AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLE AND TRAINING NEEDS OF HOCKEY CHAPLAINS

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Preface

It all began over lunch with Dr. Carol Anne Janzen at the Acadia University cafeteria. I was in my third year of the DMin program and had decided to pursue a directed study option for my next course. I had been referred to Dr. Janzen having indicated my desire to explore Christian education as the topic for the DDS. In conversation, Dr. Janzen began asking a series of questions regarding my work with Hockey Ministries International (HMI). She seemed keenly interested in learning more about the role of hockey chaplains. Finally, Dr. Janzen suggested I pursue the relationship of faith and sports with the view towards my future thesis topic. This was a defining moment in the journey. It set the path in a new direction, an exciting exploration into the role of hockey chaplains. That same year I was approached by our local Fire Department concerning the possibility of serving as a Fire Chaplain. It was during a Federation of Fire Chaplains training course that the idea of developing a formal training program for Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL) chaplains was born. The role of chaplain has a long and rich history in a variety of settings, from the military to hospitals, from fire departments to factories. Chaplains in sports, specifically in the sport of hockey, are a new phenomenon. This study explores the history of chaplaincy and the relationship between the church and sports, tracing the story of how sports ministries came into being. The biblical and theological foundation will also be examined to see how the Bible speaks to this ministry. The study will outline some of the roles and responsibilities associated with hockey chaplaincy, incorporating the insights and observations of chaplains across the QMJHL gained through a survey/questionnaire. Finally, based on the
feedback from actual chaplains, a draft framework for a chaplaincy training course will be presented, for use within the QMJHL (the draft framework presented in this thesis would be further developed and augmented with additional resources for use as a formal training program). It is my hope that the training program will expand to become a formal hockey chaplaincy training course implemented throughout the entire HMI network of hockey chaplains in leagues across North America.
Abstract

The history of the relationship between sports and Christianity goes back to the early church where leaders were faced with the issue of sports’ rising popularity, and whether the church would embrace or oppose. The rise of sports ministries was one step in the process of sports acceptance by the church as a conduit for proclamation and evangelism. Sports chaplains were established on teams across a variety of sports acting as spiritual care-givers and an emotional resource for athletes and other team personnel.

The concept of sports chaplains has biblical and theological support. Jesus’ parable of the “Good Samaritan” provides the directive to go to the hurting and needy to care for people with Christ’s love. Hockey chaplains encounter the many broken and wounded along the road of the hockey arena and are in place to tend to their needs. Paul’s address to the Areopagus takes place in a culture steeped in pluralism. Such a setting exists today. Here Paul provides the example of how chaplains can communicate the “Good News” of Jesus Christ to a pluralistic culture, drawing from common ground in proclaiming the message of Christ. The kingdom of God, a central theme in the ministry of Jesus, is to be lived out in the everyday and the ordinary of life. Chaplains are called to make the invisible kingdom visible in the arena.

A survey/questionnaire was developed to draw from the experiences, insights and observations of existing chaplains across the QMJHL. The results provided a glimpse into the world of the hockey chaplain, receiving feedback concerning their role and responsibilities while identifying needs concerning further training and equipping.

The life of a hockey chaplain requires a sacrificial commitment to making oneself available for God to use in the hockey arena. It is a life of prayer, of service, and of risk-taking as chaplains connect and engage with people. In doing so, chaplains need to be further equipped for the role and the call to go and serve in the hockey world.
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Introduction

Some years ago a National Hockey League (NHL) general manager, when presented with the offer of a hockey chaplain, was quoted as saying, “Let’s not bring God into this!” There would be others associated with the game and in society who would echo this general manager’s sentiments. Such a response prompts the question, “Is there a place for the hockey chaplain in the world of hockey?” This researcher asserts that there is a legitimate and valuable role for chaplaincy within a hockey context. In fact, it will be argued, there is a urgent need for such an emotional and spiritual resource that is accessible and available to the hockey community.

A growing volume of literature concerns the development of sports ministries and the place of faith in sports. The major emphasis of this material is on three of the four major sports of North America, Major League Baseball (MLB), the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA). The missing sport is hockey. This research seeks to break that trend and begin what will hopefully become a catalyst for further study regarding the place of faith in the hockey world.

Hockey Ministries International (HMI) is a Christian parachurch agency that co-ordinates over 270 hockey chaplains, located across North America, serving hockey teams in 41 leagues, from the National Hockey League to junior and youth hockey. These chaplains come from a variety of denominational backgrounds and sports ministries. They are made up of lay people, pastors and full-time Christian workers.

The concept of sports chaplaincy has been well established in major sports around the world. In hockey, the role of a chaplain is still relatively new. There has been an increasing openness by many in the sport, who see a value to having a team chaplain as an emotional and spiritual resource. Players have expressed appreciation for the
availability of chapel programs led by team chaplains. Chapels are offered to players interested in the service. The chapels feature a 15-20 minute message from the Bible addressing the many issues of life. Opposition to having chaplains and chapel programs come from some team owners, coaches and general managers who see no place for faith in the hockey arena.

In what ways are chaplains able to serve the needs of people on their hockey teams? What roadblocks or obstacles do chaplains encounter when trying to serve teams? What specific training should hockey chaplains have to more effectively serve in their respective arenas? I am convinced that there is a tremendous opportunity available for future ministry through hockey chaplaincy. Chaplaincy is a calling to invest time, energy, and effort, with God’s glory and our neighbor in mind. The role of a hockey chaplain can be used to deliver the love of Christ to players, coaches, trainers, families and fans in word and deed. With the potential to minister through hockey chaplaincy also comes the risk of ineffective and counter-productive ministry as a result of approach and methodology that could damage the work of building God’s kingdom. I have a heart for our chaplains and their role in a hockey team setting. My desire is to enrich the ministry of hockey chaplains. Through surveying our existing chaplains I will seek to identify areas of strength and weakness in hockey chaplaincy. From the research results a training program will be developed to meet the needs of hockey chaplains, designed to better equip them for their future ministry in a hockey context.

While the spectrum of chaplaincy covers a broad range of operations, from hospitals to prisons and the military, this thesis and research will focus specifically on Christian ministry within the North American hockey world.
Chapter 1

Historical Review

A Brief History of Sports and the Church

The world of sports encompasses many activities involving an individual or team in competition toward a common goal. For the purpose of this work sports will be viewed in its historical broad sense and move toward the specific world of professional sports and the rise of its popularity as a spectator sport. Sports hold a prominent place in the lives of millions across this continent and around the world.\(^1\) Statistics support the assertion that North America is a sports obsessed culture. The National Football League recorded in 2013 the highest average attendance figures of the five major sports leagues in North America with an average of 68,397 fans per game and an astonishing 17.3 million spectators in total. Major League Baseball was second with an average of 30,437 attendees per game and a grand total of 73.74 million.\(^2\) In 2007, *Sports Illustrated* magazine sold 13.2 million copies a month. In 2005, Americans purchased over $89 billion in sporting goods, and $7.6 billion on sporting event tickets.\(^3\) Major League Baseball teams as of November of 2015 had just over 16 million Twitter followers, with

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1. Barna Group, [Link](http://https://www.barna.org/barna-update/culture/672-futball-to-football-what-americans-think-of-sports#.U_HrT6OgSTA) (accessed April 1, 2015). Barna Group is a well respected research organization. In a recent 2014, survey Americans were asked if sports were an important part of American culture. Nine out of ten adults surveyed strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement. Although the survey focused on the U.S.A., its findings likely reflect the same sentiment in Canada and many other countries around the world.


the New York Yankees alone having 1.5 million. North America is a sports obsessed culture.

This fascination with sports is not limited to North America. Lincoln Harvey, in A Brief Theology of Sport, reveals the top soccer league in England, the English Premier League, is hugely popular. In the 2011-12 season, over 13 million tickets were sold for 380 league games, averaging 35,000 spectators per game. Across England, there are 37,000 registered soccer teams. The Football Association, the governing body for soccer in the country, estimates that 7 million people participate in the sport.

Sport is a worldwide phenomenon and has been part of the human experience since the beginning of time. In India, ancient texts reveal sporting tournaments were common over 3000 years ago; likewise in China, a precursor to football was played dating back to the sixth century BC. The first Europeans to arrive in America at the end of the fifteenth century discovered the native population were already engaged in sport. Athletes were competing in archery, javelin and racing competitions. Stickball, an early form of lacrosse, was known by many names and featured a variety of formats which often included teams competing with neighboring tribes. Across the Atlantic, Western colonists discovered a similar story in Africa, where entire villages in the Sudan gathered for community wrestling tournaments. The evidence reflects a universal reality that past and present, from around the world, people have participated and been engaged in sport.

Throughout her history, the church has questioned the relationship between Christian faith and sports. The reality is that religion has always played a role in sport.

6. Ibid., xii.
The ancient tournaments were held in temples. Rules and regulations were often established based on cultic myths, drawn from the supernatural ordering of the universe. Religion is universal. Sport and religion have enjoyed a long and rich history of interconnectedness. Ancient civilizations, with their established deities, celebrated holy days which at the same time were sporting holidays. In Central America, the Mayans and Aztecs constructed stone ball courts alongside their temples. Sports and religion also enjoyed an intimate relationship among the First Nations peoples of North America. The sport of lacrosse found its roots in the stick and ball games played by tribes across the continent, and was considered “a gift from the Great Spirit, the Creator.” Early African and Europeans combined wrestling matches in honor of their deities with prayers and dances. Homer’s Iliad records life around 1000 BC, featuring funeral games held to honor a fallen soldier in the battle of Troy, games which included races, boxing, wrestling, discus and javelin throwing. The gods were said to have an active interest in such sporting events. A ring of familiarity to modern day sports is noted, as athletes praised the gods for victory or accepted defeat as the will of the gods.

Sport was first established in ancient Greece based on their religion. Zeus was pronounced the patron deity of Olympia. Athletes were required to swear by Zeus, prior to competitions, of their commitment to training, a willingness to compete fairly, and pledged to abide by the rules. The notion of the Greek athlete competing for the simple glory of sport is a fabrication. The games were all about winning.

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7. Ibid., 4.
9. Ibid., 8-10.
The sports events during the days of the early church were fashioned by the Greeks and Romans. Both cultures saw the value athletics held for military training.\textsuperscript{11} The Roman propensity for sporting events was built into their calendar year. In the fourth century, 177 days each year were set aside as public holidays, with 10 of those days dedicated to gladiator competitions and 66 to chariot races, with the remaining days committed to the theater.\textsuperscript{12} The sporting events during the early church period consisted of: athletic competitions found in the stadium, the gladiator games of the amphitheater, and chariot racing. Significant to note was the connection spectators saw between these sporting events and religious worship.\textsuperscript{13}

The popularity of sporting events in the days of the early church required a response from church leaders in regard to a Christian’s involvement either as a spectator, a competitor or abstainer.\textsuperscript{14} How was the church to deal with the subject of sports? In many ways the church viewed sports with great suspicion, seeing a link between the worship of idols and false gods.\textsuperscript{15} Sports and the Christian life were often considered as juxtaposed to each other, engaged in competition for the hearts and minds of Christians.\textsuperscript{16} It appeared that the early church struggled with what parts of their former life, prior to conversion, should be left behind, and what would continue with them as Christians.\textsuperscript{17} Over the first three centuries the early church found itself in the midst of a pagan society.

\begin{flushright}
11. Ibid., 25.
12. Ibid., 31.
13. Ibid., 26–27.
15. Ibid., 3.
17. Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 35.
\end{flushright}
The church leadership placed sporting events outside the boundaries of the Christian life.\(^\text{18}\)

There is virtually nothing known about the leisure life of the first Christians. Scripture does not present an argument for or against informal play; however, the early church fathers consistently wrote against the gladiatorial and other public athletic events.\(^\text{19}\) Christians were torn between the popularity of the games and the opposition from church leaders. Tertullian (160-225), considered the first great Christian writer in Latin, received an extensive education in Greek and Roman culture. He was highly critical of pagan culture and any involvement Christians might have in society, including serving in the military and attending sporting events.\(^\text{20}\) Tertullian saw the rejection of sporting events as the true mark of a Christian.\(^\text{21}\) In his work entitled, *On Spectacles*, written approximately 200 A.D., he instructed Christians to have “nothing to do, in speech, sight, or hearing, with the madness of the circus (chariot races)” or “the savagery of the arena.” Tertullian, as a trained lawyer, presented a systematic and cogent response to arguments put forth by some believers in favour of the games.\(^\text{22}\)

The great theologian, St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), saw the gladiatorial competitions as “licensed cruelty.”\(^\text{23}\) Novatian, a Roman presbyter from the third century, was appalled at the fact that some Christians were in the habit of attending sporting events. “Sacred Scripture condemns the spectacles because idolatry is the source of all the public games. How incongruous it is for a faithful Christian, who has renounced

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 47.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 25.


\(^{21}\) Hoffman, *Good Game*, 36.


the devil at baptism, to renounce Christ at the games!” Novatian also spoke against the immorality and violence associated with the games.\textsuperscript{24}

The apostle Paul made many references to sports, using athletic metaphors to illustrate his messages. A couple of examples are found in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians and his letter to Timothy.

Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified. (1 Cor. 9:24-27 NRSV)\textsuperscript{25}

In his letter to Timothy, Paul writes, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim. 4:7). Some have argued that Paul was supportive of the games and had actually attended them. However, Paul’s use of athletic metaphors was a common practice in his day, and could hardly be used as a ringing endorsement of sports. Paul was quite clear in his opposition to the immorality and idolatry that accompanied the games.\textsuperscript{26}

The early church had a multifarious view of sport, summarized in three points.

First, sport could be found acceptable if it was put to use by the church for its own purposes.

Second, sport was always unacceptable when linked with pagan religion and idolatrous behavior.

\textsuperscript{24} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 38, 37.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Holy Bible New Revised Standard Version} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993). All other Bible reverses will be in the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.
\textsuperscript{26} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 37, 44. For an excellent study of Paul’s athletic metaphors see David J. Williams, \textit{Paul’s Metaphors: their Context and Character} (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), especially ch. 12, “Public Shows and Sporting Events,” 257-292.
Third, it is evident that sport was hugely popular during the days of the early church. Christian and non-Christian alike continued to attend sporting events.\(^{27}\)

Church leaders and the laity would face off over the matter of sports but given the widespread popularity, it was a contest the leadership would lose.\(^{28}\)

In the medieval period, sport underwent significant change. With the collapse of the Roman Empire, the focus on the relationship between religion and sport shifted to northern Europe. Ancient games found in the Germanic region, *kegels* (bowling), French *soule* (football), Irish *hurling* and Scottish *shinty*, all had religious associations.\(^{29}\) Gladiators and charioteers gave way to mounted knights and elaborate tournaments.\(^{30}\)

Christian leaders took a negative stance on sports tournaments, concerned that the popularity of such events would detract from the church’s promotion of the Crusades.\(^{31}\)

The church’s resistance to the overwhelming popularity of sport gradually gave way to attempts to Christianize sports. The popularity of tourneying competitions, despite the church’s opposition, continued. Finally in 1320, Pope John XXII lifted the ban, doing so not on theological grounds, but for purely pragmatic reasons. The tournaments had reduced the number of knights available for the Crusades. Pope John now saw the opportunity to support the Crusades by using the tournaments as a recruiting tool and a means to raise funds from the general public at the events.\(^{32}\)

Sport had found its way back into religion. Christian symbols and ceremonies were incorporated into the pregame and postgame rituals.\(^{33}\) Pre-jousting masses were

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30. Ibid., 37.
32. Ibid., 44–45.
conducted, and blessings pronounced over participants. There were even jousts that took place in St. Peter’s Square in 1471. The medieval period revealed a pattern consistent with the early church’s position on sport. Initial opposition from the leadership could not dampen the popularity of sport. Although the church viewed sport as a rival to be contested, eventually the church sought to use sport for its own purposes, forming a sort of partnership with sports. Games were especially prominent during Easter, where ball play was incorporated into its religious program by providing time for play after the morning service. The endorsement by the medieval church went a long way to popularize ball games and other recreational activities. For a short time, during the medieval period, the church embraced sport as part of its liturgy in worship. This practice rapidly concluded with the rise of the Reformers and the Puritans.

The Protestant Reformers delivered a mixed message when it came to sports. Luther endorsed participation in “honorable and useful modes of exercise,” such as dance, archery, fencing, and wrestling. Luther himself enjoyed bowling (kegels), using it as a metaphor for knocking down the devil! Like Luther, Calvin enjoyed bowling. He would also play a game similar to modern day horseshoes. But Calvin singled out many other sports for criticism, viewing them as a hindrance to holy living, denouncing games as a pursuit of “carnal pleasure” leading to gambling and breaking the Christian Sabbath. Luther’s enjoyment of sports was linked to his belief that “the ultimate objective (of sports), is to keep us from lapsing into other activities – drinking, wenching, gambling – as we can already see happening (for shame!), in our courts and cities.”

34. Ibid., 45.
35. Ibid., 46.
37. Hoffman, Good Game, 71.
39. Ibid., 16.
Calvin taught Christian liberty regarding the enjoyment of pleasures, providing an action would not be offensive to a weaker believer and that the purpose was to glorify God. He was not opposed to playing games on Sunday afternoon following morning services. He saw a place for sport and play in the Christian life, seeking to find the balance between wild excess and strict asceticism. Christians were left to work out the details of what it meant to be in the world but not of the world, holding on to the good things of life that God had provided, yet avoiding being consumed by them. But Calvin, by and large, had a general low view of sports that influenced Protestant exiles from England, Scotland, and Holland. These Protestants returned to their homes where they sought to reform the church and society. Eventually they would become known as the Puritans.

The Puritans called the church to task, expressing the need to “purify” itself by returning to biblical religion. They stressed the need for a sober life, guided by Scripture. Puritans saw life as hard work, and simple, sober living – there was no room for sport. John Bunyan, the Puritan writer of Pilgrim’s Progress, was playing an early form of baseball when he had an encounter with Jesus Christ. The message he heard was that recreational sport was sin and it would lead to hell!

Under persecution in England the Puritans began emigrating in large numbers to North America where the Plymouth colony and Massachusetts Bay had been established by 1630. Here the Puritans were free to handle sport however they preferred. It has been noted that the Puritan view of sport was rife with inconsistency and complexity. In the American colonies, the Puritans found a place for sport in their theology. Sport could be

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40. Hoffman, Good Game, 74–75.
41. Ibid., 76–77.
42. Baker, Playing with God, 16.
44. Harvey, A Brief Theology of Sport, 50.
profitable in the Christian life; however, the issue of Sabbath observance became a challenge, as play on that day competed with activities deemed faithful to keeping the Lord’s Day.\textsuperscript{45} Play on Sunday was not acceptable to Puritan preachers.\textsuperscript{46} As their influence spread quickly across New England beginning with the banning of Sunday sport, by 1650 lists of prohibited pastimes were in place in Massachusetts and Connecticut.\textsuperscript{47} Those within the church who opposed sports found fodder for their position in Puritan writings, sermons, and diaries.\textsuperscript{48} Taking a more generous position, the influential Puritan pastor, Richard Baxter, sought to define a position on “lawful” sports and recreation in his book, \textit{A Christian Directory}.\textsuperscript{49} The great American preacher and theologian of the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards, recognized the need for affections and emotions in the life of a Christian, stating that “the human capacity for pleasure was not just the province of the sinful passions: it was part of the spiritual nature as well.” According to Edwards, there was room for fun, recreation and entertainment in the Christian life.\textsuperscript{50}

In the United States, the views on sport and religion initially differed between the northern and southern states. The northern states, with larger Roman Catholic populations, had more readily accepted sports as part of the social fabric of community life. Organized sport and the social gospel were viewed by the South as northern constructs. The issue of Sunday sports kept the southern states united in opposition to the growing practice in the north.\textsuperscript{51} Southerners saw little value in professional sports.\textsuperscript{52} The

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 52.
\textsuperscript{46} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 83.
\textsuperscript{47} Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 18.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 24.
\textsuperscript{50} Dominic Erdozain, \textit{The Problem of Pleasure: Sport, Recreation and the Crisis of Victorian Religion} (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010), 56.
\textsuperscript{51} Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 95.
churches in the southern states were predominantly Protestant. Preachers would warn against forbidden social activities considered “worldly amusements,” such as card playing, dancing, and the theater. The southern states eventually came to embrace the combining of religion and sport. But one hundred years ago the scene was quite different across the United States with churches united in opposition against sports, seeing them as a competing force against the church and a risk of creating idol worship for their parishioners.

The 1920s marked the beginning of the shift in attitude. At the beginning of World War I, evangelicals began to question the separation between sports and religion. Sports at this time became a source of morale. Sport experienced rapid expansion in the evangelical south at high schools and colleges. College football at the turn of the twentieth century was a controversial issue for southern evangelicals; concerns ranged from the possible detriment to academics to the physical danger faced by participants. A growing trend in the early twentieth century was the disengagement of conservative Christians from popular culture. This withdrawal was partly a result of evangelicals’ lack of success in changing the culture to conformity to their core beliefs. This disconnect did not last long when it came to sports. “The shift from justifying sport in the nineteenth century by appeals to religion, to promoting religion by appeals to sport, reveals much about the changing status of both sport and religion in America.”

52. Ibid., 89.
53. A census of 1906 indicates 96.6 of all church members in the South identified themselves with Protestant denominations. Ibid., 86.
54. Ibid., 89.
55. Ibid., 85.
56. Ibid., 104–6.
57. Ibid., 95.
The Rise of Sports Ministries

The Industrial Revolution brought significant change to Western society. Many families moved from rural to urban, as people flocked to factories for employment. Suddenly, people had leisure time and watching competitive sport was a welcomed activity. The first signs of modern sport appeared in eighteenth century Britain. By approximately 1800, sports associations had been formed with rules and clubs for horse racing, cricket, prize fighting, yachting, and golf. America quickly followed with written rules and clubs for baseball in the 1840s, American football in the 1870s and 1880s, and basketball, established in 1891.

The rise of modern sport prompted a response from organized religion to discover a way to harness the popularity. The term “muscular Christianity” appeared, calling for a response from churches and denominations to either accept, modify or reject. There were those within Christianity who sought to marry religion and sport, creating a movement which became known as “muscular Christianity,” its roots traced to England. The formation of “muscular Christianity” was linked to Charles Kingsley, a liberal Anglican clergyman, novelist and social activist who wrote a novel, *Two Years Ago*, which was reviewed by T. C. Sanders in 1857. Sanders wrote, concerning the novel, that Kingsley was “spreading the knowledge and fostering the love of a muscular Christianity.” Kingsley himself actually hated the term, but it stuck. The muscular Christian movement saw athletics and Christian faith as compatible, and moreover, mutually supportive. Sports could develop qualities in boys and young men that would

60. Ibid., 24.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid., 31.
63. Ibid., 31–32.
produce Christian character, spreading beyond the sporting venue. Here was a movement promoting the body as “a vehicle of virtue.” A fellow novelist and Kingsley ally, Thomas Hughes, greatly enhanced the muscular Christian image in his novel, *Tom Brown’s School Days*, which was used by Victorian educators to propagate the values of fellowship, honour, and service. This muscular Christian “games ethics” spread through Britain’s elite private schools, whose graduates would become leaders in the British Empire, thereby spreading this philosophy throughout the world.

England’s influence in America in the mid-nineteenth century made it almost a certainty that muscular Christianity would find its way to America. Access to muscular Christianity novels, along with Thomas Hughes’ tour of America in the early 1870s, during which he addressed Harvard College on “muscular Christianity and its proper limits,” planted the seeds in American society. In British North America (Canada), nearly all of Canada’s private schools were designed to follow the British educational model with clergy preaching the gospel of muscular Christianity in chapel and on the sports field. The United States borrowed the term from England but significantly modified its foundations to apply to an American context. Its leading proponent, Luther Gullick, who presided over the American YMCA, believed that “Christ’s kingdom” also “should include the athletic world.”

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64. Krattenmaker, *Onward Christian Athletes*, 60.
70. Ibid., 35.
71. Krattenmaker, *Onward Christian Athletes*, 61. An example of the influence of muscular Christianity in America is on display at Princeton University, where a bronze statue was erected in 1913 entitled, “The Christian Student.” It was modeled after a Princeton undergraduate who was also captain of the football team, a leader with the intercollegiate YMCA, and high academic honours graduate. The statue features the lower half dressed in a football uniform with
The YMCA (Young Men’s Christian Association) began in London, England, in 1844, with its purpose outlined in the minutes of their first meeting, to awaken Christian men “to a sense of their obligation and responsibility as Christians in defusing religious knowledge to those around them either through the medium of prayer meetings or any other meetings they think proper.” The evangelical purpose of the YMCA was clear, the methods flexible. In November 1851, the first YMCA in North America was established in Montréal. A month later, the first in the United States was founded in Boston. In the summer of 1852, a YMCA was established in New York City. By 1856, 56 YMCAs were in place across North America, from Halifax to San Francisco. Shortly after being established in North America there was a call for the addition of a physical dimension to the existing spiritual, moral, and intellectual emphasis of the YMCA. This was led by Henry Ward Beecher, pastor of the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, NY. Beecher, known as a muscular Christian apologist, clearly articulated the direction he envisaged for the YMCA, “There ought to be gymnastic grounds and good bowling alleys, in connection with reading rooms to give to the young men of our cities the means of physical vigor and health, separate from temptations and vice.” In 1860, leaders from 200 US and Canadian YMCAs, with membership now totaling 25,000, gathered in New Orleans for their seventh convention, where they unanimously agreed on “the importance and necessity of a place of rational and innocent amusement and recreation for young men, especially in large cities and towns,” and committed that each branch should build a gymnasium for physical activity.

an academic gown draped over his shoulder and a stack of books in his arm. See Baker, Playing with God, 98.
72. Baker, Playing with God, 47.
73. Ibid., 48.
74. Ibid., 50.
75. Ibid.
The YMCA played a leading role in bridging the gap between the physical and the spiritual. It eventually expanded its mission of keeping young men from sin to the role of character development through sports. For the YMCA, promoting baseball, football, and basketball were acceptable, although baseball had its detractors within the leadership because of its “pernicious habits, such as Sabbath playing, betting, drinking and the like.” Worst of all, the sport had become professional, flying in the face of the YMCA’s amateur emphasis.

D. L. Moody, as a young man, moved to Boston for employment. There he joined the YMCA and had a religious conversion. He moved to Chicago in 1856 and became a charter member in 1858. In 1860 he dedicated his life to full-time religious work. Moody would go on to be a great Christian evangelist who impacted many lives across the United States and around the world.

