LIBERTY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE CONTINUNING PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF PASTORS

A Thesis Project Submitted to
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for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

George Wayne Thomas

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Dissertation Project Approval Sheet

Grade_____

Mentor_____
Dr. David Wheeler

Reader_____
Dr. Leo Percer

ABSTRACT

The Personal Continual Spiritual Development of Pastors is intended to be solution based project. The proposed solutions are intended to empower pastors to minister for a life time. The issues and the proposed solutions are not declared to be comprehensive. The solutions are intended to be a spring board for continual spiritual development of pastors.

George Wayne Thomas

Liberty Theological Seminary, 2007

Mentor: Dr. David Wheeler
Reader: Dr. Leo Percer

Dedication

This project is dedicated to my loving wife, Bev of forty years. Thank you for the first forty years of our lives, the sacrificing, working and loving, especially over these past five years. I love you.

My gratitude is extended to my children Dr. Joy, Derek, Tony, my Daughters (in Law) LaToya and Anna, and to my grandchildren, Isabella, Isaiah, and Tavaris.

Special Recognition to Debbie Compton and Tim Walker my primary long term partners in my studies. Thank you for all the nights, weekends, and prayers.

My additional family support and proof readers:
Robby
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Thanks to the Boaz and Ruth class and prayer partner
Thanks to my long time national prayer partners

Thank you to my mentor, Dr. Dave Wheeler and my proof reader, Dr. Leo Percer who have been more valuable than can be expressed in this short dedication. I am eternally grateful to them.

My appreciation
George

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CHAPTER ONE: THESIS STATEMENT

Pastors can develop spiritually and avoid burnout, dropout, or turnout by being able to recognize the symptoms and knowing methods of escape or rescue from such tragedies. Continual growth and development of Pastors will better prepare them for ministry, increase their effectiveness, and prolong their service to the Lord. The responsibility of pastors reaches far beyond Sunday morning. The demands are more than many can imagine. The pressures of time and the demands and needs from others often cause pastors to put some of their own needs, health and or family needs on hold. These demands over long periods of time have led to burnout, dropout or even forced termination.

Alternatives are available and will be discussed in the solutions and concluding sections of this dissertation.

Statement of the Problem

The results of this research should encourage pastors to be more informed of the need for continuing spiritual growth. Burnout, dropout, or termination affects 25% of pastors.[1] This research should be helpful to pastors and perspective pastors seeking to enter the service of ministry. Pastors need to know how to influence long term impact on the church, community and the world without having a quick, ineffective departure.

Burnout is defined as having the demands of the ministry exceed the pastor's ability to cope or lack of ability to commit the work to the Lord. Dropout is defined as

[1] George Barna, *Updateonline*, BARNA Research Group, 2007 accesses10-12-07. www.barna.com October 12, 2007.

the pastor's unwillingness to continue in ministry. Turnout or termination is defined as the pastor's superior or board or person in authority making the decision to end the services of the pastor.[2].

Research has been conducted by churches, Para-church groups and seminaries over the years regarding the separation of pastors from ministry.[3] The search for reasons and preventions must continue however in the wake of new evidences, new pastors, new congregations and new circumstances. Inclusive of changes, a pastor must continue to grow.

The demands for continued growth for pastors include more theological training, personal training, church growth and even technological training. Families, congregations, and communities are complex and almost completely redefined. The increasing demand for the Great Commission on a global scale is also a challenge in continuing to grow spiritually.

Statement of Limitations

This project will not address specific church or denominational issues. It will not address specific seminary courses in detail or by institution. The survey will include the examination of personal and seminary training, denomination development and recommendations from some successful pastors who are making an impact on the world.[4] Personal spiritual growth should encourage and support growth and development of

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[2] Elizabeth Proctor, "Professional Burnout, detection, prevention and Coping" The Clergy Journal, Ministry Issues, September 2005. Referenced September 9-26- 06; Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition,* (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 39; Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor,* (Chicago, Moody Publishers, 2004) 300, 301; and Richard a Swenson, M.D. *Margin,* (Colorado Springs, NavPress Publishing, 2004) 50, 51

[3] George Barna, *Updateonline,* BARNA Research Group, 2007 accesses10-12-07. www.barna.com October 12, 2007.

[4] Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition* (Grand Rapids, William B. Errdmans Publishing Company) 198.

current and future pastors and ministry leaders. Global locations will not be included in the project.

This dissertation will offer spiritual growth perspectives and some practical applications for growth in lieu of burnout, dropout or termination.

Theoretical Basis of the Project

When addressing continual personal growth, scriptural references will be made to Timothy and John Mark. When the topic of burnout is addressed, reference will be made to Elijah.

Timothy was Paul's son in the faith. (1Timothy 1:2) Paul trusted him to stay in Ephesus to charge the people. (1Timothy 1:3) Paul believed Timothy had matured to the extent he could assume responsibility of the church in Ephesus.

John Mark according to Acts 12:25 and 13:5 was on mission with Barnabas and Paul. He left them and returned to Jerusalem in Acts 13:13. Paul refused to take John Mark on the second mission trip. John Mark later matured and Paul told the Colossians to welcome John Mark. (Colossians 14:10)

Elijah was concerned the people of Israel. They began to combine worship of God with worship of Baal. He confronted Ahab concerning the issue. He ordered the prophets of Baal destroyed (1 Kings 18:40). Ahab told Jezebel who threatened Elijah. Elijah escaped into the wilderness. He stated he wanted to die (1Kings 19:4) Elijah had burnout.

Statement of Methodology

Chapter One is an introduction to the project. It addresses an overview of the project.

Chapter Two will address Symptoms of not being spiritually developed. Impacts such as burnout, dropout and turnout will be discussed.

Chapter Three addresses the reasons why a lack of spiritual development will have an adverse impact on pastors. Spiritual immaturity and improper training are key reasons for lack of spiritual development.

Chapter Four will address the impact insufficient development and training has on individuals, families, congregations, and communities.

Chapter Five touches many of the solutions available for continual development. The approach is not to do a comprehensive analysis but addresses many recommendations made by pastors and others in ministry who have experienced growth or had a lack of growth.

Chapter Six is a summary of data, recommendations for further studies for improved retention of pastors in ministry.

Conclusion

Spiritual development is a solution to carrying out the Great Commission. A national survey by Duke University is used as well as a local survey which surprisingly had similar results. The Great Commission must be kept in mind when all is analyzed. There must be more prepared soldiers for the spiritual war we are engaged in.

Literature review

Books, online research information, periodicals, and magazines are available resources for this project. References are drawn from various books by Henry Blackaby and John Maxwell. Periodicals such as Pulpit and Pew, LifeWay Research, and George Barna Up-dates are used. Magazines include Church Executive and Christianity Today. All scriptural references will be given from the New King James version unless otherwise noted.

Henry Blackaby has been a well noted pastor, author and workshop leader for decades. His works were selected in part of his successes and his longevity in ministry. He also serves as a mentor for pastors and business men. Multiple books from Dr. Blackaby's works are used.

John Maxwell is also a noted pastor, President of InJoy Ministries and an international speaker. Similar to Dr. Blackaby's work, several of Dr. Maxwell's books are referenced. He mentors in person and on line to numerous pastors and business leaders.

George Barna is an internationally known and referenced researcher. Several references will be made to the Barna Group. His research is often broad enough and has enough depth to be trusted. His longevity in research is also a key to referencing his work.

The Duke University research conducted by Dean R Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger referenced over six hundred pastors and why they were in or had been in transition in ministry.

David Wheeler is a professor at Liberty University. He has served as a regional director for Southern Baptist Convention. He is published and has international influence. Several of his works are referenced.

Reference may be given to text by John MacArthur, Charles Stanley, Tony Evans, Tom Peters, Peter Senge, or Ken Blanchard. Over a thirty five period of study, some of the quotes may overlap. Each of these gifted authors is to be credited for their works.

CHAPTER TWO: SYMPTOMS

Chapter two will reveal symptoms and effects of pastors not growing spiritually. The effects of a pastor not growing spiritually are pointed out by such issues as pastor burnout, dropout or being terminated.

A pastor is chosen by God. He is a servant of God who is chosen to shepherd His people. He recognizes that God's people are His inheritance, that they are God's special treasure. A pastor has to have integrity of heart. He recognizes that he must be skillful to lead, trust God, and trust his own heart.[5] The absence of any of these traits will affect the pastor's personal continual spiritual development.[6]

Burnout

Burnout is defined as the demand of the ministry exceeding the ability of the pastor to cope or exceeding his willingness to commit the work to His Lord.[7] Some of the discussion will address the ministerial changes over the years and how ministering in the twenty-first century may increase burnout. Options and tools to observe the process of burnout and tools to avoid burnout, dropout or turnout will also be addressed.

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[5] General footnote –much of what follows may be contributed to the influence of books and articles by Henry Blackaby and John Maxwell perused by the author over the past eight years. These writers and their works had a major influence in the final shape of this project.

[6] Henry T Blackaby and Henry Brandt, *The Power of the Call*, (Broadman & Holman Publishers 1997) 10.

[7] Elizabeth Proctor, "Professional Burnout, detection, prevention and Coping" *The Clergy Journal*, Ministry Issues, September 2005. referenced September 9-26- 06; Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition,* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 39; Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor,* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004) 300, 301; and Richard a Swenson, M.D. *Margin,* (Colorado Springs: NavPress Publishing, 2004) 50, 51.

Pastors may be employed in one of society's most demanding professions and many churchgoers may place unrealistic expectations on their leaders. But today's pastors are surprisingly similar to people from other walks of life with doubts and insecurities of their own. Pastors brim with self-confidence in many areas of their ministry but admit it is a challenge to maintain genuine connections with other people. Pastors struggle with personal relationships, shyness, maintaining a balanced life, and life's cycle in general.[8] The bottom line is that the pastor must assess himself and his environment and use that assessment to direct prayers for his family, himself, his ministry and the congregation. The Barna Research Group suggests the use of personality profiles, ministry assessments, professional coaching, organization consultants and other diagnosistics. The test sample for the Barna Group was a national sample of 628 Senior Pastors of Protestant churches conducted in 2005.[9] Some pastors are content while others face burnout, turnout or dropout. This research addresses issues not only in the United States but in Europe and Australia. The bottom line is that pastors need to find the tools and methods to evaluate themselves and their ministries as candidly and accurately as possible.

The twenty-first century is an interesting time to do the work of the ministry. Western society is in an upheaval- child molestation, incest, pornography, homosexuality and adulterous affairs are pervasive. Divorce is rampant. Medical doctors dispense psychotropic drugs at the drop of a hat, and people who would never think of sipping a

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[8] The Barna Group, "Pastors Feel Confident in Ministry, but Many struggle in their Interaction with Others" *The Barna Update*, (July 10, 2006). 1–4.

[9] Ibid 4.

glass of wine think nothing of zoning out.[10] Society has changed and so will expectations for pastors. The cost of bread in 1932 at .07 cents is no comparison to $2.45 in 2007.[11] The cost has gone up like the expectation of people for their pastors. In 1932, people expected a personal touch because relationships were crucial. Pastors had fewer distractions in 1932. There were fewer electronic inventions and there was no television, computer or cell phone to distract pastors.

In this current society, there have been major changes. Professional burnout is more rampant today. Elizabeth A. Proctor wrote an article on detection and prevention of burnout in 2005. In her article, it was reported that over 40% of pastors often felt depressed or worn out. Factors leading to this stress and burnout are poor health, the glass house living of pastors, distractions, and their own family issues.[12]

There are impacts of all of these issues. Some reasons pastors leave the ministry are conflict between the pastor and the church, lack of support or encouragement, family issues, or health issues. These issues were some of the same issues raised by Rev. Rowland Croucher of Healthmont, Victoria, Australia.[13] His survey is ongoing. The reasons and the aftermath seem to be repetitive across several surveys and several continents.

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[10] Bob Vincent "The Modern Pastor and Burnout" rbvicent.com/BibleStudies (August 15, 2007) 2.

[11] Google search 1932 cost of living, History and Culture, October 2, 2007. www.thepeoplehistory.com/1932.hyml.

[12] Elizabeth A. Proctor "Professional Burnout (Detection, Prevention and Coping)" *The Clergy Journal* (September 2005) 19, 20.

[13] Rev. Rowland Croucher, "An Attempt to Understand Pastor Burnout and why pastors leave ministry" Career Change with Purpose.com. August 15, 2006. 1-5.

One other issue that seems consistent in burnout or dropout is busyness. In the twenty-first century, people expect others to be available. They are busy and they feel important because of it. Obviously, if they are important, then others must want to be busy also. This busyness has been enhanced by technology. The internet, cell phones and text messaging have left pastors with no place to retreat. The pastor may be reached at any hour, for any reason and the expectation is that he is available and ready to communicate and to give of himself. This expectation of course means that the pastor can not have a wife with needs, children with home work, soccer, basketball, school activities or any pets.

