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Christianity and the Media

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Internet Analysis

The *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website and *Ignatian Spirituality* website includes external connections and formal connections which involve the outside world and connecting with other people. People can work, intern, or volunteer for the *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* and for the *Ignatian Spirituality* website, people can go on spiritual retreats throughout the world. The sites can be analyzed using a discourse analysis which involves analyzing the text, and an author-approach analysis which involves analyzing the intentions of the author(s). I have used my personal knowledge and learning of Jesuit principles to understand the message behind these sites and believe that Christianity is heading in the right direction. The *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website and *Ignatian Spirituality* website includes formal and external connections, the ability to analyze through a discourse and author-approach analysis, understandable content, and a step in the right direction for Christianity (“Billy Graham”; “Christ Our Life”; “Home”; “Retreats”; “Topics”; “What We Believe”; Lynch).

There are ways that the *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website connects to the external world. People can volunteer, be an employee, and be an intern for the organization. This would allow them to connect with other people and allow them to work together to represent what it means to live the Christian faith. Serving others

through this organization and in general is a characteristic of Christianity and part of the Christian culture. This is because ancient believers in Christ have had previous encounters with Him and witnessed Christ serving others, and this has been passed on to later generations of Christians (“Billy Graham”).

Christians can also make formal connections to this website. This is because they have been taught over the years to proclaim the Gospel of Christ just as the site says that the people in the organization do. Christians have also been taught that they can grow in their faith and can find direction and encouragement through Christ. Faithful Christians have been taught to give to other people and to organizations that encourage their beliefs and spread the Gospel. People can also turn their life to Christ or decide not to believe in Christ based on the devotions and information on the site (“Billy Graham”).

The information on the *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website can be analyzed using a discourse analysis. A discourse analysis is a useful tool for analyzing the meaning and how it is constructed in text. Foucault uses the word discourse to refer to the language and how the language constructs our understanding of the real world. Discourse analysis reflects on the knowledge of human culture and reflects on assumptions, thinking, tension, and disagreement. The key point of this analysis is that popular texts are places where discourses are expressed, developed, and challenged. These discourses are reflected and seen in how people think of themselves, speak to each other, and act (Lynch 146-148).

Based on the information from the site, the organization encourages people to think and express their faith in Christ through sharing their faith, praying, and getting to

know Jesus. They can also get help from the site on different topics that relate to everyday life. These topics include Christian living, Christianity, crisis situations, culture, lifestyle, relationships, and religion. The site also gives information about what they do to spread the Gospel of Christ and how they travel to places to do this. Other people can speak to each other about this information if they so choose to and can express Christian ideas in a similar way if they want to or not (“Topics”).

Meanwhile, an author-focused approach explores how a particular piece of culture reflects the background, personality, and intentions of the author(s). This approach says that by knowing more about the author, people can have a clearer image of the core meanings of the particular piece. The analysis allows users to understand that the people that are involved with the *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* wrote a statement of faith. They believe in the Word of God; the fact that there is only one God; the fact that Jesus is the only way to salvation; the idea that is God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the ministry of evangelism; prayer; and human life being sacred. The main people involved with the organization are Billy Graham, Franklin Graham, and Will Graham. They all grew up as Christians who have learned to preach the Gospel of Christ (Lynch 112; “What We Believe”).

Meanwhile, there are ways that the *Ignatian Spirituality* website connects externally to people. People can go on retreats based on the information on the retreat centers throughout the world. This would allow them to connect with other people and allow them to work together to represent what it means to be involved with Jesuit teachings and social justice. Being involved with spiritual exercises and reflecting on one’s faith in Christ is a general characteristic of the Jesuits. This is because ancient

believers in Christ have had previous encounters with Him and witnessed Christ praying, reflecting, and applying Jesuit values of being with and for others, and this has been passed on to later generations of believers in Christ (“Retreats”).

Christians can also make formal connections to this website. This is because there have been people throughout the world who have been educated on Jesuit values of being with and for others. For example, Saint Joseph’s University teaches its students Jesuit teachings such as loving others and having spiritual reflections. Christians have also been taught that they can grow in their faith and can find direction and encouragement through spiritual reflection, social justice, and prayer through Christ. Faithful Christians have been taught to give to other people and to organizations that encourage their beliefs and spread the Jesuit values and the Gospel (“Home”).

Based on the information from the site, the information could also be used for a discourse analysis. The site encourages people to think and express their faith in Christ through sharing their faith, devotions, knowing Jesus, praying, and reflecting on everyday life. The site also gives information about what Jesuits do to spread the Gospel of Christ and how they have reflections, prayers, and service opportunities to do so. Other people can speak to each other about this information if they so choose to and can express Jesuit ideas in a similar manner (“Home”; “Retreats”).

This site could also be analyzed using an author-approach analysis. The *Loyola Press* is a publishing company and Jesuit Ministry who is responsible for designing the site. Their goal is to have their publishing help people find God in everything and to help people develop a personal relationship with Christ. They continue the Jesuit

tradition of service and excellence through their publishing and being men and women with and for others (“Christ Our Life”).

The *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website relates to my personal experience. This is because I have been a fan of Billy Graham for a long time and am interested in his message of the Gospel. He basically invites people to be Christ-like through his preaching and teaches about the Bible based on the website. I have also gotten to know more about his son Franklin Graham and Will Graham through the site, social media posts, and live streaming on social media. I like how they preach the Gospel and invite people to join him in coming to Christ at his events. The website shows his and the other members dedication to Christ, which is what I strive to do through words and actions.

Meanwhile, the *Ignatian Spirituality* website focuses more on what I learned about Jesuit values. I have learned about reflections, prayers, and social justice through classes, retreats, and service trips at this university. The website gives me more knowledge about applying what I have learned at this university and gives different types of spiritual exercises that are helpful for my faith. I strive to love God and others for the greater glory of God.

I think the websites for Christianity are heading in the right direction. The *Ignatian Spirituality* website and *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website are modern and include images and information that people in modern times would recognize and interact with as a user. They also have social media accounts for people to interact with the people involved with the websites and ministries (“Billy Graham”; “Home”).

Thus, I see Christianity growing based off of these sites. This is because modern technology has allowed for more interaction among people throughout the world whether they are millennials or the older generations. The millennials are used to social media and can relate to it and could possibly follow or like the organizations and become a follower of Christ. The older generations are getting the hang of new technology through computers and the workplace, and therefore can possibly become a follower of Christ if they choose to do so based on the websites.

The *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association* website and *Ignatian Spirituality* website includes content that helps with external and formal connections, the ability to analyze through a discourse and author-approach, content that can be understood, and a step in the right direction for Christianity. The sites have external connections and formal connections which involve the outside world and connecting with other people. The sites can be analyzed using a discourse and author-approach analysis. I have used my knowledge of Christianity to understand the message behind these sites, and believe Christianity is heading in the right direction (“Billy Graham”; “Christ Our Life”; “Home”; “Retreats”; “Topics”; “What We Believe”; Lynch).

Works Cited

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