Between 1873 and 1896, as a result of severe economic conditions, some Protestant ministers began calling for a more socially conscious gospel. Walter Rauschenbusch, and others, redefined the kingdom of God as an attainable world of compassion and justice. Proponents of the ‘social gospel’ desired to abolish the traditional distinctives between the sacred and the secular. They declared all areas, rightly performed, as sacred. “Social Christianity” meant “that Christ has redeemed the whole world, that it all belongs to him – its industries, its pleasures, its arts, its social institutions – and that it is the duty of the church to claim it all for him and use it in his honor.” Seeing all areas to be claimed for Christ, including recreation and sports, churches began

76. Hoffman, Good Game, 117.
78. Ibid., 52.
79. Baker, Playing with God, 64.
building gyms and sponsoring sports teams and leagues.\textsuperscript{80} Conservative Protestant denominations began seeing the potential for running sports programs as part of their church activities for evangelism.\textsuperscript{81} In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, churches that were once detractors from sport became supporters.\textsuperscript{82} The shift by Protestant denominations to accept and embrace sports at the turn of the twentieth century was largely based on expediency.\textsuperscript{83} Three major Protestant denominations in Canada – Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian – took the approach that they had to “go after” their young men through church sponsored sports teams in leagues. In 1906, seven Anglican churches in Ottawa formed the Anglican Amateur Athletic Association. Toronto’s Protestant and Roman Catholic churches put together 128 hockey teams to play in inter-church leagues. Annette Street Methodist Church in Toronto spent $1000 to level a site next to their church, to create an ice skating rink, lit with hundreds of electric lights.\textsuperscript{84}

By the 1950s and 1960s, sport had solidified its place in American society. For the Christian community it seemed natural to utilize sport’s popularity. Many evangelicals were inspired by the example of Billy Sunday, a late nineteenth century baseball player. Sunday signed to play for the Chicago White Stockings in 1883, and after five years in Chicago, moved on to play in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. One evening in 1887, Sunday and five of his teammates made their way out of a bar, only to encounter a brass band marching down the street toward the local rescue mission. Sunday decided to follow, heard the gospel preached, and was “saved.” He renounced alcohol, swearing,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[80.] Ibid.
\item[81.] Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 142.
\item[82.] Ibid., 6.
\item[83.] Ibid., 102.
\item[84.] Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 70.
\end{footnotes}
gambling, the theater, and refused to play baseball on Sunday. He would shortly thereafter retire from baseball and begin traveling the country, sharing his story and using baseball illustrations to communicate his message of salvation. Sunday would use his prominence as a former baseball player to attract crowds where he could communicate his faith.

Another example of the opportunity to exploit the popularity of sports to attract audiences for the purpose of delivering the Christian message was found in Gil Dodds. As a runner, Dodds had great success, winning the 1943 James E. Sullivan trophy awarded to the nation’s outstanding amateur athlete. Dodds dominated NCAA events for most of World War II. On Memorial Day, 1945, he attracted 65,000 people to a rally at Soldier Field in Chicago – there he ran a mile against the clock and followed up with an inspirational message. “Running is only a hobby,” Dodds shared with his audience. “My mission is teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

A young Billy Graham also recognized the benefits of using sports figures to attract people to the gospel. He invited Dodds to speak at a number of his first crusades. As Graham’s popularity grew, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was incorporated in 1950, often using sports stadiums as crusade venues. The pattern for using sports celebrities as part of his events would be a pattern for decades.

A number of sports ministries were formed at this time including the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and Athletes in Action (AIA). These and similar groups

85. Ibid., 58. This stand by Billy Sunday against Christian Sabbath participation in organized sport would be repeated in 1924 at the Paris Olympics when Eric Liddell, a Christian runner from Scotland, refused to run in the opening heat of the 100 meters because it fell on Sunday. His story would later be told in the 1981 Oscar-winning film, Chariots of Fire.
86. Ibid.
88. Ibid., 195.
89. Ibid., 196.
90. Hoffman, Good Game, 133.
recognised the potential of using ‘hero worship’ as a means of attracting converts to Christianity.\textsuperscript{91}

The mission of Don McClanen, the founder of FCA, was to establish “a ministry to coaches and athletes” committed to promoting Christianity by the “harnessing of heroes to reach those who idolized them for a life for the Lord.”\textsuperscript{92} McClanen sought the support of high profile major league baseball manager, Branch Rickey, who enthusiastically embraced the FCA vision. Ricky mobilized a number of local businessmen who pledged $25,000, a huge sum in 1954; the official launch of FCA took place November 12 of that year.\textsuperscript{93} In the 1960s, as the USA wrestled with many divisive issues, including civil rights and the Vietnam War, the simple message of the gospel delivered by star athletes and coaches held great appeal. FCA began offering summer sports camps and conferences.\textsuperscript{94} In 1976 FCA’s annual budget was 2.2 million; by 1990 it had climbed to $20 million, with a staff of 500 and a membership of 500,000.\textsuperscript{95}

AIA, established in 1966 by Bill Bright (who also founded Campus Crusade for Christ, now CRU), also embraced the FCA model, using sports camps, clinics, and breakfasts featuring sports celebrities to advance the gospel. But AIA added the dimension of sponsoring traveling sports teams to compete and preach around the world.\textsuperscript{96} Sports spectacles and hero worship were seen as conduits to opening the doors of the kingdom to the masses.\textsuperscript{97} Bright called for “a more aggressive evangelism and discipleship training” than was found in FCA (FCA worker Gary Warner wrote that

\begin{itemize}
\item[91.] Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 199.
\item[92.] Tony Ladd and A. Mathieson James, \textit{Muscular Christianity: Evangelical Protestants and the Development of American Sport} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 129.
\item[93.] Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 199, 200.
\item[94.] Ibid., 201.
\item[95.] Ibid.
\item[96.] Ibid., 201.
\item[97.] Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 129.
\end{itemize}
according to AIA his organization did “not produce enough pelts on the salvation barn door to satisfy the Crusade zealots.”).\textsuperscript{98}

Several other sports ministries were formed in the 1970s, including Hockey Ministries International (HMI) which was established in 1977, by Don Liesemer, born in Walkerton, ON. He became a Christian in 1962 and a year later, as a teenager, moved to Montreal to play hockey for the Montreal Junior Canadiens. During his professional hockey career, Liesemer saw the need for a ministry specifically focused on hockey players and the hockey community. Inspired by the FCA model, Liesemer, following his playing days, formed HMI in the summer of 1977, conducting its first Christian Athlete Hockey Camp in Montreal with 27 campers. Over 58,000 boys and girls have attended the camps over the past 38 years. HMI currently conducts 30 hockey camps in 6 countries.

Sports ministries are now well established in every major professional sport in North America and in countries around the world where professional sport is played. A large portion of sports ministries activities is in the establishment of sports chaplains and chapel programs with sports teams.

The rise of sports ministries in professional sports was not without its detractors. In 1976, \textit{Sports Illustrated} writer, Frank Deford, wrote an article describing this tactic by evangelicals to combine sport and religion. He called it “sportianity,” defining it as a movement by conservative Christian evangelicals to use sports as a vehicle of witnessing for Christ.\textsuperscript{99} Deford described it a “new denomination” within Christianity.\textsuperscript{100} He saw

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item[98] Ibid., 137.
  \item[99] Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 193.
  \item[100] Frank Deford, “Religion in Sport,” \textit{Sports Illustrated}, 1976. Deford was interviewed by a FCA staffer a year after his article had been published and asked the question if “sport has had a greater impact on religion than religion on sport?” He responded that it had and went on to say: "bad things about athletics have rubbed off on religion. Religion is like the tar
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
sportianity not as a result of bad theology but rather as a systematic, rationalized approach, justified by sports ministry organizations. The introduction of religion into the locker/dressing rooms of professional teams raised concerns from a variety of directions. The Protestant underpinnings of sports ministries created apprehension among Catholic, Jewish and Muslim players. Athletes feared the potential for being proselytized by teammates and chaplains. Christian players who were quiet about their faith faced pressure from more outspoken Christian teammates. Coaches and managers saw the potential for division on the team.

Tom Krattenmaker, in his book, *Onward Christian Athletes*, argues that the brand of Christianity being presented at these sports chapels is a divisive, conservative worldview message. Krattenmaker protests the evangelical Christian access to professional locker/dressing rooms, calling instead for a greater ecumenical, inclusive approach. Other critics of sports ministries point out that not only has sports invaded the Christian community, evangelicals have sought to invade sports. Chaplains have become a regular feature in most professional sports teams, coordinated by sport-faith organizations such as FCA, AIA, HMI, and Baseball Chapel.

Critics also question the marketing of Christianity, seeing religious faith presented as a “commodity.” It is argued that the tailoring of the message for maximum appeal has left FCA and other sports ministries guilty of a non-biblical message. The message is – “turn to Jesus and your athletic pursuits will be realized.” In *Good Game*, Shirl

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104. Ibid., 26.
Hoffman writes of the challenge faced by sports ministries in communicating faith to an unsympathetic culture, without modifying the core of the message to make it palatable.\textsuperscript{107} He questions the place of “sports evangelism” in the professional arena. “As human experiences, our sports spectacles seem unlikely places to find God ‘softly and tenderly calling’; the calls of the stadium are from another land and another God.”\textsuperscript{108} Hoffman goes on to criticize how evangelicals have been able to enter the realm of sports, where material success is a core value, using the one to serve the other.\textsuperscript{109}

Sport, which celebrates the myth of success, is harnessed to a gospel which consistently stresses the importance of losing. Sport, which symbolizes the morality of self-reliance and teaches the just rewards of hard work, is used to propagate a theology dominated by the radicalism of grace. The first shall be last and the last first, but not in big-time sports.\textsuperscript{110}

Krattenmaker and Hoffman question sports ministries’ use of marketing methods in their approach, reflecting an attitude that Christianity is a product to be promoted using whatever effective means available.\textsuperscript{111} Celebrity athletes are used to sell the gospel in the same way sports stars endorse merchandise.\textsuperscript{112} It is no accident that a strong Christian presence in sports points to the deliberate initiatives of evangelical Christians to “convert” athletes and use sports to spread the gospel to a wider audience.\textsuperscript{113} “Faith Nights” are now commonplace in professional sports where teams offer reduced tickets to churches in the area in order to attract more spectators to the game. Often a sports celebrity is featured as a guest speaker, to address the crowd and share the Christian faith.

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\textsuperscript{107} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 222.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 226.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 11.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{111} Krattenmaker, \textit{Onward Christian Athletes}, 63.
\textsuperscript{112} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 232.
\textsuperscript{113} Krattenmaker, \textit{Onward Christian Athletes}, 33.
\end{flushright}
It is argued that these “Faith Nights” put sports ministries in the position of sales representatives for professional sports teams and leagues.\textsuperscript{114}

Legitimate questions beg for answers. Is there something unethical about professional sports? Is providing a form of entertainment (sports) unhealthy and “worldly”? Is there harm in ministries partnering with sports teams? The professional teams see an opportunity to promote their product by partnering with churches and sports ministries. Sports ministries see the opportunity to support a local team while communicating the gospel to any who wish to hear. Sports ministries view the game as an avenue of connecting with people. The position of this thesis is that the key lies in doing ministry in a respectful, non-aggressive manner. Current religious reality in North America is that church attendance is declining dramatically. Sport offers an avenue of connecting with and engaging people through their interest.

Critics portray the presence of a chaplain as privileged access for the purpose of proselytizing. While there have been cases of overzealous individuals aggressively promoting their beliefs, it is the experience and observation of this researcher that the majority of sports chaplains recognize that their role is providing emotional and spiritual support for teams, and making themselves available to serve those in need, regardless of their faith or non-faith background. Chaplains are there to support, care for and help needful people. While many may question whether an athlete has any recognizable needs in the affluent world of professional sports, the reality is that those involved in the sporting world carry the same burdens common to all. Chaplains are simply available to minister to people associated with their particular team and sport. Sports chaplains are a part of a role that has a long and rich history.

\textsuperscript{114} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 230.
Sports Chaplains

The word “chaplain” has been traced back to the medieval Latin word, *capella*, which means, cape or cloak. It specifically refers to the cape of St. Martin of Tours, who was said to have shared it with a beggar on a cold and wet night.\(^\text{115}\) At his death, St. Martin’s cape was enshrined and the keepers of the *capella* became known as the *chaplain*.\(^\text{116}\) In the fourth century, these chaplains were named by the king as protectors and keepers of St. Martin’s cape. Eventually chaplains took on additional roles for the king, including other religious duties and ceremonies. Such practice of the royal appointing of chaplains spread throughout Western civilization.\(^\text{117}\)

Chaplains have been a part of the human story for centuries. In ancient times, priests would accompany armies into battle. Throughout Judeo-Christian history, from the entering of Canaan to the time of the Judges, spiritual leaders led the people during times of crisis.\(^\text{118}\) In more recent history, chaplains have served in many different settings. They traveled with Sir Francis Drake in the sixteenth century and were alongside George Washington during the American Revolution.\(^\text{119}\) Workplace chaplains were found in factories and mills in seventeenth century Massachusetts. In the twentieth century, chaplains were found in corporations, seniors homes, on sports teams and at truck stops. Police, fire and emergency medical responders have also sought the services of chaplains. Healthcare chaplains were introduced in the early twentieth century with the growth of hospitals; spiritual care became recognized as an important companion to physical

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\(^{119}\) Ibid.
care. Chaplaincy grew because it became evident that spiritual care was necessary even outside a church, mosque, or synagogue.

In contrast to the above-mentioned settings, chaplaincy in professional sports is a relatively new phenomenon. There are a few examples in history of what might be considered a sports chaplain. In the third century, Jerome records the activities of Hilarion, a charismatic Christian, who healed a chariot driver's neck, blessed a celebrity charioteer’s horse, along with racecourses and stables. According to Jerome, the resulting victories by horses and drivers were attributed to Hilarion, and "caused very many people to turn to the faith." Canadian clergy in the late nineteenth century offered their blessing to competitive ice hockey between schools, played on frozen lakes and rivers.

Team chaplains can be a spiritual and emotional resource for players and team staff. They speak at chapel services which are made available to teams on a voluntary basis, lead prayers and draw alongside injured and discouraged players. Even outspoken critics of the combining of religion and sports concede the right professional athletes have to practice and speak about their faith. There is even recognition that schedules often exclude players from attending church, making it acceptable to bring church to the players.

Bill Glass, a former football player, recognized that the National Football League (NFL) Sunday games did not allow coaches and players to attend Sunday morning Protestant worship. He began offering devotional services prior to Sunday games.

120. Ibid., 2.
121. Ibid., 3.
122. Hoffman, Good Game, 40–41.
124. Hoffman, Good Game, 234.
125. Krattenmaker, Onward Christian Athletes, 46.
126. Baker, Playing with God, 204.
Vince Lombardi, the great coach of the Green Bay Packers, attended daily, early morning mass, as a Roman Catholic. When he was approached by Protestant players regarding their inability to attend church on Sunday, he supported the institution of non-denominational services for the Packers before their games.\textsuperscript{127} Tom Landry, a devout Christian and coach of the NFL Dallas Cowboys, had aligned himself with FCA and spoke at his first of many Billy Graham crusades in 1966. Landry would bring in outside speakers for non-denominational, voluntary devotional services offered to his team.\textsuperscript{128} By 1970, every team in the NFL, with the exception of one, promoted pregame Sunday chapel services for players and staff, led by club appointed chaplains.\textsuperscript{129}

Major League Baseball (MLB), like the NFL, had a few teams where chapels were taking place prior to Sunday games. Expansion of chapel programs began with the arrival of a Detroit sportswriter and former president of the Baseball Writers Association of America, Watson Spoelstra. He had experienced a dramatic conversion as a result of a family trauma.\textsuperscript{130} After retiring from writing in 1973, Spoelstra approached the baseball commissioner, Bowie Kuhn, with the idea of providing pregame worship for players and staff. He pitched the idea of “Baseball Chapel” as an organization that would coordinate chapels and chapel leaders with respective teams across the league. The Commissioner supported the concept and actually provided funding to start it. In its first year, Baseball Chapel had support from 12 teams; by 1975 it had grown to all 24 MLB clubs.\textsuperscript{131} Today, all 30 MLB clubs have their own chaplain and conduct separate chapels at the ballpark prior to Sunday games for both the visiting and home team.\textsuperscript{132} Baseball Chapel quickly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 205.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 204.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 205.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 206.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 207.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Krattenmaker, \textit{Onward Christian Athletes}, 34.
\end{itemize}
spread to minor baseball teams – Rip Kirby, in 1979, began coordinating the chapel program to minor teams. Within five years he had 140 pastors and laypeople volunteering to lead chapel services in 150 cities encompassing 16 minor leagues.\textsuperscript{133}

In the National Basketball Association (NBA), league commissioner, David Stern, who happened to be Jewish, supported the players’ right to practice their faith, but drew a line at “someone trying to impose his beliefs on somebody else.”\textsuperscript{134}

The growth of hockey chaplaincy in the National Hockey League (NHL) has been a long, slow journey. In 1977, Don Liesemer began the process of offering and conducting chapels with NHL clubs. While the NHL has no formal position on chaplaincy, they have been supportive of HMI and its work among NHL clubs, with one-third of the teams in the NHL currently taking advantage of the services provided by HMI. HMI has seen more rapid growth of chaplaincy and chapel programs across other hockey leagues in North America – currently 270 HMI chaplains serve in 39 leagues, including junior hockey, Canadian university, US College and minor professional leagues.

The role of sports chaplains has been called into question by some. Shirl Hoffman is one who is critical of the concept: “the fact that special chaplains are needed to serve athletes is, in itself, condemnatory of big-time sports, and indictment of what we have allowed sports to become.”\textsuperscript{135} Tom Krattenmaker views chaplains as faith coaches instructing players on ways to evangelize using their sports platform. FCA’s vision statement clearly communicates the mission: “to see the world impacted for Jesus Christ through the influence of athletes and coaches.”\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{133} Baker, \textit{Playing with God}, 208.
\textsuperscript{134} Krattenmaker, \textit{Onward Christian Athletes}, 31.
\textsuperscript{135} Hoffman, \textit{Good Game}, 235.
\textsuperscript{136} Krattenmaker, \textit{Onward Christian Athletes}, 52.
A common refrain repeated by Christian athletes goes like this: the Lord has given me this platform in sports and I am to use it to promote my faith.\textsuperscript{137} Christian athletes can be quite vocal regarding their perceived responsibility to proclaim Jesus Christ by using their sport platform as a vehicle.\textsuperscript{138} Tony Ladd and James Mathisen point out in their book, \textit{Muscular Christianity}, that Christian athletes many times communicate messages without a sound biblical foundation:

They then extrapolate to a theology that is grounded more in sports world rhetoric than Orthodox Christian teaching….Athletes and sports related personnel are assumed to have adequate biblical and theological knowledge, based largely on the legitimation they enjoy as sports heroes. In public settings they talk about what they know best – the world of sport – and use the symbols and rhetoric of that world. Typically they attempt to add some spiritual principle or theological insight which is often misguided, if not clearly incorrect, because that is why they weren’t invited to speak in the first place.\textsuperscript{139}

In response to such criticism, these Christian athletes do not profess to be theologians or scholars. What they desire is to communicate the life-changing message of Jesus Christ at every opportunity. These players and coaches hold a privileged position in society and recognize this status as a platform from which they can share their faith to a listening world.

It is my opinion that Christian athletes should recognize the privilege, opportunity and responsibility they have to represent Christ under the spotlight of professional sport. There are many opportunities provided for an athlete to express his/her faith in appropriate venues and manners. Critical to this proclamation is that it be done in a respectful manner, acknowledging the right of others to hold an opposing position or alternate worldview.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 37.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 15.
\textsuperscript{139} Ladd and James, \textit{Muscular Christianity}, 30.
Chapter 2

Biblical & Theological Foundation

Hockey Chaplains – Serving the Needy

Hockey is a sport overflowing with people. Arenas are filled with individuals: fans of their favorite team, parents supporting their children, players, coaches, trainers, on-ice and off-ice officials, media, agents, scouts, arena attendants and more. The local arena is where people gather. But incredibly, surrounded by so many, some of the loneliest people are hockey players. These players come from many backgrounds, different countries, languages, cultures and religions. In this sub-culture, hockey chaplains encounter hurting, lonely and needful people. Behind the hype and bright lights, one finds a world filled with people trying to find their way through life. It is along the road in the arena where chaplains find such people to serve.

Jesus provided the guidelines for responding to the needful people one encounters in life. The “Good Samaritan” acts as a model for the life of a chaplain who compassionately responds to those in need. The Apostle Paul ministered to a pluralistic world not unlike the prevailing context of our modern day. What was his approach to ministering to the needs of others? His message to the Areopagus reveals an approach that can be replicated, seeking the common ground, building on this foundation while introducing the truth of the gospel. Kingdom life was central to the life and teaching of Jesus. Here the chaplain finds the motivation and directive to go to where people gather and make the invisible kingdom visible through the everyday and ordinary of life.
The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Background & Context

Jesus’ parable of the “Good Samaritan” is found in only one of the Gospels (Luke 10:25-37). Most scholars attribute the authorship of the book to Luke, a physician and travelling companion of the apostle Paul.140 The writing of Luke’s Gospel has been presented as early as AD 59-63 and as late as the latter part of the second century, having likely been written from Rome.141 Luke is considered to be one of the theologians of the New Testament, with a clear purpose of recording history to communicate theological truth.142

The themes found in Luke’s Gospel are summarized in the first part of his writing (2:10-11, 30-32; 3:6; 4:18-19). He reveals that, first: the Christian message is good news about Jesus. Luke was familiar with the custom of Roman Emperors marking their notable accomplishments, usually a military victory, by making these official proclamations as ‘Good News’.

Second: Luke points out that the Christian message is good news about salvation through Jesus involving the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. ‘Salvation’ is an important theme in Luke. Exclusive to Luke’s Gospel is his record involving the forgiveness of the sinful woman in the house of Simon the Pharisee (7:36-50), the ‘Prodigal Son’ parable (15:11-32) and Jesus’ final commissioning of his disciples in

141. Ibid., 7-8.
terms of the forgiveness of sins (24:47). Including forgiveness, salvation involves the gift of the Holy Spirit. Luke reminds the reader that God has in Christ dealt with our guilt and shame of our past sins but also transforms our lives today, filling the believer with hope and promise for the future through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Third: the Christian message is good news about salvation through Jesus made available for the whole world. Luke records Jesus’ compassion for the oppressed, the poor and the needful who found themselves excluded from organized religion and were socially marginalized. Luke points to Jesus as Savior, not just for the religious but for the world and all kinds of people.

And fourth: the Christian message which is good news about salvation through Jesus for the whole world results in joy. Luke begins his record with the angels announcing to shepherds ‘good news of great joy’ (2:10) and concludes his writing with the apostles returning to Jerusalem ‘with great joy’ (24:52).  

Luke 10:25-37

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” 27 He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” 28 And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” 29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 30 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ 36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands

of the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Luke does not provide any information regarding the setting for this event. The discussion that takes place occurs between Jesus and a lawyer (Luke used this term to describe a scribe).144 Joel Green asserts that the exchange begins when the lawyer abruptly interrupts Jesus and his disciples in what had been a private conversation. There is no shift in scene from vv. 20-24.145 In fact the NRSV infers a continuation in v. 25 – “Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.”

v. 25

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

A lawyer (νομικός146) stood up to ask a question of Jesus, presupposing that he was seated among an audience who had been listening to Jesus.147 This lawyer would have been considered an expert in religious law. There is reason to believe the lawyer’s motivation in asking Jesus a question did not come from pure motives. Luke uses the word “testing” (ἐκπειράζων) which usually had an unfavorable connotation (Matt. 4:7, Luke 4:12, I Cor. 10:9). A visual image of confrontation and challenge exists as the lawyer rose to his feet to question Jesus in what had likely been an informal discussion.148 The question being posed to Jesus, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” was not a new one. And although his motives may be in question, there is still the possibility he

146. NASB Lexicon http://biblehub.com/lexicon/luke/10-25.htm (accessed December 15, 2015). All further Greek references will be drawn from this source.
genuinely desired to hear how one could find eternal life. The question also revealed that the man’s understanding of attaining eternal life was based on a person’s performance. The lawyer saw a never-ending life possible through works, but had little concept of divine grace.

v. 26

He said to him, “What is written in the Law? What do you read there?”

Jesus’ response to the lawyer in directing him back to the law was totally fitting and appropriate. In referring him to Scripture for the answer to his question, it is clear that Jesus was not preaching a new doctrine but pointing to God’s holy law. This is a reminder to the Christian that the Bible stands in authority on all matters of faith and obedience. “The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689” states, “The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience....”

v. 27, 28

He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

In reply to Jesus’ counter question, the lawyer states the law’s requirements for eternal life known as the “great commandment,” outlining perfect love for God and toward one’s neighbor. The man quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, for which


Jesus commends him, but also points out that this truth must be put into practice.\textsuperscript{153} Some have argued that Jesus’ response is an endorsement of works, promoting the idea that if one seeks after eternal life it can be attained by worthy performance. In fact it is a repudiation of such a notion. If a person really loves God in the manner of which Jesus speaks, than our reliance must be on him and not ourselves. This kind of love is in response to God’s love for us, not the cause of God accepting us. Living in love is to live the life of the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{154}

v. 29

\textit{But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”}

Jesus’ affirmation of the lawyer’s correct reply was in fact leading towards a set up. In an attempt to escape, the lawyer asks for the identity of the “neighbor”, hoping that Jesus would reveal that not all people are his neighbor, therefore justifying limits on his love toward people.\textsuperscript{155} In seeking to define “neighbor,” the religious leaders had confined the term to mean fellow Jews. It had even been taught that it was illegal to help a Gentile woman in childbirth, as such action would result in another Gentile added to the world.\textsuperscript{156} In seeking to justify himself the lawyer revealed he did not fully understand what the Scriptures taught. So the question is asked, “Who is my neighbor?” He seemed to understand that it was more than the person next door, but how far did it extend? There were various views amongst the Jewish people but all were confined to the nation of Israel – the concept of loving all humankind had not been grasped.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{153} Bock, \textit{Luke}, 1024.
\item \textsuperscript{154} Morris, \textit{Luke}, 206..
\item \textsuperscript{155} Geldenhuys, \textit{Commentary on the Gospel of Luke}, 311.
\item \textsuperscript{156} Barclay, \textit{The Gospel of Luke}, 143.
\item \textsuperscript{157} Morris, \textit{Luke}, 206.
\end{itemize}
Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

Jesus, like other contemporary Jewish teachers, utilizes a parable to illustrate his teaching point concerning Leviticus 19:18. The debate over how far-reaching love should extend toward others is heightened with the mystery surrounding the man’s identity. Stripped of his garments, beaten and left for dead insures the traveler’s anonymity is maintained. The inference is that he is a Jew. But his nationality is not the important point. What is important is the need of the neighbor.

The road the traveler was on connected two major communities. The city of Jerusalem is 3000 feet above sea level, while Jericho is more than 1000 feet below sea level, making travel between the two locations very difficult. Jericho had a large population of priests and Levites which meant a steady flow of travel between the two centers. The road between Jerusalem and Jericho was known to be a treacherous route, traversing rocky, wilderness terrain, and notorious for attacks against travelers by bands of robbers. This route would have been well traveled by Jesus who would be very familiar with its reputation as a dangerous place frequented by thieves. Some called it “the red and bloody way.” The Romans eventually positioned guards along the route.

