

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

The typical Burmese Buddhist lifestyle is marked by kindness, patience, love, sacrifice, and loyalty. Generally, those who can live out the faith according to the teachings of Buddha and live peacefully with the people around them, practice meditation each day of their lives. More than before, meditation is a popular spiritual practice among active Burmese Buddhists. According to my observation, Myanmar Buddhists release their daily stress and anxiety by spending sometimes even five minutes of meditation upon the three sacred gems: Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. Meditation gives them peace, security, and purpose in life; it helps them focus on their own businesses, careers, and studies to be more effective and find success by living in harmony with the people and events in their lives. Every year, especially during summer holidays and other special days in Buddhism, most Buddhist temples in Yangon are full of adherents who meditate to find sufficient personal knowledge and insights through Satipatthana Vipassana Meditation and through all stages of progressive Vipassana insight (America Burma Buddhist Association 2020). One of the most famous Buddhist centers for meditation, the *Mahasi* Buddhist temple in *Kabaraye*, opens daily for its devotees to practice meditation from three am until eleven pm, with breaks for meals and baths. The ability to be balanced in life has been one of the benefits that meditation offers its adherents in the

context of Buddhism in Yangon, Myanmar. Meditation plays a huge role in Buddhist spirituality.

The word “spirituality” was first negatively used in the seventeenth century to describe elite forms of subjective religious practice (Certeau 1992, 94). For Frederick A. Milacci, faith and spirituality are closely related but not always synonymous (Milacci 2006, 217). Certainly, spirituality can grow only when a person has a true and authentic faith. Apart from faith, the growth of spirituality cannot be seen and can be very wavering and challenging. At the same time, the term spirituality and faith or faith development can be interchangeably used since spirituality and faith development are gradual and take time. Spirituality must be strongly based on faith. In Christian spirituality, faith is needed to have contact with God and to grow in knowing him more to become like him. Janet Walton believes that Christian spirituality has to do with one’s entire life; our understanding, feelings, imaginations, and decision aligned with the heart of Jesus Christ (Walton 1989, 134). It is a life lived in relationship with Jesus and living out Christian beliefs (McGinn and Meyendorff 1985, xv). Dallas Willard also agrees with this concept by saying that it is “a matter of reforming the broken soul of a man in recovery from its alienation from God” (Willard 2006, 156). Francis Schaeffer also gives a detailed explanation by saying that “true spirituality begins with the born-again experience and calls us into a deeper, more committed life. It involves an orientation of love toward God and toward people. The nature of spirituality is dynamic and positive, there is a positive inward experience of reality, followed necessarily by positive outward results” (Schaeffer 1971, 28). My own definition of spirituality is transforming into the likeness of Christ

(Rom. 12:1-2; I Cor. 11:1) by being balanced in loving God and loving others in action (Mk. 12:30-31).

Mark Yaconelli defines youth spirituality as spirituality which involves awareness of our nearness to God, our relationship with Christ, and the inspirational work of the Holy Spirit, which all empower people for acts of mercy, justice, and peace in the world. He says that teenage spirituality is motivated by an earnest desire to encounter the Triune God and recover the universal call to holiness (Yaconelli 2005, 280). John Westerhoff and John Eusden suggest that each human being is on a quest to integrate the material and nonmaterial, the body and the soul, the secular and sacred. Spirituality for them is an integrated person in the fullest sense, having a comprehensive and balanced life (Westerhoff and Eusden 1982, 2). Edward Carter states that “the Christian life is not one-half natural and one-half supernatural. He or she is one graced person” (Carter 1971, 15).

There are different opinions and approaches to spirituality and how to form a spiritual life. According to John H. Westerhoff, a spiritual life means a love affair with God. The spiritual life starts in God with love (Westerhoff 1994, 53-55). For Jurgen Moltmann, spirituality means both a life in and a living relationship with God’s Spirit (Moltmann 1992, 83). M. Robert Mulholland, Jr. defines spiritual formation as “a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others” (Mulholland 1993, 15). The term *spiritual formation* has been used in varied ways over time and between different streams of Christian tradition—such as the pursuit of holiness, godly living, spiritual perfection, the deeper life—but all point to a common core of ideas (Greenman and Kalantzis 2010, 10). James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim define spiritual formation as a process that helps believers grow with God in daily life (Estep and Kim 2010, 240).

For Dianne Leclerc and Mark A. Maddix, the focus of spiritual formation is uniquely for others which starts in the intentional, communal process of growing with God and living like Christ (Leclerc and Maddix 2011, n.p.). Likewise, the understanding of Rebecca Laird and Michael Christensen on spiritual formation aims at living out in the community and serving the world through the process of spiritual awakening, purification, growth, and development of a divine heart in the body of a human being (Laird and Christensen 2003, 15). Likewise, Lee Wanak, based on the biblical view, defines spirituality as total devotion to God with the natural outgrowth of loving one's neighbor (Wanak 1995, 30; Mk. 12: 28-34; Lk. 10: 25-37).

Spiritual formation refers to our daily walk with God, growing under His grace by living intentionally through spiritual practices, by allowing the Spirit of God to form the heart in Christ, and by living out one's faith as the heart, hands, and feet of Christ to bring shalom to the community and the world. Christian spirituality begins with the belief that God has created us as spiritual beings, capable of being in relationship with God; God seeks us in love and desires a relationship with us. Buddhist spirituality contemplates impermanence, non-self, emptiness, and interbeing to help adherents touch the phenomenal world more deeply, release their notions and concepts about things, and penetrate the heart of reality (Hanh 1997, 159). The contrast between Buddhist and Christian spirituality is that there is no figure of God in Buddhist spirituality which is the central focus of Christian spirituality. Buddhist spirituality focuses on self in order to find reality in life where Christian spirituality starts with God; continues to grow with God, and finally, end with God for the glory of God.

Background of the Problem

Spiritual formation practices are very helpful and important in the life of theological school students. While theological school students prepare themselves for the mission and ministry of God, they should build a profound spirituality as an essential part of their beings. In order to grow with a balanced spirituality as theological students, it is also crucial to look out and also learn from other faith traditions and ecumenical traditions of faith.

In 2015 November, I started my PhD in Transformational learning in Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS). In the “Spirituality and Transformational Learning,” I discovered the importance of the spiritual fathers and mothers of the medieval era. The spirituality of the medieval church fathers and mothers is characterized by total devotion, an undivided heart, lifelong commitment to God, and living out the kingdom of God on earth (Foster 1998, 23-58; Ringma 2014, 112-26). These spiritual fathers and mothers were models to follow for ministers of the gospel in theological schools. These contemplative spiritual practices should be in the spiritual formation curriculum of the theological schools in Myanmar.

Buddhist spiritual practices of meditation are very popular these days. In Myanmar, Buddhists find that meditation releases their stress and helps devotees to be more productive and focused on their work and careers. Although the Buddhist goal in meditation differs from the Christian’s goal, meditation is a practice valued by both. Would a spiritual formation curriculum for theological school students in Myanmar which includes medieval spiritual contemplative methods assist the students in understanding the value of contemplative meditation, and the life-transforming value of

Biblically grounded, Christ-focused meditation? Would these Bible-based practices equip students to better connect with the Burmese culture they are preparing to serve?

The history of Myanmar has had an impact on Burmese Christianity and, particularly, theological education. The programs and patterns of spiritual formation practices in theological schools have been crucial for students preparing themselves for the ministry of God in Myanmar.

The History and Challenges of Christianity in Myanmar

This section discusses the background of the Myanmar context.

Background of Myanmar

Myanmar, previously called Burma, is a country situated in South-East Asia. According to the Union report on religion census, volume 2–C, in Myanmar (Department of Population: Ministry of Labor 2016, 4), the total population of the country is 50, 279, 900. Among them, Buddhists comprise 87.9 percent and Christians 6.2 percent of the total population. Muslims are 4.3 percent and Hindus 0.5 percent of the total population. Animists are 0.8 percent, other religions are 0.2 percent, and no religion is 0.1 percent of the total population. The Bamar people represent a major people group; there are seven marginalized groups: the Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhaing, and Shan tribes. Moreover, the four major religions of the world—Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity—have been familiar to the people of Myanmar for centuries.

The Nature of Theological Education in Myanmar in the Past and Present Era

The first seminary in Myanmar was founded at Monhla in 1770 which has two departments of secular and theology, where the theological department is named later as

“missionary college” (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 19). The first formal school under the Baptist mission was founded in 1836 in Tavoy and later moved to Yangon (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 19). Karen Theological Seminary (KTS) and Burman Theological Seminary were founded in 1890.

Theological education has been developing rapidly in Myanmar since 1995. In 1990, a severe clash took place between the Myanmar government and university students regarding the leadership and management of the government. The government responded by closing all the universities in Myanmar for several years to suppress the voice of college students. Therefore, theological education became the only way for most of the young people and young adults in Christian churches to get a higher education. After 1980, theological schools became more independent, operated and supported by local founders with the help of friends from international where denominational values and needs are focused on their training and some few theological schools which are academically or ecumenically oriented (Hre 2012, 74). Especially, most of the Assemblies of God theological schools born out of the pressing need of the church for locally trained pastors which just focus on providing God’s people with the necessary theological and ministerial training for God’s work (Oo, 2014, 17). Furthermore, young people in those days faced limited opportunities for employment. Because of circumstances in the country, some young people came to theological schools without specifically having a passion or burden for ministry or a call from God to serve. According to my experiences in my bachelor and master degrees in Yangon, when spiritual formation practices were put in the schedule to help students grow, those students who came to theological schools merely for intellectual growth were not

interested in spending time on spiritual formation practices and did not grow in their spiritual life. Some students also came to theological schools based on the encouragement of their parents and their pastors. Moreover, some theological schools focused on quantity rather than the quality of their students. Based on the need of the time, the number of theological schools established in the country rose to record levels. From then on, many theological school graduates were added year after year. Some schools offer degrees with minimal academic work and little spiritual formation. Consequently, some graduates from those theological schools did not have a real and intentional zeal for equipping themselves for their future ministry in the church. Theodore Lim and Dengthuama said the problem currently occurs in Myanmar in terms of theological education is that “many seminary graduates have not worked for the churches as they are not trained by the churches” (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 26).

The Nature of the Spiritual Formation Practices in Theological Schools in the 1990s

As indicated above, some graduates of theological schools have been accused by the church itself of not having a strong zeal and for being ill-equipped for the ministries of the church especially in my context of ministry. At the same time, some Bible schools did not emphasize the importance of spiritual formation programs where intellectual development is focused more as of the traditional method of teaching which trained by former missionaries (Antone 2004, 30). Lim and Dengthuama (2016, 16) suggested that “theological education needed to be involved and aimed at a new life formation in each individual for forming the mind of Christ.” They also said that the personal growth and holiness be the focus on the theological school where we should not ignore the characters

on the altar of academic excellence on the altar of character (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 17). Some graduates were disgruntled with spiritual disciplines they were forced to do in the seminaries, such as fasting and prayer, Bible study, devotions, prayer meetings, and chapel. The distinctiveness of theological education, according to Stephen D. Brookfield and Mary E. Hess, lies in being formational, where theological teaching focuses on personal quality of faith commitment, or spiritual sensibility (Brookfield and Hess 2008, 3).

Some theological school students themselves confessed that their lives in the theological schools were worse than before they came. Sadly, based on the sharing of Bible school students during my previous teaching ministry in Yangon, theological schools became places where good Christians could even be negatively influenced by the worldly thoughts and lifestyles of their fellow roommates or classmates. The theological school students were unable to overcome those things opposed to Biblical teachings. According to my observation, some of the immorality of the world could be seen in theological schools without strong and effective spiritual formation practices. Theological schools were even portrayed as places where students lost their joy and became weaker in their spiritual life by going through doubt, testing, confusion, and general feelings of inadequacy (Cooper 2008, 114). In some theological schools, the deformation of spirituality appeared to be the norm rather than formation for the students (Interview with Stratton). “The holistic nature of theological education which aims to be informational, formational and transformational, with the focus on individuals, communities, societies, and structures” (Wanak 2017, 39), might be needed to improve spiritual development in the theological schools of Myanmar.

Moreover, the motivation for going to theological schools differs among students. Some students attend to learn English and find a good job, which could help them find a better and more stable life. At the same time, some graduates gain only knowledge from theological schools with little chance for a life-changing experience and spiritual growth. Therefore, upon finishing their studies, students are only formed intellectually. Some have never even been into the ministry for many reasons. Even when they serve in their respective churches and ministries, their spiritual lives are not well-formed and intellectual formation alone does not make them strong enough to cope with the challenges of the ministry. Those theological school graduates seem to be intellectually capable but not effectively formed in their spiritual life, making it quite hard for them to fit into local congregations. According to my observation, only a few of them, particularly one-third of the graduates served actively in the ministry in the 21st century.

Some theological school students are insufficiently trained to serve the people of God. The four main activities of theological education – theological understanding, denominational socialization, spiritual formation, and the reconstruction of church and society (Hess 2005, 33)–might need to be examined. Because of a lack of formation, not all of the theological school graduates are considered fit for ministry. Kwai Lin Stephens also writes that “Christian leaders with spiritual integrity are in short supply. So the way leaders are trained needs to be re-examined” (Stephens 2010, 193). Moreover, the context of Myanmar, which is religiously, politically and socio-economically pluralistic need to consider their curriculum of theological schools to be relevant and contextual (Lim and Dengthuama, 2016, 18). Theological schools in Myanmar should reevaluate and revise their spiritual formation curriculum based on a reexamination of the present spiritual

formation practices. This step will help them reconstruct a Biblically sound and culturally appropriate spiritual formation curriculum guidelines for the theological school students in Myanmar.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar, to discover the perspectives of theological school students, graduates, and faculty members regarding the effectiveness of those practices. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify which spiritual practices are utilized by the students; (2) identify which spiritual formation practices are most used by the students; (3) identify what practices are effective or ineffective, and (4) develop guidelines for biblically sound, spiritually formative, and appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices for incorporation into the curriculum of the two selected theological schools.

Statement of the Problem

This study explores this main problem: what guidelines can be formulated towards developing a Biblically sound, spiritually formative, and contextually appropriate curriculum for the selected two theological schools in Myanmar?" The sub-problems of the study are:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of the following:
 - a. From which theological school
 - b. Gender
 - c. Categories of role in the school

- d. Age
 - e. Number of Years as a Christian
2. What spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the two selected theological schools?
 3. How do the respondents believe the spiritual formation course and related activities offered in the curriculum impacted the spiritual growth and ministry of the students?
 - a. How do professors perceive the spiritual growth of the students involved in the spiritual formation course?
 - b. How do graduates perceive the impact of the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum on their spiritual growth and ministry?
 - c. How do students perceive the impact of the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum on their spiritual growth and ministry?
 4. How do theological school students, graduates, and professors decide which spiritual formation practices are the most crucial and necessary disciplines to practice?
 5. Which spiritual formation practices help students the most in the two theological schools?
 6. What is the participation of students across the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP?
 - a. Will there be any differences between men and women in participation in the spiritual practices of the CSPP?

- b. Will there be any differences in the spiritual practices of the students by the number of years of faith?
 - c. Will there be any differences in practicing across the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP by the respondents?
 - d. Will there be any differences of practices on the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP between participants from the two different schools?
7. What guidelines can be formulated towards a Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and spiritually formative curriculum for the theological school students in Myanmar?

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for this study are:

- a. There are no significant differences between men and women for spiritual practices.
- b. There are no significant differences in spiritual practices by the number of years of faith.
- c. There are no significant differences in practicing across the ten areas of spiritual practices.
- d. There are no differences of participation between participants from the two different schools.

Theoretical Framework

This study used the transformational learning theories of Jack Mezirow and David A. Kolb. Mezirow, an American sociologist, describes transformational learning as helping the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or

her own values, meanings, and purposes rather than to uncritically act on those of others (Mezirow 2000, 11). Mezirow states that transformational learning theory is centered on three main dominant themes: (1) Critical reflection of assumptions—if one does not challenge their current assumptions, the need for change is never recognized and hence, learning begins with challenging one’s current perspective; (2) Awareness of frames of reference—the point at which the need for change is acknowledged; and (3) Participation in rational discourse—we “attempt to understand – to learn – what is valid in the assertions made by others and attempt to achieve consensual validation for our own assertions” (Mezirow 2000, 19-20).

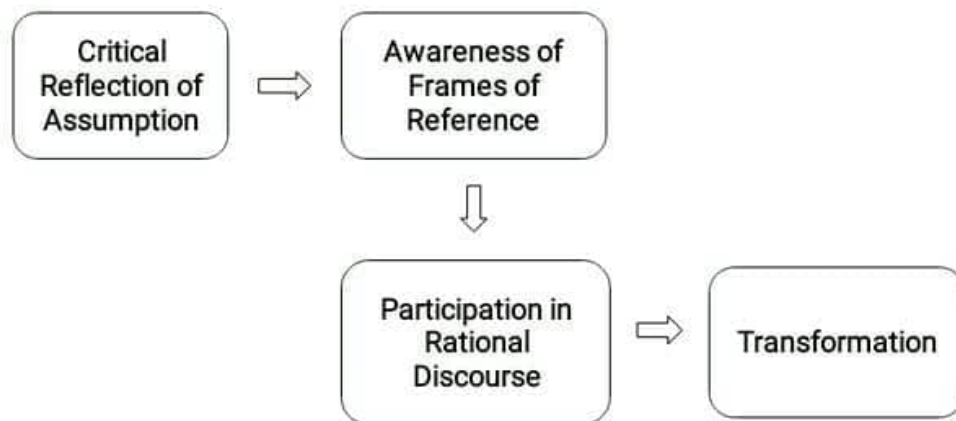


Figure 1: Mezirow’s Theory of Transformational Learning

In this study, the framework for the spiritual formation of theological school students in Yangon was shaped by the transformational learning theory of Mezirow. In applying the theory of Mezirow, the participants of the study is assumed to experience change through joining the study by their critical reflection on their spirituality and spiritual formation practices led by their theological schools. The qualitative research session helped them go through the process of critical reflection of assumptions, awareness of frames of reference, and participation in the rational discourse.

This study also used the framework of O. Jane Thayer, which is based on the experiential learning theory of David Kolb, which in turn draws from the intellectual origins of experiential learning in the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. Kolb, the Chairman of Experience Based Learning Systems (EBLS), believes that “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb 1984, 38). The two processes in learning are essential in Kolb’s model, they are called grasping and transforming, where both have equal status. The grasping axis has two poles, concrete experience (CE) and abstract conceptualization (AC); the transforming axis also has two poles, reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE) (Kolb 1984, 40-43).

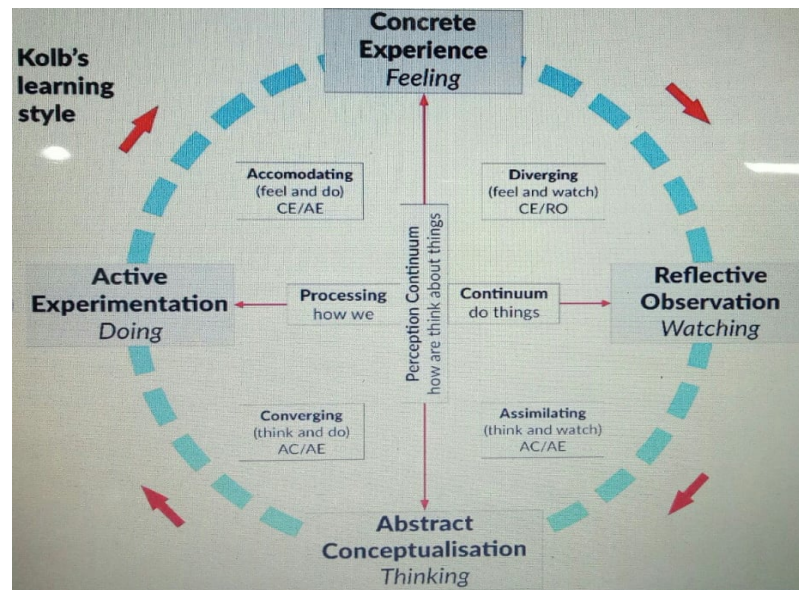


Figure 2: Kolb’s Model of Learning (Researchgate.net)

Kolb believes that we grasp new knowledge and understanding through our concrete life experiences, and also from studying abstract concepts. Transformation comes as we take note of (observe) and reflect on our experiences. Transformation takes place through the concepts we have learned or the experiments that we have made by

what we have grasped from concrete experience or concepts. Kolb's research also indicated that individuals have learning style preferences for the way they gather information and the way they are transformed by what they have grasped (Kolb 1984, 40-43).

Even though persons have learning style preferences, learners' understanding and transformation are enhanced as they learn to use all four kinds of learning abilities—concrete experience abilities (CE), reflective observation abilities (RO), abstract conceptualization abilities (AC), and active experimentation abilities (AE).

O. Jane Thayer used Kolb's models in the development of the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP) to understand a person's spiritual practices. In that profile, Thayer believes that the process of transformation takes place through grasping and transforming (Thayer 2004, 196). She developed four scales to evaluate various spiritual practices. Each scale relates to each aspect of Kolb's model of experiential learning. They are as follows: (1) Transcendent Scale (Concrete Experience) which assesses one's participation in a relationship with God, (2) Reflection Scale (Reflective Observation), which assesses one's critical reflection of culture and one's own life, (3) Vision Scale (Abstract Conceptualization), which assesses participation with the Word of God, and (4) New Life Scale (Active Experimentation), which assesses participation in relationships with others (Thayer 2004, 202).

When compared, these two theories of Mezirow and Kolb have a similarity and also some contrasts. These two theories share a similar focus on the role of reflection in adult learning. The theory of Mezirow focuses on the characteristics of adult learning which leads to transformation. He believes that adult learning relies on the individual's

ability to become better learners through reflection. Kolb's learning style centers on the importance of experience in learning and the role of reflection on that experience which leads to meaningful learning. Based on the transformational learning theory of Mezirow, the experiential learning theory of Kolb, and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer on the relationship between learning theory and spirituality, this study hoped to assert that transformation happens through critical reflection upon our active participation in both of the relationship of God and others; our critical reflection on the culture and our lives; and our abstract conceptualization on the Word which are connected through different kinds of learnings (Thayer 2004, 204).

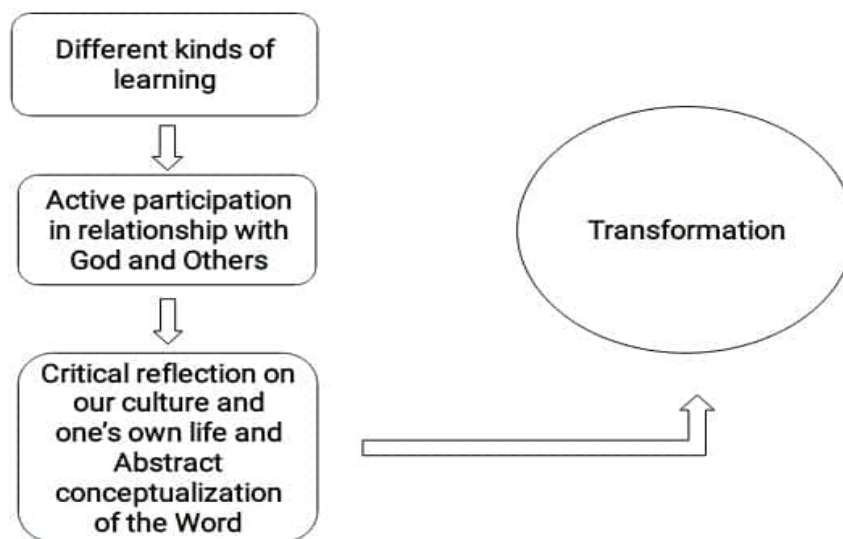


Figure 3: Theoretical Framework (Based on Jack Mezirow, David A. Kolb, and O. Jane Thayer)

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 4) presents the flow of research incorporating the roles of students, the graduates, and the faculty in identifying the effective spiritual

practices for theological schools using the Christian Spiritual Profile of O. Jane Thayer, which was in turn based on the experiential learning of David A. Kolb.

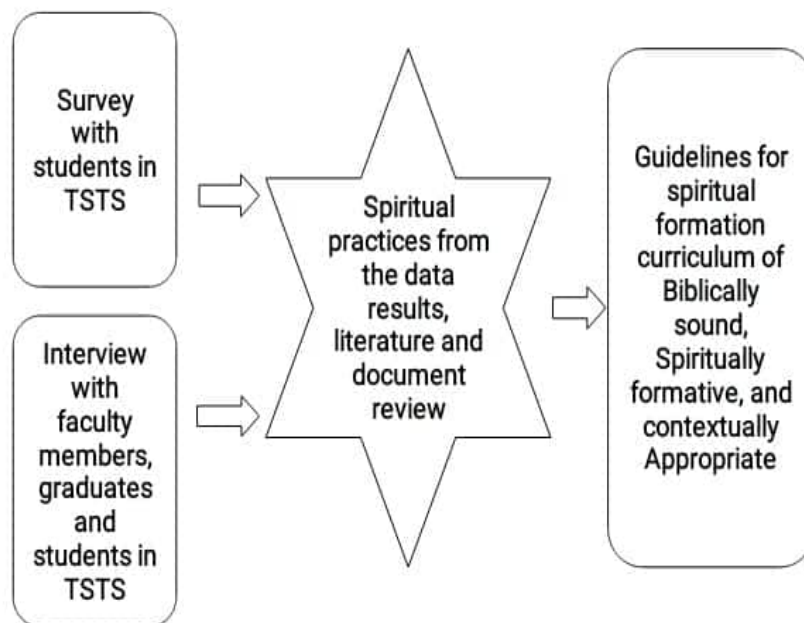


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

Research began with the document study on the course description, the catalog, and the spiritual formation syllabus showed how the spiritual formation process of each theological school fulfilled the mission and vision of their respective schools. Second, a survey of the current students based on the CSPP developed by O. Jane Thayer. From responses to the survey questionnaire, the general picture of spirituality, in the TSTS, became apparent. Third, the interview questions with the current students, the faculty members, and the graduates of the selected schools reflected the most effective spiritual formation practices of the theological schools. Data collection and analysis led to the development of effective spiritual practices and activities as a biblically sound, spiritually formative, and culturally appropriate curriculum guidelines for theological school

students in Myanmar. Finally, this revised and developed spiritual formation curriculum guidelines would be presented to the TSTS.

Brief Description of the Research Design

In order to find answers to the research questions, a mixed methods research approach was used. First, a survey was used to gather data to see the general picture of the spiritual walk and practices of theological schools. Second, a study of documents and interviews were used to collect qualitative research data. The research was conducted in two theological schools in Yangon, Myanmar: (1) TSA, which offers a Bachelor's degree, a Diploma in Theology, and a Bachelor of Ministry (Burmese), and (2) TSB, which offers bachelor's and master's degrees. For the privacy and confidentiality, the name of the two theological schools will be omitted and use this acronym of TSA for Theological School A and TSB for Theological School B as a pseudonym. The research subjects were the current students, selected graduates, and the selected faculty members of the TSTS.

The Significance of the Study

This study seeks to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar—TSA and TSB—to discover the perspectives of selected theological school students, graduates, and faculty members on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of those practices, and to develop a proposal for a revised model of biblically sound, appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices to be incorporated into the curriculum of the TSTS.

The study hopes to provide insight into the perspectives of students, graduates, and faculty on certain approaches to spiritual formation during theological studies. The results of this study can provide an overview of the spiritual formation curriculum in the TSTS and based on the data result, the suggestion for the spiritual formation curriculum guidelines for the TSTS would be developed. This study is significant because it focused on the spiritual vitality of the theological school students which has a great influence on the other areas of their lives such as academic study, social life, and ministry involvement. Moreover, it may also help students, graduates and faculty members to review the spiritual formation practices in their respective theological schools, to evaluate the effectiveness of those spiritual formation practices, and to suggest the spiritual practices they would like to utilize in the future. Secondly, the interview session of the research helps respondents to have a critical reflection on their lives and the spiritual formation programs. As the transformative learning theory of Mezirow indicates, the experience is a kind of transformation through the process.

Assumptions of the Study

This study is based on the following assumptions: first, the transformation is not evident in the lives of the students in the selected theological schools in Yangon. Second, it needs to change spiritual habits and programs in those two theological schools.

Definition of Terms

Burmese Context refers to the beliefs, value systems, practices, culture, and ways of life in the environment of the Burmese and all other minorities in Myanmar.

Christian spiritual formation refers to our daily walk with God, growing under His grace by living intentionally through spiritual practices, by allowing the Spirit of God

to form the heart in Christ, and by living out one's faith as the heart, hands, and feet of Christ to bring shalom to the community and the world

Contextualized Buddhist Practices are the noble practices which are not contrary to the Bible such as giving, respect for the elderly, caring for the earth and dressing up well for religious activities.

Curriculum generally refers to a set of lessons that is necessary for learning related to a specific subject or area. It includes overview, purpose, plans, practices, and results. In this study, the curriculum includes everything that happens in the context of a seminary.

Helpful Spiritual Formation Practices are the disciplines that help build the spirituality of students' lives during their theological studies.

Unhelpful Spiritual Formation Practices are those disciplines which do not help students' grow their spiritual life though it seeks to help them grow.

Perspective Transformation means having a different or changed perspective based on a crisis in life upon critical reflection and making our own meaning of life from it.

Spiritual practices are our daily activities and regular performance of actions to deepen our relationship with God and His Word in order to bring Christ to others by ourselves. A Christian practice is a cluster of activities, ideas, and images, lived by Christian people over time, which addresses a fundamental human need in the light of and in response to God's active presence for the life of the world in Jesus Christ.

Theological school students are those preparing themselves for the ministry of God by presently studying the word of God.

Transformation is a kind of spiritual, mental, and moral change, where the ideal lifestyle and character of Jesus Christ is being seen and applied in one's life.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study intended to examine the present spiritual formation practices and the spiritual growth of TSTS in Yangon, Myanmar. The researcher chose these two theological schools for being accessible for her to do the research and their willingness to join the study. The study started with a pilot test in a Bachelor level theological school in Kale town, Myanmar using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The statistical analysis was done by a statistical analyst from Asbury University.

The study focused on bachelor level students in two theological schools in Myanmar; therefore, it could not be generalized to apply to other theological schools that offer graduate or post-graduate degrees in the country. The study was limited to evangelical Christians; it cannot be generalized to apply to other denominations. This study mainly examined the spiritual growth of theological students based on their participation in the spiritual practices, which also affect other areas of development.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter II of this dissertation discusses the literature on the nature and patterns of spiritual practices in Christian and secular traditions, particularly in the Buddhist tradition. Chapter III provides the reader with an understanding of the research methods used, and Chapter IV reports the findings of the research. The conclusions and recommendations that flow from the research are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter presents the historical background through three main topics: historical background, review of literature related to the research topic and methodology, and summary. The historical background presents: 1) spirituality and animism in the context of Myanmar, (2) Buddhist spirituality, (3) Buddhist worldviews and Christian Spiritual formation, (4) Christian spirituality, (5) comparison of spiritual practices and values in Buddhism and Christianity, (6) the nature and impact of theological school graduates, and (7) need for reconstruction of the Spiritual formation curriculum. The review of literature related to the research topic and methodology has seven segments: (1) literature on spirituality, (2) Biblical theology of spirituality and spiritual formation, (3) various approaches to spiritual formation, and (4) Buddhist and Christian spiritual practices compared, (5) spiritual practices in theological schools, (6) the transformational learning of Jack Mezirow, and (7) the experiential learning of David A. Kolb and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer. Third, a summary section is presented.

Historical Background

Spirituality and Animism in the Context of Myanmar

Being Burmese and Buddhism cannot be separated. As a Burmese, being a Buddhist is a natural assumption of the people in Myanmar. Buddhism was introduced

into Myanmar approximately c. 1300 C. E. (Hawkins 1999, 88-89). The majority of the population of the country practices Buddhism. Buddhist adherents represented 89.8% of the total population of 50, 279, 900 according to the 2014 Census Myanmar. Theravada Buddhism is the dominant religion in Myanmar and the core teaching can be described as a moralistic religion, where outer actions and good deeds are practiced and performed (Department of Population 2016, 1-17). For a Myanmar citizen, the basic understanding of spirituality is strongly influenced by how much a person can bring peace, forgiveness, and kindness to his society through good ethics and conduct in any religion in Myanmar.

Burmese life is made up of ceremonies, merit-making activities, and donations. To attain enlightenment, a Burmese Buddhist must engage in good deeds, offerings, and charity work to build merit. The most obvious layer of spirituality is religious devotion. In terms of spirituality in the Burmese Buddhist context, all temples, monasteries, and shrines, and the countryside too, have the images of mythical figures and twisted faces of part-animal creatures more than the image of Buddha. Those images of mythical figures and twisted faces of part-animal creatures reveal an atmosphere of spirit worship and belief. Burmese spirituality has 37 kinds of nat (spirits); those nats have made their home in the Popa Taungkalat monastery and the Pegu mountain range near Bagan, Myanmar. With that, an altar for the Buddha with spirit houses can be seen in many Burmese Buddhist houses, businesses, and shops. Spirit worship and the spirit houses came down from the former animistic religion of the Myanmar people. The statues and animals in most Buddhist temples in Myanmar are for the 37 Great Nats, which in their simplest form are spirits similar to saints in the Burmese Roman Catholic Church. Both nats and saints are actual human beings who lived here on earth and lived a life of purity and

blessing to the people. All the nats in Myanmar have a human story behind them, where those people once lived and died violently but now are ultimately appeased for protection through worship and honor. Thagyamin, who is based on Indra, a Hindu deity, is King of the nat. The mountains, forests, and trees are protected by the nats which descend with spirits. Moreover, Burmese Buddhism and folk Buddhism believe that nats cover every aspect of human life: health, animals, crops, safety. The daily worship of a Burmese Buddhist is mixed with animistic beliefs in many rural areas of Myanmar and also by various ethnic groups. Religion in modern Myanmar is intertwined with myth and history in an odd confusion (O'Donnell 2017).

Myanmar

Myanmar was known as Burma before 1989 (both *Burma* and *Myanmar* mean strong and fast). It is an ancient nation in the Indochina peninsula and bordering to Bangladesh, India, China, Laos, and Thailand. The pioneer missionaries were Eastern (Armenian) Orthodox; they came to Myanmar prior to the thirteenth century. Catholic Christians introduced Catholicism to Myanmar around 1554. Protestant Christianity was introduced in 1807, and the Pentecostal expression of the Christian faith in the 1920s (Khai 2000, 667-68).

The nation's political history can be divided into the times of the monarchy (1044-1855), colonialism (1824-1947), parliamentary democracy (1948-1962), the socialist regime (1962-1988), the State Law and Order Restoration Council (1988-2015), and the National League for Democracy (2016-present) (Khai 2000, 667-68).

Buddhism

Buddhism is the dominant religion in Myanmar. Eighty-nine percent of the country's population follows the teaching of Theravada Buddhism. The core teaching of Buddhism deals with how to live a life of morality. The people of Myanmar understand spirituality as being preoccupied with outer actions, good ethics, discipline, or instructions. The whole concept of spirituality in Myanmar, whether in Buddhism or Christianity, is mostly influenced by how much a person can live a life of blessing to the people around them and the community where they live and even to the wider context of the world.

Buddhist Spirituality

Buddhist spirituality involves the moral life which focuses on abstinence from the sins of action, speech, and thought.

Everyday Buddhist Practices

On a daily level, common people follow the five general precepts of not killing, not stealing, not lying, not engaging in sexual misconduct, and not using intoxicants. Apart from these five fundamental precepts, all lay Buddhists need to keep three more precepts on Buddhist Sabbath days, which fall within a three-month period each year. These precepts are fasting during afternoons, abstaining from using perfume and cosmetics, and refraining from sitting in high places and sleeping in luxury beds. These actions affect the merit and impact of their karma, which means actions driven by intention which leads to future consequences. If they violate these actions, they will receive demerits and will awaken bad karma (Cing 1995, 147). Moreover, for the

layperson to attain nirvana in Theravada Buddhism, meditation is the most popular practice. Nirvana, according to the Buddhist is “the waning of the *tanha*, the craving, desires, passions which serve to perpetuate the cycle of rebirth. Without the fires of craving, man’s *purusha* (self, consciousness, universal principle) would be liberated from all attachment to the world of *prakriti* (material reality)” (Bradley 1963, 114). Even in Yangon (the former capital of Myanmar), every year lay people take a period of time for meditation under the guidance of a devout monk or a devout layperson. Mahasi is a famous meditation center established by Mahasi Sayadaw (1904-1982), one of the famous Buddhist monks. It hosts many lay Buddhists seeking truth through meditation (Habito 2005, 96-99). Central to the devotional temperament of Buddhists are the three refuges or three jewels. These three refuges give reverential homage to the historical Buddha, to his canonical teachings, and to his monastic community. For Buddhists, those three practices serve as a source of help and protection (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 208).