The use of TRIO telephone/organizers, walkie talkies telephones, Outlook, Franklin Planners and laptops allows the pastor to effectively schedule every minute of the day and not miss a moment of his waking hours. This rush or busyness however sets a pace for stress. The truth is that the pastor does not have ministry hours. When he arrives home the telephone may still ring with important issues to be addressed such as births of babies, death of parishners or building or equipment failure or members' family emergencies. Schedules can sometimes be so tight that emergencies have to be extreme or there is no room to add them to the schedule. One main question is whether all of the busyness is essential. There is no verse in the Bible that says Jesus rushed. We have allowed ourselves to be rushed beyond measure. Busyness is not Holiness.[14] One of the greatest illusions of our day is that hurrying will buy us more time. There is no place to store the hours alleged to be saved. One twenty-four hour period passes and the next one begins. At the end of the week everyone has had the same number of hours. The illusion is the more time people save the more they will have in the end. Time management

[14] John Ortberg, "Taking Care of Busyness" *Christianity Today* (1998) 5-7

confirms that people can not store hours but they can make wise use of their time. They need to take heed also that they manage what they are supposed to do for Christ. People cannot redeem yesterday nor can they redeem today.[15] Packing in more events does not assure people that the activities are all from God. Sometimes people pack their wants into the schedule and ask God to bless their wants. When people think of busyness how can they help but think of the story of Martha and Mary and how Jesus states whether it is better to be burdened or spend time with Him. (Luke 10:38)[16] If a pastor serves 60 to 80 hours a week in ministry, there is hardly time to spend at the feet of Jesus.

The concept of busyness crosses the borders of church and home for pastors. Instead of the richness of a relationship with Christ, they are so preoccupied with rushing and busyness that they settle for a mediocre relationship with Christ Jesus. Jesus constantly withdrew from the crowd and activities and taught his followers to do the same. Jesus even recommended once that they come away with Him. He ruthlessly eliminated rushing from His life.[17]

Some people hurry to feel important, reduce loneliness, or set controls for others. Hurry can not only cause burnout but it can adversely impact others who are stressed from trying to live through others' schedules, expectations, and desires. Pastors or lay leaders must examine the condition of the flock to determine whether the sheep are pushed beyond their limits as well. This does not include friendly nudges or professional encouragement. Stress from the eyes of the over extended member will look more like a

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[15] Steve Covey, FranklinCovey Planner www.franklincovey.com, accessed August 17, 2007.

[16] General reference, all scripture referenced is from the New King James version unless otherwise noted.. PC Study Bible is the electronic source for scripture and commentaries. *PC Study Bible*, (Thomas Nelson Publishers version 5e 2007). Referenced December 2006.

[17] Ibid 3, 4.

scared doe or wounded buck. The most important examination of all is whether the busyness has been ordered by God. It should be more important to people that they are in the will of God than whether they please the busyness syndrome of humans.[18] This is where the rest and abide in Christ instructions come into perspective.

John Ortberg of Willow Creek Community Church wrote an example this way:

> "Some time ago, a newspaper in Tacoma, Washington, carried the story of Tattoo the basset hound. Tattoo didn't intend to go for an evening run, but when his owner shut his leash in the car door and took off for a drive with Tattoo still outside the vehicle he had no choice. Motorcycle officer Terry Filbert noticed a passing vehicle with something dragging behind it, the basset hound picking them up and putting them down as fast as he could. He dashed the car to a stop and Tattoo was rescued, but not before the dog had reached a speed of 20 to 25 miles per hour, falling over several times. Too many pastors end up living like Tattoo, their days marked by picking them up and putting them down as fast as they can." They can manage this by eliminating hurry from their lives.[19]

Peter Scazzero gave an example of wanting to build churches and finding that he had little time for his wife or his four children. This came on the back end of a ten year stretch. This work, though church related, became in his terms wood, hay, and stubble. He finally came to the conclusion that he had to reevaluate himself. His conclusion was reached at the end of a three month sabbatical.[20] Many pastors put on a façade and do not reveal truth to the staff, congregation, their families or themselves. Overload and a lack of rest will lead to burnout.

The cure for many of the issues mentioned is in the identification of the problem itself. Beyond the facade, the truth is waiting to be revealed. Avoiding burnout means acknowledging that it is real and that it can affect your life, family and ministry.

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[18] John Ortberg, "Taking Care of Busyness" *Christianity Today* (1998) 7.

[19] Ibid 1.

[20] Pete Scazzero, "Beating the Pastoral Blues" *Christianity Today*, www.ctlibrary.com/1999 1-6. Accessed August 18, 2007.

Spending time to address the solution is very important in healing. A healthy shepherd is more likely to take better care of the sheep.

Detection and Prevention of Professional Burnout

One of the first thoughts of avoiding burnout is whether the person is called into ministry. A person operating in the flesh will certainly not have the strength of the Holy Spirit. One does not choose ministry, a pastor is chosen. He is chosen by God for His purposes, time, place, and serves God in God's ways. God has chosen to change others. The world is also changed through pastors who answer the call of God and obey God consistently. God has chosen to bring both His people and the pastor to fullness of life. He does this by expressing Himself, His presence and power in the pastor and though the Scriptures.[21] Power and direction must come from the Scriptures and not from man. Any other direction will lead to stress and because of the frailty of man, he will work frantically to keep pace in the flesh and he will be extremely busy. When a pastor is extremely busy and full of stress it seems the most reliable approach for relief is to go to God in His Scriptures and to spend time in prayer and meditation. Ironically, when a pastor is stressed, he may feel he does not have time to pray or meditate as he should. As Jesus withdrew from the multitudes to spend time alone with the Father so must pastors have the same type of relationship with the Father and so must they withdraw and meditate. Busyness is an enemy of God.[22] When we think about it, when pastors are too busy they are saying to God that He is not first in their lives. Pastor filled with busyness

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[21] Henry T Blackaby and Henry Brandt, *The Power of the Call*, (Broadman & Holman Publishers 1997) 26.

[22] Pete Scazzero, "Beating the Pastoral Blues" *Christianity Today*, www.ctlibrary.com/1999 1-6.

are not a substitute for being filled with the Spirit of God. Galatians 5:16 reminds us that if you walk in the Spirit you shall not fulfill the list of the flesh.[23] The Spirit of God allows the pastor to be Spirit controlled and not self reliant. Self reliance is no match for the enemy who knows our weaknesses.

So many pastors bow to self control because they believe they are doing the right thing. They believe this in their hearts. The problem with believing in one's heart that they are doing the right thing is that the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. (Jeremiah 17:9)

Jonah may have had an issue with burnout and in his heart he may have thought that he was doing something significant when he went in the opposite direction that God told him to go. When he boarded the ship to Tarshish instead of going as directed to Nineveh, he generated stress for himself and his fellow travelers. The only way for Jonah to spare the others and ultimately himself was to be thrown overboard. (Jonah 1:10, 15) Obedience to God is the only way to avoid burnout. Pastors can go in the opposite direction, they can try to avoid stress and depression by going to sleep, or they can be obedient to Christ and improve their efficiency for Jesus.

Job may have faced burnout after his wife and "friends" tried to convince him he had sinned and deserved punishment. He may have reached burnout when he decided to question God's presence in his life at that moment. (Job 4, 5, 6) A pastor may remember when his walk may have been closer to the Lord than at present. God has not left but may be doing a work in the pastor. God who is omnipotent may allow stress and the

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[23]Scriptural references are from the New King James (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988) unless otherwise noted.

pastor may be facing burnout, but the key is not in accusing God but in believing in Him and being obedient to Him. The pastor may stop at the stress level and get back into the Word, spend time with God and wait on the Lord. Sometimes the hardest part is to wait not knowing but by faith relying on the majesty of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This is the most effective way to be restored. When Job acknowledged again the omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence of God, God was willing to restore him.

Only God can restore a pastor. He can eliminate stress or He can increase it. There are some practical things a person can do to reduce the probability of pastoral burnout. A pastor can maintain devotion to Jesus. He can take sin seriously. A pastor must absolutely rely on the promises of God. He must guard his heart and maintain a healthy relationship with his own wife and children. A pastor must choose battles carefully. Fighting a battle that is not your own is one matter and it is another matter to fight a battle that God has not told you to fight.

In a pastor's life, it is so important to know when to fight and when to rest in the presence of the Lord. The decision is best determined with a close relationship with the Lord and constantly talking and praying to the Father for guidance. Resting may be difficult when one is facing burnout or caught in the trap of busyness. There are some things which a pastor may attempt to slow himself down to the pace God intends. Some are very serious and some may place a smile on the face of the reader. Reread a book, especially the Bible. Take an hour to simply be with God. Eat your food more slowly. Declare a fast on honking your car horn. Deliberately drive in the slow lane on the expressway.[24]

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[24] John Ortberg, "Taking Care of Busyness" *Christianity Today* (1998) 5.

There are things that the church or denomination can do also to assist the pastor and allow him to slow down and avoid burnout. Burnout is an adaptation to exhaustion that involves withdrawing from others and limiting empathy. Conversely, caregivers with compassion fatigue fully extend themselves despite physical, mental and spiritual depletion.[25] Burnout is overloading the pastors' system and when he is a caregiver, he sometimes keeps giving even though he is exhausted physically, mentally and spiritually.

Responses such as fighting or running help in acute stress, but hurt in chronic stress. Chronic stress causes infections, headaches, body ache, insomnia, high blood pressure, heart disease, indigestion, even diabetes. A critically over stressed caregiver may feel numb, depressed, angry, anxious, or even become chemically dependent.[26]

The pastor, family, church or denomination can apply some of the following actions to assist in avoiding burnout.

- Determine suitability of candidates by testing prior to ordination
- Career development throughout the pastor's career
- Provide retreats, sabbaticals, and networking with fellow clergy.
- Leadership training
- Clinical pastoral education
- Conflict resolution training
- Training in pastoral counseling

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[25] Elizabeth A. Proctor "Professional Burnout" (Detection, Prevention and Coping) *The Clergy Journal* (September 2005) 20.

[26] Ibid 20.

- Clergy family support such as higher salaries, improved benefits, including health benefits.[27]

We should never grow weary in well doing and dependence on the Holy Spirit should never be abandoned. (Galatians 6:9) Burnout is critical and claims the lives and careers of many pastors and their families. The greatest hope against burnout is in Scripture in 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9 which reminds us that "We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed, we are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed."

Dropout

George Barna's statistics state that within five years of graduation 25% of pastors leave the ministry (dropout) never again to return.[28] We would never accept 25% loss of income, family investments or of anything. A loss of 25% of pastors should not be spoken of as normal. When pastors view statistics such as these, they must ask whether this is in fact normal. Does every profession or ministry lose 25% of those interested? Christians have to evaluate statistics not just as facts but by whether God is bringing this information to their attention for them to approach change. In his book, *Thinking for a Change*, John Maxwell addresses the necessity of thinking about changes that need to be made in your life and reflecting on the change to make an impact in your life.[29] When a pastor hears a comment like this he has to examine what changes he may need in his life. Changes do not have to be linked to failure. They may be needed to go to the next level

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[27] Ibid 20.

[28] George Barna, *Barna Update*, Barna Group 2007. www.barnaupdate.com . Referenced September 2007.

[29] John C Maxwell, *Thinking for a Change*, (Center Street: New York, 2003) 22, 23.

in life or ministry. A pastor has to constantly ask God if he is on the intended path. If he does not, he may find that he has taken part of God's plan and customized it to fit his own needs. When he leaves God out, he operates in his own strength which is insufficient. When his limited strength fails, it may become easier to drop out of ministry. It may be tempting to think that he has been abandoned by God. The pastor may consider dropping out of ministry because he has not kept focus on the correct mission or vision that God has given him. When the pastor's focus changes, he may began chasing visions or missions of his own. When he does not find his rainbow or recognition, he may want to throw in the towel and quit ministry and find something that will bring him more of the recognition he perceives he deserves. He may lose his focus and chase a new fantasy.

When a pastor is in a church that has increased in membership, many worldly perspectives define that to be success. If the focus is not what God intended, this is not for the glory of God. Since God will not share His glory, the pastor is left on his own. A good example of this is King Saul. His kingdom was successful. He was enjoying his success. He grew from being a shy young man to one who expected people to recognize him for his name. The king lost his focus. His heart was not for God. God wanted a man after his own heart and chose David. In his loss of focus, Saul began to chase David to kill him. He dropped out of being king to pursue a role of murderer. (1 Samuel 19:15) Saul wanted to remain king because of the recognition. Today, there may be a pastor who wants to remain "king". He may confront the assistant pastors, deacons or congregation to maintain "his" position. In order to avoid dropout, he may want to stop fighting and start "thinking for a change". He may be doing things right but for all the wrong motives. John Maxwell tells a story of Karen Ford who rose up the Mary Kay

organization seeking a National Sales Director position but did not obtain her desire because she had developed followers for herself to help her obtain her goals but not Gods. She was greatly disappointed when she did not get the position. She nearly quit Mary Kay. While thinking about a company change, she realized she did not want to change her goals so she thought to change herself. Mary Kay did not give her the promotion she desired because she had only developed followers not leaders who could reproduce others. When she changed her thinking, she began to develop strategies to include people growth. Karen changed and began to attract a different type of person who could make a greater impact on the organization. When she changed her thinking, she received the promotion.[30]

This is not different for pastors. When they develop others they are free to move to greater levels. This does not mean larger churches but could be more influential in directing others toward Jesus.