Jesus does not say the traveler was robbed. His listeners would simply recognize that this was part of the thieves’ modus operandi. The focus is placed on the condition of

162. Ibid., 311.
the traveler, who was left half dead.\textsuperscript{164} This traveler likely would have been considered by Jesus’ listeners to be a reckless individual, making the trek alone and carrying valuables. The audience possibly saw him getting what he deserved for his careless behavior.\textsuperscript{165}

v. 31, 32

\textit{Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.}

A priest was the first person to happen upon the injured man. His response was one of avoidance. The priest moved as far away from the victim as possible. Why did he not stop to help? It has been suggested the priest would run the risk of defiling himself by touching a dead person, rendering him unclean for seven days (Numbers 19:11). He chose the ceremonial requirements over the needs of the man.\textsuperscript{166} Joel Green questions this view. The fact that the priest was on his way back to Jericho from Jerusalem, and likely would not be back to the temple for some time, meant this excuse could not be valid. There was also the obligation even for a priest to bury a neglected corpse.\textsuperscript{167} In any event the priest deliberately avoided having contact with the victim. There may have been other factors that weighed into his final decision but what is known is that the priest left the traveler in his suffering and need.\textsuperscript{168}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[164.] Morris, \textit{Luke}, 207.
\item[165.] Barclay, \textit{The Gospel of Luke}, 141.
\item[166.] Ibid.
\item[168.] Morris, \textit{Luke}, 207. Darrell Bock points out that there have been a number of motives presented as to the reason the priest did not stop. “However, the text gives no motive, nor is it concerned with the reason.” See: Bock, \textit{Luke}, 1030.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Later a Levite arrives at the scene of the crime. He appears to venture closer to the traveler before moving along. Darrell Bock suggests that the use of γενόμενος (happened by) with ἐλθὼν (coming) would indicate a closer examination of the man.\(^{169}\)

Highwaymen were known to use decoys to lure unsuspecting travelers into a trap. The Levite appeared to adapt the policy of “safety first,” unwilling to risk his own safety for the sake of another.\(^{170}\) The traveler found no comfort or assistance from those who should have been his friends (priest and Levite), persons who by their occupations one would expect to find compassion and tenderness. Instead of aid, the priest and Levite moved as far away from the scene as they could. In both cases, because they saw the man in need and did nothing, they were culpable.\(^{171}\)

v. 33-35

*But a Samaritan while traveling came near him, and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.* \(^{34}\) *He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.* \(^{35}\) *The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’*

Along came a Samaritan who had compassion on the sufferer. He sought to meet the traveler’s immediate needs, tending to his wounds and then transporting him by his own animal (this meant the Samaritan would have to walk) to an inn.\(^{172}\) At the inn the Samaritan did not say, “I have done what I needed to do. It’s someone else’s turn.” Instead, the Samaritan took care of him during the night and the next morning he paid the

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innkeeper to continue looking after the injured traveler until the man was well enough to be on his way. The innkeeper was assured that if there were additional expenses the Samaritan would make good upon his return. 

The audience likely expected the priest and Levite to be followed by a lay Israelite, anticipating Jesus moving towards an anticlerical message. The introduction of a Samaritan to the story would have been a stunning development to this Jewish audience. A Samaritan would be seen as the last person who would help. The Samaritan traveler would initially be received by Jesus’ Jewish audience as the arrival of the villain! Jews despised Samaritans, seeing them as half-Jews, tainted by Gentile interbreeding. For a Jew, a Samaritan was of the least respected, viewed as unclean, and to be avoided. Two things are evident about the Samaritan in the story. 1) The innkeeper viewed him as trustworthy and 2) he was the only person prepared to help. 

v. 36, 37

*Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?*” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

The lawyer originally had asked a very simple question, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus’ parable response answered a deeper, more profound question, “Do I behave as a neighbor to those who need my love and help?”

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176. Barclay, *The Gospel of Luke*, 142. “The Assyrian and Babylonian exiles removed Jews from their homeland, which resulted in their intermarriage with pagans. The Samaritans were a remnant of the Northern Kingdom who married Gentiles exiled in Israel by the Assyrians. Their children were no longer considered Jews.” See: Coleman, *Today’s Handbook of Bible Times & Customs*, 89.
neighborly limits to the essential nature of neighborliness. The priest and the Levite had no heart for one of their own people, but the Samaritan revealed his heart toward another people. Although the victim was a Jew, the Samaritan had learned to honour all human beings, treating people in the same manner he wanted to be treated. The hostility between Jews and Samaritans was built along race, religion, and cultural lines. The parable illustrates the point that there should be no such barriers when it comes to our care and compassion for other human beings. Jesus revealed that love for God must be practically reflected in our care and concern for others.

The first head-to-head challenge between Jesus and the lawyer ended with Jesus’ injunction, “Do this, and you will live” (v. 28). The second showdown came with a similar directive, “Go and do likewise” (v. 37), this time with no promise. Being a good neighbor is an expression of love toward God and others, and reveals kingdom citizenship. There is no thought concerning reward, just as the Samaritan could not have expected any reward or compensation for helping the wounded traveler. A person who shows mercy to gain something is not truly doing “likewise.” Jesus instructed the lawyer to “Go and do likewise.” The “do” (ποίει) is in the present tense, meaning, “do constantly.” Jesus is saying that love for others is a continuous, life-long action.

Lessons from the Good Samaritan

Jesus through his parable was teaching three important points. 1) We must help others even when their poor actions or decisions result in trouble. 2) Any person from

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anywhere who is in need becomes our neighbor. 3) The help must be practical and must go beyond mere words and feelings.182

In Jesus’ final exhortation to “go, and do likewise,” he communicated that there is no limit when it comes to loving others. Whoever is found in need becomes our neighbor.183 Jesus conversation with the lawyer is revealing. It illustrates the difference between the ethics of law and the ethics of love. To the lawyer, eternal life is a prize to be won by the meticulous observance of religious rules; to Jesus, love to God and neighbor is in itself the life of the heavenly kingdom, already begun on earth. The lawyer wanted moral duties limited and defined with a rabbinical thoroughness; Jesus declined to set any limits to the obligations of love. Religion to the one is a set of restrictive regulations, to the other a boundless series of opportunities.184

Where are the needy who require help, comfort and care? They are all around us – including those in the hockey world. Shirl Hoffman and Tom Krattenmaker are opposed to sports chaplains based on the assumption that their role is primarily in the proselytizing of players to Christianity. While there certainly have been examples of overzealous chaplains, such actions are not considered appropriate by other chaplains who serve with sensitivity and compassion. Hockey chaplains are present to be spiritual care-givers to individuals associated with their respective teams. Hockey chaplains are called to be “neighbors” to hockey players, coaches and staff. They are called to follow the example set out in the “Good Samaritan” – to draw alongside the hurting and the needy to provide comfort and care. The application of the story is clear. Jesus is mandating that the appropriate response is to help those in need of help, regardless of their race, ethnicity or religion.185

185. David Roper writes, “We are not called upon to love the world and bring salvation to it. Only God ‘so loves the world.’ Our business, as Jesus made clear in the parable of the Good Samaritan, is to love our neighbor. ‘Who is my neighbor?’ we ask. The next person we meet
Some have sought to use the Good Samaritan as a type of Jesus. It is doubtful that Jesus intended to convey this to his original audience.\textsuperscript{186} William Hendriksen does not question the message for the intended audience; however, he points out that even today, those with limited biblical knowledge can see how the Samaritan represents or symbolizes Jesus.\textsuperscript{187}

The Hockey Chaplain recognizes and responds to the needs of hockey people. He does so with a tenderness and compassion as illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The chaplain also recognizes that all human beings are the busted up, beaten traveler, who is in need of his own Good Samaritan. That person is indeed Jesus Christ.

**Hockey Chaplains – Serving in a Pluralistic Society**

**plu-ral-ism**
Function: *noun*
1: the holding of two or more offices or positions (as benefices) at the same time
2: the quality or state of being plural
3 a: a theory that there are more than one or more than two kinds of ultimate reality b: a theory that reality is composed of a plurality of entities
4 a: a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional cultures or special interest within the confines of a common civilization b: a concept, doctrine, or policy advocating this state\textsuperscript{188}

It is widely recognized that we live in a pluralist society, a society that embraces a variety of cultures, religions and life-styles. This age of pluralism is valued and celebrated by the majority. A Western world dominated by pluralism stands in contrast to the past when accepted values, shaped by Christianity, provided the guidelines for belief along the way whose deep needs God exposes to our eyes." See: David Roper, *A Beacon in the Darkness* (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 1995),116.

and conduct. The secular conclusion is that peace will come between peoples, not with the end of religion but the blending of all religion. It is important for hockey chaplains to understand pluralism and learn how to minister effectively in a pluralistic society. Such a setting should be seen as an opportunity for ministry rather than a roadblock.

D.A. Carson, Research Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical School, proposes three elements of pluralism. The first one he names empirical pluralism, which simply acknowledges the reality of pluralism in our society. The second element of pluralism Carson calls cherished pluralism. This is the notion that diversity and variety is beneficial and should be celebrated. Empirical pluralism recognizes that our culture comprises a variety of religions, lifestyles, and cultures whereas cherished pluralism goes beyond the simple acknowledgment creating a value in itself, something to be embraced. A third definition of pluralism is viewed as problematic; Carson calls it a philosophical pluralism (or hermeneutical pluralism). This is the notion that no religion can claim to possess absolute truth. So how does a hockey chaplain minister in such a setting without compromising his/her faith? The apostle Paul also found himself in a pluralistic society. How did he handle the exclusive claims of Christianity in contrast to the melting pot of religious activity found in Greece? What are the lessons that can be learned by Christians living in a time of pluralism?

191. Woodard, Ministry of Presence, 1836.
Acts 17:22-31 – Paul addresses the Areopagus

22 Moreover (δὲ) Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said: “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

23a For (γὰρ) as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’

23b therefore (οὖν) what you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

24a For the God who made the world
24b and furthermore (καὶ) everything in it,
24c therefore (καὶ) is Lord of heaven and earth,
24d and therefore (καὶ) does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25a consequently, is he not served by human hands, as though he needed anything,
25b since (καὶ) he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.

26a Therefore (καὶ) from one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth,
26b also (καὶ) having allotted the times of their existence
26c and (καὶ) the boundaries of the places where they would live,
27a if (εἰ) they should search for God, and perhaps grope for him and find him -
27b Yet (καὶ) he is actually not far from each one of us.

28 For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’

29a Since (καὶ) we are God's offspring,
29b we ought (καὶ) not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone,
29c and (καὶ) an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

30a In that (καὶ) while God has overlooked the times of human ignorance,
30b but now (καὶ) he commands all people everywhere to repent,

31a because (καὶ) he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged
31b in (ἐν) righteousness by a man by whom he has appointed;
31c and (καὶ) of this he has given assurance to all
31d by (ἐν) raising him from the dead.”

193 Discourse Analysis was a method of study taught by Dr. Scott Hafemann during his course, DMin. 8233: “Exegesis of 1 Peter for Teaching & Preaching”. Discourse Analysis is rooted in examining the conjunctions that link the content, looking at the logical relationships between the clauses in the text. This has been a profitable technique in studying a passage of Scripture.
Background & Context

Paul’s address to the Areopagus as recorded in Acts 17:22-31 is considered to be one of the great speeches recorded in all of Scripture. Here Paul found himself in Athens, the cultural center of religion and education of Greece and the empire. As he traveled around the city he found worshippers of the creature everywhere. He went to synagogues, the town square, temples, the religious and irreligious, educated and non-educated, Epicureans and Stoics – everywhere he looked he discovered the creature worshipping the creaturely. Paul sought to address the ignorance of the people, to proclaim the one true God and thus reveal their errors and the folly of idolatry. Higher learning had not led to the removal of idol worship. Paul’s entire speech was aimed at the announcement that this one man (Jesus), who God raised from the dead, would be the judge of the world.

Although not identified, the writer of the Book of Acts has been commonly recognized to be Luke, the beloved physician. Acts is the companion volume to Luke’s Gospel. Some have argued that the Book of Acts should be renamed The Acts of the Holy Spirit, as the power of the Holy Spirit is on display (mentioned sixty-one times). But Acts is the story of how the ascended Jesus continues His work through His Spirit-empowered Apostles and people.

194. Larkin, Acts, 543.
199. Crooks, One Lord, One Plan, One People, 313.
The date for the writing of Acts would fall between the last events recorded (AD 62) and the usual life span of Paul’s fellow travelers (AD 85). Many favour an early sixties dating of Acts. There has been some debate over the intended audience and the purpose for Luke’s account. Both of Luke’s writings are dedicated to the “most excellent Theophilus” (Luke 1:3; cf. Acts 1:1). While the honorific title would point to a person of significant rank in Roman society, Luke’s readership undoubtedly encompassed an ethnically and socially diverse group living in an urban setting, likely Rome.

The literary style of Acts is clearly an historical narrative. But it is the telling of history, with a purpose! Was the book intended for a Christian or non-Christian audience? Was Acts to be used as an evangelistic tool or as a book to edify believers? Certainly convincing arguments can be presented to support the respective positions. Suffice to say, the Acts of the Apostles can be useful for both edification and evangelism.

Acts recounts the story of the mission of the triune God through the Apostles; the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation; the reception of the gospel of salvation; the church; the Word of God; the power of the Holy Spirit; and the worldwide scope of the gospel. The structure of Acts follows the pattern of Acts 1:8, where the spread of the gospel begins in the local community and spreads to the surrounding regions and into the far reaches of the world. Following Pentecost, the Spirit-empowered church witnessed in Jerusalem (ch. 3-7); ordinary Christians were forced out of the city as a result of persecution, but they took the gospel with them to Judea and Samaria (ch. 8-9). The

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200. Larkin, Acts, 351-52. Larkin points out that an early sixties date is supported by the fact that Luke fails to mention many mid-sixties events: (1) the outcome of Paul’s trial; (2) the death of James, the brother of Jesus; (3) Nero’s persecution around AD 64; (4-6) the deaths of Peter, Paul, and Nero; (7) the Jewish revolt (AD 66) and the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. See also: Trites, Luke, 6-7.

201. Ibid., 365–73.
greater portion of the Book of Acts records the gospel going “to the end of the earth” (10-28). Luke’s second book (Acts) does not seem to have a conclusion since Paul is reported as still preaching in Rome. The book does not tell us what happened to him or the rest of the church. It may be surmised that Luke had a theological reason for this – since the story he was telling would not come to an end before the end of all history.

Prior to his speech to the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-31), Paul was exposed to the sights of idolatrous religion all around the city of Athens and was “deeply troubled” by the scenes. However, Paul did not slip into a depression or fall into a state of resignation; instead he was motivated to action. The Athenians were known for their curiosity of the novel and for their willingness to add foreign deities to their pantheon. But they were also cautious when it came to adding the “new” lest it undermined established beliefs. Following his discussions in the synagogue and public square, where he engaged some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, Paul was brought before the council of the Areopagus to give an account regarding his message. There was confusion and misunderstanding among the philosophers who heard Paul’s message and this was the opportunity to bring clarification. The Areopagus was a “deliberative body” consisting of Athens’ chief administrators who were responsible for many departments, including religion and education. “Areopagus” could also refer to a place near the Acropolis in

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206. Hansen, *The Preaching and Defence of Paul*, 315. William Larkin also points out that Paul’s appearance before the Areopagus should not be viewed as an opportunity to discuss new ideas and philosophies as an intellectual exercise but rather was a pre-trial hearing to explore Paul’s message which appeared to be an introduction of new deities to Athens. (Larkin, *Acts*, 542)
Athens where the council usually met.\textsuperscript{208} When it came to authority, the Greeks were willing to recognize experts in a particular field. They would have acknowledged Paul’s credentials in speaking on religion. But when Paul spoke of absolute authority and what the Greeks believed was inherently unknowable, the concept would have been untenable to his audience.

The prevailing philosophy of the day in Athens was a blend of established schools of philosophy. Two of the dominant schools belonged to the Epicureans and Stoics. The Epicureans (philosophers of the garden) were founded by Epicurus (died 270 BC). They believed the gods were removed from the affairs of humankind; this world was a result of chance, a random collision of atoms; there was no survival of death and no judgment.\textsuperscript{209} Epicureans were atomic materialists who perceived reality as a perpetual chance combination and dispersion of atoms. Nothing of the human survived death, meaning any talk of a bodily resurrection was nonsensical.\textsuperscript{210} Epicurus held the view that the end of life was to maximize pleasure – yet paradoxically he taught that it was “better” to live a simple and ascetic life of self-denial.\textsuperscript{211} The second major school, the Stoics (philosophers of the porch), was founded by Zeno (died 265 BC). They recognized a supreme god, in a pantheistic manner, whom they identified with the “world soul”. This world was determined by fate. People were to pursue their duty, committing themselves to a life of harmony with nature and reason and developing their own self-sufficiency.\textsuperscript{212}

\textsuperscript{208} Larkin, \textit{Acts}, 541.
\textsuperscript{210} Larkin, \textit{Acts}, 544.
\textsuperscript{212} Stott, \textit{The Message of Acts}, 280–81. A Stoic image which illustrates their philosophy is found in the example of a dog tied to the back of a wagon. “When the wagon moves, the dog can either be dragged yelping barking and strangling itself by pulling in the opposite direction, or
Stoics held very high moral standards. They were materialists, believing all things were made from fire, and determinists, convinced that all they could do was train themselves to assent to the inexorable laws that rule events. They saw philosophy as a guide to understand the law of nature and to obey and adjust to it.\(^{213}\) The Stoics’ cyclical philosophy did not allow for a physical resurrection.\(^{214}\) Contrasting these two major philosophies, the Epicureans emphasized chance, escape and the pursuit of pleasure while the Stoics focused on fatalism, submission and enduring pain.\(^{215}\) Both groups needed to hear the “good news” of “Jesus and His resurrection”, a message that Paul proclaimed with boldness.\(^{216}\) The gospel calls “for a complete reordering of what one thinks and how one lives.”\(^{217}\)

**General Comments on Acts 17:22-31**

Paul’s speech to the Areopagus has been critiqued under two categories: 1) authenticity and 2) adequacy. Regarding authenticity, some scholars have argued that the speech is a Lukan creation, designed as an example of the style of preaching to be employed when addressing pagans. Robert Wall questions Luke’s recording of Paul’s message, suggesting that the content reflects Luke’s “idealized version of what ought to have happened, so marvellously wrought that for its readers it provides the emblem of what possibly could happen.”\(^{218}\) Other scholars claim that the speech does not reflect the


specific thought, theology and ideas of Paul. Those who refute these assertions point to the evidence revealing Pauline features affirming the text as authentically Pauline.²¹⁹

The second area of critique involves the adequacy of the speech as a gospel presentation. Some have argued that Paul’s address in Acts 17 is “the most important episode” of Paul’s second mission, but not because of some new approach or message. The importance lies in the setting of Athens, a place of blended ideas and philosophies – here Paul delivers a major speech and the only one addressed to nonbelievers.²²⁰ Some have noted the absence of the cross. John Stott believes that Luke’s record of the address by Paul is an extraction from his speech, providing only an outline, but that Paul did preach the cross in Athens. How could he proclaim the resurrection of Christ without mentioning his death? How could Paul call for repentance without mentioning the faith in Christ that accompanies it?²²¹

A close examination of Paul’s speech reveals that, in both subtle and direct approaches, he identified areas of ignorance among his hearers. They were misguided in thinking God lived “in shrines made by human hands”(v. 24); misguided in thinking that God needed gifts provided by human hands (v. 25); misguided in thinking that individual nations were under the patronage of different deities (v. 26); misguided in thinking that the living God, the source of all life, could take the form of an inanimate material (v. 29).

It would be difficult to interpret Paul’s speech as a positive evaluation of natural theology.\textsuperscript{222}

Was Paul’s speech a sermon or a defence? There are those who argue that Paul was simply defending himself (thus explaining why this was not a gospel presentation since there was no mention of the cross of Christ). This argument is plausible since Paul stood before a council with judicial authority who was calling him to give an account of his beliefs – which is exactly what he did. As in the case of the other apostles, they seemed incapable of defending themselves without preaching Christ. As for Paul in Athens, it required tremendous courage to say what he said to a sceptical and even hostile audience.\textsuperscript{223} We see the degree of opposition Paul encountered before he even began to speak to the Areopagus through the word used in questioning his message. Paul is described as a babbler (\textit{σπερμολόγος}, ‘seedpicker’, 17:18) by the Epicurean philosophers. It is a term of derision, a derogatory name, slang for a gutter sparrow that picks scraps at a market, one who trades second-hand scraps of philosophy. The term also communicated disgust at those who plagiarized ideas from the great teachers.\textsuperscript{224}

Chaplains should remind themselves that the Christian message will not always be warmly received but be encouraged that they deliver the good news found in Jesus Christ to a world that desperately needs to hear.

\textit{Structure of Acts 17:22-31}

Paul’s speech to the Areopagus follows a series of steps: 1) God is not made but is the maker; 2) God has guided history; he alone determines the rise and fall of nations; 3) God has made humankind in such a way that people instinctively long for God; 4) the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[222] Hansen, \textit{The Preaching and Defence of Paul}, 316.
\item[224] Hansen, \textit{The Preaching and Defence of Paul}, 310–11.
\end{footnotes}
days of ignorance and groping are past; 5) judgment is coming; 6) proof of the pre-eminence of Christ is in His resurrection.\footnote{225}{William Barclay, \textit{The Acts of the Apostles} (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1960), 143.} Paul begins with the hearers’ belief in an impersonal divine essence and leads them to the living God as creator and judge.\footnote{226}{Ibid., 336.} The main thrust of the speech builds on common ground, drawing from Jewish, Christian and Hellenistic sources as Paul makes his case for the nature of the one true God and against idolatry.\footnote{227}{Wall, \textit{The Acts of the Apostles}, 316.} Although Paul does not quote Scripture, he employs relevant and contextual images and references to engage his audience while still remaining true to biblical theology.\footnote{228}{Ibid., 250.} This approach of finding common ground and using the vernacular of the people is a valuable lesson and model for hockey chaplains as they engage with others in the hockey world.

v. 22

\begin{quote}
Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.”
\end{quote}

The context of the passage reveals whether the word “very religious” (δεισιδαιμονεστέρους) is to be understood in a positive or negative sense. Although it could simply be “religious,” most translate it as “very religious”. The word also denotes the idea of “superstitious” behaviour, which Paul recognized in his audience. Some have seen this opening as Paul’s complimentary attempt even though such gambits to secure favour from the Areopagus were forbidden.\footnote{229}{Bruce, \textit{The Acts of the Apostles}, 335.} It is likely that Paul used the word positively to engage his audience.\footnote{230}{Wall, \textit{The Acts of the Apostles}, 246.} The Athenians were serious about religious piety.
But for the Epicureans and Stoics this zeal was more a “superstitious fear;” they had also embraced the idolatry of popular religion.\textsuperscript{231}

v. 23

*For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.*

Here Paul continues to find points of contact with his audience. He uses the inscription on an altar, “to an unknown god” (ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ) in his strategy of engaging his listeners. The remark comes across as a respectful acknowledgement of their religiosity. Paul builds on this point of agreement to prepare them for the revelation to follow regarding this “unknown god.”\textsuperscript{232} The people’s desire to acknowledge “an unknown god” also reveals the fear in their hearts of offending whatever god might be present.\textsuperscript{233} This introduction frees Paul from the accusation of promoting alien gods in Athens.\textsuperscript{234} The worship of the unknown reflected an incomplete approach to worship and an incomplete understanding of the true nature of deity – it is “this” (τοῦτο) that Paul would address, the nature of the one true God, who can be known.\textsuperscript{235}

v. 24, 25

*The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.*

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{233} Larkin, *Acts*, 546.

\textsuperscript{234} Hansen, *The Preaching and Defence of Paul*, 315.

Paul begins with the revelation of God in creation.236 “The God who made the world” would stand in sharp contrast to the Epicurean view of a world as a chance combination of atoms or the pantheism of the Stoics. Instead, God is personal Creator of all things and the personal Lord of all that He creates. Paul reasons that it is illogical to think that the One who made and rules over all lives in shrines built by human hands.237 God is “absolute” in the sense He created all things and is thus the ground of all reality. As such, God has no need for any other being for His own existence.238 Paul combines the Epicurean doctrine that God needs nothing from humankind and cannot be served by them and the Stoic belief that God is the source of all of life. Here we see Paul, once again, finding common ground with his audience.239 “Human hands can’t serve His needs – for He has no needs”. Service (θεραπεύεται, ‘is served’) is presenting anything to an idol, i.e. food, as if it needed sustenance like a human being. Stoics and Epicureans shared this understanding of the self-sufficiency of God (although based on a pantheistic deism, materialist or materialist pantheism). Paul then pointed out that this is the same God who gives life and breath to everyone. For the Epicurean and Stoic, living under impersonal chance and fate, this was good news!240 The description of God as the source of breath is drawn from Isaiah 42:5 (“Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it.”), but Paul uses the triad of “life and breath and everything” from the current vernacular. Since the word for “life”

(zoē) was popularly associated with “Zeus”, it is possible that Paul was saying, “Not Zeus but Yahweh is the source of life.”\textsuperscript{241}

v. 26

*From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live,*

Paul then shifts his focus from the divine to humanity. He refutes the Stoics’ assertion of a divine ancestral parent to humankind. It was by God’s design that from the first human being would come every culture (ἔθνος) of humans. “From one man” (ἐξ ἑνὸς ἐκ) addresses the Greeks’ pride in their assumed superiority to non-Greeks, whom they referred to as barbarians. Against this attitude of racial superiority, Paul asserts the unity of all people. This unity of all of humanity as descended from Adam is fundamental in Paul’s theology. This basic unity, impaired by sin, is restored by redemption.\textsuperscript{242} God would determine this mosaic of diverse cultures and determine their time and geographical locations.\textsuperscript{243} The “allotted periods” (προστεταγμένους καιροὺς, “the appointed times”) refers to the divinely ordained periods, times and seasons of life.\textsuperscript{244} Here again, Paul builds on a point of agreement with his listeners since many of the philosophies of the day concluded that God was the author of creation; Plato had referred to God as the maker and father of the universe. But Paul enlarges on this understanding by adding that God is so involved in the lives of human beings that He determines the

\textsuperscript{241} Hansen, *The Preaching and Defence of Paul*, 287.
\textsuperscript{243} Larkin, *Acts*, 547. William Larkin also points out that the word “nation” (ἔθνος) would be better translated “culture,” emphasizing the unity of persons from a variety of cultures into one universal people of God. (see page 543).
\textsuperscript{244} Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 337.
times and places where they dwell (17:26) and stressing the goodness of God in His provision for the needs of humankind.  

v. 27, 28

so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’

Paul describes the search for God as a person seeking to “feel their way” (ψηλαφήσειαν) after Him in the darkness where the light of His full revelation is not available. The people have not found the one true God through their religious practices as indicated by their “groping” in darkness. The expression, “he is actually not far from each of us”, emphasizes the nearness of God. God is not far from us. Every human being is aware of God’s grace by which one lives and moves and has one’s being. But to “apprehend” God, a person does not have to look any further than the evidence that God has placed in their heart. Paul calls the Athenians back to their philosophical roots by quoting their own poets. God is still near. Paul points out God’s presence in terms of our total dependency on Him, “for in him we live and move and have our being.” He refers to the Stoic, Aratus, and his quote, “we are his offspring.” Paul’s earlier remarks remove “Zeus” and its pantheistic metaphysic from its meaning. The crowd realized that Paul did not mean the same thing as their poets in reference to living and moving and

having their being and being the offspring of God. The Stoics saw all people as essentially a piece with God, participants in deity. Now his audience is to see the one true God, Creator and Sustainer of life and their position as “his offspring” (Τοῦ γένος), with a common origin, the source is God and they are made in His image.  

v. 29,30

*Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.*  

While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

The Old Testament revealed that human beings are not only the creature of God, but are also made in His image and after His likeness.  