The Influence of Buddhism on Christianity in Myanmar

Similar to other Southeast Asian countries, Myanmar has been influenced by cultural currents emanating from India. It is believed that Buddhism and Hinduism traveled along the maritime trade routes to Southeast Asia at a very early date, probably starting in the second century B. C. E (Hawkins 1999, 88). According to Bradley K. Hawkins, by c. 1300 C. E., Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia had become Theravada Buddhist countries (Hawkins 1999, 88-89). As noted earlier, Roman Catholic missionaries brought Christianity to Myanmar around 1554. Protestant Christianity was introduced in 1807, and the Pentecostal expression of the Christian faith in the 1920s

(Khai 2000, 667-68). Myanmar was colonized by Great Britain in 1886 along with the other Southeast Asian countries of Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore. For a total of 62 years, Myanmar was a British colony until independence in 1948. Colonization influenced the spread of Christianity, but in a very limited way. Christianity in Myanmar failed to grow under British rule due to the fact that Burmese identity and Buddhism could not be separated. Being Burmese means being Buddhist; as the saying goes, “a good Bama is a good Buddhist.”

As in Sri Lanka, Buddhism in Myanmar came to be intimately linked with the concept of nationhood in the popular mind and played a role in the region’s fight to regain independence (Hawkins 1999, 89). Hawkins stated that “the struggle to escape the colonial grasp of Great Britain in Myanmar was to some degree associated with the resurgence of Buddhism in the same way that it had been in Sri Lanka” (Hawkins 1999, 90). The Young Men’s Buddhist Association was formed in 1906 and this organization provided the leaders who led the country to independence in 1948 (Hawkins 1999, 90). Myanmar in 1948 was a Burman (the name of the majority citizens of Myanmar) state. However, twenty-five percent of the total population was heavily influenced by European missionaries and became Christian (Hawkins 1999, 90). With the appointment of U Nu, who was elected as prime minister of the new Burmese Federation in 1948, his vision was to lead Myanmar to become a Buddhist socialist state. The Karens, however, who were mostly Christian at that time, strongly opposed the idea of making Myanmar into a socialist Buddhist nation and wanted to have their own state. The tension between the socialist government of U Nu and the Karens led to the rule of General Ne Win, commander of the government forces; the rule of General Ne Win was hoped to be a

momentous event (Hawkins 1999, 90). At the same time, U Nu's attempt to promote unity through a Buddhist revival did not calm the anxieties of the minority groups who sought to gain autonomy from the central government. These developments paved the way for government power to transfer to the military, who kept the country under their control while Buddhist belief remained strongly rooted. By 1958, the military rule of General Ne Win had taken control of Myanmar. In 1960, the plan to go back to civilian rule in Myanmar failed. The Burmese constitution was amended to make Buddhism the official religion of the country, which remained in military hands until 2016 (Hawkins 1999, 91). The military government succeeded in closing off Myanmar from the rest of the world; Myanmar became one of the most isolated countries in the world until 2013. The abuse of power by the military government brought injustice to Christians and restricted Christianity's influence on the country (Hawkins 1999, 91). According to Pum Za Mang, from U Nu and Ne Win to Than Shwe and Thein Sein, all these state leaders of Myanmar protected and promoted Buddhism as the national religion and favored the nation's Buddhist monks over adherents of other religions in the country, especially Christianity. Myanmar Christians were restricted, persecuted, and discriminated against by the Buddhist community and national leaders in Myanmar (Mang 2016, 148-49). This is the short version of how Buddhism gained strong, firm roots in Myanmar.

Lessons from Buddhist Spirituality

So-called "engaged Buddhism" encouraged the Bodhisattva's spirit of compassion and led the Buddhists to address social inequities and injustices (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 216). These Buddhist groups were enthusiastic in taking care of the natural world and environment in order to make it more sustainable and become a

blessing for the living creatures in it. This trend of taking action to protect creation, which has been a strongly rooted passion among Buddhists in the eastern hemisphere, also attracted many adherents from the western hemisphere where people were taking serious actions on social justice and ecological concerns (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 216).

Buddhist Worldviews and Christian Spiritual Formation

Buddhism began in India, five hundred years before the rise of Christianity and was significantly influenced by “perspectives that were commonplace in India at that time” (Schumann 1973, 11; Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 200-01). It embraced three main perspectives which included the idea of “the triple world system, karma and nirvana” (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 200-01).

The Triple World System

Robinson and Rodrigues stated that:

the Buddhist worldview and cosmology derives quite substantially from perspectives that were commonplace in India at the time. This included the idea of the triple world system of heavenly realms populated by gods, goddesses, and powerful demons, earthly realms where humans and animals dwell, and the hellish realms, where ghosts and lesser demons reside and beings suffer terribly (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 200-01).

Karma

“Karma is understood as a result of our words and actions. It is believed that each one of us is responsible for the consequence of our actions and words which determine our future rebirth. The future rebirth will reflect our present actions and thoughts and determine the categories of rebirth such as a beast, insect or man” (Bradley 1963, 83).

Robinson and Rodrigues explained that “though there is the belief of Karma, Buddhists do not believe in the existence of an unchanging and eternal soul which transmigrates from one incarnation to another” (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 200-01).

Nirvana

David C. Bradley defined the word “nirvana” as the combination of two words called the negative *nir*, and the root *va*, meaning “to blow” (Bradley 1963, 83-84). When a person dies, the fires of his body go out, becoming cool. Therefore, nirvana means going out, waning away, or losing selfhood. As Robinson and Rodrigues wrote, “the ultimate goal in Buddhism is not the attainment of rebirth in a heavenly realm, but complete liberation from the cycle of rebirth (samsara) altogether. Once Buddhahood has been attained, there is no more rebirth in any realm” (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 200-01).

The core ethical teaching of Buddha, or the eightfold path of eliminating suffering, are right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right meditation. Moreover, there are four virtues and practices to enhance spirituality, such as loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity (Young 1995, 144-46). Among many noble virtues that Buddhists try to possess as their morality, the two sacred virtues in the Buddhist context of Myanmar are equanimity and compassion.

Equanimity

According to the worldview of Myanmar society, how a person withstands difficulties and tensions is a mark of spirituality. Such people are considered more admirable and outstanding than the rich and educated. Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of

Aung San, the father of the nation in its struggle for independence from British colonial rule, showed the world and the people in Myanmar her stability while striving for democracy. After bearing much hardship and strain, she brought democracy into Myanmar in 2015. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1991 for her efforts on behalf of and commitment to democracy, human rights, and ethnic reconciliation by peaceful means. Following in the footsteps of her father, General Aung San (1915-1947), her sacrifices for the country, especially for democracy, had restricted her freedoms, especially her ability to be with her husband, Michael Aris (1946-1999), a British historian who died of prostate cancer in 1999. Suu Kyi was under house arrest for almost 15 years as a political prisoner. Many times, she was under life-threatening attacks by the ruling military regime. However, she showed the world how to conquer life-threatening oppression and opposition with nonviolent or peaceful means and with a stable heart. Nevertheless, during the Rohingya crisis in 2017, the international media condemned her with accusations that she remained silent on the human rights violations and ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya in Rakhine State. The accusations ignored her strong condemnation of any violation of human rights for any race and religion in Myanmar. Su Kyi was silent on the crisis in Rakhine State because suffering was not limited to the Rohingya, who were immigrants from Bangladesh, but affected other ethnic groups in Rakhine State, such as Rakhine and other ethnic groups. She did not stand for a particular tribe or people group, but stood for each ethnic group in Rakhine State and trusted the military to handle the situation in bringing peace and prosperity to each ethnic group in Rakhine State (BBC News 2018).

Compassion

One of the most sacred virtues of spirituality in the Myanmar context is kindness to fellow human beings, animals, and nature. Takeuchi Yoshinori says that “in primitive Buddhism, the purified spirit of a monk is revealed in compassion. Compassion is seen as the consummation of contemplation, and contemplation as the realization of compassion” (Yoshinori 1983, 42). The Bama (Burman or Burmese) tribe, which comprises more than half of the population of Myanmar, is traditionally famous for their charity and generosity. Recently, according to the Charity Aid Foundation World Giving Index 2018, Myanmar was listed first in the top ten most generous nations followed by the United States of America, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sri Lanka, Ireland, and Malaysia (Charity Aid Foundation 2018). Victims of tragedies such as fire and flood all provide opportunities for Buddhists to show kindness and sympathy.

Many individuals help the poor as they struggle to survive in daily living, and also in death. Kyaw Thu, a Myanmar actor/director, at age 59 started the Free Funeral Service Society (FFSS) in 2001. This organization provides free services for people who contact them. From January 2001 to October 2012, they sponsored 120,000 funerals. Moreover, after the 2008 Nargis Cyclone, Kyaw Thu was actively involved in relief and social work for all those affected by the natural disaster. After the 2008 Nargis Cyclone, his organization raised \$400,000 for the victims. Kyaw Thu received the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2015 in the Philippines. He lives his life by sharing his possessions, his ability, and his time for the needy. His life is inspirational and exemplary for people in Myanmar regarding social work. His kindness is obvious without a single word, but with tender action experienced by many vulnerable people in Myanmar (Bayos 2016).

Other admirable characteristics of Buddhist beliefs also helped Buddhism gain a strong influence on the people of Myanmar. One is its commitment to peace. For many others, Buddhism's practical program for rising above the pains of human life is one of the fascinating facts about Buddhism (Hawkins 1999, 111). Moreover, the kindness of Buddhists which extends to the mute inhabitants of the planet and the other species is also one of the noble characteristics of Buddhism (Hawkins 1999, 114). Hope, peace, and compassion are the characteristics of Buddhism that attract many people in Myanmar (Hawkins 1999, 114).

This discussion of Buddhist spirituality points out the importance of spiritual practices that connect people to God in the midst of their daily activities. Moreover, it emphasizes the importance of both faith and practice in Christian life, which should go hand in hand. Sometimes Christians can focus too much on the inner life, and their personal relationship with God and neglect to impact the outside world. At the same time, too much focus on performance can lead Christians to a pharisaical mentality in their Christian life. The focus on things related to the mind and heart in Buddhist spirituality is a great example for Myanmar Christians to whom the meaning of spirituality is twisted and mostly measured with the performance mentality in some of Myanmar Christian churches. Sometimes a Christian can fast for 40 days, but that same Christian could have a problem with forgiveness and hatred which is unhealthy for one's spiritual life. Buddhist spirituality helps Christians see the importance of both our intentions of the heart and our actions in life.

Christian Spirituality

Spiritual longings are in the hearts of all people today, Christians and non-Christians alike. As George N. Capaque mentioned, spirituality has captivated the hearts and minds of many people of different faith backgrounds, as attested to by the countless books and courses offered both online and in universities and seminaries (Capaque 2014, 53). Glenn G. Scorgie agreed that spirituality has become a major interest of the people because of twenty-first-century materialism and its seductiveness, which causes soul-hunger, helplessness, and less satisfaction with the material world. He believed that “the contemporary quest for ‘spirituality’ is a cry of the human spirit for the satisfaction of the deeper needs of creatures with eternity set into their hearts” (Scorgie 2010, 370; Ecc. 3:11). William M. Thompson argued that “many Christians today have a keen desire to learn how to experience a deeper and more authentic prayer life despite the considerable challenges modern culture presents for people seeking the silence needed for reflection and meditation” (Thompson 1991, 2). Regarding Christian spirituality in Myanmar, different faith traditions such as Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, including Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism, have their own ways of pursuing the goal of spirituality.

As mentioned earlier, Eastern Orthodox missionaries arrived in Myanmar in the thirteenth century and Catholic missionaries in the fifteenth century; Protestant missionaries brought the gospel message to Myanmar around the eighteenth century. However, Christian representation has remained low despite such a long history of Christianity in the country. According to the 2014 census of Myanmar, Christians in 1973 were 4.6 %, 1983 4.9%, and 2014 6.3 % of the total population (Department of Population: Ministry of Labour 2016, 5). Some Christian leaders were concerned about

this slow growth of Christianity in Myanmar and have begun seeking to understand the reasons behind it.

Among them, Chin Khua Khai, a theologian and Christian leader, has been studying the possible causes of this slow growth. According to Khai, “spiritual formation practices are not clearly taught and not considered a priority in the churches. Pastors and evangelists are passionate to do mission and evangelism. However, there has been a lack of emphasis and preparation for discipleship and spiritual growth in a practical way among Myanmar Christian churches, where spiritual normality has taken its root so strongly” (Khai 2003, 191). To Khai, the reason for the slow growth of Christianity in Myanmar lay in an insufficient focus on training and instruction for personal and corporate spiritual growth which, while seen in some churches, needed improvement. Most popular messages and themes were related to physical blessings as opposed to spiritual matters since, for most Christians, survival is literally a daily struggle throughout most of the country. To support this idea, Steve Curtis also said that “this appeal is of course particularly acute in the context of extreme poverty, such as is the case in much of Myanmar where 25.6 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line” (Curtis 2018, 64; Asian Development Bank 2020). The prosperity gospel has been popular in many churches to the detriment of true discipleship. Understanding of spirituality defines Christians’ practical walk in their life of faith. Different definitions and interpretations of spirituality and understanding of the works of the Holy Spirit have arisen among Myanmar churches.

Extreme Spirituality and Practices

One factor that has had a negative impact on the church in Myanmar, particularly the north-western part of Myanmar, is a movement led by persons called Spiritualists, people who are considered to be deeply spiritual, take spiritual practices to the extreme, and claim to receive special messages from God. Other Christians look up to them and follow them. Some extreme understanding of spirituality has resulted in unnecessary demands and burdens being put on Christian families who look up to them and assume that the Spiritualists speak God's word to them. However, that understanding of spirituality grew out of a special movement of God's Spirit in the 1970s. The gospel message with revival reached the Western part of Myanmar beginning in 1970, particularly among the Chin, or the Zomi tribal group (Khai 2000, 667-68). Many conversions and spiritual breakthroughs took place in that area. Many spiritual practices helped new believers to experience God. At the same time, the passion of new Christians for God burned bright and their love and longings developed. Some new Christians practiced whole nights of prayer and solitude.

Because of the revival, believers earnestly practiced evangelism. In Chin state, especially in its Northern part, the gospel was presented urgently and more than half of the villages experienced great awakenings (Khai 2011, 228). Many young people were touched and their lives were transformed. Sharing the gospel was believed to be the most urgent thing to do. Therefore, most conversations of born-again Christians included such statements as follows: "Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?" and "If you die tonight, do you know, where you will go?"

With the fire of revival in Chin state, many churches were established. The revival opened the eyes of the people and gave opportunities for new believers to experience the power of Scripture, the power of prayer, the power of healing, and the power of the name of Jesus Christ. Believers saw many miracles, signs, and wonders. However, sometimes, some of their actions were driven by emotion and not by God and his Word.

For example, thirteen church members, including men and women considered to be spiritual people, felt moved to pray for a man who had been dead for 3 years, but their singing and praying did not raise the dead (Nang et al. 2010, 221). In 1979, believers from different villages in Chin state claimed to have received Word from God that Jesus would come again on December 23. Those who claimed to have received this message were known as the spiritual people, and they prepared for Christ's return, selling and giving away their possessions. However, they had to return to life as it was when Jesus did not return (Nang et al. 2010, 223-27). These events caused others in the community to look down on Christians and Christianity.

The spiritualists are considered extraordinary Christians by those who see themselves as ordinary Christians. This causes some members of the church to be more interested in what the spiritualists have to say than in their pastors' teaching. The perspectives of the spiritualists, however, are sometimes unbiblical. Lack of sound Biblical teaching and lack of focus on intentional Christian discipleship in the churches can lead to dependence on the spiritualists' unbiblical teachings for guidance.

When spiritual power is not tied to spiritual growth, unhealthy consequences occur (Foster 1998, 103). Spirituality and spiritual disciplines should be aligned with the

Bible so that the name of God will be glorified through any activity practiced in any faith community. Myanmar churches and Christians need to understand the true meaning of spirituality and the right ways of using spiritual practices and spiritual warfare which can bring glory to God for the benefits of others. Spirituality is meant to build others up, and not be destructive. According to Siang-Yang Tan and Douglas H. Gregg, “the blessings of the Spirit-filled life, are greater love and intimacy with God, exaltation of Jesus....greater wisdom and faith..., release of spiritual gifts for ministry...power in prayer...deeper trust in Scripture as the Word of God, renewed zeal for evangelism, and fresh love of Christ and others” (Tan and Gregg 1997, 21). These are the characteristics we desire to nurture through building spiritual formation into the curriculum for students preparing to serve as pastors and leaders in the churches of Myanmar.

Evangelical Brands of Spirituality

The evangelical tradition is comprised of the three great themes: “the faithful proclamation of the gospel, the centrality of Scripture as a faithful repository of the gospel, and the confessional witness of the early Christian community as a faithful interpretation of the gospel” (Foster 1998, 219). Although there are churches that focus on the spiritual nurture of the relationship with God, some other churches emphasize outward signs. The themes of evangelical spirituality in Myanmar, based on the beliefs and practices of the majority of evangelical Christians, have been more focused on the outward signs of Christian life than on the interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Spirituality is therefore measured by how much a Christian is blessed and not by how much the inner life is growing—from time spent in God’s Word, or learning from the traditions of the early church, or how much one is serving. As Charles R. Ringma says, I

believe that some of the Myanmar churches are in need of “growing in a love relationship with the Word made flesh and to grow in the wisdom of God” (Ringma 2014, 125).

Nominal Christianity

A great number of Christians in Myanmar live a nominal Christian life. Schaeffer says that true spirituality goes beyond being justified and having the assurance of salvation (Schaeffer 1971, 16-17). It requires us to die daily to certain things and live a life that has a love for God and service to God in communion with him in the present moment of history.

The saltiness of today’s churches and Christian uniqueness has been questioned among other religions in Myanmar. According to John Stott, “Radical disciples, are those who are not swallowed up by the contemporary trends of the world and to the surrounding culture, who are resisting the modern culture by developing a Christian counterculture” (Stott 2010, 17-21). The radical disciples should be added to all of the Christian churches in Myanmar. Meanwhile, the work of the Spirit continues in giving the burden to some Christians for building a strong foundation of their relationship with God, their relationship with others, their critical reflection of culture and their own lives, and their participation in living the Word of God (Thayer 2004, 202).

Starting from 2016, under the democratic government, there has been increasing opportunities in terms of Christian mission and ministry in Myanmar. This has been one of the miracles God has granted for Myanmar Christians to grow with proper spiritual health and become mature in faith and action.

Comparison of Spiritual Practices and Values in Buddhism and Christianity

The spiritual practices and values of Buddhists in Myanmar are merit-making and vipassana. There is one more practice called Weizza which related to the practice of an esoteric form of the occult, which is the least popular practice. Merit making in Theravada Buddhism includes *dana* (giving), *sila* (morality), and *bhavana* (meditation) (Davids and Davids 2000, 211). The two basic meanings of merit-making are spiritual insurance for Buddhists, where they expect to enjoy in the future to experience a relatively prolonged state without suffering and a kind of virtue that a person acquires in the eyes of others through his or her acts of merit-making (Keyes 1993, 267). Vipassana means a kind of insight meditation which aims to attain enlightenment.

Christian spiritual practices can be summarized into three main categories according to Richard Foster. They are as follows: (1) inward disciplines: meditation, prayer, fasting, and study; (2) outward disciplines: simplicity, solitude, submission, and service; and (3) corporate disciplines: confession, worship, guidance, and celebration (Foster 1998). According to O. Jane Thayer, there are 10 disciplines of spiritual formation practices called prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, and stewardship (Thayer 2004, 206-07).

John B. Cobb, Jr. identified four kinds of basic differences between Christians and Buddhists. First, Buddhist culture focuses on socially desirable behavior which is aligned with the structure of society and members are required and expected to conform to the social structures and meet the needs of others in society (Cobb 1982, 132-33). Therefore, Cobb concluded that the function of Buddhists in society is always better than

the Christians' contribution to society. Generally, Buddhists are always ready to take action on social injustices, mistreatment, and social problems. Though Christians also have good attitudes and actions toward the community, compared to the ethics and actions of Buddhists in terms of compassion and sympathy for people, Christians are still left behind in taking the response.

There are some examples of Buddhist adherents taking action in world affairs. An impressive example is the Neo-Buddhist movement of B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) in responding to the oppressive and dehumanizing situation of the untouchable caste in India. Moreover, the alleviation of human suffering in Sri Lanka, initiated by A. T. Ariyaratne of the Sarvodaya movement is a kind of community-based initiative. Another remarkable example is the monastic-centered Theravada Buddhism in Thailand for ongoing development in the socio-ecological engagement of Buddhists, by the Buddhadasa Bhikkhu (1906-1993) a forest monk who presented a vision of Buddhism as grounding personal as well as social transformation. Other Buddhist monks such as Maha Ghosananda from Cambodia and Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh from Vietnam, as well as Aung San Suu Kyi from Myanmar, are great examples of engaged Buddhism with a socio-ecological impact to their own context and society. Humanistic Buddhism is also practiced by the Fo Kuang Shan (Mountain of Buddha's Light) group and the Buddhist nun Cheng Yen and her group called Tzu Chi (Compassion Relief) from Taiwan. Moreover, the new religious movement in Japan which follows the teaching of Nichiren centered on the transformation of this earth into the Lotus Land through the propagation of Lotus teaching and the reformed movement in Korea called Won Buddhism, has a

fourfold platform for addressing the social malaise of our world. The Dalai Lama from Tibet, for his socially engaged Buddhism, is outstanding (Habito 2005, 190-93).

The second difference of Buddhists from many who claim to be Christians is that Buddhism discourages violence and greed, which in turn lifts up the values of humans and society more. It always stands against the exploitation of the weak in society. Human dignity is strongly valued by Buddhists, who tend to be more tolerant than Christians in general. Third, personal kindness and generosity are the core practices of Buddhism and are ways to work toward the attainment of enlightenment. Buddhists and Christians have similar views on the importance of service and sacrifice for the sake of the community. The final characteristic of Buddhism is to encourage people not to seek rewards for any good work or completing an assigned task. The requirement for morality is quite high in Buddhism.

Cobb wrote, “The relation between traditional Buddhism and Christianity can be clarified by attention again to *pratitya-samutpada*, which is called dependent origination” (Cobb 1982, 135). Eviatar Shulman clarifies that dependent origination is a description of all that exists (Shulman 2008, 297). It is believed that both mental and physical phenomena come into being only in relation to, and conditioned by, other phenomena. Christian spirituality has concentrated on discerning the possibilities, determining which constitute God’s call, and responding appropriately. Buddhist disciplines concentrate on the realization that what is occurring is just coalescence in which there is finally no dualism of subject and object. Buddhist disciplines have been far more refined and effective than Christian ones, partly because the latter have not overcome the illusion of substance and dualism (Shulman 2008, 44). Substance Dualism recognizes two sorts of

substance, the mental and the physical; the two exist independently and separate (Philosophy Index 2002-2020).

Therefore, the values and practices of both Buddhism and Christianity are somehow similar and still noble to pursue. However, the difference in these two religions is that Buddhism pursues these noble actions and practices to attain a state higher than their present one; in Christianity, the drive for doing all those spiritual practices is to start with experiencing the love of Christ and giving back love in turn to him by living how Christ wants us to live. Therefore, Buddhist practices are driven by the hope that they will earn a better future but the Christian spiritual practices and values are driven by love. For this love to capture the hearts of Christians and cause that love to be lived out in everyday life in the world around them, Christians need ongoing spiritual formation.

The Nature and Impact of Theological School Graduates

According to research done by David Thang Deih Lian, a pastor and a missionary from Myanmar, there are 701 churches in Yangon and around 364 theological schools in Myanmar (FGA Yangon 2019). Most of the theological schools offer bachelor's degrees, some offer master's, and a few offer doctoral degrees with extension programs of international institutions. Some training centers offer diploma certificates and some short-term training for missionaries. Most of the theological schools have a burden for the students to be well equipped for the ministry of God in Myanmar and beyond. The goals in established theological schools have the goal of preparing people for the ministry of God and reaching out to the unreached people groups of Myanmar. Those theological schools have produced approximately 3000 graduates. Some theological schools, including Full Gospel Bible Training Center in Yangon, also train and equip those who

have a high school level education, to become powerful and enthusiastic Christian missionaries, ministers, pastors, and church planters.

The theological schools in Myanmar may have at least 3,000 graduates every year who go to minister in churches. However, churches who have a theological school graduate as a pastor do not seem to grow more their church members numerically or spiritually in contrast to churches who do not have a seminary-trained pastor. Normality in faith and practice among Chin Christian churches and other tribes in Myanmar has been an occurrence for second and third generation Christians (Khai 2011, 227). Theological education does not seem to make a great contribution to the hearts and lives of the students in theological schools when considering the significant number of graduates and their lack of results in ministry.

Speaking from the North American context, Stephens averred that “Christian leaders with spiritual integrity are in short supply. So the way leaders are trained needs to be re-examined” (Stephens 2010, 193). He argued that “leaders must be disciples before they can be disciple-makers” (Stephens 2010, 193). This calls for a change in the way future pastors are trained and equipped. There needs to be a “shift from leadership to follower-ship,” the willingness to listen, learn from others and cooperate in reaching goals, “from information to spiritual formation, and from content to character . . . and competence” (Stephens 2010, 193). Stephens identified on methods of teaching, that it may be important “[t]o integrate these disciplines in the seminary setting . . . [namely] non-formal educational approaches, the power of hidden curriculum, modeling, and mentoring and coaching” (Stephens 2010, 193).

Julie Gorman agreed with Stephens when she said, “learners are experiencing pressure from society which gives priority to an external ‘paste-on’ over internal commitment, action over value and content more than character, which results in only knowledge without character” (Gorman 2001, 24). Conforming to the Word and being transformed into the likeness of Christ has been a great challenge for some Christian ministers. After graduating from seminary, pastors tend to settle down into a life of comfort and cozy ministry. In Yangon, there are some churches and ministries led by pastors and Christian leaders who have had a chance to study or somehow be connected with Christian organizations abroad. Those ministers have a chance to receive financial support from international organizations and other means of support. Among them, some kinds of ministries can easily be swayed by the intention of getting sponsors and support from abroad, but weak in practical ministry. A commitment to striving for perfection, holiness, and spirituality has been very hard to see in the lives of the ministers themselves when prosperity or superficiality takes control of their minds and lives. Some of Myanmar evangelical Christians, including ministers and theological school students, are in need of transformation attained by pursuing spirituality. As Glenn G. Scorgie suggests, evangelical Christians in Myanmar also need to resist the pervasive pressure to downsize Christian spirituality and recover “intentionally cultivated virtues” and the “spiritual disciplines” in transforming friendship with God (Scorgie 2011, 30-31).

This section has shown that Christians in Myanmar, particularly among the Christians in my context, need to be more devoted to studying the Word of God to become true disciples of Christ, who bring glory to God. Moreover, maturity in Christ must be a goal for each Christian so that they cannot be easily swept away by the lies of

the evil one and false teachers in the Church. It helps us to see the importance of spiritual food, which is the living Word of God for our daily growth and maturity as a true Christian and follower of Christ. Spiritual coldness or hardness in life results when the focus of life rests more on material things than eternal things. Each Christian should build their life on the rock of Jesus Christ and pursue what Christ wants his followers to pursue.

Need for Reconstruction of the Spiritual Formation Curriculum

Based on denominational beliefs and practices, Christians differ in defining spiritual formation. Sadly, some Christian churches even define spirituality as a certain type of performance or style of worship, such as joyful noise and respectful quietness. The way Christians understand spirituality defines the way they pursue God in their Christian journey. Wrong understanding together with wrong practices can lead many Christians to guilt, shame, burnout, and hopelessness. Spiritual formation practices in theological schools in Myanmar should be reviewed for their effectiveness. Moreover, the spiritual formation curriculum should have a more integrated nature such as being balanced between the Bible (content) and cultural context. This will help theological school students experience transformational learning for spiritual development, which can impact the holistic development of their lives. This idea of learning from other cultures and being flexible in adapting the spiritual formation practices from other faith tradition is pointed out by Samuel Ngun Ling that “the nature, structure, and vision of theological education in Myanmar call for a new paradigm shift from the exclusive missionaries’ traditional form of education to an inclusive and multifaceted form of

education” (Ling 2004, 29). Theological schools and their students should be introduced to new and integrated approaches for developing their spiritual growth that would sustain the spiritual life and future ministry of students.

Review of Literature Related to the Research Topic and Methodology

In this section of the related literature review, several articles, books, and dissertations are used. The section is divided into seven major categories: (1) literature on spirituality, (2) Biblical theology of spirituality and spiritual formation, (3) various approaches to spiritual formation, (4) Buddhist and Christian spiritual practices compared, (5) spiritual practices in theological schools, (6) the transformational learning of Jack Mezirow, and (7) the experiential learning of David A. Kolb and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer.

Literature on Spirituality

Human beings are created as spiritual beings. Being spiritual means that a human being is capable of relating to a deeper and higher reality, the transcendent dimension of life. As people respond to the sense of the presence of the transcendent, they can be aware of a personal encounter with that higher other. Most world religions, such as Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity, search for and look to encounter and experience that reality or truth which is higher and stronger than human beings.

“Spirituality has to do with the whole of our life grounded in ultimate reality, in the Spirit and attunes to the spiritual dimension of existence—that which both animates and transcends our bodily, physical selves” (Bowe 2003, 11). Marjorie Thompson in her

book, *Family: The Forming Center*, describes the spiritual life as “not one slice in a large loaf of reality, but leaven for the whole loaf” (Thompson 1996, 13).

Biblical Theology of Spirituality and Spiritual Formation

The Bible is the origin of spirituality and spiritual formation. God, in his spiritual nature, relates to human beings through his word, the Bible.

Biblical Theology of Spirituality (*Pneumatikos*)

In the French Catholic Christian tradition, spirituality did not have a theologically defined meaning related to Scripture until the eighteenth century. Giovanni Scaramelli (1687-1752) of the Society of Jesus started ascetical and mystical theology as a science of the spiritual life. For Scaramelli, the test of Christian spirituality was conformity of heart and life to the confession and character of Jesus as Lord (Albin 1988, 656-57; 1 Cor. 12: 3). The guarantee of Christian spirituality is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (resulting in conformity to God’s revealed will). Jesus described the ultimate test of Christian spirituality when he told his first followers “all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another . . . as I have loved you” (Jn. 13: 34, 35; Albin 1988, 656-57).

Biblical Spirituality

The Bible portrayed the sacred and wonderful relational bond and commitment between the Creator God and his created human beings. At the beginning of the world, God already constructed his sovereign plan of taking the Israelites and the church for his own and using them to bring spiritual life to the whole world. In Genesis, God initiates

his redemption of humanity (Gen. 3) with the end goal of God enjoying his redeemed people for eternity (Rev. 22).

Images and Concepts of Christian Spirituality in the Bible

Most of the spirituality in the Old Testament focused on the Israelites following the direct instructions of God in terms of their daily practices and rituals related to communal worship. In Deuteronomy 16, God gives detailed guidance on how to celebrate the Passover (vv. 1-8), the Feast of Weeks (vv. 9-12), the Feast of Booths (vv. 13-17), establish justice (vv. 18-20), and avoid forbidden forms of worship (16: 21-17:7). Clearly, spirituality in the Old Testament rests on God, his Word called the Torah, and in the people of Israel faithfully following the Torah in their lives. Old Testament spirituality is a life lived within the framework defined by God's saving acts in history with his people (Harrelson 1963, 22). This sacred history is reflected in the faith of the community and its liturgy, particularly as rehearsed in annual commemorations (such as Passover) and centered on the temple and its practices (Okholm 1996, 746).

Regarding Christian Spirituality, Lawrence O. Richards, finds many images and concepts in the Bible: fruitfulness, growth, maturity, sanctification, holiness, and love (Richards 1987, 21-28). The first image of spirituality is fruitfulness (Richards 1987, 21). This image represents the product of plants, the offspring of animals or human beings, and also the consequences of human choices and acts. In Isaiah 5, Israelites symbolized the plant or vine planted and nurtured by God. Though the gardener, God expects the fruits of justice and righteousness, but only finds bloodshed and cries of distress.

In the New Testament Gospels (Matt. 7, Lk. 6, and Jn. 15:1-6), the fruit God desires refers to words and actions which represent a person's character. The book of

Galatians also reveals the fruits which grow from the sinful nature of human beings: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. These are contrasted with the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:19-21): love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (vv. 22-23). Fruitfulness cannot be seen as spirituality, but a spiritual person bears the fruit of the Spirit called love, joy, peace, and patience (Richards 1987, 22). Fruitfulness can be seen even in the lives of those who neither know nor believe in I Christ, as personal striving. Christian spirituality, where the fruits of the Spirit are automatic and natural by the means of being death and resurrection with Christ (Gal. 5:25-26) is different from the nature of fruitfulness seen in other religions,

The second image of spirituality according to Richards is growth. It is mentioned twenty-two times in the New Testament, to represent plant and human development and the numerical growth of the church. Paul mentions the growth of faith in the lives of believers (2 Cor. 10:15) and the growth of those believers in the knowledge of God (Col. 1:10). Peter mentions growth in grace (2 Pet. 3: 18). Paul also discusses the corporate growth of the body of Christ as it matures (Eph. 2:21; 4:15-16), solely controlled by God and can be seen (1 Cor. 3:6-7; Eph. 2:21; 4:15). Spiritual growth requires that people are fed by God's Word (1 Pet. 2:2, Heb. 5:11-14) and that they are involved in the community of faith (Eph. 3:1-19; 4:13-16). Not all growth is spiritual, but spiritual life is a process of growth (Richards 1987, 23).

The third image of spirituality according to Richards is called maturity. Maturity implies an end or goal, where the mature person has approached the goal of God's

process of growth. The ways to maturity involve feeding with spiritual truth (1 Cor. 2:6), having the right priorities in life (Phil. 2:15), and standing firmly in the will of God (Col. 4:12). Maturity is achieved only in the community of faith and in a church (Eph. 4:12-13), persevering in our trials (Jas. 1:4) and exercising our faculties by using God's Word to guide our choices (Heb. 5:14). Maturity is the result of a lifelong process of maturation, which is important in every area of life, including the spiritual (Richards 1987, 23).

The fourth image of spirituality according to Richards is sanctification (Richards 1987, 23-24). It means to be "made holy," to be cleansed and set apart for service to God. Hebrews 10: 29 concludes that I' blood has sanctified the believer through his sacrifice on the cross. Moreover, the New Testament emphasizes the process of sanctification, for example, when I also prayed for his followers to be sanctified by God's Word (Jn. 17:17, 19). The Holy Spirit is identified as the agent of sanctification (Rom. 15:16; see also 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11); Paul also calls for the continued sanctification of the lives of believers (1 Thess. 5: 23). Sanctification is part of ongoing spiritual nurture and formation. Believers are sanctified by the work of Christ on the cross and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

The fifth image of spirituality is called holiness (Richards 1987, 24-25). The meaning of holiness in the Bible is "to be consecrated" or "to be dedicated." The Israelites were called to be holy (Lev. 19:2) with rituals and ascetic practices. In the New Testament, Paul describes a kind of holiness whereby believers are freed and separated from their sinful nature and desires (Col. 2:20-23, 3:-11). Though holiness is not spirituality, a spiritual person lives a life of holiness.

The final image of spirituality is love (Richards 1987, 26-27). Loving God and neighbor is the theme of the Old Testament and of I (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22: 34-40). The love theme is also tightly woven through every New Testament epistle and there is a link between love and spirituality. Though love is not spirituality, true Christian spirituality never detaches from deep and overflowing love.

Mark 12:28-34 presents the answer of I to the scribe in terms of the greatest commandment. I said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (v. 30). Moreover, the command next to the greatest one is to love neighbors as one's self. Then the scribe agreed with the statement of I by saying that those two commandments are the greatest, greater than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. I responded, "you are not far from the kingdom of God," which left the audience silent, not raising any more questions.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37), I again makes very clear the importance of love. According to these two texts above, spirituality is our personal love and commitment to God and also our love and compassion for our neighbors.