When the pastor's focus is not on Jesus, he may be more likely to want to drop out of ministry. When we think about people in ministry dropping out, we have to remember Elijah and Jonah. They became angry with God and they wanted to quit. God had to put things back into perspective for Elijah and for Jonah. Elijah found he was not the only one left to serve God. Jonah still landed where God intended him to be. Life is not about them. Life is not about the pastor. It is all about Jesus. It is all about His finished work on the cross. Thank God, Jesus did not quit the cross and go off sulking. Jesus did not drop out.

Pharisees and Sadducees tried everything to get Jesus to quit or drop out. They were the religious and political leaders of the day. (Mark14:1 and Matthew 26:2) Politics

[30] Ibid 24.

today have not changed. Politics add a burden to ministry. People in their fleshly nature want to establish their authority, determine who receives which positions in the ministry, control the budget and determine the limits of the pastor. They may even think they hired the pastor and they can fire him. If the pastor begins to believe the people more than God, he may want to dropout of ministry. This may be particularly true in a congregation ruled ministry. They may know what they want and just need someone to preach. Groups who do not know God and do not preach from the Word of God will likely give a pastor even more grief. People who do not know God personally do not know the peace of God will rely on them.

Changing your thinking can change your beliefs. Changing your beliefs can change your expectations.[31] When you know where God is working and you join Him in His work, you will not have to drop out of ministry. You simply need to follow Christ in His work.[32]

When the pastor follows God, people have less difficulty following him. Conflict with people is almost inevitable. How the pastor resolves the conflict is a different issue. In 1 Kings 21:15, Ahab went to his wife and she took care of his concern with the property he wanted. John the Baptist was beheaded because of conflict with Herod's wife. Abraham put his wife in front of him to save himself. Relationships and issues husbands have with their wives will impact the congregation. Some of the issues lead to dropout.

Elijah stood before Ahab (I Kings 18). These men were facing dropout or had lost focus. They had conflicts with people and could not refocus by themselves. They

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[31] Ibid 29.

[32] Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God,* (Broadman and Holman: Nashville 1994) 119.

needed help from the Father. A pastor contemplating dropout does not have to complete the journey but should get help to remain with the call God has placed on his life. Disobedience can be painful, life can be hard, and challenges can be difficult. If a pastor does not have commitment to the ministry it will be too easy to quit.

Commitment is to carry into action or perpetuate something. Today we seem to use the term commitment to discuss placing away as opposed to standing firm for something. In the world today, whether talking ministry or marriage, commitment seems estranged. Divorce is high even among Christians and even pastors are not immune from divorce. Fathers are not committed to their children, wives are not committed to their husbands, and pastors are not committed to their congregations or communities. If you are called to ministry and you decided to drop out on your own you dishonor God. If the pastor is called and is disobedient, disobedience will be painful. When pain becomes too unbearable, a pastor may find that without God, he wants to escape. He may want to drop out. Pastors must remember that tribulation produces perseverance and perseverance produces character and character produces hope.

When a pastor does not have hope it may be easier to want to drop out. There are many other issues that can cause a pastor to want to drop out of ministry. One other key factor is fatigue. Young pastors may think they are invincible however in time if they do not realize that ministry can be a twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year assignment. Weekends are already committed. Wives have needs and children have activities. They may feel their lives are absorbed and there is no way out and they want to drop out. Pastors need to continually grow because ministry is for a

lifetime, it is not temporary. Commitment is required to fulfill the call of God. It is not a place for the faint hearted.

The call on a person's life by God is phenomenal. It is exciting and frightening at the same time. The call is not reversible by humans. The call can be misinterpreted however. The call may be to minister but not to pastor. The definition of the call must come from God. In Hebrews 13:20, 21, God promises to equipment those whom He calls. This is essential when measuring the decision to drop out. When a pastor feels he has been called to ministry he must immediately go to God in His Word and in prayer. He must search scripture for confirmation. He must seek counsel from the pastor, family and church. During the process he must seek the details of ministry beyond Sunday morning preaching. When a pastor's house is in order, he will be better prepared to enter and remain in ministry. When the person has a heart for God, is versed in scripture, has the love and respect of his spouse and children and has his personal busyness in order he will be better positioned to enter and remain in ministry. A candidate for ministry must be a willing learner to succeed in ministry. If he refuses God's teaching, he will surely drop out of ministry. (1 and 2 Timothy)

A youthful pastor may want to rush into ministry. In this world of instant everything, an immature pastor is more likely than a seasoned pastor to drop out of ministry. A pastor must be seasoned. If he rushes his training, he endangers his ministerial work. When a pastor does not have sufficient training and or preparation he will not be prepared for the challenges that come sometimes too fast for him to recover. In what may seem to be excessive stress, the pastor may desire to drop out. Continual growth is required for the pastor who is young chronologically or inexperienced.

Pressure results when stress mounts up higher than experience, pride, or fear can resolve. It is more than the pastor can endure at that moment. Sometimes the dropout is temporary, and as mentioned earlier sometimes the twenty-five percent is part of a permanent change. Dropout has lasted up to ten years.

One of the major concerns in preparation for ministry is the call; another is the preparation of the pastor. If he has an assessment done to determine his personality type, someone can assist him in determining his suitability for ministry and determine his strengths as well as learning opportunities. When opportunities are revealed training can be provided to improve performance. Support is essential.

There is independence in most men. When a pastor attempts to endure ministry leadership alone, he may be a candidate for dropout. A solution is acquiring an accountability partner. If the church is small, a pastor may find another trustworthy pastor in another local church or a pastor in another city. The intent of the support is to assist the pastor in being successful in ministry. The key is to keep him in the ministry for the long term. Dying out in a blaze of glory does not glorify God when the workers are already too few.

When a pastor has experienced the call on his life he should immediately pursue God in prayer. Instruction comes from the Lord. While the new pastor may want to jump immediately into the ministry and start having an impact, it will be wise to obtain a prayer partner. The call is confirmed through the Word and prayer. The Word of God confirms that the pastor will find God if he seeks him diligently. Since God is the one doing the calling, it is imperative to find out from Him what the call is and where the call is. Prayer and meditation will provide guidance according to the Word of God. When

the pastor has taken a personal inventory of the nature of his call and purpose, examined his inner life and completed his spiritual inventory, then matters can be measured by God's standard for ministry. The pastor must not wait until everything is falling apart before seeking God. God has called the pastor to study scripture, meditate on its truth and measure his life through transparent honesty.[33] In this time of prayer and meditation, the pastor must be prepared to repent of any revealed sin that hinders the process of spiritual growth. In addition to the verses in Hebrews 13:20, 21, more truth is found in 1 Peter 1:1-11.[34] Trials will come. Before the pastor is in position to drop out, he must go to God who makes the assignments and is the only one to make the retraction of the call. All of the criteria for pastors are listed in 1Timothy 3:1-7.

The transformation is different for each new pastor. Many influences such as personality, background, worldly influence, training and experience make a difference. The surrender to God for a pastor must be purposeful and it must be done daily. Continual spiritual growth is to continue to be more like Jesus daily. Jesus did not drop out; He went all the way to the cross. Transformation will be slow, painful and purposeful but if you look at the transformation from God's perspective, Jesus died on the cross for you and you will not face anything that painful. Good preparation will help prevent dropping out of ministry. *Sir Winston Churchill gave a short speech at a graduation. He said "never give in, never give in, never give in" then he sat down.*[35]

The pastor may be in the process of graduating from Bible college, seminary or from a post graduate program. He must remember to never give in. Continual growth

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[33] Henry Blackaby, *The Power of the Call,* (Broadman and Holman: Nashville 1997) 200, 201.

[34] Ibid 202.

[35] *Brainy Quotes,* Online Referenced October 6, 2007, www.brainyquote.com.

can not be obtained by quitting. Surely you will reap a just reward if you faint not. (Galatians 6:9) A spiritual leader will not rest, or be satisfied until all of God's purpose is being lived out in his life and the lives of those entrusted to him. Activation of his gifts, training and the growth of God's people should be a goal of the spiritual leader. It must be done for the glory of God and not for the credit of the pastor.

A pastor should remain active in service instead of dropping out of ministry. This can be accomplished by staying true to the call, and staying focused on the goal and not the trials.[36] Trails are for growth and not for the destruction of the pastor. Trials are controlled by God. They are to move the pastor to the destination God has prescribed for His purpose. The pastor should watch for God to reveal to him what he is doing. God's revelation to us is His invitation to join Him in His activity. With God's strength and power, staying the course has all the success required. God always works from His kingdom perspective with eternity in mind.[37]

A spiritual leader is one who is immersed in the love of God, the love of Christ and the love of the Holy Spirit. He, controls, motivates, initiates, guides, and leads the pastor in all his relationships with God's people. Literally the love of Christ touches everyone around him and his greatest desire is to present everyone perfect in Christ. This he accomplishes, just like Jesus did, according to His working which works in Him mightily (Col 1:28, 29). A spiritual leader does not rest until every person in his care comes to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to the perfect man,

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[36] Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor,* (Moody Press: Chicago 2004) 296.

[37] Henry Blackaby and Tom Blackaby, *The Man God Uses,* (Broadman and Holman Nashville 1999) 165.

to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph 4:13).[38] There are several terms that do not seem to align with dropout. In fact they seem almost contrary to the concept. Terms like eternity, measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ or not resting until every person comes to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God. The harvest is plentiful and this is no time to drop out. Jesus did not drop out. He is our example!

Turnout/Forced Termination

Pastors are not exempt from turnout/termination. An on-line CBN report on July 16, 2007 shows 1,200 pastors terminated in a year. The report indicated that this is only those who report such events. Pastors have to deal with personalities and conflict almost daily. There are times when people become hostile or act in a spiritually immature manner if they do not get their way. They seek revenge or they rebel. Some immature pastors likewise cause their own demise.

Turnout may be considered by some as compromised resignation. Termination is considered by some to be terminated from the position. Termination should be a last resort. Just as Christ has mercy on us in our faults and weaknesses, so ought His pastors, congregations, and disciples to have mercy on others. Romans 12:9 states "Let love be without hypocrisy."

Following the proper match and the proper training, good discipleship should lead to success. Termination means the trainer or mentor has also failed. Termination is not an exhibition of power but a result that says nothing else can be done. This conclusion reflects on the trainer as well as the trainee. When the hire (call) was made there must

[38] Henry Blackaby, *The Power of the Call,* (Broadman and Holman, Nashville 1997) 245.

have been prayer. The church must have sought the Lord in prayer for Him to send the correct person to fill His purpose for the ministry. If the church determined on its own to hire a person of their choice that is a different matter. If God was excluded, then they may not likely seek His input on how to train the pastor and help him be successful. If the church hired a preacher, then they may well feel comfortable in firing him.

Ordination is a process of approval. A church ordains a pastor. In doing this, they are saying they have examined him and they are willing to place their hand of approval on him. Still no matter how impressive the ritual, no matter how sincerely the vows are given, the church keeps trying to untie the cords that hold the pastor to the mast. Some of them manage to get loose and respond to other demands but the church forgets the terms of the ordination. They forget why they asked him to be pastor in the first place. They direct and control and start new projects and gradually shift the authority from the pastor to themselves. Eventually they do not feel the same connection and do not find the pastor to have the same value.[39] When a pastor is perceived to be of lesser value to the congregation, they may be more at ease to dismiss him. There are issues that pastors initiate also. All of the decisions are not initiated by the congregation.

Pastors of America have metamorphosed into a company of shopkeepers, and the shops they keep are churches. They are preoccupied with "shopkeepers' concerns." How do they keep the customers happy, how to lure customers from the competitors down the street, how to package the goods so the customers will lay out more money.[40] All of these self- interest issues stray away from the Great Commission.

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[39] Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles,* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co: Grand Rapids 1987) 25.

[40] Ibid 2.

Some pastors are good shopkeepers. They attract many people, collect great sums of money, and develop a magnificent reputation but the concerns are the same. There may be a deacon group vying for power. The trustee board may be in the same wrestling match for power and then there are the men's and women's ministries. All of the entities must be on one accord or dissatisfaction will lead to separation of the parties. There may be times when the pastor can win the majority vote and not satisfy the most powerful group and turnout may still be inevitable.[41] The focus or vision may have shifted without becoming formally identified. Programs, ministries, equipment and people may change from the original positions and their desires may not align with the pastor or even Christ. Although they may not verbalize their view in this manner, by their attitudes they are saying they value their desires more than what God had recommended.