“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (Gen. 1:27). Paul reminds his listeners that it is illogical to think that the divine nature (τὸ Ḫεῖον) that created humankind is like an “idol” made of an inanimate substance. Paul’s call to repentance was an appeal to repent from creature worship and turn to the worship of the “living God.”  

Paul returns to human ignorance in v. 30. The Athenians had acknowledged in their inscription, “unknown God”, that they were indeed ignorant of God. Paul had also provided them with the evidence proving their ignorance. Now the people are told that they are culpable for their condition. God has shown mercy withholding his judgment.  

But now the people needed to act and respond.

v. 31

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254. Ibid.
because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

Following Paul’s challenge to the Athenians’ idolatry is a call to repentance and a new direction for living. God had graciously “overlooked” their previous ignorance (vs 30), and had postponed judgment, but He had set a day when judgment would come. A standard of righteousness had been established, a man had been appointed to judge, whose appointment had been verified by raising Him from the dead. This judgment is definite and universal. Epicureans denied any judgment by the gods, the soul survival’s after death, and a judgment day. Stoics, on the other hand, held onto the elements of judgment but framed it in a pantheistic, cyclic metaphysical paradigm. Both schools of thought would receive the news of judgment for all at the end of human history as perplexing. Jesus’ return will be both to judge and to restore the inhabited world.

Lessons from the Areopagus

When Paul arrived in Athens, he did not immediately begin preaching. In fact, his first activity was to observe – he traveled around the city and spoke with people, he listened to the latest philosophers and joined them in dialogue, he toured the temples built to the many gods of the Greek pantheon. And he did not stop there. Paul read the ancient texts of the Greeks, acquainting himself with their thought. His approach reflects the importance of timing and pace when conducting ministry, a respect for the audience and

sensitivity in approach toward believers and nonbelievers. This is the approach hockey chaplains must adopt as they enter their “Athens” arena – observing, listening and engaging the people in the arena, familiarizing themselves with the context and setting where they minister.

There is a sense that Paul already recognized that God was at work among the Athenians well before his arrival. It appears that Paul understood that to effectively communicate the gospel he must have an understanding of the society and culture. The evidence is found in Paul’s knowledge of the customs, traditions, activities and beliefs of the Athenians.

Chaplains are to see their role as participants in the missio Dei, understanding that God is already present in the arena, working in the lives of the people who have gathered there. The chaplain is to learn the culture, understanding the nuances of the hockey sub-culture in order to better engage others. The hockey chaplain understands the value of a ministry of presence, being available to be used by God when the opportunity arises.

Chaplains understand that the ministry of presence is sometimes the most important ministry intervention chaplains provide. From the mandate to feed, clothe, and shelter, chaplains understand that practical acts of service are an essential part of demonstrating faith. And from the examples of Jesus and Paul, chaplains recognize the importance of respecting differences in culture and religion, always providing opportunities for people to choose their own paths.

Compassion and respect for the people is critical. A chaplain also must understand the prevailing philosophies that dominate Western thought while remaining

grounded in her or his faith and belief. This combination enables the chaplain to draw from the culture, illustrations of his or her religious convictions.²⁶³

Paul listened to and shared in the Athenian culture, but he did so without compromising his faith. He identified with the people’s search for God and was familiar with their culture, poetry, literature, philosophies and beliefs. His approach was as a fellow sojourner relating to their struggle for meaning in life. On this common ground, Paul built his case for the God of the Bible, revealing they had been worshipping the wrong god. In overlooking the true God, Paul called for a change in direction and belief in Jesus.²⁶⁴

Paul’s context for his speech to the Areopagus was an audience who held views gathered from competing philosophies. Believers in the twenty-first century are not the first Christians to face the challenge of pluralism. Paul spoke to a world content to worship many different gods.²⁶⁵

Christian hockey chaplains share the same message preached by the apostles and others throughout the Book of Acts. Paul’s preaching in Athens shows us how, as Christ’s ambassador, Paul was able to make inroads into the culture of his day. There are valuable lessons to be learned from Paul’s approach in communicating the gospel to a pluralistic world.²⁶⁶

**Hockey Chaplains – Living Kingdom Life in the Hockey World**

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from

²⁶³. Ibid., 176.
being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

(John 18:36-37)

There are those within the hockey world who have a negative presupposition toward Christianity. An offer of a chaplain can be met with suspicion and distrust. Critical to establishing a presence in the arena is the chaplain’s commitment to an authentic, living faith, on display in the arena. This dedication to making God’s invisible kingdom visible through word and deed is paramount to the ministry of a hockey chaplain.

A dominant theme in the teachings of Jesus is the kingdom of God. The terms “kingdom of God” and “kingdom of heaven” (the two operate interchangeably) are mentioned 117 times in the four Gospels and 32 times from Acts to Revelation. 267 It is important to trace the kingdom of God back to the days of the Old Testament. God made an oath, a Kingdom covenant with David and his descendants. There would be a “house,” a dwelling place, a temple placed at the center of the community where his people would gather to worship him. At the same time, David would have a “house,” a line of descendants who would reign forever (2 Sam. 7:10 – 16; Ps. 89:19 – 37; 132:1 – 18). The merging of these two “houses” established the reality of God’s kingdom on earth. 268 The Old Testament prophets foretold of this kingdom, a kingdom ruled by one comparable to the first Adam (“one like the Son of Man”), and an everlasting kingdom that would never

be destroyed.\textsuperscript{269} In the Old Testament, God announced that he would establish his kingship (his sovereignty, Dan. 4: 34-35) by setting up his kingdom (his rule and reign over his people) under his chosen king (the Davidic Messiah, Isa. 9:6-7).\textsuperscript{270} For Matthew, Jesus is the true King. In his genealogy Matthew presents Jesus as the real King of the Jews (in contrast with Herod) tracing his royal ancestry. The disciples look forward to Jesus’ “kingdom” (Matt. 20:21) and in 21:4 – 5, Matthew sees Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem as the fulfillment of Zachariah’s prophecy of the coming of “your king”.\textsuperscript{271} Many of Jesus’ followers were convinced that this kingdom Jesus referred to constantly would be an earthly empire which he would establish. The people of Israel were all too familiar with Roman occupation and rule. They longed for a Saviour, a Messiah who would set them free from foreign domination.\textsuperscript{272} Little did they realize this kingdom would first be established in the hearts of people.

What is the kingdom of God (or kingdom of heaven)? “That Kingdom is the rule or reign of God, the expression of His gracious sovereign will. To belong to the Kingdom of God, then, is to belong to the people among whom the reign of God has already begun.”\textsuperscript{273} The Christian message announces that “God’s future has come in Jesus.” The

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{269} Ibid., 441.
\item \textsuperscript{272} W. Phillip Keller, \textit{A Layman Looks at the Lord's Prayer} (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1976), 59.
\item \textsuperscript{273} Sinclair B. Ferguson, \textit{Kingdom Life in a Fallen World: Living Out the Sermon on the Mount} (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1986), 17.
\end{itemize}
kingdom of God has come! This kingdom is unlike any other kingdom that was ever established in this world. It is an “other-worldly kingdom” (John 18:36).

When Jesus declared in Matthew 4:17, “the kingdom of heaven has come near,” he was not referring to a time reality, but rather a nearness with regard to space. “And the Word became flesh and lived (ἐσκήνωσεν or tabernacled) among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14). The reference “has come near” (ἤγγικεν), introduces a situation which is already beginning and which requires an immediate response. Jesus could declare that the kingdom was near because he was (and is) the king in this kingdom and where he reigned (and reigns) the kingdom of God is present. This day was no longer a future hope; it was now.

Repentance means more than a feeling of being sorry or changing one’s mind – it needs to be understood in the context of the Old Testament prophets who constantly called the people of Israel to return to God, to abandon their rebelliousness and turn back in obedience. A radical conversion is required in light of the coming of the kingdom.

This kingdom was inaugurated with Jesus the Messiah, who establishes his Lordship through those who come to him in repentance, faith and obedience. Jesus healed, restored and raised the dead revealing that with the arrival of God’s kingdom came restoration, healing, cleansing and forgiveness. This was God reversing the curse of death and disease. The inauguration of the kingdom through Jesus began the “great

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The kingdom of God has both a present (and developing) as well as the future dimension. It is often referred to as the “now and not yet.” How can this kingdom already be here and yet still in the future? That is one of the paradoxes of Scripture. It is here in one sense but in another, it is still to come. The continuation of the kingdom is the current age. “The already and the not yet,” is a time where God’s kingdom is present in true form but not here in full form. The consummation will take place at the end of the age when Christ returns. “The world has now become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 15:11b). The promise is that Jesus will return one day and put all things right. J. I. Packer describes what it will be like:

So the life of heavenly glory is a compound of seeing God in and through Christ and being loved by the Father and the Son, of rest and work, of praise and worship, and of fellowship with the Lamb and the saints. Nor will it end. Its eternity is part of its glory; and endlessness, one might say, is the glory of glory. Hearts on earth say in the course of a joyful experience, “I don’t want this ever to end.” But it invariably does. The hearts of those in heaven sake, “I want this to go on forever.” And it will.

The Heart of the Kingdom

Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, “The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.” (Luke 17:20-21)

283. Ferguson, Kingdom Life in a Fallen World, 22.
284. Pratt, He Gave Us Stories, 353.
In response to the Pharisees’ question about the coming of the kingdom, Jesus made it clear where this kingdom could be found. It would not be found in a geographical location or in a particular nation.\(^{286}\) When he taught his disciples to pray “your kingdom come,” Jesus spoke of his own future kingdom on earth but also of his kingdom established in human hearts by the Holy Spirit at regeneration. The King of Kings would occupy a person’s mind and will so that his authority would be evident in every aspect of her or his life.\(^{287}\) Kingdom life is the surrender of one’s life to the reign and rule of God.\(^{288}\) Kingdom life is based on what the Bible teaches as to how life was meant to be lived. In the kingdom of God what one believes and how one lives are interconnected.\(^{289}\) Christianity must be real. It is not a temporary, outward appearance facade, but rather it is to be an inward reality, solid, living and lasting.\(^{290}\) Kingdom life must be embraced by hockey chaplains.

**Kingdom Living**

Unlike the manner in which the kingdoms of this world are often established through force, God establishes his kingdom through a path of self-denial, sacrifice, and service.\(^{291}\) C. S. Lewis held the view that Christians who “did the most for the present world were precisely those who thought the most of the next.” Chaplains are to remember that they too are citizens in the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of this world.\(^{292}\) As citizens of God’s kingdom, chaplains are given the responsibility of making the invisible kingdom visible through living kingdom life.\(^{293}\) According to R. T. France, the Sermon

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288. Ibid., 62.
on the Mount is a collection of Jesus’ teachings dealing with the character and duties of being a citizen of God’s kingdom. “It is a manifesto setting out the nature of life in the kingdom of heaven.”

The sermon presents the radical demand of Jesus on those who respond to his preaching of God’s kingdom.

Kingdom life, according to Jesus, is not lived in compartments such as private and public. Kingdom life affects every aspect of a person’s life. John Stott, in his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount writes, “there is no single paragraph of the Sermon on the Mount in which this contrast between Christian and non-Christian standards is not drawn. It is the underlying and uniting theme of the sermon; everything else is a variation of it.”

The Sermon on the Mount presents a detailed look at kingdom life. The kingdom of God was central to Jesus’ teaching prescribing living kingdom life here and now.

Jesus taught that citizens of his kingdom are the light of the world and that even if they wanted to they could not remain hidden. The property of light is to shine. This light shines in the darkness and reveals what is there. Living kingdom life acts as a light for others to see.

Jesus did not call himself “the salt of the earth,” but used this expression for his disciples whom Jesus entrusted to do his work on earth. Jesus did not say, “you must be salt.” It is not left up to the disciples to decide whether they would be salt, they have been made salt by the call. Those who respond to the call of Christ become the salt of the earth in their total existence.

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295. Ibid., 107.
299. Ibid., 116.
earth.“Salt does not exist for itself, nor do the disciples; their life is turned outward to the
world.” Often when one considers the teachings of Jesus and how far short a person
falls, one may be left with guilt and despair. That is not the purpose. What is intended is
the creation of a vision of what Jesus intends for our lives. Jesus was not primarily
seeking to show a better way to live. Rather, he revealed what a human life looks like
when one submits to the reign and rule of God. Leon Morris in his commentary on Luke
states, “Eternal life means life that is proper to the age to come. It denotes the life that
will never end, but, in the Christian understanding of it, the more important thing is that it
is life of a particular quality, that life that is the gift of God.” Jesus teaching will only
change a person when they submit to his reign over their lives. J.I. Packer writes, “The
repentance that Christ requires of His people consists in a settled refusal to set any limit
to the claims which He may make on their lives.” The apostle Peter points out that
Christians don’t really belong to the kingdom of the world but are in fact “strangers
(aliens) in the world” (1 Pet. 1:1). Kingdom life always has our position as sons and
daughters adopted into God’s family in view. As a result his children seek to please their
Heavenly Father.

Kingdom Life on Display – Connecting with Others

Through faith in Jesus a person enters the kingdom of God. But we also live in
“the kingdom of the world” (Rev. 11:15), although we are citizens of another kingdom.

301. Ibid., 22.
303. Ferguson, Kingdom Life in a Fallen World, 58.
304. J.I. Packer, Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God (Downers Grove: InterVarsity
305. Ferguson, Kingdom Life in a Fallen World, 24.
This kingdom life is to be lived out in the context of this present age.⁴⁰⁷ Kingdom citizens are to live in a manner that points to another world and yet at the same time connects them with this world.⁴⁰⁸ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matt. 5:14). God calls his people, his citizens, to go out and shine in the darkness. This shining is to take place in prominent places so that those in darkness may see it.⁴⁰⁹ Jesus prayed, “I do not ask that you take them out of the world…” (John 17:15a). In Luke 10, Jesus appoints seventy-two of his followers to go out into communities to live with and engage people. In verse 9, Jesus instructs those he appointed to minister to the sick and to tell them “the kingdom of God has come near to you.” The kingdom of God becomes evident through his followers “who represent the extension of the ministry of Jesus himself.”⁴¹⁰

God has placed the citizens of this kingdom in an often hostile world, to be salt and light. Salt flavours the food with which it comes in contact; it also has a preserving quality. Light displaces darkness and gloom. God’s people go out to “spread a savour and disseminate a light in the world.”⁴¹¹ Salt also creates thirst. The Bible reveals all human beings are created in the image of God and possess a God-consciousness (Rom. 1:18-25). There is a sense of a greater need, a thirst, but people are unable to identify how and where that thirst can be quenched. Augustine (A.D. 354-430) recognized this universal

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³⁰⁷. Ibid., 23.
³⁰⁹. Ibid., 33.
thirst, “thou hast created us for thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.”

When Jesus’ disciples were instructed to pray, “your kingdom come,” they were petitioning the Lord to reign and rule in their hearts and, also, that they would reflect the Lord to others. Hockey chaplains are called to extend the kingdom of God as they move out into the everyday and the ordinary of life, reflecting Christ to those they encounter in everyday experiences, empowered by the Holy Spirit to love and connect with others. Some have argued that to reach people in the world they must become like the world, to “be like everyone else.” So they seek to look, talk, sound and act like the world. By doing so they communicate that the world’s kingdom is no different or even far better than God’s kingdom. D. L. Moody pointed out the need to go into the world but also raised the warning to the dangers of embracing the ways of the world. “The place for a ship is in the sea. But God help the ship if the sea gets into it.”

Concluding Thoughts on Kingdom Life

The kingdom brings a change of status. The kingdom of God supplants other kingdoms, calling Jew and Gentile, even those living on the fringes, into a new community centered on Jesus. Kingdom citizens enjoy victory over the power of sin in their lives. “Ultimately, it means entering God’s dominion and experiencing the blessing

316. Ibid., 28.
of eternal life in his presence.”

Jesus instruction to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness…” (Matt. 6:33) is really addressing a person’s priorities. What occupies first place in one’s thoughts, affections, time and energy? The kingdom of God does not point to a specific situation or event, but rather it speaks of “God in control.” Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is extended in the hearts of people. The reality of kingdom life is the impossibility for human beings to live it. The impossible life remains until a person acknowledges that he/she cannot live it and asks Christ to live it in him/her. An increased awareness of God’s presence in a person will profoundly impact one’s outlook, attitudes and activities. It becomes a privilege and pleasure to do God’s bidding.

Light reveals what was hidden by darkness but it also illuminates the way out of darkness by pointing to the source of light, which is Christ. The apostle Paul encourages citizens in the kingdom of God, “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Cor. 10:31). The hockey world desperately needs kingdom life on display so that hockey players will know where to turn when their kingdom collapses.

318. Chantry, God’s righteous Kingdom, 15.
319. France, Matthew, 45.
320. Chantry, God’s righteous Kingdom, 38.
322. Keller, A Layman Looks at the Lord's Prayer, 64.
Chapter 3

Research Methodology and Survey Results

A critical component to any thesis is the compiling and analysing of data. Assertions must be supported by data.\footnote{323}{Tim Sensing, \textit{Qualitative Research} (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 79.} This data must then be interpreted to deduce a valid conclusion. The core of an argument must be developed through reason and based on the evidence.\footnote{324}{Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, \textit{The Craft of Research} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 151.}

The research for this study utilized a qualitative method involving a survey – a hockey chaplain response questionnaire. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B. Hockey Ministries International (HMI) directs the activities of Christian hockey chaplains in leagues across North America. Feedback was sought from thirteen Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL) hockey chaplains, located in Quebec and the Maritimes, seeking insight into their role and experiences. At the time of this study, there are thirteen chaplains involved with twelve teams in the 18-team QMJHL. One team has a co-chaplain arrangement and five teams have declined the services of a hockey chaplain.

On September 22, 2015 an email was sent to the thirteen QMJHL chaplains requesting their participation in this research (see Appendix A). The names and email addresses were compiled by the author in his role as chaplain co-ordinator responsible for the QMJHL. These chaplains had been previously contacted by telephone and in person regarding the survey. All had agreed to participate in the study. The author assured the participants of complete anonymity and took steps in the procedures to ensure this was the case. The chaplains were instructed to create a pseudonymous email address using a
They were instructed to choose pseudonyms that would protect their identity (so, for example, not ‘mooseheadschaplain@gmail.com’). The suggestion was given to use a long number or alphanumeric combination that was meaningful to them. They were to reply by email to the author using the pseudonym. The survey was emailed back to the chaplains with instructions for them to complete; the completed surveys were then returned to the author using their pseudonymous account. If there was a need for real-time, follow-up interaction, then a text-only ‘chat’ session could be set up with them as a pseudonymous respondent. Each respondent was given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Twelve of the thirteen surveys had been returned by October 28, 2015.

The questions on the survey were created to explore a variety of areas concerning the role of hockey chaplains involved with teams in the QMJHL. What motivates these chaplains to serve their respective teams? How do they see their role and what do their responsibilities entail? Where do they find their greatest fulfillment and what are the sources of frustration in their role as a hockey chaplain? Chaplains were asked to identify areas within the hockey organization where they had experienced support or opposition. Chaplains were asked to do a self-assessment regarding their strengths and weaknesses in serving as hockey chaplains. They also identified areas where further training and equipping might assist them in their role as hockey chaplains. Finally the survey provided an opportunity for the participants to share from personal experience the highs and the lows of hockey chaplaincy.

The purpose of the survey was to gather data from QMJHL hockey chaplains to better understand their roles and responsibilities on their respective teams. The data would also identify areas where these chaplains had needs in their respective ministries,
with the goal of understanding how HMI might provide greater support. Based on this feedback, a formal training program will be developed to provide more comprehensive training for these hockey chaplains.

Upon the return of the twelve completed surveys the researcher categorized the responses according to each applicable question and then summarized the chaplains’ responses to the survey questions. In the following sections the responses will be explored, analysed and interpreted.

Survey Results

The survey provided an opportunity for direct feedback from twelve QMJHL chaplains, drawing from their experiences and observations. This insightful data has revealed key areas, identified by these chaplains, as needing additional support and training. Their responses also share the life stories and examples of what hockey chaplaincy looks like across the QMJHL. Where necessary, pseudonyms have been chosen to protect the identities of chaplains, players, trainers, other team personnel and coaches. Quotes from players have been copied as written, capturing their grammar, punctuation, and spelling; for ease of reading, direct quotations are in italics.

What Motivates a Hockey Chaplain?

The majority of respondents view their hockey chaplain role as a “calling from God” and point to this as their primary motivator in serving in this capacity. 53% of the chaplains ranked this as their number one motivation for serving in this capacity. The chaplains surveyed also recognize they have been provided a unique opportunity as hockey chaplains to minister to the needs of hockey teams. 50% of the respondents scored this motivator as their second and third highest reason, simply identifying the opportunity this role provides as a way to serve God.
Half of the chaplains across the QMJHL come from pastoral ministries in local churches. This may explain why many point to a pastoral heart as a prime mover in responding to the role of becoming a hockey chaplain. The team in effect becomes their “flock” with the chaplain operating as a pastor to hockey players.

It was interesting to note that the majority of hockey chaplains were not motivated by the combination of a love for hockey and ministry. 58% (7 of 12) considered it the least important reason in motivating them to serve as a hockey chaplain. This non-motivator negates the criticism that chaplains are in fact simply hockey fans desiring to hang out with hockey players. Many of these chaplains do not come from hockey backgrounds but simply have entered into the role in response to a need that was presented to them, that they linked to a “call by God” to serve him in this way. The primary desire of hockey chaplains is to minister to young people who happen to be hockey players.

**How do you View your Role?**

While leading a chapel service with members of the hockey team has been a major responsibility of hockey chaplains, 75% of those surveyed (9 of the 12) perceive a greater role in representing Christ in the arena. These chaplains look beyond simply conducting chapel meetings. They see the broader role of reflecting God’s love through their conduct and behavior in their interaction with team members. These chaplains make themselves available to their team to serve in whatever capacity is presented. Their is the holistic ministry of communicating the gospel through word and deed.

A team will reach out to chaplains in times of crisis and grief. Chaplain Brady reports being called on by the team’s president to meet with the entire team following a player’s serious, life-threatening, on-ice injury. The chaplain led the team in a prayer for
the injured player and remained to speak with a number of others who were shaken following the incident. Later the chaplain spent time with the injured player during his recovery.

Another chaplain shared of how the team requested his presence in support of the players at the funeral of a player’s mother.

Chaplain Lawrence was called by the coach of his team following the tragic, on-ice death of a player who was attending the team’s training camp. His presence and his support of individual players in providing comfort was greatly appreciated by the organization, as shared by the chaplain.

A chaplain recorded an instance where a quiet side conversation with a staff member about personal family and professional situations – person opened up and shared and welcomed prayer and support.

**What are your Responsibilities?**

A variety of roles and responsibilities were highlighted by the chaplains and varied from team to team. All the hockey chaplains, with the exception of one, lead team chapels. This activity is seen as their primary role. However, a significant number (83%, 10 of 12) list praying for the team on a regular basis as another essential role in ministering to their hockey team. Pastoral care, providing encouragement, supporting the team at games and practices, praying at special events and spiritual mentoring were also included in the roles identified by chaplains. The breadth of responsibilities identified by those surveyed point to a holistic role, encompassing making oneself available to serve the needs of others.
Where do you find your Greatest Fulfillment?

Chaplains expressed their fulfillment in two key areas: the leading of chapel services and discovering opportunities to engage one-on-one with members of the team to support and encourage them. The responses revealed both a corporate and an individual component to the ministry of a hockey chaplain.

A chaplain shared his regular practice of taking a player out for a meal or coffee just to get to know the individual and build friendship, drawing a great sense of satisfaction from growing relationships. Other chaplains have invited the team to their home for a Chinese food night. Chaplains also see the value of group gatherings to explore the Bible with hockey people and communicate the good news of Jesus Christ. They also experience the blessing of drawing alongside an individual who is in need with comfort and encouragement.

Chaplains find fulfillment when, from time to time, they are reminded that their efforts are meaningful and appreciated by those they serve. Chaplain Brady received this endorsement from a player,

*As hockey player, we usually only think about hockey and it is not always a good thing! Life is all about balance and for me the chapels have given me this balance. Just for 30 minutes of your week to talk about life is nothing for the good it does to you. Chaplain Brady is always available when you need to talk and will help you get through whatever the situation is. I am lucky to have met chaplain Brady.*

Another chaplain received this note from a player who had been traded away from his team.

*Hey Chaplain*

*I am playing hockey in the OHL for the Mississauga Steelheads now. Things are going well here and I am enjoying the change of scenery. I actually attended my first chapel here yesterday, the guy who ran it knows Bruce Smith well but said he hasn’t met you before.*
I am sure it was a little different to not have me at chapel! I don't think I have missed one for the last few years. I am sure that there was a good crowd today though.

Is everything going well for you back with the team?

Keep in touch,
John

Junior hockey players are notorious for not staying in contact once they have left a team. This note is a subtle reminder of how much some players appreciate the services of a chaplain.

hey how is everything. sorry i havent been in contact earlier ive been extremly busy and didnt have a cell phone for over a month. there is no chapel program here. thanks for everything.
thanks aaron

In what areas do you experience the greatest frustration?

The chaplains admit to the struggle of connecting with individual players and coaches. A hockey team is a very structured unit with clearly defined roles. The introduction of hockey chaplains in the QMJHL only began in 2006, so the concept remains a relatively recent addition. Finding opportunities to engage with team members is a challenge, as so much of their day is structured around the sport and the discipline of practice days and game days. Another area of frustration for hockey chaplains lies in juggling their own multiple responsibilities with the time demands and constraints placed upon them. 50% of the respondents acknowledged this as a challenge with one chaplain stating, this is my own problem because I find it hard to say “no.” Half of the QMJHL chaplains are pastors of local congregations who carry a significant load of responsibility that at times conflicts with their responsibilities as a hockey chaplain. A chaplain stated, As a pastor and with many responsibilities with our own presbyter and synod, I feel as if sometimes I am barely keeping my head above water.
Where have you experienced Opposition and Support?

A wide range of sources of support and opposition were identified.

83% (10 of 12) of the chaplains reported that they have the support from coaches (opposition from this area would effectively suspend a chaplain from performing any hands-on role with the team). Some of the chaplains have been called upon by their coach to connect with a player going through difficult times. One chaplain was asked by the coach to take a player, who wanted to quit the team, for coffee. The chaplain listened to the player’s situation, the frustrations and issues he raised. The player was able to work through the problem with the support of the chaplain and remained with the team for the rest of the season.

