowledge.\textsuperscript{13}

Dewey’s theories would not serve the needs of the project because it fails to address what Bell Hooks calls ideological differences, which deny any program that would threaten the present power arrangements.\textsuperscript{14} These differences are present at the highest level of academia in America according to Hooks’ accounts in the book *Teaching Community*. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church must design her own curriculum as well as prepare her own instructors in order to avoid the ideological prejudices that exist in the education process. Until the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church takes the lead in the preparation of a cadre to carry out the wishes of the founders of the convention, the church’s existence will be threatened.

In order to avoid the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church’s loss of identity, ministers and leaders must be trained in their own context and possess proper credentials. There exists a resistance to reaching those goals as observed by the author during the attending portion of the project. In this portion the author dialoged with the members of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Convention in order to identify their needs. Through this process the author moved forward in making preparations for the

\textsuperscript{13}John Bowen and Peter R. Hobson, *Theories of Education* (Melbourne: John Wiley & Sons, 1987), 164.

fulfillment of the Convention's wishes. During the attending process it was identified that persons resisted the project because it threatened existing power arrangements. Because of L. Gregory Jones' challenge to the church that its ministry must model the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the resistance was overcome.

Modeling Christ is certainly the answer to the spiritual formation, but according to Dr. Michael I. E. Dash the journey is both an intellectual and faith encounter. Argument for the intellectual formation of church leadership will be informed by the work of Paulo Freire who found a new way of teaching the illiterate by using the words of their world.

When Freire used his own literary materials, the peasants merely heard or saw words they did not relate to. Because the words were not about their world, there was no praxis. When he used their own words, he relied on their being in the world, for these words stood for objects in their world.

The leadership of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church finds itself in the same predicament in its attempts to reach the goal set forth by its founders. That primary goal of providing accredited theological training is the gist of the project.

The researcher took the approach of L. Gregory Jones during the attending stage of the project. After finishing the Master of Divinity program at the Interdenominational Theological Center, the author applied to the Doctor of Ministry program at the same institution. The sacrifices made by the author gave moral authority to the argument for accredited theological education. An example of an education within the proper context

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16Michael I. E. Dash, *Class Lectures*, (Atlanta, GA: Interdenominational Theological Center, 2005), the information was shared during a Midler Assessment class at the ITC.

of student (minister) created a model for the State Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, which embraced and celebrated the concept. Since education’s aim is the transformation of the student\textsuperscript{18}, a change is taking place within the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention about the need for an educated clergy.

Theories of other educators were examined for their usefulness in the project. Princeton Seminary’s use of the systematic theology of Francis Turretin helped to usher in the use of rote learning for students of theology. This method is also used today by Dallas Theological Seminary and Chafer’s Systematic Theology.\textsuperscript{19} The theory used in the project is called “co-intentional dialogics” by Paulo Freire.\textsuperscript{20} This methodology is used in the classroom by the author and an advisor to the project, Dr. Michael J. Johnson, Sr. It is Piaget’s theory of cognitive development that informs the author’s method of presenting the project to perspective students and ministries.\textsuperscript{21} Understanding of Piaget’s method, aided the researcher in understanding how the formulation of thought takes place in the other self. Now the author will give the theological rationale for the formation of the thoughts in himself that gave genesis to the project.

**Theological Foundation**

To support the argument theologically, the researcher will use three scriptures to establish a mandate. The argument is that the Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention can survive through a concerted effort of delivering theological education to its pastors,

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\textsuperscript{18}Dr Edward Smith, *Classroom Lecture* (Atlanta, GA: Interdenominational Theological Center, 2009).


\textsuperscript{20}Vandenberg, 183.

ministers, and Christian workers in a familiar context. The researcher's definition of context includes the culture, traditions, and experiences\textsuperscript{22} of the members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches. The researcher is challenged to reassess the past even though there is certain apprehensiveness about the future\textsuperscript{23}. First, the researcher will share the theology selected for the theological foundation. That theology is found in the songs and sermons of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches. Looking at the words members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches gives a view of her theology.

We must uncover their words about God and make them the foundation of black theology\textsuperscript{24}.

Examination of this theology begins with the songs celebrated in the church. One is those songs is \textit{Traveling Shoes}. The lyrics are:

\begin{quote}
Traveling Shoes, Lord, Traveling Shoes,
Got on My Traveling Shoes,
John declared I’ve Got A Long White Robe
Waiting Up in Heaven for Me.
\end{quote}

What is important in this song is the comfort that the singer has in his/her own skin. It is the long white robe that John talks about in Revelation that all believers will wear and not a change in color or complexion of the person. Therefore, the inference is that God sees every person as he/she is. Another song is \textit{I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord}:

\begin{quote}
I’m Not Ashamed to Own My Lord
Or to Defend His Cause.
No Power on Earth My Hope Can Shake
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{22}James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead. \textit{Method in Ministry}. (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1995), 4-5.


\textsuperscript{24}James H. Cone, \textit{For My People: Black Theology and the Black Church} (Marryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984), 117.
Nor Hell Can Pull Me Down.

This song shares how bold the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is in her resolution to be what God has determined for her. It also shows the vigilance in those of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. There is a pride that comes through in these words.

Something Inside of Me, Telling Me to Go Ahead
Something Inside of Me, Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Feel It All over Me, Telling Me to Go Ahead
Something Inside of Me, Telling Me to Go Ahead
Sometimes I Feel Depressed
Telling Me to Go Ahead
Sometimes I Feel Tired
Telling Me to Go Ahead
Under So Much Stress
Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Feel It Down in My Soul
Telling Me to Go Ahead
Must Be the Holy Ghost
Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Feel Like Running
Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Feel Like Shouting
Telling Me to Go Ahead
Must Be the Holy Ghost
Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Can Feel the Fire Burning, Burning, Burning
Telling Me to Go Ahead
I Can Feel It Deep Inside of Me
Telling Me to Go Ahead
Must Be the Holy Ghost
Something Inside of Me, Telling Me to Go Ahead

This song shares the reality of those members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches and their dependence on the Holy Spirit to assist them in making sense of their reality. Many years removed from slavery, the church yet is faced with the depressing circumstances of making a life in an ideological system that seeks to return them to the conditions of slavery. The resolve to continue a life of freedom is heard in this song.
Only the clergy who make the contextual teaching of theology his/her focus can meet the needs of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Churches.

The theology of Paul Tillick gives the author additional theological grounding for the project. Tillick argues in *The Courage To Be*\(^{25}\) that an individual has to have the courage to be both an individual and a member of a group. What Tillich adds is the academy’s explanation of what members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention have established as expressed through the songs. The author asserts that the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is grounded and progressing to its goal of providing schools, which teach theological education. The truth of the church’s progress has helped the author to embrace the drive in ministry to do something considered taboo. It becomes okay when that is the individual’s purpose. When the group dynamics are not accepting to the individual, progress is possible with the group and person if equilibrium exists. That equilibrium is established when the individual or group has developed agency, i.e. she can take responsibility for her failures and her successes. According to Piaget this step happens when new schemata are accommodated by the learner as a part of his/her being. This can be seen in the Women’s Congress address by the late Mother Lillian J. Brantley whose husband had served as the President of the National Primitive Baptist Convention.

Leadership is the position or guidance of a leader. The ability to lead, direct the course of going before, or along with, to conduct or guide. Some of us are leaders in our homes, churches, schools, communities, districts, state and national work. We are responsible to God for the type of leadership that we are giving; therefore, we should not take it with indifference or neglect.\(^{26}\)

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Notice that Mother Brantley was confident in her role as the leader of the Women’s Congress. It was a role that she served well until her passing. The schemata Mother Brantley brought to the leadership were accommodated by her being until they reached the state of equilibrium.

The project to provide contextual theological education is creating equilibrium within the church. Since the project’s beginning there has been an increase in the number of pastors seeking theological training. Those already trained on the Bachelor’s level have enrolled in Masters of Divinity programs. Both the President and Vice-president of the National Primitive Baptist Convention enrolled in advanced programs. They are graduates of Bishop College. The Vice-president completed the Masters of Divinity program at Virginia Union (2013). The President commissioned the author to chair a committee to look into ways to establish a theological school and/or seminary operated by the National Primitive Baptist Convention. This is important because the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is the more intimate group, the Christian Church, the intimate group, and the peoples of society the other selves that make up the human dynamics that the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church serves. The church’s theology must be sound and relevant. That objective cannot be reached without contextually trained leaders. The theology is driven by the scriptures that will be covered fully in the Biblical section.

The three scriptures that give the theological mandate are 2 Timothy 2:15, Acts 8:31, and Matthew 15:14. There will be an examination of each scripture in order to provide the reader criteria for their use. They all provide a mandate for the exploration of theological education as an aid to the survival of the Black Church. Within each scripture
taken from the *Novum Testamentum Graece*\textsuperscript{27} there is a particular word *odege* which is translated *guide*. In Matthew 15:14 the *guide* is described as blind. In Acts 8:31 the Ethiopian eunuch requests assistance in seeing the text with a request in the future tense of the same verb. It is there written *odegesei* with *ean me* preceding the verb and it is translated *unless someone will guide me*. This is the request of the eunuch for instruction in the scriptures. Finally, in Paul’s second letter to Timothy 2:15, the word is *orthotomounta*. The interpretation is guiding the word along a straight path. The researcher uses the *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*\textsuperscript{28} and *A Reader’s Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*\textsuperscript{29} as the tool for translation. The researcher will cover those translations now.

The scripture mandate for the project has as its source the strong affirmation that one must have a guide in order to enter any unfamiliar terrain and traverse it efficiently. The guide must be grounded in his/her person. Trial and error can be of use in fixing one’s location in an unknown *place*, but the method is not efficient. One needs a guide. Clodovis Boff discusses *Theology and Praxis* under three headings: *topos, kairos, and telos*\textsuperscript{30}. The Greek word for *place* is *topos*. As the researcher enters the *place* of possibility for a successful implementation of accredited theological education within the


Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, the scripture will be the initial guide as the territory is made clearer to those readers who will trust the chief guide, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus is the foundation of the author's system of belief. It is through the revelations given by Christ that the researcher can enter the place with courage. Paul Tillich argues that one must have courage "to be" an individual as well as a member of a group.\textsuperscript{31} Jesus is the researcher's guide from youth until the presence. It is through Christ that the researcher comes to know the things of God and the self. It is important to know the self in light of a greater being. It is the greater being that motivates the author to complete the project and add to the journey of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in reaching its goal of providing theological education for its ministers. The project reflects the researcher's own theological journey.

The journey began as a five years old lad whose environment was the Christian home with parents whom were faithful members in the Missionary Baptist church. The church was serving as extended family for the researcher's parents who relocated from Adams County, Mississippi. Both childhood connections were through the paternal grandfather of the researcher. The grandfather was the pastor of the author's maternal grandparents who were faithful in the church. A dispute arose in the church and the maternal grandfather left regular worship. The faith of both sets of grandparents provided a foundation for trust in the religious tradition that believed in a theologically qualified clergy, which held in high esteem Natchez College—the institution that trained the African-American clergy of Mississippi.