Some churches desire that the pastor only preach and they manage the remainder of the ministry. They may believe the pastor should only pray, preach, and present the communion. Some mainstream groups may even evaluate the sermon, singing, or the order of the service. If they are dissatisfied they want to replace the pastor.

There are dangers with some impact groups but the pastor may create some difficulties of his own. One thought that comes to mind is improper preparation of messages. Then message plagiarism is another issue. The pastor may stray away from praying for the ministry. He may do a great job of exergeting scripture but may be a horrible office manager. These are just a few of the issues that are ministry related.

Pastors are falling into sexual sin, pornography, or gambling at a horrific rate. The matter of homosexuality has not even hit full stride. Society blames so much on sex.

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[41] Ibid 2.

It is on television, in movies, magazines and books. It is even in the Bible. Look at the Song of Solomon. The issue is not in sex but in the manner it is addressed. When the pastor is abusing sex not in the manner God intended it to be enjoyed between one man and one woman, the pastor or any ministry leader may be turned out or terminated. Dr. Archibald D. Hart describes it this way, sex is a virtue. It is when sex is distorted and corrupted that it is a fault. But it can be something beautiful, virtuous and good. After all, it is an expression of the deepest form of human love possible. It is medicine to the body and the emotions and the soul. Sex that is not kept in the proper context may become unsafe.[42] David is an example of a man who abused his authority and position as king and fell into sexual sin and suffered the penalty for many years. Sexual sin and issues of immorality especially in pastors will lead to discipline and probably termination or turnout.

There is a flow or a process that leads to hiring and a flow to installing a pastor. There is also a flow of maintaining a pastor and there is a flow of turnout or termination of a pastor.

The ministry should have a vision or projected view of what God is calling them to do. More often the vision is given to the pastor. Even when the church does not have a pastor, the congregation must stay in constant prayer to ask God for direction. The church without a pastor should be able to write an overview of what God places on their heart for a leader. God places His plan on their hearts.

In scripture, Saul was selected for the wrong reasons. That was costly to the people. In evangelical circles, a pastor or lay leader is seldom asked about his or her

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[42] Dr. Archibald D. Hart, *The Sexual Man*, (Word Publishing: Dallas, 1994) 189.

soul. All those who preach, teach, or lead must model a filling lifestyle energized by a Holy nearness with God.[43] A pastor must be connected to God and with the vision and mission of God or his vision will perish and he will take the congregation with him. If the pastor does not have a vision, then the board of trustees, deacons and congregation may want the pastor to leave. When the pastor is unable to cast the vision of God or lead the congregation there will be dissention. Confusion will set the course and turnout may result.

It is also possible that the congregation will not agree with the pastor on the vision and mission of the church. The pastor may assume roles not agreed upon by the lay leadership, such as signing checks, withdrawing funds or staffing the ministry with friends and relatives. Whatever the disruption, these things will likely occur over time and not just in a day or two. The flow of dissention may be performance, personality or possessions. The results may be the same, disagreement may lead to turnout.

Ministries must seek methods to avoid turnout. Short term and long term objectives must focus on the glorification of God. The effectiveness of any works for God must be focused on Him and honors Him only.

The effective continual growth of pastors should move pastors toward Christ-likeness and maturity. Living like Christ and teaching others in the ministry to do the same will reduce the need or desire for turnout. The pastor must be equipped, trained and matured. Through prayer he must maintain the focus of God. The pastor must follow the lead of God through prayer and keep the congregation on point. He must refuel the members by keeping them in tune to the Holy Spirit and Scripture. The pastor must keep spiritually fit, refreshed and renewed. Renewal must be deliberate. This will equip

[43] H. B. London Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman. *They call me Pastor*, (Regal Books: Ventura 2000) 222.

congregations to go into the world and be effective. Proper equipping will help prevent turnout. In a later chapter, the issue of seminary and training will be given additional attention.

Pastors must know God's plan for them, the leadership and the congregation. Praying to God and communicating with the congregation will help eliminate gaps in the purpose of the ministry and this may reduce turnout. Termination of pastors and divorce of spouses seem to fit in a similar category. They should be avoided for the glory of God. Matthew 19:6 states, "What God has joined together let no man separate."

Avoiding termination seems uncomplicated with God present and in complete control. God may allow a termination. However, a pastor can do certain things to avoid termination. First the pastor must be certain of his call and he must continue to maintain communication with God regarding that call. Constant prayer will keep the pastor in the presence of God. This allows sensitivity to any changes or corrections in interpretations of the call of the pastor. The vision, mission, strategy and the objectives are next to be considered. Scripture reminds us that without a vision the people perish. God can speak to whom He chooses as in the case of Samuel or David. In order to lead, the pastor has to know where God is telling that branch of believers to go and what He is telling them to do.

God's vision for a ministry may not change quickly, nor will it be accomplished rapidly. The vision may even outlive the pastor.[44] The vision will not change every year. There is no need to be concerned if the course is the same every year. God is more interested in relationships than quick changes.[45] The vision will not be identical between

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[44] George Barna, *The Power of a Vision*, (Regal Books: Ventura 2003) 90.

ministries but may overlap or supplement another ministry. An example would be a church in the United States partnered with one in Haiti. The one in the United States was summoned to provide material to build churches. Their ministry was to train pastors. They could build and others could train pastors to fill the positions and draw congregation members. The churches were not inclined to minister in the other's call nor did either they feel threatened by the supplemental work the other added. The visions were customized. Each vision was unique to the ministry and the pastor.

When the pastor has difficulty in expressing the vision and steering the congregation to following him, the pastor may be in danger of turnout. The same may be said of the mission. The mission is broad and the vision is detailed. A vision that is too broad will not provide direction. In contrast, a vision that is too tight will be too restrictive. God's vision will not limit you because He has all resources. The key here is to stay focused on God. God put each person here and the reason for their existence is spelled out in His vision for each pastor.[46] When a pastor leaves God's plan for his own plan, turnout may come charging in and consume the pastor's work.

God is not task orientated. He created man to be relational. God loves His people so much He sent His Son to die for them. God designed the church as a means to allow people to be relational and learn to love one another. Scripture reminds us that there is one church, one Spirit, and one baptism.

When the pastor is on God's plan and the church is on the same plan and they are both being lead by the Spirit of God, then turnout can be diverted. We must always work as to the Lord and not towards man. Continual Spiritual Development will help prevent

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[45] Ibid 90.

[46] Jerry Falwell, *Building Dynamic Faith,* (World Publishing Co, Nashville) 27.

what John Maxwell refers to as the Law of the Lid.[47] If the pastor has no vision, and has come to the end of his knowledge and abilities, and will not study or develop any further, then the ministry can not grow any higher than the leader. This may be a clear indication that turnout is coming. It would definitely be time to investigate the matter.

Vision can do so much for the pastors that it is essential to pursue the process. Vision may awaken many other emotions within us, such as the following:

- Relief over having a viable purpose on earth
- Joy over the realization that God can use you
- Confidence based on the notion that He will bless those faithful to His call
- Anticipation over the desire to see how the vision will look in the practice and what impact it will have on people's lives
- Hope for the future, based on the recognition that He is in control and that we are truly on the winning side
- Passion to return to Him a measure of the love He has demonstrated by counting us worthy of His mercy, adequate to be part of His team and destined to see Him prevail
- Anxiety to get on with the task that will further promote unrighteousness, injustice, and love of the world. Most people have no clue where to search for peace.

[47] John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, (*Thomas Nelson: Nashville 1998) 1.

Loving and serving God is the key. It is the surest manner to effectively grow in relationship to His vision and live it to its fullest.[48] Anyone can steer the ship but it takes a leader to navigate the course.[49]

The leader or pastor not only needs to know the vision, he also needs to know the mission. There are times when people mistake the two as being the same. They are aligned but distinct. Mission is a general statement or ministry objective; it is philosophical. Vision is a specific, detailed statement of direction and uniqueness; it is strategic.[50] This is a critical time for a pastor to find out the differences and receive the necessary training to navigate the ship. This is not a time to fake knowledge or fool the people. They will see the results or lack of results almost right away. Pride, arrogance and deceit will lead to turnout.

The mission statement is a general statement about who the pastor and congregation wish to reach and what they hope to accomplish. It can be described in a sentence or two. Here the pastor and congregation must keep in mind that the mission belongs to God and not them. Therefore, the wording can be the same or similar to another church. The method for each church may not be identical. There are times when the mission and vision are inadvertently reversed. An example of a mission statement that is passed on for a vision statement is, "To evangelize, exalt, edify and equip." [51] An additional issue is to use a phrase that is neither a vision nor a mission statement. An example of that would be "To take Christ to the world."[52] Confusion will

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[48] George Barna, *The Power of a Vision*, (Regal Books: Ventura 2003) 92.

[49] John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, (Thomas Nelson: Nashville 1998) 33.

[50] George Barna, *The Power of a Vision*, (Regal Books: Ventura 2003) 33.
[51] Ibid 34, 35.

lead to mistrust and destroy the integrity of a pastor. When the trust is gone, people will not follow. When a leader has no followers it is hard to say he is leading.

Another confusing issue is that of slogans. Slogans are neither vision nor mission statements. They sound catchy but because they do not give direction, they do not assist the church in developing a strategic plan. The charting of the course is critical here.

The application of the vision in all church based endeavors ought to begin with the strategic perspectives of the church. Vision is critical for effective strategic planning and implementation. The ministry tactics utilized by the church should fully reflect the vision. In the process of marketing the church and its ministries, vision must be present. It is around the vision that all plans are made. Individuals who seek to bring marketing techniques to the ministry without sensitivity to the realities of the vision do the church a great disservice. When this work is complete, the vision becomes a filter for key decision. When everything is measured by the vision and the strategy, then the pastor and other leaders can discern whether the efforts will accomplish the results directed by God's vision.

When vision is the center piece of the decision-making and evaluation processes, ill advised efforts are less likely to occur. A pastor who continues to do the will of God according to His plan, training, and process will likely have success and avoid turnout. The process is clear and the tools are available. The rest is up to the pastor who is called according to the plan of God to glorify His Holy name. When the pastor is successful, he can lead the church to be successful for Christ. His relationship with God is more personal and souls are won for the kingdom.

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[52] Ibid 35.

Divorce

Divorce may be close to the burnout, turnout syndrome. Separations from church can affect marriages and marriages can influences in separation from church ministries. When Satan can attack the marriage it will impact the individuals, families, and congregations. Divorce is not a reason for automatic dismissal in every denomination.[53]

Regardless of the reasons, divorce has proved to be complicated and devastating. It can be because of stress, finances or relationships. These issues can be the cause or the result of divorce. Wives may have complained of long hours of work or emotional drains that left nothing for them and the family when the pastor arrived home. They left or left with someone else. This again was not automatic grounds for leaving the ministry. If most cases, however, the pastor decided to leave. The pastor may have had some personal issues of his own that led to misconduct such as extra marital affairs. Extra marital affairs are not always sexual. They may be emotional or physical without any sex involved. They have the same impact.[54] God ordained marriage in Genesis chapter two. He references husbands and wives in Ephesians chapter five. In Revelation nineteen chapter twenty one and twenty two scripture references the bride of Christ. Christ is coming for His bride. Marriage is God's plan. Divorce disrupts God's plan. He allowed it because of man's heart. (Matthew 19:8) God designed marriage to last.

Suicide

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[53] Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger. *Pastors in Transition*, (Grand Rapids: William B Erdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 144.

[54] Ibid 151

Suicide may appear to be the only way to get free but there is no scriptural approval for it. What appears to be an individual decision shatters many other lives. Suicide is one of the most stressful times in the life of counselor or a pastoral counselor. A client or parishioner who kills themselves not only devastates family and friends, but also adversely impacts the counselor long after the event.[55] The clergy person's own needs and self deception are common barriers to effective referrals. Clergy must be mature enough and professional enough to know their limits when it comes to counseling troubled persons. Training in counseling suicide victims is a life and death matter and must not be taken lightly.[56] A counselor must not extend himself or herself beyond their counseling abilities.

A pastor can devastate his family, congregation and community through suicide. The impact may affect them for a life time. Suicide will not bring honor to God

Continual Spiritual Development can reveal many issues that cause burnout, dropout, turnout, divorce, or suicide. The objective surely is not to promote any of these. The objective is not to expose problems but to find and implement solutions to keep pastors in the ministry so more souls can hear the Gospel and people turn to God the Father.

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[55] Tim Clinton, Archibald Hart and George Ohlschlager, *Caring for People God's Way*, (Nashville: Nelson reference & Electronic, 2005) 333.

[56] Ibid 354

CHAPTER THREE

Reasons for Lack of Spiritual Development

Chapter three will address some of the reasons why continuous growth in pastors is required and why a lack of growth will affect everyone around him. Pastors have many reasons why they must have maturity and why they must grow continuously. Additionally, the chapter will offer some basic solutions to the challenges identified.