Another chaplain was called by his coach following a car accident involving one of the players and arranged for them to connect. The chaplain was there as a resource and support during the initial hours, and followed up in his recovery.

One chaplain reported some opposition from the coach with another chaplain currently facing full opposition from the coach, requiring the work of helping players to take place away from the arena.

Chaplains must gain the support of players by first building a relationship with the team to earn their trust and respect. There is no shortcut to gaining a player’s trust. The majority of the chaplains (75%) are able to regularly attend games and practices, to begin the process of trust building by simply showing an interest through presence. It is through the everyday encounters and also the intentional efforts to connect with individuals (each player receives a Christmas card with a personal note from the chaplain) where a player’s support of the chaplain is established.
Billet families play a key role in the life of junior hockey players. These families, appointed by the team, become a surrogate family for players away from their own homes. One chaplain shared this endorsement from the team billet co-ordinator:

_We had one particular player who wasn’t getting a lot of ice time and getting very discouraged. I had a discussion with chaplain Bob on how to help my player. In having this talk with him it also allowed Bob to keep an eye on the player and be available if he chose to open up to him. This player was not a religious player at all and I remember him being hesitant to attend chapel and I encouraged him to at least attend one and if he didn’t like it he didn’t have to go back. Well he ended up attending all chapels after that. The boys soon realize that he isn’t just there to talk about religious topics but he tells stories that the boys can relate to hockey which would also talk about self-esteem, respect, being a team player, etc. In my eyes he is a key person to the entire team. He makes himself available for whoever needs someone to talk to whether it’s a player, a billet or even a coach._

It is encouraging to note the wide range of support some chaplains receive from team ownership, the general manager, front office staff, billet families, coaches, players and trainers.

**What training and equipping have you received for being a hockey chaplain?**

A hockey chaplain’s background is basically broken into two categories; clergy and laity. Those from professional clergy have seminary training while those from laity have a strong Christian testimony which is confirmed through reference and background checks during the application process. Pastors have training and experience in public speaking and message preparation which prepare them well for their responsibility of leading chapel meetings with hockey teams. Those who come from laity have no formal training in these areas yet have some natural ability to organize and deliver a message to an audience evidenced by the league co-ordinator or corroborated through supporting references.
In what areas could HMI support hockey chaplains?

The vast majority of chaplains (92%) identified the area of message preparation for the chapel meetings as a significant area where help was needed or appreciated. The content, emphasis, and relevancy of the messages are a concern for the chaplains as discussed at a recent QMJHL chaplain’s conference.

Assistance in counseling situations on their teams is also an area where chaplains felt additional training would be beneficial with 92% of the chaplains surveyed indicating they had a need for some or much training in this area.

The development of listening skills, was identified by 83% of the chaplains, as a skill in which they had received little or no training and would appreciate additional support in this area.

A key area involved the chaplain’s spiritual growth - the respondents expressed a desire to be supported in this area of their lives with 92% of the chaplains indicating an appreciation for support. One chaplain pointed out that it was impossible to adequately minister to the needs of others when one’s own spiritual tank was empty.

It is important that hockey chaplains understand the culture of hockey to better minister to the needs of those involved in the sport. Over half the chaplains in the QMJHL do not come from a hockey background. 7 of the 12 chaplains surveyed indicated their need to better understand the hockey culture - to be familiarised with the norms, customs and mindset of hockey players. Being more fully aware of the cultural context of hockey has been identified as a need hockey chaplains have to make them more effective as hockey chaplains.
What experiences have you had where you encountered opposition?

Chaplains describe various forms of opposition, mostly in a subtle and passive way. Scheduling changes, breakdown in communications, no returning of phone calls and forgotten arrangements top the list of adversity and opposition. In some respects these circumstances can hardly be seen as opposition but rather reflect the lack of priority placed upon the chaplain’s ministry by coaches and general managers.

One chaplain described direct opposition voiced by one of the assistant coaches towards his work leading chapels; the criticism focused on the content which the coach felt was too overtly “religious.” Interestingly, in this case the players’ voluntary attendance remained strong and stable, indicating their support of what was being presented.

Another chaplain shared, *I had a coach tell me I was not a coach, and that I need to know my role and I need to stay out of his way! He failed to understand the role but in time it became clearer. He even welcomed a Bible.*

A chaplain told of how one of the assistant coaches would mock him calling him, “Jesus.” This went on for a number of months until one day a player on the team confronted this coach and said, “His name is Donald, you should use his name.” The mocking stopped.

Sadly, one of the chaplains revealed that opposition comes from within his home church.

What experiences have you had where you have clearly seen God at work?

Chaplains report an incredible array of stories that reflect God at work in the lives of coaches, trainers, players, players’ families and fans. Players have expressed their appreciation for the chapel meetings, for the one-on-one time with chaplains, for prayer
and for the gift of a Bible. A former player provided this endorsement: *In a pressure packed environment that is competitive hockey, chapel is a place where anyone can escape to talk about various aspects of life on and off the ice.*

A player sent this text following his attendance at a chapel service. *Hey, my names Joe Smith (pseudonym) I play for the Charlottetown Islanders and was at your service today I just want to say I really got something from it and I will definitely be back to listen!*

A former QMJHL player sent this note of endorsement.

_During my years in Major Junior, chapel was something that I attended regularly. Taking the time each week to read and discuss scripture was very important to me. It granted me strength to deal with adversity, and reminded me that there is more to life than a game. On top of that, our team chaplain became one of my closest friends, and I still cherish that relationship to this day._

Another player writes:

_The reason why I support having chapels and chaplains in hockey is because it educates hockey players about religion but even more importantly about becoming better people. The bible has many stories to tell and one of the themes to many of these stories are teaching us how to treat our neighbor and everyone around us. Hockey players in the Pro and major Junior levels are looked up to by many younger athletes and are role models to some. To get these “role models” to educate themselves on being a better person has a huge impact on a community. I am thankful to have had chapel service while playing hockey and appreciate everything chaplain Brady has taught me._

Parents of players have shared their gratitude to chaplains for the support provided to a son who is away from home and in a new environment. These parents recognize that chaplains are a resource for their child, providing encouragement and a safe place for players to confide and discuss their anxieties and struggles.

Support from coaches include inviting the chaplain to attend team meetings, calling upon the chaplain to be available to the players in times of stress and worry for an injured teammate, and free access to engage with members of the team. Coaches have
confided in chaplains, sharing some of their own struggles and challenges they face coaching in the QMJHL. Some years ago, in conversation with a coach, I expressed appreciation for his support of our chaplain and the chapel services. When I mentioned the players benefitting from the service the coach responded, “It’s not just good for the players, it’s good for me!” Other staff have sought out the chaplain to engage in conversation involving personal, family and professional situations.

Some chaplains noted that team permission for them to have a presence at the arena was in itself a sign of God at work. Chaplains marvel at the popularity of the chapels they conduct amongst the players, as so few have any Christian background. As an example of the attendance across the league in a one week period in November, 2015 chaplains reported players attending, Cape Breton Screaming Eagles – 10; Halifax Mooseheads – 15; Moncton Wildcats – 19; Acadie-Bathurst Titan – 22; Saint John Sea Dogs – 9; and the Gatineau Olympiques – 13.

One chaplain reported that an introductory chapel presentation made to the team went poorly yet resulted in strong player attendance at the first chapel meeting.

Chaplains spoke of the response to their chapel meetings where players ask questions indicating a desire to grow deeper in their knowledge of the Christian faith. The requests for Bibles by individuals on their respective teams has also been a great source of encouragement to chaplains. Players have told chaplains of taking them on road trips to read on the bus. Recently I was at a QMJHL game where I met up with a NHL scout who formerly coached in the QMJHL. We chatted about a number of things but as we departed he said to me, “I still have that Bible you gave me. I take it with me wherever I go.” It has now become my prayer that this man would begin reading and discover the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.
Chaplains report seeing teenage hockey players reconnecting with their faith through their ministry, going on to actively participate in the life of their home churches. Chaplain Lawrence received this email from a player at the end of the hockey season.

Lawrence,

You might remember me from the chapel sessions you did this year. Just wanted to write a quick note to thank you for further introducing me to the church and God.

Your chapel sessions really inspired me to further develop my relationship with God. I've been a regular church attendee this summer and really enjoying the whole experience.

Hope you're having a good summer, and I hope to see you back with the team next year!

John Brown
#45 Team Name

Players have also expressed their appreciation to explore life in the context of a hockey chapel. A player writes:

Being an atheist, I admit that I was hesitant at first to join the program and it took me a few months before I decided to attend my first chapel. I was immediately pleased with the dynamics of the meeting, the discussions, the life stories shared, and the lessons learned from real life experiences. For me, it was the human aspect of sharing and the relationships developed with that I appreciated the most. In the end, whatever religious or spiritual beliefs one might have, the messages and the values emphasized during the meetings are values that I believe should be fundamentally anchored into everyone's life.

The chaplain hopes that through this experience this player will one day embrace the message of the gospel.

The results of the survey illustrate the various ministry opportunities provided through being a hockey chaplain. They also communicate the heart of chaplains and their desire to help and support those involved on their respective hockey teams. What is also captured is the need to deepen and broaden the training of hockey chaplains to even better equip them for service.
Chapter 4

Being a Hockey Chaplain

Hockey Chaplains – Be in Prayer

The twelve disciples had the incredible privilege of daily following Jesus, of listening to His words and witnessing His miraculous power. There were plenty of opportunities to ask him questions. They could have asked Him to teach them how to walk on water or change water into wine or raise people from the dead. But these were not the burning question of their hearts. Instead, Luke records in his Gospel that the disciples came to Jesus with this request, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1b).\(^{325}\) It was in some ways a surprising request, since as Jews they would be very familiar with prayer, all kinds of prayers for many occasions. But the disciples saw something in Jesus’ prayer life that they wanted.\(^{326}\) This appeal acknowledged that the disciples saw that they had a need to learn more about prayer. They recognized that something was missing in their prayer life and that they had something to learn on the subject from Jesus. The fact that this question was asked by the disciples over the many others that could have been asked reveals their recognition of the vitality of prayer as followers of Jesus.

Connecting with God through prayer is one of the foundational spiritual disciplines. The fact that the disciples elevated the issue of prayer as a primary focus of their need should heighten our emphasis on an active, dynamic prayer life.


Oh Lord,

In prayer I launch far out into the eternal world, and on that broad ocean my soul triumphs over all evils on the shores of mortality. Time, with its gay amusements and cruel disappointments, never appears so inconsiderate as then.
In prayer I see myself as nothing; I find my heart going after thee with intensity, and long with vehement thirst to live to thee. Blessed be the strong gales of the spirit that speed me on my way to the New Jerusalem. In prayer all things here below vanish, and nothing seems important but holiness of heart and the salvation of others.
In prayer all my worldly cares, fears, anxieties disappear, and are of as little significance as a puff of wind.
In prayer my soul inwardly exults with lively thoughts at what thou art doing for thy church, and I long that thou shouldest get thyself a great name from sinners returning to Zion.
In prayer I am lifted above the frowns and flatteries of life, and taste heavenly joys; entering into the eternal world I can give myself to thee with all my heart, to be thine forever.
In prayer I can place all my concerns in thy hands, to be entirely at thy disposal, having no will or interest of my own.
In prayer I can intercede for my friends, ministers, sinners, the church, thy Kingdom to come, with greatest freedom, ardent hopes, as a son to his father, as a lover to the beloved.
Help me to be all prayer and never to cease praying.

-Puritan prayer

What is Prayer?

The prayer preceding all prayers is “May it be the real I who speaks. May it be the real Thou that I speak to.”

— C.S. Lewis

A person needs to keep in mind that prayer is conversation with God. Prayer is fellowship with God. He speaks through the contents of the Bible and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Prayer provides the Avenue where a person can speak back to God about

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Himself, ourselves, and others in the world. It is a unique form of communication.\textsuperscript{330} Oswald Chambers in his book, “My Utmost for His Highest”, notes, “Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life.” It is to be as natural to the Christian as breathing and blood circulation is to the human body. The apostle Paul captures this understanding in his exhortation to “pray without ceasing.” (1 Thess. 5:17).\textsuperscript{331} God calls his children to be people of prayer. It is to be a natural and consistent pattern in a person’s life.\textsuperscript{332} “Prayer is fitting at any time, in any posture, in any place, under any circumstance, and in any attire. It is to be a total way of life – an open and continual communion with God.”\textsuperscript{333}

The purpose of prayer “is to lift and direct our minds to God so that we desire his glory, confess his praise and ask him for help in time of need.”\textsuperscript{334} Prayer is an avenue to peace and contentment. This world is filled with heartache, struggles, trials and disappointments. The best response is found in bringing the cares and burdens to God in prayer (Phil. 4:6,7). The only way to true happiness is found in casting our cares on God. Prayer can lighten the load. Prayer can bring comfort and peace in the midst of the storms of life.\textsuperscript{335} Prayer is personal and private, found in a person’s heart and mind, requiring a calm and unencumbered freedom from the anxiety and worry of life. Jesus would often withdraw from people in order to give himself fully to prayer.\textsuperscript{336} In prayer a person empties out any thought of self-worth or confidence in themselves and approaches God in humility taking no credit for their own achievements.\textsuperscript{337}

\textsuperscript{330} Packer, \textit{Concise Theology}, 187.  
\textsuperscript{331} Oswald Chambers, \textit{My Utmost for His Highest} (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour and Company, 1988), 106.  
\textsuperscript{332} James Montgomery Boice, \textit{Ephesians} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 262.  
\textsuperscript{334} Calvin, \textit{Institutes}, 536.  
\textsuperscript{336} Calvin, \textit{Institutes}, 537.  
\textsuperscript{337} Ibid., 521.
The Essential Role of Prayer

Prayer is essential in the Christian life. There are other important aspects but none are as important as private prayer. The discipline of prayer does not come easy to an individual. Oswald Chambers writes: It is not part of the life of a natural man to pray. We hear it said that a man will suffer in his life if he does not pray; I question it. What will suffer is the life of the Son of God in him, which is nourished not by food, but by prayer. When a man is born from above, the life of the Son of God is born in him, and he can either starve that life or nourish it. Prayer is the way the life of God is nourished. Our ordinary views of prayer are not found in the New Testament. We look upon prayer as a means of getting things for ourselves; the Bible idea of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself.

Prayer can often be a neglected part of the Christian life. Prayer is a private matter between an individual and God, seen by no one else, and as a result can be ignored. Prayer is a matter of the heart. It must reach the deepest place in a person’s life. If the heart is not engaged it is not real prayer. Prayer does not come naturally to a person. The natural bent of the human heart is to avoid God.

Maybe the most important purpose of prayer is to expose the true inner self to God’s love.

(God) He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

Psalm 103:10-14

“Nobody has to prove to me that prayer makes a difference,” wrote Henri Nouwen during his time in South America. “Without prayer I become irritable, tired, heavy of heart, and I lose the Spirit who directs my attention to the needs of others.”

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instead of my own. Without prayer, my attention moves to my own preoccupation. I become cranky and spiteful and often I experience resentment and a desire for revenge. Without this one hour a day for God, my life loses its coherency and I started experiencing my days as a series of random incidents and accidents."

The great saints in the history of Christianity emphasized the vital role prayer plays in the life of a Christian. In his classic work, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, John Bunyan writes of “Christian’s” journey through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Here he encounters adversaries, “fiends” who could only be defeated using the weapon of prayer. Calvin writes, in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, “We have seen that all our hope and welfare so depend on God that neither we, nor what is ours nor what touches us, can ever prosper without his blessing. Accordingly we must continually commend to him both ourselves and all that we have.” J. C. Ryle stressed the importance of prayer in the Christian life. An active prayer life would lead to a transformed life in the power of the Holy Spirit. Prayer and sin will not coexist in the human heart. Prayer will overcome sin or sin will overcome prayer. There is a link between a life of holiness and an active prayer life. There are many examples of godly men and women who were also people of prayer. Of course there is no greater example than the Lord Jesus Christ and his life of prayer. If a person wishes to grow in their Christian life they must recognize the importance of private prayer.

The Apostle Paul stressed prayer in his writings to the early church. In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul reveals insightful guidance on the topic of prayer.

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Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Ephesians 6:18-20

Here is a comprehensive description of the Christian in prayer. Prayer is not simply a practice, it is a lifestyle focused on a personal relationship with God. Prayer is a life lived in the presence of God (Coram Deo) in a constant creation–Creator fellowship. Although not included in the foregoing list of spiritual armor the Christian recognizes the vital role prayer plays in the Christian struggle. The Greek word, “praying” (προσευχόμενοι) has a participle which can be taken with the previous commands regarding the putting on of the “armor”. In effect Paul was exhorting his readers to put on each piece with prayer. In the hymn, “Stand up, Stand up for Jesus,” George Duffield, the writer penned these words: “put on the gospel armour, each piece put on with prayer; where duty calls, or danger, be never wanting there.” Duffield understood the link between prayer and the Christian’s armour.

Prayer is more than a godly weapon in spiritual warfare. It is the very spiritual air that a Christian is to breathe. Jesus called his followers to always be in prayer and not grow discouraged (Luke 18:1). He knows the struggles of the Christian journey and the vital role prayer plays in overcoming adversity. Praying in the Spirit points out the necessity of relying on the power and strength of the Holy Spirit in the conflicts one faces in life. In prayer the Christian must submit all thoughts and desires to the influence and

347. Boice, Ephesians, 261.
348. MacArthur, Ephesians, 89.
submission to God’s word. In effect prayer presents God’s promises back to him acknowledging his attributes and will.\footnote{Ferguson, \textit{Let's Study Ephesians}, 185–86.}

When should a person be praying? Paul points out “on all occasions” should prompt people to pray. In times of happiness one should pray. In times of discouragement we should pray. Prayer should take place in one’s vocation and on vacation. Prayer should take place with friends and in dealing with enemies. Every situation of life calls for prayer to God.\footnote{Boice, \textit{Ephesians}, 260.} The apostle requested prayer for his ministry in key areas: 1) asking for the right words to be given to him that would be used by God the Holy Spirit to penetrate the hearts of his audiences. 2) Paul asked for boldness in his ministry as he faced opposition, intimidation and persecution.\footnote{Ferguson, \textit{Let's Study Ephesians}, 188.}

The exhortation to present all prayers and supplication is simply an invitation to pray prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. It is done in an attitude of submission and humility, as a subject presenting his or her petitions to the Great King.\footnote{Ibid., 186.}

All kinds of prayers and requests denote that there are many kinds of prayers. The acrostic, ACTS, has been used as a guide that stands for adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplications.

\textbf{Adoration} – It is so appropriate that prayer begins with praise to God. Prayers will simply turn into ritual unless a person fills their minds with the realization of who is being addressed. R. A. Torrey points out that the most important part of prayer is the acknowledgement of a person truly approaching God, entering into his presence and
requesting from him what that person needs.\textsuperscript{353} Being confronted by the glory and greatness of God brings the person to a place of humility. As theologian Daniel Hawk puts it, “the basic human problem is that everyone believes that there is a God and I am it.” Prayer provides the opportunity to re-establish a person’s place before their Creator.\textsuperscript{354}

**Confession** – Confession helps establish the ground rules for creatures with their creator.\textsuperscript{355} Having entered into God’s presence through prayer, it is natural to be reminded of past sinful thoughts, words and deeds that require confession since such matters must be dealt with. Isa. 59:1-2 says, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”\textsuperscript{356} Sin in a person’s life strains their friendship with God. Psalm 32 records David’s relief following his confessed sins.\textsuperscript{357}

**Thanksgiving** – It is often the case that people pray asking for things, but like the nine lepers, often forget to thank God for all that he has done. In thanks, prayer should include gratitude for the forgiveness and cleansing God has provided in response to confession of sin (1 John 1:9)\textsuperscript{358}

**Supplications** – Often this is the only prayer people offer to God but it is still not to be left out in a life of prayer. Jesus gave the example as he taught his disciples to pray, “give us today our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11). In approaching God through prayer, a person

\textsuperscript{353} Boice, *Ephesians*, 261–62.
\textsuperscript{354} Yancey, *Prayer*, 37.
\textsuperscript{355} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{356} Boice, *Ephesians*, 262.
\textsuperscript{358} Boice, 262.
needs to have the confidence that coming to him as he intends and praying according to his will, one will receive what has been requested (1 John 3:21 – 22). 359

Calvin understood prayer consists of two parts: petition and thanksgiving. In petition, a person presents their heart and desire to God, requesting that he be glorified through those things petitioned and that he would provide what is useful and needed. In thanksgiving a person recognizes God’s goodness toward them, thanking him and giving him glory for every blessing. These two elements are captured by David in one verse, speaking in the person of the Lord: “call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.” (Ps. 50:15). 360

The Hockey Chaplain in Prayer

Prayer is essential to the life and ministry of a chaplain. 361 "Unless in the first waking moment of the day you learn to fling the door wide back and let God in, you will work on a wrong level all day; but swing the door wide open and pray to your father in secret, and every public thing will be stamped with the presence of God." 362 The business of ministry may hinder prayer. In such cases it would be better not to do the work than to neglect prayer. Nothing can be done well without prayer simply because it leaves God out of the equation. Satan has overcome those he has kept busy doing with no time to stop and pray. 363 The key to the effective ministry of chaplains is prayer. From a commonsense point of view, prayer is a waste of time. There is work to be done and that must be the priority, not prayer. The chaplain needs to remember that he or she has no special work to do. A Christian is called to belong to Jesus Christ, never to be above the

359. Ibid., 262.
360. Calvin, Institutes, 534.
361. Woodard, Ministry of Presence, 2215.
362. Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest, 173.
Master, and does not dictate to Jesus. “Pray to the Lord of the harvest,” that he will orchestrate the circumstances and send a person out.364 There are 24 hours in a day and every human being is given the same amount of time. The phrase, “wasting time” refers to frivolous or unwise use of time. Time with God in prayer is never wasted. For those who love God there can be no better way to spend time.365

Paul asked specifically for the words to speak and the courage to do so. He was convinced that his ministry would be ineffective without prayer. Paul was well educated and gifted in communication yet he recognized the need to call on God for help and blessing in the choice and use of words to reach others.366 C. H. Spurgeon was asked what the secret to his ministry was. “My people pray for me.”367

The importance of prayer for the hockey chaplain is summarized by E.M. Bounds, “God’s great works are to be done as Christ did them; are to be done, indeed, with increased power received from the ascended and exalted Christ. These works are to be done by prayer. Men must do God’s work in God’s way, and to God’s glory, and prayer is a necessity to its successful accomplishment.”368

**Hockey Chaplains – Be a Listener**

If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

Proverbs 18:13 ESV

Listening intently to another person is one of the greatest ways we can connect with another human being.369 According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God

369. Campolo and Darling, *Connecting Like Jesus*, 64.
begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to
listen to them.\textsuperscript{370} The listener is required to see past the external and recognize that the
individual has been made in the image of God. Listening becomes a sacred moment of
engagement where a person reaches beneath the surface, to the soul of the individual.
“When we listen, we invite someone to share their story – and that’s holy ground. We
honor others’ stories by listening to them and looking for the fingerprints of God in their
story.”\textsuperscript{371} Bonhoeffer writes in his book, \textit{Life Together}, “Christians have forgotten that
the ministry of listening has been committed to them by Him who is Himself the great
listener and whose work they should share. We should listen with the ears of God that we
may speak the word of God.”\textsuperscript{372} A chaplain is called to be a listener most of the time and
a speaker some of the time.\textsuperscript{373}

\textbf{Empathetic Listening}

Empathy [em-puh-thee] noun
\begin{enumerate}
\item the psychological identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings,
thoughts, or attitudes of another.
\item the imaginative ascribing to an object, as a natural object or work of art, feelings or
attitudes present in oneself: By means of empathy, a great painting becomes a mirror of
the self.\textsuperscript{374}
\end{enumerate}

Empathetic listening reaches beyond feeling sorry for the person but actually
involves engaging in personal identification the feelings of others. Often people seek out
a person to be a good listener, not a good responder. There are many times when silence

\textsuperscript{371} Campolo and Darling, \textit{Connecting Like Jesus}, 64.
\textsuperscript{372} Bonhoeffer, \textit{Life Together}, 99.
\textsuperscript{373} Paget and McCormack, \textit{The Work of the Chaplain}, 27.
October 28, 2015).
is appropriate. Listening with empathy seeks to understand the person’s perspective, a view that may even differ from the listener. This type of listening removes judgment, simply seeking to understand why a person feels the way that they do. It is important that a person listens as a learner and friend rather than someone who comes assuming they know all about the problems and pain. Listening is part of the ministry of presence. A chaplain makes the decision to be physically present and emotionally present through empathetic listening.

**Hockey Chaplains – Be Connected**

I was sitting, torn by grief. Someone came and talked to me of God’s dealings, of why it happened, of hope beyond the grave. He talked constantly, he said things I knew were true. I was unmoved, except to wish he go away. He finally did.

Another came and sat beside me. He didn’t talk. He didn’t ask leading questions. He just sat beside me for an hour or more, listened when I said something, answered briefly, prayed simply, left. I was moved. I was comforted. I hated to see him go.

Connecting with people is a vital part of chaplaincy. Making oneself available through the simple ministry of presence requires engaging with people, sharing in their journey, through the highs and lows of life.

Understanding ministry in a given context requires an exploration of how one views culture and the world. There are two common approaches. The first is a positive view of the world, where we see God at work, present and active in accomplishing his purposes. The second view takes a more negative approach, seeing the world as fallen and hostile with the church (Christians) called to live separated, or at best, at odds within

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376. Campolo and Darling, *Connecting Like Jesus*, 69.
378. Ibid., 25.
their community. When Jesus prayed for his future followers in John 17 he prayed, “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one...As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world” (v. 15,18). This would indicate that disconnecting from the world is not an option for Christians. Jesus sends his followers into the world knowing there would be a conflict: “In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart; I have overcome the world” (16:33). Being in the world does not mean being like the world. In John’s gospel, “world” does not mean planet earth. It is a term used to describe the fallen and rebellious nature of human beings against God. But Christians are sent into the world to bring a “sanctifying” influence, to ultimately point people to the reality that God sent his Son to die for sinners.

How Christians relate to the surrounding culture has been a topic of sharp debate and differences within the church. But the authenticity of the person of Jesus Christ and his story is what will prevail. Missions are the effort to take the Gospel into places where it has never been, to have a Christian presence. Engaging our culture is what Christians must do. Our faith transcends culture; however, it also engages the culture of that time and space. In seizing the vernacular Christianity has spread. The Gospel is cross-cultural and can be communicated to engage that culture. The influencing of a community comes from the numerous small, seemingly unimportant events. Christians must follow Christ’s example who went and lived in a community, in a local culture,

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drawing from the context in the stories he told and the language he used. Jesus immersed himself in the local context and engaged people in their happenings and circumstances. Jesus ministered “as if people mattered”.