\textsuperscript{31}Paul Tillich. \textit{The Courage To Be}. New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1952.
The tradition of faith extended to both parents who practiced their faith at home and in the community. Each showed a special care for widows who sought their assistance. Those elderly widows were good examples of the pious life of a saint. Each of them represented what many young persons were lacking in the world that was passing from modernity to a form of existentialism that now expresses itself as post-modernity\textsuperscript{32}. The researcher has his ground in the faith tradition of congregational worshippers who originated from the Mississippi Territories—a crossroad for American Indian Nation trading, French landowners, Spaniards, Free Africans, Italians, Jews, and the largest slave population in North America. Adams County is the terminus of the famous Natchez Trace. Paternal grandparents who represented Free African, Italian, and Native American blood have off-springs that pastor churches in the region of Southwestern Mississippi. With such a background the researcher's parents believed in a God who is just and required the minister to be theologically trained.

The justice of God was rehearsed constantly within the home. There was a reminder that God's promise to re-establish Israel's homeland was successful in the year of the researcher's birth, 1948. Therefore, as a five year old the researcher experienced his first revelation. During an illness that was persistent from birth, high fevers caused extensive care from both parents who were frugal and unable to get medical care for the chronic ailment. In the spring of 1953 the fevers became extreme enough for the author's parents to ask the pastor to come and pray for healing. The pastor prayed and immediately the fever left. From that time to the present the severity of the fevers has not returned. At that moment the power of Jesus to hear a representative of the gospel became real in the

researcher's life. Even though the pastor came into disfavor with the congregation over an error in judgment in handling the building project, which the membership anticipated would provide needed room for worship. The pastor eventually left the congregation, but the pastor's spirituality has not been replaced until this day. Because of a lack of proper theological training the pastor was not prepared to handle the growing congregation and its wishes to build a larger edifice for worship. Those men and women who verbally attacked the pastor were never able to bring back the leader's spiritual fervor.

The next leader was chosen from Selma University and had earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from the institution. Because pastoral leadership has always been held in high esteem by the researcher, it is the researcher's belief that Christ has given the church its leadership. In the congregational structure of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, the commands of Christ are taken seriously. It is Christ who has called the researcher into the task of designing a project to meet the need of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church for a relevant theological education in the regions where the student resides. Whether the region is rural and distant from a major metropolis or an urban center, the student will be afforded an education in her/his context. Robert Osmer states "in short, people process new data on the basis of the content they already possess. This also takes place in activities other than reading."³³ There is a need for such an institution.

The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in its initial documents has a mandate for a school to teach theology. Since its inception in 1907 the National Primitive Baptist Convention has run into difficulty in establishing the school. One association [Mallard

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Creek District Association] has developed an institution through a partnership with the Missionary Baptist Churches in the Huntsville, Alabama area. This program has not sought to provide training for those outside of their geographical area. It is the researcher's belief that failure to honor the desires of the elders to establish such an institution especially when those desires come into conflict with the difficulties of doing so by present-day leadership. The difficulties have their origin in the institution of slavery when the African-American was denied the right to own anything—more importantly his/her own person, desires, and means of education. This problem was experienced by those of the New Friendship Primitive Baptist Church in North Alabama:

New Friendship Primitive Baptist Church, long known as “Belvue,” has shone as a beacon of light to all those who have travelled within its path. One hundred and forty-one years is a long time as well as a blessing to be established. In 1862, our ancestors started our first church, a brush harbor, and later a log cabin...The first pastor was a white man—Elder Bell.34

Even though New Friendship was an independent church she needed a member of its former master’s community to serve as the first shepherd. The ideology of Pastor Bell could not be separated from Pastor Bell’s being. There was still the residual mind-set of the African-American as not being fully a free moral agent. It was later that the church sought from its own ranks for a pastor. Also in Dallas County, Alabama the Salem Primitive Baptist Church had a similar beginning:

In 1865, the black people were holding meetings under a brush habbler (harbor?) and the white people were holding meetings in the church. Later, the white people migrated away and some died. There was no one left to open the doors or ring the bell. Mrs. Hatcher told Elder Bell, who was the pastor for the white people that she would rather give the church to the black people because she didn’t want to see it go down...Elder Bell stated to Mrs. Hatcher that he would

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preach to the black people until they get them a pastor... The first pastor was Elder Hatcher who served faithfully.\textsuperscript{35}

The Dallas County church states that its first pastor was Elder Hatcher. Therefore, they did not consider Elder Bell their pastor but, Elder Bell’s influence appears in the history. Since there was a lack of trained ministers in the newly freed community of ex-slaves the desire to be led by one’s own created a desire for theologically educated leadership. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Convention at its beginning realized the need of an institution to provide for the training of those having the responsibility to guide the word down a straight path in order to reach its telos (goal/end).

Why does the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church need an institution to train her leaders is a common question of those who are within and without this particular sect. Actually, it occurs to the researcher that while the need exists for such an institution on a state level it is also needed on a national scale. Many sects argue for the necessity of teaching its own. Over the last thirty years the Southern Baptist church purged its institutions and leadership that it thought too liberal. This would seem extreme to others but it was perfectly normal for that sect, which took the liberal teachings as a threat to its philosophical and theological foundations. The Catholic Church in America sought to limit the influence of Protestant education upon its members by the institution of Catholic schools and universities.\textsuperscript{36} The Lutherans and other sects have a history of establishing schools to re-enforce the traditions of the church in its membership. The same need applies to the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Providence United Primitive Baptist Church speaks clearly to this problem:

\textsuperscript{35}William T. Gladys, 61.
Providence United Primitive Baptist Church existed before the slaves were freed. When the Church was first built, it was a frame building with a dirt floor. It was known as the Colored Primitive Baptist Church and later called the Two Seat Church...Early 1800 to 1900 oil lamps were along the walls until one night Martin Turner, who owned Turner's Fruit and Vegetable Cannery, was about to lose everything, came to Pastor McCullough, for help. He offered to have the church wired if the pastor and members would help save his fruits and vegetables...Although not familiar with this date, meetings were held here as early as 1826...Elder Thomas Williamson was born in North Carolina on February 15, 1795 and was brought to Tennessee as a slave. He joined the White Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Williamson was called to the ministry in 1832 and licensed by the White Presbytery.37

Proper training by the church would assure that persons who sought to pastor could be taught in their own context. Schools that would teach both theological and secular subjects are the mandate of the convention's founders.

Recently, there is a renewed emphasis by Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention to establish schools that will provide alternatives to public education. Friendship Academy in Cocoa Beach, Florida and Greater Bethel School in Riviera Beach, Florida have successful institutions. The Greater Bethel School now extends to grade twelve and offers a high school diploma. Friendship extends to grade eight. Throughout the history of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in the Southern United States, schools providing education were the norm. Alabama, Texas, Florida, and North Carolina have a history of such schools. Those schools and their history will be examined further at a later stage in the project. Now the researcher will look at the reasons for the need of such an institution.

The need exists because any people must know who they are in order to survive amalgamation by other groups. Amalgamation would be okay in an equitable world but that is not the case at the present. That will be achieved upon Christ's return. For now it

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37William T. Gladys, 273.
is the researcher’s view that each people must define who they are in light of their faith. Theologically, through the researcher’s life the ground of being has been God through the revelation of Jesus Christ. Christ is affirmed by the researcher to be equal with God and the source of all. That revelation has come through the agency of the Holy Spirit who has guided the researcher through life since the first true revelation at the age of five years. Wherever the researcher has been the Holy Spirit has given revelation to the need for theological education for those who handle the precious WORD of GOD. The need for theological training receives affirmation through the teaching division of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention. This was set in motion ten years ago when the Church School Division made a request for accredited instructors that could provide accreditation for the courses the Congress offers. The process began with the researcher being the first to start the pursuit. Three instructors have degrees from accredited Seminary schools.

Those schools provide an education that is assisting in the formation process for the instructors within the Congress. Of particular note is the education provided by the Interdenominational Theological Center. The Seminary provides a wholesome environment for students of different denominations. The structure of the institution is such that the main focus is theological education rather than denominational dogma. The ITC makes it possible for persons coming from other denominations to develop theologically without the interference from denominational leaders to form the seminary student to defend the teachings of their particular faith. It makes the Interdenominational Theological Center a good guide for the formation process.

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This formation process can be found in Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy. Certainly Paul provides for Timothy a mentor who is able to be an effective guide for those infants in the faith. Paul’s admonishment for Timothy to guide the word along a straight path is given for the benefit of Timothy as well as those who ground themselves in the message of Jesus Christ. To carry out this request from Paul, Timothy and all subsequent followers of Christ must do it through education. Only an education in the culture of the people is effective for wholeness (salvation of being).

The purpose of education, it seems, is to transmit of culture: so that culture (which has not been defined) is likely to be limited to what can be transmitted by education.\footnote{T. S. Elliot. \textit{Christianity and Culture}. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1949), 172.}

Therefore, the researcher argues that Paul intends for Timothy to be conscious of the cultures, traditions, and experiences of the persons being served. Paul made this quite clear when the 2nd letter to the Corinthian church was penned to soften the painful rhetoric of the first letter. Paul received an effective reflection on the words used to give correction to a people who comprised an unstable social context.

Theologically the researcher’s context comprises persons of various traditions, experiences, and cultures. The church has as its origin North America just prior to the abolition of slavery and following. The oldest congregation has as its initial members persons who were former members of the First African Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia. Their experience was independent worship therefore they began in a graveyard in Huntsville, Alabama in 1820.

Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church is by many Primitive Baptists regarded as “The Mother Church of Black Primitive Baptists.” Elder William Harris, a freeman, organized the church in 1820 within the confines of a “graveyard”… The name of the church was “The Huntsville African Baptist Church.” Why a church
in a graveyard? It was the only public place within the state that a freeman colored man or slave could reasonably claim as his own...The Graveyard was called the “Old Georgia Graveyard” in my heart connects William Harris and possibly a number of other slaves with the Savannah African Church.40

Another of the pre Civil War churches is the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church of Dixon Mill, Alabama. Their experience was the fellowship with the European American Shiloh Baptist Church until 1889 when they began to worship independently. The two churches still sit next to each other in the town of Dixons Mills, Alabama.

The Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church was founded in 1817. It was a Brush Arbor Church with the first minister being a white Missionary preacher. Elder George Essex was the founding pastor.41

These two churches and a few others in Florida can trace their origins prior to the Civil War. Each church is quite different in their particular context and the persons who serve them certainly must guide the word along a straight path. Without proper training it would be absurd to believe that the people of these churches can survive as vibrant institutions.

This brings to light the second scripture for the researcher’s theological mandate. Jesus said in Matthew 15:14b if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. It is of necessity to have guides that can see for the survival of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The researcher is not surprised that some persons do not see the necessity for theological education for their and the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church’s survival. There must be some revelation via the Holy Spirit for persons to see the things that are hidden from the wise and prudent. In America the leadership of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church has been grappling with its identity. It appears

40William T. Gladys, 123-126.
41William T. Gladys, 239.
from one year to the next that there is a new catch-phrase to assist the cadre of the church
to maintain control. Those phrases are being tossed about as theological truths until the
next new phrase is echoed with charisma. There is a need for sound teaching within the
Progressive Primitive Baptist church. A rebirth of catechesis is needed.