Regarding the Biblical view of spirituality, Wanak focuses on the natural outgrowth of our devotion to God which results in love for our neighbors (Wanak 1995, 30; Mk. 12: 28-34, Lk. 10: 25-37). He clarifies the meaning of spirituality as the unity of our spirit and the Spirit of God in our everyday life (Gal. 5: 25). The six dimensions of Biblical spirituality are: (1) intellectual – involving our thoughts; (2) emotional – relating to our feelings and social affections; (3) social – sharing our relationships and social structures; (4) behavioral – governing our actions; (5) volitional – controlling our desires and ambitions; and (6) ethical – determining our values (Wanak 1995, 30). According to

Wanak, spirituality is inadequate when it focuses on legalism, where it tries to judge spirituality by certain outward behaviors, dress, even hairstyle (Wanak 1995, 30). This kind of understanding of spirituality to a degree has been popular in some churches in Myanmar. At the same time, it is wrong when it solely stands on the libertine pattern that takes freedom in Christ to the extreme, interpreting Scripture wrongly; Romans 6: 1 states, “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?” Interpreting spirituality as a libertine pattern can be seen in some Christian groups in Myanmar. Likewise, Wanak clarifies the unbiblical patterns of spirituality in a self-denigrating pattern, which focuses on personal sin and worthlessness to the exclusion of redemption (Wanak 1995, 30-31). However, self-affirming spirituality that emphasizes redemption without recognition of personal sin, is also not Biblical. Wanak also clarifies that neither a life of privation nor grasping for wealth is spirituality (Wanak 1995, 31). “The *pattern of privation* identifies spirituality with poverty, and the poor with the people of God. It contrasts with its opposite, the *pattern of wealth* which identifies material wealth with the blessing of God” (Wanak 1995, 31). Michael J. Gorman also says that, according to the apostle Paul, becoming like Christ means being conformed to the crucified One and therefore living a “cruciform” life (Gorman 2001, 53-62; Gal. 2: 19-20). This “cruciform” life is marked by the presence of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Models of spirituality can be classified as having seven forms: (1) the teacher model which stresses knowledge of the Word; (2) the mystical model, which emphasizes feelings in the absence of anxiety and tension; (3) the devotee model, which focuses on

sacramental devotion to God; (4) the pastoral model which emphasizes communion with God and his children; (5) the anointed strongman model which depends on Pentecostal power in worship and witness for overcoming the challenges of life; (6) the prophetic activist model which looks for justice as the nature of the Kingdom of God; and (7) the warrior model which emphasizes obeying the call of God to violently change religious behavior or the social order (Wanak 1995, 31-33). In terms of the models of spirituality, Wanak states that since the models are usually developed along denominational lines and are anchored in the historical realities of each group, each also has its strengths and weaknesses. At the same time, he warns that being spiritual does not mean we should be following a recipe, adding the right amount of the right ingredients—a little prayer, a little witnessing, some Bible reading (Wanak 1995, 33-34). According to Wanak, “Spirituality is more like a poem. Each person is the unique expression of the Divine Writer, yet the poem of our lives follows certain patterns of rhyme and meter—echoing Christ in the rhythms of life” (Wanak 1995, 34).

Wanak believes that the best ways to foster spirituality in our schools and churches as six steps (Wanak 1995, 34-36). The first step is to accept the reality that there are a variety of models of spirituality, diversity of gifts, callings, roles, and aptitudes. He suggests that learning from other denominations and organizations is important to foster spiritual growth by allowing a variety of programs and activities. Wanak reminds us that every expression of spiritual life is imperfect and we need to be aware of using those criteria to judge spirituality. Second, Wanak states the importance of the atmosphere or climate of our schools or churches as a powerful teaching tool for fostering spirituality (Wanak 1995, 34). He strongly believes that the nature of teaching spirituality is never

possible in an atmosphere where people hold their grudges toward each other and gossip about one another. Therefore, living in union with the Spirit, by putting aside our infantile behavior as described in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and living by the Spirit, is the best way to teach spirituality in our schools and church contexts. The atmosphere where believers grow spiritually is where God's Word is honored, love toward God and mankind is expressed, and the rule of God is sought in the community of believers and in the world (Wanak 1995, 35). The third suggestion for fostering spirituality is to love, care, and nurture our children and our family. He also suggests that family is a key arena for spiritual development. Therefore, parents should demonstrate their love for God and God's love for children, so that children will be able to love their parents and love God. The fourth point is developing spiritual disciplines and accountability to grow spiritually, although spirituality cannot be reduced to certain models. It emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in making us spiritual while stressing the Christian's role in seeking and valuing personal spiritual formation. Moreover, Wanak differentiates spiritual activities and tuning them for maximum spiritual development (Wanak 1995, 35). It should not be just an activity of prayer and worship but prayer and worship from the heart; not just love for God, but an intimate relationship with Him. The fifth is the importance of taking our personal responsibility for spiritual growth. There is spiritual growth in submitting to the Spirit of God and being in right relationship with Him. The last one is the importance of emphasizing cultural values which are rooted in Scripture in formulating a spirituality, while not to absolutizing culture. He also points out the different emphases of Eastern and Western people where Asians prioritize relationship but Westerners focus more on truth. With that, Wanak gives a picture of a spiritually mature person as one whose life

reflects a biblical perspective in epitomizing the best of culture and in challenging its worst elements (Wanak 1995, 36). Spiritually mature people always recognize their behavior and values as “a” pattern, not “the” pattern of spirituality.

Biblical Theology of Spiritual Formation

Jeffrey P. Greenman defines the chief purpose of theology as “whole-person formation” for the mission of God (Greenman 2010, 35). Dick O. Eugenio defines the entire Christian life as a participation in union with Christ in the Holy Spirit, which takes place within the corporate fellowship of life in the church (Eugenio 2014, 133). The Bible provides significant examples of spiritual life (Estep and Kim 2010, 245). According to James C. Wilhoit, the three sets of metaphors of spiritual life in the Bible are nurture (agriculture, gardening, human growth, intimacy): the journey (race, battle, struggle); and death and resurrection (dying with Christ, being born again) (Wilhoit 2008, 19).

First, Wilhoit begins with the image of Christian life and nurture (Wilhoit 2008, 19). The image of I as the True Vine (John 15) vividly communicates the spiritual truth that to continue to be alive and to grow spiritually, believers need to stay spiritually connected to Christ. Wilhoit states, “We often misread this image as being just about ‘me abiding in I’—when the branches are connected to the vine, a marvelous crop of grapes is produced” (Wilhoit 2008, 19-20). We live and have our being as we stay connected to the Source, I Christ (Estep and Kim 2010, 245).

Second, Wilhoit provides the image of the Christian life as a journey and struggle (Wilhoit 2008, 20). Paul uses the imagery of training and discipline in the Christian life (1 Cor. 9:24-27). The emphasis of the athletic race image is a call for Corinthian believers to adopt the singular focus of a trained athlete who follows Christ (Wilhoit 2008, 20). The

most popular example of this image is Philippians 3:13-14 which depicts the image of “straining forward and pressing on toward the goal (Wilhoit 2008, 20). Also, the journey includes the struggle against “reaching forward” and “pursuing the goal.” In Ephesians 6, when Paul calls I to “put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the devil’s schemes,” (Eph. 6:10-12), he makes it very clear that in the Christian life, there will be struggles. This battle imagery depicts struggle and risk is necessary for growth and sanctification (Estep and Kim 2010, 245). The third image developed by Wilhoit is the image of the Christian life and resurrection (Wilhoit 2008, 22). Scripture is full of examples of the movement from death to life. Wilhoit states, “The death-rebirth pattern is an archetypal pattern present throughout the Bible. The pattern shows itself in the flood (Genesis 6-9) as God destroys the entire world....and then brings forth life on the earth out of the barrenness of destruction” (Wilhoit 2008, 22). Other examples are the death and resurrection of Christ, the new birth I described to Nicodemus in John 3:1-8, and the symbolism of baptism—being “buried” in Christ’s death and raised again in new life (Estep and Kim 2010, 246; Rom. 6:4). According to Wilhoit, these three images of nurture, journey and struggle, and death/resurrection capture the essential aspects of spiritual formation (Wilhoit 2008, 22).

Willard argues that the primary image of spiritual formation is found in the life of I Christ (Willard 2002, 22). He states, “Christian spiritual formation is focused entirely on I. Its goal is obedience or conformity to Christ that arises out of an inner transformation accomplished through purposeful interaction with the grace of God in Christ” (Willard 2002, 22). He builds his argument on Galatians 4:19, “until Christ is formed in you,” and 2 Corinthians 3:6, “the Spirit produces life” (Willard 2002, 22).

Willard's primary thesis is that the Biblical imagery of spiritual formation is most reflected in being a follower, a disciple of I Christ. For Willard, discipleship is central to spiritual formation and practice (Willard 2002, 23). The hope of Christianity is in the hands of ordinary believers, who are committed to its cause as disciples (Mamo 2017, 164).

Spirituality and the Role of Spirit

The apostle Paul strongly focuses on walking and living in the Spirit to become like Christ in attitude, character, and self-giving service which cannot be done by human effort alone (Gal. 5: 16, 25; Greenman and Kalantzis 2010, 10). Fee explains that "the Spirit is God's own personal presence in our lives, individually and corporately" (Fee 1994, 827-43). Moreover, Fee also identifies the work of the Spirit as the one who searches all things (1 Cor. 2: 10), knows the mind of God (1 Cor. 2: 11), teaches the content of the gospel to believers (1 Cor. 2:13), dwells among or within believers (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14), accomplishes all things (1 Cor. 12:11), gives life to those who believe (2 Cor. 3:6), cries out from within our hearts (Gal. 4:6), leads us in the ways of God (Rom. 8:14, Gal. 5:18), bears witness with our own spirits (Rom. 8:16), has desires that are in opposition to the flesh (Gal. 5:17), helps us in our weakness (Rom. 8:26), intercedes on our behalf (Rom. 8:26-27), works all things together for our ultimate good (Rom. 8: 28), strengthens believers (Eph. 3: 16), and is grieved by our sinfulness (Eph. 4:30; Fee 2010, 41- 42). Moreover, the fruit of the Spirit's indwelling makes it possible for humans to reflect the personal attributes of God (Gal 5: 22-23). From this list, it is obvious that if the Holy Spirit is left out of our account of Christian spirituality, then a very great deal will have been lost. Fee says that spirituality without the Holy

Spirit becomes a shaky human project. Spiritual transformation comes from partnering with the Trinity for a change. The reason is that the Holy Spirit knows how to help us move into the rhythms of grace which suits us best. When we simply desire communion with God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through practicing a spiritual discipline, then, God works within us that which He alone can do. Until or unless we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit through spiritual practices, God cannot work His transforming action in us (Calhoun 2005, 19).

Spiritual formation happens when we partner with the God of the Trinity. There are various approaches to the formation of our spiritual life. In the ministry of I, he always welcomed people who longed for God's touch or work in their lives (Calhoun 2005, 16). Attaining the likeness of Christ does not just happen through spiritual discipline in our lives. The Holy Spirit always has a role along with our part in practice. The dark side, of practices or spiritual disciplines, presents itself if believers depend on them for transformation. Therefore, Paul encourages believers to be aware of putting away regulations and practices which are self-made techniques with no power to stop us from the indulgence of the flesh (Col. 2:23). Practices or rituals can be legalistic if believers just focus on their part in performing them for their own transformation without acknowledging the role of God or the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

God's way of changing our inner being cannot be predicted or ordered. Sometimes, God can use a spiritual discipline to reveal our false self-conceptions and idols in our hearts. For spiritual growth, believers should be authentic with their state of being, whether they are true to God or not. In the process of God's transforming work, there are times that we need to set our minds on the fact that God's intentions toward

believers are good even when things are not going the way they expected. I Christ also lived his life trusting God day after day (Mt. 11:30). In the process of transformation, it is crucial that believers partner with the Holy Spirit (Calhoun 2005, 23).

According to Foster, the disciplines of the spiritual life are given by God as a means of grace. Though human striving is not sufficient to experience the transformation of God, the disciplines lead us to place ourselves before God so that He can transform us (Foster 1998, 7).

Various Approaches to Spiritual Formation

Spiritual formation is an interesting subject both past and present. Depending on people's personality, interests, and upbringing, different means and methods of spiritual formation exist.

Classical Spiritual Practices

Nurturing the spiritual life has been very important from even before the Protestant Reformation. Most spiritual formation practices were ascetical-mystical ways of finding God and enjoying him in a personal way. Many branches of the Protestant Church ignored these early spiritual practices. However, much can be learned from these early practices. Classical spiritual formation is mostly known as the three ways of purgation, illumination, and union (Ray 1999). In the purgative state, believers awaken from a life that is inconsistent with God's will, unconscious sins, and omissions of life. In the second stage of illumination, people tend to experience total consecration to God in love. It is giving God charge of the relationship (Mulholland 1993, 94). In the final state of the union, the experience of relational union with the divine occurs (Schults and Sandage 2006, 27-28). The journey, through the stages of purgation, illumination, and

union, provides a pattern of transformation necessary for spiritual growth and formation. This pattern provides a “guidance system” to keep the vehicle of our lives en route toward wholeness in Christ. Often through patterns, God breaks in and upsets our lives in order for transformation and change to take place (Estep and Kim 2010, 254). There have been many mystical practices regarding spiritual formation in the history of Christianity.

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

One of the great leaders in the history of the church, Bernard of Clairvaux influenced many by writing on the love of God. Bernard considered *Lectio Divina* (a method of meditative Bible reading), contemplation guided by the Holy Spirit, as the key to nourishing Christian spirituality. Bernard’s theme is a mode of love referred to as “Bridal Mysticism,” a relationship with the Lord similar to love between the bride and the groom according to the Song of Solomon (Farina 1987, 209-10). The soul of the devotee is the bride and God is the Bridegroom; their union is recognized as a spiritual marriage. One of Bernard’s key concepts is that just as the wisdom of God in the incarnation built a house in Mary, so God seeks to build a house in each of us. His focus is on unity between human beings and God. This kind of unity between God and human being formed in willing and loving, not of being, opposite to the language of union used by Meister Eckhart (1260-1327) (“I and God are one”). Bernard wrote more than eighty-six sermons based on the Song of Solomon as an allegory of divine/human love. He portrayed the importance of believer’s devotion to love God through purity of heart, sincerity of soul, and holiness of life. Bernard answered the question, “why should God be loved?” The reason for loving God is God himself because no one could be more justly loved than God, no one deserves our love more. He identifies four degrees of love:

(1) love of self for self's sake, (2) love of God for self's sake, (3) love of God for God's sake and (4) love of self for God's sake (Foster and Smith 1993, 40-45). According to Bernard, the final matured stage of love means loving ourselves as the creation of God, for the sake of loving God back fully by relying on his unconditional love for us.

Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)

An Italian mystic, once a wealthy man who left his wealth in order to imitate Christ, Francis of Assisi lived a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience after his conversion experience (Foster and Smith 1993, 314). One of his spiritual practices was worshipping God through nature. He saw every living thing as a beautiful gift from God. He called the sun, the moon, and all the creatures of the earth his brothers and sisters (Payne 1982, 38). To Francis, poverty was synonymous with obedience. Furthermore, poverty meant not only physical poverty but also a life of self-denial, humility, and service to Christ (Galli 2002, 142).

Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

Teresa of Avila, a very devout member of the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation, started new Carmelite houses for those devoted to the contemplative life. She also wrote many spiritual autobiographies. Her most famous work on prayer is the "Interior Castle," which refers to a journey of the soul starting from outside a castle and heading toward the center room after passing many rooms on the way. The center room is the place where there can be complete unification of the soul with God (Foster and Smith 1993, 169). In the spirit of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Teresa uses allegory to describe the spiritual journey all Christians face, with its attendant obstacles and joys (Bunyan 1979, 11-303).

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

A member of the Dominican Order, she was a scholastic philosopher and theologian of the fourteenth century, who vowed to give her whole life to God after meeting Christ in a vision at the age of seven. Based on her spiritual and mystical experiences with God, she cultivated her spiritual life with sacred devotion to God, including harsh asceticism and simply living out her life for others. She lived her life on earth just to please her God, not herself, not for her family either, but for God alone. She had her hair cut in order to abstain from being attractive to men in denying herself marriage. She had a mystical marriage with Jesus Christ at the age of 21 (Foster and Smith 1993, 287). Though she used harsh asceticism for penance, her commitment and singular devotion to Christ is remarkable and led her into service for the poor and the vulnerable during terrible plagues in her country.

The lives of these mystical spiritual fathers and mothers help believers' understanding of spirituality to be more integrated and comprehensive. Their earnest and sincere devotion to God gives a glimpse that spirituality is having God at the center of life, and experiencing his peace and love is the most satisfying relationship for a human soul. Moreover, their lives show that spirituality has a role to play in a society where believers bring shalom and the kingdom of heaven on earth through their lives. Being spiritual not only gives comfort and confidence in God but also makes Christians more careful in the world and the community in which they live. Evangelical Christians should sincerely imitate and follow those practices. Although they have Catholic roots, they have important lessons for spiritual growth as evangelical Christians.

Contemporary Spiritual Practices

Robert T. O’Gorman has articulated a unique definition of spirituality in the postmodern era. Compared to past definitions of spirituality, Gorman says that current spirituality is more about relationships or connection. According to O’Gorman, “connection, community, and spirituality are in one family for this day and age” (O’Gorman 2010, 351). Since O’Gorman defines spirituality as connectedness, he believes authentic spirituality can be developed only in community. This statement is very close to the psychosocial development theory of Erik Erikson. Erikson focuses on the psychosocial challenges faced by young adults as intimacy vs. isolation. Being connected means a lot to young adults (Erikson 1959, 95). Connectedness is extremely important in these days when individualism or separateness has become common in most societies and in the church setting. Relationship in communities is the arena for spiritual formation to happen. Though there are some examples of extended solitude such as Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul and the participants in the Korean prayer chambers, spirituality is normally nurtured in the community of believers.

Glenn Brian Stavridis analyzed the relationship between spirituality and morality in his dissertation titled “An Overview of the Value and Effect of an Integration of Christian Spirituality and Ethics” (Stavridis 2001, 83). He says that spirituality and morality are inseparable. For Stavridis, the initial stage of spirituality starts with God by having a personal encounter with Him in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit (Stavridis 2001, 3). This makes possible real transformation which leads believers to become the disciples of Christ. Moreover, Stavridis believes that the integration of spirituality and morality can generate love and justice in society through the lives of

transformed believers. Christian spirituality needs to bring transformation and change to society. Spirituality which does not impact society cannot be considered as true and authentic. Especially in Myanmar, this kind of spirituality which could bring benefits to the society is one Christians need to embrace to live as agents of transformation.

Similar to Stavridis' perspective on spirituality, Trevor John Ruthenberg researched the significance of Christian spirituality for authentic Christian ministry. Ruthenberg believes that contemporary academic spirituality (the spirituality that is taught and nurtured in the academic setting) contributes a newfound authenticity to Christian ministry (Ruthenberg 2005, 1). Self-understanding, vocational awareness, and a desire for God are understood as the essence and dynamic of ministry. Therefore, our academic spirituality should bring more understanding of ourselves, our vocation and our God. This kind of academic spirituality is needed in Myanmar, where theological education should prepare students to attain academic spirituality which in turn will prepare them to be useful in their respective ministries.

Alan Jones believes that love is the crucial element in personal formation, including Spiritual formation and that, conversely, Christians are deformed by the absence of it in their lives (Jones 1987, 9-29). He sees students as a "community of enquirers" who need a community in which to learn and experience love. Love plays an important role in theological education, which is quite challenging if students do not have love for God, love for study, and love for others. In my own opinion, love is the motivating factor that always gives hope and perseverance despite difficulties and challenges in life. Without love, a school and subjects taught there cannot provide real transformation through learning.

Henri Nouwen (1932-1996), a Roman Catholic priest, psychologist, professor, and famous writer of many award-winning books, served the mentally handicapped in L'Arche in the latter part of his life. Nouwen came to understand himself as the beloved of God after observing classical spiritual practices as he experienced being conformed to the divine image within his life (Nouwen 1992, 2-33). Moreover, he was able to enter into the heart of God and the mind of Christ and to see things spiritually from a divine perspective (Laird and Christensen 2003, 29). Nouwen states that "through the practice of a spiritual discipline we become attentive to that small voice and willing to respond when we hear it" (Nouwen 1981, 66).

Tan and Gregg conclude that "it is not our control and practice of the disciplines that make a difference, but our yielding to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit through the practices of the disciplines that give Him space to speak to us and guide us, to fill us and empower us, to turn us around and transform us" (Tan and Gregg 1997, 8). Discipline should be practiced with openness to the transformation which is from God alone. According to Stephens, "the goal of spiritual disciplines is 'to be with Christ', 'out of the world', so that we can effectively live 'in the world.' He continues to clarify the nature of spiritual disciplines, which helps us with the spiritual chores of dusting, cleaning, and washing of 'worldliness,' for the renewal of our mind, the refreshment of our hearts, and the production of the spiritual fruit of 'godliness'" (Stephens 2010, 200).

Willard lists some main disciplines for the spiritual life under two categories, disciplines of abstinence and disciplines of engagement (Willard 1999, 158-91). The disciplines of abstinence include seven major practices, such as solitude, silence, fasting, frugality, chastity, secrecy, and sacrifice. The disciplines of engagement are study,

worship, celebration, service, prayer, fellowship, confession, and submission. Willard concludes that engaging these disciplines conscientiously—and creatively adapting them to our individual needs, time, and place—will be more than adequate to help us receive that full Christ-life and become the kind of person that should emerge in following Him. Willard also states that spiritual transformation is attainable for everyone in the contemporary world (Willard 1999, 11-27). To begin, put into practice what confidence believers have in God, see the results, and learn how to do better in the future. Therefore, the way to spiritual transformation and growth needs openness and persistence. As Willard states, the need for believers' initiative and longing to be conformed into the image of Christ through their practical steps for spiritual growth is one of the needs of today's Christians. Most Christians are just longing and waiting while not participating in their spiritual growth.

Along with these more traditional spiritual formation practices, there is renewed interest in resurrecting ancient prayers and liturgies in church. The increased interest in Christian icons in worship, participation in weekly Eucharists—practicing the labyrinth, experiencing the stations of the cross, and participating in the Ignatian examen—are examples of the renewed interest in Protestant circles of finding new avenues of spiritual formation (Jones 2005, 175). Another example is praying the “sign of the cross” or kneeling and genuflecting before participation in worship (Jones 2005, 175). Foster, a Quaker and the founder of *Renovare*, an interchurch movement committed to the renewal of the church, listed twelve kinds of practices as the classic or central practices of the true path of spiritual growth. Dividing the disciplines into three movements of the Spirit, Foster shows how each of these areas contributes to a balanced spiritual life. The inward

disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting, and study offer avenues of personal examination and change. The outward disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission, and service help prepare us to make the world a better place. The corporate disciplines of confession, worship, guidance, and celebration bring Christians nearer to one another and to God (Foster 1998, 13-201).

Barton writes that the habits and disciplines we use to shape our desire form the basis for our spirituality (Barton 2006, 13). In *Sacred Rhythms*, she clearly articulates how hard it is to transform ourselves. Barton says that our truest desires and deepest longings stir the presence of God working within us to pursue spiritual transformation. As a believer, our part is to create the conditions for transformation through spiritual practices. This is very important in Christian life and growth. Without any desire, spiritual practices seem compulsory and legalistic.

Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland say that “the needs to be woven into the practice of theological education and spiritual formation are: (1) spiritual formation must be defined by Scripture, (2) It must be transformed by Jesus Christ, (3) the process must be led by the Spirit, and (4) It must be practiced in community” (Ott and Netland 2006, 277-78). J. O. Balswick, Pamela Ebstyne King, and Kevin S. Reimer believe that, from a theological perspective, spiritual disciplines such as meditation, silence, and *Lectio Divina* serve to draw believers into the reality of the presence of God, allowing Scripture and the Holy Spirit to reform and shape them rather than studying Scripture and analyzing the text for meaning (Balswick, King, and Reimer 2016, 325). Thomas Merton wrote, “The whole purpose of meditation is to deepen the consciousness of the basic relationship of the creature to the Creator, and of the sinner to his Redeemer” (Merton

1969, 62). Balswick, King, and Reimer believe that those practices help us to experience the importance of depending on God and Christ (Balswick, King, and Reimer 2016, 325). They also agree that grace, mercy, and faith are not permanent inalienable possessions that we gain by our efforts or spiritual practices. Merton reminds us that “true contemplation is not a psychological trick but a theological grace” (Merton 1969, 70). According to Iris V. Cully, living in the presence of God is one way to help the development of attitudes that attune to the purpose and will of God for the world (Cully 1984, 15-17). Regarding the spiritual practice called Hesychasm (contemplative prayer), Moe Moe Nyunt, a doctoral student at Asbury Theological Seminary, also gives her opinion on the similarity of Buddhist and Christian practices (Nyunt 2015, 76-94). She clarifies that Hesychasm solely stands on a Judeo-Christian framework, rather than a pantheistic one. This requires the Hesychast to block out all his senses and eliminate all his thoughts. Since Myanmar is a multicultural society, that spiritual practice would be applicable among people who have an oral culture and also literate people.

Estep and Kim say that spiritual formation takes place through a variety of Christian practices (Estep and Kim 2010, 258-62). They state that the spiritual practices of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, are called “means of grace” (Wesley 1986, 187). For Wesley, means of grace are outward signs, words, or actions. They are ordained by God and appointed to be ordinary channels whereby God might convey to men, women, and children prevenient, justifying and sanctifying grace. Wesley divided the “means of grace” into two divisions: instituted means of grace and prudential means of grace (Estep and Kim 2010, 259). Instituted means of grace are practices ordained by Jesus Christ: prayer, searching the Scriptures, participating in the Lord’s Supper

(Eucharist), fasting, and Christian conferencing (small groups). These means of grace—particularly in their corporate expressions—mirror the intended and ongoing sacramental life of the Church (Estep and Kim 2010, 259). Prudential means of grace are practices ordained by the Church: doing all of the good you can and attending to the private and public worship of God. Wesley believed that a person should try to do all of the good they can by caring for the needs of the poor and by loving one’s neighbor (Estep and Kim, 2010, 259). The means of grace are one avenue for discussing the role spiritual disciplines or practices play in the process of spiritual formation (Estep and Kim 2010, 260). Willard says, “The activities constituting the disciplines have no value in themselves. The aim of the substance of the spiritual life is not fasting, prayer, hymn singing, frugal living, and so forth. Rather, it is the effective and full enjoyment of the active love of God and humankind in all the daily rounds of normal existence where we are placed” (Willard 1998, 137). He goes on to add that spiritual disciplines do not make a person “spiritually superior,” but create the conditions in which grace may flow more freely. Richard Foster also says that “all the spiritual disciplines have the potential to become destructive if misused, but submission is especially susceptible to this problem” (Foster 2014, 22). According to Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, there are more than sixty spiritual disciplines and desires (Calhoun 2005; Appendix A).

This section on spiritual disciplines helps clarify the Christian’s role in cultivating the atmosphere where the Spirit of God can work openly and freely in believers to rebuke their sins and help them transform into the likeness of Christ, which brings glory to God. The Spirit of Christ works with the willing heart where Christ is seen as the sole purpose of life, and a heart that is sensitive to His will and made ready for the steps of faith.

Buddhist and Christian Spiritual Practices Compared

Meditation has been one of the crucial practices in Buddhism. Buddhism could not exist without meditation. Buddhist meditation started in Myanmar through a Buddhist Monk in Leti (1846-1923), Monwya, Sagaging Region, Myanmar. Leti Sayadaw, named U Ñāṇadha Ledi Sayadaw, was the one who modernized the practice of meditation by making it more available to laypeople. Wanpen Murgatroyd, a female author who was raised in the Buddhist tradition and trained for a Western mental health profession, defined meditation and spirituality in her own context. According to Murgatroyd, “meditation in Buddhism is practiced and used as a means of understanding how fear and a desire to escape from pain have conditioned an individual’s perceptions of self and life” (Murgatroyd 2001, 94-102). Through meditation, one learns to reconnect with the state of well-being by experiencing what is going on in one’s mind. This is the reason why Buddhists practice meditation. In Buddhism, meditation is a process of quieting the mind to understand the nature of oneself and to live in the present by giving full attention to everyday life experiences. As a result of quieting the mind, a person is hoped to be more focused on his or her present work or present reality. Michael Chaskalsonm, who has been practicing mindfulness and related disciplines for more than 35 years, says that “the essence of the practice of mindfulness helps people to feel better or to be more effective at their work. It doesn’t call for any religious affiliation and it results in empathy, better focus, more sustained attention, better capacity for perspective-taking, changed communication skills and emotional intelligence skills” (Law 2012, 331-38). This study shows the pure nature of mindfulness which helps the practitioner to experience good results and progress.

In contrast to Buddhist meditation and mindfulness, Christian meditation is based on the Word of God which displays the will of God and the nature of God. According to Nathan Foster, “the main distinction of Christian meditation is a focus on filling rather than emptying” (Foster 2014, 85). Moreover, the value of Christian meditation results in experiencing a deepening, maturing relationship with God. The life of Joshua after the passing of Moses was tremendously empowered through the practice of meditating upon the Word of God in leading the Israelites back to Canaan, the promised land (Josh. 1: 8-9). The book of Psalms displays the nature of a blessed person and the nature of a life focused on meditation on the Word of God day and night (Ps. 1:1-5). A result of meditation upon the Word of God is fruitfulness and success in following the will of God follows (Josh. 1: 8, 9). For Jesus, time alone with his Father was essential. Mark 1:35 reveals that the morning after a very busy day of ministry, Jesus got up early, and found a solitary place to be with his Father. After the feeding of the 5000, Jesus sent the crowd and his disciples away so that He could spend time in his Father’s presence (Mk. 6: 45-46). If this practice of spending time alone with God was essential in the life of Jesus, it is also essential for Christ’s followers today. The Bible teaches the practice of meditation as a part of their lives, including Jesus Christ (Mk. 1: 35). Buddhist meditation focuses on emptying the mind to become balanced in life; Christian meditation focuses on filling the mind with the living Word of God to walk a life worthy of the call of God in loving God and loving others unconditionally.

Spiritual Practices in Theological Schools

The seven essential factors, identified from an ecumenical study of spiritual formation conducted by the Program on Theological Education of the World Council of

Churches (WCC) in 1987, are important to note for Christian spiritual formation related to theological study. They are as follows:

- (1) Spiritual formation is always lived and sought in community,
- (2) Engagement in scholarly study of scriptures and theology must be seen as integral to the processes of spiritual formation,
- (3) Times for silence and retreat, private and corporate, often provide helpful means of sustaining Christian spirituality,
- (4) Spiritual formation should always be related to a local community of believers,
- (5) Spiritual growth is fostered by direct exposures to the harsh realities of this life and encounter with the problems of our world,
- (6) Experiencing various liturgical and worshipping traditions is a means of enrichment in spiritual formation, which will encourage growth towards a spirituality that is inclusive of the diversity of the spiritual wealth of the whole people of God,
- (7) Opportunities for ecumenical and cross-cultural exchange provide chances for realizing that a given type of spirituality is not universal, and that spirituality is not the property of Christians alone” (Amirtham and Pryor, n.d., 158).

The above statements, in terms of the relationship between spiritual formation and theological study, are important and need to apply to each seminary context. Those statements clarify the nature of spiritual formation and theological education where the context of community is crucial in fostering the spiritual formation of each student. Moreover, the statements also help us see the importance of personal encounter and disoriented dilemma (Mezirow) and the role of liturgies and worship tradition for spiritual formation and growth. Moreover, the statements help Christians be aware that a given type of spirituality, which comes out of cross-cultural and ecumenical encounters and discussions, is not universal and still is not owned by Christians alone.

Also, the article “Reciprocal Ecology” by Mary E. Lowe and Stephen D. Lowe (Lowe and Lowe, n.d., 1) suggests an integrating theological concept of spiritual formation for theological education in the twenty-first century. In this reciprocal ecology, Lowe and Lowe integrate social science insights from human ecology theory and social network theory as a comprehensive model of spiritual formation for seminarians (Lowe

and Lowe, n.d., 1). They state that seminary ecology provides critical ingredients beneficial for development, such as a variety of interactive, transactive, and reciprocal exchanges between persons, Scripture, learning resources, intentional experiences, classroom encounters, and theological and Biblical concepts. These constitute the socio-spiritual ecology of the seminary experience which helps seminarians achieve normal growth in their spiritual life. This kind of growth, according to James M. Howard, is called community-based transformation, where the dynamic and reciprocal interaction basically occurs through believers relating to one another in authentic ways (Howard 2007, 187).

Greenman and Kalantzis say that “spiritual practices can be generally classified as reading Christ into the heart: The theological foundation of *Lectio Divina*, spiritual direction as a navigational aid in sanctification, centering prayer, and being renewed in knowledge in the image of our creator through Psalms, hymns, and songs of the Spirit” (Greenman and Kalantzis 2010, 141-226). Reading Christ into the heart is leading and guiding someone to be more in union with God. This practice is one of the famous and supernatural gifts of the priests and mystics in the past. *Lectio divina*, called divine reading, is one of the famous monastic practices of scripture reading, meditation, and prayer. It is intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God’s Word. It is not just reading Scripture, but taking Scripture for life. Spiritual direction is similar to mentoring others so that they will grow as Christians. In that process, the mentees share their life and experience in terms of the spiritual journey where the mentor plays the role of a guide by asking questions that are related to spiritual growth. Centering prayer is a method of prayer which focuses more on interior silence. It

is a kind of meditation that helps us to be able to renew our knowledge of God through meditation on the psalms, hymns, and songs of the Spirit, which automatically come out of the heart when thinking about God and His attributes. *Lectio divina*, a spiritual practice of the ancient monasteries, is also applicable to contemporary Christians either in solitude or communally (Jones 2006, 95-109).

The Teacher's Role in a Class for Spiritual Formation

Deborah Moore researched the perspective of teachers or the role of teachers in their intentional practices to enhance the students' spiritual formation (Moore 2014, 255-70). She did her research on 50 schools within the Southeast Region of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The most common characteristics found from this study were "exhibiting a Christ-like attitude," "creating a classroom climate that promotes spiritual growth," and "being intentional in the spiritual disciplines" (Moore 2014, 255). Therefore, the role of teachers is crucial in fostering and guiding the spiritual formation of students. Being an example of Christlikeness, creativity in classroom arrangements, and having a strong passion for the spiritual growth of students can also be the quality of lecturers and teachers needed in Myanmar.

Rule of Life

Eun Sun Suh, a member of the Transgenerational Mission Church, did her research on spiritual practices as a means toward spiritual formation and found that the cultivation of spiritual formation needs not only God's grace and help but also human efforts (Suh 2012, 83-84). By focusing on human efforts for spiritual formation, spiritual practices can be a good means for fostering spiritual growth. Core belief formation is

important toward fostering spiritual formation in all aspects of human life, in that core beliefs significantly affect one's lifestyle. A rule of life involves the selection of spiritual practices that Christians can choose to build into the rhythm of their lives, practices they believe will enhance spiritual growth and provide a pattern of spiritual life for believers. A rule of life would offer a stable, persistent, and steadfast spiritual journey for those who seek to experience abundant spiritual life. She found that spiritual practices may provide space for God to work in our hearts and opportunities to expose ourselves to God's reality. Participation in spiritual practices can enable lives to change and one's relationship with God to improve.

Creation Care

Matthew Fox director of the Institute in Creation-centered Spirituality, believes that practicing creation spirituality or caring for creation is a way of transforming education (Fox 1982, 74-80). For him, education means finding our place in the universe as a student. Moreover, Fox believes that college students need to see their involvement in the process of both historical and personal matters. Seeing themselves as participating in the most significant ventures in the entire history of the planet is the intention of education for each student (Fox 1982, 74-80). Christians should be aware of believers' involvement in creation care. Moreover, creation care is the mandate of God for each human being. In Myanmar, where Buddhists comprise more than half of the country's population, Christian spirituality should include care for creation, which would be a witness to Burmese people who see creation care as noble. Moreover, weather changes and disasters are also consequences of human neglect of creation and the environment

around us. Christians need to learn more about nature and be involved in creation care, remembering God's command to the first humans to care for the Garden of Eden.

Forming for Ministry

Lisa M. Hess did her research on the content of formation and the methodology of formation in formal theological education. Formation is defined as the “shaping-being-shaped primarily by God in the world for unplanned service to the world through planned steps and methods of formation” (Hess 2008, 14-23). The nature of ministry that students are going to face cannot be planned since it is planned by God. Hess is dissatisfied with current theological education for having too much knowledge and too much perspective, but little focus on gifts and wisdom in the lives of students. How to form them for ministry based on their gifts and graces is what each theological education program needs to-remember and focus on.

Curriculum Relevance

Teshome Abebe and Zenebe Abebe believe that curriculum transformation is an urgent need for education and for the faculty themselves. They say that it is very challenging for professors to educate students today (Abebe and Abebe 2004, 195). One of the problems in educating this generation is that the curriculum and lessons are not relevant to learners anymore. Relevance plays a very important role in every subject. If it is not relevant no one will be interested in it. Meanwhile, Christian Spiritual formation should also be practiced in ways that are relevant within the context. Being always aware of current changes in terms of political, social, economic, and intellectual issues is an important challenge for professors and ministers.