Following the introduction in chapter one, chapter two identifies symptoms of pastors who needed to grow continually. Chapter three will address reasons why a lack of growth occurs. The process is important because the pastor is an ambassador of the Lord and must follow God. Pastors must be mature to become more effective.

Maturity reflects the concept of finding out God's vision and staying with His vision. Immaturity has to do with the pastor wanting to do what he wants and ignoring the plan of God. D. L. Moody, the greatest evangelist of the nineteenth century, overheard someone say, "Our world has yet to see what God can do through one man whose life is totally committed to Him." Moody said, "I will be that man." Through Moody's life, multitudes were converted to God. Two continents were shaken for Christ. His work continues to bear fruit to this day.[57]

Pastors have to be spiritually mature enough to follow God. Congregations will follow mature pastors, who have clear direction, and leadership skills to take them to the next level. Pastors are some times placed in churches prematurely.

Spiritual Immaturity

[57] Darrell W. Robinson, *Total Church Life*, (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers 1997) 9.

If a pastor is thrust into a position before he has the maturity to handle the responsibilities, disaster will occur. Maturity goes beyond chronological age and includes personal experience, and education. The pastor must be a follower of God and must walk with Him. Immaturity is expensive and can be detrimental to everyone around the pastor.

Hebrews 5:12-14 address immaturity in this manner. "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."[58] The concept of milk implies that Christians be familiar with the initial stages of ministry. A pastor likewise, must be familiar with the milk as well as the bread of the gospel. The initial stages may mean greeting and preaching. He would not be addressing conflicts or budgets in the initial stages. He must eventually get to the stages referred as the meat or more complex stages of ministry.

Most congregations expect ministries to operate effectively. Maturity and growth are expected and evaluated. As local churches practice the presence of Christ, compassion, concern and interest in the lives of people develop. This kind of concern encourages educational, social, medical and other ministries to meet the needs of the total person and the total community. Local churches are primary today. Many who live in communities where local churches are strong take them for granted. One has only to go

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[58] All scripture is taken from the New King James version of the Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988).

where local churches are weak to see a distinct difference in the climate of the community. The influence of a strong local church increases the moral and spiritual vitality of the community and deepens concern for individuals.[59] This is not a matter of pastoral ego to measured success but is referring to the kingdom of God. Pastors need to set their ego aside and concentrate on the role and function of the church.

Some pastors suffer from ego issues and think they have arrived. When the ego increases, then maturity is mandatory. The pastor may fall into his own pit without a healthy amount of maturity. People influence the swelling of the ego of pastors. They may say "great message," "great prayer," or "I could not have survived without you, pastor." This may be true in their opinion. The maturity of the pastor will determine whether he steps away graciously from taking credit for the work of the Holy Spirit.[60] The position of authority is a perilous one. At memorable moments of life such as baptism, marriage, reconciliation, death or confirmation, pastors are robed in dignity and represent God's authority.

All types and conditions of people come into the presence of the pastor seeking discernment from the Word of God. They look up to the pastor as one in authority. The practice of faith or maturity however is in the pastor's obedience to the Word of God and not just giving of advice or interpretation of the Word.[61] The pastor must coordinate the efforts of the church through the power of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of a church is to be the body of Christ- filled with the Christ-life. It is a Christ-filled body, living in a

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[59] Darrell W. Robinson, *Total Church Life*, (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers 1997) 18.

[60] Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles*, (Grand Rapids: William Erdmann Publishing Company 1993) 166.

[61] Ibid 167.

community, radiating the glory of Jesus' indwelling presence. It becomes light to the world and the salt of the earth.[62]

Examples of lack of development in pastors are listed:

Personal immaturity

Self- centered

Improper self-assessment

Work only for the money

Exploit their flock

Insufficient study

Carnal minded

Lack of global comprehension

Clarity of direction

Affects on the family

Affects on the congregation

Affects on the community[63]

The pastor's immaturity determines how he responds to issues of the congregation or even how he manages the staff and facility. Pastors struggling with immaturity will have difficulty in leading their wives and children.

Immature pastors seek their own way and are self centered. An immature shepherd will flee in time of danger if his interest is only on himself. If there is a choice

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[62] Darrell W. Robinson, *Total Church Life,* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers 1997) 20.

[63] Richard A. Swenson, M.D., *Margin,* (Colorado Springs: NavPress 2004) 157.

of saving the flock or for the immature pastor to save himself, he may choose himself. His work may be for the money and the growth and maturity of the congregation may not be accurately on his agenda. An immature pastor will have improper influence on his family, congregation and the community. His congregation will enter the community with their reflections of their pastor.

The practice of immaturity has been an issue since man was created. There are many Biblical examples of immaturity or immature acts, for example:

1. Samson desired to be with a woman and lost his sight.
2. Ahab and Jezebel murdered to get their way.
3. Peter reacted to the soldier by cutting off his ear.
4. Ananias and Sapphira lied about the money they gave to get recognition.
5. Adam and Eve sinned and were sent out of the Garden of Eden.
6. David was an adulterer.
7. Elijah thought he was the only one left to defend God.

Sampson had been set aside for service to God. He had been given unusual strength. Samson attempted to appease a woman, He gave riddles and finally she turned him into authorities. What he did not know when he opened his eyes, was that God's strength had left him (Judges 16:20). Samson in an immature manner played a game until the soldiers caught him. Sampson wanted to play games and it cost him the loss of his sight and he lost sight of God's objectives.

Ahab gave an impression of a man who desired to have his own way. He wanted land that was not for sale and when the owner would not sell him the land he complained

to his wife. She had the man killed and gave the land to Ahab. He received it (1 Kings 21:2-5).

Peter was responsible in some ways and immature in others. He responded by cutting the guard's ear off (Matthew 26:51) and he denied Christ three times as Christ predicted (Matthew 26:74).

Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-5) lied about the amount of money they received for the sale of their house. They said they had given it all to the church. They both died because they lied. That was immaturity.

In Genesis, God had given Adam the responsibility for the garden, the animals and mankind. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God went to the shepherd (Adam) and asked why. Adam immediately displayed immaturity and blamed God for the woman God had given to him. Adam did not stand up to his responsibilities (Genesis 3:12).

Then there was Ananias and Sapphira. In order to gain recognition, they sold property and lied about how much they donated. Perhaps it would have affected their status. Men of God, servants, and women who serve God have all had issues over the years. Many displayed immaturity yet some regained their relationship with God by repentance (Acts 5:1).

David was an adulterer and murderer; Solomon was far beyond being a bigamist and Rahab, a prostitute and liar. All sinned and came short of the glory of God, yet those who repented were restored. Note the concept, some were restored. Sin has its consequences and, God in Romans 6, reminds us not to go on sinning. Maturity is

stepping up to accept responsibility when the time comes and being accountable for your actions. God accepts a broken and contrite heart.

There are many indicators of maturity as well as immaturity. Peter states that a shepherd must know the state of his flock (1 Peter 5:1, 2). He must be responsible for them all. He does not choose which ones to serve because the flock belongs to the Father. He must protect all of the sheep.

The shepherd must learn to serve in any condition he finds himself (2 Corinthians 9:6). Each shepherd may, in his heart, know what to do by instruction from the Father. The test however of a true shepherd comes when a wild animal comes to attack the sheep; perhaps a bear or wolf, or even a wolf in lambs clothing. The shepherd must be content or he will flee. The search today is for mature, caring, content, and Christ-centered Shepherds. Churches have to continue to seek mature shepherds.

In the midst of education, money, cars, prestige, power and well meaning parishioners, stands a pastor who may still be discontent. The more he has, the more he thinks he needs. There is a gap between what they now have and all there is to have.[64] Since life in the United States has become a comparative experience, pastors must take action to guard themselves, their families and the congregations they serve.[65]

The prosperity ladder may be leaning against the wrong building or hill to climb. They need to quit staring at those who have more than they do. The test of maturity is to look down the ladder to those needing help and not up the ladder at those who have more than they do. They have to fix their contentment on godliness rather than relativism.[66]

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[64] Richard A. Swenson, M.D., *Margin*, (Colorado Springs: NavPress 2004) 157.

[65] Ibid 158.

Godliness must be the priority. They have to be content with their relationships, money, and their suffering just to name a few issues. Most of all, they have to be content with Christ. Richard Swenson lists some key helps on contentment in his book *Margin*. His list includes but is not limited to:

1. Get to work. The gap between contentment and discontentment requires work from the pastor.
2. Divorce your thinking from society. Do not get stuck with relativistic standards.
3. Turn off the ads. This includes television, newspaper and computers. They are designed to transfer your funds and hours into their profit.
4. Defer to God's opinion regarding your family and not your opinion.
5. Set your standards on contentment not discontentment. Use the scripture as your standard.
6. Develop counter habits. Replace fleshly issues with God-centered habits.
7. Develop a list of needs and begin to slowly take them off the list. Where your priorities are, so shall your treasures be. It is no great thing to desire more and more and quite another to desire less and learn to be content with what you have.
8. Accept what God gives you as contentment. Contentment is not just doing without but trusting God for the difference.
9. Tell yourself the truth about why you want certain things or people in your life.[67]

Identification of immaturity and the related perils is a first step. The world is full of people who see problems. The solution must take the pastor from the identification of problems to problem resolution or the pastor, his family and congregation will be headed for a fall.[68]

Avoid the fall by being content rather than discontent, learn to give rather than just receive, sow more than you reap, the harvest is the Lord's any way. The pastor should think of others first. He must learn to discern what others need. In praying for them, he should ask God to fulfill their need. He should observe their pattern. The pastor

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[66] Ibid 159.

[67] Ibid 166, 167.

[68] Richard A. Swenson, *Margin,* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004) 166.

should learn to place people in their giftedness not just in a convenient place for the pastor's benefit. The talents of the people belong to the Lord. A shepherd must stand firm. A shepherd who will not take a stand for something specific will fall for anything. A pastor should want to avoid falling for immaturity, selfishness, self-centeredness or pride.

Spiritual immaturity may be considered making decisions and blaming them on the Holy Spirit. This may remind one of Adam. He ate the fruit and blamed God for the woman God gave him. An immature decision may be like getting out of the boat like Peter and not knowing if you will trust Jesus or not. Jesus is always trust worthy. Christians make decisions all day on whether they rely on His trustworthiness.

Pastors must never give up on God's people. They must be willing to bear great burdens then bear a great deal more. This does not mean the pastor may not want to escape sometimes. Gaining a balanced life is to know when the pastor is burning out and taking the congregation with him. He has to know when he is hurting the church and himself.[69]

It takes exceptional maturity to avoid hurting the flock of God. The pastor's faith must be strong and his personal relationship with God has to be exceptional. Faith that is not tested may be too faint in times of trouble. Faith must be dynamic. Dynamic faith is not what a person believes he can do but it is about God doing a work in him.[70] The main emphasis is never on the things or the person. Although these things are important, it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Phil 2:13). Staying

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[69] Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor* (Chicago: Moody Publishers 2004) 300-308.

[70] Jerry Falwell, *Building Dynamic Faith* (Nashville: World publishing 2005) 46.

on track is more than just voicing your intentions. Gaining spiritual maturity requires experiencing faith.

Prayer is the focal point in obtaining God's direction. Determination to serve God for His glory is critical for spiritual growth. Faith comes from the Word of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing from the Word of God. People have to hear the Word and they also have to believe in Jesus. "How can they believe in one whom they have not heard and how can they hear without a preacher and how can one preach unless he be sent? How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (Romans 10:14). A mature pastor must learn to talk to God as a friend.

Pray to God as you knock on doors.[71] People are waiting to be saved from death and destruction. It would be very immature for a pastor to sit idly and watch people sink into hell just because he thought so much about himself that he did not make time to witness and lead others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The position of pastors requires that they act with authority; their faith requires that they live in submission. While they are busy delivering the Lord's commands, someone has to assist them in guarding their healthy propensity for pride and ego. The wreckage accumulates and the pastor moves away from prayer, they do not grow in faith, and they may stray from Christ to cultural issues. They may chase fads, programs, and technology all for the purpose of giving themselves another charge of ego.[72] When a pastor has made an improper self assessment, he may focus on himself rather than on God. He may become self-centered, he may work or minister only for the money, he may exploit his congregation (flock).

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[71]Ibid.

[72] Ibid 166.

Pastors may feel they have studied so much over the years that they do not believe they have to continue their studies. When they rely only on past studies they may become carnal minded. They may by their actions put to death again the Son of God as referred to in the book of Hebrews chapter 5.

A pastor must lead his congregation through three broad umbrella areas of the mission and of the vision for God's work. The three areas include: first, the church must be about salvation of the lost, second, it must be about the maturing of the saved and the third area is its' spiritual fellowship of the saints – the believers. All programs, practices and activities must reflect this mission and vision.[73] The mission and vision is the Lord's and not the pastor's.[74]

The pastor must be able to keep many concepts alive while maintaining the vision and mission of God.