Catechesis is the "resounding" or "echoing" of the truth fully revealed in Christ.
Literally, the word catechesis derives from the Greek katechein, "to echo."
Originally, the term referred to the oral repetition expected of children in school.\textsuperscript{42}

The natural emulation of others must be one of the tools the researcher uses to bring an
appreciation for the richness of the theological gifts of persons in the community who
maintain their identity in spite of the forces that pull them away from the \textit{true light}. The
light that one can only receive through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the
salvation of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The failure of the Progressive
Primitive Baptist Church as stated previously is the disregard for the vision of the elders
to provide schools that teach secular as well as theological subjects. Those schools assist
the formation of every member. To disregard the wisdom of the elders is to enter into
blindness.

Blindness is not always bad. When it is a situation similar to that of the Ethiopian
eunuch, it can be an opportunity to witness to a seeking soul. Acts 8:31 (KJV) gives a
beautiful rendering of the story that gives the genesis to the Ethiopian Christian
community. The wise Ethiopian knew that in order to have theological knowledge one
needs a guide. It was the former queen of Sheba who was guided through revelation that
Solomon's Deity was worthy of worship because that Deity gave to Solomon wisdom
that was unknown in the barbaric peoples of Palestine. Without a guide only a Deity can

give such knowledge. The Ethiopian official's question to Philip is sincere in its search. “How can I accept some man guide me?” Those words are still searching the researcher's community for men/women who are willing to accept the guidance of others that they may be effective guides. Jesus has shown each man/woman the beauty and completeness of following Christ. The necessity, of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church to establish schools where the wisdom of God in Jesus Christ is shared, can be means the community uses to assure its survival.

This era for the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is no different from those endured by the church fathers and mothers of yesteryears. The survival of the church has always been given as an assignment to those who live in the particular age. Throughout the history of the church there have been threats to its survival. Somehow God through the agency of the Holy Spirit has raised men and women who allowed their being to express the will of God for that age. It is the researcher's belief that this is the season for the implementation of the mandate of the Founders of the National Primitive Baptist Church. Since the initial phase of the project, the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church where the researcher serves has endorsed the concept of accredited theological education. Within the next four months two more units will be added. Those two will be in addition to the one already in existence in Pensacola, Florida and Tallahassee, Florida. It is the season for the work to be cultivated. As the Spirit joined Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch, the Spirit yet directs the activities for the growth and survival of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.

It is the survival of the Black Church and more particularly the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church that is the aim (goal) of this project. Through its survival the church can
effectively carry out the mandate of Christ, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19-20 KJV).

Jesus distinctly left the church a mandate to teach. One of the previous presidents of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, Elder Moses General Miles, would challenge the convention with the phrase “you can not teach what you do not know, and you can not lead where you do not go. Study the Word, Study the Word.” Elder Miles earned a Doctorate degree in the secular field, and he encouraged the convention to seek higher learning in the field of theology. It is the researcher’s relationship with Elder Miles that helps the researcher to move toward the goal of accredited theological education being available to all pastors, ministers, and Christian workers within their context, one that could benefit from a theology of Liberation.

It is the researcher’s observation that the greatest hindrance in implementing the wishes of the founders is the bondage of its members. Many of those members are bound in some form or another. Therefore there is a need for liberation. One of the tools being used in the initial unit in Pensacola, Florida is the use of Paulo Freire’s dialogical method of teaching. The need for a liberating style of teaching is made apparent by the many pastors and Christian workers who believe that their secular education is sufficient for the affairs of the church. Somehow they appear to be indoctrinated to promote the ideals of the state rather than giving careful thought to the importance of right teaching. The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church must involve herself in the theological teaching of

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Theology of Liberation

Theology of liberation has its sources in the Black Experience; Black History; Black Culture; Revelation; Scripture; Tradition. These are covered in depth in the dissertation. To this point the researcher has shared the theology of the project for accredited theological education to be made available to pastors, ministers, and Christian workers in their locale and context. The theological mandate for the project is supported by the scriptures. Matthew 15:14, Acts 8:31, and 2 Timothy 2:15 are the texts that give the support. The researcher gives a view of his theology from Boff’s understanding of place, season, and goal. Theology of the researcher is driven by the desire to perform the task given to Christ’s servant in this place and season in order to reach the goal this ministry is intended in this present age as revealed through God’s Word and the Holy Spirit. That task is the provision of accredited theological education to those in ministry within their place, season, and goal. It is the scriptures that give affirmation to the theological mandate.

Biblical Mandate

The scripture the author will use is taken from 2 Timothy 2:8-21. This is the primary scripture for the project because it is addressed to a younger minister [Timothy] by an elderly believer [Paul] for the purpose of pedagogy. In order to affectively address the

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Biblical mandate, the author has chosen the oracular paradigm$^{46}$ as the method for interpretation. The oracular paradigm allows the interpreter the freedom to interpret the text from his/her theological position. It is noted that the author has respect for the historical-critical approach to the text. This method will be used but the oracular approach will take precedence in the interpretive task. The author will not use the interactive paradigm$^{47}$ due its failure to respect the Holy Spirit's work in the interpretive process in guiding the reader to see biblical warrant for establishing schools for contextual theological education.

The oracular paradigm is ideologically binding for the author. According to Cosgrove's definition$^{48}$ the author agrees that ideology is something persons take for granted. The author argues oppression codes$^{49}$ found in the Bible are in addition to liberation symbols, which the author's community and self adapted for survival. Those liberation stories and symbols communicated within the Bible can be juxtaposed to the negative results, which favor the status quo. The author's position is that here are not powerless persons, especially those who have sold out to be slaves of Christ. The Christ event for the author redefines who has the real power. Individuals, families, peoples, or nations may claim to be in power, but the author believes that real power is given by God to whomever God wills to give it. That truth is found in scripture and empowers the project for theological education.

$^{46}$Kevin A. Munoz, Lecture on Biblical Interpretation, Atlanta, GA: Interdenominational Theological Center, 2009.

$^{47}$Kevin A. Munoz


$^{49}$Cosgrove, 91.
Scriptural Mandate

The section will discuss the scriptural mandate for the project chosen for the doctoral dissertation. Overall, there is a need within the community of the writer for accredited theological education. The educational opportunity is needed to reverse the loss of capable leadership within the community. That desire is expressed in the historical record of the Green Grove Primitive Baptist Church of Williamson County, Tennessee.

Soon a church was organized and named Green Grove United Primitive Baptist Church...After becoming an organized church, these dedicated people began to make plans to build a church house to hold their meetings in...They were badly in need of both a church and school. They wanted the spot to be convenient to all concerned. They wanted their children to have proper training and to be brought up in the way they should go.50

The way they should go is theological language for Christian discipleship. Those early churches knew the importance of a theologically prepared clergy. Today the leadership has secular preparation, but few have theologically training. Therefore, most of the leadership is being provided by those persons who have secular degrees or no training at all. For this reason the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention’s Church School Congress initiated a program under the author’s leadership to make accredited theological education available within a fifty mile radius of its local pastors. The relative closeness of an institution of training would allow the pastors and Christian workers to avail themselves of the opportunity for theological training.

The passage that the author uses for the theological foundation of the project presents several possible areas where interpretation may be biased. The first caution is in the author’s use of the rule of purpose.51 In the Progressive Primitive Baptist church

50William T. Gladys, 293.

51Cosgrove, 12.
tradition, absolute authority is given the scriptures. Dealing with the text brings new insights into what the term absolute authority has meant to the writer. The words of Paul to Timothy in the second letter—chapter two—are read by the writer as a conversation between Timothy and Paul rather than between Christ and the Church. Rather the words are directives that are helpful for ministry in the Christian Church today. As Cosgrove notes, it is the spirit of the command rather than the letter of the directive that gives the warrant for contextual theological education. As the author deals with the chosen text, be aware that there may be confusion in the use of the rule of purpose.

In addition to the rule of purpose, the rule of analogy may present some tension in the interpretation process. Making an analogy from the first or second century of the Common Era to the twenty-first century will also present a problem for the author. There is also weakness in the author's ability to adequately establish reasons for a judgment about a particular fact pattern. As the text is examined keep in mind that the rule of analogy can pose difficulty in establishing the meaning of the scripture for the Church today. The community that the text speaks to is those mostly-Gentile believers who make up the 1st and 2nd century Christian Church. They were in need of training in order to survive as a faith.

The author speaks from the voice of the minority community in America. It is expected that much the author contends will cut against current ideological positions.

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52 Displine of the Primitive Baptist Church, (Tallahassee, FL: National Primitive Baptist Publishing Board, 1997), 3.

53 Cosgrove, 12-13.

54 Cosgrove, 52.

55 Cosgrove, 75.
Therefore, the reader should keep in mind the context from which the interpretation is made. With this in mind, Cosgrove’s assertion that the Bible itself is a counter to the prevailing ideologies\(^\text{56}\) will not come into conflict with the author’s interpretation even though the Bible itself is a bearer of ideology.\(^\text{57}\) These three rules of hermeneutics must be observed as the author examines the passage in order to establish the mandate for contextual theological education.

**The Text**

The translation of the text is taken from the Novum Testamentum Graece.\(^\text{58}\) The author translates the passage from 2 Timothy 2:8-21 as follows:

> Remember Jesus Christ who was raised out of death, out of the seed of David, according to my gospel, in who I suffer misfortune until imprisonment as an evil doer, but God’s word is not bound: because of all this I endure for the sake of the elect, so that even they might attain salvation in Jesus Christ with eternal glory. Faithful is the word
> For if we die with (Christ), also we will live with (Christ)
> if we endure, also we will reign together;
> if we deny Christ, even he will deny us;
> if we are unfaithful, faithful he remains,
> for to deny himself, he is not able.

These things remind (them) charging in the sight of God to not dispute about words, for no one benefits, leading to the ruin of the hearers. Making every effort to present yourself approved to God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path. But Godless empty talk avoid, for more ungodliness it will advance and the word of them as a cancer will spread. Of who is Hymenius an Phyletos, who concerning the truth they departed, saying [the] resurrection already has come, and they upset the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal; God knows whoever (is) his, and; abstain from all unrighteousness they who name the name of the Lord. But in a great house is it not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and of clay, and on the other hand to honor and to dishonor; therefore if

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\(^{56}\)Cosgrove, 91.

\(^{57}\)Cosgrove, 91.

\(^{58}\)Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, Kurt Aland, and Barbara Aland, eds, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993). The text has been translated by the author, and he believes it to be closer to the meaning which the original writer intended.
someone should cleanse himself from these, he will be a vessel to honor, consecrating, useful to the Lord, to every good work prepared.\textsuperscript{59}

Now the author will look at each verse and give an interpretation for the passage. First, the pericope was chosen to include verses eight through twenty-one. In order to gain a full understanding of Paul's discourse in this passage the meanings of each word phrase will be examined. Only verse fifteen will be covered in this portion of the text. The other verses of the translation will be found in the appendix.