In Luke 10: 1-12, God’s kingdom is presented and lived out in the local, everyday and ordinary of life. This is how God chooses to shape the future. Jesus sent his disciples out, empowering them to “go out and do the kingdom,” because the kingdom has to be “done.” God’s people are to be present in all of life. It’s about engaging the people with whom one comes in contact so that kingdom life can be put on display. The passage calls for Christians to connect with people in an intentional, open manner, exploring where God is working and making oneself available as part of God’s plan for people. God has chosen from the common, everyday and ordinary, a people to accomplish his purposes. As a young missionary to India, Lesslie Newbigin realized he had to enter the culture and dwell among the people. He made a point of sitting with people in their communities and listening to their stories. He learned the power of presence, and how to perform the gospel.

Chaplains are called to be witnesses of a spirit-filled life so that others might see “the world to come” and that these chaplains would “live” it in Christ. Chaplains must find Christ wherever they look in their lives and rejoice in him as he transforms them.

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386. Sedmark, Doing Local Theology, 23.
388. Roxburgh, Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood, 129.
392. Roxburgh, Missional, 129.
393. Ibid., 120.
Hockey chaplains are to enter into the lives of hockey people, hear their stories, love and care for them without feeling the need to “sell” or make a “pitch.” Look and listen for what God is doing.\footnote{Roxburgh, Missional, 136.} Chaplains are to display lives committed to others rather than themselves. The New Testament records the lives of people formed by the cross, a journey that costs.\footnote{Alan J. Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making: Skills for Leading in Times of Transition (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 153.} Ministry is about God and people. It’s about having compassion for people.\footnote{Sedmark, Doing Local Theology, 23, 33.} Going to these communities is not about forming some sort of “raiding party” mindset. It is taking time to be with and get to know people.\footnote{Newbigin, The Gospel in a Pluralist Society, 140–41.} Slowly, Christians are realizing that people outside the church are not responding to the attractional methods utilized to bring outsiders into the church. No matter how well you build it, people are not coming.\footnote{Roxburgh and Boren, Introducing the Missional Church, 19.}

Culture shapes our lives. The hockey culture is a sub-culture with its own set of norms, symbols, unwritten laws, habits and practices.\footnote{Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making, 44.} Cultivation of habits and practices are formed out of and within the hockey culture. There are certain habits and practices to be learned and cultural limitations to be respected.\footnote{Ibid., 185.} HMI goes into the hockey world, enters the hockey culture to connect with hockey people. Chaplains enter the hockey culture recognizing the norms and customs associated with the sport.\footnote{Roxburgh, Missional, 172.} Hockey chaplains go to the local arena, to the dressing room, the stands, the bench, the coach’s office, the front office, as Christ’s representatives in the arena. It is here where people are engaged in conversation. Chaplains show up, make themselves available and see what God is doing. God shows up in the everyday and the ordinary of life. He appears
in some unusual places. Yes, he even shows up in hockey arenas! Psalm 139 records: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.” (v. 7,8). It is theologically sound to recognize, “And if I go to the arena, God, you are already there.” The omnipresent God is already at the arena. When a chaplain walks through the door he or she is joining God there. Chaplains need to be listening to what God is saying and observing what is happening in their hockey context. It may come as a surprise to learn what God is up to on their local hockey team. Connecting with others as hockey chaplains requires a discerning of what God is doing and entering with no preconceived ideas of how ministry is to be done. HMI people are missionaries within the context of hockey.

Contextualization takes place with “interweaving the gospel with every particular situation.” “Every interpretation of the gospel is embodied in some cultural form. The missionary does not come with the pure gospel and then adapt it to the culture where she serves: she comes with a gospel which is already embodied in the culture by which the missionary was formed.” Within the hockey culture there are concepts for doing theology. In the game, “team” is of critical importance. While individuals contribute to team success it is the emphasis on the collective group that leads to overall victory. This understanding of community, which is so critical in the life of God’s people, also resonates within the hockey culture. HMI seeks to answer the question, “How will the hockey community be impacted by people who live for others and not for

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408. Sedmark, *Doing Local Theology*, 47.
Chaplains (all Christians) are called to serve. It is a call to shift from serving self to pouring themselves out for others. Is a call to self-sacrifice for Christ’s sake. Hockey chaplains should look for practices and habits to create their own identity on their hockey teams. The Christian life is about Jesus, who exemplified love in action. His followers are called to die to self and live for Christ, exhibiting his love to those around them. This is a call to go to the people in the game “who long for the personal rather than the pitch.” Hockey chaplains need to be reminded that Christ came not only to save people from sin but also save human beings for life the way God intended it be lived. This is why hockey chaplains go to the arena, to be involved, to connect and communicate care and compassion for people in the hockey community. Chaplains must be careful in the message they communicate. If the gospel simply becomes Jesus came to meet your needs, at some point the truth of the matter must be revealed that the opposite is the case. Jesus came to call people to a life where they let go of their needs.

A hockey chaplain’s ministry is to be shaped through dialogue and engagement in a hockey context with local hockey teams. Time is required to enter into the lives of people in their hockey community, engaging their stories and exploring ways to best serve their needs. It is imperative that hockey chaplains enter lives, sit in arenas and ask the questions, what is God up to here and what is my role in all of this? It is essential to see how the world participates in God’s missional life and how God participates in the

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409. Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making, 152.
411. Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making, 142.
412. Alexander, Being Church, 19.
413. Roxburgh, Missional, 148.
414. Roxburgh and Boren, Introducing the Missional Church, 103.
415. Roxburgh, Missional Map-Making, 147.
416. Roxburgh and Boren, Introducing the Missional Church, 85.
lives of others. Christ holds the key to understanding the relationship between God and the world. The incarnation is the meeting between God and humankind. Chaplains are to live incarnationally as the body of Christ, participating in the hockey culture and in God’s work of redemption as he crafts humanity in the power of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{417}

\textsuperscript{417} Van Gelder and Zscheile, \textit{The Missional Church in Perspective}, 139.
Chapter 5

QMJHL Hockey Chaplaincy Training Program

Many years ago, while sitting watching a Saint John Flames (American Hockey League) practice, I happened to strike up a conversation with the only other individual who was seated in the stands. We introduced ourselves. He was a NHL team scout, whose son happened to be a player on the Flames. The man was intrigued when I explained my role as team chaplain. Then, for the first time in my life, I was asked: “What theological training do you have?” I was shocked at such a question. I mumbled something about my own personal study, but I had no solid answer to the question. It was at that moment that I realized I needed more than good intentions to serve in my role as a hockey chaplain. I needed training – we all need training.

Foreword

The presence of chaplains in professional sports has become an accepted and, in many cases, a welcomed addition to their respective sports. Hockey was the last major sport in North America to embrace the concept; however, since the launch of HMI in 1977 there has been rapid growth of the number of chaplains and chapel programs to the point that there are now 41 leagues and 270 teams utilizing the services of a hockey chaplain.

The QMJHL chaplain ministry was launched in September of 2004 when the Halifax Mooseheads owner, former NHLer, Bobby Smith, agreed to establish a chaplain for his team. This marked the first chaplain and chapel program in the history of the league. Since that time the ministry has expanded as opportunities have opened up with other teams.
The growth has underlined the need to formalize a training program for QMJHL hockey chaplains in order to better equip and train them for their specialized role. Each chaplain faces distinctive aspects in the culture of their specific team. Coaching personnel, management, governors, owners, and league officials – all have influence on the scope of the chaplain’s role and ministry – as do the players and their engagement with the chaplain.

In 1990, Kevin Costner produced and starred in the epic western movie, *Dances with Wolves*. Costner portrayed Lt. John Dunbar, an American Civil War, Union Army officer who was exiled to a remote western outpost. Left in isolation Dunbar was forced to determine how he would interact with a tribe of Sioux Indians. It becomes evident that he was able to cut through the rampant racism of his day and see the human being, rather than the stereotype of the prevailing prejudicial attitudes against Native Americans. Dunbar learned the culture and the ways of the Sioux and eventually was embraced as one of their own. The isolated frontier posting in a sod hut amongst the indigenous population has striking similarities to the role of a hockey chaplain.

Hockey chaplains serve in the front lines of hockey, in the arena with their local hockey team, ministering to a wide variety of people in that world. HMI desires to equip chaplains with greater knowledge of the hockey culture and training to enhance their existing skills. Chaplains need access to specialized resources to prepare them for their respective team ministries. As well, a need exists for a standard of conduct and approach for chaplains that is appropriate in the context of hockey. This training manual has been designed to meet these needs. Much of the material presented is in direct response to feedback obtained from chaplains across the QMJHL, who have expressed their desire to
grow in specific areas of ministry and to find the resources they need to enhance their effectiveness as hockey chaplains.

Bruce Smith
Chaplain Coordinator QMJHL

Introduction

Those who serve as hockey chaplains across the QMJHL are a highly motivated group of people who see their role as a “calling from God.” As a result these chaplains move into the ministry with a sense of being “commissioned” to fulfill “the Great Commission” that Jesus gave in Matthew 28, taking the good news in word and deed to the hockey arena.

Organizations recognize the need to continually upgrade and train their staff and employees. This manual is designed to fill that need.

Hockey Chaplaincy Overview

A hockey chaplain for a team may be clergy or a lay-person. The chaplain serves as an emotional and spiritual resource to those involved with a hockey team – players, coaches, trainers, management and front office staff. The ministry may extend to include fans, families of team members and even the arena staff. The chaplain is available to minister to the needs of all people in this setting, regardless of their faith tradition.

Hockey chaplains, in some sense, serve as local pastors for people in the hockey community. These chaplains volunteer their time to serve in this capacity. Some are local pastors of churches where their congregations see the hockey chaplain role as an extension of their pastor’s ministry in the community. Others face opposition from church members who see their pastor’s involvement in hockey chaplaincy as a distraction.

418. Across North America over 95% of the chaplains that serve with HMI do so as volunteers. In the QMJHL, 3 of the 13 chaplains are fulltime workers with HMI.
from their responsibilities to shepherd their own flock. A lay-person faces the challenge of balancing a desire to serve as a hockey chaplain with responsibilities in work and personal life. A hockey chaplain is a spiritual presence on his or her respective hockey teams. He or she enters the arena representing Jesus Christ, acting as his ambassador to the hockey culture. Hockey chaplains are called to demonstrate and communicate the message of God’s love to teams they serve.

It is important that hockey chaplains also recognize the limits of their role. Chaplains are not coaches, player agents, physicians, clinical psychologists or substance abuse professionals. Each chaplain must recognize his or her limitations and be willing and competent to refer situations to trained professionals, when appropriate.

Origins

The word “chaplain” has been traced back to the medieval Latin word, *capella*, which means cape or cloak. It specifically refers to the cape of St. Martin of Tours, who was said to have shared it with a beggar on a cold and wet night. At his death, St. Martin’s cape was enshrined and the keepers of the *capella* became known as *chaplain*; in the fourth century, these chaplains were named by the king as protectors and keepers of St. Martin’s cape. Eventually chaplains took on additional roles for the king, including other religious duties and ceremonies. Such practice of the royal appointment of chaplains spread throughout Western civilization.

The historical heritage of chaplaincy stretches back much farther. In ancient times, priests would accompany armies into battle. Throughout Judeo-Christian history,

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from the entering of Canaan to the time of the Judges, spiritual leaders led the people
during times of crisis.\textsuperscript{422} Chaplains have served in many different settings. They traveled
with Sir Francis Drake in the sixteenth century and were alongside George Washington
during the American Revolution.\textsuperscript{423} Workplace chaplains were found in factories and
mills in seventeenth century Massachusetts. In the twenty-first century, chaplains can be
found in corporations, continuing care facilities, on sports teams and at truck stops.
Police, fire and emergency medical responders have also sought the services of chaplains.
Healthcare chaplains were introduced in the early twentieth century with the growth of
hospitals as spiritual care became recognized as an important companion to physical
care.\textsuperscript{424} Chaplaincy grew because it became evident that spiritual care was necessary even
outside a church, mosque, or synagogue.\textsuperscript{425}

\textbf{Hockey Ministries International and the Development of Hockey Chaplaincy}

In 1977, Hockey Ministries International (HMI) was established by Don
Liesemer whose vision was to create a ministry to hockey players. Christian Athlete
Hockey Camps in the summer and offering hockey team chapel services in the winter
season became key activities of HMI. These camps and chapel programs began to expand
across North America and Europe.

In 1996, Bruce Smith moved to Rothesay, NB, to establish a branch office of
HMI in Atlantic Canada. One of his primary responsibilities was to develop chaplaincy
presence and chapel programs in the American Hockey League (AHL). In the spring of
2002, the AHL Saint John Flames ceased operations. AHL teams in the Maritimes had
been gradually disappearing and being replaced by relocated or expansion teams in the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{422} \textit{Paget and McCormick, The Work of the Chaplain}, 1. \\
\textsuperscript{423} \textit{Ibid.} \\
\textsuperscript{424} \textit{Ibid.}, 2. \\
\textsuperscript{425} \textit{Ibid.}, 3.
\end{flushright}
QMJHL. The question was asked, “Would God use a unilingual Anglophone to establish a work in the QMJHL?” The response by Bruce Smith was, “We are going to find out.” The arrival of the QMJHL in Saint John for the 2003-2004 season launched the effort to begin establishing a ministry in the QMJHL. Since its inauguration, this ministry has experienced significant growth – by the beginning of the 2014-15 season, 12 teams of the 18 teams had active chaplaincy.

**A Hockey Chaplain’s Identity**

Although the role of chaplain has been well established in certain disciplines, the concept is still relatively new in the field of hockey. The QMJHL was one of the last leagues in North America to be introduced to the concept. One must consider this ministry to be in the pioneering stage of development. The chaplain enters this arena as God’s representative with tremendous possibilities both for positive ministry and also for damage – appropriate behaviour is critical.

The hockey chaplain serves in a unique ministry. Ministering to junior hockey players comes at a critical stage in their development both as a hockey player and as a person. It is important that certain characteristics and qualities are developed in the life of a hockey chaplain.

**Be Available**

The first quality a hockey chaplain must possess is a heart submitted to God and made available to be used for God’s purposes. This “sold out” attitude is essential when facing the challenges and adversity that come with ministering to hockey players. Hockey chaplains are called out of their comfort zones to minister in a setting that is generally foreign to a spiritual emphasis.
Developing a heart available to God requires spiritual growth and maturity. As with all ministry positions, the chaplain is called to move from a comfortable life of religious activity into a deeper spiritual relationship with God and others. Spiritual maturity enables a person to be more accepting of the diversity of expressions of faith, accepting that one’s way is not the only way. The path to this maturity is to be a student of the Scriptures.

Being available means going to the arena and out into the world to serve others. Jesus left familiar and comfortable surroundings and journeyed to where people gathered to minister to them. Christ is our example in how he made himself available to serve people and glorify God the Father.

Making oneself available also requires a level of trust. Hockey chaplains are often called into situations where they do not know a person’s background, history, worldview or personal circumstances. Availability means trusting God for guidance in each encounter. A formula for disaster is when the chaplain enters a situation confident that he or she has all the answers. As Proverbs 16:18 says, “pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.” The truth of that verse has been played out many times. James reveals the proper way to go, “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” (James 4:10). A blessing awaits the hockey chaplain who approaches a situation with humility, allowing God to use him or her, and using the tools with which they have been provided.

**Be Authentic**

There is no place in hockey chaplaincy for persons to present themselves as someone other than who they are. Phoniness and a false front will be easily spotted by a hockey player. Junior hockey players need to see someone who is real – and facing life’s
struggles with integrity. Chaplains need to model vulnerability and openness with hockey players. Chaplaincy is about removing the walls that separate people from one another. In the words of Saint Paul, chaplains need to open their hearts to the hockey players they serve (2 Corinthians 6:11 NIV).

**Be Bilingual**

Being bilingual means speaking a second language besides one’s native tongue. It is always helpful for a chaplain to be able to converse in both French and English. The ability to speak in either language can be a great asset in conversing with hockey people in the QMJHL, as well as in other hockey leagues in North America. In the context of hockey chaplaincy, being bilingual also refers to knowing the language of the sport and its idiosyncratic vocabulary and terminology. Learning these terms and phrases is essential to understanding the culture in which the chaplain serves. A glossary of terms is included at the back of this manual. Chaplains would do well to learn the language of hockey in order to speak the language of the citizens of this world. Furthermore, chaplains need to learn how to communicate spiritual truth in non-religious language.

Becoming proficient in hockey terminology normally requires prolonged exposure to the conversation. Although chaplains who come from a hockey background will have an advantage in this area, persons with limited prior hockey knowledge do not need to feel disqualified. A hockey chaplain will learn by spending time in and around the arena. If the chaplain focuses on building relationships with hockey players, the players will be more than willing to educate the chaplain. Learning both the language and the culture requires complete immersion and time.
Accountability

Most hockey chaplains will minister by themselves on their respective teams. This does not mean the hockey chaplain operates outside of a system of accountability. Chaplains submit to authority placed over them to which they are accountable. First is accountability to God, whom they represent and to whom they are ultimately accountable.

Chaplains operate under the guidance and leadership of HMI, a ministry dedicated to serving the hockey community, and to whom they are accountable. Chaplains must recognize that inappropriate conduct or behavior will have significant ramifications on the future work of HMI. It is essential that chaplains recognize that they do not operate as “lone wolves” but see their particular ministry in the broader context of a ministry to the entire hockey world.

Finally, chaplains must submit to and are accountable to the authorities on their respective hockey teams, who include league officials, owners, presidents, general managers, and coaches.

Balancing Roles

Almost all hockey chaplains serve as volunteers. The few exceptions are full-time staff with HMI. Many hockey chaplains serve as pastors of local churches and must strike the balance between these two roles. The pastor’s primary loyalty is with his or her church. Consistent monitoring of time commitments as well as paying attention to conversations with church members will help keep the church from seeing the hockey arena as a competitor. A pastor who is able to share the vision of the local arena as a mission field will discover a supportive congregation, enthused with the idea, seeing the ministry as an extension of the church.
Family responsibilities for both the layperson and pastor must never be neglected. A person’s first ministry is with his or her family.

**The Spiritual Well-Being of a Hockey Chaplain**

A hockey chaplain must never neglect his or her own spiritual needs. The constant and intense attention to others’ needs can easily lead to spiritual dryness and even burnout. It is difficult to minister to others effectively when one is spiritually dry. Chaplains need to honour their own Sabbath, including regularly scheduled quiet times and spiritual retreats. Watch for the warning signs which may lead towards burnout – such as significant changes in appetite (not eating or eating too much) or sleep patterns; a loss of physical energy; increased forgetfulness or loss of concentration; depression; or lack of willpower. Emotionally, signs of detachment or increased anger may be warning signs in the state of one’s spiritual health. Any of these symptoms indicate the need for a break and for spiritual renewal or emotional/psychological attention.

**Equipped for Serving as a Hockey Chaplain**

**Understanding Junior Hockey Culture**

The sport of hockey is a sub-culture within the prevailing sport culture. Hockey carries its own set of customs and norms – an unwritten “code” one should understand and respect to be effective in engaging people within the hockey community.

The majority of youth who begin playing hockey in North America and Europe dream of one day playing in the National Hockey League (NHL). Two main routes lead to playing in the NHL: Major Junior in Canada (comprised of three leagues, the Western Hockey League, Ontario Hockey League and QMJHL) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the United States. Both share the distinction of being big
business. At this level, hockey becomes a career path with teams and programs designed to create revenue streams and business plans. The pressure to produce wins and to achieve celebrity status and recognition for both players and coaches increases the stakes.\textsuperscript{426} Former NHLer, Patrick O’Sullivan, had a less than flattering assessment of his experience as a junior hockey player in Canada. “Professional sports – and let’s be honest, Canadian Junior hockey is professionalized – it is a meat market. Nothing more, nothing less. It’s all about performance on the ice.”\textsuperscript{427}

The QMJHL is an 18-team league with franchises located across the province of Quebec and the three Maritime provinces. Team rosters typically composed of 22 skaters and two goalies with players’ ages that range from 15-20 years old. These players come from across Canada, the United States and Europe. In the 2015-16 season, there were 255 Quebec-born players, 78 born in Atlantic Canada, 42 from the other Canadian provinces, 26 players born in the U.S.A. and 40 born in Europe.\textsuperscript{428}

What is it like playing junior hockey in Canada? What does this world look like? Life in junior hockey is a time of transition for adolescent males who have moved away from their homes to pursue the dream of making it to the NHL. Young players are drafted (selected) by major junior teams and become the team’s “property.” These players then travel from their homes in late summer to try out at training camp, attempting to prove they are deserving of a spot on the team. Once they have made the team, their junior hockey career begins.

Homesickness is sometimes the most difficult part of the journey. Most players who are homesick agree the toughest part is getting through training camp.

\textsuperscript{428} Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, theqmjhl.ca/teams/2 (accessed November 24, 2015).
followed by the loneliness of the first few weeks in new homes without family. For 15 and 16-year-olds, living with strangers, getting comfortable in their homes and getting used to their habits, foods and personalities, and having them not know yours, could be a difficult transition. The feeling is similar to that experienced by many youths on their first days in a new school. But here, there would be no returning to your parent’s home. There are great players who didn’t make it because of the shock to the system. Although they would never admit as much to the team, some cried themselves to sleep with the loneliness, while others just jumped in without missing a beat.⁴²⁹

Once a player has made the team, the rookie must undergo the rituals of initiation and hazing. This tradition has existed for decades and is a test to one’s right to belong on the team. This practice has been presented as a necessary rite for inclusion on the team. The activities involve humiliating acts and games that include sexual ridicule. Although hazing is technically illegal and prohibited, those in authority such as coaches and general managers often turn a blind eye to the practice. Their attitudes reflect ones of, “I don’t want to know” and “I don’t want to hear what the players are up to in their spare time.” The apparent ignorance of any hazing activity preserves the authority’s ability to plead ignorance if such behaviour becomes public knowledge.⁴³⁰

Junior hockey revealed an even darker side in 1996 when former NHL player Sheldon Kennedy publicly revealed details of his own sexual abuse and that of another teammate by his former junior hockey coach, Graham James. James would later be found guilty of 350 counts of sexual assault against the two players and was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison. The coach used his position of power to manipulate and control his teenage players, promising fulfillment of their NHL dreams through his influence, in exchange for their submission to his demands. James’ other victim was

⁴³⁰ Jamie McKinven, So You Want Your Kid to Play Pro Hockey? (Toronto: Create Space, 2012), 531. McKinven argues that there may be a link between the percentage of players who abuse alcohol related to traumatic hazing experiences. (See: 742).
Theo Fleury who was subjected to the same manipulation. In his book, *Playing with Fire*, Fleury revealed the details of his sexual abuse.\(^{431}\)

There is also the horrendous story of a junior coach in Canada who allegedly punched a player in the face to motivate the rest of the team, and encouraged his players to spear and tomahawk opponents with their sticks. The coach was also alleged to have organized orgy parties involving his players and invited girls, ordering them to perform sexual acts as he watched.\(^{432}\) It is a reminder that the game of hockey can have a dark side.

In Canada, hockey elevates the status of a teenage player more than any other sport or activity. In small towns across the country, major junior teams are the big show and players are treated as celebrities. Junior players subsequently become objects of extraordinary attention. For devoted hockey fans, these players represent an opportunity to socialize with potential future NHL stars. For teenage girls, these players represent rock star status and the possibilities of a high profile life.

Teenage adolescence is a time of major transition from childhood to adulthood. Most teenagers navigate this period of transition in their hometown, with the support of family and friends. The major junior hockey player makes this transition away from home and away from a familiar support system. Adding to this sense of disequilibrium is the pressure of being in the spotlight in his new hockey town.

It is common for hockey players to be labeled or stereotyped as being confident, cocky and arrogant. This label is developed in junior hockey where a player spends almost all his time with his teammates. Outsiders see this as a clique, inferring that players see themselves as superior to their high school peers. In fact, the team becomes a


\[^{432}\] McKinven, *So You Want Your Kid to Play Pro Hockey?*, 879.
support system for the junior hockey player. The cockiness and arrogance some players display is often a defensive response to a sense of inferiority, pointing to a deep sense of vulnerability. These feelings may be linked to a drill-sergeant coaching style that the players may have been exposed to at young ages. Such coaches rarely provide positive reinforcement, choosing to motivate a player through fear, belittling and breaking down the player’s confidence, with the belief that it will produce a desire in the athlete to work harder to prove his worth.

As previously mentioned, the hockey culture has its own terminology, using words and phrases unique to the sport. A common practice is the alteration of a person’s name – usually achieved by removing the last syllable of the name and adding a “sey” or an “er” at the end. For example, if the last name is Highmore, the player would become “Highsey.” This practice enables teammates to communicate quickly and easily on the ice during a game. Nicknames are also commonly given to players that may describe a unique or special quality. A player noted for his scoring ability may be called “shooter” or “sniper.”

Unfortunately, profanity is frequently used in the language of hockey. A profanity-laced conversation is a regular feature of dressing rooms, players’ benches, on the ice and on the road. Verbal intimidation is a big part of a player’s strategy when dealing with an opponent. Threats, insults and personal attacks are considered natural in a hockey game. Players will often make fun of a teammate, which is considered perfectly normal, and is viewed as a way of creating camaraderie.

While the sport of hockey has a prescribed set of rules and regulations established by the league and enforced by referees, unwritten rules considered players norms must also be respected in regard to conduct and behavior. For example, if a team is winning by
five or six goals, it is considered unacceptable for players on the winning team to excessively celebrate further goals. If a player is excessively aggressive against an opposing team’s skilled player, it becomes mandatory to respond in kind against the aggressive player. If the goalie comes out of his net to play a puck, no player is permitted to body check the goaltender.

Unwritten off-ice rules exist in regard to the relationships between veterans and rookies. Veterans always sit at the back of the bus with a full double seat to themselves while the rookies must sit side-by-side with other rookies towards the front of the bus just behind the coaches. Once the bus arrives at its destination, rookies are to stay seated until all the veterans have left the bus.

An essential rule for teams on the road is that whatever takes place on a road trip must be kept in confidence within the team structure. Any discussion that takes place inside the dressing room is never to be discussed with others outside the team.

Unwritten rules also exist for the chaplains in this arena. Certain sensitivities must be considered when engaging with players and other personnel. Chaplains should never ask for tickets, autographs, jerseys or sticks from players – these players are surrounded by people with hidden agendas, who are seeking to exploit players for personal gain. To be effective, the chaplain must be seen as a person with no hidden agenda, who is simply available to support each player and the team as a whole.

Chaplains must be sensitive to the times and places that are considered acceptable for them to be present. They must avoid visiting too frequently, and never enter the players’ dressing room unless formally invited by the coach. The chaplain should never invite himself or herself to events or meetings. During practices, chaplains should keep
their distance from the ice surface and never call out to a player, or create a distraction.

Presuming on one’s position of privileged access will only create barriers to ministry.

Respecting these unwritten rules and expectations and observing the common courtesies of civil society will smooth the path toward acceptance as a valued member of the team.