The Transformational Learning of Jack Mezirow

Mezirow theorizes that our urgent need as humans is to understand and order the meaning of our experience and to integrate it with what we know to avoid the threat of chaos. In order to overcome imaginary meanings, we need to understand well the meaning of our experience and critically reflect upon the tradition, the explanations by authority figures, and raise questions on various psychological mechanisms, such as projection and rationalization (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 3). Mezirow differentiates adult learning from adolescent learning, by emphasizing contextual understanding, critical reflection on assumptions, and validating meaning by assessing reasons (Mezirow 2000, 26). The values, beliefs, and feelings of adults mostly depend on the context—biographical, historical, cultural—in which they are embedded (Mezirow 2000, 3). Our understandings and beliefs are dependable and justified as true only when we can have interpretations and opinions which overcome other predicted understanding and beliefs (Mezirow 2000, 4). Mezirow and Associates state that “Transformative Theory’s focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others—to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers” (Mezirow 2000, 8). Adults experience a more complete understanding of changing events and a higher degree of control over their lives when they are armed with their new outlooks (Mezirow 1991, 3).

Jargon Habermas (Habermas 1984) identifies two ways of learning: instrumental learning and communicative learning. Instrumental learning focuses on learning to control and manipulate the environment or other people, as in task-oriented problem

solving to improve performance. Communicative learning focuses on learning what others mean when they communicate with you. This often involves feelings, intentions, values, and moral issues (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 8). Communicative learning often involves a critical assessment of assumptions supporting the justification of norms (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 9). Habermas and Mezirow hold similar views, that learning requires critical assessment and reflection in making meaning through communicating with others in the learning process.

In the context of adult learning, frames of reference are ways of interpreting one's experience. People's frames of reference are their personal perspectives, which they receive from their primary caregivers, and learning which is unintentionally assimilated from the culture, which shapes their cultural paradigm (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 16-17). There are two dimensions called habits of mind and points of view. A habit of mind is a set of assumptions—broad, generalized, orienting predispositions—that act as a filter in interpreting the meaning of experiences and points of view. This includes people's points of view, attitudes, and beliefs interwoven with their sense of self in their frames of reference (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 17). In order to respond well and adjust to other, even opposite, opinions and beliefs in learning, rational discourse must be correctly used. Rational discourse enables us to set a tentative best judgment on the justification of a problematic belief or understanding in communicative learning. Appealing to tradition, authority or force are the only alternatives to discourse for justifying a belief (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 9-10). According to Mezirow and Associates, learning occurs by elaborating existing frames of reference, learning new frames of reference, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of mind

(Mezirow and Associates 2000, 19). Transformation happens by reconstructing dominant accounts and stories in reformulating reified structures of meanings (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 19). Therefore, transformative learning starts with defining a problem or by redefining or reframing the problem to solve it. It involves justifying the new perspective through discourse, after critically reflecting on assumptions or those of others, and arriving at transformative insight (Mezirow and Associates 2000, 20). This study is focused on how students can transform their perspectives through their own reflection on their experiences in theological schools in terms of their spiritual formation practices.

The Experiential Learning of David A. Kolb and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer

The conceptual framework on which the CSPP is built involves an interdisciplinary relationship between theology and the human sciences, which James E. Loder has explored (1989, 1998). Loder believes that there are similarities in the human spirit and the Holy Spirit, in terms of a transformational pattern that characterizes the dynamics of each spirit operating through time (Loder 1998, 35). On the other hand, the two are dissimilar, according to Loder, in that the Holy Spirit is grounded in God, whereas the human spirit is rooted in the human psyche (Loder 1998, 35). The CSPP classifies spiritual disciplines into four spiritual development modes that provide for holistic spiritual development, where all the modes are crucial for optimal learning or development. The CSPP is based on a theory of spiritual development that recognizes the redemptive work of God in every mode of spiritual development. The Holy Spirit is present in the process of each mode and can transform the person through the learning

that occurs (Thayer 1996). Spiritual growth occurs during these transforming moments (Loder 1989).

The CSPP study was conducted with a total of 1,687 participants from Baptist Churches, Free Churches, Pentecostal Churches, Reformed Churches, and Wesleyan Churches, which are all evangelical Protestants. All scales revealed high reliability in terms of internal consistency using coefficient alphas (Thayer 2004, 195). In scale development, the coefficient alphas of internal consistency for the four scales range from .84 to .92 with 899 college students as participants.

Reflection is the lowest scale with a coefficient alpha of .84, while others, such as the Vision scale has .89, the New Life scale has .90, and the Transcendent scale has .92 (Thayer 2004, 200).

The final form of the CSPP does not have test-retest reliability, but such a study was made with the initial form of 87 items. A total of 246 students, who participated in the retest in the Step 2 validity study, completed the same form again 4 to 7 weeks later in Step 4. The test-retest correlation coefficients were .82 for the Transcendent Scale, .68 for the Reflection Scale, .83 for the Vision Scale, and .87 for the New Life Scale (Thayer 2004, 200).

The study has six different measures, which are the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, the Spiritual Well-Being Scale, the Religious Orientation Scale, the Religious Life Inventory Quest, the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire, and the Social Desirability Scale, to prove its criterion-related validity through correlation with its 15 scales or subscales (Thayer 2004, 195). Moreover, all three major sources of validity in quantitative studies called content-related evidence, construct-related evidence, and

criterion-related evidence were used to find evidence to support the validity of the CSPP (Thayer 2004, 200).

The 4 Modes of learning are grasping (1) Direct Experience and (2) Abstract Conceptualization, and Transformation (3) Experimentation, and (4) Reflective Observation. The 4 scales of learning are: (1) Transcendent Scale (Concrete Experience)—assesses one’s participation in relationship with God, (2) Reflection Scale (Reflective Observation)—assesses one’s critical reflection of culture and one’s own life, (3) Vision Scale (Abstract Conceptualization)—assesses participation with the Word of God, and (4) New Life Scale (Active Experimentation)—assesses participation in relationship with others (Thayer 1999, n. p.).

The CSPP reports on the frequency and depth of participation in ten basic Christian practices: worship, prayer, repentance, meditation, prophetic critiquing (examen of conscience), Bible study/reading, fellowship, services, evangelism, and stewardship. Christians engage in these practices, sometimes referred to as spiritual disciplines, to worship God, learn of his will, and place themselves where he can transform them. A personal profile has two sectors: (1) participation in the individual disciplines, and (2) use of the four basic learning modes for spiritual growth.

The theory on which the CSPP is based states that spiritual growth can be enhanced by a balanced, in-depth use of all the modes because these learning modes provide different “learning opportunities” that God uses to transform us as his people. A balanced approach would correct the excesses of both the Pietist and the social activist (Thayer 1999, n.p.). Therefore, this study used CSPP as a measure to predict the spiritual growth of students in theological schools in Myanmar.

Summary

The literature review covers several subjects and areas related to spirituality and the context of the research, which are spirituality in Buddhism, spirituality in Christianity, spirituality in theological schools in Myanmar, biblical spirituality, ancient spiritual practices, contemporary spiritual practices, comparisons of Buddhist and Christian spiritual practices, spiritual practices in theological schools, and the theories of Jack Mezirow, David A. Kolb and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer.

Buddhist spirituality is comprised of outer actions called good ethics which bring about the betterment and longevity of human beings. Christian spirituality starts with knowing the living God who communicates with His children through His Spirit in leading and transforming them into His likeness, which leads to shalom for themselves and for the community. Moreover, spiritual formation practices in theological schools in Myanmar need to review their spiritual formation curriculum that help students grow spiritually with intentional spiritual practices that come from the heart as a natural outgrowth of inner transformation. Biblical spirituality helps us understand that spirituality starts with the initial encounter with God and ends with shalom and spiritual fruits that benefit others. Some ancient spiritual practices have brought changes and transformation to lives and society with good deeds accompanied by good actions. Moreover, contemporary spiritual practices are also worth considering for personal and communal observance where spirituality helps Christians love God and others more in their process of transformation into Christlikeness.

The review of today's churches and theological schools in terms of spirituality helps make evident the need to review the spiritual formation programs and develop a

curriculum guidelines that is Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and culturally relevant for theological schools. The review of Burmese Buddhist spiritual practices argues for the use of meditation as a means of spiritual formation while using the Word of God as the focus of meditation. Regarding spiritual disciplines, transformation requires Christians to cooperate with the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. The role of a teacher in the theological school context in terms of helping form spirituality in the students is crucial and needs to be intentional. Moreover, a rule of life for each student should be set and practiced in forming students' spirituality for spiritual growth. A Christian spirituality curriculum needs awareness of the environment and serious creation care of the earth to be good stewards of God's creation. Theological school curricula should be revised and updated based on current trends of life where relevancy plays a very important role in seeing change in theological education. Theological schools need to reset or balance their curricular emphasis more on spirituality than intellectual knowledge for future ministry effectiveness of their students, with possible means of imparting skills and using resources and gifts that each student has.

The transformational learning theory of Mezirow helps adults' learning to be transformational through critical reflection on experiences and making their own meaning. According to the learning theory of Kolb, a strong relationship between spiritual formation and experiential learning exists. This research finds its base on the relationship between the process of learning theory and theology, as found in the spiritual disciplines of O. Jane Thayer.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Overview

The purpose of this study is to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar, to discover the perspectives of theological school students, graduates, and faculty members regarding the effectiveness of those practices. Specifically, the study seeks (1) to identify which spiritual practices are utilized by the students; (2) to identify which spiritual formation practices are most used by the students; (3) to identify what practices are effective or ineffective, and (4) to develop guidelines for a biblically sound, spiritually formative, and appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices for incorporation into the curriculum of the two selected theological schools.

This chapter describes the research methodology, research design, selection of subjects, development of instruments, pilot studies, data collection and recording, data processing and analysis, and summary.

Research Methodology

The value of any research project depends on gathering data that accurately reflect the phenomenon being studied and involves philosophical assumptions. The study used a descriptive research design with mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative research. The nature of the descriptive study is collecting data from one or more groups to analyze

for describing present conditions (Yount 2006, 1-8). Thus, this research was more than simply collecting and analyzing both kinds of data; it involved the use of both approaches in tandem so that the overall strength of the study was greater than either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell 2009, 4). It also started with the worldview assumptions that the researcher brought to the study, procedures of inquiry (called strategies), and specific methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

The research was designed first on a philosophical worldview with a set of assumptions, which helped form the basis for the research questions. Descriptive research strategies were used for closer observation into practices, behavior, methods, and procedures (Calmorin and Calmorin 2007, 70). Specific methods were chosen, such as both open- and closed-ended questions, multiple forms of data drawing on all possibilities through surveys, interviews, and document analysis (Creswell 2009, 15). Corrine Glesne believes that how a person responds to a particular research approach will depend on his or her personality, background, values, and what they believe is important to know the world around them (Glesne 2011, 14). In general, the people of Myanmar are indirect in their approach and response to problems and questions and practice a culture of gentleness, politeness, and positive words especially when giving feedback to others. As Bixler states on the concept of “အားနာဝလှ” (*aa-nar-de*), one of the traits of the people of Myanmar, “there is always extreme sensitivity to the feelings of another by intentionally answering questions in a way that does not embarrass the ones asking or make them feel small to achieve smooth interpersonal relationships” (Bixler 1972, 177). Therefore, to get reliable and authentic data from the respondents, this study used both quantitative and qualitative methods, and documentation.

To gather quantitative data, the researcher used surveys (Appendix B) with the current students to get a general picture of the understanding, perspective, and practice of each respondent regarding spirituality. The use of a survey questionnaire had the following advantages: low cost and effort, ability to produce more candid and objective responses from the anonymous respondents, and greater uniformity in the manner by which questions are posed (Reys 2004, 76).

To gather the quantitative data, the study used interview (Appendix C) and document review (Appendix D). Data collected through qualitative research allowed the researcher to understand and analyze the assumptions, principles, and practices of respondents. It also helped the researcher discuss with respondents their feelings and frustrations regarding a particular subject or incident. Michael Quinn Patton identifies three kinds of qualitative data: interpersonal interviews, fieldwork observation, and documentation (Patton 2015, 36). Patton says that “Interpersonal interviews give the researcher the opportunity to learn about the perceptions, experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge of informants by asking open-ended questions” (Patton 2015, 36). Moreover, the process of interviewing was reciprocal and communicated to the participant a sense of importance and specialness as the interviewer listened carefully and seriously. Questions that stimulated the participants to be more reflective helped them understand themselves better, increased their personal exploration, and felt useful in their role as information providers (Glesne 2011, 178). Through the interview, the research helped students experience transformational learning by placing them in a situation where respondents became autonomous thinkers by learning to negotiate their own values, meanings, and purposes rather than uncritically acting on those of others (Mezirow 2000,

11). The strengths of qualitative data are found in being real-life based, locally grounded, and rich and holistic description. This methodology assessed causation and the meanings people attached to events and the social world around them.

Documents produced by the institutions in this study offered rich insights into their values and practices. Documents “include any kind of written material from organizational, clinical, or program records; social media postings of all kinds; memoranda and correspondence; official publications and reports; personal diaries, letters, artistic works, photographs, and memorabilia; and written response to open-ended surveys” (Patton 2015, 36). The documents also generated quantitative data where numerical analyses of the occurrence of statements and concepts in the documents can indicate key values of the institution (Best and Kahn 1998, 276). I used the information gathered from documents to determine the interests and focus of each seminary regarding their mission, vision, and spiritual formation practices.

Research Design and Instruments

The research design served as a series of guideposts in keeping the researcher headed in the right direction. It is not a specific plan to be followed without any deviation (Kumar 2002, 62). The research design is a detailed plan for how the research is going to be conducted. Sanchez defines research design as the description of sources of data, a data-gathering procedure, the instrument used, and data-processing techniques and statistical treatment applied (Sanchez 1986, 20).

The research design for this study used mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. The researcher has chosen to use a semi-structured interview which is based on a one-on-one conversation with a blend of close-and open-ended questions, accompanied

by follow-up why or how questions (Adams 2015, 493). According to Patton, “The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton 2015, 426).

The documents were studied by collecting materials, such as course descriptions and catalogs from the TSTS. Second, the survey questionnaires were used to collect data from the 80 respondents of the TSTS. Third, interviews were conducted with a total of 18 interviews, consisting of nine respondents from each theological school: three current students, three graduates and three faculty members from each of the TSTS. Each of the interview, the session takes minimum 18 minutes to maximum 50minutes.

Selection of Subjects Dealing with Sample and Population

The sample of this study is comprised of two theological schools in Yangon, where there are more than 364 theological schools (FGA Yangon 2019). They are theological schools A and B. TSA focuses on academic training (theology), ministerial skills, spiritual growth, and Christian life. TSB is committed to building church leaders. I selected these two theological schools in Yangon based on three criteria: 1) credentials with a long history, 2) willingness to join the study and 3) forty or more students in each school. Out of the many theological schools in Yangon, where there are many schools that fit the criteria, these two were chosen for the research field because of the familiar and offered easy open access to me as the researcher.

As Sharon B. Merriam states, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (Merriam 1998, 61). Fraenkel and Wallen also agree that purposeful sampling is appropriate here: “Occasionally, based on

previous knowledge of the population and the specific purpose of the research, investigators use personal judgment to select a sample. Researchers assume they can use their knowledge of the population to judge whether or not a particular sample will be representative” (Fraenkel and Wallen 1990, 75).

TSA was established in 1993 and offers a bachelor’s degree (B. Th), a diploma certificate (Dip. Th/G. Th), both in English and Burmese programs, Bachelor in Ministry in Burmese (B. Min) (Myanmar Centers for Theological Studies 2019). Qualification of applicants at TSA for the program of B. Min (Burmese) is primary school pass, Dip. Th and G.Th program (English) should be at least grade 10 passed and B. Th (English) should be grade 11 passed. TSB was established in 1979, which is one of the four Assemblies of God’s theological schools in Myanmar. It offers a Bachelor’s degree in Theology (B.A. in Bible Theology). TSB also has a joint study program for Master of Art in ministry, M.A (Ministry) and Master of Divinity (MDiv) with Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Baguio, Philippines. Applicant for the B Th program at TSB should be at least grade 11 passed. (Evangel Bible College – Yangon 2019).

All the 364 schools in Myanmar constituted the population of this research. The two selected schools are a purposive non-random sample. Both of the two theological schools are located in Yangon Region. Since TSA uses both English and Burmese as the medium of instruction, all survey questionnaires and interview questions were translated into Burmese; data were collected solely in Burmese and the researcher translated the data later into English. TSB uses English as the medium for teaching. Both the survey questionnaire and actual interviews were conducted in the Burmese language and Zomi/Chin language to get clear answers and opinions from the respondents.

Respondents for the survey were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate in the research program. The interview respondents were chosen mostly from the three current students who have taken the spiritual formation class, the three graduates who also have taken the spiritual formation class, and the three faculty members who have taught the spiritual formation class and who also were familiar with the spiritual formation practices in their respective theological schools.

Development of Instruments

The instrument chosen for data collection should be useful (Subagyo 2004, 232). The instruments used for this study are document review checklist (Appendix D), designed and developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration in Washington. The document checklist includes a type of document, dates and author of the document, and information about the document.

The instrument of survey questionnaire was patterned after the CSPP of Thayer as a measure to predict spiritual growth. The CSPP is based on the spiritual disciplines and Kolb's experiential learning theory. According to Kolb, "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb 1984, 38). There are two processes in learning of Kolb's model of grasping and transforming, where both have equal status (Kolb 1984, 40-43). The grasping axis has two poles of concrete experience (CE) and abstract conceptualization (AC) (Kolb 1984, 40-43). Moreover, the transforming axis also has two poles called reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE) (Kolb 1984, 40-43). The experiential learning theory of Kolb is similar to the models of transformation logic and spiritual development (Thayer 2004, 196). In the first part of the survey, 4 points inquire about the nature and background of

the respondents. The second part is the CSPP questionnaire. The CSPP is a paper-and-pencil measure consisting of 50 items producing scores on scales, each scale representing a spiritual development mode. The items were drawn from 10 spiritual disciplines: prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, and stewardship. The conceptual framework of the CSPP posits that the balance and depth of participation in each spiritual development mode are indicators of the commitment to and the potential for spiritual growth (Thayer 2004, 195-204). The survey questionnaire is mostly based on a western context, but the items are very familiar and applicable to the East Asian context too since it is Bible-based.

Fraenkel and Wallen point out that interviewing is the primary methodology in descriptive educational research (Fraenkel and Wallen 1990, 12). Merriam explains, “Interview is the person-to-person encounter in which one person elicits information from another” (Merriam 1998, 71). The main purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information. The researcher wants to find out what is “in and on someone else’s mind” (Patton 1990, 278). This study used semi-structured interviews. It is a kind of interview which is “usually scheduled in advance and expected to last a certain amount of time; during them, the interviewer might engage in dialogue with the interviewee, rather than simply ask questions, particularly if an interpretive or critical paradigm frames the research” (Bailey 2007, 100). The researcher developed the interview questions based on the research questions. For the validity and reliability of the qualitative data, the triangulation method of Sharan B. Merriam is used with multiple sources of data based on observation by comparing and cross-checking data, which are collected through interview data collected from people with different perspectives

(Merriam 2009, 216). Moreover, the interview questions were developed based on the transformative learning theory of Mezirow, who understands transformational learning as helping the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own values, meanings, and purposes rather than to uncritically act on those of others (Mezirow 2000, 11). To help theological school students gain meaning from their own experience in spiritual formation, it is important for them to engage in active dialogue (Mezirow 1991, 14). Active dialogue could help students see the effectiveness of those spiritual formation practices in each of their lives and assign their own meanings to spiritual practices. The interview has ten questions regarding their opinions of the effective spiritual formation practices in the curriculum, their views in terms of social justice, and split-level Christianity, who are very strong in faith about their salvation but weak in practice and tend to follow their previous tradition and beliefs before they come to faith in Christ. Moreover, the interview questions inquired about their dreams of spiritual life. Each question was semi-structured where the respondent can have freedom for answering and giving their opinions. The interview protocols were mainly based on the problem statements of the study and are focused on the spiritual formation practices and programs of the theological schools. To handle biases and objectivity, I explained to the respondents and participants that the research is “purely constructive.” The survey questionnaire and interview respondents needed to be simple, not biased, and transparent in terms of their spiritual life, views on the Spiritual formation curriculum, and their perspectives on effective and non-effective spiritual formation practices. To achieve that goal, I explained to the respondents that the study purely looked for the betterment of the spiritual life of the theological schools in Myanmar, and did not look to judge those two

theological schools. Moreover, I requested the academic dean of the theological schools to explain this purpose of the study as “being purely constructive” and the respondents will not be accused or punished for their sincere answers and perspective on the research.

The document reviews answered RQ 2 (What spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the TSTS?). The survey questionnaire answered the RQ 2 (What spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the TSTS?), RQ 4 (How do theological school students, graduates, and professors decide which spiritual formation practices are the most crucial and necessary disciplines to practice?), RQ 5 (Which spiritual formation practices are helping students the most in the two theological schools?), and RQ 6 (What is the participation of students across the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP?), and other sub-questions Ho 1 (There are no significant differences between men and women for spiritual practices.), Ho 2 (There are no significant differences in spiritual practices by the number of years of faith.), Ho 3 (There are no significant differences in practicing across the ten areas of spiritual practices.), and Ho 4 (There are no differences of participation between participants from the two different schools.).

The interview questions guided the interviewees in finding the answers to the RQ 2 (What spiritual formation practices are being used in each of the TSTS?), RQ 3 (How do the respondents believe the Spiritual formation course and related activities offered in the curriculum has impacted the spiritual growth and ministry of the students?) and its sub-questions (a) How do professors perceive the spiritual growth of the students involved in the Spiritual formation course?, (b) How do students perceive the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum has impacted the spiritual growth and

ministry, and (c) How do graduates perceive the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum has impacted the spiritual growth and ministry and RQ 4 (How do theological school students, graduates, and professors decide which spiritual formation practices are the most crucial and necessary disciplines to practice?).

Pilot Study

The pilot study tested the research instruments including the survey and interview questionnaires. The pilot study was conducted with undergraduate Bible College students in Kale City, Sagaing Region, Myanmar in June, 2019. To test the validity of the research instruments and also identify effective practices for spiritual formation, I requested ten respondents to use the survey questionnaire with either second, third or final year students of theological school X (Appendix E). For the interview questions, three students, a graduate, and three faculty members were chosen from theological school X based on their willingness and availability. The survey questionnaires and interviews for the pilot study were conducted in June using the Burmese versions of the instruments (Appendix F and G). Based on the information provided by the pilot study, the survey questionnaires and interview questions were revised accordingly to improve the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

Data Collection and Recording Procedures

The study used three methods of data collection: document reviews, survey questionnaires, and interviews.

First, in June 2019, I sent an email to the two respective academic deans of the selected Theological Schools in Yangon Region, asking permission to do the research

(Appendix H and Appendix I). In that email, I also attached the introductory letter from the APNTS program director of Transformational Learning (Appendix J and Appendix K). Second, in July 2019, I visited the two theological schools in Yangon and met with the academic dean of each theological school to get the possible date for the research with their theological schools. Third, after having official approval from the respective offices, the request was made to get information about each school through possible documents. Fourth, the survey with the questionnaire was implemented in each theological school with the forty respondents on the dates determined by the Academic Dean with the signed consent (Appendix L). Fifth, one-on-one interviews were conducted with the nine respondents in each theological school. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents, they were not asked to write their names on the questionnaires and interviews. For the respondents who were not able to come to the theological schools, Facebook Messenger was used to record their answers.

Sixth, the recorded quantitative data and qualitative data were transcribed into Microsoft Word document and to the excel sheet. Seventh, collected data were analyzed and findings were identified. Eighth, upon completion of data collection and analysis, suggested spiritual practices were listed in the curriculum.

Data Processing and Analysis

The process of data analysis includes preparing the data, conducting analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and interpreting the larger meaning of the data (Creswell 2003, 190). For the survey questionnaire, data were processed to see the students' participation with the following themes of prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading

and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, and stewardship. After getting the completed questionnaires, a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to process the data based on the above categories. To analyze the quantitative data, the following analysis methods were used: (1) a series of independent samples t-tests, (2) a repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA), (3) a series of paired-samples t-tests, and (4) a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs).

The respondents for the interview were chosen by the Academic Dean in each of the theological school based on the criteria of (1) availability, (2) students who have taken the spiritual formation class, and (3) faculty members who have taught the spiritual formation class or who have taken that class. The name of the respondents was made confidential and both of the note-taking and audio recordings have done during the interview session. The Burmese language and Zomi language were used during the interview sessions and depended on the respondents' preference and proficiency to get the answers as accurate as. Then, the transcribing session was done in English. Except for the interview session with one of the faculty members in TSB, which was done by text message on Facebook, all the interview sessions were done by face to face conversation. All of the interview sessions were one to one with the respondents, except three of the student respondents in TSB. They were interviewed as once for the sake of time limitation. Before the interview session, the nature of the study was explained and consent forms were signed and processed.

For coding, both the name of the seminary and the name of the respondents were not stated. The codification of the respondents was as follows: faculty (F) were

designated as F-1, F-2, F-3, current students (S) as S-1, S-2, S-3, and graduate (G) as G-1, G-2, G-3 from each theological school.

Table 1: The Coding of the Interview Respondents

No.	Classification of the Respondents	Code
1.	Faculty respondent 1	F-1
	Faculty respondent 2	F-2
	Faculty respondent 3	F-3
2.	Graduate respondent 1	G-1
	Graduate respondent 2	G-2
	Graduate respondent 3	G-3
3.	Student respondent 1	S-1
	Student respondent 2	S-2
	Student respondent 3	S-3

Qualitative research data analysis was done by following Ditte Hvas Mortensen's thematic analysis of user interview "(1) Familiarize with your data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, (6) Producing the report" (Mortensen 2002). Data analysis in this combined qualitative and quantitative research was presented in three steps: data description, data analysis, and data interpretation. In order to have accurate notes of the interview, the researcher arranged properly all the interview notes before analyzing the data. With that, common terminology, such as emerging themes and common trends which occur consistently throughout the interviews, were noted. There was some elimination of data that did not meet the criteria, such as unclear and inappropriate answers which did not answer the interview questions. To detect errors and omissions, data from interviews were transcribed, translated, and edited as needed and were further corrected and arranged to achieve a minimum data-quality standard, which is normal and regular as acceptable data (Emory and Cooper 1993, 450), and then written as a completed transcript.

Data were recorded and analyzed in Burmese for both the surveys and interview questions, and the results of the analysis were translated into English. The survey questionnaire and interview questions were in Burmese, with the English translation in parentheses. Quantitative data were obtained by using survey questionnaires. Data entry was made in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet; data processing and analysis were conducted using a series of independent samples t-tests, a repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA), a series of paired-samples t-tests, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) for data scoring for survey questionnaires and thematic analysis of user interview. The interview answers were used to see demographic comparisons of data such as gender differences, age differences, and their role in the theological schools. The Excel spreadsheet covered the following: (1) qualitative data collected through survey questionnaire of facts: gender, age, role at the theological school, year of Christian life, and the scale of the fifty categories of spiritual disciplines based on CSPP; (2) quantitative data collected through demographic characteristics of the 18 interview respondents: gender, name of their school, age, years as Christian, and role in their theological school, which generation Christian and the ten interview questions; and (3) data collected through documentation from the two theological schools. For survey interview all the seventy-nine respondents are students.

The sixty spiritual disciplines and desires are presented in Appendix A, which presents a detailed picture of the nature of spiritual practices. There are ten spiritual disciplines in the CSPP survey questionnaire that overview students' participation in spiritual formation practices. Thirteen spiritual formation practices come from the responses of the interviewee in the interview session with the eighteen respondents from

those two theological schools. The spiritual formation practices mentioned are interrelated to each other and some terms overlap or are synonyms.

Chapter IV presents the findings from the study of the documents, such as the spiritual formation syllabus and the school catalog, to support the findings from the survey and interview sessions. Second, the findings from the quantitative data which reveal the pattern of spiritual formation practices and their effectiveness in both theological schools are presented. Third, findings from the interviews are discussed to clarify which spiritual formation practices are applicable and which are not.

Summary

In the design of this research, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used. Quantitative research helped the researcher see the overall picture of the spirituality of the respondents, and qualitative research pointed out effective spiritual practices to be included in the reconstructed spiritual formation curriculum. Data were collected from two theological schools in the Region of Yangon through the surveys, interviews, and documents review.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of document review, survey, and interview in terms of the spiritual formation practices in the TSTS in Myanmar. The purpose of this study is to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar, to discover the perspectives of theological school students, graduates, and faculty members on the effectiveness of those practices, to identify which spiritual practices were engaged by students and to develop a proposal for a new model of biblically sound, spiritually formative, and appropriately contextualized Buddhist practices which are noble manners to apply in Christian context such as dressing up well for religious occasions, respect to the elderly and to the religious leaders, charity to be incorporated into the curriculum of the theological schools.

The findings are presented in the sequence that the specific research questions identified in the first chapter: (1) the demographic characteristics of the participants for the survey and interview (2) the spiritual formation practices being used by the students in each of the TSTS, (3) the impact of the spiritual growth and practical ministry of students by the spiritual formation course and related activities offered in the curriculum from the perspectives of professors, graduates, and students (4) the most crucial and necessary disciplines for the students, graduates, and professors on the spiritual formation practices, (5) the spiritual formation practices which help students the most in the two

theological schools, (6) the participation of students across the ten spiritual practices of CSPP, and (7) Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and spiritually formative curriculum guidelines for theological schools students in Myanmar.

The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section discusses the answer to the Research Question 1 which reflects the demographic information of the respondents including: the total number of participants from each theological school, their gender, and the categories of their roles in the school. The data gathered for this part of the demographic information account for both the survey and the interview respondents. The data on the age of the respondents and the number of years they have been a Christian only reflect those who participated in the survey questionnaire. The researcher assumed that the interview questions did not have anything related to the age of the interviewees and their number of years as a Christian. However, she asked the interview respondents what generation were they as Christians because she believes that their understanding on spirituality might be affected on that variable.

There was a total of 91 respondents in the current study. Table 2 shows the number of participants from each theological school. There are 45 participants (49.45%) from TSA and 46 participants (50.54%) from TSB. There was a good representation of respondents from both theological schools.

Table 2: Number of Respondents from the Two Theological Schools

Name of the Theological School	Frequency	Percentage
Theological School A (TSA)	45	49.45%
Theological School B (TSB)	46	50.54%
Total	91	100%

Table 3 below shows the gender of the participants. There are 70 male (70.33%) and 27 female participants (29.67%). The number of males is double the number of female students in these two selected theological schools. The ratio of male students to female students is $70/27 = 2.59$, which represents the typical pattern of education in Myanmar.

Table 3: Gender of the Participants (Both for Survey and Interviews)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	64	70.33%
Female	27	29.67%
Total	91	100%

Hyunjeong Lee (2017) found out the limited education for females in Myanmar is constitutionally guaranteed for all. She said that the reason of the limited education for females compare to males is the cost of education where parents need to provide the cost for school supplies and transportation though tuition fees are free. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics show that in 2015, more than 1.7 million women over 15 in Myanmar were found to be illiterate, while half as many men could not read (Lee, 2017). The number of female students is always less than half of the number of male students though the sex ratio of the total population, according to 2015 record was 0.972 (972 males per 1000 females) which is lower than its global rate (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 3). This ratio highlights the importance of education for women, gender equality and the role of women in leadership. It has been a struggle for majority of families in Myanmar which somehow affects the education of female and their contribution to society. The role of females in Myanmar is to take responsibility of the household since they are confined to family life after marriage. In the rural communities, girls are not encouraged to go to school because

they are not worth the expense of an education which results more girls than boys in education (Lim and Dengthuama 2016, 16).

Table 4 shows the categories of the role of participants in their theological schools such as faculty member, graduates, or students. There are six faculty members, six graduates and 79 students who participated in the study.

Table 4: The Categories of Role of the Participants (Both for Survey and Interviews)

Categories of Role	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty	6	6.59%
Graduates	6	6.59%
Students	79	86.82%
Total	91	100%

It should be noted that of the 91 research participants, there were 79 respondents who participated in the survey questionnaire. The rest participated in the interviews.

Table 5 shows the age ranges of the 79 respondents who answered the questionnaire. The majority of the students, 65 respondents ranged between 18 and 25 (82.3%). Eight students ranged from 26 to 30 years old, four students were under 18 years of age, and two students ranged from 31 to 40 years old (Table 5).

Table 5: Age Range of the Survey Participants

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Under 18	4	5.1%
18-25	65	82.3%
26-30	8	10.1%
31-40	2	2.5%
41-50	0	0
Total	79	100%

Table 6 shows years of faith as Christian of the 79 survey respondents. All of the participants have walked the Christian life for more than a year (Table 6). Twenty-eight students (35.4%) have walked their Christian life between one to five year and 29 students (36.7%) have their Christian life live between six to ten years. 10 students (12.7%) have walked their Christian life between 11 to 15 years. Seven students (8.9%) have walked their Christian life between 16 and 20 years. Five students (6.3%) have walked their Christian life over 21 years. The ratio of the 57 respondents of those newer Christians (who were Christians less than 10 years) to the 17 respondents of those older Christians (who were Christians for more than 10 years) is $57/17=3.35:1$. This ratio of more than the triple larger number of the newer Christians to the older Christian shows the need for detailed guidance for their spiritual formation of those newer Christians.

Table 6: Years as Christian of the Survey Participants

Years as a Christian	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Years	28	35.4
6-10 Years	29	36.7
11-15 Years	10	12.7
16-20 Years	7	8.9
Over 21 Years	5	6.3
Total	79	100%

Table 7 shows that which Christian generation of the 18 respondents in the interview. There are three respondents (S-3, G-1, and G-2 from TSB) who are the first generation Christians. The second-generation Christians are S-2, G-3, F-1, and F-2 from TSA and G-3 and F-2 from TSB. The third-generation Christians are S-1, S-3, G-1, G-2, F-3 from TSA and S-1, S-2, F-3 from TSB. There is the only eighth generation Christian, F-1 of TSB.

Table 7: Generation as a Christian of the Interview Respondents

Categories of Christian Generation	First Generation	Second Generation	Third Generation	Eight Generation	Total
Number of Participants	3	6	8	1	18

Table 8 below shows the number of participants for the survey and interview. There are 79 participants for the survey. The interview participants are 18. Three students joined both for the survey and interviews. It should be noted that for the hypothesis testing, only used the data from the survey questionnaire.

Table 8: Participants of the Survey and Interview

Categories of Research	Survey	Interview
Number of Participants	79	18

The Spiritual Formation Practices Being Used by the Students in Each of the Two Selected Theological Schools (TSTS)

Research Question 2 which says, “What spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the two selected theological schools?” is answered using data from the documents review, survey, and interview.

The Spiritual Formation Practices Being Used by the Respondents Based on the Documents Review

The documents collected from the TSTS including the school catalog and spiritual formation syllabus were reviewed to see how those documents describe the spiritual formation of students, as to how many spiritual formation practices were listed. The document analysis was done using the Document Analysis Worksheet of the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington.

TSA: The spiritual formation syllabus of the TSA was written by one of the faculty members for 2018-2019 academic year. The spiritual formation course is offered for students one in a semester. The document guides the school's intended outcome regarding the spiritual life of the students during their time in theological school. The course objectives guide students to be able to (1) know the whole meaning of spirituality, (2) exercise spiritual disciplines, (3) develop a habit of journaling, and (4) listen to the voice of God. The weekly course outline addresses the following topics: (1) Introducing the course and activities, (2) Restoring our passion for God: Solitude, (3) The goal of life in Christ: Study, (4) Reviewing the foundation of our spiritual life: Prayer, (5) Obstacles in spiritual formation: Fasting, (6) The definition of spirituality: Service, (7) The spiritual aspects of disciplines: Meditation, (8) The hard work of spirituality: Submission, (9) Person, place and provision: Celebration, (10) Radical solutions for radical sins: Simplicity, (11) The life of integrity: Guidance, (12) Adversity and crisis: a week without disciplines, (13) Getting ready for the rest of life: Worship. By looking at the content of the syllabus of the course, it displays that the course put the spiritual formation practices of solitude, study, prayer, fasting, service, meditation, submission, celebration, simplicity, guidance, and worship. According to F-1 of TSA, the course outline is adapted from his M.A. class (Development Association International -DAI) on Spiritual formation. F-1 of TSA suggested his opinion on the need to revise the spiritual formation course to be easier and level down, it might be more applicable and reasonable for students to be able to understand the content and use the spiritual formation practices effectively in their lives. These practices are also similar to the practices suggested by Richard Foster which are categorized as inward, outward, and corporate (Foster 1998, 13-201).