The pericope now opens up with the positive picture of being approved by God. The writer of the letter uses \textit{dokimos}\textsuperscript{60} to express the idea of approval. The verb in the pericope is in the accusative singular case here and also in Romans 16:10. Romans 14:18 speaks about being acceptable to God and therefore approved by men. The noun is in the nominative singular case. 1 Corinthians 10:18 is also in the nominative masculine singular case. 1 Corinthians 11:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:7 use the nominative first person plural form of the word to read \textit{approved men}.

Approved men lead to the idea of \textit{workmen}. The word Paul uses is \textit{ergatns}\textsuperscript{61} in the accusative singular case. 2 Corinthians 11:13 uses the idea of deceitful workers. Philippians talks about evil workers. 1 Timothy shares the term workers in the nominative masculine singular case.

\textsuperscript{59}Edward T. Hayes, translator, \textit{Novum Testamentum Graece}, ed. Eberhard et Erwin Nestle, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993. All scriptures used in the analysis of the text are the translation of the author from the noted work by Nestle-Aland. The scriptures will not be footnoted from this section throughout remainder of the work.

\textsuperscript{60}Walter Bauer, 203.

\textsuperscript{61}Walter Bauer, 307.
the Master of Divinity program at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

While working to complete the Master of Divinity degree, the author was elected to be the president of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church School Congress. This occurred after two years of service as the vice-president of the body. During service in that capacity the author met with Smith Bible College of Tallahassee, Florida to ascertain their capability to provide the vehicle that the State Convention needed to meet the goals of the State Church School Congress. The investigation of Smith Bible College found that its program was inadequate to meet the needs of the body. They were not accredited and many of their faculty was not sanctioned by any accrediting agency. At that time the State Church School’s staff had more accredited personnel [President—Master of Divinity, Vice President—Doctor of Ministry, two instructors—Master of Divinity] than Smith Bible College.

Because many of the members of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention had degrees from Smith Bible College, resistance to another institution was experienced. The degrees conferred by Smith were not devalued, but their program simply did not meet the needs of the State Convention of Florida. Those needs were defined by members of the State Church School whom responded to surveys given by the author in order to ascertain the wishes of the body. The survey is included in the appendix. It was given in April 2009 and April 2010 to the members of Florida State Primitive Church School Congress during its annual sessions. The respondents to the survey totaled sixty. For question #1, fifty-eight answered yes and two no. Question #2 fifty-one were high school graduates and above, of that number two had some college, seven were college graduates and three
had advanced degrees. Six did not answer the question, and three did not finish high school. Question #3 had fifty-four to answer yes; two to answer no; and four did not answer the question. Question #4 was answered by forty-one answered that the education should be both secular and theological; eleven answered it should be theological; and two did not answer. Question #5 the majority answers (51) were I do not know; three answered Doctor of Divinity, and there were six not answered. Question #6 there were forty-five yes responses and fifteen no responses. Of the forty-five, forty answered yes and five responded no. Question #7 had no responses. Question #8 had fifty-five responses. Thirty-five responded yes, and twenty responded only theological education. Question #9 had the fewest responses (35). Of those twenty-three said yes, eight said no, and four said they did not know. Question #10 forty-three responded they did not know and eight said that the convention would be better with better trained clergy.

The survey was done in concert with a two-year lecture series that addressed the connection between secular and theological education in the church. Elder John Dees, Doctor of Divinity was the lecturer. In conjunction with the State Congress, Selma University—Pensacola Extension invited Drs. Henry Mitchell and Riggins Earl, Jr. to examine the supposition that a community can not survive without theological education. Six surveys were chosen randomly from the one hundred and twenty participants. Each respondent noted either that the community could not be effective (3) or it would eventually fail (2). One participant simply gave praise to God for the intellect of Drs. Mitchell and Earl.

Finally, after Doctors Earl and Mitchell, an Elder from the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention [Elder Terry Price—Pastor, Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church]
asked that Doctor Michael Johnson (Doctoral Advisor) and the author (Elder Edward Hayes) come to Tallahassee, Florida to make a presentation for accredited theological education in the Tallahassee area. The author prepared a series of lectures for the Tallahassee area to be presented May 21-23, 2012. The author’s lectures were based on the need for contextual theological education within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. Dr. Michael Johnson, Sr.’s lectures were based upon the needs for theological education and two lectures were from his dissertation entitled “From Membership to Ministry.” A copy of the author’s lectures can be found in the appendix. A summary is included below.

Summary:

The first night of lectures was attended by approximately fifty participants. The response from the attendees was as expected. The pastor who is a member of the Selma University’s Pensacola Unit gave encouragement to those in attendance to take advantage of the educational opportunity afforded by Selma University. Also during the lecture by Dr. Michael Johnson an appeal to attend Selma University was made throughout the presentation. Following the presentations Dr. Alvin Cleveland, President of Selma University, delivered an inspiring message to those assembled. The subject was “when the miracle does not come.” The scripture text was 2 Samuel 15b-23. The points were 1) Accept the will of God 2) Continue to worship 3) Strengthen our spirituality

The response to the message was overwhelming and a blessing to those assembled.

Dr. Cleveland made an appeal to those who were interested in furthering their theological education to consider Selma University.
Following the worship the author, Dr. Cleveland, Dr. Michael Johnson, Pastor Terry Price, Dr. Franklin Rush (President of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention and the Middle Florida/Georgia Church School Congress), and Elder Cornell Leonard (President of the Old West Florida Church School Congress) went to dinner and informally discussed the gist of the project. The fellowship was cordial.

At the conclusion of the worship one participant approached to state a commitment to enter the program at Selma University’ proposed site in Tallahassee, Florida. Participants were invited to take part in the second night of lectures. That lecture can be found in the appendix. The summary is below.

Summary:

The class received the lecture with more enthusiasm than the previous night. The previous night dealt with technical information therefore the feedback was different. The body appeared to grasp the material on context more readily. Dr. Franklin Rush, President of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention and President of the Middle Florida/Georgia Church School Congress preached from Matthew 4:1-4. His subject was “Standing on the Word of God.” He gave seven things that are needed to stand. They were:

1) substance 2) stability 3) surety 4) substantiation 5) salvage 6) stimulation 7) silence

The message was enthusiastically received.

Dr. Johnson’s lecture continued with ‘from membership to ministry.” The church seems to hunger for the information. Dr. Johnson helped the congregation to see that each member of the body was responsible for ministry.
There was a positive response to the message and several persons signed up to attend Selma University in the Fall 2012.

**Summary:**

The challenge to the body was received and generated more questions than had been previously asked during the proceeding sessions. The younger members of the body asked more relevant questions. As they reflected upon the initial mandate of the National Primitive Baptist Convention concerning education, their questions showed a deep reflection upon the material presented. There were eighteen persons who signed up to attend the program [Bible and Pastoral Care & Bachelor of Arts in Christian Education] at Selma University. The Church School President of the Old West Florida District Association was one of the enrollees.

The message was delivered by Elder Leonard, Old West District Church School President. The subject was “The Believer’s Reward.” The scriptural texts were 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Revelations 22:12-13. Throughout the message Elder Leonard stressed that there was a reward for work done for the cause of Christ.

**Over-all Summary:**

The messengers for the sessions helped to bring clarity to the lectures that were done by the author and Dr. Michael Johnson. Dr. Johnson’s lectures were focused upon ministry in the local church. He stressed the need to be gifted and prepared for ministry. The lectures were a compliment to those done by the author with a focus of challenging the State Church to re-evaluate and re-examine its commitment to contextual theological education.
The response to the challenge was shown by those who made themselves available for theological training. Dr. Johnson advised the author of the steps that should be taken to assess the lectures and their effectiveness. After the lectures Dr. Johnson committed himself to come back to Tallahassee and encourage the Missionary Baptists in the area to also take part in the Selma University experience of theological training within their context.

The author looks forward to August 2012 as the first class from the Tallahassee, Florida area enters theological training.

A total of twenty perspective students signed up to be a part of the initial class in Tallahassee, Florida. The class is supported by the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, which assists in monitoring the progress of the work through its Church School Congress.

Of the twenty perspective students, ten applied for admission to the program. Some of the students were unable to enter because of a conflict with their work schedule and one had not finished a requirement for admission. The classes began in September 2012 with six students. A report will be given to the State Church School, Education Committee, and State Convention in its Winter Board Meeting, December 5, 2012. A meeting is set for the Missionary Baptists in the Tallahassee, Florida region to invite them to take advantage of the program.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This section will give the summary and conclusion of this phase of the project. Keep in mind that the Tallahassee, Florida unit was began primarily as the vehicle to provide for the mandate of the founders of the National Primitive Baptist Convention in 1907. That is “to build churches and colleges…”¹ What was accomplished, learned, and what could have been done differently will be covered in this section. Some information the author deems important will be included followed by an over-all summary. First thing to be covered is the work accomplished.

What Was Accomplished

The work accomplished in this project has provided the author with an understanding of the difficulties in providing a tool to prepare a cadre for the proper pedagogy of a people. Throughout the process the author’s work has been instrumental in creating a dialog in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church and especially in the State Convention of Florida concerning contextual theological education.

The dialog involved the members of the State Convention of Florida in the task of re-evaluation and re-examination. Truly, the members began to reflect earnestly on the place of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church in the larger community of Faith. The dialog created a means for the community to reflect upon its objectives and how this present age has adapted those principles into her goals.

¹Samuels, 35.
Those goals seemed elusive until a consensus was reached with the leadership of the Church School Congress and the adoption of those goals by the State Convention of Florida in its 2008 session. Creating consensus for the project is reflected in the support given by the moderator [Elder Bernard C. Yates, D.D. who is also the National Primitive Baptist Convention’s President] of the Mt. Zion Association where the author serves. Also, the State Convention President [Elder Franklin Rush, D. Min.] who is also president of the District Church School Congress—Tallahassee (Middle Florida Association) and the Old West Florida Church School President—Elder Cornel Leonard are giving their support to establish the school for theological training of pastors and Christian workers throughout the Tallahassee, Florida area.

Support was also given by the President of the Tallahassee, Florida Baptist Ministers’ Fellowship for the project and those churches have committed to send their ministers to the Selma University extension. Their support allows this project to be a blessing not only to the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church of Florida but also to the Christian community as a whole. The support from both inside and outside of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention has resulted in the initial class at the Tallahassee site.