**Glossary of Hockey Terms**

**agitator** – a player plays in such a way as to throw his opponents off their game by using dirty play and verbal trash talking

**bag skate** – a coach punishes a team by making them skate hard or simply to better condition the team

**bar down** – a shot that goes off the crossbar and into the net

**bussy** – bus driver

**celly** – a slang word for celebrating after a goal

**cherry picker** – a player who hangs out around center ice, looking for breakaway pass; such players neglect their defensive zone responsibilities; another word for such a player is a “floater”

**chirp** – the steady flow of insults directed towards opponents throughout a hockey game in an attempt to throw off their concentration

**coast to coast** – when a player carries a puck from his own end to the opposing teams end without passing

**drill killer** – a player who often makes mistakes executing a drill in practice

**the dub** – the WHL (Western Hockey League)

**dump and chase** – a tactic by which players shoot the puck into the opposition zone and then attack on a forecheck

**flamingo** – when a player who is afraid to block a shot lifts one leg like a flamingo to avoid getting hit with the puck
footsteps – a player who hurries a play to avoid being body checked

Gordie Howe hat trick – when a player registers a goal, an assist and a fight in the same game

grinder – a player on a checking line, whose role is to finish checks and wear down opponents

the Q – the QMJHL (Québec Major Junior Hockey League)

the show – the NHL

sieve – a terrible goalie

slew foot – when a player kicks a leg or legs out from behind an opponent – considered a dirty play

stone hands – a player who is a very poor stickhandler

stripes – the referee

toe drag – a stickhandling move where the player uses the toe of the blade to pull the puck back and away from opposing player

the trap – a defensive tactic by a team where all five players pull back into the neutral zone to fill up the space making it difficult for the attacking team to penetrate

tilt – a hockey fight

trolley tracks – occurs when a player skates into the middle of the ice with his head down leaving him open to a heavy body check

turtle – a player who drops to the ice and covers his head with his arms when challenged to a fight

the wall – the boards surrounding the rink

the wrapperr – a bed

The Functions of a Hockey Chaplain

Hockey chaplains are a spiritual and emotional resource for a local hockey team. The duties of each chaplain may vary; however, the most important ministry is to be available when called upon. Spiritual need is one of the prime human needs and the chaplain is called to address this need. Spiritual witness is often more through action than
by word. The life example set by the chaplain in all phases of life has more bearing on the hockey player than “preaching” about it. That said, the following is a list of specific responsibilities and expectations of a hockey chaplain.

1. Chapel Leader – A major responsibility of a hockey chaplain is leading chapel services. These services are open to all personnel involved with the team, on a voluntary basis. Non-denominational and non-sectarian in nature, chapel services are often conducted at the arena in an empty dressing room, media room or weight room. They are offered at mutually convenient times and designed not to conflict with the team’s schedule. Services are typically twenty minutes in duration and feature a short message delivered by the chaplain addressing the issues of life and Scripture’s words in regard to the issues. These meetings may also include discussion and interaction with players and usually conclude with a prayer.

2. Availability in times of crisis and grief – The hockey chaplain is a resource to personnel who are experiencing situations involving crisis and grief – occasioned by family illness, death of loved ones, serious injury and the trauma of being traded to another team. At such occasions, the chaplain can provide comfort and support through personal care and attention to those in need.

3. A source of encouragement – The chaplain serves as a regular source of encouragement to individuals associated with the game. Through the highs and lows of a hockey season, the chaplain can deliver a word of encouragement, either spoken or through a text message, to an individual. This encouragement can also take the form of a note in a Christmas or
birthday card. In a world where mistakes, failures, and shortcomings are highlighted, bringing a kind word and a positive message can go a long way.

4. A source of prayer – Prayer is essential in the ministry of the hockey chaplain. Regularly praying for the needs of players should form the foundation of a chaplain’s ministry.

5. Staying connected – It is important for the hockey chaplain to stay in tune with the happenings associated with his team. Attending as many games as possible is ideal; however, keeping informed of team news will enhance the awareness of day-to-day developments.

6. Ministry of presence – Showing up at the arena on a regular basis for games and practices makes the chaplain available for those moments that take place only when one makes himself or herself available to be used by God. It is one of the most exciting aspects of hockey chaplaincy to join in the missio Dei.

7. A safe place – It is so important that young, vulnerable adolescents have a person to trust and confide in. The chaplain is that safe and neutral resource, available to each individual player. Chaplains should be trained to recognize symptoms of abuse (emotional and physical) that may provide a clue of a player needing help.

8. Other sundry duties – This is the catch-all statement recognizing that opportunities for ministry can take many diverse forms. What is essential is that the chaplain is sensitive and open to the leading of God the Holy Spirit in ministry opportunities.
Leading Chapels

A primary duty of a hockey chaplain is the leading of team chapel services. QMJHL chaplains expressed a desire for additional resources in support of this major responsibility. Many chaplains have received formal training in this area as pastors; however, lay persons have expressed the need for training in this area.

To begin with, the most important talk a hockey chaplain will deliver is his life – as perceived by his audience. People are observers before they are listeners and credibility is lost when a chaplain’s life contradicts the verbal message delivered.\footnote{Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson, eds., \textit{The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 127.} Credibility is based on a person’s perception of the chaplain’s character, so how hockey players see the character of the chaplain has a significant impact on how they will respond.\footnote{Haddon W. Robinson, \textit{Making a Difference in Preaching} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 37.} A chaplain’s character comes through in leading a Chapel. Just as people reveal who they are through their conversations and manners, the chaplain reveals much about himself or herself through delivering a message.\footnote{Bryan Chapell, \textit{Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon} (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 37.}

This world longs for authenticity. Your players will listen to a chaplain’s message that comes from an honest heart.\footnote{Scott M. Gibson, ed., \textit{Preaching to a Shifting Culture: 12 Perspectives on Communicating That Connects} (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 144.} A person’s delivery can never be forced or fake. It must be “me.”\footnote{Willhite and Gibson, \textit{The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching}, 102.} People listen for a speaker’s feelings as much as for his or her ideas, perhaps more. It displays the character and quality of the speaker.\footnote{Ibid.} Delivering a
message to effect change requires the speaker to be vulnerable and exposed to his/her audience. It requires opening up one’s life to reveal their imperfect lives as fellow strugglers in the process of growth. The chaplain must know God’s grace to speak about it. A chaplain will unlikely lead a hockey player closer to God if his or her life does not reflect the ongoing work of God.

**Proclaim the Good News**

The apostle Paul exhorted his young associate Timothy to “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2). The word “preach” means “to cry out, herald, or exhort.” Chaplains should deliver their messages with passion and fervor to touch the hearts of listeners.

Christians believe the Bible reveals God’s word. This foundational belief recognizes the Bible has eternal authority and relevance for people in every period of human history and every culture. Haddon Robinson asserted, “God speaks through the Scriptures to all people in all times.”

God communicates to people through the Bible. It is a major way God speaks into the lives of individuals.

**Preparing the Message**

If a message is to transform a person it must speak to the needs, hurts, temptations, trials, and issues all face. In a word, the message must be “contextualized.” The gospel is meant to be contextualized. The message must remain faithful to the biblical gospel, yet shared in terms that can be understood by the listeners.

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439. Ibid., 125.
446. Gibson, *Preaching to a Shifting Culture*, 53.
Any message should have one major idea that a speaker should be able to summarize in one sentence.\textsuperscript{447} What is an idea? The word originates from the Greek word \textit{eido}, which means “to see” and therefore “to know.” An idea consists of a subject and a complement. The question, “what am I talking about?” must be answered. The complement “completes” the subject, answering the question, “what am I saying about what am I talking about?”\textsuperscript{448} Every message should have a purpose and must answer the question, “why am I delivering this message?”\textsuperscript{449}

One important question a chapel leader must ask when preparing the message is: “Do you endeavor to bend your thought to the Scriptures, or do you use the Scriptures to support your thought?”\textsuperscript{450} Exegesis is about getting meaning from a passage.\textsuperscript{451}

\textbf{Selecting a Topic}

There are many lessons in life learned through the everyday and the ordinary. Watching television and movies, reading books, magazines and Internet news, all provide insights by observing life.\textsuperscript{452} Chapel messages must relate biblical truth to life.\textsuperscript{453} Spurgeon made a point to direct every text used back to the cross. Messages prepared and delivered can be practical, inspirational and informative, but if it does not ultimately lead to the gospel of Jesus Christ it becomes indistinguishable from any other religion.\textsuperscript{454}

Where does the chaplain go when deciding on the message for an upcoming chapel? The first source for guidance should be the Holy Spirit. Pray and then listen for his leading regarding the focus and thrust of the message for your hockey team.\textsuperscript{455} In

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{447} Ibid., 36–37.
\item \textsuperscript{448} Ibid., 41.
\item \textsuperscript{449} Robinson, \textit{Making a Difference in Preaching}, 76.
\item \textsuperscript{450} Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 22.
\item \textsuperscript{451} Robinson, \textit{Making a Difference in Preaching}, 87.
\item \textsuperscript{452} Ibid., 103.
\item \textsuperscript{453} Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 96.
\item \textsuperscript{454} Gibson, \textit{Preaching to a Shifting Culture}, 135.
\item \textsuperscript{455} Ibid., 139.
\end{itemize}
message preparation the leader must be most concerned about listening to God before speaking for him. Another source is through the reading of God’s word. Developing a message for an upcoming chapel requires the chaplain to read the Bible in a close, intentional manner. Read a passage for what it contributes to the whole and how it does it.

The chaplain also needs to study the team. As Spurgeon stated, “The careful shepherd often examines his flock, and governs his mode of treatment by the state in which he finds it.” Recognize the issues players face and use them as a guide in preparing your messages. When looking for chapel topics, let the situation guide the content. Hockey chaplains operate in a setting dominated by unchurched hockey players. The focus should be on an introduction to Christianity and the relevance of faith in the twenty-first century. People in the arena don’t know the language of the church, so those in the church must learn the language of the arena to be able to communicate the truths of Scripture. It’s the chaplain’s job to be bilingual.

**Expository Delivery**

An effective method for message preparation is the expository method.

Expository preaching is the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage.

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in its context, which the Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.\textsuperscript{463}

In the expository method, the chaplain is not as focussed on individual words, but on what the biblical writers meant through their words.\textsuperscript{464}

What are the stages for preparing an expository message?

1) Choose the passage – the chapel leader seeks to build the bridge between the word of God and the people being addressed. It is vital that the chaplain understands the needs of his listeners in order to speak into their lives.

2) Study the passage and make notes – the starting point in examining a specific passage begins with its context. One needs to see the passage in relation to the broader literary unit.

3) Study the passage and related parts to determine the exegetical idea – ask the question, “What exactly is the biblical writer talking about?” Develop your subject and complement.

4) Submit your exegetical idea to three questions – a) explain it: “what does it mean?” b) prove it: “is it true?” c) apply it: “what difference does it make?”\textsuperscript{465}

**Starting and Finishing Well**

Essential to delivering your message effectively begins with your introduction.\textsuperscript{466}

The opening thirty seconds is critical in gaining an audience’s attention.\textsuperscript{467} The purpose of the introduction is to engage your audience, focus the message and transition to the biblical passage. The aim is to have your listeners want to hear the rest of the message,

\textsuperscript{463} Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 20–21. The expository method is one approach to message preparation and delivery. Other approaches will be presented in the future formal chaplaincy training course.

\textsuperscript{464} Ibid., 23.

\textsuperscript{465} Ibid., 54–96.

\textsuperscript{466} Ibid., 121.

\textsuperscript{467} Ibid., 166.
either because of some need that was stirred or a curiosity sparked.\footnote{Donald R. Sunukjian, \textit{Biblical Preaching: Proclaiming Truth with Clarity and Relevance} (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2007), 192–93.} In the introduction, the audience is forming their impression of you as the speaker and will largely determine whether to tune you in or out. Appearing to be nervous, hostile, or ill-prepared may lead to being rejected. Appearing relaxed, friendly, and with a positive attitude toward the listener leads to greater receptivity by the listener. In many respects, listeners do not hear the message – they hear the messenger.\footnote{Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 165–66.}

Once an introduction is complete, the speaker must move the listeners to the focus of the message by having them ask, “Where are you going with this message? What’s it about? What am I supposed to get from it?”

As you conclude your message, don’t announce that it is concluding. Let your words and tone communicate that you are bringing your message to a close. Maintain eye contact with your listeners – your heart needs to connect with their heart.\footnote{Ibid., 250–51.} The purpose of a conclusion is to summarize – that is, to tie the message together, and encourage your audience to make it part of their lives.\footnote{Ibid., 242.} Hockey chapels are about changing lives.

**Further Tips on Message Preparation and Delivery**

- “A sermon should be a bullet and not buckshot.” – Haddon Robinson\footnote{Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 35.}
- When illustrations are used the speaker should ask, what picture does this put in their heads? Is it the right picture, supporting the big idea?\footnote{Willhite and Gibson, \textit{The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching}, 152.}
- Build the message around a single significant thought.\footnote{Ibid., 20.}
- Use illustrations drawn from the lived experiences of your listeners.\footnote{Ibid., 30.}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item 470. Ibid., 250–51.
\item 471. Ibid., 242.
\item 472. Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 35.
\item 473. Willhite and Gibson, \textit{The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching}, 152.
\item 474. Ibid., 20.
\item 475. Ibid., 30.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
• Remember, this is not a message about the Bible, this is a message to hockey players about themselves from the Bible.\textsuperscript{476}

• Do not assume your audience fully understands what is being talked about. Seek to provide a clear explanation and avoid using words and terms that have no meaning to hockey culture.\textsuperscript{477}

• Use concrete rather than abstract terms – for instance, when speaking about sin talk about lying, stealing, murder and adultery.\textsuperscript{478}

• The application of the passage answers the questions: “So what?” and “Now what?” The first question asks, “Why is this important to me?” The second asks, “What should be my response?”\textsuperscript{479}

• When providing a word definition avoid, “according to Webster.” Instead put a definition in your own words, or better, provide a word picture that effectively “defines” what you mean. As an example, rather than providing a dictionary definition of “patience,” say, “Patience is pausing an extra four seconds before hitting the horn at the car in front of you when the light turns green; or patience is remaining calm while the cashier calls for a ‘price check’ on an item for the person in line in front of you.”\textsuperscript{480}

• When quoting someone, it needs to be a short statement to have the desired impact on your listeners.\textsuperscript{481}

\textsuperscript{476} Robinson, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 104.
\textsuperscript{477} Ibid., 143.
\textsuperscript{478} Ibid., 151.
\textsuperscript{479} Chapell, \textit{Christ-Centered Preaching}, 210.
\textsuperscript{480} Sunukjian, \textit{Biblical Preaching}, 129.
\textsuperscript{481} Paget and McCormack, \textit{The Work of the Chaplain}, 130.
The Chaplain’s Self-Care & Spiritual Growth

The hockey chaplain is committed to proclaim Christ’s love to a world where many may never darken a church door; therefore, the chaplain goes to the people where they gather. Such an initiative to connect with people takes courage and compassion. The chaplain intentionally enters people’s space to engage them in the highs and lows of life.\textsuperscript{482}

Burnout is a real danger of long-term stress. There are a number of contributing factors. It may include professional isolation, the emotional toll from providing continuous empathy, a perceived lack of success, a relentless pace and a “Messiah complex.” Symptoms of burnout include physical exhaustion, irritability, or emotional negativity. Chaplains experiencing such a pattern may be in the early stages of compassion fatigue.\textsuperscript{483} Chaplains are susceptible to compassion fatigue from being unable to maintain a safe distance between themselves and those who are dealing with crisis and grief. It often occurs as a result of improper self-care on the part of the chaplain.\textsuperscript{484} Chaplains who experience long-term stress and the resulting negative mental and physical effects often also undergo changes in their values and beliefs. Chaplains may experience doubt over their calling, the value of their ministry, or even a crisis of faith.\textsuperscript{485}

When a chaplain’s spiritual and emotional tank is empty it is impossible and dangerous to try to fill the tanks of other people.\textsuperscript{486} A chaplain must practice self-care

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{482} Ibid., 119.
\item \textsuperscript{483} Ibid., 116.
\item \textsuperscript{484} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{485} Ibid., 117.
\item \textsuperscript{486} Richard M. Gula, \textit{The Way of Goodness and Holiness} (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 1030.
\end{itemize}
before helping others.\textsuperscript{487} Appropriate self-care is not being selfish, but is recognition that a chaplain’s respecting of himself or herself is necessary to being fully alive in the Spirit. Being good to oneself makes it possible to be good to others. This is not promoting self-centeredness but is simply recognizing the need not to neglect oneself. The Great Commandment reveals that self-love is important, as to love God and one’s neighbor requires a love of oneself (Luke 10:27).\textsuperscript{488} Tending to the cares and needs of others must come from the overflow of God’s compassion and caring in a person’s life.\textsuperscript{489} The spiritual life does not focus only upon God, it also involves knowing something about oneself. The concept of self-care is built upon knowing that people are loved by God and have value separate from achievements.\textsuperscript{490} Self-care must begin with the reality of God’s love as the basis for a person’s self worth. This story illustrates the acceptance of God’s love:

One evening as the priest walked along the country road he came across an old man also out enjoying the twilight air. They walked and talked together until a sudden rain made them take shelter. When their conversation moved into silence, the old Irishman took his little prayer book and began praying half aloud. The priest watched him along while, then in a quiet whisper said, “You must be very close to God!” The old man smiled very deeply and answered, “Yes! He is very fond of me!”\textsuperscript{491}

Self-care involves developing lifelong habits that include proper eating, regular exercise, strengthening personal relationships, getting proper rest and sleep, and a consistent prayer and devotional life. Self-care includes preventive maintenance as well as a willingness to ask for help.\textsuperscript{492}

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\textsuperscript{487} Paget and McCormack, \textit{The Work of the Chaplain}, 117.
\textsuperscript{488} Gula, \textit{The Way of Goodness and Holiness}, 1023.
\textsuperscript{489} Paget and McCormack, \textit{The Work of the Chaplain}, 117.
\textsuperscript{490} Gula, \textit{The Way of Goodness and Holiness}, 1016.
\textsuperscript{491} Ibid., 59.
\textsuperscript{492} Paget and McCormack, \textit{The Work of the Chaplain}, 115.
Tending to the physical needs of the body is a part of self-care. Rest the body. Find ways to simplify life and get the necessary sleep. Replenish the body. Eat balanced meals, control excess calories and carbohydrates. Renew the body. Schedule regular physical checkups and never allow physical symptoms to go uninvestigated. Take vacations that provide a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual recharge. Release the body. Don’t allow the body to become an idol through an excessive focus while ignoring the care for the soul and relationships. ⁴⁹³

The threefold spiritual discipline of Scripture reading, prayer and reflection (journaling the experiences of life) are like three strands braided together to strengthen the life of a Christ-follower. Setting aside a quiet time or a daily devotion should be a part of the life of every Christ-follower. It is here that a person finds a rhythm of place and time and enjoys the loving arms of God. ⁴⁹⁴ Build into your schedule times of solitude. Solitude provides freedom from external forces that relentlessly crowd into a person’s life. ⁴⁹⁵ Solitude is about not doing something. Just as fasting is to refrain from eating, so solitude means to refrain from society. It is a withdrawal from conversation, the clutter and demands coming from many directions, in order to be still before God. ⁴⁹⁶ The sad reality of contemporary life is the rarity of silence. ⁴⁹⁷ Solitude is the critical discipline in developing the spiritual life by setting time apart to give God one’s total attention, free from the interruptions and distractions of life. ⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁴. Ibid., 83.
⁴⁹⁶. Ibid.
In discernment, “pay attention” is the imperative. Listening and seeing are essential skills in developing a discerning heart. The chaplain should desire to develop spiritual discernment. The goal is to uncover the best ways to respond to God’s directives for our lives. There are four methods of developing God-centered listening skills:

1. Immerse yourself in the truth of Scripture – read with the prevailing thought, “Lord, show me the truth about myself through your word.”

2. Develop the practice of silence and solitude – Henri Nouwen wrote, “Without solitude it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life.”

3. Connect with trusted Christian friends who will encourage you to live in truth.

4. Take faith risks by placing yourself in uncomfortable places.

Commit to removing hurry from your life. Hurry can play a role in keeping people from living well. As Carl Jung wrote, “Hurry is not of the devil; hurry is the devil.” Life gets weighed down by the burden associated with the many things a person did not say no to. “Hurry is not just a disordered schedule. It is a disordered heart.” Hurry keeps people consumed by “the cares and riches and pleasures of life,” as Jesus put it, impeding his way from reigning in a person’s heart. Jesus was well aware of the problem – he often withdrew and taught his followers to do the same. “Following Jesus cannot be done at a sprint. If we want to follow someone, we can’t go faster than the one who is leading.” This does not mean life will never get busy. Jesus often had much to do, but he never allowed it to interfere with his life-giving connection between him and

500. Ibid., 67.
503. Ibid., 80.
504. Ibid., 79.
505. Ibid., 78.
506. Ibid., 79.
his father. He always had time to give love when it was called for. His life was marked by regular time of withdrawal to solitude and prayer.\textsuperscript{507}

**Scripture Reading**

Engaging the Scriptures is a vital aspect of spiritual transformation, not for the purpose of a yearly Bible reading schedule or message preparation but rather to allow God’s word to speak to our heart and to our needs.\textsuperscript{508} The purpose of meditating on the Scriptures is to have one’s mind “washed by the word.”\textsuperscript{509} An approach to Scripture that enhances an open and receptive attitude is through lectio divina, an ancient method utilized by the desert mothers and fathers in which God addresses a person through the biblical text.\textsuperscript{510} Lectio divina is the practice of reading the Bible in an attitude of deep reverence and openness to what God is saying to a person at that moment.\textsuperscript{511}

**Prayer**

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. They noticed how Jesus desired regular periods of prayer which fed his soul as food fed his body. Jesus enjoyed a rich interactive relationship between himself and the father. In times of crisis, grief, need and fatigue, Jesus would pray. The disciples wanted to be nourished by praying as Jesus did.\textsuperscript{512} The prayers of God’s people are heard. Prayers matter and change things.\textsuperscript{513} Prayer involves not only speaking to God but also listening to God, receiving guidance from the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{514} In every encounter the chaplain should ask the Holy Spirit, “How can I respond to this person? What should I say or do?”\textsuperscript{515}

\textsuperscript{507} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{508} Barton, *Pursuing God’s will Together*, 637.
\textsuperscript{509} Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, 182.
\textsuperscript{510} Barton, *Pursuing God’s will Together*, 41.
\textsuperscript{511} Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation*, 246.
\textsuperscript{512} Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, 96.
\textsuperscript{513} Ibid., 94.
\textsuperscript{514} Ibid., 140.
\textsuperscript{515} Ibid., 151.
Discernment is developed in a person’s life through prayer. There are three types of prayer that foster discernment. The first is the *prayer of quiet trust*, in which a person recognizes their total dependence on God and trust in God. An illustration can be found in a child’s dependence on and trust in her mother. Another type of prayer to enhance discernment is the *prayer of indifference*, in which a person asks God to make him indifferent to anything but God’s will. Once a person is at the place of indifference she is ready for the *prayer of wisdom*: “If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and un-grudgingly, and it will be given you.” (James 1:5).

What should be prayed about? Keep the focus on what Richard Foster calls “simple prayer.” It means praying about what is really on a person’s heart. C. S. Lewis wrote that in prayer a person must “lay before him what is in us, not what ought to be in us.”

**Practical Suggestions for Spiritual Growth**

- Pray – developing a prayer life begins with a time and place. Start with five minutes a day. Choose a specific time of the day for focused prayer. Pray at a time of day when you are at your best – whether you’re an early bird or a nighthawk – a time that works for you. The setting for prayer is also important. Find a place free from distractions. Jesus often prayed outdoors in the beauty of creation.

- Slow Down – practical ways to slow down involves developing patience by intentionally choosing places where one must wait. Deliberately drive the speed limit

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to the kilometer. Slowdown eating. Choose the longest line at the checkout. Offer a person to go ahead of you in the line.\textsuperscript{520} Take a week and “unplug.” Plan a one week television/movie fast. Ask God to help you declare a “week of Jubilee.” Use the time saved to do things you need or planned to do. Get extra rest, read a book, have a meaningful conversation.\textsuperscript{521}

- Plan Solitude – build solitude into the calendar. There can be brief times of solitude on a regular basis, each day, half days, full days or combined days. At the start of a day begin by praying over the schedule. Take five minute breaks to commune with God. At the end of the day review it with God.\textsuperscript{522} Plan for extended solitude by taking a one-day retreat. Use a retreat center or any place that provides an undisturbed location. Plan the day focused on listening to God.\textsuperscript{523} In times of ministry fatigue take your own “Emmaus walk” (Luke 24:13-22), inviting the Holy Spirit to walk with you. Enjoy his presence, share your deepest feelings, thoughts and issues of your life. Accept his invitation to come and find the rest you need (Matthew 11:28). Be refreshed, renewed and reenergized by his power to continue the work of a chaplain.\textsuperscript{524}

**Developing Listening Skills**

Knowing when to speak and when to listen is critical in caring for others.\textsuperscript{525} An important step in learning to listen begins with daily listening to Jesus, the ultimate listener. Another component to developing the skill of listening is preparation. Prior to

\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{521} Ibid., 72.
\textsuperscript{522} Ibid., 87.
\textsuperscript{523} Ibid., 89.
\textsuperscript{525} Campolo and Darling, *Connecting Like Jesus*, 78.
meeting with someone, pray for the person, asking the Holy Spirit to bring to mind
details, guiding in when to speak and/or not speak. Listening for the unspoken cues to
a person’s needs involves asking the Holy Spirit to give wisdom in spotting peripheral
details that may distract from the main issues. Those who are natural talkers find it
hard to imagine that people often prefer a person’s presence and not their talk. Listening includes paying attention not only to what is spoken but also to the possible
meanings beyond what is actually said. It is important not to jump to conclusions since
appearances can sometimes deceive. Proverbs 18:13 points out the mistake of the listener
being too eager to speak, providing pat answers as solutions before actually listening.
Seeking clarification from a person as to how they feel avoids the problem of using
words that do not accurately communicate true feelings. The word “noise” is a
technical term used in communication and can refer to internal or external factors that
interfere with communication. Both exercising silence in one’s life and learning to
block out internal and external noise can develop sensitivity and skill in listening.

Barriers to deep listening involve failing to recognize how one is listening. The
following questions can identify possible barriers:

- How are my responses being received?
- Am I guilty of being too lighthearted and not allowing the other to be serious?
- Am I too serious and not making room for humor?
- Am I preoccupied and not providing my full attention?

526. Ibid., 83.
527. Ibid., 68.
528. Ibid., 78.
529. Ibid., 67.
    (Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2000), 571.
531. Campolo and Darling, Connecting Like Jesus, 69.
532. Ibid., 77.
533. Ibid.
Interrupting indicates that a person is not listening well, as illustrated by Proverbs 18:13. Talking too much also prevents deep listening since one cannot talk and listen at the same time. Ask:

1. Do I take it upon myself to keep a conversation going?
2. When there are more than a few seconds of silence, do I automatically try to find something to say?
3. Do I often give advice?
4. Do I think what I have to say is superior to what the other person is saying?

Answering yes to two or more of these questions indicates likely barriers to listening.\textsuperscript{534}

The Mental Health Commission of Canada provides this useful guide to developing listening skills:

\textbf{You are not listening to me when…}

- You do not care about me, and you cannot care about me until you know something about me to care about.
- You say you understand before you know me well enough.
- You have an answer for my problem before I finish telling you what my problem is.
- You cut me off before I have finished speaking.
- You feel critical of my grammar, accent, culture, or way of doing and saying things.
- You are communicating to someone else in the room.
- You are dying to tell me something or want to correct me.