Education

Education is not limited to the study of the Word, attendance in Bible College or Seminary. Experience and knowledge are gained by other opportunities as well. Attention will have to be given to the impact on those working with an immature or poorly trained pastor as well as the impact on the congregation. An examination must be made of the level of maturity required to be personally effective, to have a healthy family and in order to direct a healthy congregation.

Spiritual maturity encourages:

1. Establishing the foundation for growth in self, family and congregation

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[73] Fred Smith, Sr., *Leading with Integrity*, (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers 1999) 95.

[74] Bobb Biehl, *Master Planning*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997) 21.

2. Enhancing global perspective
3. Linking potential resources
4. Strengthening soldiers of the Kingdom
5. Expanding the Kingdom of God

Education may not determine maturity. The time spent in studying, the information learned and the experiences gained will enhance the maturation process. Education may increase information and improve knowledge and maturity will help determine how to use the information and knowledge. Some people refer to wisdom in the same sense. According to the Webster dictionary, wisdom is good sense judgment, a wise attitude or course of action. Maturity is defined in Webster as having attained a desired state or relating to a condition of full development.[75] It could be said that a mature pastor has knowledge and can make good decisions and judgments. He can bring situations or conditions into full development. Learning to make sound decisions according to the context of the scriptures is most important. Asking a pastor to make decisions and be accountable for something they know nothing about seems dangerous for the pastor and the congregation. Education is not about accumulating information or giving a display of mental or verbal gymnastics, it is more of learning how to be like Jesus and living for God.

There are more than one hundred Bible colleges and seminaries.[76] They have specific goals of equipping God's servants. They do not equip each pastor equally. Determining the call God has placed on the pastor will be essential in determining the

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[75] *The Merriam Webster Dictionary*, (Springfield: Merriam Webster Incorporated, 1994) 453.

[76] College Scholarship.com, Online 2007 list of Christian Colleges and Universities by state listed alphabetically. October 8, 2007. www.collegescholarships.com

most effective education, college, or seminary for equipping him. A pastor interested in missions or being a mission's pilot may find appropriate training at Moody Bible College. Some Christians are called to minister, not all are called to pastor. A call to minister may be to be an accountant in a Christian organization or even in a secular organization. A Christian education will be essential but the person may not be required to attend seminary.

In today's fast growing world, the pastor will have to know the Word of God and in conjunction with training in Theology, he must know how to manage a church and the congregation. He must know the terms but most important, he must know how the ministry works. He must have a working knowledge of vision and mission statements. He must know how to develop and manage budgets. He must know how to manage people and the art of delegation. The pastor must know how to manage conflict.[77] A pastor is called to manage the most critical work in the universe. The most important work is the keeping of the sheep of God and leading the unsaved people to God because of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.[78]

A Christian education may be influenced by the timing of the actual call. It may be influenced by the ministry, the church denomination or the location. The area of concentration that a college offers is important. It is also important to address location of the institution and the budget for schooling.

Another important item to this concept is the personality type of the pastor. Mels Carbonell, PhD. presented a concept of Extreme *Personality Makeover*. It provides some

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[77] Bobb Biehl, *Master Planning*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997) 21.

[78] James D. Berkley, *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 2003) 312, 313.

interesting components on determining the personality type of a person. This concept included pastors. In this instrument, a person's test results may indicate a specific type of personality. The instrument is also able to provide methods to overcome obstacles, and learn how to emulate all the traits of each of the other personality type.[79] It may be helpful to know the personality type during the time of assessing the ministry call. The personality type will not determine "the call" but may be helpful in determining the type of assignment, church or staff that would function best together.

Education is important in the continual spiritual development of pastors because laity is becoming more educated. Seminary students today are more mature starting into ministry having served part of their careers in other disciplines. They have less church experience than in the past.[80] They may however have more of life's experiences.

Preaching current events, expressing preferences or being politically in tone is not the same as knowing the meaning of the scriptures and properly exegeting a passage. It is critical to remember the assignment is to speak the Word of God and not personal opinion. A pastor called to preach or teach will get an excellent education at Liberty Theological Seminary or Dallas Theological Seminary. This does not eliminate other professions at these institutions. The reference here is only used to highlight areas for which these institutions have earned national acclaim. A pastor may not be called to attend a nationally acclaimed institution initially but to shepherd a small congregation of

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[79] Mels Carbonell, PhD., *Extreme Personality Makeover*. (Blue Ridge, GA: Uniquely You 2005) 55.

[80] Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition, (*Grand Rapids: William B Errdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 11, 12.

fifty or less persons. It would not be a deterrent, nor would it be required depending on the call of God.

Willing Learner

According to a Duke University sponsored project, pastors are entering ministry later in life and have varied employment experiences. They also have less denomination experience, and less allegiance to any specific denomination.[81] Looking at this rationally they may believe they have all the pieces in place. They may also think they may learn just a little and be able to address all of the upcoming issues. In ministry however, there is always something new to add to the learning process because the pastor is dealing with individuals. When he thinks he has heard and seen it all someone adds a different perspective or twist to the scenario. A pastor has such a varied assortment of issues that he must be willing to learn from anyone and everyone with whom he comes in contact.

Having greater responsibility does not guarantee that the pastor knows more than his entire congregation. If the pastor allows the people to believe he knows everything people will stop coming to him because he already knows everything or they will bring every issue great or small to him for resolution. Either way, the pastor loses.

One solution to avoid the loss of input of members is for the pastor to listen even when he thinks he knows it all. Listening may be a formal class or meeting, or an informal or mentoring environment. Listening adds value and refusing to listen reduces the value of a person. Actually, the person refusing to listen to someone shows how shallow he may be if he refuses to develop spiritually by gaining insight from others.

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[81] Ibid.

Many people err by thinking that value is limited to education, intelligence, tenure, or boldness. In comparison, none of these issues match with the wisdom that is available from God and through His Holy Spirit. Jesus said in the book of John, that "when he would leave and He would ask the Father to send another helper, the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world of sin. He will guide the world into all truth for he will not speak on His own authority but whatever He hears, He will speak and He will tell you of things to come" (John 16:8-13).

There are times when the knowledge of man is inappropriately substituted for the wisdom of God. Pastors and others in ministry may begin to measure themselves by man's standards instead of God. When this occurs, they lose sight of what God is teaching and their education is wasted on pleasing man instead of God. This is not the way to grow spiritually mature. Matthew 6:33 states we are to seek first the Kingdom of God and all of the other things He will add unto you. Seeking God is then a building block to maturity and growth. It is the standard by which we are to be measured. Willingly seeking God will increase wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 1:1).

Lack of an Effective Mentor

In ancient days, when printed material was less available, people were taught by others. Often the other person was older and wiser than the student. The older person served as a mentor for the younger or less experienced person. Today education has shifted to online, internet and video material. There are even schools that are teaching by internet because of space and ingenuity. Students will not only be home schooled but

will have access to vast amounts of information. This process will be interesting considering that God is a relational God. The world is in search of mentors but is less willing to accept God the creator as the chief mentor. This is amazing considering that God is the creator and architect of the universe. Pastors need godly mentors who have faithfully walked in the path of serving the Lord and have made a godly contribution to the faith community. Perhaps senior pastors are too busy to serve as mentors to new pastors. Their written books, tapes, DVD's and manuscripts may fill in but may never replace having someone available to describe how deep the trouble is one is about to enter. More importantly, a mentor can describe how to get out of trouble. Mentors can assist where comprehension of the written word is not clear to the pastor. Mentors can be sounding boards for new ideas or for assisting in personal matters. A mentor is a person who can be relational and help establish a teaching relationship. He can teach about the Holy Spirit.

Ministry Assignment

A ministry assignment can serve several elements of growth for pastors. In the assignment they can learn on the job. They can also be learning elements for future assignments. Assignments must be purposeful and some specific growth issues should be addressed. If this is not done, the pastor may go into a position and endure the assignment until he dies or something else comes along. The whole intention of education and mentoring should be preparation for greater work in the Kingdom of God. Greater may not be larger. It may be greater in the eyes of God and for His purpose. No assignment is wasted by God. A mentor can also serve as a reference to attest to actual

performance verses text book analysis. Handling a late night call on bereavement or possible suicide is different than reading counseling excerpts.

Limited Ministerial Exposure

As was mentioned earlier in the paper, pastors may be entering in ministry later in life with less ministerial experience. Spiritual growth and leadership skills take time. Personal training in ministry is important. Limited exposure or lack of exposure may be an issue over a period of time. However, mistakes will be made prior to training. The reason spiritual development is needed is that mistakes are costly and may influence a person, congregation or community for a life time.

When costly mistakes are made people may be less forgiving. Some future research may be directed to the impact of on the job training for pastors or perhaps the impact of having an effective mentor in ministry. The key is to develop a means to helping pastors to mature spiritually and sustain their call for the benefit of the Kingdom of God.

Limited Resources

In small churches, independent churches, or church start ups, limited resources may hinder the pastor, ministry, or community. Resources in the United States give a false impression of how ministry is done around the world. Many countries are not only hampered by the lack of pastors and Bibles but teachers and laity as well. It may be considered immature to think only of the United States and not be aware of what God wants done around the world. Creativity and maturity in getting the Gospel around the world is important not just to pastors but to dying souls around the world. A pastor is

responsible for obtaining education and experience but what he learns is not his personal talents to keep. The Bible states that to whom much is given, much is required. (Luke 12:48) Limited resources do not have to translate into limited results. Pastors must be equipped to abase or to abound.

Global Perspective

There are not many pastors who live only for the day or week. They would be the ones who receive what comes in on Sunday and spend it during the week and wait for the next Sunday. This is not limited to finances. This type of narrow perspective is immature. A person thinking only of himself or his family will find it almost impossible to be concerned about God's vast world. Matthew 28:16-20 states that we are to go into the entire world and teach the Gospel. Christians are to go into Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the utter most parts of the world. Spiritual maturity is when pastors accept the fact that this includes them. They are included in the going and preaching and reaching. A global perspective is not optional it is a command.

Pastors need to be spiritually developed because if they are not, they will not want to go to a different culture to serve God. Going without purpose or results is not optional. People are to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:8, the Bible states you shall receive power from the Holy Spirit and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and throughout the earth. Learning and teaching will be essential to being effective in the work of God. A global perspective is not optional, it is a command. A pastor is commanded to step outside of himself and do the work of the ministry. He is responsible to teach others to do the same.

John Piper ties global perspective, missions, worship and prayer all into God creating us for His glory. All People groups are to be reached for God's honor. Everyone must be educated on a global perspective as a command and not an option in serving God.[82]

There may be many immature pastors in the world. They are not broken nor do they all need to be discarded. They may need training or education. The primary concern is for them to be equipped for ministry. The equipping is for pastors and for the benefit of those whom they serve. All exposure, assignments, and education are for the purpose of glorifying God and expanding the effects of ministry. The pastor can not lead people where he himself has not been. The pastor needs to prepare then he needs to share what he has been gifted to do. This must all be done for the glory of God and expansion of God's Kingdom.

Training

Training should include theology, languages, worship, scriptural analysis and many other wonderful helps. Some courses will include management of the local church and budgets and/or how to handle conflict.

There is so much to know and yet one critical component of training is how to pray and how to be obedient to the Spirit of God. Training may vary according to the Seminary or Bible College.

Incorrect training

[82] John Piper, *Let The Nations Be Glad,* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 2003) 9.

Learning but not applying is not being a wise investment. Many books end up on a shelf and are never reopened.

There are times when training may be for personal enjoyment or convenience. A pastor will not increase maturity by just adding new classes. Studying material and not applying the information is not a good investment. Training that is based on preference that is not scriptural, should be weighed continually and discarded when appropriate. Church history and past religions provide valuable insight and traditions. They should not necessarily be placed into practice today. Some denominations may have done things a certain way for decades or centuries. That does not mean that is the only way to do things and they may not reach the Generation X's or Bridgers. One key objective in training is to mature the pastor and prepare him to provide maturity for the specific congregation he serves.

Incomplete training

If a pastor takes a portion of a course or program, his education is incomplete. Many pastors may have had interruptions in their education because of the demands of the ministry or family. The challenge is to avoid staying mid-stream but to eventually get to the other side. Taking a course in Theology 1 is helpful; however, completing 1 and 2 will provide a broader picture. Crossing areas of concentration may provide for a wide exposure of information, however, the depth of knowledge overall may be too shallow to be of benefit to the pastor and the congregation. An example may be that the pastor may be able to speak the language but does not comprehend what it means. He may

comprehend but not know how to apply the information. The intent must be to the furthering of the Kingdom of God.

Continuing Education

There will be times when a course or even two courses in the same subject will not provide all the information to fully apply the material learned. One purpose of continuing education is to build on the knowledge gain previously. It is important for the pastor to constantly ask God what he is to be equipped for. Continuing means to go on or add to. Taking courses that do not relate to the personal growth or growth of the ministry is futile. Many may boast of the number of courses they have taken, however, what have they learned and what have they applied. Failure to grow or apply what the pastor has learned is an immature approach to ministry.