Finally, the Tallahassee, Florida site has challenged the author to create tools for the proper evaluation and examination in the creation of effective tools for pedagogy. Those tools began in the people and their desire to attain the unspoken goals that equips them to do ministry. The culture, religious traditions, and experiences of those who participate in this work has brought joy to the author and the students that the author is blessed to instruct.
What Was Learned

According to Paulo Freire the teacher also learns from those being taught. The author naively thought that building consensus was an easy task. Much to his chagrin the author was made aware of the difficulties in building consensus. In the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church the alliances that were built by some its members with other institutions was the most difficult. It was not the desire of the author to lessen the value of what other institutions had previously provided, but to build a consensus to refocus on the goal of the founders. The author's theological education was acquired through an institution [The Interdenominational Theological Center] not created by the volition of Progressive Primitive Baptists. Those obstacles have not been completely removed but consensus has been acquired and institution of the site realized.

The site is staffed by the author and Dr. Michael Johnson, Sr., D. Min. Dr. Johnson's credentials were conferred by Virginia Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. He holds or has held offices in the Florida State Missionary Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. Having held the positions of Dean and State Church School President in the State Convention of Florida, he brings a wealth of knowledge to pedagogy in the Baptist tradition. The author has also held teaching positions in the Church School Convention of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, and is the past President of the Church School. With a combined forty-eight years of instruction in the Missionary Baptist and Primitive Baptist churches both instructors have developed sagacious observations of the task of pedagogy.

One of those challenges involves the resultants of being a member of an oppressed class of peoples. Many of the students arrived in the classroom convinced of the
impossibility of learning. Those students were given the proper rewards for their positive
responses and affirmed when they brought valuable insight to the subject being
discussed. One student came to the Pensacola site [the initial laboratory for testing
hypotheses to be used in the instituting of the project] suffering from dyslexia. When the
problem was identified the student did exceptionally well and finished the course with
honors. While working with the Pensacola site the author worked with high school age
students whom were having difficulties with public education. During research the
author was convinced by the arguments of Paulo Friere, James Cone, Gustavo Gutierrez,
and Bell Hooks. Each of them defined the problem of pedagogy within the system of
oppression rather in the student. With proper attention the high school age students
excelled through Florida Virtual School, but when returned to the public classroom the
learner was again impaired.

Those impaired students when taught within their own context faired well. Therefore
it is the contention of the author that the unspoken desire of the community as a whole is
for the success of its youth in preparing them to meet the challenges of life. It is that
same spirit that drove and still drives the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church to prepare
its members to meet the challenges of society. The Apostle Paul’s insistence to Timothy
in 2 Timothy 2:15

Making every effort to present yourself approved to God, a workman who does
not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path.²

It is this desire that drives the project as well as the spirit of the Progressive Primitive
Baptist Church. Throughout the tenure of the author in service to the Florida State
Primitive Baptist Convention and as an instructor on the staff of the National Primitive

²Edward Hayes, translator, Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. Barbara Aland and Erwin Nestle
(Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001).
Baptist Church School, it has been the experience that the pursuit of excellence in learning is the driving force of the fellowship.

This driving spirit within the church is sometimes co-opted by those who are not controlled by the prevailing spirit of the body but by self-centered goals. The author is amazed how the mind of God for a people, especially those of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church, allows her to meet the goals that God has intended. The author affirms that God is equipping the church to be God’s witnesses upon the earth. It is the wishes of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church to be found in the will of God by preparing its ministers and Christian workers to guide the word along a straight path.

What Might Have Been Done Differently

The author contends that the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church is following the wishes of God for this portion of the body of Christ. Yet, many times, persons and their motives are misunderstood due to a lack of effective communication skills. The author should have studied more closely the regional dialects and cultures of each district in the State Convention of Florida during the observation process of the project. With a better understanding of those regional differences consensus could have been reached sooner and with less conflict. Resolving of conflicts involves the expenditure of valuable energies and time, and requires skills that are achieved through proper preparation that theological schools provide because their curricula inform the whole person.

Time and resource management was not optimal. More emphasis could have been used to build stronger bonds with those who assist in the project. The author realizes that the project is only the initial phase of a perpetual work and therefore understands the need to reframe many of the tools, which were utilized for effective realization of the
goal of the project. Those who the author believed were accepting of the project were not fully invested. Better critique of the motivations of those persons would have allowed a smoother journey during the assertion stage.

Finally, the author could have utilized human resources in order to document the many volumes of research gathered for the project. A system of storage could also help to make the research material readily available for the record of the project. The things that happened during the project that were not in the control of the author were noted for reflection should the author becomes responsible for guiding a student in the dissertation process.

Summary

The dissertation process has been a rewarding experience for the author. The ways to introduce the project, the ministry issue and setting, the framework [empirical, theological, biblical, and summary], and practical application, and explanation of the project has served well to discipline the author for further research and writing.

The author is grateful that the realization of the Tallahassee, Florida site is proof that the will of God for the people of God can be realized. Those men and women who met together in Huntsville, Alabama in 1907 blessed the body to seek the will of God for this portion of the Christian Church to provide schools to teach secular as well as theological subjects.

The steps in the project allowed the author and his community to re-evaluate the wishes of the founding members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The research shows that there is an on-going effort by the body to provide theological training. Those entities were researched to ascertain whether they meet the needs of
contextual accredited theological education. One institution [Huntsville Bible College] does offer accredited theological education, but it does not meet the needs of making that provision geographically accessible. Dialog with its president has begun and hopefully that institution can expand its bounds. Throughout the nation Progressive Primitive Baptists are awaiting a tool that will give a quality theological education for the equipping of the ministry and survival of the church.

The Progressive Primitive Baptist Church suffers from a loss of cadre [persons who provide the framework for the church’s survival]. Upon examination it was observed that the successful implementation of an effective school to provide theological subjects has been lacking. Early efforts saw the organizing of schools to teach secular subjects as well theological. Those schools and their mandate were eventually ceded to the state boards of education. That process has created an exodus of the better trained clergy to other denominations. When the church ceased to provide the correct training the state has no motive to provide it.

One success story can be found from the Greater Bethel Christian School in Riviera Beach, Florida. The Greater Bethel School provided K-12 education. One of its graduates, Elder Jeremiah Chester earned the Bachelor of Arts degree from Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama and now attends Princeton University in the Master of Divinity program. Because of his exposure to education in a Christian school environment, Elder Chester is becoming equipped to provide contextual accredited theological education within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.
With the help of God the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church will eventually staff its own faculty whom seek the preparation of its ministry and cadre to meet the needs of the coming age.
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APPENDIX

Biblical Interpretation from Chapter III

To open the passage Paul says to Timothy, *remember*. Paul uses the imperative mood to give a command to Timothy. In Romans 1:9 Paul uses the first declension noun *mneian*\(^1\) in the accusative case to express the idea of remembering one in prayer. Ephesians 1:16 and Philemon 1:4 use the same declension and case of the noun to express the same idea. In the 2 Timothy 1:3 Paul uses this same noun to express the thought of remembering the recipient of the letter in prayer.

Ephesians 2:11 uses the present active indicative second person plural of the verb *mnemoneuo*\(^2\) to request the church to *remember* their former spiritual state. 2 Thessalonians 2:5 also uses the same mood and person as Ephesians, but asks the church to be mindful of the antichrist. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 use the present active participle of the same verb in the first person plural as Paul begins the dialogue with the church there. It is noticeable that it is their work of faith, labor of love, and steadfastness of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ that is important to Paul’s, Silas’, and Timothy’s ministry.

In all of Paul’s writings, it is only in 2 Timothy 2:8 that the Apostle uses the imperative mood to express the idea of *remembering* to the letter’s recipient, Timothy. It

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\(^2\)Walter Bauer, 525.
is important that Paul uses the noun and verbal forms of the idea of remembrance sparingly throughout the thirteen letters credited to him.

The next idea I will examine is Paul’s expression of Jesus Christ being raised out of death. Paul’s use of the term both noun and verbal forms will be discussed. In the text being used the idea is expressed through the use of the accusative case of the aorist participle form of the verb egeiro. Romans 6:9 and 8:34 both express the idea raised out of death by the aorist passive participle in the normative case. Romans 14:9 uses the aorist form of the verbs apothnasko and zao to imply the resurrection by stating that Christ “died and lived again.” 1 Corinthians 15: 12-27 records Paul discourse on the power of Christ’s resurrection by using the pluperfect form of the verb egeiro in verses 12, 13, 14, 16, and 20. Verse 15 uses the aorist form of the verb, and verse 16 uses the present passive form.

Galatians 1:1 and Colossians 2:12 use the aorist participle of the verb egeiro. Paul expands the thought process for the reader in Ephesians 2:6 when he uses the verb sunegeiro to express the power of Christ’s resurrection.

Romans 1:4 uses the noun anastasis, which translates resurrection. Paul says “...by resurrection from the dead.” This is the only place where Paul uses the noun form to express the resurrection. As Paul expresses the idea of Christ being raised out of death it

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3Walter Bauer, 214.
5Walter Bauer, 91.
6Walter Bauer, 336.
7Walter Bauer, 785.
8Walter Bauer, 60.
is the present active verbal that is the choice of the Apostle in the thirteen letters for which he is given credit.

The language Paul uses to express Christ as being the offspring (seed of David) is found only in the passage selected for the project and Romans 1:13. In both verses the writer of the letter uses the genitive case of the third declension noun *sperma*.9

Paul now uses the idea of *my gospel*. Romans 1:16, and 16:25 use the same form of the noun *euangelion*.10 Galatians 1:11 uses the aorist participle of the verb *euangelizo*,11 and the noun *euangelion*. These are the only references Apostle Paul uses for the term *my gospel*.12 It is noted from Paul’s expressions of the gospel that uses the term Christ’s gospel (2 Corinthians 2:12) once and the gospel of God (1 Thessalonians 2: 8, 9) twice. In the Corinthians passage Paul uses the same noun [*euangelion*] form to express the term gospel. 1 Thessalonians 2: 8 and 2:9 use the same noun form for the gospel, but it is here that Paul makes an appeal to the recipients as one who has not developed the experience to make a claim for a personal rendering of the gospel. Many believe 1 Thessalonians to be Paul’s first letter.13 Therefore, the insecurity of claiming a personal gospel is understandable. It also begs the question of whether Paul has deviated from the real gospel as given by Christ in the later years of ministry as demonstrated by the wording of

9N. Clayton Croy, 98.

10Walter Bauer, 317.

11Walter Bauer, 317.

12The term *my gospel* will be examined later in the paper to find what Paul means in relation to the idea of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:8. The problem with giving credit to Paul for the writing of 2 Timothy will be addressed later in the paper.

Following the expression of my gospel Paul speaks of suffering to begin verse #9. It is in this verse that Paul deals with suffering misfortune and imprisonment *kakopatheo*. In the chosen passage the verb in the subjunctive mood. In Romans 8:17 Paul uses the verb *sumpaschomen* in the present active indicative first person plural to share the idea of suffering with Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:26 Paul uses both *suffer with* and the verb *pascho*, experience/suffer, to express the idea. Both are in the present active indicative third person singular. 1 Corinthians 1:6 introduces the noun *pathema* which combines the idea of both suffering and misfortune in the genitive case and plural number. The same verse shares the verbal form *pascho* in the mood and person as 1 Corinthians 12:26. Philippians 1:29 uses the infinitive of the verb *pascho* to express the idea of suffering for Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:5 share the idea of suffering with the use of the same verb *pascho* in the second person plural. Paul declares that their suffering and afflictions are evidence they are worthy of the kingdom of God.