TSB: The Christian formation syllabus and the school catalog were collected for the document review from the TSB. The catalog of the TSB is intended to see these outcomes regarding spiritual formation activities as part of the holistic learning process, helping students grow into spiritual maturity is an important objective. The mechanism to reach the goal of a personal relationship with God is created and implemented (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 5). School programs for students were listed such as: have daily morning and evening devotions, attending chapel service regularly and taking an active role in chapel services, having a pre-arranged weekend ministries for the development of ministerial skills, spirituality, and passion for God and His ministry, joining small group meetings composed of students and faculty members to encourage and pray for one another, joining spiritual emphasis week during the first trimester, Mission emphasis week during the second trimester, and deeper life emphasis week in the third trimester, joining in Christian service, where students need to take responsibility of shopping for foodservice, and volunteering in the student canteen and library to develop interpersonal relationship skills as well as management skills (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 5).

The school prioritizes honesty in the community and in all relationships in developing Christian conduct. All students are expected to conduct themselves with the high standards of a Christian community. If some problems arise among the individuals in the school family, they will be addressed on an individual basis and through counseling with the Dean of Students. The school community is also a drug, alcohol, and smoke-free campus. Any activities which misrepresent the school's image, its leadership, its community, and its stakeholders, and bring damage to the image of the school are

strictly prohibited (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 5). The dress code emphasizes modesty and appropriateness. Even hairstyles should be appropriate, consistent with their identity as men and women of God in the Myanmar context. Students are required to dress properly when they go to administrative offices, chapel, library, classrooms and dining hall (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 6). Moreover, all undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to live on the school campus. Some of the specific guidelines for students such as dress code and hairstyles were not contrary to the culture, context, and norms where the theological school located. TSB set a dress code and hairstyle which not only represents them as theological students, but also plays a very important role in fellowship, evangelism, and mission among the people around them, who are all the Buddhists. The general goals of TSB are:

- (1) Provide excellent Christian ministerial training with Pentecostal distinctives;
- (2) Create opportunities for the development of spiritual and ministerial maturity;
- (3) Encourage the growth of spiritual character and personality;
- (4) Develop ministerial leadership skills and abilities;
- (5) Establish practical ministerial experiences;
- (6) Stimulate evangelistic and missionary zeal for all the students;
- (7) Prepare all students for a lifetime of continuous growth and fulfillment of God's call; and
- (7) Strengthen the work of God, and in particular, the churches of Myanmar Assemblies of God (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 2).

The general goals of TSB emphasize the integration of education with ministerial training, spiritual and ministerial maturity, the growth for spiritual character and personality, ministerial leadership skills and abilities, practical ministerial experiences, evangelistic and missionary zeal, a lifetime of continuous growth, and fulfillment of God's call and work.

The Christian formation syllabus of the TSB was written for the 2015-2016 school year by one of the faculty members. The school's intended-outcomes regarding

spiritual formation in that document are “to give a clear understanding of a biblical model for holistic Christian formation for Pentecostal and charismatic churches. Several important factors were found to be dominant in all spiritual formation efforts in scripture and church history.” The ministry formation statements stated in that document are:

- (1) It can serve as a model for holistic Christian formation for Pentecostal and charismatic churches in Yangon, Myanmar;
- (2) It can provide a guideline for denominational leaders;
- (3) It can also be applied to Bible School situations as potential pastors and leaders are trained there for meaningful roles in the Christian formation of members in their churches; and
- (4) With proper adaptation, it can also be used as a guide for Christian formation in other churches and denominations in other parts of Myanmar (Syllabus for Christian Formation of Evangel Bible College).

The Christian formation syllabus of TSB has an emphasis on Pentecostal distinctive and the contents focus on leadership, spirituality in Pentecostal church history and spiritual leadership in the Bible.

The general admission requirements for the bachelor program are, “an applicant must be a born-again Christian, displaying evidence of good moral character, a dedicated Christian life, and be in agreement with the doctrinal statement of the school. He or she must also demonstrate a genuine-calling and commitment to ministry” (Evangel Bible College 2019-2020, 7). The requirement for admission to TSB is important to maintain the quality of students. Problems in theological schools in Myanmar developed when all young people turned to theological schools since the government shut down all the colleges and universities in the country in 1997 (The Eric Metaxas Radio Show 2019). The requirements to finish the Bachelor of Arts in Bible-Theology required students to take 128 credits in four different areas: (1) Bible- 36 units, (2) Theology- 27 units, (3) Practical Theology-39 units, and general religion and education – 26 units. Practical

theology courses required for students to take emphasized in-class learning in spiritual formation and practical ministry. The spiritual formation practices and activities in the TSB are morning and evening devotions, chapel service, ministerial involvements, small group meetings, spiritual emphasis week, mission emphasis week, deeper life emphasis week, Christian service, honesty and morality, and holiness in conduct and manner. According to S-1, S-2, and S-3 from TSB, morning devotion and evening devotions are conducted daily from 6:00-6:30 am every weekday. There are four times for chapel service from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm from Tuesday to Friday. On Monday, there is a small group meeting at the chapel time. Fasting prayer is conducted once a month on Saturday. Spiritual emphasis week is held for three days during the chapel hour in a trimester. There are Mission emphasis week and Deeper life emphasis week for the following two trimesters. Students need to involve in Christian service once each week as they are assigned on shopping for food, volunteer services in the student canteen and library. Honesty is highly considered in the TSB community in all relationships. A high standard of Christian conduct is expected from all students. TSB is a smoke, alcohol, and drug-free campus. (Evangel Bible College Catalog 2019-2022, 5). Mechanics for monitoring students' conduct are done by dorm leaders and Dean of students. The TSTS focuses on training their students, not just to become strong spiritual men and women, but also to become leaders and mentors based on their ministry calling. The TSTS have the same denominational affiliation of Pentecostal tradition of faith. TSA is an independent theological school where TSB is directed run by the general council of the Assemblies of God, Myanmar. TSA uses their own developed syllabus for spiritual formation course for Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Theology (B.A. Bible-Theo), and master of divinity (M.

Div). Moreover, TSA also offer Pentecostal foundation course for undergraduate program in EBC-APTS Joint program under the Global University curricular. The study review the developed Spiritual formation course syllabus of TSA. Upon the document review, implications were drawn out for the effectiveness of fostering spiritual formation and the syllabus were reviewed and revised. Outward behaviors which the school catalog of the TSB stated in terms of the students' conduct should not be legalistic and should fit with the parameters of the culture and context of the TSB. The focus on student leadership and ministerial skill development in TSB allows students to practice what they have learned in their classes throughout the weekend ministry involvement.

The Spiritual Formation Practices Being Used by the Respondents Based on the Survey Data

In order to answer the research question on the spiritual practices being used by the students, the survey data is analyzed. All participants completed the CSPP measure 10 areas of spiritual practice. Means and standard deviations for these 10 areas are in Table 10. The * indicates 'significant', which means that the difference found is very unlikely to have happened by chance; thus, it is probably a true difference between two (2) groups. The p-value, which (typically <0.05) indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis, so the null hypothesis is rejected. A large p-value (> 0.05) indicates weak evidence against the null hypothesis, so the null hypothesis is accepted. P-values very close to the cutoff (0.05) are considered to be marginal. In order to better understand the spiritual practices and their meanings is stated in the Appendix N.

Prayer

The students mostly agreed with all the statements about the prayer with a mean score of 4.16. Statement 3, “In my prayers, I reveal to God my innermost needs and thoughts” had the lowest score of 3.80. This indicates that students had some difficulty in being open to God in prayer. Statement number 1, “When I pray, I am confident that God will answer my prayer,” had the highest score of 4.51. It appears that students have a very strong confidence in God, hearing and answering their prayers. Yet, the contrast between these two questions may indicate a discontinuity between believing God for answers to prayer but a lack of faith in revealing themselves to God. This indicates that students’ prayer lives seem very limited and they need to open up to God regarding their inner needs.

Repentance

The practice of repentance was assessed by students with a score mean of 4.16. Statement 7, “Repentance is a part of my private prayers to God” scored 3.66, averaging the lesser agreement and the highest score of students was 4.38 for question 8, “When I confess and repent my sins, I experienced the assurance of being forgiven by God.” Each of the highest and lowest score is close to the average mean of 4.0. Therefore, students agreed that repentance is a part of their private prayer and believed that God forgives when they confess their sins. The data can be interpreted to mean that students are strong in their practice of repentance.

Worship

Students mostly agreed with all the statements about the worship with a mean score of 4.03. Statement number 13, “My participation in the Lord Supper (Communion, Eucharist) draws me into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ,” had the lowest score of 3.24. This indicates that students had some difficulty in their understanding relational closeness with Jesus through their participation in the Lord Supper. Statement number 12, “My worship is focused on the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” had the highest score of 4.85. It appears students have a very strong focus on their worship of Trinity. Yet, the contrast between these two statements may indicate the understanding of students on their closeness with Christ in joining the Lord Supper is still limited though their understanding of the worship on Trinity is very strong. The reason why students have limited understanding of their participation in the Lord Supper might be that they are not clearly taught about the essence of the Lord Supper and its impact on their relationship with Christ.

Meditation

Students slightly disagreed with all the statements about meditation with a mean score of 3.05. Statement number 17, “I record in a journal my thoughts on my spiritual journey” scored 1.54. This indicates that students had very low interest in spiritual journaling. Statement number 16, “I listen to music that praises God,” had the highest score of 3.95 which is very close to the mean 4.0. It appears that students have slightly agreed on the practice of listening to music and praise songs. Yet, the contrast between these two may indicate that students were somewhat passive in listening to music but very weak in spiritual journaling. The impact of modern technology might be one of the

reasons why students do not practice journaling. They are too attached to the virtual world. Moreover, students might need detailed guidance and models to follow on how to journal.

Examen of Conscience

The practice of examen of conscience was assessed by students with a score mean of 3.92. This indicates that students slightly agreed on the practice of examen of conscience. Statement number 22, “When I hear about famine, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters, I want to help the victims in some way” had the lowest score of 3.15. It appears that students had some difficulty in helping with natural disasters. Statement 25, “Even when a situation seems unbearably difficult or painful, I have confidence that through his providence, God can bring something good out of it” had the highest score of 4.82. It appears students have very strong confidence that God can bring something good out of difficulties and painful situations. Yet, the contrast between these two statements may indicate a discontinuity between believing God for his goodwill but a lack of their involvement in helping the people who suffer from natural disasters. The reason why students are lacking in their social involvement, though they have a belief in the goodwill of God in the midst of pain and suffering, might be that they need good mentors and models who are involved in these ministries.

Bible Reading and Study

Students slightly agreed with all the statements about Bible reading and study with a mean score of 3.28. Statement number 32, “I read devotional articles and/or books,” had the lowest score of 2.23. This indicates that students had significant

difficulty in reading devotional articles and books because the impact of military government in the country for more than 20 years lessen the reading culture where the older generation were enjoyed about it (Oo 2017, n.p.). Statement number 27, “I read or study the Bible to learn the will of God,” had the highest score of 4.13. It appears students have strong agreement on learning the will of God by reading the Bible. Yet, the contrast between these two statements may indicate a discontinuity between learning the will of God by reading the Bible but lack in reading devotional articles and books. Students need to be encouraged to read devotional books and articles along with the Bible to have an integrated understanding of the text and the context. Faculty members can assign students to have reflection on those devotional books and articles in the requirements.

Evangelism

The practice of evangelism was assessed by students with a mean score of 3.26. Statement number 36, “I invite unchurched people to attend church or small-group meetings with me,” had the lowest score of 2.65. This indicates students had some difficulty in inviting unchurched people to church and small group meetings. Statement number 35, “Based on my abilities and spiritual gifts, I assist in some way in the teaching ministry of my church” had the highest score of 3.67. It appears students have confidence in the impact of their spiritual gifts to the teaching ministry of their church. Yet, the contrast between the two statements may indicate a discontinuity between assisting in the church with their spiritual gifts but lack desire in inviting unchurched people to the church. Students may not be involved in inviting the unchurched because they are not ready to deal with the questions and problems that arise from newcomers. Churches and

theological schools should prepare their members and students to take on the challenges in inviting the unchurched to the faith community.

Fellowship

Students slightly agreed with all the statements on fellowship with a mean score of 3.31. Statement number 38, “When someone in my church is sick or experiencing some other problem and needs me, I help them” had the lowest score of 2.71. This indicates that students had some difficulty in helping those who are sick and those who had problems in the church. Statement number 42, “I see evidence that my participation in church helps encourage or build up the whole congregation” had the highest score of 3.89. It appears that students have confidence in their participation to encourage and build up the whole congregation. Yet, the contrast between these two statements indicate discontinuity between their helping the whole congregation but lack of help for those who are sick and have problems. This kind of hospital visitation and care of the sick need to be taught so that students will be more active in these ministries. Most of the time, the sick are helped by the family members, but not from the church members as part of culture. Only those who does not have any family member to take care of, then the relatives and church members offer their help.

Service

The practice of service was assessed by students with a score mean of 3.44. The statement number 46, “I use my home (apartment, dorm room) to provide hospitality to strangers or to those in need,” had the lowest score of 2.82. This indicates that students had difficulty in welcoming strangers and people who need help into their dwelling

places. Statement 45, “I depend on God to help me accomplish the work he has calls me to do,” had the highest score of 4.54. It appears that students had a very strong confidence in God to help them accomplish the work he had called them to do. Yet, the contrast between these two statements may indicate a discontinuity between believing God to accomplish the work entrusted to them but a lack of welcoming strangers and people who are in need of their help. This kind of service in hospitality is hard for students who are staying in the dormitory, where strangers are generally not allowed to come in.

Stewardship

Students slightly disagreed with all the statements about stewardship having a mean score of 2.72. Statement number 48, “I give financially to support the work of the church,” had the lowest score of 1.89. This indicates that students have willingness but no resource. Statement number 50, “I choose what to eat and drink and how to live my life based on the concept that caring for my health is being a good steward of God’s blessings of life” had the highest score of 3.22. It appears that students had been somewhat careful in choosing what they eat and drink, and how they conduct their lives as stewards of God’s resources. Yet, the contrast between these two statements may indicate a discontinuity between living their lives as stewards of God but still lack in supporting the work of the church with their financial resources since they are also supported by their parents, and sponsors.

Table 9 below presents the means and Standard Deviations for the items of the CSPP using data from the 79 respondents from the survey questionnaires.

Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the CSPP (n = 79)

Questions	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Prayer</i>	4.16	0.62
1. When I pray, I am confident that God will answer my prayers.	4.51	0.90
2. When I pray, I sense that God is infinite and holy.	4.00	1.14
3. In my prayers, I reveal to God my innermost needs and thoughts.	3.80	1.33
4. In my prayers, I actively seek to discover the will of God.	3.90	1.35
5. In my prayers, I thank God for the salvation he has provided for me in Jesus Christ.	4.48	0.95
6. When experiences in my life lead me to despair or depression, I turn to God in prayer for deliverance.	4.29	0.98
<i>Repentance</i>	4.16	0.73
7. Repentance is a part of my private prayers to God.	3.66	1.34
8. When I confess and repent my sins, I experience the assurance of being forgiven by God.	4.38	0.98
9. I experience genuine sorrow for my sins.	4.33	1.00
10. When I confess a sin, I express a desire to be delivered from its power.	4.25	1.14
<i>Worship</i>	4.03	0.64
11. My worship of God is a response to what God has done for me.	3.35	1.85
12. My worship is focused on the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.	4.85	0.53
13. My participation in the Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist) draws me into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ.	3.24	1.64
14. I attend a church worship service.	4.66	0.96
<i>Meditation</i>	3.05	0.86
15. I reflect thoughtfully on passages I read in the Bible.	3.43	1.25
16. I listen to music that praises God.	3.95	1.11
17. I record in a journal my thoughts on my spiritual journey.	1.54	1.51

18. I freely forgive those who sin against me even when the damage or hurt they have caused is very great.	3.27	1.40
<i>Examen of Conscience</i>	3.92	0.62
19. When I examine my life, I recognize my great need for God's redemptive work for me.	4.23	1.58
20. I evaluate my culture by principles found in the Bible.	3.37	1.67
21. When I read or hear reports of terrible crimes that have been committed against people, I grieve over the evil in the world.	4.30	1.11
22. When I hear about famines, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters, I want to help the victims in some way.	3.15	1.40
23. When I see or learn about the immoral ways so many people live, I long for God's will to be done.	3.67	1.39
24. Even though evil seems to be so powerful and so pervasive, I feel confident that God will ultimately provide justice.	4.56	0.94
25. Even when a situation seems unbearably difficult or painful, I have confidence that through his providence, God can bring something good out of it.	4.82	0.47
26. I use biblically-based principles to govern ethical decisions.	3.29	1.21
<i>Bible Reading and Study</i>	3.28	0.80
27. I read or study the Bible to learn the will of God.	4.13	1.10
28. When I read or study the Bible, I attempt to learn the enduring principles being taught by the specific passage I am considering.	3.66	1.31
29. I study the Bible to understand the doctrines of my church.	2.94	1.65
30. As part of my study of the Bible, I consider how the church has dealt with issues throughout its history.	2.72	1.75
31. When I read or study the Bible, I change my beliefs and/or behavior to accommodate new information or understanding.	3.56	1.31
32. I read devotional articles and/or books.	2.23	1.39
33. I read or study the Bible.	3.72	1.12
<i>Evangelism</i>	3.26	0.96
34. I work with other Christian believers for the purpose of introducing unchurched people to Jesus Christ.	3.15	1.55

35. Based on my abilities and spiritual gifts, I assist in some way in the teaching ministry of my church.	3.67	1.42
36. I invite unchurched people to attend church or small-group meetings with me.	2.65	1.57
37. I pray for people and/or organizations that are working for the salvation of the unsaved.	3.57	1.45
<i>Fellowship</i>	3.31	0.84
38. When someone in my church is sick or experiencing some other problem and needs me, I help them.	2.71	1.43
39. I meet with a small group of Christian friends for prayer, Bible study, or ministry.	3.58	1.26
40. I serve as a peacemaker among my friends and/or among members in my church.	2.81	1.56
41. Within my local church, I associate personally even with those with whom I have no common social or intellectual interests.	3.58	1.28
42. I see evidence that my participation in my church helps to encourage or build up the whole congregation.	3.89	1.20
<i>Service</i>	3.44	0.95
43. I serve in a church ministry or community agency to help people in need.	3.43	1.45
44. When a friend, believer, or neighbor suffers pain, hardship, or loss, I join them with my presence and suffer with them.	2.96	1.39
45. I depend on God to help me accomplish the work he calls me to do.	4.54	0.87
46. I use my home (apartment, dorm room) to provide hospitality to strangers or to those in need.	2.82	1.82
<i>Stewardship</i>	2.72	1.00
47. My actions in nature are guided by what is best for the environment.	2.77	1.66
48. I give financially to support the work of the church.	1.89	1.41
49. I do without things that I want in order to give sacrificially to the work of God.	2.99	1.45
50. I choose what to eat and drink and how to live my life based on the concept that caring for my health is being a good steward of God's blessing of life.	3.22	1.44

The Spiritual Formation Practices Being Used by the Respondents Based on the Interview Data

In order to answer the research question on what spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the two selected theological schools, the interview data is analyzed using the thematic analysis for the semi-structured interview. According to Mortensen, there are six steps in doing thematic analysis of user interview, such as “(1) familiarize with your data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report” (Mortensen 2002). The first step of familiarizing with the data comes from the process of the interview session with the respondents and the transcribing of the recorded interview audio of those eighteen respondents who are students, graduates, and faculty members. The second step of generating the initial codes was processed by making a table of each of the spiritual practices described by each of the respondents. From the codes of the respondents, the themes for spiritual formation practices and activities were collected and recorded. In this step of naming the themes, there are forty spiritual practices and activities called spiritual emphasis week, deeper life emphasis week, mission emphasis week, spiritual formation class, meditation, solitude, morning devotion, evening devotion, dorm devotion, personal devotion, small group meeting, Bible reading and study, fellowship, service, evangelism, internship, the discipline of study, fasting, journaling, mentoring, discipleship, celebration, prayer walking, whole night prayer, worship, chapel, Friday night worship, Sunday night worship, intercessory prayer, forgiveness, patience, social development, spirituality of parents, giving, compassion, hospital visitation, dressing up, giving tithes, repentance, and worshipping through nature. Then the fourth step of reviewing themes was done by putting all the similar

themes into one (1) category of the spiritual practices and deleting all the overlap themes.

In this step, the finalized spiritual formation practices are listed (See Table 10).

Table 10: Themes of Spiritual Practices in Qualitative Data

No.	Spiritual Practices and Activities	Themes of the Spiritual Practices
1.	Bible Reading and Study The Discipline of Study	Bible Reading and Study
2.	Giving Dressing Up Well Patience	Contextualized Buddhist Practices
3.	Discipleship Mentoring Spirituality of Parents	Discipleship
4.	Social Development Compassion	Examen of Conscience
5.	Fasting	Fasting
6.	Fellowship Small Group Meeting	Fellowship
7.	Meditation Solitude Journaling Forgiveness	Meditation
8.	Prayer (Personal Devotion) Prayer Walking Whole Night Prayer Intercessory Prayer Morning Devotion Evening Devotion Dorm Devotion Repentance	Prayer
9.	Service Evangelism Internship Hospital Visitation	Service
10.	Worship Chapel Celebration Friday Night Worship Sunday Night Worship	Worship
11.	Tithing (Tithe offering) Worship through Nature	Stewardship
12.	Spiritual Formation Class	Spiritual Formation Class
13.	Spiritual Emphasis Week Mission Emphasis Week Deeper Life Emphasis Week	Spiritual Emphasis Week

The 11 finalized spiritual practices are Bible reading and study, contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship, examen of conscience, fasting, fellowship, meditation, prayer, service, worship, and stewardship.

The fifth step of defining and naming themes and producing reports are as follows.

Bible Reading and Study

Bible reading and study included the practices of Bible study, Bible reading, and any reading of books whether for the sake of spiritual, mental, moral, and intellectual growth.

TSA: Bible reading and study were mentioned as one of the spiritual practices in TSA. All of the nine respondents practiced Bible reading and studying either privately or in a group Bible study. Both F-1 and G-1 mentioned that they also study devotional books as part of their daily life. S-1 mentioned group Bible study as her way of studying the Bible and others have their own personal time of Bible study. Except F-2 and G-2, all other respondents have their specific time and chapters for reading the Bible. S-1 mentioned that they read the whole Bible every year. F-1 mentioned theme by theme studying of the Bible. F-1 also believes that there is revival not only in prayer but also in reading the Bible and studying books. Both G-1 and G-2 said that they read the Bible three chapters a day and S-3 reads the Bible 30 minutes a day. G-3 mentioned his way of reading the Bible by reading it in his own dialect.

TSB: Bible reading and study were mentioned as one of the spiritual formation practices in TSB. F-1, F-2, F-3, G-1, G-2, G-3, S-2, and S-3 mentioned that Bible reading and study as part of their daily routine for spiritual growth. G-1 said that this discipline of

Bible reading and study as the most important discipline for her life. Moreover, G-1 finds that sharing her insights from the Bible study builds up others as well as herself.

Moreover, G-3 responded that the book of Corinthians helps him learn more about Christianity and the issues of the church. F-1, F-2 and F-3 mentioned Bible study as a part of their devotional life and believe that students who are intentionally involved in devotions are blessed spiritually. G-1 mentioned that she reads ten Bible verses a day and F-3 mentioned that he reads five chapters a day and finishes reading the whole Bible in a year. F-3 also enjoys not just reading the Bible but studying inductively the gospel of John.

According to the answers of the respondents, Bible reading and study are important and common practices in the lives of students, graduates, and faculty members. But the data analysis finds that some respondents still struggle with having a specific time and consistency in Bible reading and study. Since both theological schools conduct morning, evening and dorm devotions, there is adequate time to study and reflect on the text during their devotional times. Moreover, F-1, F-2, G-1, G-2, S-2, and S-3 have their own personal devotion. It is a good practice that it helps respondents grow spiritually through the practice of reading the Bible.

Contextualized Buddhist Practices

The interview focused on what inspired students, graduates, and faculty members in terms of Buddhist spirituality or morality. As the literature review suggests that one of the spiritual practices in theological schools should have opportunities for an ecumenical and cross-cultural exchange to better understand the nature of spirituality (Amirtham and Pryor, n.d., 158). Therefore, Buddhist spiritual practices were taken to be studied and

reflected upon by the respondents. Buddhist spiritual practices in this study focuses on all the good manners the Buddhists offer to the people of different age and their devotion to the Buddha and his teachings.

TSA: Most of the respondents asserted that Buddhists and their daily practices were admirable in terms of generous giving and serving the community through social responsibility. F-1, G-1 and S-2 even praise Buddhist actions in giving generously and G-1 admire them for extending forgiveness, which is far better than Christians. S-1 recognized the value of Buddhist daily activities, such as dressing up nicely for religious festivals and holidays, politeness in communication, and respect for elders. G-2 admired their practice of abstain killing anything. F-2, F-3, and G-3 surprised their commitment to the Buddha and his teachings. F-2 and F-3 mentioned the sacrifices of Buddhists made to attain Nirvana through morality. Buddhist monks are viewed by F-2 and G-3 as good and exemplary in terms of the way they teach and preach. G-3 even believed that devout Buddhists are ethical and those devout Buddhist celebrities are famous for their ethical standards. Since there is no concept of sin in Buddhism, the law of Karma motivates them to attain Nirvana (Myo Chit, 1983, 43). They hope to cancel their remaining bad karma through charitable actions or good works (Spiro 1970, 103). All actions in Buddhism whether good or bad weigh in their final goal of attaining Nirvana. S-3 said that he does not have any knowledge about Buddhism and Buddhist people because he grew up in a small village in southern Chin State where there are no Buddhists around and his teenage years before coming to theological school were in a foreign country as a worker. F-1 also stated that the contributions of Buddhists are “all-out” and excellent. Moreover, G-3 stated that devout Buddhists live their lives well. Buddhist morality and

practices help Christians to live out their faith in action. Some Christians might have very strong faith but if their actions are not matching with their professed faith, their lives are not different from non-believers. Theological students should be active in having mercy on the people around them which goes beyond sacrifice to God (Matt. 12:1-14).

TSB: Most of the respondents, except S-3 from TSB have respected and admired Buddhist practices. F-1, G-1, G-2, S-1, and S-2 admire the respect the Buddhists adherents to monks and elderly people. G-3 was inspired by the way the Buddhists extend love and loyalty to all people through their giving. Respondents see the Buddhists as far better than Christians in these areas. The literature review has discussed widely the noble practices of Buddhists in terms of respect, giving and compassion, which are good to imitate through the living example of Aung San Suu Kyi and Kyaw Thu (Habito 2005, 190-93; Bayos 2016). S-3, however, viewed Buddhist practices with no appreciation because he sees that their actions do not match with their heart intention. G-1 admired the Buddhist practices on religious activities led by the father in the house and their respect of the pagoda and monastery compound. Both G-1 and S-2 mentioned the admirable Buddhist practices are the way they dress up on Buddhist holidays and festivals, where each month of the year has a significant Buddhist festival. In Myanmar, especially among the Buddhist community, their dress shows their respect for people and the occasion. F-2 mentioned that those Buddhists are good in social life and communication in the community and their respect for other religions is excellent. G-1 also mentioned the good practice of Buddhists as their sacrifice in serving the monks by preparing food early in the morning.

The Buddhist practices of giving respect to monks and elderly persons, generous giving, respect for the religious compound and buildings, giving attention and focus on the Buddha and his teachings, active in social affairs of the community, and being strong in social life and communication are still needed to be developed among Christians and churches in our context. G-1 and G-3, who were converted from Buddhist backgrounds are more attuned to those good practices since they practice those noble ones for attaining Nirvana. The students who come from Christian backgrounds focus more on the heart and attitudes than on outer practices. For these students from Christian background, heart transformation and inner authenticity was their first concern. The literature review identified spirituality as conforming to the image of Christ for the sake of others (Muholland 1993, 15). A good and ethical lifestyle should always follow heart transformation. In terms of being committed to Buddhist teaching, F-2 from TSA shared his opinion that we, Christian ministers should prepare our sermons and lectures well like the Buddhist monks who do have perfect and well-prepared sermons for their adherents. G-3 from TSA also shared that his opinion on how the smoothness and solidness of the teachings of the Buddhist monks make their adherents' faith firm and could not easily sway by other religious teachings. Therefore, it is observed that some of the Buddhist monks really love their religion and their profession. The engaged Buddhists that was discussed in chapter two, take special care of nature and resources on earth demonstrate one of the important practices that all the Christians, including students in the TSTS, should be aware of and take action on (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 216). This is also related to stewardship in Christianity where they have roles to play in taking care of the

earth just as the noble example of those Buddhist adherents who take the socio-ecological action seriously (Habito 2005, 190-93).

Discipleship

The practice of discipleship includes nurturing new believers how to grow in their Christian life and ways to help them reach to the likeness of Christ. In the interview session, the spirituality of their parents is asked to the respondents to reflect on how they were nurtured by them. Moreover, recalling those memories would help respondents to become more aware of their role in nurturing the next generation and the community around them. This kind of review is similar to the theory of Merizow, focusing on critical reflection as one of the ways for transformation.

TSA: The respondents from TSA are seven male respondents and two female respondents. F-1, F-2, G-3, and S-2 are the second-generation Christians and F-3, G-1, G-2, S-1, and S-3 are third-generation Christians. In terms of love and service to God, F-1 and G-1 shared that the spirituality of their ancestors was stronger and more admirable than they were. Both S-1 and S-2 said that the spirituality of their parents was normal in faith and Christian practice. F-2 said that his parents were never satisfied with his spiritual life in terms of prayer. F-3 shared that his grandfather was the first Christian convert in his village. Both F-1 and S-3 shared that their mother prayed for their conversion and to become full-time servants of the Lord since they were young. G-1 shared that her grandfather's passion for worship and evangelism was better than her. G-2 shared that his grandfather sacrificed a lot for his faith. This kind of sacrifice for the faith involves persevering in our trials (James 1:4) and exercising our faculty members by

using God's Word to guide our choices (Heb. 5:14) and is a measure of maturity (Richards 1987, 21-28).

TSB: The respondents from TSB are six male respondents and three female respondents. G-1, G-3, and S-3 are first-generation Christians who converted to Christianity from Buddhism. F-2 and G-2 are second-generation Christian. F-3, S-1, and S-2 are the third-generation Christians and F-1 is an eighth-generation Christian, who is a descendant of the first Christian convert, U Naw, under the mission of Adoniram Judson from the American Board for Foreign Missions. S-2 and shared his grandfather was the first convert in their village and served the Lord as a full-time minister in the village. F-3 shared that his grandfather was the first Christian convert in their village. G- 2 shared that the spirituality of her parents is just normal in faith and practices. S-1 shared that his parents had to deal with primitive animistic beliefs since they are first-generation Christians and his generation does not need to struggle with those primitive beliefs and superstitions. As the literature review shared about the spirituality and superstitions in Buddhism, it is crucial for ministers and Christian leaders to know how to guide new converts from other religious backgrounds in their discipleship and mentoring process. For this reason, the interview questions provided some guidelines to follow when they disciple new converts. Since G-1, G-3 and S-3 are the first generation Christian and among them, both G-1 and G-3 shared that their parents became Christians and now the whole family believes in God. G-3 also shared that though his father is a Buddhist convert to Christianity, after experiencing the healing of his lower back pain, he became very active in sharing the gospel and doing evangelism while working as a government officer in military service. F-1 who is an eighth-generation Christian shared that she has a

wonderful father who is a pastor and who has an exemplary lifestyle of joyfulness and good in social life with any age of people. He practiced giving tithes since his primary school years and encouraged others enthusiastically for the practice of giving. F-3 shared about the spirituality of his father in terms of faithfulness, enthusiasm, sincerity, and commitment to God and his ministry.

Moreover, the responses on nurturing the faith of new believers from non-Christian backgrounds and how to help them grow into Christlikeness is presented.

TSA: The practice of discipleship for converts from other religious backgrounds is recommended by most of the respondents as a crucial and necessary discipline. S-1 called discipleship as the “next step” for new born again believers. In disciplining new converts, building a friendship with them, helping them to understand the Bible and convincing them to follow Biblical teaching were suggested by G-1, G-2, G-3, and S-1. S-2 respondent suggested that praying for them as an important and logical first step for doing discipleship among new converts. While doing that he also included that it is important to avoid judgmentalism and to offer counseling in dealing with new converts from other religious backgrounds. G-1 suggested that there should be time for forgiveness and personal growth for converts in the process of discipleship. F-1 suggested the importance of transforming our minds according to Romans 12:1-2. F-3 suggested handling the issues related to new converts from other religions with gentleness to avoid religious discrimination and sadness. Moreover, he suggested that we should appeal to them to know the power of God and His work to those new converts. Among the respondents from TSA, S-2 and S-3 mentioned their active participation in church planting and disciplining new converts. S-2 has been serving among the Buddhist

community in Hlegu Township, Yangon Region with ten of the new Buddhist converts to Christianity. S-3 is active in evangelism and discipleship among his own people especially young Christians converts from a Christian background in his hometown and also other countries such as Malaysia where his tribal people live.

TSB: The respondents from TSB believe that the new converts need a program of discipleship to grow and overcome their former religious belief and faith. The practice of prayer and Bible study was mentioned by F-1, F-2, and F-3 for the spiritual growth of the new converts. S-1, S-2, S-3, and F-2 mentioned the importance of taking the time and being patient with those new converts. G-1 suggests that the issue related to the former lifestyle of the new converts and their adjustment with the Christian practices need to be handled with care. F-1 shared her beliefs using contextualization in dealing with new converts from other religious backgrounds as important in doing discipleship and in teaching how to live a Christian life. Both F-1 and S-1 mentioned the importance of living our lives as models for new believers to follow. F-3 shared regarding the necessity of providing a mentor for new converts in the program of discipleship and spiritual growth.

Respondents from both theological schools A and B mentioned discipleship as an important step for each new convert from any religious background. In doing that, all the respondents expressed the importance of prayer for the new converts, building friendship, non-judgmental attitude regarding their beliefs and practices related to their former beliefs, being patient and gentle by taking time, giving time for them for forgiveness and personal growth, being a role model to them, providing a mentor for each new convert and applying contextualization if it is applicable.

As theological school students, the school required more of their spiritual growth through their time of study in the school. But in terms of service such as evangelism and discipleship, the involvement of the students was still very limited. Therefore, F-3 in TSB suggested that offering a ministry internship for students is important for students to apply what they have learned in classes. Mission and evangelism among other religions should be more active so that the discipleship program for those new converts will also be active.

Examen of Conscience

The examen of conscience means how the respondents feel and take action on social issues, discrimination, compassion and injustices in their lives and society.

TSA: In terms of social issues and discrimination in society, most of the respondents agreed on the need for their involvement. F-2, G-1, G-3, S-1, and S-3 mentioned that they prayed over social issues and discrimination. Both G-1 and S-1 felt grief over social issues all over the country including tribal tensions, social injustices, and discrimination. It is obvious that recently minority in Myanmar, the Chin tribal people are discriminated by the Burmese Army with airstrikes killing 21 of Christians (Klett 2020, 142). However, F-3 confessed that he could not be involved in social development because it is costly in terms of time and finance. S-2 shared that social issues in the church helped him to be aware of adultery and to shun it. S-2 also gave his suggestion for helping Christian family members with social sin, not by accusing them and making him feel abandoned, but by helping them to stand and live faithfully for God. F-1, F-2, F-3 and G-2 suggested conducting awareness for those social issues by educating parents and adults. In doing that, F-1 suggested that social involvement should have two directions: to

educate and to set laws. Moreover, F-2 shared his feeling of pessimism on the government and prayed for justice to intervene in the country. Moreover, F-2 shared his sad feelings for never hearing or and experiencing justice, since all of his life has been under a dictatorship and unjust discipline. F-2 also suggested one of the important things about social issues is to offer proper education and awareness about sex to children.

TSB: In dealing with social issues and discrimination, F-1, G-3, S-1, S-2, and S-3 said prayer is a means to deal with those issues. G-2 thought that those issues can be handled well by the government. G-1 suggests offering awareness to children and adults in terms of social issues. F-1 felt the need for development and transparency regarding social issues. F-2 believed that education as the parameter for eliminating those social issues in society. F-3 also believed that Christians have a role to play in social development by representing Christ through words and actions.