Reading Books

Reading books, attending seminars or workshops have the same application. They must be applied to the requisite training for growth and maturity. The reason for spiritual development of pastors is not for the pastor only but for the congregation and the community and most of all for the Kingdom of God. Dusty books are not impressive.

Books by pastors are valuable when the pastor may not have a mentor. Books such as *Return to Holiness* by Greg Frizzell, *They Call me Pastor* by H. B. London or *On*

Being a Pastor, by Derek Prime and Alstair Begg are inside perspectives on being a pastor from men who have walked the mile and remained steadfast.[83]

Books are to be examined by discussions with other pastors. This is helpful to find if others received similar perspectives from the reading.

Seminars

The selection of the proper seminars is important. Attendance for attendance sake is a waste of time and resources. Wasted seminars are not impressive. They must result in growth and development. Seminars should supplement class room or on line courses and workshops.

Seminars may be a requirement for the personal growth of the pastor or may be needed training for the staff or for laity. The intent of the seminar may for seeking solutions within the church or reoccurring issues in the congregation or community. When the pastor does not have the maturity to solve issues he must seek help and that help may be in the form of a seminar. The ultimate goal is to do the work of the ministry more effectively.

Seminars can offer reinforcement or information learned from another venue. When pastors drift from scriptural requirements of their call they may need encouragement and redirection. Seminars can offer support in this area.

Holiness is a requirement for pastors. Personal holiness stands at the core of any pastor's ministry. Its potential, availability and promise are among the most fulfilling

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[83] H. B. London Jr., and Neil B. Wiseman, *They Call me Pastor*, (Ventura: Regal Books, 2000); Greg Frizzell, *Return to Holiness*, (Memphis: The Master Design, 2000); and Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor*, (Chicago: Moody, 2004).

discoveries.[84] Yet a pastor straying from holiness may not recognize his own issue. He may not think about a seminar on holiness.

Workshops

Workshops can be developmental wherein the information is shared and the material is implemented. Attending workshops or conducting workshops that are not related to the mission assigned by God is futile. All things are to be done as unto the Lord. Workshops are often hands on experiences. This supplement process should enhance the seminars, books and formal education. There are many reasons why pastors need to grow continually. The impact pastors have on many others is phenomenal. They are given much and much is expected of them.

Consulting firms offer a variety of workshops. They may consist of one time reviews or they may be ongoing depending on the demand for them. Workshops are even being offered on line for pastor who have travel or budget restrictions. The bottom line is to get help and gain maturity.

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[84] H. B. London Jr., and Neil B. Wiseman, *They Call me Pastor*, (Ventura: Regal Books, 2000) 188.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Impact of Insufficient Spiritual Development

Chapter four is directed towards examining the need for maturity and the impact of immaturity on the pastor, and all of those around him.

The impact of pastors in today's Christian world and their spiritual development are essential to preparing for the return of Christ or for the next millennium, which ever comes first. There are so many issues with post-modernism, Bridgers Generation, family definition and global intervention it is difficult for a pastor to know where to place his time in training and his energy in ministry.[85] Training, timing, and the potential of backlash add stress. This stress influences the pastor, his family, the congregation, and the community. Most important of all, the pastor will eventually influence the world for Christ Jesus on a global scale. Fast transportation and fast internet service influence how Christians operate. They have to become global, whether they are ready or not. The issues have more impact when we realize they are mutually exclusive. There can be multiple impacts simultaneously. The issues will be discussed on an individual basis and as they link with other issues.

Christians may say that their goal is to win our generation to Christ or to build up the body of Christ or serve God in our day. These things sound noble but they do not describe how to start today, lead into tomorrow, project for next week or plan for next month.[86] The last few decades have been difficult for Christian churches. Most have lost

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[85] Carl S. Dudley, *Effective Small Churches,* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003) 10.

[86] John C. Blattner, *Leading Christians to Maturity,* (Altamonte Springs: Florida, 1987) 5.

ground and today they can not rely on society to be normally sensitive toward Christianity.[87] Christian soldiers must get prepared for spiritual warfare. The potential impact is going to be on the individual pastor, his family, the church, congregation and community.[88]

Individual Spiritual Growth

Pastors can cause tremendous stress on themselves and others. When there are immature leaders many people are affected. Spiritual maturity is not referring to chronological age. Maturity is depth of relationship not length of time.[89] Jesus did not refer to knowing about God as eternal life. His reference is concerning knowing God personally. In the Scriptures knowledge of God comes through experience. Experience may be gained like David at an early age with the lion and the bear (1 Samuel 17:34). We come to know God as we experience Him in and around our lives.[90] The effective development of pastors can be influenced by their past.

Spiritual maturity could have developed as early as childhood. Things that were done or not done could be factors. Things that were said or not said could have an influence on pastors. Any reason a pastor did not develop or grow in greater maturity

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[87] Ibid 11.

[88] Ibid 12.

[89] Merriam Webster, *The Merriam Webster Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster Incorporated, 1994) 453.

[90] Henry T. Blackaby & Claude V. King, *Experiencing God,* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers) 7.

will be a factor. Past history may be forgotten for some, but these thoughts could later bring back memories that will trigger immature thinking and responses.[91]

A pastor who may have been physically abused may have flashbacks during a counseling session when helping others. The same concept could apply for sexually abused pastors. The same could be said for any physically, mentally or socially abused victim. It would be foolish to assume that pastors have never had a past. It would be immature of Christians to believe that pastors turned all of the corners into salvation at once and never had to reconcile with the past.

When the pastor himself is immature, it impacts his decision making, handling of situations and handling of people. If the pastor is immature, and his walk with the Lord is limited, the foundation of his ministry will be shaken.[92]

A pastor must walk very closely with God to gain spiritual maturity. The pastor does not start out with a completely intimate walk with God but develops that close relationship over time and through experience. God is known for taking the ordinary men and making them extraordinary. He called ordinary men to affect His Kingdom. Each man God used had a responsive heart, ready to hear God and a life that was available to obey God. Each one also had integrity to honor God.[93] Psalm 139 reminds the pastor to ask God to search him, test his heart and his thoughts. Knowing God as the examiner builds the integrity in a pastor.[94]

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[91] Dr. Archibald D. Hart, *The Sexual Man*, (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1994) 149.

[92] Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001) 43.

[93] Henry Blackaby and Tom Blackaby, *The Man God Uses*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999) 3.

[94] Ibid 5.

The integrity and other Godly qualities that a pastor should constantly seek are:

Holiness
A pure heart
A contrite heart
Fear of God
Faithfulness
Obedience
Seek and love God
Servant of the Lord[95]

God said be Holy because He is Holy (1 Peter 1:16). He has set an example for pastors through His Son Jesus. A pastor must have a pure heart and be available to God. The pastor's heart must also be tender towards God and His people. A spiritually mature pastor will think of others before himself. If a pastor ever finds his ego or arrogance getting out of proportion, it will take the fear of God for the pastor to relinquish his recognition and honor to its proper place which is with God.[96]

Many pastors pledge to be faithful but a faithful pastor is hard to find (Proverbs 20:6). A pastor must be faithful to his God, his wife, children, congregation, community and people around the world. This may sound too extraordinary but they are loved by an extraordinary God. God has issued a command and He expects pastors to be obedient. This is not a robotic obedience but one made out of love for the Father. Obedience is important because it is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22, Romans 5:12-21). If an immature pastor talks about how much he has sacrificed for God, his thoughts had best go back to the cross where the full price was paid once for all.

The price has been paid and all Christians are Christ's. We love Him but He first loved us. Christians must love Him and worship Him in Spirit and Truth. Following

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[95] Ibid 9.

[96] John C. Blattner, *Leading Christians to Maturity,* (Altamonte Springs Florida, 1987) 52

God requires pastors to seek and love God. All of a pastor's service must be as God's servant.[97]

These Christ-like characteristics can be crucial to leading a pastor to increased maturity.[98] As servants of God, pastors must understand God's aim. God does not expect the pastor to be served but to serve. They are to glorify Him by telling others about Him and leading them to Him. This is true maturity. Insufficient maturity will cause a pastor to want to hold onto recognition for himself. Constant praises should be a warning for a pastor. He should divert that attention back to God where it belongs.

Instead of receiving glory, Jesus taught His disciples to wash feet. This was a role for a servant and not the King of Kings. Jesus was teaching them to be shepherds and how to care for His flock.[99]

A pastor without the heart of a servant may seek to fleece the flock rather than serve them. Some pastors even believe the sheep belongs to them. A shepherd is not the owner. God is the owner.[100] The shepherd is to care for the sheep and protect them. An immature pastor will take advantage of the sheep in the name of the Lord and claim he was instructed by God to do so. Insufficient spiritual development may start out innocently but once the heart is hardened the pastor may grow to expect all of the perks of placing himself between God, the owner, and the sheep.

There are many concepts that are affected by insufficient spiritual development. They include decision making, relationships, and ministry. It is not wise to make

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[97] Henry T. Blackaby & Claude King, *Experiencing God*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers) 99.

[98] Henry & Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman 2001) 117.

[99] J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, (Chicago: Moody Press 1999) 51.

[100] Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999) 395.

decisions without facts, knowledge and wisdom. Many people have tried and the results have impacted them and others for quite some time. Spiritual development or a lack of it will not change a decision that is already made, but it does serve a foundation for future decisions. Relationships for pastors are important. This is true because God is the owner of the sheep and He is Omniscient. Believers, pastors and Christians will stand before God to be evaluated for the manner in which they lived while on earth since salvation. Making unwise decisions without the consultation of God is not wise. A commitment to do the will of God must take precedence over the will of the pastor.[101]

Luke 12:48 states "to whom much is given, much is required." It is interesting to note that many pastors gauge how well they are doing by the number of members in their church. This seems to be a bit of a paradox. The more people a pastor has, the more he is accountable to God. Each sheep must receive care. One may be neglected if there are too many for the shepherd to care for properly. The shepherd still has to be evaluated by God on whether the care for all the sheep was sufficient. It would seem tragic for a pastor to be evaluated on caring for the rich, educated or based on where the member lives and the others were not properly cared for. The explanation that would have to be given to God is frightening. The pastor with more members will be evaluated on more members.

Spiritual Development

Solutions to gaining sufficient spiritual development are:

- Trust in God. Apart from God, a pastor does not have spiritual maturity.

[101] Jack Hayford, Pursuing *The Will Of God*, (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 1997) 9.

- The Holy Spirit will not delegate authority to human hands. It is mandatory for the Holy Spirit to be present will not has the world
- Acts 20:28 states that the pastor is the overseer of the sheep. (He is not the owner)
- Prayer is the method by which a pastor talks to God and receives his instructions.[102]

Spiritual maturity sounds like a double requirement. A pastor may be mature in many ways but if he is not spiritually in tune with the Lord he does not have all that is needed to properly serve God.

Family Spiritual Growth

The families of many pastors across the country are hurting and are not growing and maturing. If the pastor is not spiritually mature, the probability of his family being spiritually mature is reduced.

Deuteronomy 6:7 states that you are to teach your children as you sit and as you walk down the road. This is a command. So many comments are made about the children of pastors. Pastors get cut with a two edged sword. If their children behave, they are accused of trying to be better than everyone else. If they misbehave, they are called spoiled brats and receive discipline from the parents and members of the congregation. This exerts an enormous amount of pressure on pastor's kids. Many of them require counseling to deal with all of the struggles they face along with what their parents face. Things are said and done in the name of the Lord and scars are left for a lifetime.

[102] Ibid 88-92.

With all of these lifetime scars, pastor's kids may either turn away from God and serving Him or be drawn closer to Him. Pastors have to take extra measures to protect their children. Healthy parents make healthy children.[103]

If pastor's children are not participating in everything they are accused of being slackers. If they participate in too many activities, they are trying to take over. It seems such a heavy burden for someone not called but is a family member. Some pastor's kids may feel compelled to enter ministry. They must confirm their call on an individual basis. A person who has a parent(s) called to pastor is not necessarily called to pastor also.[104]

Pastors must lead by example. The scriptural reference for the qualification of a pastor is found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. They must manage their families well. If they do not manage their families well, how can they manage the church? Pastors have to practice what they preach. They have to teach their families to listen to God on their own and not just follow after the pastor's call. Some pastor's families are in ministries they have not been called to. Seeking God personally is critical to mature service to the Lord.

There are many helps for pastors. Some are listed here:

- Minister first to your spouse
- Raise children and not pastor's kids
- Redeem the time
- Guard your heart
- Pray without ceasing[105]

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[103] Jerry Pipes, *Building A Successful Family*, (United States: Dr. Jerry Pipes, 2002) 79.

[104] Jerry Pipes, *Family to Family*, (United States: Dr Jerry Pipes, 2003) 121.