The next idea is *imprisionment*. Paul uses the noun *desmos*, which translates bond and fetter, in the genitive plural—translated of bonds and fetters in 2 Timothy 2:9. The only other idea of imprisonment is found in 2 Corinthians 6:5. There, the noun used by

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14 Walter Bauer, 397.
15 Walter Bauer, 779.
16 Walter Bauer, 633-634.
17 Walter Bauer, 602.
18 Walter Bauer, 176.
the writer of the letter is *phulake*. The noun is dative plural, which translates in imprisonments.

The idea of God’s word in 2 Timothy 2: 9 is *logos tou Theou*. Romans 9:6, 1 Corinthians 14:36, and Titus 2: 5 use the same word order and cases of the nouns and articles. 2 Corinthians 2:17, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Colossians 1: 25, 1 Thessalonians 2:13 use the accusative case [*logon*] for the noun *logos*, but the genitive for the article and noun *Theou*. 1 Timothy 4:5 use the genitive case for the both the term *word* and *God*. In Romans 10:17 uses the *rhema* in the genitive case for the noun that is translated as *word*. Paul in this passage uses the phrase ‘the word of Christ.’ Ephesians 6:17 uses the nominative case of the same noun *rhema* and the genitive case for *Theos*. As the author looks at this expression “word of God,” the different uses by the writer of the letters calls into question why there is a change in the terms for the expression *word*. In this passage Paul shares the WORD rather than word. That is the WORD has creative force.

The expression *dedetai* [she, he, it is bound] is found in the passage being examined and Romans 7:2 to describe a sacred bound between a husband and wife in respect to the law. This verbal form is the perfect passive third person singular of *deo*.

1 Corinthians 7:27 renders the verb in the aorist infinitive [to be bound].

Paul next speaks the word *endure* in the present active indicative first person singular, *huomeno*. In 2 Thessalonians 1:4 the author uses the noun *hupomone* in the

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19 Walter Bauer, 867.
20 Walter Bauer, 735.
21 Walter Bauer, 177.
22 Walter Bauer, 845.
genitive case to express endurance. In 2 Timothy 4: 5 the author of the letter uses the imperative of *kakopatheo* giving the command to endure suffering. The word in this passage ties together the thought of Paul with the previous term suffering.

Paul now gives the reason for the suffering as he says it is for the elect's sake [*eklektos*]. Romans 8: 33 and Titus 1:1 use the genitive plural [*eklekton*] of the noun to express the elect of God. Colossians 3:12 uses the normative plural case [*eklektoi*] of the same noun to express the elect of God.

The term the author will examine is *tugchano* [attain]. In this translation the word is in the subjunctive mood present active third person plural. Therefore, it is translated they might attain. Paul also uses *katantao* in the subjunctive mood first person aorist when he writes in Philippians 3:11. Romans 9:30 has Paul using another word, *katalambano*, to express the idea of attaining. This verbal form is aorist third person singular. Philippians 3:12 also uses *katakambano* in the subjunctive mood first person singular. This is quite unusual for the writer of the letter because the writer has just used a different verb [*katantao*] in the preceding verse # 10. Philippians 3:16 brings another verb to describe the idea of attaining, and that verb is *phthano*. The verb is in the aorist indicative first person plural in the passage. For the writer of the letter it is somewhat difficult to ascertain the meaning he has in mind for the idea of attaining.

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23Walter Bauer, 846.
24Walter Bauer, 397.
26Walter Bauer, 829.
27Walter Bauer, 415.
28Walter Bauer, 412.
29Walter Bauer, 856.
Next Paul deals with the thought of salvation. In the chosen passage Paul uses the noun *soteria*\(^{30}\) to express the idea. This is done in the plural accusative case. Also, 2 Corinthians 1:6, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Ephesians 1:13, Philippians 1:28, 1 Thessalonians 5:8, 9, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, and 2 Timothy 3:15 employ the same form. Romans 10:10, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Philippians 1:19, and Philippians 2:12 all use the singular accusative form of the same noun to express the idea of salvation. Romans 11:11 and Romans 13:11 employ the nominative singular case. Ephesians 6:17 utilizes the genitive singular case for the noun. Titus also uses a different genitive singular form of another noun meaning savior [*soter*].\(^{31}\) This difference in usage will be examined later in the paper.

Now the author will examine the term *glory*. In the selected passage the word is *doxa*\(^{32}\) appearing in the genitive singular along with the word *aionios*\(^{33}\) which translates to mean eternal. This case and number is also found in Romans 3:23, Romans 5:2, Romans 6:4, Romans 9:23, 1 Corinthians 2:8, 2 Corinthians 3:10, 11, 2 Corinthians 4:6, 17, Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14, 17, 18, Ephesians 3:18, Colossians 1:27, and 2 Thessalonians 1:9, 14.

Romans 1:23, Romans 2:7, Romans 3:7, Romans 4:20, Romans 8:18, Romans 15:7, 1 Corinthians 2:7 [with the genitive plural of eternities/*aion*],\(^{34}\) 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Corinthians 1:20, 2 Corinthians 3:7, 18, 2 Corinthians 4:15, 8:19, Philippians 1:11, Philippians 2:11, and 1 Thessalonians 2:6, 12 have glory in the accusative singular case.

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\(^{30}\)Walter Bauer, 801.

\(^{31}\)Walter Bauer, 800.

\(^{32}\)Walter Bauer, 203.

\(^{33}\)Walter Bauer, 28.

\(^{34}\)Walter Bauer, 27.
Romans 2:10, Romans 9:4, Romans 11:36 [along with the idea of eternal in the genitive case], Romans 16:27 [with the accusative plural of ages/eternities/aión], 1 Corinthians 11:7, 15, 1 Corinthians 15:40, 41, 2 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 8:23, Galatians 1:5 [with the term eternal], Ephesians 3:13, 21, Philippians 3:19, Philippians 4:20, 1 Thessalonians 2:20, 1 Timothy 1:17 [this scripture carries the idea of eternity], and 2 Timothy 4:18, which also carries the idea of eternity, are in the nominative singular case for the noun.

1 Corinthians 15:43, 2 Corinthians 3:7, 8, 9, 11, Philippians 4:19, Colossians 3:4, 1 Timothy 3:16 have the noun in the dative singular case. Throughout the Pauline letters the idea of the glory of God is relevant along with the concept of eternity/eternal.

The next term is faithful. The writer of the epistle uses the adjective pistos. It is the nominative singular case that the word expresses in the pericope. The term first appears in the writings to the Corinthian Church. 1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 Corinthians 4:2, 1 Corinthians 7:25, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 1:2, 7, Colossians 4:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:24, 1 Timothy 1:15, 1 Timothy 4:9, and Titus 3:8 have the word in the same case and person.

1 Corinthians 4:17 and 1 Timothy 1:12 have the adjective in the accusative singular case. 1 Timothy 3:11 uses the adjective in the accusative plural case to express the faithfulness of women. 1 Timothy 6:2 uses the same accusative plural masculine case. Titus 1:6 makes use of the same plural accusative but it is neutral in gender. Titus 1:9 has the adjective in the genitive masculine singular case. Ephesians 1:1 has the adjective in the dative plural case, and Colossians 4:9 has the masculine dative singular case.

35Walter Bauer, 664.
Galatians 3:9 uses the genitive singular of the word *pistis*, which translates as faith or trust. The genitive gives the same idea as faithful. 2 Thessalonians has the nominative singular case of the noun *pistis*. This concludes verse twelve. The hymn found in verses eleven through thirteen will not be analyzed in this paper.

Verse fourteen begins with the statement by Paul to remind them. The word he chooses is *hupomimosko*, which the writer of the letter gives in the present active imperative mood second person singular. No other letters of Paul made use of this term. Paul seems to use it as a device to get the reader to focus on the instruction being given through the communication. This and the opening word of the pericope are the only ones using the imperative mood within the letters examined.

The next word Paul uses is *diamarturomai*. The word can be translated warn, charge, or adjure. Paul uses it in the first aorist participle masculine nominative singular. Paul uses the verb in the first person singular present active indicative deponent in primary verb *diamarturomai* in 1 Timothy 5:1 and 2 Timothy 4:1 to begin the close of both letters to Timothy. No other letters of Paul contain this formula.

The next formula to be examined is sight of God. *Enopion* is the word used to express in the sight/presence of someone. Romans 3:20 refers to the Deity by reading in the sight of him. 2 Corinthians 4:2, 2 Corinthians 7:12, 1 Timothy 2:3, and 1 Timothy

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36Walter Bauer, 662.


38Walter Bauer, 846.

39Walter Bauer, 186.

40Walter Bauer, 270.
6:13 has the same word found in the pericope being used for this paper. 2 Corinthians 8:21 refers to being in the sight of the Lord and in the sight of men.

2 Corinthians 2:17 employs the word *katenantido* to express the idea of being in the presence of by standing opposite of another. The word is an adjective. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 uses another word, *emprosthendo*, which is an adverb to express the idea of being before/in the presence of. Each word expresses clearly the idea of being in the presence of someone. The writer of each of the epistles, where the expression is found, makes it plain to the reader.

Paul makes plain to the reader the next idea about disputing about words, *logomacheo*. In the pericope the word is in the present active infinitive. The only other place this idea is found is noun form [*logomachia*] of the word, which carries the same meaning as the verb.

It is interesting that the writer of the letters of Paul uses the term words [*logoi*] in relationship to the gospel message and wisdom juxtaposed with confusion. 1 Corinthians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 2:4, 13, 1 Corinthians 14:19, 1 Timothy 6:3 talk about the words of God. In Ephesians 5:6 the writer talks about empty words. 1 Thessalonians 4:18 talks about these words. 1 Timothy 4:6 speaks about the words of faith. The term *chresimos* is used only here in the letters of Paul. Here it expresses the futile efforts of arguing

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41Walter Bauer, 421.
42Walter Bauer, 257.
43Walter Bauer, 477.
44Walter Bauer, 477.
45Walter Bauer, 477.
46Walter Bauer, 885.
about words. *Katastrepho*\(^{47}\) expresses the results as the ruin of the hearers. This word is found only here in Paul’s writings. The only usage for this word was found in Matthew and Mark’s account about Jesus *overturning* the tables of the moneychangers in the temple. The verb form was the aorist active indicative third person singular. The mental picture of that action is sufficient to give strength to the pericope. The term is found only in this passage. Hymenius and Phletos have limited expression to the ideas covered by the letter’s writer. Hymenius is mentioned by the writer in 1 Timothy 1:20 who is mentioned with Alexander as men turned over to Satan.