\textsuperscript{534} Ibid., 77.
• You are trying to sort out the details and are not aware of the feelings behind the words.
• You sense my problem is embarrassing and you are avoiding it.
• You get excited and stimulated by what I am saying and want to jump right in before I invite your response.
• You need to feel successful.
• You tell me about your experience which makes mine seem unimportant.
• You refuse my thanks by saying you haven’t done anything.

You are listening to me when…
• You come quietly into my private world and let me be.
• You really try to understand me when I do not make sense.
• You grasp my point of view when it goes against your sincere conviction.
• You realize the hour I took from you has left you feeling a bit tired and drained.
• You didn’t tell me the funny story you are just bursting to tell me.
• You allowed me the dignity of making my own decisions even though you felt I was wrong.
• You didn’t take my problem from me but trusted me to deal with it in my own way.
• You gave me enough room to discover for myself why I felt upset and enough time to think for myself what was best.
• You held back the desire to give me good advice.
• You accepted my gift of gratitude by telling me it was good to know I had been helped.\footnote{Mental Health First Aid Canada (n.p.: Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2011), Section 2, 10-11.}
Deep listening is an essential component of providing a safe and caring environment – which also involves the ethical issue of permission and confidentiality. Chaplains are not entitled to talk, but should seek permission to engage in conversation. The assurance of strict confidentiality (except for instances of potential personal harm) must always be the chaplain’s practice. 536

Chaplains re Emotional Health

*Hockey chaplains are not mental health professionals.* This does not mean chaplains have no role to play in this area since they can be equipped to recognize symptoms of potential mental health problems. Chaplains can operate as an “early warning system,” identifying potential issues. Being front-line people, they are in a strong position to direct an individual towards appropriate professional help. The Public Health Agency of Canada provides a definition of mental health as:

> ... the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.” 537

It is interesting to note that a government agency recognizes a spiritual dimension as part of overall mental health. Here the chaplain can be a valuable resource to those needing assistance for emotional and spiritual well-being.

The chaplain needs to be aware of the resources accessible to players. The QMJHL Players Assistance Program is available to every player in the league who might be facing addictions, substance abuse problems, and mental health issues. The Director of this program provides leadership in co-ordinating cases with a team of professionals trained in these fields. Chaplains should also be aware of the resources available locally,

537. *Mental Health First Aid Canada*, Section 1, 1, emphasis mine.
for example: crisis lines, hospital emergency department, social worker, psychologist or mental health worker, family doctor, other clergy, school or work counseling services.

Given the variety and number of mental health problems, this manual will provide only an introduction to mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and substance-related disorders – the two most common mental health issues being depression and anxiety.

The five basic steps of assessing a possible mental health problem are known as the ALGEE model or approach:

Step 1. – **Assess** the potential risk of suicide and/or harm. “Assess” is a term referring to the evaluation of the situation to determine the best way to help. If it is concluded that there is little or no risk, the chaplain can continue with care.

Step 2. – **Listen**. The chaplain employs active listening skills (verbal and nonverbal) to enable him or her to hear and understand what is being communicated and to enable the person to speak freely and comfortably regarding the situation.

Step 3. – **Give** reassurance and information. Give the person hope and optimism that there are effective treatments readily available

Step 4. – **Encourage** the individual to get appropriate professional help. Assist the person in identifying the most appropriate professional person/service for their mental health problem.

Step 5. – **Encourage** other supports. Explore with the person ways to help themselves or by reaching out to family, friends and other support systems.

The greatest risk in any mental health situation is self-harm. Since the five steps do not necessarily have to follow a fixed order, the chaplain must exercise judgment regarding the order and be flexible in any given situation. It is important to convey to the person experiencing mental health problems, that the chaplain is a person who can be
trusted and respected. Note: confidentiality does not apply when a person is at risk of harming themselves or others.  

**Mood Disorder**

**Anxiety Disorders**

Everyone experiences anxiety at some time – it is a natural response, useful in helping us to avoid dangerous situations and motivating us to solve everyday problems. Anxiety can range from mild uneasiness to a panic attack. It can last for a few moments, days, weeks, months, or even a lifetime. While normal anxiety occurs for a limited time in a person who then returns to a normal physical, emotional and behavioral state, people with anxiety disorders have excessively high levels of anxiety that impede day-to-day living. An anxiety disorder is different from normal anxiety in the following ways: it is more severe or intense; it is long-lasting; it interferes with the person’s ability to function; it takes place when a person is not in a state of danger. “An anxiety disorder affects the way the person feels, thinks and behaves, and if not treated could become chronic and lead to considerable suffering and disability, depression, substance use or other co-morbidities and problems.”

**Signs and symptoms of anxiety disorders**

Anxiety can manifest itself in a variety of ways:

- **Psychological:**
  - Fear, a sense of impending doom or imminent danger
  - Excessive inappropriate worry

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538. Ibid., Section 1, 4.


• Fear of dying or “going crazy”
• Decreased attention and concentration
• Environment feels unreal and unfamiliar
• Feeling detached from oneself
• Speeding or slowing of thoughts
• Easily distracted, irritability, insomnia, and vivid dreams

Physical:
• Cardiovascular (heart palpitations, chest pain, rapid heart rate, flushing)
• Respiratory (hyperventilation, shortness of breath)
• Neurological (dizziness, headache, vertigo, tingling or numbness of the skin)
• Gastrointestinal (choking, dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)
• Musculoskeletal (muscle ache in tension, restlessness) 541

Panic Attack

A panic attack occurs when four or more of the following symptoms develop abruptly and reach a peak within 10 minutes. This intense fear is inappropriate for the circumstances in which it is occurring.
• Intense fear, inappropriate to the circumstances
• Palpitations, pounding heart, or accelerated heart rate
• Sweating
• Trembling or shaking; feeling of choking

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Nausea or abnormal distress
- Feeling of unreality or detachment from oneself or from one’s surroundings
- Feeling dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded or faint
- Fear of losing control or going “crazy”
- Fear of dying
- Numbness, tingling sensation
- Chills or “hot flashes”

Many of these physical symptoms appear similar to a heart attack. A person experiencing a panic attack often has a sense of impending doom or death.\textsuperscript{542}

**Crisis handling for panic attack**

1. Call for help. It is difficult to tell the difference between a heart attack and a panic attack. Always err on the side of caution, and call emergency services.
2. If possible, move the person to a quieter, private location and have him sit down.
3. Try to calm the person by encouraging slow, relaxed breathing in unison with your own. The breathing will become slower as the person becomes more relaxed.
4. Be a good listener, remain calm.
5. Explain to the person that he may be experiencing a panic attack and not something life-threatening, such as a heart attack. Explain that if it is a panic attack, it will soon stop and that he will recover fully.

\textsuperscript{542} "Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders,” 249–476.
6. Assure the person that someone will stay with him and keep him safe until the attack stops or medical help arrives.\textsuperscript{543}

**Help for Anxiety Problems**

ALGEE – 1. Assess the risk of suicide and/or harm

2. Listen

3. Give reassurance – help her to realize that she has a real medical condition. An anxiety disorder is a common illness and not a sign of weakness. Effective help is available. Skills can be learned to reduce the effects of stress and anxiety.

4. Encourage the person to get appropriate professional help. See a family doctor first.

5. Encourage other supports.

**Key points about self-help for anxiety:**

- Anxiety is best overcome by confronting fears rather than by avoiding them. However, confronting fears needs to be done in a safe manner. The earlier fears are confronted, the sooner the person will get better.

- Learn and practice daily relaxation methods to reduce physical symptoms of tension.

- Reduce caffeine intake to 300 mg or less per day.

- Get enough sleep.

- Engage in leisure time and pleasurable activities.

- Learn and practice controlled breathing methods (slow, relaxed breathing) to reduce physical symptoms of anxiety, fear and panic. Avoid breathing too deeply or rapidly (hyperventilation) as this can cause physical symptoms of panic.

• Identify and challenge exaggerated worries and pessimistic thoughts.
• Realise that avoiding feared situations allows the anxiety or fear to grow even stronger.
• Follow a set of specific steps to help overcome fear or phobia.
• Talk about your anxiety problems with other people at self-help groups.\textsuperscript{544}

**Substance Related-Disorders**

People use substances for various reasons. Use does not necessarily mean a person has a problem. There are many factors that determine when it becomes a problem. There are many types of substances that can be purchased illegally or legally, such as nicotine, alcohol, prescription and non-prescription drugs, caffeine, and illicit drugs.\textsuperscript{545}

Substance abuse is significant impairment in one or more of the following areas within a 12 month period:

• Failure to meet role obligations at work, school, or home because of recurrent substance use.
• Recurrent substance use in situations where it is physically hazardous.
• Continued substance use despite problems.

Substance dependence – where three or more of the following symptoms occur within a 12-month period:

• Increased tolerance for the substance (person needs increased amounts over time to get the same effect)
• Use of larger amounts or over longer periods than intended

\textsuperscript{544} Mental Health First Aid Canada, Section 4, 7-10.
• Problems cutting down or controlling use

The person gives up or reduces important social, occupational or recreational activities because of substance use

• The person continues using the substance despite suffering from its ill effects

Mental Health Assistance for Substance Problems

Implement ALGEE.

Depressive Disorder (Depression)

“Depression is a psychological state – an emotional response to life. In particular, it is a feeling of hopelessness and despair that’s often accompanied by self-hate and self-blame. These feelings can vary from barely perceptible to overwhelming. They can last for moments or for a lifetime.”

The word “depression” is used in a variety of ways. All people face times of sadness, but that is not depression. People who go through “the blues” may experience a short-term depressed mood, but go on functioning normally and soon recover without treatment. Major depression is characterized by either a depressed mood or the loss of interest or enjoyment in nearly all activities for a period of at least two weeks.

Outward signs of depression

Physical appearance – a depressed person may:

• Look sad, dejected or anxious
• Speak slowly, in monotones
• Look untidy (neglect physical appearance and personal hygiene)

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- Exhibits slowed thinking and body movements or agitation (unable to sit still, pacing, or hand wringing)
- Have decreased energy, tiredness and fatigue

**Attitudes** – a depressed person may say things, such as:
- “I’m a failure.”
- “I have let everyone down.”
- “It’s all my fault.”
- “Nothing good ever happens to me.”
- “I’m worthless.”
- “No one loves me.”
- “I am so alone.”
- “Life is not worth living.”
- “There is nothing good out there.”
- “Things will always be bad.”

**Symptoms of Major Depressive Disorder (Clinical Depression)**

A clinically depressed person will present five or more of the following symptoms over a two-week period, in a change from their normal mood and behavior. At least one symptom will be either a depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in activities.

- An unusually sad mood most of the day in nearly every day. The person will experience depressed feelings (e.g., sadness and emptiness); the depressed mood is observed by others (e.g., appears to be tearful)

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549. Ibid., 349–51.
• Loss of enjoyment and interest in activities that used to be enjoyable
• A significant weight gain or loss even when not dieting
• Sleeping too much or too little, nearly every day
• Moving more slowly or becoming agitated and unable to settle
• Lack of energy, chronic tiredness
• Inappropriate feelings of guilt and worthlessness, nearly every day
• Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, nearly every day
• Reoccurring thoughts of death – suicidal thoughts

Risk factors for depression

Depression has no single cause and can involve many factors. A person may become depressed without any explanation or, conversely, may become depressed following a distressing experience beyond personal control. Examples include:

• A breakup of a relationship
• Having a baby
• Loss of a job and difficulty finding a new one
• Having an accident which results in long-term disability
• Being a victim of crime
• Developing a long-term physical illness
• Unresolved bereavement, particularly in childhood
• Death of a family member or friend

Depression can also result from:

• Side effects of certain medications or drugs

550. Ibid.
• The stress of having another mental disorder such as severe anxiety or an eating disorder
• Lack of exposure to bright light in the winter months
• Substance dependence (alcohol or illegal drug use)

Suicide in Canada

Health Canada reports that 13.4% of Canadians over 15 years of age have thought seriously about suicide in their lifetime. Between 3,500 and 4,000 Canadians of all ages and from all walks of life die by suicide each year. Suicide is ranked ninth in the leading causes of death in Canada.

Specific warning signs for suicide include:

• Expressing negative comments about self
• Expressing intent to die by suicide and having a plan to do so
• Telling final wishes to someone close
• Giving away prized possessions or putting personal affairs in order
• Loss of interest in friends, hobbies or previously – enjoyed activities
• Loss of energy
• Loss of appetite
• Changes in sleep pattern
• Repeated expressions of hopelessness or desperation

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551. Ibid., 342.


• A sudden change in appearance or behavior, for better or for worse, can also be a warning sign\textsuperscript{554}

**Assess the Risk of Suicide/Harm**

Most mental health problems carry with them an increased risk of suicide. A person can become so overwhelmed that her future appears hopeless and suicide is considered her only option. How does the chaplain go about asking the person about suicide?

First – Engage the person in a serious conversation about how he is feeling. Connect with him in a personal way. It is important that you establish a comfortable relationship in which the person can openly share how he is feeling and what is happening. Ask questions to generate a response concerning how and why he is feeling a certain way. Listen carefully for any signs that might be an invitation to talk about suicide.

Secondly – determine if the person is thinking of suicide by asking a direct question, “Are you thinking of killing yourself?” Or, “Are you having thoughts of suicide?” Such a direct question does not promote thoughts of suicide; rather, asking a direct question about suicide indicates that you care, that you realize she may have considered suicide and that you’re ready to talk with her about it. This opportunity to discuss feelings and emotions about suicide is often a great relief to people. If the answer is “no” then move to the next step in ALGEE. If you are unsure about her response, continue to engage the person in conversation, and, if necessary, ask her again about possible suicidal thoughts.

Thirdly – Explore and assess the risk. Continue to ask questions and listen to what is happening in the person’s life. Explore his reason for wanting to die but also reasons for wanting to live. What has changed to make him think about suicide now? Ask if he has a plan for suicide. Does he have the items prepared to kill himself? Is there a plan as to how, when or where? Has he ever attempted suicide in the past? If so, he is at greater risk. Ask him about possible supports. “Are you feeling alone and with no supports?” “Who do you think you could turn to for help?”

Fourthly – Engage the person in a plan for safety. Discuss with the person a plan to keep her safe and provide a sense of hope. When a person has a plan for suicide, work as cooperatively as possible to disable the plan. Ensure that the person does not have ready access to the means to kill herself. Help the person to agree not to kill herself for a manageable period of time. Provide her with accessible contact information, such as a crisis line number or emergency service number. Try to ensure that she does not take any more drugs or alcohol by asking her to agree not to use it or take it away. Connect her with appropriate professional help or other resources that she trusts and respects. Examples: local crisis lines, hospital emergency department, social worker, psychologist or mental health worker, family doctor, other clergy, school or work counseling service, emergency medical services. Help her to connect with support resources to protect against feeling alone. If necessary, ensure the person is not left alone. Stay with her as a supportive resource or arrange for another safe person to be with her.
Any communication of suicidal thoughts should be taken seriously. If you believe that person is at imminent risk of harming himself/herself, seek professional help immediately by calling 911 and do not leave the individual until other help is in place.

Final Thoughts on Mental Health

In recent years there has been a tremendous emphasis on mental health to the point that some have raised the concern that it has become overemphasized. To illustrate: In 2000, a satirical article was published entitled “Pathology of the Hundred Acre Wood.” Winnie the Pooh, the hero of A.A. Milne’s 1926 children’s classic, appears to be a perfectly healthy bear, but on closer examination is discovered to be suffering from ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder) and is a binge eater – just to name a few of his issues. But Pooh is not alone: Rabbit displays qualities of a narcissistic personality syndrome; Owl is emotionally disturbed, making him dyslexic; and Piglet suffers from generalized anxiety; Eeyore the donkey struggles with low self-esteem and is unable to enjoy himself.555

The spoof seeks to make the point that our society is fixated on the idea that a large portion of the population is emotionally damaged. There has been an ever-increasing emphasis on therapy and the role of helping professionals. While not diminishing the advances in psychology and other medical sciences, there is evidence to support the view that generally human beings are “self-reliant, resilient, sound moral agents responsible for their own behavior.”556 “The mental health profession must find a balance between offering its services and promoting them too eagerly, between letting

people know help is available and suggesting to them that they need help when they do not. The chaplain should be aware that he or she can play an important role in the emotional and mental well-being of hockey players. Sometimes a cup of coffee, a breakfast and a listening ear can go a long way in helping young players through a difficult situation. But is is also important to note that there are situations which are beyond the range of a chaplain where professional help will be necessary.

557. Ibid., 214.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

Do hockey chaplains have a place and role in hockey? This work has sought the answer to this question. Where does one look to answer this question? For the Christian, the source is found in the Scriptures. *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* states:

Question 2: “What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him?”
Answer: “The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.” In Scripture we find the divine imperative to love. It is a love for God and a love for our neighbor that propel the chaplain forward, entering the arena to serve God and people.

In the “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus instructed his followers to “…let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16b). Here was one of many directives to go to the people and make a difference, to bring the gospel to the needy and the hurting. Light shines bright in dark places. The hockey arena is a location that so desperately needs God’s light to shine. Jesus at the end of his parable of the “Good Samaritan” concluded with the imperative to “go and do likewise,” referring to the love and compassion shown by the Samaritan to the needy traveler.

In the manner in which he engaged the pluralistic culture of his own day, Paul provided a timeless example of how Christians can connect and communicate with people who live in pluralistic twenty-first century North America. Finding the common ground and engaging the people in their domain, Paul spoke the language of the culture and met individuals in their area of need.

The kingdom of God was central to Jesus’ mission and ministry. His emphasis heightens the attention Christians should pay to the subject. Jesus reminds his followers
that kingdom life, as he outlined in his teaching, must be on display in every setting of life. Here is the mandate chaplains receive to serve, give and sacrifice for the people they meet in the hockey arena.

The issue of sports in relation to the Christian faith has two thousand years of church history to draw from. Have there been lessons learned as the church has wrestled with the subject? Opposition to sports by church leaders at various periods has largely been replaced with an embracing of sports. No longer is it seen as competition with the church but rather an opportunity to connect and engage with the culture that has in many ways pushed the church to the sidelines.

What has become clear is the opportunity which has developed in the sport of hockey for chaplains to go and serve. Chaplains go with the desire to make themselves available for God to use as he sees fit. Chaplains are available to be used by him for his purposes, ministering to the needs of people. The call by Jesus to “go” is clearly a call to go to people. Go to where they gather, go and share in their journey, go to be “salt and light.”

Hockey chaplains in the QMJHL have shared their passion for ministry and their “calling” to go to the arenas across Quebec and the Maritime provinces to reach out to junior hockey players, coaches, trainers, front office staff, Zamboni drivers, families and fans to share the gospel in word and deed. Chaplains have expressed their desire to be supported in their role in specific areas, familiarizing themselves with the hockey culture, learning to be active listeners, growing deeper in their own spiritual development, being better prepared in communicating God’s word in chapel, and helping the broken and needy through counseling and care.
There is an important role for the chaplain in the hockey world. The need for a support system for hockey players, especially junior hockey aged players (ages 16-20), is continuing to be recognized by those in the hockey world and within the faith community. Chaplains fill a significant role in providing for the emotional and spiritual needs of these young athletes. As well, God has opened a door of opportunity for chaplains to minister to others in the hockey world in their familiar settings. Chaplains have the privilege of joining God in his mission to the hockey world. In the final book of the Bible, God reminds his people: “I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.” (Rev. 3:8).
Appendix A

Letter of Invitation (Sent by email on September, 22, 2015, 7:09pm AST)

Letter of Invitation to Participants

Dear Chaplain,

Thank you for your interest in this research thesis. I would like you to consider this letter as a formal invitation to be a part of a study on Hockey Chaplains.

My name is Bruce Smith, a full-time worker with Hockey Ministries International, and a Doctoral Student at Acadia Divinity College at Acadia University in Wolfville, NS, Canada. I am conducting a study on Hockey Chaplains. I can be contacted by email at hmiatlantic@gmail.com or by phone at (506) 849-4488. My Supervisor’s name is Dr. Carol Anne Janzen and can be reached at carol.anne.janzen@acadiau.ca. If you have any questions please contact either of us. If you have any concerns about the ethical nature of this research, you may contact Stephen Maitzen, Chair of the Acadia University Research Ethics Board, by email at: smaitzen@acadiau.ca or by phone at (902) 585-1407.

The purpose of this research is to gain greater insight into the role and responsibilities of Hockey Chaplains. I am seeking to explore the role and training needs of Hockey Chaplains in order to provide greater support for Hockey Chaplains through further training and equipping.
If you consent to be part of this study, you will be asked to complete a survey and questionnaire and return it to me. To maintain your anonymity I will need you to create a pseudonymous email address using a free service such as Gmail. You should choose pseudonyms that will not allow me to guess your identity (so, for example, not ‘mooseheadschaplain@gmail.com’). I would suggest you use a long number or alphanumeric that will be meaningful to you but not to me.

After you contact me by email using the pseudonym, I will send you the email survey, to be answered using your pseudonymous account and returned to me. If there is need to have real-time interaction, then we could set up a text-only ‘chat’ session with you as a pseudonymous respondent.

The survey should take between 10-20 minutes of your time. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may refuse to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw from this study at any time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bruce Smith

Director, HMI Atlantic
Appendix B

Consent Form (first page of the survey)

Introduction: My name is Bruce Smith, a full-time worker with Hockey Ministries International, and a Doctoral Student at Acadia Divinity College at Acadia University in Wolfville, NS, Canada. I am conducting a study on Hockey Chaplains. I can be contacted by email at hmiatlantic@gmail.com or by phone at (506) 849-4488. My Supervisor’s name is Dr. Carol Anne Janzen and she can be reached at carol.anne.janzen@acadiau.ca. If you have any questions please contact either of us. If you have any concerns about the ethical nature of this research, you may contact Stephen Maitzen, Chair of the Acadia University Research Ethics Board, by email at: smaitzen@acadiau.ca or by phone at (902) 585-1407.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to study the roles and responsibilities of Hockey Chaplains. I am seeking to understand the roles and training needs of Hockey Chaplains. From the research a formal training program will be developed to provide greater support for Hockey Chaplains.

Procedure: If you consent, you will be asked to answer several questions and return your response to me via email. A follow-up interview may be requested and will be set up by text chat to maintain your anonymity. The results will be compiled from all the Hockey Chaplains who responded. The surveys will be stored in a locked drawer in my office. The survey results will be deleted after the thesis has been approved.

Time Required: Completing the survey should take 10-20 minutes of your time. Any follow-up interview by text chat should be a 20-30 minute time commitment.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may refuse to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. You are free to withdraw at any point.

Risks: There are no risks associated with this survey.

Benefits: This research will provide insight into the role of Hockey Chaplains across North America. It will help HMI identify strengths and areas that need improvement. It is our desire to support Hockey Chaplains in their roles and responsibilities.

Confidentiality/Anonymity: You will remain anonymous in this study with pseudonyms assigned to protect your identity. Your response will be received by me and kept in confidence. Because of my supervisory role, please be assured you will not be penalized in any way for content. If you choose to use a workplace computer, your employer may have access to the information you have submitted for the study.
Sharing the Results: A chapter of the thesis will be written based on the findings and conclusions gained from the research. The results of the survey will reveal strengths along with specific areas of need where HMI can focus to better train and equip chaplains through a formal Hockey Chaplain Training Program.

It is my intention to present the results to HMI leadership of HMI Ministry Centre. I also plan to share the results of the research with my research readers and selected faculty at Acadia Divinity College. The thesis will become a public document.

Publication: There is no plan to publish this information.

Before you Send: By sending your response you are agreeing to participate in this study. By sending you also understand that you do not waive your rights to legal recourse for research related harm.

Hockey Chaplain Survey

PART A

1. Why do you serve as a Hockey Chaplain? (Rank in order of importance, 1 being the highest)
   __ I believe God has called me to serve Him in this role.
   __ I enjoy/am gifted in ministering to hockey players.
   __ I have a pastoral heart.
   __ I see the opportunity to serve the Lord as a Hockey Chaplain.
   __ I was presented with the need and felt I should respond.
   __ I want to combine my love of hockey with ministry.
   __ Other (please specify). ______________________________________

2. How do you view your role as a Hockey Chaplain? (Rank in order of importance, 1 being the highest)
   __ As a chapel service leader.
   __ Dedicated to praying for the team on a regular basis.
   __ Making myself available for the club in times of crisis and grief.
   __ As a supporter and encourager of each individual member of the team.
   __ Being present to reflect the love of Christ to all who I encounter.
3. What are your responsibilities as a Hockey Chaplain? (Indicate areas that you have had opportunity to serve your team)

___ Leading team chapels
___ Pastoral counseling (grief, crisis, relationships)
___ Providing encouragement
___ Praying at special functions (team dinners, banquets, etc.)
___ Spiritual mentoring
___ Praying for the team on a regular basis
___ Team supporter at games/practices
___ Other (please specify)

4. Where are you most fulfilled serving as a Hockey Chaplain? (Rank in order, 1 being the highest)

___ Leading team chapels.
___ One-on-one opportunities to support and encourage.
___ Sharing the Gospel.
___ Distributing Scriptures.
___ Simply making myself available to serve the team as requested.
___ Praying for the team.
5. In what areas do you experience the greatest frustration as a hockey chaplain? (Select all that apply)

- Lack of communication from coaches re-changing of schedules.
- Lukewarm response from players to your presence.
- No access to team dressing room.
- Struggle to connect with individual players and coaches.
- Unclear as to the team’s expectations of your role.
- Juggling time demands as a Hockey Chaplain with other areas of responsibility.

- Other (please specify).

6. Where have you experienced opposition or support in your role as Hockey Chaplain? () in the box(s) that applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Opposed</th>
<th>Some Opposition</th>
<th>Some Support</th>
<th>Full Support</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaches</td>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Front Office</td>
<td>Players</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. How would you rate your training and equipping in the following areas of ministry? (X) in the box(s) that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapel leading</th>
<th>Message preparation</th>
<th>Pastoral counseling</th>
<th>Listening skills</th>
<th>Hockey knowledge</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Training</td>
<td>Limited Training</td>
<td>Some Training</td>
<td>Well Trained</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

__(Specify)__

___
8. In what areas could HMI support you in your role as a hockey chaplain? (×) in the box(s) that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Support Necessary</th>
<th>Some Support Appreciated</th>
<th>Some Support Needed</th>
<th>Much Support Needed</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Message preparation & Resources
Pastoral counseling
Listening skills
Development
Part B. If you are willing to complete this section, please share from your experiences as a Hockey Chaplain. Your personal accounts would add greatly to the research. Please do not use team name, players, coaches, etc so that you can maintain your anonymity.

9. Describe an experience, if any, where you encountered opposition as a Hockey Chaplain.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

10. Describe an experience in which you saw God at work in your ministry.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
Bibliography


Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. theqmjhl.ca/teams/2 (accessed November 24, 2015).