According to the respondents' answers on social issues, it is seen that most of them are still weak in their social involvement and social development. G-2 from TSA said that though he is willing to be involved it is limited for him since he does not have proper knowledge about laws and regulations. Moreover, adults who should be involved in social development have spent their teenage years under the military dictatorship where critical thinking is not allowed. The only way to survive for them was obedience to the government without any questions. Moreover, according to F-1 from TSA, his concerns for social issues have been trapped by fear and silence. Maintaining awareness is the only thing that he can do regarding social issues and injustices. Similar to those comments, Ben Rhodes conveys the importance that Myanmar nationals heal themselves from all the trauma they have experienced in terms of ethnic division and poverty, which

even causes the Chin pastors to be unable to love and accept the Muslim minority in Myanmar (Rhodes 2019, 73). Perhaps this is the reason why theological school students are slow and limited their involvement in social issues. But it is good to see that they are interested in giving awareness to social concerns and feel the need to educate people to lessen the issues and help people to be more aware of the issues. Therefore, one of the remedies to deal with Christian involvement in social issues and justice affairs is helping them to be healed in terms of the trauma they have in their hearts, such as fear, hatred, and pessimism. Moreover, offering a subject called critical pedagogy among Christians especially in theological schools and asking some experts and judge advocates to come and share the laws and regulations of social development in churches and theological schools might be the initial step for our involvement in social matters. Biblical teachings on the role of Christians in social issues should be expanded and preached more by pastors and teachers in theological schools.

Fasting

TSA: In TSA, fasting is conducted once a month for the whole student body and sometimes with the faculty members. S-1 respondents said that fasting is the most important discipline for her to practice spiritual growth. She also has her personal fasting every Sunday. Both S-1 and S-2 have their personal fasting one day a week for a meal apart from the school program. S-2 said that fasting helps him understand the lectures and increases passion for ministry. Moreover, family fasting, according to S-2, leads to desiring God, bringing unity, and strengthening the whole community. S-3 said that he practiced Christmas holiday fasting. According to his experience, through fasting, he receives God's guidance in doing ministry and changing lives. S-3 affirmed that fasting is

an important practice to experience God's hand in changing lives and situations. G-2 confessed that he never had a practice of fasting before he came to the theological school. Moreover, S-1 stated that in her early years of study in theological schools, 20-30 percent of the whole student body could not do proper fasting and they tend to have their own food provided. It means that they joined the prayer but they could not fast. F-2 stated that though all the students could not properly do fasting by not being able to skip a meal, the school does not take action because the student body is composed of students from an inter-non-denominational and there are some trends that students would like to have their spirituality more in. Depending on the students' emphasis and focus on spiritual formation, faculty members give them freedom in their spiritual practices.

TSB: In the TSB, fasting is compulsory for students to participate every last Saturday of the month. According to F-1, through fasting, they experienced freedom from inner struggles, discrimination, hatred, and tension among each other. Moreover, it is a time to pray for the nations. F-2 also shared fasting as the most important thing in his spiritual life.

The practice of fasting in each theological school is actively pursued. It is also seen that some of the students even have their personal practices of fasting. TSA also had a balanced view of those spiritual formation practices where they have an understanding for those students who cannot or do not fully join in fasting. Some of the faculty members have the practice of fasting in personally, as couples, in families and church fasting practices. Both G-1 and G-2 from TSA indicated that they discovered some meanings and benefits of seeing answered prayers from fasting.

Fellowship

Fellowship includes help for those in need, meeting with new friends for prayers and Bible study, making peace in the church and community, associating with people in the church who have different opinions and concepts, and participating in building up other believers.

TSA: The school has small groups that are composed of students. In that small group, they have practiced singing and drama and hold dance competitions. S-2 said that a small group helped him to be more connected to each other where they have games and fun based on the small group. S-2 also shared that more fellowship should be conducted among students and faculty members for more understanding and strong relationships to be built.

G-1 said that she has a passion for mentoring friends who are in need. She cares for those heartbroken in relationships among students and young people in her context, pointing them to God as the one who is Almighty, who controls everything and who cares for their lives. G-1 also suggested that faculty members in theological schools should be actively involved in nurturing the students inside and outside of the classrooms. Moreover, F-1 said that he always encourages students and his church members.

TSB: S-1, S-2 and S-3 in the TSB shared how they enjoy small group meetings where they can share their feelings, the ups and downs of their lives, prayer concerns, and encouragement to each other and prayer for one another. S-3 gave his remarks on small group meeting where he gets lessons of life from their fellow students and how they can also become great influencers of their schoolmates. S-2 also shared that apart from his time of prayer and Bible study, he always spent his time for fellowship with friends. G-3 shared his concern about forming small groups. Students should be grouped based on

their gender and faculty members should not be in the small group so students can have a more powerful and meaningful interaction and can freely share their feelings and lives with their fellow schoolmates.

The practice of small group ministry in each theological school helped most of the students to be able to go through their stress and struggles with school requirements. According to the suggestions of G-3 from TSB, the absence of faculty members in those small group meetings seems more effective since students can share their feelings and burdens. When forming a small group, the role of gender should be given priority since the small group tends to include sharing personal struggles and issues in life.

Meditation

Meditation in this study means a reflection on the Bible. Listening to praise songs and sermons, recording daily spiritual journals and forgiving others for any harm and hurt.

TSA: S-1 shared the ways she does meditation is through reading the Bible, listening to the voice of God, meditating upon it, and making an application for everyday lives. S-1 also said that she always does meditation during the break of classes for about 15-20 minutes in the chapel room or any vacant classroom. In terms of forgiveness, which is related to meditation, she continued to share her experiences during her study in theological school, where she is wrongly accused by a teacher. The life and example of Jesus Christ helped her overcome the hurt and pain which came into her life in terms of the unforgiving spirit. She could let go of all the wrong accusations through the practice of prayer and meditation on the Bible. She added that she does keep her feelings in check meditating on the life of Christ and Paul's teaching on spiritual fruit. S-2 also shared his

feelings of how hard it is to overcome deep hurt and that it can take a month or even a year to overcome. According to S-2, the motivation in forgiving others comes from the story of Jesus and Peter, where Peter broke his promise to Jesus but Jesus still forgave and loved Peter. Therefore, this student decided to forgive no matter how deeply he was hurt. S-3 shared his experience of asking forgiveness from his friends to receive complete healing for his hurting heart. It was easy for him to ask for forgiveness once he decided to ask forgiveness to his friends. G-1 shared her experience of forgiving her own father because of his hurting actions toward her. She sought counseling from her pastor on resolving these hurts and the process for forgiveness. She was motivated to forgive by looking at the life of Jesus Christ who offered forgiveness even on the cross at the very moment of his death. That picture of Jesus on the cross gave her a sense of reality that she should love everyone, not only the people who make her happy but also the one who opposes her and brings her to trouble. G-2 shared his experience of meditation through listening to the sermons on YouTube from his favorite preachers such as John Piper and Saw Patrick from Myanmar. In terms of forgiveness and reconciliation, he shared that the process of forgiveness and reconciliation took about eight years with his relatives in his hometown, who had a grudge against him and his family for changing denomination. He shared that the process and initiation had started from him all of his tries for communication with his relatives. Moreover, he shared that he gets annoyed easily and after five minutes, he always asks for forgiveness. G-3 shared that writing a spiritual journal is one of the important spiritual disciplines for him as a student. He shared that through meditation, he could overcome his hurt feelings because he believes that forgiveness can open up for happiness, joy and peace. F-1 said that one of the benefits the

students have through the spiritual formation class is the practice of journaling. He shared his experience of forgiveness which he felt is easy for friends and relatives but hard for family members. He felt he is still in the process of forgiveness, though he tried to initiate forgiveness although continually feels hurt from time to time by his family members. F-2 shared that he forgives offenses for only one or two times. If someone commits the same mistake and asks for forgiveness for the third time, that person does not receive mercy and has no more chance for forgiveness. He shared that he always tried not to commit the same wrong and is careful about repeating the same mistake. F-3 shared how the Lord's Prayer instructed him to forgive. We need to forgive others as we are forgiven by God. He also said that offering forgiveness is not always easy but we have to forgive. The process of offering forgiveness for him comes from knowing the love of God and remembering that love in his daily life.

TSB: S-2 shared that he listens to sermons on YouTube and received encouragement from those messages. He extended forgiveness to others and he continued to ask for forgiveness if his jokes hurt people. Moreover, he also shared that he never nurses discrimination toward people around him, but released those hurts by himself extending forgiveness to people, even without their apology. S-3 also shared that he was deeply and terribly hurt by the harsh words of a roommate when his unintentional jokes woke his angry friend up. Therefore, he said that he asked him for forgiveness and learned the lesson for his whole life to be careful. Yet, S-1 shared his terrible experience of hurt by other young drunk hitting and fighting him by confused him with their opponents. Encouraged by his parents, he decided to let the case go and offer forgiveness

to those drunk young people and build a relationship with them by showing the example of Christ.

G-1 also shared that she was deeply and bitterly hurt by someone. By listening sermons on YouTube and reading some Christian books she overcame the hardships and hurts. G-2 also shared that she watches testimonies on YouTube and Facebook and listens to songs to get encouragement which blessed her heart. In terms of forgiveness, she shared that she had a miscommunication with a senior student in terms of workload in the dorm. But later, she adjusted to her and offered forgiveness to the person. G-3 shared that he was deeply hurt by others related to his father, and he really wanted revenge on those people. He prayed for them and experienced the love of God in his life. He felt relief from being hurt through prayer. Moreover, he shared that he has not asked for forgiveness from others yet.

F-1 shared her memory about forgiving a student where she was hurt by that students' accusation for not being skillful in communication with a student in terms of some issues. Later, she said, she could start a normal conversation with the students and overcome the hurt in her heart. She continued that God gave her a lesson which helped her to grow more and made her strong through that particular student. Moreover, she continued to share that all hurts and grudges she had even among her family members and her housemaid also could be dealt with and overcome. F-2 said that he does not have any grudge to take revenge on someone for their wrong attitude and behavior toward him. He is ready to ask forgiveness if he needs to reconcile. His philosophy is that, if someone misunderstands you when you are doing right, that is a blessing for the spiritual life. F-3 also shared his experience of asking forgiveness to a senior student of whom he made

jokes. After having a time of prayer about his behavior he felt led to ask for forgiveness to the person and it set them free.

Most of the respondents have experienced pains and offering forgiveness to the offending parties. At the same time, most of them said that going through those painful experiences was not easy and offering forgiveness also was a challenge. Meditation upon the life of Jesus, the teaching of the Bible in terms of forgiveness, and prayer helped them to overcome those painful experiences through forgiveness and reconciliation. As the literature review discussed Christian meditation, which focused on filling in with the Word of God (Foster 2014, 85), the respondents could overcome bitterness and hurt by replacing these feelings with love and forgiveness.

Prayer

In this study, prayer involves revealing our innermost needs, seeking God's will, confession of our sins and repentance, and thanking God for salvation. It includes prayers of confidence that God will answer our prayers, prayers of sensing God's nature and prayer patterns, such as personal prayers, whole night prayers, intercessory prayers, and prayer walks.

TSA: S-1 shared part from the small group that the TSA organized for students, there is a prayer group composed of twelve students for prayer and Bible study. They have a prayer meeting early in the morning from 5:00-6:00 AM before the school's daily morning devotion. The meeting includes Bible study, singing and praying together. The urge for them to join this group is because of their answered prayers. They pray for their future ministries, their personal needs, and the concerns for their family.

S-2 shared his experience of prayer walking with the faculty once a semester. The prayer walk is done by dividing the student body into two groups for walking around the town, where the TSA is located. He felt that it is important because God said to Moses that “very place where you set your foot will be yours” (Deut. 11:24). Therefore, he believed that God blessed those places where he did prayer walking. He continued to share how the Lord gave him a burden for intercessory prayer every day for about 30 minutes. S-3 shared the role of prayer, “without prayer, living a single day is not easy and not worth living. It is the most important thing to do every day. When we cover our plans and dreams with prayer, the name of God glorified. If we don’t pray, nothing happens.” S-3 also shared how prayer has brought practical spiritual guidance from God. He has seen how prayer has changed many lives in his ministry. G-1 shared that he encourages her friends to pray because it can help them rest in the promises of God and find solutions when they get lost in life. She shared that she does prayer when her other roommates go to bed. G-2 shared his memories that TSA had very good programs and practices of prayer. When he looks back to those experiences and actions, he felt that the school had a good pattern where the students had time for fasting prayer and intercessory prayer for the nation. He also shared that through prayer he felt that he had received answers and that was very encouraging for him. F-1 shared that his family has their prayer time before they go to bed and that for, he goes to a prayer garden for special prayers once a year. He continued to share that he wants to increase his prayer life since he feels guilty for not having enough time for it. He felt that although we read a lot and know a lot if we do not spend time in prayer, it can change nothing to the hearts of people. For him spending time in prayer led him to see miracles and changes for good. One of his weaknesses in giving

time for prayer is because of having a family that demands so much of his time. He understands prayer as not just asking God about something but also listening to God.

F-2 shared that the school conducts prayer and study for students to be balanced by not forcing students involved in prayer and fasting prayer. Rather, they involve students voluntarily since theological school is a place for study and education. F-3 also shared that prayer is very important for him and he always spent his time every morning from 6:00 to 6:30 AM. He shared that they also have family prayer time at night.

TSB: S-1 shared that prayer has been one of the spiritual practices which he faithfully does. His favorite time for praying is before going to bed for 30 minutes or more. S-2 also shared that his practice of prayer is also before bedtime for about 15 to 30 minutes. S-3 shared that he follows a regular discipline of prayer. Both G-1 and G-2 shared that there is a need to have a prayer room at the TSB so that students can pray freely and pour out their hearts before God.

G-3 shared that the school should give more opportunities for students to spend more time in prayer. His personal prayer time is always at night and sometimes he does midnight prayers alone in the field or playground of the school. For him, prayer is one of the most important disciplines in his daily life. F-1 observed that prayer has been one of the ways students release their stresses regarding school requirements. Therefore, she believes that in the future, whole night prayer should be included as the extra-curricular of the spiritual formation curriculum of the school. She continued to share that prayer is a part of her daily life.

F-2 shared that prayer has been one of the most important practices to help new converts stand firmly on their faith. Therefore, his church has every Friday prayer

meetings and he believed that prayer should be very strong and solid. F-3 shared that the spirituality of his father in terms of prayer is very unique and exemplary for him as he was intentionally nurtured since his childhood.

In theological schools A and B, it seems all the respondents have their personal time for prayer. F-1 and S-2 from TSA mentioned that prayer for them is not just asking God for things and needs, but more of listening to Him and having guidance from Him. This practice of prayer can be seen its detailed guidance of the process that Teresa of Avila named the interior castle where it goes beyond just requesting to God what we need, but passing many rooms on the way of the castle to reach the center, where it is complete unification with the soul with God (Foster and Smith 1993, 169). F-1 and S-3 from TSA strongly believed that apart from prayer, the knowledge that we have and the hard work that we perform could not bring success and fruitfulness in doing the ministry. F-1 from TSA said that “For me, though I read a lot and know a lot, if I don’t spend time in prayer, nothing can change the hearts of the people. But when I spend time in prayer, I can see miracles and changes” (Interview with Faculty respondent (1) from TSA, July 11, 2019)

Service

The practice of service means serving the people in need, helping people who are in pain and experiencing hardship, depending on God to accomplish his work, opening our home for strangers and needy, helping the needy, hospital visitation, working with other Jesus to bring unchurched to Christ, serving in the teaching ministry, inviting people to small group and church, praying for ministers and the lost, and evangelism.

TSA: S-2 shared his involvement in a Christian organization where evangelism and mission is their focus. He also shared the fruitfulness of their mission work, where more than ten families from Buddhist backgrounds have been converted to Christianity. His passion is to be used by God more in mission and church planting and he has been praying and preparing for his future ministry. S-3 also shared his ministry of hospital visitation for prayer and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the people who are sick. G-1 also shared her involvement in serving junior students in her current graduate studies through the mentoring program.

TSB: S-3 shared about his hospital visitation and helping poor people financially. G-1 also shared her wish and passion to serve more faithfully in the future in children's' ministry among non-believers. G-2 also shared her involvement in the church with the hospitality ministry in preparing food and serving the people. She also has a passion for serving young people to nurture and make disciples. G-3 also shared the need for theological schools to have more opportunities in practical ministry for students such as sharing the gospel and doing evangelism. He also would like to see students have hospital visitation and sharing the gospel regularly as a program of the school. F-1 also shared her passion to share the gospel and share some gifts with the neighbors during the Christmas season.

TSB: All students in TSB are required to involve in ministry as well as sharing gospel tracts in the community and on buses and trains. F-3 shared his opinion for the need of students to participate in internships so that they can learn the nature of ministry and apply what they have learned in classes. F-3 said that in the present ministry internship program some students did not take it seriously and some do not properly

report their ministry involvement. He believes that ministry involvement could strengthen the relationship between the theological school and the churches in Yangon. Partnering in ministry is mutually beneficial; students could help with the leadership role.

The experiential learning theory of Kolb, a transformation of experience is crucial in the process of learning where it gives a deeper and different meaningful knowledge (Kolb 1984, 38). All the respondents in theological schools A and B gave their suggestions on the need of having opportunities for students' involvement in practical ministry. The hospital visitation ministry has been very weak and only one student respondent has mentioned the practice. Evangelism and mission work involvement by students are also very limited and each theological school should find ways to help students be more active in partnering in evangelism and mission work. An overall observation of the involvement of the respondents in social service and activities is very limited and should be strengthened for the fulfillment of the great commission.

Worship

Worship means having a response to Trinity and God's work, partaking communion in coming closer with Christ, attending church worship service, joining in the chapel, morning devotions, evening devotions, dorm devotions, Friday night services, Sunday night services and the practice of celebration.

TSA: Both S-1, and S-2 shared the practice they have for their spiritual development through worship in the chapel, morning devotions, evening devotions, and devotions in classes. G-1 suggested having chapel services at least once in a semester in the Burmese language so that students can wholeheartedly join in worshipping God in his presence. G-2 also shared his experience of joining worship services, morning devotions,

and evening devotions. His opinion on these spiritual formation activities is that they are “just enough” for students. Adding more could make students feel burned out regarding spiritual practices since not all are applicable or possible for students to perform effectively. G-3 shared his opinion on messages shared during chapel services as sometimes not so solid and morning devotions are such a hard thing to wake up to so early when it is quite cold in the school. Personal devotions, which students are required to have instead of chapel service, are also a matter of finishing requirements without any benefit. F-1 mentioned all the worship services the school performs, such as chapel which is conducted three times a week, morning and evening devotions for daily practice, and dormitory devotions in each dorm. He shared that third year and final year students are required to be involved in ministry on Sundays and all students are asked to report the message that they heard every Sunday. Sunday nights in the school are sometimes used for song practices and some other activities. F-1 also mentioned his passion to have the practice of celebration more in his life and his family and clarified the difference between celebration and thanksgiving. For him, thanksgiving happens in the wider context of believers or church context but celebration can be just words of thanks to our family members. Both F-2 and F-3 shared how the school conducts chapel services using two languages both English and Burmese five times a week and devotions such as morning devotions, evening devotions, and dormitory devotions.

TSB: The practice of worship is conducted as a chapel service, Friday night service once a month, Sunday night worship service every week, and morning devotions in the dorm. S-1 shared that Friday night worship services helped them to come closer to each other and know each other’s gifts and talents. G-1 also shared how she was blessed

through sermons shared during chapel services and sharing during dorm devotions. G-2 also shared how she was blessed by the weekly chapel services and its messages. F-1 shared her opinion on the effectiveness of the dorm devotions, which is based on the willingness of the students themselves and their longings for the Word of God.

In terms of the chapel, TSB practices it four times a week in the English language. F-1 senses that it is quite challenging for new students to engage with messages shared in English. She also said that ninety-five percent of the students enjoy the Sunday night worship, where the worship is composed of same-age students worshipping together. The Friday night service is more for fellowship, talent show, games and sharing a message. F-1 shared the way they conducted their family devotions using topical Bible study. F-2 shared how important it is to conduct worship services not just participate in them. He shared how challenging the Friday night worship service was in terms of students' role in providing food. Moreover, he also suggested that there should be some rules for students in terms of using electronic gadgets and media. F-3 also shared how the schools provide different worship services for students, such as morning devotions, chapel services, small groups, prayer meetings, Friday night worship, and Sunday night worship. According to his view, Friday night worship services effectively help students grow spiritually and Sunday night worship services are the second most effective in shaping the spiritual disciplines of students. He suggested combining those two worship services of Sunday night and Friday night into one and making them very solid and meaningful with a special program each week.

The worship services in theological schools A and B are helping students grow spiritually through the sermons and messages they shared. As some of the respondents

have shared their opinion, it is important to evaluate those worship services, not just have them but to review their effectiveness by examining the way they are conducted. Among eighteen respondents, G-3 from TSA shared that personal devotions were ineffective as a replacement of chapel service.

Stewardship

Stewardship means taking action on environmental awareness, supporting financially the work of the church with our tithes and offerings, giving sacrificially to the work of God, eating and living lifestyles as good stewards of God. None of the respondents mentioned stewardship, how they manage their financial matters, giving to the church or managing resources that God has given to their lives.

S-2 from TSA shared that whenever he sees beauty in nature such as a tree, it reminds him of the creator who is our God. He also shared that nature reveals the Maker behind it, and it also shows the handiwork of God helps connect more with Him. The way nature is created and sustained helped him to think more about his Christian life, and to be more balanced in spiritual and physical life. S-3 from TSB shared that he always helps financially to those who are poor and needy. In this way, he shared love with them and lives as a good steward of God. F-1 from TSB shared that she faithfully supports the ministry of the church through her tithes. She also shared that the practice of tithing was strongly encouraged by her father who is a pastor and who started the practice of tithes since his primary school days.

Most of the respondents did not mention their involvement in environmental development, financial support for the work of the church, their sacrificial giving, and their lifestyles of eating as good stewards of God. Sharing our practice of giving to others

is not normal and usual in the Myanmar Christian context since Christians tend to say in the church when giving is necessary, “do not let your left hand know what is in your right hand for the offering.” Perhaps those respondents, think of those practices of stewardship are more personal and not to be shared with others. Christians should be involved more in taking care of nature as stewards of God, where the literature revised discussed on the engaged Buddhism (Robinson and Rodrigues 2006, 216). G-3 from TSA mentioned that he and some of his friends were asked to stop studying for a semester since they misbehaved at the end of the school year. This taught holiness and how to use our bodies, money, and talent for the kingdom of God that should be emphasized in the teaching and preaching in the theological school context. Moreover, the lifestyle of eating as good stewards of God might be not so applicable in the context at the moment since the country is a developing country where Christians and most of the people in Myanmar do not have much choice in terms of food.

Therefore the spiritual practices being used by students in the two selected theological schools are: prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, stewardship, contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship and fasting.

The spiritual formation practices listed in the CSPP of the survey questionnaire has 10 spiritual disciplines called prayer, repentance, worship meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, and stewardship. In the interview data, the practice of repentance is combined to the practice of meditation and some new practices such as contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship, and fasting are added to the ten spiritual practices of CSPP.

The Impact of the Spiritual Growth and Practical Ministry of Students by the Spiritual Formation Course and Related Activities Offered in the Curriculum

The data analysis of the interview sheds light on Research Question 3 addressing the impact of the spiritual growth and practical ministry of the students by the spiritual/Christian formation course and related activities such as spiritual emphasis week offered in the curriculum from the perspective of the respondents.

Spiritual Formation Class

Spiritual formation or Christian formation class is a class where the spirituality of students is enhanced through teaching them the nature of spirituality and training them to be able to form their spiritual life through spiritual practices. The biblical model for holistic Christian formation for Christians and churches is taught and students are trained.

Faculty Members (Professors)

TSA: F-1 believed that spiritual formation class has a great impact on students in terms of practicing solitude. He also shared that journaling is the most beneficial practice for the students. He also shared his opinion that the class might be more effective if the course is simple so that students can grasp the nature of spiritual formation and the practices. F-2 shared how the spiritual formation class helped him to learn more about Christian spirituality in terms of spiritual practices, he believed that it solely depends on which practices students would like to use. F-3 shared how theological education in Myanmar should train students not just to be brilliant in academics but also in practical ministry and daily Christian lives. He also believed that the spiritual formation class in his theological school has learning experiences both for the head and for the heart

encouraging student growth. He emphasized the personal spiritual growth in students' lives of the students. In terms of the impact of the spiritual formation class, he saw the difference in the students' lives where character change and growth happened.

Graduates

TSA: G-1 shared that she learned the themes called integrity and core values from the spiritual formation class. Integrity for her means being ourselves just as we are wherever we are and whatever we do. It is being true in the presence and out of the presence of people. G-2 shared about his personal growth other than ministry growth took place through the spiritual formation class. He learned about spiritual formation, personal identity, and intimacy. G-3 shared that he does not remember any content that he has learned from the class.

TSB: G-1 shared that through that Christian formation class she learned that the Christian life is to be a holistic transformation. She saw the Christian life as a process where each person grows into Christlikeness step by step. One of the changes that she has attained through the class was growing in patience and understanding others. G-2 shared how the class helped her to understand about spirituality and how to live her spiritual life.

Students

TSA: S-1 shared her experiences of taking the spiritual formation class and learning the spiritual practices of solitude, meditation, and fasting. She also shared how spiritual formation practices have impacted her life so much though she could not practice them all. S-2 shared that the spiritual formation class guided him in experiencing

God through spiritual practices such as solitude, meditation, and prayer. He had not learned the habit of listening to God before he took the class in Spiritual formation. Listening to God and meditating on Him has been a new experience that he learned apart from prayers of thanksgiving. He also shared that he could use the practice of solitude when he is on the bus and having time to think about the God who created nature as he sees trees and the way they grow. Using those good words and the ability of discernment in choosing how to speak comes to him through the class of spiritual formation. The benefit he received through that class was the ability to live a balanced spiritual and practical Christian life. S-3 expressed the benefit of taking the class on spiritual formation as understanding the importance of prayer, fasting, Bible reading, and meditation.

TSB: S-1 have not taken the Spiritual formation class. S-2 and S-3 shared they grew more in understanding spiritual formation through the Christian formation class. S-3 shared that he does not practice most of the spiritual practices he has learned from the class, except for prayer and Bible reading. S-2 shared that he could practice all the things that he has learned through the class. He was blessed through a study of the life of Moses and benefitted by coming closer to God in prayer.

According to the respondents of theological schools A and B, having the course on spiritual formation seems effective and brings a great impact on the students in terms of spirituality and growth.

Spiritual Emphasis Week

Spiritual emphasis week is a week or some days in which students are nurtured and trained to grow spiritually by the experienced and anointed pastors and leaders.

Similar activities are known as mission and deeper life emphasis weeks in each theological school.

Faculty Members (Professors)

TSA: F-1 and F-2 shared how their school conducted spiritual emphasis week by inviting different speakers to share salvation and also the truth that students should understand to finish their school years well.

TSB: Both F-1 and F-3 also shared how the school conducted one emphasis week- spiritual, mission or deeper life-in each trimester. The three emphasis weeks are excellent means of growth for students in terms of their understanding of spiritual life, mission affairs, and a deeper life with God.

Graduates

Among all the six graduates from TSA and TSB, only G-3 of TSA shared how his life was blessed through hearing powerful and applicable sermons from speakers during the spiritual emphasis week.

Students

TSA: S-1 mentioned that spiritual emphasis week has been one of the events where students' spiritual lives are enhanced and nurtured. It usually occurs at the beginning of the school year. At the end of the school year, they have a mission emphasis week where students learn more about the nature of missions and their role in the mission of God.

TSB: S-1, S-2 and S-3 shared that the spiritual emphasis week, the deeper life emphasis week and the mission emphasis week are all part of the school program for

spiritual formation. S-1 shared his experience of listening to those solid and well-prepared sermons during those emphasis weeks had a great impact on students. S-3 shared that the sermons shared on those emphasis weeks have more benefits for students' growth than chapel sermons.

The spiritual emphasis week of the two theological schools have contributed to the spirituality of the students according to the perspectives of faculty members, graduates, and students from the TSTS.

The Most Crucial and Necessary Disciplines for the Students, Graduates, and Professors on the Spiritual Formation Practices

To answer Research Question 4, the responses from interview data were used. Based on the responses from professors, graduates, and students, the following stories of their most crucial and necessary disciplines were summarized.

The Most Crucial and Necessary Disciplines for the Respondents Based on the Interview Data

The spiritual practices which respondents felt the most crucial and necessary are as follow. According the faculty member respondents meditation (F1, TSA), examen of conscience (F2 TSA), Bible reading and study (F3 TSA, F1 TSB), prayer (F3 TSA, F1 TSB, service (F3 TSA), discipleship (F1 TSB), fellowship (F2 TSB), worship (F2 TSB, F3 TSB) are the most crucial and necessary practices.

According to the graduate respondents, worship (G1 TSA, G3 TSA, G2 TSB), prayer (G1 TSA), Bible reading and study (G1 TSA, G3 TSB), fasting (G2 TSA), meditation (G3 TSA, G1 TSB), and fellowship (G1 TSB, G2 TSB, G3 TSB) are the most crucial and necessary practices.

According to the student respondents fasting (S1 TSA, S3 TSA), discipleship (S1 TSA, S2 TSA), prayer (S3 TSA, S2 TSB, S3 TSB), fellowship (S1 TSB, S2 TSB, S3 TSB), worship (S1 TSB), and Bible reading and study (S2 TSB, S3 TSB) are the most crucial and necessary practices for their spiritual growth.

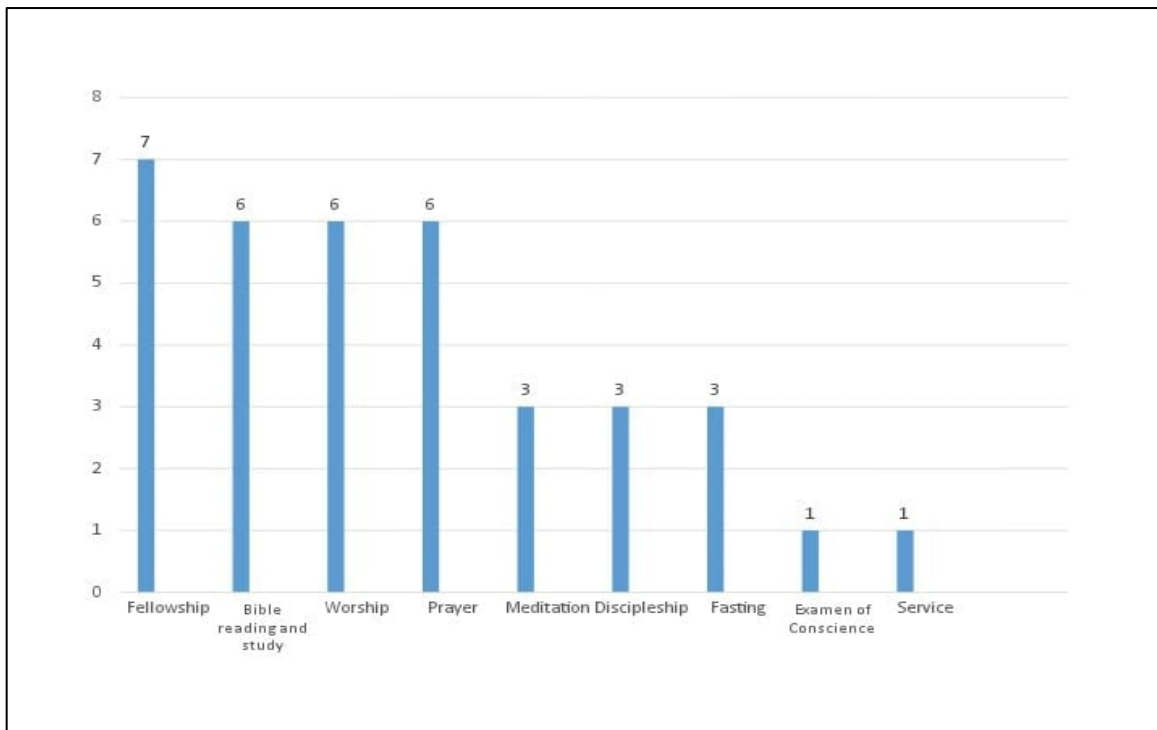


Figure 5: The Most Crucial Practices

The most crucial and necessary disciplines for the students, graduates, and faculty members in the two selected theological school on the spiritual formation practices are fellowship (7 respondents), Bible reading and Study (6 respondents), Worship (6 respondents), prayer (6 respondents), meditation (3 respondents), discipleship (3 respondents), fasting (3 respondents), examen of conscience (1 respondents), and service (1 respondents). Moreover, the respondents also shared the spiritual practices they would like to add such as the contextualized Buddhist practices on giving and dressing up well of religious ceremonies.

The Spiritual Formation Practices which Help Students the Most in the Two Theological Schools

In order to answer Research Question 5, the survey data was used to further explore the participation of students across the ten areas of spiritual practices on the CSPP. This reveals the practices which help them the most. The means and Standard deviations in each item of practice are given in Table 10. According to the data analysis on the ten spiritual practices of CSPP, the practices of prayer, repentance, and worship have been the most used and helpful practices among students in TSTS.

The Participation of Students Across the Ten Areas of Spiritual Practices of Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP)

In order to answer Research Question 6, the survey data is analyzed to know the participation of students across the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP. See Table 10 and Table 11.

According to Table 10, the five items of spiritual practices have revealed that there are significant differences in practicing across the ten areas of spiritual practices on the CSPP according to the result of data analysis. The three items of spiritual practices called prayer, repentance, and worship are more frequently used among the ten areas of spiritual formation practices on the CSPP. Moreover, the item of stewardship and meditation are frequently used by the respondents among those ten areas of spiritual formation practices on CSPP.

Table 11 shows the overall view of the student body from the TSTS and point out the areas of strength and weakness in the spiritual life of the respondents. See Table 11. Based on the learning styles of Kolb, placement of CSPP items in disciplines and scales and code for determining scales of spiritual practices (Appendix M) are displayed based

on each spiritual discipline. The whole student body was strong in their relationship with God (Transcendent Scale/Concrete Experience) and their critical reflection of their culture and their own lives (Reflection Scale/ Reflective Observation). It also shows that the whole study body from the TSTS was weak in their relationship with others (New Life Scale/ Active Experimentation) and their participation in relationship with the Word of God (Vision Scale/Abstract Conceptualization). The reason why students are strong in their with God and their critical reflection on their own culture and one's life must be the denominational affiliation where personal relationship with God and reflection of one's life and culture based on God are prioritize than one's participation with the Word and one's participation with the others.

Table 11: Assessment Report Form Based on the Four Scales of Spiritual Practices

Spiritual Development Mode	Strong Intentional Participation		Weak Intentional Participation	
	Number	%	Number	%
Growing through a relationship with God	Prayer 1	4.51	Stewardship 50	3.22
	Prayer 2	4.00	Prayer 3	3.80
	Prayer 5	4.48	Worship 11	3.35
	Prayer 6	4.29	Worship 13	3.24
	Repentance 8	4.38	Repentance 7	3.66
	Repentance 9	4.33	Prayer 4	3.90
	Repentance 10	4.25		
	Worship 12	4.85		
	Worship 14	4.66		
	Service 45	4.54		
Growing through a relationship with others			Service 43	3.43
			Service 44	2.96
			Service 46	2.82
			Fellowship 38	2.71
			Fellowship 39	3.58
			Fellowship 40	2.81
			Fellowship 41	3.58
			Fellowship 42	3.89
			Evangelism 34	3.15
			Evangelism 35	3.67
		Evangelism 36	2.65	
		Evangelism 37	3.57	
		Stewardship 49	2.99	
Growing through a	Bible Reading and Study 27	4.13	Meditation 15	3.43
			Meditation 16	3.95

relationship with the Word			Meditation 17	1.54
			Meditation 18	3.27
			Bible Reading & Study 28	3.66
			Bible Reading & Study 29	2.94
			Bible Reading & Study 30	2.72
			Bible Reading & Study 31	3.56
			Bible Reading & Study 32	2.23
			Bible Reading & Study 33	3.72
Growing through Critical Reflection	Examen of Conscience 19	4.23	Stewardship 48	1.89
	Examen of Conscience 21	4.30	Examen of Conscience 20	3.37
	Examen of Conscience 24	4.56	Examen of Conscience 22	3.15
	Examen of Conscience 25	4.82	Examen of Conscience 23	3.67
			Examen of Conscience 26	3.29
			Stewardship 47	2.77

Differences between Men and Women in Participation in the Spiritual Practices of the CSPP

To better understand any differences between men and women, a series of independent samples *t*-tests were conducted in Table 12. All the probability values (*p*-values) of the spiritual practices among men and women were greater than the level of significance, which was 0.05. Therefore, the research failed to reject the null hypothesis, meaning there was no significant difference when the respondents were grouped according to gender. There were no significant differences between men and women for any of the spiritual practices.

Table 12 below contains the means and Standard Deviations for the spiritual practices on the CSPP by gender using the data from the 79 respondents of the survey questionnaire.

Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations for the Spiritual Practices on the CSPP By Gender (n = 79)

Spiritual Practice	Total (n = 79) M (SD)	Men (n = 56) M (SD)	Women (n = 23) M (SD)	F (df)
Prayer	4.16 (0.62)	4.08 (0.64)	4.36 (0.53)	-1.88 (77)
Repentance	4.16 (0.73)	4.13 (0.73)	4.23 (0.74)	-0.57 (77)
Worship	4.03 (0.64)	3.98 (0.65)	4.14 (0.62)	-1.03 (77)
Meditation	3.05 (0.86)	2.96 (0.90)	3.25 (0.73)	-1.35 (77)
Examen of Conscience	3.92 (0.62)	3.85 (0.64)	4.11 (0.55)	-1.71 (77)
Bible Reading and Study	3.28 (0.80)	3.25 (0.73)	3.34 (0.60)	-0.45 (77)
Evangelism	3.26 (0.96)	3.17 (1.02)	3.49 (0.79)	-1.37 (77)
Fellowship	3.31 (0.84)	3.29 (0.91)	3.37 (0.64)	-0.35 (77)
Service	3.44 (0.95)	3.42 (0.93)	3.48 (1.03)	-0.23 (77)
Stewardship	2.72 (1.00)	2.83 (1.04)	2.43 (0.86)	1.61 (77)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

Differences in Spiritual Practices of the Students by the Number of Years of Faith

To better understand any differences in spiritual practices by the number of years of faith, series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted. Three areas of spiritual practices showed significant differences. Participants who had been Christians for 6-10 years reported less use of prayer than did participants who had been Christians longer, $t(2, 76) = 4.61, p = 0.013$, post-hoc $p = .012$. Participants who had been Christians for one to five years reported less use of repentance than did participants who had been Christians longer than 11 years, $t(2, 76) = 3.96, p = 0.023$, post-hoc $p = .045$. Finally, participants who had been Christians for 6-10 years reported less use of worship than did participants who had been Christians longer than 11 years, $t(2, 76) = 3.33, p =$

0.041, post-hoc $p = .041$. See Table 13. In some cases, the 1-5 years old look use more than 6-10 years in some practices such as prayer, meditation, worship, examen of conscience, and Bible reading and study. But when those practices are compared to the variance of the standard deviation (SD), they are not significantly different between men and women. The age grouping is divided into three for equally sized groups as (1-5 years) of twenty-eight participants, (6-10 years) of twenty-nine participants, and (11-20 years) of twenty-two participants. This grouping helps the study to have the statistical power to be strong in comparison with groups which has similar number of participants in finding the significant differences between the number of years in the faith.

Table 13. Means and Standard Deviations for the Spiritual Practices on the CSPP By Number of Years of Faith (n = 79)

Spiritual Practice	Total (n = 79) M (SD)	1-5 Years (n = 28) M (SD)	6-10 Years (n = 29) M (SD)	11-20 Years (n = 22) M (SD)	F (df)
Prayer	4.16 (0.62)	4.21 (0.56)	3.92 (0.63)	4.42 (0.58)	4.61 (2, 76)*
Repentance	4.16 (0.73)	3.86 (0.88)	4.29 (0.64)	4.35 (0.50)	3.96 (2, 76)*
Worship	4.03 (0.64)	3.97 (0.65)	3.86 (0.66)	4.31 (0.53)	3.33 (2, 76)*
Meditation	3.05 (0.86)	3.08 (0.75)	2.83 (0.87)	3.30 (0.93)	1.93 (2, 76)
Examen of Conscience	3.92 (0.62)	4.00 (0.56)	3.77 (0.66)	4.04 (0.66)	1.49 (2, 76)
Bible Reading and Study	3.28 (0.80)	3.34 (0.79)	3.08 (0.66)	3.47 (0.94)	1.62 (2, 76)

Evangelism	3.26 (0.96)	3.12 (1.08)	3.29 (1.03)	3.40 (0.68)	0.55 (2, 76)
Fellowship	3.31 (0.84)	3.04 (1.01)	3.36 (0.69)	3.60 (0.68)	2.94 (2, 76)
Service	3.44 (0.95)	3.33 (1.08)	3.44 (0.98)	3.58 (0.75)	0.42 (2, 76)
Stewardship	2.72 (1.00)	2.57 (1.20)	2.66 (0.91)	2.97 (0.82)	1.01 (2, 76)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

Therefore, it can be seen that longer Christians practices more on prayer, repentance, and worship than shorter Christians. Therefore, it is important for theological schools and churches to train and nurture the Christians those who are new converts such as those believers who are recently converted to Christianity and those who are new to Christian faith and practices in terms of prayer, worship, and repentance with detailed guidance for them to grow.

Significant Differences in Practicing across the Ten Areas of Spiritual Practices of CSPP

A repeated measure analysis of variance (ANOVA) found a significant difference across the ten areas of spiritual practices, $F(9, 702) = 45.37, p < .001$. To determine the relative strengths, a series of paired-samples t-tests then were conducted on the 10 areas. *Prayer* was reported to be used significantly more often than most of the other characteristics (t -values ranged between 3.69 and 12.41, with $p < .001$), except *Repentance* and *Worship*. Similarly, *Repentance* also was reported to be more frequently used than the other practices, except *Prayer* and *Worship* (t -values ranged between 2.42 and 10.16, with $p < .02$). Thus, both *Prayer* and *Repentance* are the most frequently used practices. See Figure 6.

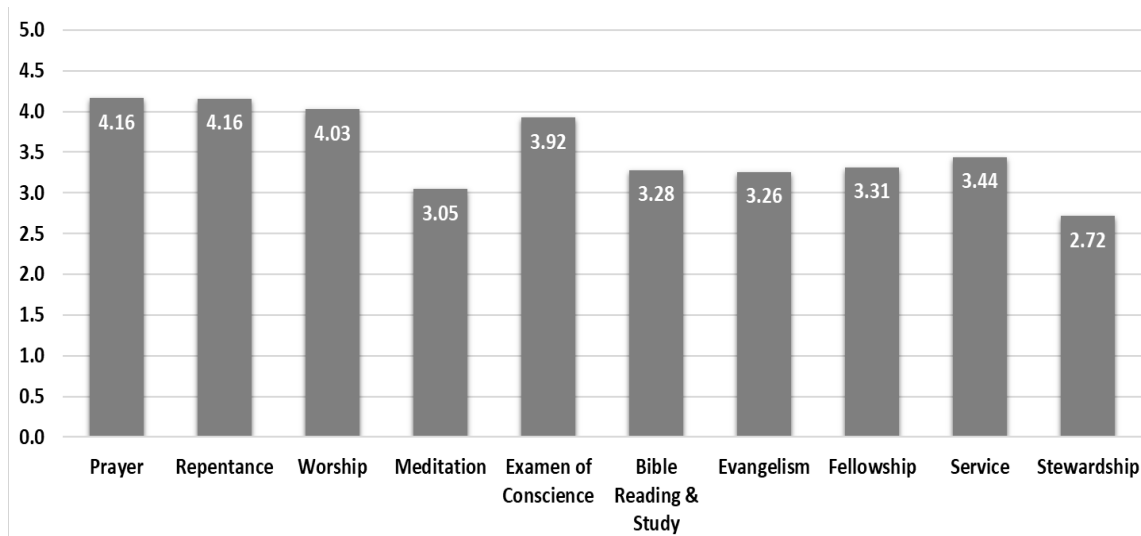


Figure 6. Means for the Spiritual Practices on the CSPP (n = 79)

To determine the relative weaknesses, a series of paired-samples t-tests then were conducted on the ten areas. *Stewardship* was reported to be used significantly less frequently than all of the other characteristics (t -values ranged between -3.02 and -12.41, with $p < .001$). Similarly, *Meditation* also was reported to be used less often than the other practices, except *Evangelism* (t -values ranged between -2.59 and -12.14, with $p < .01$). Thus, both *Stewardship* and *Evangelism* are the least used practices. See Figure 5.

The reason why prayer, repentance are stated as the most used practice and meditation, stewardship and evangelism are stated as the least used practices of the students because the most used practices such as prayer and repentance can be done by the student alone and it is personal. Moreover, the least used practices such as stewardship and evangelism because those practices required the cost and sacrifice in terms of time, talent, and resources. The practice of meditation is less used because it has some commitments and sacrifices in terms of a Christian standard of living based on the Bible, such as forgiveness (Thayer 2004, 206). Moreover, under the practice of

meditation, there is a practice of journaling, recording our spiritual journal, which requires consistency, persistent and zeal to students (Thayer 2004, 206).

To help students practice more in the areas of meditation, first, faculty members in both theological schools could enrich the counseling and mentoring programs. In that program, students can freely and openly approach teachers and discuss their problems and receive guidance from their teachers in terms of meditation and forgiveness, which require a long process of healing. Second, in order to help student practice more on stewardship, the spiritual formation syllabus of TSA needs to add the content on stewardship with the practical lessons for students such as caring for the earth, our environments and our lives as good stewards. Third, in order help students involve more in evangelism, TSB s needs to be practiced more at TSA.

Significant Difference of Practices on the Ten Areas of Spiritual Practices of CSPP between Participants from the Two Different Schools

To better understand any differences of their participation on the ten areas of spiritual practices of CSPP between participants from the two different schools, a series of independent samples *t*-tests were conducted. There were significant differences in four areas of spiritual practices between the two schools. School A reported less frequent use of three spiritual practices than did School B; these practices include *Prayer*, $t(77) = -2.58, p = 0.012$, *Meditation*, $t(77) = -3.15, p = 0.002$, and *Bible Reading and Study*, $t(77) = -2.95, p = 0.004$. However, School A reported more frequent use of *Service* than did School B, $t(77) = 2.14, p = 0.018$. The reason why School A practice less on prayer, meditation, and Bible reading and study is because of the emphasis on those practices by each school. According to F-2 of TSA said that the way they lead their students for

spiritual practices is flexible and still allow students to choose their own preferences where TSB has set compulsory for students to join those spiritual practices. In terms of service, where TSB practice less than TSA is also agreed by F-3 of TSB where he also sees the need to provide more opportunities for students during their weekend ministry. Therefore, School A and B have significant differences in their practices on the ten areas of CSPP based on each school's preferences. See Table 14 and Figure 8.

Table 14: Means and Standard Deviations for the Spiritual Practices on the CSPP By School (n = 79)

Spiritual Practice	Total (n = 79) M (SD)	School A (n = 40) M (SD)	School B (n = 39) M (SD)	F (df)
Prayer	4.16 (0.62)	3.99 (0.65)	4.34 (0.53)	-2.58 (77)*
Repentance	4.16 (0.73)	4.06 (0.75)	4.26 (0.69)	-1.23 (77)
Worship	4.03 (0.64)	3.91 (0.62)	4.14 (0.65)	-1.60 (77)
Meditation	3.05 (0.86)	2.76 (0.90)	3.34 (0.72)	-3.15 (77)**
Examen of Conscience	3.92 (0.62)	3.84 (0.61)	4.01 (0.63)	-1.25 (77)
Bible Reading and Study	3.28 (0.80)	3.03 (0.73)	3.53 (0.80)	-2.95 (77)**
Evangelism	3.26 (0.96)	3.26 (1.06)	3.26 (0.86)	0.03 (77)
Fellowship	3.31 (0.84)	3.40 (0.79)	3.23 (0.89)	0.87 (77)
Service	3.44 (0.95)	3.69 (0.93)	3.19 (0.91)	2.14 (77)*
Stewardship	2.72 (1.00)	2.65 (1.04)	2.78 (0.97)	-0.58 (77)

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

Based on the results of spiritual practices by the school, the reason why TSA practiced less prayer, meditation, Bible study and reading than TSB that the TSA has more new Christians than TSB. The ratio of the newer Christians who are under 10 years of Christian life in the TSA and TSB is 32:25. Therefore, newer Christians have a harder time to deeply experience prayer, meditation and Bible study and reading. In terms of service, why students in TSA are more active than the students from TSB is because of

the ministry opportunities the TSA offers more intentional, guided and applicable ministry experiences than the TSB. Another reason is that the background and limitations of TSB students where ministry involvement would be limited in terms of their former ministry experiences, availability, giftedness, language proficiency, and connection with the local pastors. In terms of their participation with the ten practices, TSB is significantly better than TSA, because TSB has a long history of establishment and directly run the general head quarter of the Assemblies of God Myanmar, with the practitioners faculty members who has been leading and their own ministries in Yangon.

The dark gray color bars in the graph represent the TSA and light gray color bars represent the TSB in Figure 8.

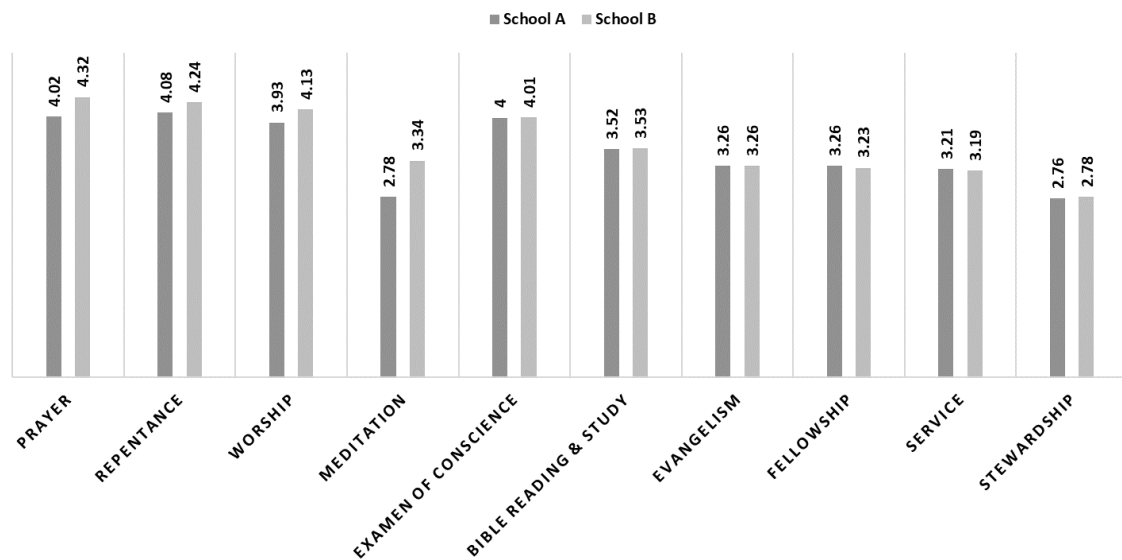


Figure 8. Means for the Spiritual Practices on the CSPP by School (n = 79)

The final section of this chapter tackles Research Question 7 which says: What guidelines can be formulated towards a Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and spiritually formative curriculum for the theological school students in Myanmar?

Guidelines Toward a Biblically Sound, Contextually Appropriate, and Spiritually Formative Curriculum for Theological School Students in Myanmar

Biblically Sound

The study focused on the role of the Bible in spiritual formation practices. As the literature review discussed the nature of spirituality in the Bible and Biblical views of spirituality, it is important that every practice we introduce to the students should always be biblical. The extreme spiritual practices which happened in the North-Western part of Myanmar in the 1990s taught us that churches and theological schools should be aware of the wrong practices which are contrary to the Bible. Though some practices might look very attractive and strengthening the spirituality of the students, it is important to check with the Bible. Ott and Netland also emphasize the interwoven practice of theological education and spiritual formation and that spiritual formation must be defined by Scripture (Ott and Netland 2006, 277-78).

Spiritually Formative

Based on the responses of those interviewed, spiritual formation practices were ineffective when students were required to perform but had limited faculty model to imitate. Moreover, spiritual practices were not effective when they do not come from the heart and were done just as a matter of practice. Another pitfall was that, when practices were not based on love, rivalry and self-gain was the result. Likewise, the spiritual formation practices were ineffective when focused on self-growth alone while neglecting others around them.

The survey data helps to figure out those spiritually formative practices which are crucial and helpful for students as fellowship, worship, Bible reading and study, prayer, fasting, discipleship, meditation, examen of conscience, and service.

Contextually Appropriate

Culture plays a big role in each society. Myanmar is also culturally unique and diverse in terms of beliefs and practices with its dominant religion of Buddhism. As the qualitative data shows the belief that the contextualized Buddhist practices that are not contrary to the Bible, such as giving, compassion, mediation, and creation care should be included in the spiritual formation curriculum. So that the good news that we share with the Buddhist neighbors would be more receptive to them.

Summary

The research instruments were tested through a pilot test with the students who have the same denominational affiliation and undergraduate program of study. The data analysis of the study includes three methods including document review, survey questionnaire, and interview. The document review presented the objectives and methods of spiritual formation in TSTS. The survey data give a big picture of the spirituality and spiritual formation practices of the students. The interview data present the forms of spiritual formation practices at TSTS. The spiritual formation practices being used in the two selected theological schools, based on the data from survey and interview are prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, stewardship, contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship, and fasting. The spiritual formation class and the spiritual emphasis week

gave a great contribution to the students understanding the nature of spiritual practices and how to apply them well in their spiritual journey. The most crucial spiritual formation practices according to the interview results are fellowship (7 respondents), worship (6 respondents), Bible reading and study (5 respondents), prayer (5 respondents), fasting (3 respondents), discipleship (3 respondents), meditation (3 respondents), examen of conscience (1 respondents), and service (1 respondents). The most helpful spiritual practices which are suggested by the respondents are prayer, repentance, and worship.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar and to discover the perspectives of theological school students, graduates, and faculty members regarding the effectiveness of those practices. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify which spiritual practices were utilized by the students; (2) identify which spiritual formation practices were most used by the students; (3) identify what practices were effective or ineffective, and (4) propose guidelines towards a Biblically sound, spiritually formative, and appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices for incorporation into the curriculum of the theological schools.

The theological education and the spiritual formation practices in theological schools in Myanmar around 1990 in Yangon had been weak for many reasons. The possible reasons are the rapid growth of the student body resulting from the closure of colleges and universities, the different intentions of students for joining theological schools, the weakness in proper screening for students with the criteria of having the born-again experience and the calling for ministry, and the inadequate leadership in theological schools in spiritual formation practices. The literature review discussed the meaning of spirituality as described by the Bible as living in the likeness of Christians Christ by loving God and loving others (Mk. 12:30-31). The crucified life, which is our

sole calling as Christians, demonstrates the fruit of Spirit called love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gorman 2001, 53-62; Gal. 2:19-20).

This study examined the present spiritual formation practices being used in the two selected theological schools. The mixed methods research data present the atmosphere of the schools or community as a very important role in nurturing the spirituality of the students (Wanak 1995, 35). Faculty modeling is a great need in theological schools in terms of teaching and helping students grow. Moreover, as Wanak suggested, the importance of caring for and nurturing our next generation with love has been one of the lessons this study has pursued in shaping the legacy of our next generation of spiritual leaders (Wanak 1995, 35). As the WCC (World Council of Churches) has suggested, the balance study on the Scripture and theology can help Christians to grow gradually and be protected by extreme spiritual practices. However, transformation and spiritual growth requires direct exposure to the harsh realities of this life and dealing with the problems of our world. Mezirow and Kolb focused on the reflection of life experiences and meaning-making for ourselves, making perspective transformation possible. As the practices of early Christian churches including liturgical and worshipping traditions can also be spiritual practices for our growth. In terms of liturgical and worshipping traditions, Christian icons in worship, participation in Eucharists weekly, practicing the labyrinth, experiencing the Stations of the Cross, and participating in the Ignatian examen are suggested by Jones (2005, 75).

Learning from others in ecumenical and cross-cultural exchange could also help Christians grow spiritually (Amirtham and Pryor, n.d., 158). Wanak has suggested that it

is important not to name our spiritual behaviors and values as ‘the’ pattern of spirituality, but as ‘a’ pattern of spirituality (Wanak 1995, 36). This opens ways for us to learn from others. Taking responsibility for ourselves and depending on the Holy Spirit is essential in our growth and requires our intentional initiative in the transformational process. (Wanak 1995, 35; Barton 2006, 13). The Church’s mystical spiritual fathers and mothers revealed the importance of undivided devotion to God and living out the kingdom of God on earth which is the nature of spirituality. According to Wesley, prayer, searching the Scripture, participating in the Lord’s Supper, fasting, Christian conferencing (small groups), doing all the good we can and attending to the private and public worship of God are the means of grace which helps us connect with God and be formed spiritually (Wesley 1986, 187). There are other characteristics of spirituality such as reciprocal ecology in taking care of the earth, divine reading, rule of life, and engaged Buddhism (Lowe and Lowe, n.d., 1).

The transformational learning theory of Jack Mezirow, the learning styles of David A. Kolb and the CSPP of O. Jane Thayer come together in the intended transformation of theological school students in terms of their spiritual growth, through critical reflection, experiential learning and spiritual formation practices.

The findings on the spiritual formation practices used in the TSTS from both of the quantitative and qualitative data are prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, stewardship, contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship, and fasting.

The quantitative survey points out prayer (4.16), repentance (4.16), and worship (4.03) as the most used practices and meditation (3.05), and stewardship (2.72) as the least used practice. From the qualitative data, the most crucial spiritual practices according to the respondents are fellowship (7 respondents), worship (6 respondents), Bible reading and study (5 respondents), prayer (5 respondents), fasting (3 respondents), discipleship (3 respondents), meditation (3 respondents), examen of conscience (1 respondents), and service (1 respondents).

Based on the quantitative data, the most helpful spiritual practices answered by the respondents are prayer, repentance and worship.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions are made.

- 1) The Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP) gives ways to evaluate spirituality through a person's participation on the four scales of learning called a transcendent scale, learning by concrete experience which assesses one's participation in relationship with God, reflection scale, learning by reflective observation which assesses one's critical reflection of culture and one's own life, vision scale, learning by abstract conceptualization which assesses one's participation with the Word of God, and new life scale, learning by active experimentation which assesses one's relationship with others based on the learning styles of Kolb.
- 2) In the context of theological schools, the partnership of faculty members plays a crucial role in nurturing the spirituality of the students.

- 3) The document review shows that the spiritual formation practices and activities in the school catalog and Christian formation class from TSB are well stated and partially applied in the school context. It also affirmed that the spiritual formation course in TSA needs revision for a better understanding and effective utilization of the practices by the students. The outward behavior stated in the catalog of TSB in terms of the students' conduct should also be aware of leaning into legalistic but finding ways to adapt well with the culture and context of TSB. Moreover, TSB needs to implement internship ministries during the weekend for students to apply what they have learned in the classes. Practical ministry opportunities and weekend ministry for students should be operated and organized by the TSB.
- 4) The conclusions on the null hypotheses are:
 - (a) There are no significant differences between men and women for Spiritual practices of CSPP in the two selected theological schools.
 - (b) There should be more detailed guidance for students who have shorter years of faith for understanding the practices of prayer, repentance and worship.
 - (c) The most used practices in the CSPP by students revealed that the practices of prayer, repentance, and worship are easy and more accessible for them which requires them alone and not a community that much. The significant differences between the least applied practices in the CSPP such as stewardship, meditation, and evangelism call for attention from the faculty and school of the two selected theological schools. According to the CSPP, the students need to understand and participate more in those stewardship,

meditation, and evangelism to be more balanced in their spirituality. Proper teaching and guidance by faculty for students in both theological schools on the how-to reflect the Bible passages students read, listening to praise songs, spiritual journaling and the process of forgiveness should be done. For the healing to take place in terms of the hurts that students have gone through, there should also be counseling and mentoring programs for students who need help. Moreover, the practices in evangelism called working with other Christians in bringing unchurched to Christ, serving in the teaching ministry of their local churches, inviting people to small-group and church, and prayer for the ministers and the unsaved world should be taught by faculty more and applied by students. Helping and nurturing students to be more aware of environmental matters, ways to support financially to the work of the church, able to give sacrificially to the work of God and living lifestyles as a good steward of God should be focused more on the two theological schools.

- (d) TSA needs to help the students to understand and practice more on the practices of prayer, meditation, and Bible reading and study. TSB need to provide more ministry internship programs for students in order to have more on the practice of service.

Research Question 1: What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents?

There are 91 participants for the study and 45 participants from TSA and 46 participants from TSB. The number of male participants is sixty-four and the number of female participants is twenty-seven. There are six faculty members, six graduates, and six

students for the interview session. Age ranges of participants for the survey are four for under 18, sixty-five for 18-25, eight for 2-30, and two for 31-40 years old. The years as Christian of the participants are twenty-eight for 1-5 years, twenty-nine for 6-10 years, ten for 11-15 years, seven for 16-20 years, and five for over 21 years. The participants are three of the first generation Christian, six for the second-generation Christian, eight for the third generation Christian, and one for the eighth generation Christian. There are seventy-nine participants for the survey and eighteen for the interview.

Research Question 2: What spiritual formation practices are being used by the students in each of the TSTS? The first research question was answered by the document review, survey and interview data as prayer, repentance, worship, meditation, examen of conscience, Bible reading and study, evangelism, fellowship, service, stewardship, contextualized Buddhist practices, discipleship, and fasting are being used in the TSTS.

Research Question 3: How do the respondents believe the spiritual formation course and related activities offered in the curriculum have impacted the spiritual growth and practical ministry of the students?

The interview data demonstrated that the spiritual formation course and other activities of spiritual emphasis week were meaningful and helpful to the spiritual life and vitality of the students. In the spiritual formation course, students learned the meaning of spiritual practices and the different spiritual formation practices. The spiritual emphasis week helped students to be more focused on their spiritual lives through solid and powerful messages preached by the speakers.

The sub-question (a) says: How do professors perceive the spiritual growth of the students involved in the spiritual formation course?

According to the respondents (F-1 from TSA) the spiritual formation practices helped students grow in their spiritual practices especially in solitude and journaling. The sharing of students through journaling revealed that students are more comfortable expressing their feelings in the journal which brings healing for their inner struggles and pains. The spiritual formation syllabus should be revised to improve effectiveness for the students since it was adapted and developed based on a master class syllabus. Therefore, it is important to revise the syllabus of the spiritual formation class.

Sub-question (b) states: How do students perceive the impact of the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum on their spiritual growth and practical ministry?

Student respondents from the TSTS mentioned that solitude meditation, prayer, Bible reading, fasting, the habit of listening to God, speaking good words (secrecy), living a balanced life of spiritual and physical life were helpful. Some of the student respondents shared that they could not perform all of the practices they learned from the spiritual formation class. Upon reflection of the comments, the spiritual formation class helped them especially in terms of their personal relationship with God which helped them to be more enriched in learning when they practiced solitude, listening to God and meditation upon God.

Sub-question (c) says: How do graduates perceive the impact of the spiritual formation course offered in the curriculum on their spiritual growth and practical ministry?

Most of the graduate respondents recalled their memories of spiritual formation class where they were blessed through learning ethical disciplines such as integrity, core

values, personal identity, intimacy with God, living the Christian life as a process, growing and transforming into the likeness of Christ day by day. Reviews of the graduates in terms of spiritual formation or Christian formation class revealed that it helped them to understand more about spirituality and spiritual practices. For those graduates to perform those spiritual practices was still hard except for prayer and Bible reading.

The spiritual formation syllabus should have some content on how to take our role of. Moreover, there should be a practical lesson which students could be a part of for their role as a good steward of God. Likewise, students in evangelism should have more opportunities to be involved and get practical training in evangelism, mission, and ministerial work by networking with local churches.

Research Question 4: How do theological school students, graduates, and professors decide which spiritual formation practices are the most crucial and necessary disciplines to practice?

Survey results on the ten spiritual practices of the CSPP by the seventy-nine student respondent showed that prayer, repentance, and worship were the most important and frequently used practices. From the data from the interviews and any other qualitative data I gathered, the most crucial spiritual practices according to the respondents are fellowship (7 respondents), worship (6 respondents), Bible reading and study (5 respondents), prayer (5 respondents), fasting (3 respondents), discipleship (3 respondents), meditation (3 respondents), examen of conscience (1 respondents), and service (1 respondents).

According to the faculty members in TSTS the most crucial and necessary practices are in sequence of the most to the least are (1) Bible reading and study, prayer, and worship, (2) meditation, examen of conscience, service, discipleship, and fellowship.

According to the graduates of TSTS the most crucial and necessary practices in sequence of the most to the least are (1) worship and fellowship, (2) Bible reading and study and meditation, (3) prayer and fasting.

According to the students of TSTS, the most crucial and necessary practice in sequence of the most to the least are (1) prayer and fellowship (2) fasting, discipleship, and Bible reading and study, and (3) worship.

Research Question 5: Which spiritual formation practices help students the most in the two theological schools?

The most helpful spiritual practices which are answered by the respondents, based on the quantitative data are prayer, repentance, and worship.

Research Question 6: Which is a Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and spiritually formative curriculum for theological school students in Myanmar?

Biblically sound, contextually appropriate, and spiritually formative curriculum guidelines for the two selected theological schools are: prayer, Bible reading and study, fellowship, worship, discipleship, fasting, examen of conscience, service, stewardship, Spiritual formation class, and spiritual emphasis week.

Recommendations

Both of the two theological schools have a good focus on the spiritual formation of their students in terms of the practices called prayer, meditation, Bible reading and study, fasting, service, small group meeting, worship, and service. The spiritual formation

class has a great impact on the students and help their spiritual growth with the practices and some leadership models in the Bible. Moreover, the spiritual emphasis week enriched their spirituality with those solid and practical messages shared by the speakers who are practitioners.

The TSA should be more active in helping students grow spiritually through mentoring relationships. TSB should have more opportunities for ministry involvement with its students. Faculty members should be involved more in nurturing students who require their help for a spiritual journey with counseling and detailed guidance. Basic spiritual practices, that are so familiar with every Christian such as prayer and Bible reading, should be clearly taught to students for their growth. Chapel sermons can be prepared based on the selected themes such as salvation, discipleship, holiness, evangelism, and service or scriptural theme for each semester or trimester of the school year. Our role as Christians in terms of stewardship should be taught and action taken on caring the nature and animals. Finally, students should pursue loving God and loving others actively.

Recommendations for Further Studies

This study recommends the following topics for further research:

1. A Christian Spiritual Participation Profile developed for the context of Myanmar Christian churches.
2. A Review and comparison of the spiritual formation curriculum of theological schools representing different faith traditions in Yangon.
3. A study on how to help students with different learning styles grow through their spiritual formation classes of theological schools in Yangon.

4. A multiple case study of best practices of faculty members in the spiritual formation of Bachelor of Arts level students in Yangon, Myanmar.
5. A study of common teacher characteristics related to intentionality in student spiritual formation in the theological schools in Myanmar.
6. Best spiritual formation practices for students who are addicted to pornography among theological school students in Myanmar.

APPENDIX A

Spiritual Disciplines and Desires

(Adapted from *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*
by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun)

DISCIPLINE	DESIRE
Accountability Partner	to give a regular and honest account of my choices, priorities and temptations to a godly and wise companion who points me to Christ
Bible Study	to know what the Bible says and how it intersects with my life
Breath Prayer	to pray a simple, intimate prayer of heartfelt desire before God
Care of the Earth	to honor the Creator by loving, nurturing, and stewarding God's creation
Celebration	to take joyful, passionate pleasure in God and the radically glorious nature of God's people, Word, world, and purposes
Centering Prayer	to quiet the heart and rest in God alone
Chastity	to revere God by receiving and honoring my body and the bodies of others with purity of thought and action
Community	to express and reflect the self-donating love of the Trinity by investing in and journeying with others
Compassion	to become the healing presence of Christ to others
Confession and Self Examination	to surrender my weaknesses and faults to the forgiving love of Christ and intentionally desire and embrace practices that lead to transformation
Contemplation	to wake up to the presence of God in all things
Contemplative Prayer	to develop an open, restful receptivity to the Trinity that enables me to always be with God just as I am
Control of the Tongue	to turn the destructive way I use words into authentic, loving, and healing speech
Conversational Prayer	to talk naturally and unselfconsciously to God in prayer times with others

Covenant Group	to enter into authentic, confidential and healing relationships with a committed group of fellow pilgrims
Detachment	to nurture the spirit of trust that is attached to God alone
Devotional Reading	to prayerfully encounter and surrender to the Living God by attending to Scripture
Discernment	to delight in and recognize the voice and will of God
Discipling	to be in a relationship where I am encouraged or where I encourage another to become an apprentice of Jesus
Examen	to notice both God and my God-given desires throughout the day; to let go of an appetite in order to see God on matters of deep concern for others, myself, and the world
Fasting	to let go of an appetite in order to seek God on matters of deep concern for others, myself, and the world
Fixed-Hour Prayer	to stop my work and pray throughout the day
Gratitude	to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's prompting to live with a grateful heart, cognizant of God's work in my life and my abundant resources
Holy Communion	to be nourished by Christ, tasting the sweet depths of redemption
Hospitality	to be a safe person who offers others the grace, shelter and presence of Jesus
Humility	to become like Jesus in his willingness to choose the hidden way of love rather than the way of power
Inner-Healing Prayer	to assist the emotionally broken and wounded as they seek God for the healing only he can give
Intercessory Prayer	to turn my concerns and worries into prayer; to enter God's heart for the world and then pray from there
Journaling	to be alert to my life through writing and reflecting on God's presence and activity in, around, and through me

Justice	to love others by seeking their good, protection, gain, and fair treatment
Labyrinth Prayer	to make a quiet, listening pilgrimage to God
Liturgical Prayer	to open myself to God through established patterns or traditions of written prayers and readings
Meditation	to more deeply gaze on God in his works and words
Memorization	to carry the life-shaping words of God in me at all times and in all places
Mentoring	to accompany and encourage others to grow to their God-given potential
Practicing the Presence	to develop a continual openness and awareness of Christ's presence living in me
Prayer of Recollection	to rest in God, allowing him to calm and heal my fragmented and distracted self
Prayer Partners	to share the journey of prayer with a trusted companion
Praying Scripture	to allow God to shape my prayer life through the words of Scripture
Prayer Walking	to align myself, while walking in particular places, with Christ and his intercession for the kingdom to come
Rest	to honor God and my human limitations through restful rhythms
Retreat	to make space in my life for God alone
Rule for Life	to live a sane and holy rhythm that reflects a deep love for God and respect for how he has made me
Sabbath	to set apart one day a week for rest and worship of God
Secrecy	to follow the simple and often hidden way of Christ
Self-Care	to value myself as my heavenly father values me
Service	to reflect the helping, caring and sharing love of God in the world
Silence	to free myself from the addiction to and distraction of noise so I can be totally present to the Lord; to open myself to God in the place beyond words

Simplicity	to uncomplicate and untangle my life so I can focus on what really matters
Slowing	to curb my addiction to busyness, hurry, and workaholism; to learn to savor the moment
Small Group	to make my spiritual journey with a community of trusted friends
Solitude	to leave people behind and enter into time alone with God
Spiritual Direction	to give caring attention to my relationship with God, accompanied by the prayerful presence of someone who helps me listen well to God
Spiritual Friendship	to develop a friendship that encourages and challenges me to love God with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind
Stewardship	to live as a steward of God's resources in all areas of life; to live out of the awareness that nothing I have is my own
Submission	to have Jesus as the Master of my life in absolutely every way
Teachability	to remain a lifelong learner who is continually open to the fresh wind of the Holy Spirit
Truth Telling	to live an authentically truthful life
Unity	to live in harmony with Christ's desire for the church to be one; to be a bridge-builder and peacemaker in the body of Christ
Unplugging	to be fully present to and uninterrupted in my interaction with God and others
Witness	to reveal the life-changing love of Jesus to others
Worship	to honor and adore the Trinity as the supreme treasure of life

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire (For Students)

Dear respondents,

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Kindly provide the needed information at the spaces provided by making a mark (*). Please do not leave any questions unanswered. The purpose of this study is to identify the current spiritual formation practices in two theological schools in Myanmar, to discover the perspectives of selected theological school students, graduates, and faculty on the effectiveness of those practices, to identify effective and ineffective practices, and to develop a proposal for a new model of biblically sound, appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices to be incorporated into the curriculum of the theological schools.

Regards,

Ning Ngaih Lian

Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Philippines

1. Gender

Male ()

Female ()

2. Age

Students: Under 18 () 18-25 () 26- 30 () 31-40 () 41-50 () Over 50 ()

Graduates: Under 18 () 18-25 () 26- 30 () 31-40 () 41-50 () Over 50 ()

Faculty: Under 30 () 31-40 () 41-50 () 51-60 () Over 60 ()

3. Your Role in the Seminary

Student ()

Graduate ()

Faculty ()

4. Years of Christian Life

1-5 Years ()

6-10 Years ()

11-15 Years ()

16-20 Years ()

Over 21 Years ()

The Christian Spiritual Participation Profile

Items with disciplines are indicated. Responses are needed for recording on a six-point Likert frequency scale, from 0 to 5.