The writer of the text now deals with the idea of *truth*. The pericope uses *aletheia*\(^{48}\) in the genitive singular case. It is called the word of truth. Also genitive singular case can be found in Romans 8:20, Romans 15:8, 2 Corinthians 4:2, 2 Corinthians 6:7, 2 Corinthians 13:8, Ephesians 1:13, Colossians 1:5, 2 Thessalonians 2:10, 13, 1 Timothy 2:4, 1 Timothy 3:15, 1 Timothy 6:5, 2 Timothy 2:25, 2 Timothy 3:7, 2 Timothy 4:4 and Titus 1:1. Galatians 4:16 employs the genitive plural case. Also 1 Thessalonians 2:13 makes use of the word *alethes*\(^{49}\) to express the genitive singular in 1 Thessalonians 2:13 meaning the true word of God.

Romans 1:18, 25, Romans 2:2, Romans 9:1, 2 Corinthians 12:6, Galatians 2:14, Ephesians 4:25, 1 Timothy 4:3, and Titus 1:14 all use the accusative singular form of the word.

\(^{47}\)Walter Bauer, 419.

\(^{48}\)Walter Bauer, 35.

\(^{49}\)Walter Bauer, 36.
Romans 2:8, 1 Corinthians 13:6, 2 Corinthians 7:14, Galatians 5:7, Ephesians 5:9, Ephesians 6:14, Philippians 1:18, Colossians 1:6, 2 Thessalonians 2:12, 1 Timothy 2:7, 2 Timothy 3:8 have the dative singular as its case.

The nominative singular case is used in Romans 3:7, 2 Corinthians 11:10, Galatians 2:5, Ephesians 4:21

In Ephesians 4:15 the writer of the letter uses the nominative participle in the masculine plural of the verb aletheuo, which translates men telling the truth or men who are truthful.

Following the expression of truth, ungodliness is mentioned as asebeia. In the pericope the author translates it as a genitive singular feminine noun. Romans 11:26 uses the same case and number. Romans 1:18 and Titus 2:12 record the word in the singular accusative case. It is especially noted that the writers of the Pauline letters says very little concerning ungodliness. This will be explored later in the paper.

The letter’s writer says that ungodliness will advance/prokopto. The verb is in the future active indicative third person plural. It is rendered they will advance. 2 Timothy 3:9 use the same mood, tense, and person as found in the pericope.

The writer now addresses the ideas that have affected the church. Resurrection rhetoric is now her/his focus. Anastasis is the term used in the passage as an accusative singular noun. Romans 1:4 and Romans 6:5 and Philippians 3:10 have the rendering in

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50Walter Bauer, 36.
51Walter Bauer, 114.
52Walter Bauer, 707-708.
53Walter Bauer, 60. The term was also used by the writer in the some places to Christ’s rising from the dead.
the genitive singular. 1 Corinthians 15: 12, 13, 21, and 42 express the idea in the nominative singular case.

The term most used by the writer of the passage is faith. It appears in the seven letters given the credit Pauline authorship. The word in the pericope is the feminine noun pistor in the accusative singular.

Surveys

Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, Church School Congress
Elder Edward T. Hayes, President
Elder Edward Buckner, D. D., General President

Survey
Doctoral Project on the need for theological education

1. Do you believe that education can be of assistance in living up to one’s potential?

2. How many years of education do you possess? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, college 1, 2, 3, 4, graduate 1, 2, 3, post-graduate 1, 2, 3, 4

3. Should the church’s ministry reflect the educational level of its members? Yes or No If yes, answer question #4.

4. Should that education be a secular curriculum, theological curriculum, or both?

5. What is the education level of your pastor?

6. Would you assist your pastor in receiving more theological education? Yes or No If no, answer question #7

7. What are the reasons you would not assist in such a study?

8. Should the local church be involved in both secular and theological education?

54Stephen L. Harris, 309.
55Walter Bauer, 662.
9. Do you believe that there is a connection between a successful church and ministry and its education level? Please explain your answer.

10. What do you believe the future of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention to be with or without a theologically educated pulpit and/or pew? Be specific with your answer.

Lectures

Tallahassee, Florida Lectures
May 21, 2012

Introduction: First, on behalf of Selma University’ Pensacola Extension, I would like to thank Pastor Price and the members of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church for hosting this Lecture Series. Dr. Cleveland is present so he will give thanks from the University. It is the intentions of Selma University that the information that will be shared this week will be a blessing to each individual and each represented church.

The 6:00 p.m. lectures will address the ideas of education, what is contextual theological education, and the re-evaluation/re-examination of theological education in the Primitive Baptist Church. Dr. Johnson will give the format of the three lectures to be shared by him.

Before beginning I would like to acknowledge the President of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention, Elder Franklin Rush and any other denominational leaders.

Theories of Education

Tonight, the lecture will focus on the theories of education. Beginning at this point will help to build an understanding of what the Tallahassee project will offer, why it is needed, and how it can bless the churches of this area, its leaders, and its members.
Behaviorism

There are many theories of education or theories of learning. The first theory is behaviorism. It is also called learning perspective. The term was coined by John Watson. One of the great proponents of this Theory was B. F. Skinner. Simply put, everything that an organism does should be regarded as behavior. Ivan Pavlov showed how this idea of changing behavior works with his experiment of dogs drooling when the proper stimuli were present rather than food (lab coats and a bell).

The basic assumptions must be held true as a process of learning. First, learning is manifested by change in behavior. Second, the environment shapes behavior. And third, the principles of contiguity (how close in time two events must be for a bond to be formed) and reinforcement (any means of increasing the likelihood that an event will be repeated) are central to explaining the process. For behaviorism, learning is the acquisition of new behavior through conditioning.

1) Classical conditioning, where behavior becomes a reflex response to stimuli as in the case of Pavlov’s dog.
2) Operant conditioning where there is reinforcement of the behavior by a reward or punishment.

Constructivism

The next theory is Constructivism. It deals with the way people create meaning of the world through a series of individual constructs. Constructs are the different types of

58ibid.
59ibid.
filters we choose to place over our realities to change our reality from chaos to order...Simply stated, it is a learning process which allows a student to experience an environment first-hand, thereby, giving the student reliable, trust-worthy knowledge.\textsuperscript{60}

In Constructivism the instructor becomes a facilitator and not teacher.\textsuperscript{61} The student responds to the environment and develops the needed tools in order to solve the problems presented to him/her. The main proponents of this theory are John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and David A. Kolb.

Cognitivism

The next theory is Cognitivism. The theory deals with the way the mind deals with the information it encounters. The best way to understand this theory is through the work of Piaget as he explains the idea of intellectual organization and adaption.

To understand the process of intellectual organization and adaptation...four basic concepts are required...These are the concepts of schema, assimilation, accommodation, and equilibrium.\textsuperscript{62}

Schemata are the cognitive structures by which individuals intellectually adapt to and organize the environment.\textsuperscript{63}

Assimilation is the cognitive process by which the person integrates new perceptual matter or stimulus events into existing schemata or patterns of behavior.\textsuperscript{64}

Accommodation is the creation of new schemata or modification of old schemata.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{60}http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructivism_(learning_theory) (5/18/2012)

\textsuperscript{61}ibid.


\textsuperscript{63}Wadsworth, 10.

\textsuperscript{64}Wadsworth, 14.

\textsuperscript{65}Wadsworth, 16.
The "balance" between assimilation and accommodation is referred to by Piaget as equilibrium.66

**Kinesthetic Learning**

Another theory is Kinesthetic learning. This theory deals the actual handling of items in order for the student to form a connection that will inspire learning. Because humans are all wired differently on the micro-level, some learners need to touch or be actively involved in the project. The academy is good at teaching theories, but many pastors with little formal training become effective in their fields because of hands-on activities.

**Dialogical Learning**

Finally, for the benefit of those who appreciate the new theories of this age, Paulo Freire’s theory of dialogical learning. It was through this work that Freire wrote the book *The Pedagogy of Hope*. It was Freire’s contention that every individual has the capacity to learn. Freire also argues that the student comes to the classroom with a treasure of information that will bless the other students as well as the instructor. It is this method that frees oppressed persons to think critically about their environment and develop methods to make fruitful changes. When persons have been oppressed as the peasants Freire worked with in Brazil their confidence has to be improved. Many of the members of the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church are the off-springs of former slaves whom have passed the insecurity about education to their children. Changing the way persons see themselves is a great tool dialogical learning provides. When one’s opinions, knowledge, values, and cultures are appreciated, the person’s ability to learn is enhanced.

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66 Wadsworth, 17-18.
The author contends that this is the best model for teaching in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church.

Tallahassee, Florida Lectures
May 22, 2012

Again I would like to thank the Pastor, Officers, and Members of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church for hosting these lectures. Also Thanks go out to each of you visiting from other churches.

Yesterday, we discussed theories of Education (Behaviorism, Constructivism, Kinistetics, and Cognitivism. We ended the discussion with Piaget's work and how the learning process takes place.

The language of the parishioner is where the breakdown has occurred when addressing the problem of providing accredited theological education for church leadership. The efforts to provide accredited theological education can be traced back to the period after emancipation of the Negro people in North America. Dr. Carter G. Woodson recognized the difficulty involved in preparing men and women to minister to those within the community where they serve. For Woodson the community comprised the newly freed men and women of color. The first attempt to provide adequate training for the leadership of the Negro church created a stigma that has lasted to the present day.

The stigma involved disconnect of the ministry with the community following training that was not contextual. Woodson explained the problem in the following excerpt.

The minister had attended a school of theology but had merely memorized words and phrases, which meant little or nothing to those who heard his discourse. The school in which he had been trained followed the traditional course for ministers, devoting most of their time to dead languages and dead issues.67
The ministry was educated but not to effectively serve his/her community. Modern scholarship can address the problem faced by the church in Woodson’s day by addressing the breakdown in the intellectual formation that is a part of the learning process. Barry J. Wadsworth analyses Piaget’s idea of intellectual organization and adaptation.

To understand the process of intellectual organization and adaptation...four basic concepts are required...These are the concepts of schema, assimilation, accommodation, and equilibrium.68

Schemata are the cognitive structures by which individuals intellectually adapt to and organize the environment.69

Assimilation is the cognitive process by which the person integrates new perceptual matter or stimulus events into existing schemata or patterns of behavior.70

Accommodation is the creation of new schemata or modification of old schemata.71

The “balance” between assimilation and accommodation is referred to by Piaget as equilibrium.72

Piaget’s work will be used as a tool to assist the author’s community to appreciate the need for theological education within its own context. When the training is not contextual it creates a ministry that is not in tune with its community.

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69Wadsworth, 10.

70Wadsworth, 14.

71Wadsworth, 16.

72Wadsworth, 17-18.
The ideas of Freire and Hooks were used to argue for a new system of learning. Today we begin that journey with the idea of contextual theological education.

Context is important to any transference of knowledge. Freire uses context as the foundation of his argument for dialogical methodology in pedagogy.\(^{73}\) The author uses contextual in order to examine the experiences, traditions, and culture\(^{74}\) of the members of the Florida State Primitive Baptist Church. The traditions of the Primitive Baptists are unique to members of the Baptist Faith per se.

The Scriptural foundation is 2 Timothy 2:14-15.

These things remind charging in the sight of God to not dispute about words, for no one benefits, in addition to ruin of the hearers. Making effort to present yourself approved to God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path. 2 Timothy 2:14-15. (translation by the author from Novum Testamentum Grace).