0 Completely disagree 3 Slightly agree

1 Mostly disagree 4 Mostly agree

2 Slightly disagree 5 Completely agree

Prayer

1. When I pray, I am confident that God will answer my prayer.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
2. When I pray, I sense that God is infinite and holy.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
3. In my prayers, I reveal to God my innermost needs and thoughts.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
4. In my prayers, I actively seek to discover the will of God.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
5. In my prayers, I thank God for the salvation he has provided for me in Jesus Christ.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
6. When experiences in my life lead me to despair or depression, I turn to God in prayer for deliverance.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Repentance

7. Repentance is a part of my private prayers to God.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
8. When I confess and repent of my sins, I experience the assurance of being forgiven by God.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
9. I experience genuine sorrow for my sins.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
10. When I confess a sin, I express a desire to be delivered from its power.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Worship

11. My worship of God is a response to what God has done for me.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
12. My worship is focused on the Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
13. My participation in the Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist) draws me into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ
(0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
14. I attend a church worship service:
(0) Never _____ (3) About 2 times a month _____
(1) Less than once a month _____ (4) About 3 times a month _____
(2) About once a month _____ (5) Every week _____

Meditation

15. I reflect thoughtfully on passages I read in the Bible.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
16. I listen to music that praises God.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
17. I record in a journal my thoughts on my spiritual journey.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
18. I freely forgive those who sin against me even when the damage or hurt they have caused is very great.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Examen of Conscience

19. When I examine my life, I recognize my great need for God's redemptive work for me.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
20. I evaluate my culture by principles found in the Bible.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
21. When I read or hear reports of terrible crimes that have been committed against people, I grieve over the evil in the world.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
22. When I hear about famines, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters, I want to help the victims in some way.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
23. When I see or learn about the immoral ways so many people live, I long for God's will to be done.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
24. Even though evil seems to be so powerful and so pervasive, I feel confident that God will ultimately provide justice.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
25. Even when a situation seems unbearably difficult or painful, I have confidence that through his providence, God can bring something good out of it.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
26. I use biblically based principles to govern ethical decisions.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Bible Reading and Study

27. I read or study the Bible to learn the will of God.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
28. When I read or study the Bible, I attempt to learn the enduring principles being taught by the specific passage I am considering.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

29. I study the Bible to understand the doctrines of my church.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
30. As part of my study of the Bible, I consider how the church has dealt with issues throughout its history.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
31. When I read or study the Bible, I change my beliefs and/or behavior to accommodate new information or understanding.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
32. I read devotional articles and/or books.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
33. I read or study the Bible:
 (0) Never _____ (3) About 1 hour a week
 (1) 10 hours or less a year _____ (4) About 15 to 30 minutes a day
 (2) About 1 to 2 hours a month _____ (5) More than 30 minutes a day.

Evangelism

34. I work with other Christian believers for the purpose of introducing unchurched people to Jesus Christ.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
35. Based on my abilities and spiritual gifts, I assist in some way in the teaching ministry of my church.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
36. I invite unchurched people to attend church or small-group meetings with me.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
37. I pray for people and/or organizations that are working for the salvation of the unsaved.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Fellowship

38. When someone in my church is sick or experiencing some other problem and needs me, I help them.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
39. I meet with a small group of Christian friends for prayer, Bible study, or ministry.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
40. I serve as a peacemaker among my friends and/or among members in my church.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
41. Within my local church, I associate personally even with those with whom I have no common social or intellectual interests.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
42. I see evidence that my participation in my church helps to encourage or build up the whole congregation.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Service

43. I serve in a church ministry or community agency to help people in need.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
44. When a friend, believer, or neighbor suffers pain, hardship, or loss, I join them with my presence and suffer with them.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
45. I depend on God to help me accomplish the work he calls me to do.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
46. I use my home (apartment, dorm room) to provide hospitality to strangers or to those in need.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

Stewardship

47. My actions in nature are guided by what is best for the environment.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
48. I give financially to support the work of the church.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
49. I do without things that I want in order to give sacrificially to the work of God.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____
50. I choose what to eat and drink and how to live my life based on the concept that caring for my health is being a good steward of God's blessing of life.
 (0) _____ (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____ (4) _____ (5) _____

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions

The purpose of this study is to identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar, to discover the perspectives of theological school students, graduates, and faculty members regarding the effectiveness of those practices. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify which spiritual practices are utilized by the students; (2) identify which spiritual formation practices are most used by the students; (3) identify what practices are effective or ineffective, and (4) propose a new model of biblically sound, spiritually formative, and appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices for incorporation into the curriculum of the theological schools.

- 1) Can you tell me about your story? Your Christian life and your calling to ministry?
- 2) What are the spiritual practices used in your theological school?
- 3) How do you believe that the spiritual formation elements of the curriculum have impacted your spiritual growth and practical ministry? In what ways it has impacted your spirituality?
- 4) How do you (students, graduates, and professors) decide which spiritual formation practices are the most crucial and necessary disciplines to practice? Why?
- 5) Do you have any suggestions on effective practices for the spiritual formation of theological students in Myanmar?
- 6) What are your goals in terms of spirituality? How do you plan to achieve it? What is the role of the “Word of God” in your life?
- 7) What is your perspective on the practices of Burmese Buddhist spirituality? What kind of background do you come from, Buddhist or Christian? If Christian, which generation Christian?
- 8) How do you view and perceive social injustices and discrimination? Are you involved in social development? How? If not, why are you not interested in it?
- 9) How do you deal with forgiveness and being forgiven in your life? Is it possible?
- 10) How do you deal with some new converts from a Buddhist background if they still practice their traditions, such as keeping a statue of Buddha or nats (spirits) for blessing and protection?

APPENDIX D

Document Review Checklist

1. Type of Document: _____
2. Date(s) of Document: _____
3. Author (or Creator) of the document and the title of the Author: _____
4. Document Information:
 - (1) What are the school's intended outcomes regarding spiritual formation in that document?
 - (2) What are the program outcomes for chapel, small groups, and services mentioned in that document?
 - (3) What are the ministry formation statements found in that document?
 - (4) Are there any linguistic characteristics that are important in that document?

Adapted from a document designed and developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408

APPENDIX E**Letter to the Principal of Theological School X for Pilot Studies**

June 2019

To/

Dear Principal (Theological School X):

As part of the requirements for completing my Doctor of Philosophy degree with a concentration on Transformational Learning, I am conducting a study on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of Spiritual Formation practices in theological schools.

In order to test the reliability and validity of my research instruments, I would like to request permission from you to conduct research with ten students using a survey questionnaire, and three students, three graduates, and three faculty members using interview questions.

The name of respondents will not be recorded or gathered for the sake of confidentiality. Answers from the respondents will be used to revise the research instruments.

Regards,

Ning Ngaih Lian
Student (PhD in Transformational Learning)
Asia Graduate School of Theology/Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary
Rizal, Philippines

APPENDIX F

Questionnaire (Burmese version)

သုတေသနပြုရန်အတွက် စစ်တမ်းမေးခွန်းလွှာ

ဤမေးခွန်းလွှာရှိမိမိရွေးချယ်လိုသည့် အဖြေကို အမှန်ခြစ် (✓) ပေးပါရန် နှင့်မေးခွန်းအားလုံးကိုဖြေဆိုပေးပါရန် တောင်းခံအပ်ပါသည်။

ဤစစ်တမ်းမေးခွန်းလွှာသည် မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတွင် ဖွင့်လှစ်ထားသော ခရစ်ယာန်ပညာကျောင်း နှစ်ကျောင်း၌ ကျင့်သုံးနေသော ဝိညာဉ်ရေး တိုးတက်မှုဆိုင်ရာ အလေ့အကျင့်များကို ဖော်ထုတ်ရန် ထို ကျင့်စဉ်များ ၏ ထိရောက်မှုနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ ကျောင်းသူ/သားများ ဆရာ/မများ နှင့် ကျောင်းပြီးသွားသော ဘွဲ့ရကျောင်းသူ/သားတို့၏ အယူအဆတို့ကို သိရှိနားလည်ရန်နှင့် သမာကျမ်းစာကိုအခြေခံ၍ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးကိုတည်ဆောက်ပြီး ရေခံမြေခံ ယဉ်ကျေးမှုနှင့် ဟပ်စပ်သော သင်ရိုးညွှန်းတမ်းတစ်ခုကို ပြန်လည်တည်ဆောက်ရန် ရည်ရွယ်ပါသည်။

အမှုတော်မြတ်၌

နင်ငိုက်လျန်

PhD Student (Transformational Learning)

Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary/Asia Graduate School of Theology

Rizal, Philippines

၁။ ကျား/မ

(က)ကျား

(ခ) မ

၂။ အသက်

(က) ၁၈နှစ်အောက်

(ခ) ၁၈နှစ်-၂၅နှစ် ကြား

(ဂ) ၂၆နှစ်-၃၀နှစ် ကြား

(ဃ) ၃၁နှစ်-၄၀နှစ် ကြား

(င) ၄၁နှစ်-၅၀နှစ် ကြား

(စ) ၅၀ နှစ်အထက်

၃။ အလုပ်အကိုင်

(က) ကျောင်းသား

(ခ) ဘွဲ့ရပြီးသူ

(ဂ) ဆရာ/မ

၄။ ခရစ်ယာန်အသက်တာ

(က) ၁နှစ်-၅နှစ် ကြား

(ခ) ၆နှစ် မှ ၁၀ နှစ် ကြား

(ဂ) ၁၁နှစ် မှ ၁၅နှစ် ကြား

(ဃ) ၁၆နှစ် မှ ၂၀နှစ် ကြား

(င) ၂၁ နှစ်နှင့်အထက်

ခရစ်ယာန် ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာလှုပ်ရှားမှု မှတ်တမ်း။

အောက်ပါဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ ကျင့်စဉ်များကိုမိမိအားသာရာနှုန်းထားအတိုင်း (၀)မှ (၅) အတွင်း
: နံပါတ်တစ်ခုကိုရွေးချယ်ရန်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

၁။ ဆုတောင်းခြင်း။

ကျွန်ုပ် ဆုတောင်းသည့်အခါ ဘုရားသခင်နားညောင်း၍ အဖြေပေးမည်ဟု ယုံကြည်ပါသည်
။(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။

(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။

(၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။

(၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ် ဆုတောင်းသည့်အခါ ဘုရားသခင်၏ ကြီးမြတ်ခြင်းနှင့် သန့်ရှင်းခြင်းကို ခံစားရသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။

(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။

(၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။

(၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ် ဆုတောင်းသည့်အခါ ခံစားချက်များ၊ မိမိလိုအပ်သော အရာများနှင့် အကြံအစည်များကို ဘုရားသခင်ထံသို့ တောင်းခံ သည်။

- (၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။
- (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။
- (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။
- (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဘုရားသခင်၏ အလိုတော်ကို သိရှိရန်အတွက် ကျွန်ုပ် ဆုတောင်းရင်းရှာဖွေပါသည်။

- (၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။
- (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။
- (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။
- (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဆုတောင်းသည့်အခါတိုင်း ဘုရားသခင်ထံတွင် ယေရှုခရစ်တော်အားဖြင့်ရရှိသော ထာဝရအသက်ရှင်ခြင်းအတွက် ကျေးဇူးတော်ကိုချီးမွမ်းလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

- (၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။
- (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။
- (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။
- (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။

(၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် စိတ်ပျက်စရာများ ကြုံတွေ့ရတိုင်း ဘုရားသခင်ထံသို့ချဉ်းကပ်ပြီး လွတ်မြောက် ရာကိုရှာဖွေလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။

(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။

(၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။

(၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။

(၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

၂။ နောင်တရခြင်း။

နောင်တတရားသည် ကျွန်ုပ် ဆုတောင်းရာ၌ ပါဝင်လေ့ရှိသော အကြောင်းအရာတစ်ခုဖြစ် ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောမတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောမတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါသည် ကျွန်ုပ်အပြစ်များအတွက်နောင်တရပြီး အပြစ်ဝန်ချ တောင်းပန် လိုက်တိုင်း ဘုရားသခင်ထံမှ ခွင့်လွှတ်ခြင်းကို ခံစားရပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောမတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောမတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်အပြစ်များအတွက် စစ်မှန်သာ နောင်တတရားကို အမှန်တကယ် ခံစားရပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောမတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောမတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ် အပြစ်များကို ဝန်ချတောင်းပန်သည့်အခါ အပြစ်တရား၏ တန်ခိုးမှ လွတ်မြောက်ရန် အတွက် တောင်းခံလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောမတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောမတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါသည်။

၃။ ကိုးကွယ်ခြင်း။

ကိုးကွယ်ခြင်းဆိုသည်မှာ ဘုရားသခင် ကျွန်ုပ်အားပြုပေးခဲ့သော အရာများအတွက် ပြန်လည် တုန့်ပြန်ခြင်းပင်ဖြစ်သည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် သုံး တစ်ဆူဖြစ်တော်မူသော ခမည်းတော်၊ သားတော်နှင့် သန့်ရှင်းသောဝိညာဉ် တော်ဘုရားကို ကိုးကွယ်သည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ပွဲတော် မဂလာ ခံယူတိုင်း ယေရှုခရစ်တော်နှင့် သာ၍ ရင်းနှီးကျွမ်းဝင်လာသည် ဟု ခံစားရပါသည်

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်၏ ဝတ်ပြုကိုးကွယ်ခြင်းအစီအစဉ်တွင် ကျွန်ုပ်

(က) တစ်လလျှင်တစ်ကြိမ်ထက်လျော့နည်း၍ တက်ရောက်ပါသည်။ (ခ) တစ်လလျှင်တစ် ကြိမ်ခန့်သာ တက်ရောက်ပါသည်။ (ဂ) တစ်လလျှင်နှစ်ကြိမ်ခန့် တက်ရောက်ပါသည်။ (ဃ) တစ်လလျှင် သုံးကြိမ်ခန့် တက်ရောက်ပါသည်။ (င) အပတ်တိုင်းတက်ရောက်ပါသည်။

၄။ နှုတ်ကပတ်တော်ကို ဆင်ခြင်အောက်မေ့ခြင်း။

ကျမ်းစာဖတ်သည့်အခါတိုင်း ကျမ်းပိုဒ်များအား သေချာစွာဆင်ခြင်၍ ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဘုရားသခင်အား ချီးမွမ်းစပ်ဆိုထားသော ဓမတေး သီချင်းများကို ကျွန်ုပ်နားစင်ခံစား လေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်၏ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာကြီးထွားမှုဖြစ်စဉ်များကို နေ့စဉ်မှတ်တမ်းပြုစုရေးသားပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ် ကိုနာကျင်စေသူများအား မည်မျှပင်ကြီးမားသောနာကျင်မှုဖြစ်စေကာမူ ကျွန်ုပ် ခွင့်လွှတ် လေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

၅။ ဩတပစိတ်ကိုဆန်းစစ်ခြင်း။

ကျွန်ုပ်ဘဝကို စမ်းစစ်သည့်အခါ ဘုရားသခင်၏ ရွေးနုတ်ကယ်တင်ခြင်း လိုအပ်ကြောင်း ခံစားရပါသည်။ ယဉ်ကျေးမှုနှင့် ဓလေ့ထုံးတမ်းများကို သမာကျမ်းစာနှင့်ကိုက်ညီမှုရှိမရှိ စမ်းစစ်လေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

သတင်းဆိုးများ ကြားရ၊ မြင်ရတိုင်း ကျွန်ုပ် စိတ်မကောင်းပါ။ အစာခေါင်းပါးခြင်း၊ ရေဘေးနှင့် သဘာဝဘေးကြုံတွေ့ခံစားရသူများကို ကျွန်ုပ်တတ်နိုင်သည့်ဘက်မှကူညီလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အပြစ်တရား၏ကြီးစိုးခြင်းကိုခံရသောသူများကိုမြင်တွေ့ရတိုင်း ဘုရားသခင်၏ အလိုတော်ပြည့်စုံလာချိန်ကို ကျွန်ုပ်လွန်စွာတောင့်တမိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

လက်ရှိဘဝတွင် ခက်ခဲနာကျင်မှုများကြုံတွေ့ ခံစားရသော်လည်း ဘုရားသခင် ဂတိထားသော ကောင်းမြတ်သည့်အရာများပြည့်စုံလာဦးမည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း ကျွန်ုပ် စိတ်ချ ယုံကြည်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

သမာကျမ်းစာ၏ သွန်သင်ချက်များနှင့်ကိုက်ညီသော အပြုအမူများကိုသာ ကျွန်ုပ်ရွေးချယ်လေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

၆။ ကျမ်းစာဖတ်ရှုခြင်း။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ဘုရားသခင်၏ အလိုတော်ကို သိရှိနားလည်ရန် အလို့ငှာ ကျမ်းစာကို ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။ သမာကျမ်းစာကသွန်သင်ထားသော အခြေခံ နည်းဥပဒေများကို သင်ယူလေ့လာရန်အတွက်ကျမ်းစာကို ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်သမိုင်းတွင်တွေ့မြင်ရသော ပြဿနာဖြေရှင်းနည်းများကို သိရှိနားလည်ရန်အတွက် ကျမ်းစာကိုလေ့လာဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျမ်းစာကသွန်သင်ထားသောအရာများအတိုင်း ကျွန်ုပ်အသက်တာ နှင့် ယုံကြည်ခြင်းတို့ကိုပြုပြင်ပြောင်းလဲ၍ အသက်ရှင်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဆောင်းပါးအမျိုးမျိုးနှင့် ဝိညာဉ်ခွန်အားကိုဖြစ်စေသော စာပေများကို နေ့စဉ် ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ကျမ်းစာကို (၀) တစ်ကြိမ်မှ မဖတ်ခဲ့ဘူးပါ။ (၁) တစ်နှစ်လျှင် (၁၀)နာရီခန့် ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။ (၂) တစ်လလျှင် (၁)နာရီမှ (၂) နာရီအတွင်းဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။ (၃) တစ်ပတ်လျှင် (၁)နာရီခန့် ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။ (၄) တစ်ရက်လျှင် (၁၅)မိနစ်မှ မိနစ် (၃၀)ခန့်ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။ (၅) တစ်ရက်လျှင် မိနစ် (၃၀)နှင့်အထက် ဖတ်ရှုပါသည်။

၇။ဇဝ်ဂေလိတရားဟောပြောခြင်း။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည်မယုံကြည်သူများထံကယ်တင်ခြင်းသတင်းကောင်းဝေငှရန်အခြားယုံကြည်သူများနှင့် လက်တွဲ၍ လုပ်ဆောင်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်ရရှိထားသည့်ဝိညာဉ်ဆုကျေးဇူးကို အသုံးပြု၍ အသင်းတော်၏သွန်သင်ခြင်းအမှုတော်မြတ်၌ ပါဝင်အသုံးတော်ခံပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည်ဘုရားရှိခိုးကျောင်းနှင့်ဆုတောင်းအစည်းအဝေးများသို့ လူသစ်များကိုခေါ်ဆောင်သွားလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဝိညာဉ်ကယ်တင်ခြင်းလုပ်ငန်းနှင့်ပါဝင်ဆက်ကပ်ကြသောအမှုတော်ဆောင်များအတွက် ကျွန်ုပ်ဆုတောင်းလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

၈။ မိတ်သဟာယဖွဲ့ခြင်း။

အသင်းတော်ရှိ ဖျားနာသူများနှင့် ဒုက္ခရောက်သူများကို ကျွန်ုပ်ကူညီလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် အခြားယုံကြည်သူများနှင့်ပူးပေါင်း၍ အတူတကွ ကျမ်းစာဖတ်ခြင်း၊ ဆုတောင်းခြင်းနှင့်၊ အမှုတော်ဆောင်ခြင်းများကို တတ်အားသရွေ့ပါဝင်လုပ်ဆောင်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်နှင့်မိတ်ဆွေများအတွက်ကျွန်ုပ်သည်ရန်ငြိမ်းစေသူအဖြစ်အသက်ရှင်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်တွင် ကျွန်ုပ်နှင့် လူမှုရေး၊ အသိပညာနှင့် ဝါသနာ ကွဲပြားမှုရှိစေကာမူ ထိုသူတို့နှင့် ပေါင်းဖော်ဆက်သွယ်လေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်၌ ကျွန်ုပ်၏ ပါဝင်ဆက်ကပ်မှုသည် အသင်းတော်တည်ဆောက်ရာတွင်အထောက်အကူဖြစ်စေပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

၉။ ဆက်ကပ်အစေခံခြင်း။

အသင်းတော်၏ သာသနာနှင့် လူမှုရေးလုပ်ငန်းများတွင် လိုအပ်သည်အလျောက်ကျွန်ုပ်ပါဝင် အစေခံပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

နာမကျန်းဖြစ်သူ၊ ဒုက္ခရောက်နေသူများနှင့်ကြေကွဲဝမ်းနည်းသူတို့နှင့်အတူ ကျွန်ုပ်ထပ်တူထပ်မျှခံစားရကာ လိုအပ်သောအကူအညီများပေးလေ့ရှိပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ဘုရားသခင်စေခိုင်းသော အမှုတော်မြတ် ပြီးမြောက် အောင်မြင်နိုင်ရန်အတွက် ဘုရားသခင်ကိုသာ ကျွန်ုပ် ခိုလှုံကိုးစားပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

သူစိမ်းများ၊ အကူအညီလိုအပ်နေသူများအတွက် ကျွန်ုပ်၏နေအိမ်ကို အစဉ်အမြဲဖွင့်လှစ်ထားပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။ (၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅) လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

၁၀။ ဘဏ္ဍာစီးကောင်းဖြစ်ခြင်း။

သဘာဝပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ကို အကျိုးပြုသည့်နည်းလမ်းများဖြင့်သာ ကျွန်ုပ်နေ့စဉ်အသက်ရှင်
ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သ
ဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅)
လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

အသင်းတော်လုပ်ငန်းများအတွက်ငွေကြေးများနှင့်လည်းကျွန်ုပ် ထောက်ပံ့ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သ
ဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅)
လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည် အမှုတော်လုပ်ငန်းတွင် ကိုယ်ကျိုးမရှာပဲ ရက်ရောစွာပေးကမ်းလှူဒါန်းပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သ
ဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅)
လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်သည်နေ့စဉ်ကျန်းမာရေးနှင့် ညီညွတ်သော နေထိုင်စားသောက်မှုပြုခြင်းအားဖြင့်
ဘုရားသခင်၏ကောင်းကြီးများကို ထိန်းသိမ်းစောင့်လျှောက်သော ဘဏ္ဍာစီးကောင်းအဖြစ်
အသက်ရှင်ပါသည်။

(၀) လုံးဝသဘောမတူပါ။(၁) အများအားဖြင့် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၂) အနည်းငယ်သာ သ
ဘောတူပါသည်။ (၃) အနည်းငယ် သဘောမတူပါ။ (၄) အများစုကို သဘောတူသည်။ (၅)
လုံးဝသဘောတူပါသည်။

APPENDIX G

Interview Questions (Burmese Version)

၁။ သင့်အကြောင်း အနည်းငယ်ပြောပြပါ။ ထို့အပြင် ပြောင်းလဲလာပုံနှင့် အမှုတော်ဆောင်ရန် မည်ကဲ့သို့ ဆုံးဖြတ်ခဲ့သည်တို့ကို ပြောပြပါ။

၂။ သင့်ကျောင်း၌ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ ရင့်ကျက်ခြင်းကို ဖော်ဆောင်ပေးရန်အတွက် မည်သို့ သော ကျင့်စဉ်များကို ကျင့်သုံးပါသနည်း။

၃။ သင်ရိုးညွှန်းတမ်းပါ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ တည်ဆောက်ခြင်း အလေ့အကျင့်များက သင်၏ ဝိညာဉ် ရေးရာ ရင့်ကျက်ခြင်း နှင့် အမှတ်တံဆိပ်တွင် ထိရောက်မှုကို အထောက်အကူပြုသည် ဟုယုံကြည်ပါသလား။ သင်၏ ဝိညာဉ်ရေး တည်ဆောက်မှုကို မည်ကဲ့သို့ အကျိုးပြု တည် ဆောက်ပေးပါသနည်း။

၄။ သင့်အနေဖြင့် မည်သည့် ကျင့်စဉ်များသည် ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ တည်ဆောက်မှုအတွက် မရှိမဖြစ် အရေးပါသည့် ကျင့်စဉ်များဖြစ်သည်ဟု ယူဆပါသနည်း။ အဘယ်ကြောင့်နည်း။

၅။ မြန်မာပြည် ကျမ်းစာသင်တန်းများအတွက် ထိရောက်သော ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ ကျင့်စဉ်များကို သင် အကြံပေးလိုပါသလား။

၆။ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ ရင့်ကျက်မှုအတွက် မည်သို့သော ပန်းတိုင်မျိုးသင်ချမှတ်ထားပါသလဲ။ ထိုပန်းတိုင်သို့ အရောက် လွှမ်းနိုင်ရန်အတွက် မည်ကဲ့သို့သော အသက်ရှင်မှုမျိုးလိုအပ် ပါသနည်း။

၇။ ဗုဒ္ဓဘာသာ မြန်မာလူမျိုးတို့၏ ဝိညာဉ်ရေးရာ ရင့်ကျက်ခြင်းနဖင့်ပတ်သက်၍ သင်၏ အမြင် ကိုဖော်ပြပါ။ သင်၏ ကြီးပြင်းလာသည့် ဘာသာတရားမှာ အဘယ်နည်း။ မည်သည် ဘာသာများကို ကိုးကွယ် ယုံကြည်ကိုးကွယ်ခဲ့ပါသနည်း။ ခရစ်ယာန် ဖြစ်ပါက မည်သည် အကြိမ်မြောက် မျိုးဆက် ဖြစ်ပါသနည်း။

၈။ လူမှုပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ရှိ မတရားမှုနှင့် ဖိနှိပ် ချုပ်ချယ်မှုတို့ကို သင် မည်သို့ယူဆပါသနည်း။ လူမှု ရေးလုပ်ငန်းများတွင်သင်ဝင်ရောက်ကူညီမှု ပြုဖူးပါသလား။ မည်သည့်နည်းလမ်းများဖြင့်ပါဝင် ကူညီပါသလဲ။ အကယ်၍ ထိုလုပ်ငန်းများတွင်စိတ်ပါဝင်စားမှုမရှိလျှင်လည်း အကြောင်းအရင်း ကိုဖော်ပြပါ။

၉။ သင့်အသက်တာတွင် ခွင့်လွှတ်ပေးခြင်းနှင့် ခွင့်လွှတ်ခံရခြင်းတို့ကို ကြုံ တွေ့ခံစားဘူးပါသလား။ မည်သို့နည်း။

၁၀။ ဗုဒ္ဓ ဘာသာမှခရစ်ယာန်ဖြစ်လာသူ ယုံကြည်သူ လူသစ်များ အနေဖြင့် ယခင် ဘာသာတရားအရကျင့်ကြံမှု နေထိုင်ခဲ့ဘူးသည့် အကျင့်များနှင့် ပတ်သက်ပြီး သင်မည်ကဲ့သို့

ယူဆပါသည်။ ဥပမာ - ကောင်းကြီးရရှိရန်နှင့် အဆောင် အဖြစ် ဗုဒ္ဓ (သိုမဟုတ်)နတ်တစ်
ပါးပါး၏ ဆင်ထုတော်ကို ထိန်းသိမ်းထားခြင်း။

APPENDIX H

Letter to the Principal of Theological School A

June 2019

To/

Dear Principal (Theological School A):

As part of the requirements for completing my Doctor of Philosophy degree with a concentration on Transformational Learning, I am conducting a study on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of Spiritual Formation practices in theological schools.

This study intends to identify current spiritual formation practices in two theological schools in Yangon. The purpose of this study is to discover the perspectives of selected theological school students, graduates, and faculty on the effectiveness of those practices, to identify effective and ineffective practices, and to develop best practices in the spiritual formation of theological school students in Myanmar.

The research aims to offer recommendations for the spiritual formation curriculum of theological school students in Myanmar. In this light, I request your permission for me to do the following: First, I request permission to give the questionnaire to selected faculty members, students, and graduates of your theological school.

Second, I request permission to interview the students, graduates, and faculty members. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents, they will not be asked to write their names on the questionnaire and interview. The completed questionnaires will be coded.

All gathered data will only be used for the purpose of the research and discussed in the dissertation. Information from the surveys and interviews will be kept confidential.

Thank you so much for your positive response. Once my panel approves my dissertation, I will present the findings of the research, with your approval, at your most convenient time. May God bless you.

Regards,

Ning Ngaih Lian
Student (PhD in Transformational Learning)
Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary/Asia Graduate School of Theology
Rizal, Philippines

APPENDIX I

Letter to the Principal of Theological School B

June 2019

To/

Dear Principal (Theological School B):

As part of the requirements for completing my Doctor of Philosophy degree with a concentration on Transformational Learning, I am conducting a study on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of Spiritual Formation practices in theological schools.

The purpose of this study is to discover the perspectives of selected theological school students, graduates, and faculty members on the effectiveness of those practices, to identify effective and ineffective practices, and to develop best practices in the spiritual formation of theological school students in Myanmar.

The research aims to offer recommendations for the spiritual formation curriculum of theological schools in Myanmar. In this light, I request your permission for me to do the following: First, I request permission to give the questionnaire to selected faculty members, students and graduates of your theological school.

Second, I request permission to interview the students, graduates, and faculty members. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents, they will not be asked to write their names on the questionnaire and interview. The completed questionnaires will be coded.

All gathered data will only be used for the purpose of the research and discussed in the dissertation. Information from the surveys and interviews will be kept confidential.

Thank you so much for your positive response. Once my panel approves my dissertation, I will present the findings of the research, with your approval, at your most convenient time. May God bless you.

Regards,

Ning Ngaih Lian

Student (PhD in Transformational Learning)

Asia Graduate School of Theology/Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary

Rizal, Philippines

APPENDIX JLetter from the Program Director of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological
Seminary to Theological School A

To:

June 2019

Dear Principal (Theological School A):

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!!!

For the past five years, I have served at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary as Program Director for the APNTS/AGST PhD Program in Transformational Learning.

I am writing to introduce you to Ning Ngaih Lian, one of our students from Myanmar.

The purpose of Lian's Dissertation Research is as follows: to "identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar and the effectiveness of those practices, to identify effective and ineffective practices, and to develop a proposal for a new model of biblically sound, appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices to be incorporated into the curriculum of the theological school students."

Ning Ngaih Lian will explain the process of her research. Let me assure you that all our research studies are done keeping the findings completely confidential. It is our hope that Myanmar Center for Theological Studies will be part of this study.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

In Christ,

Catherine Stonehouse, PhD
Program Director: PhD in Transformational Learning
Asia Graduate School of Theology/Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary
Asbury Theological Seminary: Professor Emeritus
Asbury Theological Seminary
cathy.stonehouse@asburyseminary.edu

APPENDIX KLetter from the Program Director of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological
Seminary to Theological School B

June 2019

To:

Dear Principal (Theological School B)

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!!!

For the past five years, I have served at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary as Program Director for the APNTS/AGST PhD Program in Transformational Learning. I am writing to introduce you to Ning Ngaih Lian, one of our students from Myanmar.

The purpose of Lian's Dissertation Research is as follows: to "identify the spiritual formation practices being used in two theological schools in Myanmar and the effectiveness of those practices, to identify effective and ineffective practices, and to develop a proposal for a new model of biblically sound, appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices to be incorporated into the curriculum of the theological school students."

Ning Ngaih Lian will explain the process of her research. Let me assure you that all our research studies are done keeping the findings completely confidential. It is our hope that Evangel Bible College will be part of this study.

Thank you for considering this invitation.

In Christ,

Catherine Stonehouse, PhD
Program Director: PhD in Transformational Learning
Asia Graduate School of Theology/Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary
Asbury Theological Seminary: Professor Emeritus
Asbury Theological Seminary
cathy.stonehouse@asburyseminary.edu

APPENDIX L

Informed Consent Letter for the Interview Session with Current Students, Graduates, and Faculty Members

Dear _____,

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study to develop a proposal for a new model of biblically sound, appropriately contextualized spiritual formation practices for possible incorporation into the curriculum of theological schools. I will be interviewing three students, three graduates, and three faculty members from two selected theological schools.

With your approval, you will be invited to an interview meeting with me that will last 30 to 45 minutes. The conversation will be recorded for data gathering purposes but will be deleted following the completion of the research project.

In any presentation and/or report on the research project, your name will not be identified. All participants' identities will be protected and kept strictly confidential. A coded number will be used instead of a name.

You are welcome to ask me any questions at any time regarding the interview.

(Signing this paper means that you have read this information or had it read to you, and that you are willing to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign below).

I, _____, (name) have read the above information and I freely agree to participate in this study.

Thank you for considering my request,

Ning Ngaih Lian
PhD Student (Transformational Learning)
Asia Graduate School of Theology/Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary
Rizal, Philippines

Signature of the Participant

Date Signed

APPENDIX M

Code for Determining Scales of Spiritual Practices

PLACEMENT OF CSPP ITEMS IN DISCIPLINES AND SCALES

Discipline	Scales			
	Transcendent (CE)	Reflection (RO)	Vision (AC)	New Life (AE)
Bible Reading		29, 30	27, 28, 31, 32, 33	
Evangelism				34, 35, 36, 37
Fellowship			39	38, 40, 41, 42
Meditation			15, 16, 17, 18	
Prayer	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6			
Examen of Conscience	25	19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26		
Repentance	7, 8, 9, 10			
Service	45			43, 44, 46
Stewardship	50	47	48	49
Worship	11, 12, 13		14	

Notes. Numbers refer to the items in the final form of the CSPP. Letters in parentheses refer to Kolb=s learning modes: CE is concrete experience; RO is reflective observation; AC is abstract conceptualization; AE is active experimentation.

The Transcendent Scale represents A Growing through a relationship with God.

Reflection Scale represents A Growing through critical reflection.

Vision Scale represents A Growing through a relationship with the Word.

New Life Scale represents A Growing through a relationship with others.

Note: For each student, figure the mean score for each scale. Then, count the number of students in each scale who have a mean score of 4.0 or higher and place that number in the appropriate cell of the Assessment Report Form. Place the number who score lower than 4.0 in the appropriate cell. This will give you an overall view of your student body and point out the areas of strength and weakness in the spiritual life of your students.

APPENDIX N

Spiritual Practices and Its meanings

(Adapted from *the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile*

developed by O. Jane Thayer)

Bible Reading and study	Reading and study that focuses on knowing the will of God, biblical principles and doctrines, in order to deal with life issues and change beliefs and behaviors according to the Bible. This includes reading devotional articles and books, watching encouraging channels and sermons on media.
Contextualized Buddhist Practices	generous giving, respect to the elders and old aged, dressing up well for religious occasions and respect to the religious places, taking care of the nature and earth,
Practices	An emphasis on living a life of sharing and giving to the needy, modesty in dress for religious occasions, active in social work, generosity in donations and respect for monks, teachers, parents and the elderly.
Discipleship	Teaching and nurturing others to be like Jesus Christ, helping others to be able to use their potential for the kingdom of God, being a spiritual mentor to the other
Examen of conscience	Recognizing God's redemption and Bible-based cultural values, grieving over crime, helping people in disaster, longing for God's will on immortality, believing justice over evil, hoping for the best even in the worst situation, having Bible-based decision.
Fasting	Abstaining from food or anything needed in order to come closer to God in prayer for others, for myself and anyone who is in need.
Fellowship	Includes such activities as helping fellow believers in need, meeting with friends for prayer and Bible study, peacemaking in church and community, associating with people in the church who have different opinions and concepts, building up other believers, sharing our spiritual journey with a community of trusted friend.
Meditation	A time of reflection on the Bible, listening praise songs, keeping a spiritual journal, developing an attitude of

	<p>forgiving others for any hurts and wrongs, being alone and silent to focus and listen to God</p>
Prayer	<p>Praying with confidence, sensing God's nature in prayer, revealing my innermost need, seeking God's will, thanking God for salvation, praying for deliverance from despair and depression, intercessory prayer, personal prayer, whole night prayer, prayer walking, expressing repentance, confession for sins and seeking. Deliverance.</p>
Service	<p>Serving unbelievers in need and suffering, people who are in pain and experiencing hardship, depending on God to accomplish his work, opening one's home to strangers and the needy, working with other Christians to bring unchurched to Christ, serving in a teaching ministry, inviting people to small group and church, praying for the ministers and unsaved people</p>
Christian Formation Class	<p>A class which teaches students how to grow spiritually through teaching and introduces different practices and activities</p>
Spiritual Emphasis Week	<p>A week where the school focuses on the theme of mission, spirituality, and developing a deeper life with Jesus</p>
Stewardship	<p>Awareness on environmental issues, supporting finically the work of the church, giving sacrificially to the work of God, developing a habit of eating and living healthy lifestyles as stewards of God</p>
Worship	<p>A response to God's mighty works, focused worship on Trinity, participating in communion to come closer to Christ, attending church worship services, practicing morning and evening devotions, personal devotions, chapel, Friday night and Sunday night services</p>

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