We look at context through these lenses:

1) Experiences

Each person or group has a set of experiences that are uniquely their own. Those experiences vary from person to person and/or group to group. One specific experience is the lingering residual of racism. Within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church racism is experienced by those who come to worship. The racism may be overt or covert but the person still can acknowledge its existence. Theologically it is the oppressed who

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must free the oppressor as well as the oppressed (Freire). Those who practice any form of racism do not view their actions as such when it comes to sharing the WORD of God. It is the author’s experience that those persons exhibit a denial of their action while proclaiming the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ. Because of this they are not the best person to teach the truths of the gospel to a group that they feel an innate superiority toward.

2) Religious Traditions

The traditions of the Primitive Baptist Church are unique. She holds the doctrine of election and it varies from the views of many mainline institutions that are financially able to operate Bible Colleges and Seminaries. Because of this many Primitive Baptist students are asked to adapt to the particular domination’s views in order to successfully matriculate through the curriculum. The author has experienced instructors who showed there disdain for the Primitive Faith by making derogatory statements concerning the author’s tradition. Activity such as that creates an obstacle to receiving proper information from the teacher. This only injures the student and his/her efforts to make sense of the information being shared through the class.

3) Culture

Culture is certainly an individual trait of a people. The author had the good fortune to study with students who represented many diverse cultures. The students dress, facial adornments, actions toward those in authority, etc. were different for each. Culture is ingrained in the person’s being. It can not be separated from the person’s being.
Again, I would like to thank Pastor Price, the officers, and members of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church for hosting us this week. Also I thank State President Rush who also serves as the Middle Florida/Georgia Church School President and Elder Connel Leonard the President of the Old West Florida Church School Congress for their support and attendance to these lectures.

The lectures for the past two nights dealt with the theories of education (Monday) and contextual theological education (Tuesday). Tonight the discussion will center on the challenge to re-evaluate and re-examine contextual theological education in the Primitive Baptist Church. In order to do this a look back is necessary. In 1907 the National Primitive Baptist Church was organized by men who achieved high academic status.

The early leadership of the National Primitive Baptist Convention [organized in 1907] reflected the emphasis upon an educated clergy. The leadership was comprised of a medical doctor, two Doctors of Philosophy, a college president, and several Elders who possessed Doctor of Divinity degrees. It is the argument of the writer that those who relegated the education of its members to the state failed to discern the ramifications of not having the onus to produce a ministry that could not only preach but could develop curriculums for the wholesome development of its members.

I would like to read a portion from my dissertation that will help to illuminate the ideas discussed tonight:

The twenty-first century has presented the author and the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church with a set of challenges that are new for this age. Because the church is
founded upon a sure foundation (the Word of God), she is equipped to meet those
challenges. This ministry project unveils the nexus of theological education and the
survival of community. Since the first century declaration “ye are the salt of the earth”
(Matthew 5:14 KJV) the survival of community has been inextricably tied to the praxis of
the church.

Even when the community attempted to destroy the church and her teachings, the
church provided doctrine that aided the same community’s survival. Every age has
witnessed this truth—a healthy church brings health and healing to community.
Therefore, this project seeks to bring about resurgence in the desire for theologically
trained leaders and workers in the church—the Primitive Baptist Church of Florida in
particular.

The project will be done through a re-evaluation and re-examination of the affects of
accredited theological education within the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church. The
findings of the project will assist the survival of the Primitive Baptist Church or any
denominational group that will use the project to enhance the health and healing of their
particular body (community).

With the previous statement in mind the discussion will begin with the re-evaluation.
Within the National Primitive Baptist Church one Association developed its own
Institution for training in 1986. The year, 1987, saw the first class entering the Huntsville
Bible Institute. Since that time the Institute has grown to over one hundred students and
its name was changed to Huntsville Bible College. The college is ecumenical serving
Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Christian Methodists, and Seventh
Day Adventists. The college became accredited in 2007 and offers bachelor degrees and
a Bachelor of Theology degree for students whom hold bachelor degrees in areas other than theology.

National Primitive Baptist Elders developed a project to provide accredited theological education in 1978 under the leadership of the President, Elder Forest Livingston. Elder John Dees, Dr. V. Castle Stewart, Elder Forest Livingston, and Dr. Carl Malbury developed the program called “School without Walls.” The project was presented to the joint faculties of Garret Theological Seminary and Northwestern University in May of 1979. The project was never actualized by the convention due to several difficulties, which will be covered in the completed dissertation. Several other attempts were made to implement accredited theological education in other regions of the Primitive Baptist Church. Birmingham, Alabama and Cleveland, Ohio had institutes that never attained full accreditation. The failure to reach full accreditation has affected the ministry in the National Primitive Baptist Church, but the effects are more noticeable in the State Convention of Florida because it is the largest of the state conventions comprising the National Primitive Baptist Church.

The Discipline of the Primitive Baptist Church requires that each State Convention provides a school for theological training. The mandate was given in 1907, but the continuous existence of accredited institutions has not been realized. Being a member of the Primitive Baptist Church since 1982, the author has knowledge of the need for accredited theological education. For the young minister the call to ministry should always be reflected upon as a call to preparation. The call to preparation was never seen

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75 John Dees, School without Walls: Project of the National Primitive Baptist Convention (Huntsville, AL: National Primitive Baptist Convention, 1978).

76 Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church, Fifth Edition, 115.
by the author to be any less vital as the call to labor in any other field. The author’s observation of other professionals dealing with the human being was that their preparation for license in their areas required a minimum of three years of graduate studies. After the studies, each candidate is examined for proficiency in his or her field. It is the author’s belief that ministry should have as high or higher requirement for practicing the craft, which one is called.

The Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention has two schools that offer secondary education. One is Greater Bethel School in Riviera Beach, Florida and Friendship Academy in Cocoa Beach, Florida. Both of these institutions are supported by the Florida State Primitive Baptist Convention. There is also a school at the New Jerusalem Primitive Baptist Church in Miami, Florida. Other schools were opened but have not continuous service. The Greater Bethel School developed a student that graduated from Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama and now studies at Princeton University in its Master of Divinity Program.

With this in mind do you think that theological education is effective in the Progressive Primitive Baptist Church?

To do a proper examination of theological education in the Primitive Baptist Church the participation of each of you is important. In the local church what is level of effectiveness of theological education?
Chart:

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<th>Initial Enrollment</th>
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The Primitive Baptist Church Covenant

For as much as Almighty God by His Grace has been pleased to call us out of darkness into His light, and having been baptized upon a profession of faith in Christ Jesus, and having given ourselves to the Lord and one another, in a Gospel Church way, we do covenant together by the help of God:

(1) To be governed and guided by a proper Discipline agreeable to the Word of God; (2) to keep up the Discipline of the Church of which we are members in brotherly affection toward each other, (3) to watch over one another, (4) to attend our church meetings, (5) to not absent ourselves from the communion of the Lord’s Supper without a lawful reason, (6) to pay the tithe and give offerings for the defraying of the Church’s expenses, and for the support of the ministry*; and (7) to not irregularly depart from the fellowship of the Church, nor to remove to bounds of distant churches without a regular letter of dismissal and placing it in the Church in which we hold membership.

These things we do covenant and agree to observe and keep sacred in the name of, and by the will of God. Amen.

*(II Timothy 3:16-17; Malachi 3:10; Romans 12:10; Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 10:25; I Corinthians 11:26)
Articles of Faith

WHAT WE BELIEVE

ARTICLE I – WE BELIEVE in only one true and living God and the trinity of persons in the God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and yet there are not three, but one.
References: Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16, 17; 28: 19; John 1:1, 14, 16; II Corinthians 13:14; Colossians 2:9; I Peter 1:2; I John 5:7.

ARTICLE II – WE BELIEVE the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.
References: Psalms 119:9-16; II Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 1:19-21.

ARTICLE III – WE BELIEVE in the doctrine of eternal and particular election of the human race chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

ARTICLE IV – WE BELIEVE in a covenant redemption between God the Father and God the Son.
Genesis 3:15; Psalms 111:9; Romans 5:17; Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 1:17; Hebrews 9:11-12, 10:5-7.

ARTICLE V – WE BELIEVE in the fall of man and the communication of Adam’s sinful nature to his posterity by ordinary generation and their impotency to recover themselves from the fallen state they are in by nature by their own free will and ability.
References: Jeremiah 13:23; John 6:44; Romans 1:23; Ephesians 2:8.

ARTICLE VI – WE BELIEVE that all chosen in Christ shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and be effectually called, regenerated and born again.
References: Psalms 37:28; John 10:28; Acts 2:39; Romans 8:29-30; Colossians 3:3; II Timothy 1:8-9; Jude 1:1.

ARTICLE VII – WE BELIEVE that sinners thus born again are justified in the sight of God alone by the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to them by faith.
References: Romans 3:24, 5:1; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5.

ARTICLE VIII – WE BELIEVE that faith is the gift of God, and good works the fruit of faith, which justify us in the sight of men and angels as evidence of our gracious state.
References: Matthew 5:16; Romans 3:20-24, 5:1, 8:1; James 2:18-19, 22.

78Discipline of the National Primitive Baptist Church, 2-5.
ARTICLE IX – WE BELIEVE that all the Saints of God justified by the righteousness of Christ shall preserve in grace, and none of them finally fall away so as to be lost.

References: Deuteronomy 32:6; Psalms 12:5-7; John 1:12, 10:27-30; Romans 3:24-25, 3:38-39; Philippians 1:6; Ephesians 1:4; II Timothy 2:19; and I Peter 1:5.

ARTICLE X – WE BELIEVE in a general judgement, both of the just and un-just, and that joys of the righteous shall be eternal and the punishment of the wicked shall be everlasting.


ARTICLE XI – WE BELIEVE that the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of Baptized Believers in Christ adhering to a special covenant, which recognizes Christ as their only lawgiver and ruler, and His word their exclusive guide in all religious matters. It is complete in itself and independent under Christ of every other church organization. It is alone a religious assembly, selected and called out of the world by the doctrine of the Gospel to worship the true God according to His Word.


ARTICLE XII – WE BELIEVE that the scriptural officers of a church are Pastor and Deacon, whose qualifications and duties are defined in I Timothy, Chapter 3 and Titus, Chapter I.


ARTICLE XIII – WE BELIEVE that Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water by a proper administrator (an ordained Elder) in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

References: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:12-16; Acts 8:36, 39; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12.

ARTICLE XIV – WE BELIEVE that only an ordained Elder has a right to administer the ordinances of the Gospel, such as have been properly baptized, called, and come under the imposition of the presbytery by the authority of the Church of Christ.


ARTICLE XV – WE BELIEVE that only regularly baptized and orderly Church Members have a right to communion at the Lord’s Table.


ARTICLE XVI – WE BELIEVE in Washing of the Saint’s Feet in an assembly of believers immediately after the Lord’s Supper.

References: John 13:2-17; I Timothy 5:9-10; (See also Chapter IX, Church Ordinances.)