[105] Dennis Rainey, *Ministering to Twenty-First Century Families*, (Nashville: Word Publishing 2001) 18-25.

In an interview with H. B. London, Dennis Rainey brought out excerpts on these topics. Mr. London referred to the many pastors who are people pleasers.[106] They smile and take care of the flock while their own spouses suffer enormous pain. They suffer isolation and at times a lack of support. Wives are a means some use to get to the pastor and influence him.

There is extraordinary pressure on the spouse to work 50 to 70 hours a week, serve in the church, take care of the children and minister to the congregation. Many times the congregation is not sensitive enough to personal issues of the pastor's family to help the pastor help them. Some people actually think pastors do not have issues or even life issues of their own.[107] Pastors should have date nights with their wives alone. They should romance their wives. They should not keep secrets from them. There may be times when the pastor may have to say to his wife he may have to delay details so others will not probe her for information to which they should not be privy.

The same may have to be taught to pastor's kids. They receive questions also regarding ministry and family. In an effort to defend their parents, they may speak more than what is healthy. Children should be able to have friends without fear of reprisals. The legacy of a pastor must be his children and not be limited to the church or ministry. As the shepherding goes on at the home of the pastor, so goes the shepherding at the church.[108] Pastors should make their children part of the ministry but most importantly make them a part of the pastor's life. The pastor is still the parent, and the pastor's child

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[106] Ibid 16

[107] Ibid 16.

[108] Ibid 20.

needs a parent to teach them to become spiritually mature. In 1Timothy 3:4, it states that a pastor must rule his home well and have his children in submission with reverence. They should be following his leadership and be honorable to their father. If the earthly father can not lead his children, it is improbable that he can lead the congregation. He should not provoke his children (Eph. 6:4). He should train them in the way they should go so when they are old they will not depart from their training (Proverbs 22:6).

God instituted marriage and He enabled Adam and Eve to reproduce. God intended marriage and family and children to exist in the world.[109] He must intend for it to function. The family consisted of husband, wife and their off spring. In this society there are many attempts to redefine the family. When the Bible is kept from the school system there is no wonder the definition can not be compared to the truth. This truth is not hidden from the reading of those who make time to search it out. Christians have this truth and it must be shared. Pastors must teach family concepts and teach families to teach others in their families and neighborhoods. In order for the truth to be comprehended, the person must have the presence of the Holy Spirit to teach him.

When a person accepts Christ as Lord and Savior and is converted there is a radical change in his or her life. The actual spiritual growth depends on the ministry of the church and the commitment of the person to spiritual growth. The committed person is continually growing and becoming more Christ-like. In a marriage, when the couple is growing in *agape* love, they are protected and the enemy can not creep in. *Agape* love is unconditional love. In 1Cor 13:1-13, love is declared to suffer long, be kind. Love does not parade itself nor is it puffed up. Love does not seek its own way and it is not rude. It is not provoked and thinks no evil. Love does not rejoice in inequity but in truth.

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[109] Willie Richardson, *Reclaiming The Urban Family,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1996) 15.

Scripture declares that love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. Scripture declares that love never fails. The passage closes with the statement, now abide faith, hope, and love, these three but the greatest of these is love. Pastors must love their families in this manner and teach others to love in a similar manner.

When couples love unconditionally it is more difficult for the enemy of God to come into their homes. The goal in spiritual growth is to be like Jesus. The Spirit is essential in a marriage and family that will glorify God.[110]

Redeem the Time

Today people are intent to save the world, the whales, animals, and the environment. Christians and pastors in particular must be more concerned with lost souls than the environment. Spiritual maturity pastors must be reminded to allow God to redeem the time. Jesus is coming soon according to the book of Revelation. (Revelation 22:7) Maybe tomorrow the world will be more concerned about lost souls, their relationship with God and their marriages and their children. When each person has twenty four hours a day to do all that is expected, priorities must be set.

The pastor must have time to date his wife, train his children, and to disciple others. Each day, each moment, a pastor must manage the time God gives and plan to be obedient to God to complete His plan for him. Spiritually mature pastors seek God's will and to be in the center of God's will. When their priorities are focused on God, all of the energy is placed the right perspective to glorify God. God can make things right even when is seems too late for man to make corrections.

[110] Ibid 18, 19.

Guard Your Heart

God will not despise a broken and contrite heart (Proverbs 51:17). A pastor must rid himself of any matter that interferes with his relationship with God, his wife, children or any person in his congregation. As the pastor walks in integrity in his own home and honors God through his marriage and children, his marriage will be a visible sermon the sheep in his flock will welcome and never forget. [111] Family is important to God. You are a part of the family of God. Start praying now and pray without ceasing. Ask God to guard your heart.

Congregation Spiritual Growth

General conversational messages, politically correct messages or angry messages will not lead the congregation to spiritual maturity. The key is to preach according to the truth of the gospel. Pastors should be preaching progressively in deeper doctrine and with progressively clearer practical applications as models. Jesus was so excellent at teaching through parables in terms and concepts that could be understood and applied. Church should be a refueling station for the days between services. Sufficient teaching should equip the congregation for deeper relationships with God, family and others in the community. The better they are prepared, the better equipped they will be to minister to others.[112]

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[111] Dennis Rainey, *Ministering to Twenty-First Century Families*, (Nashville: Word Publishing 2001) 25.

[112] John C. Blattner, *Leading Christians to Maturity*, (Alamonte Springs, Florida: Creation House, 1987) 39.

If the pastor is spiritually immature, he can not lead his family or the congregation to deeper maturity. If the pastor does not have an understanding of deeper doctrine he is not able to teach the congregation or his family. Without the teaching of the deeper truths, scripture refers to people as spiritual babes. They continue to feed on the milk instead of moving onto more solid foods. (1 Corinthians 3:2) The qualities of a mature pastor are Holiness, a pure heart, a contrite heart, a fear of God, faithfulness, obedience to God, who seek and love God, and is a servant of the Lord. People need to see these qualities lived out and for prolonged periods not for a season. People make up the body of believers called the church.

Today pastors may pay more attention to the physical building and the programs within. The people do not get the care and attention they need to grow. They may fit a certain mold or purpose but no connection is made between the persons and their Heavenly Father of the universe. The ministry may use the members for its purpose or the pastor may use them for his purpose without ministering to the person.[113]

The ministry may use the person without knowing what God's purpose is for the person's life. It is easy to become so engaged in the mechanics of ministry that the real reason for it all is overlooked. When you evaluate the purpose of any aspect of the church's ministry, you always come back to the people.[114]

Some people have become spiritually deformed by years of gospel sterility and shriveled love. They feel abused with good cause by wrongs done to them in the name of righteousness, by unresolved conflicts, and by hurts from unfair gossip. Real pastors can

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[113] Steve Sjogren, Dave Ping, *Irresistible Evangelism,* (Loveland, Colorado: Group 2004) 24,, 44, 46.

[114] H. B. London Jr., *They Call Me Pastor,* (Ventura: Regal Books, 2000) 51.

not ignore cries for help.[115] The pastor who may understand his role to be similar to a rancher or CEO shifts to become more impersonal.[116] The rancher or CEO view the sheep as strictly business related. Sheep in the eyes of a rancher or Business executive may appear to be a commodity more than a person.

Systems, budgets and programs can block the work of the ministry. They can cause ministry to be conducted in a more impersonal manner. The challenge comes in transitioning to a more vibrant ministry. Pastors who are CEO's at heart may view the budget or program without seeing the people of God. When people are not viewed as valuable they are used and at times discarded. This waste of God's valuable resources must grieve the very heart of God.[117]

There must be a transition from using people to get things in ministry to using ministry to serve people. There must be a focus of getting them healthy, as well as reaching and making disciples of others. The goal of pleasing God is not to give Him more things. He already owns everything. God is relational and people, His children, are important to Him. God is a relational God. Genesis 1:26 and Romans 8:14, 15, 16)

The key elements to our relationship with God are grace, mercy and forgiveness. Many people understand that God sent His Son to die for our sins. They are grateful for being saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus. People are appreciative that through mercy, God does not give us the punishment we deserve. Forgiveness however is crucial to getting the relationship on the right track and the avenue to leading others to Christ. Forgiveness is at the center of the Christian faith. The gospel could easily be

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[115] Ibid 57.

[116] Ibid 76.

[117] Ibid 68.

deemed God's instructions for giving and receiving forgiveness. God expects us to forgive (Ephesians 4:32). Spiritual maturity is more of how to move to the next level of growth than the accumulation of things, including knowledge.[118]

The challenge in spiritual maturity is getting people from where they are to a level where God wants them to be.[119] God forgave and intends for us to forgive sinners. How can you entice them to come to church if they do not understand the forgiveness of God the Father? They would believe they are not good enough. Actually, they can not. However through grace and mercy and the forgiveness of God they will spend eternity with the Father. God has many other children waiting to be forgiven. The pastor must not be a hindrance to them. Some extremely helpful recommendations for pastors are shared by H. B. London. He recommends the preaching first be applied to the preacher. The preacher must be sure he has forgiven all people he needs to forgive. Forgiveness is to be without limits. The scripture verse is Matthew 28:22. You are to forgive seventy times seven. While forgiving, the pastor must point the person toward scripture and to God. When the forgiveness seems difficult the pastor must examine why. This includes examining himself. When a person asks for or gives forgiveness, it shapes their future relationship. Pastors must follow the example of Christ and forgive as completely and quickly as God forgave them.[120] Forgiveness allows a relationship to go to the next level while immaturity allows for bickering, arguments and even anger. People behaving immaturely hinder the work of the Spirit of God.

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[118] H. B. London Jr. and Neil Wiseman, *They Call Me Pastor*, (Ventura: Regal Books 2000) 37.

[119] John Blattner, *Leading Christians to Maturity*, (Altamonte Springs: Creation House, 1987) 173.

[120] H. B. London 82-87.

Forgiveness is not always easy. There are times when it comes at great expense. The greatest expense was what Jesus paid on the cross. Since God forgave you, you must forgive others. Forgiveness frees the pastor, family, or member to become useful tools in the hand of God. Forgiveness is powerful. It opens doors of reconciliation that would be shut if a person holds on to his own rights and holds another person liable. There may be times when the grieved person believes he will gain from un-forgiveness. He holds on at the risk of losing family or friendships. The church is hindered by un-forgiveness because God who is Omniscient knows the truth and has stated "if we refuse to forgive others, our Father in heaven will not forgive us" (Matthew 6:15). The church can not be as effective in its ministry while carrying all of the un-forgiveness that the combined membership may own.

The transition to maturity calls for forgiveness and the freedom it brings allows the pastor, his family and the members of the congregation to reach outside of themselves and their four walls and serve others. Healthy Christians can guide others to the Savior. A Christian who values his or her forgiveness and salvation should be all too eager to help someone else to find the same type of joy and peace in life. Churches should not send unhealthy members into the world to represent Christ. The world, who does not know Jesus as Savior, will be opposed to identifying Him as Christ. If a Christian does not understand the value of forgiveness, they may not be able to stand in the mist of turmoil and confrontation and come away looking like and smelling like Jesus. The believer must be a fresh fragrance that is sweet smelling to the unbeliever; a fragrance that attracts the unbeliever to the Father (2 Corinthians 2:15).

When the church can reach outside of themselves and outside of its walls then the work can be successfully ministered. A mature congregation can reach a troubled world for the Kingdom of God.

Community Spiritual Growth

The responsibilities of the church do not end with the people within its own congregation. When the church is not reaching the community the work of the Kingdom of God is not being completed. It is possible that some other church will reach the lost but there is not a guarantee. There may be parts of any community that fall between what the church calls its boundaries. Boundaries may be culture, neighborhood definition, denomination or other differences.[121] These invisible boundaries may be more a territorial claim of Satan than of God. The Bible reads that God does not wish that any should perish. (2Peter 3:9) Some still need to go to the inner city across the railroad tracks inside the bars and bring in the sheep. They can reach others like themselves. God will challenge believers on who is in heaven as a result of their serving Him. The work of the ministry is not about man's preference or convenience it is about God's plan that all be given an opportunity to know Him and come to Him. Imagine for a moment a whole community of believers. Imagine a reduction in murders, thefts, and brutal financial competition. Some one has to reach the people under the bridge, homeless and otherwise forgotten. They are part of the community. They may not live next door but they are part of the community (2 Peter 3:9; Matthew 28:18, 19)

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[121] Ed Stetzer & David Putman, Breaking the Missional Code, (Nashville, Broadman & Holman, 2006) 28.

Dr David Wheeler, a professor at Liberty Theological Seminary, presented a concept of "Back to the Basics." He challenged his Evangelism class to get to know their neighbors. Pray for the neighbors and even invite them to a "Block Party."[122]

There may be numerous reasons people do not invite neighbor, friends or family to block parties. Among the reasons is that people today do not want to share their time with others. Discipleship requires time. A person led to the Lord must be nurtured. One of the first explanations people give is they do not have any time to give. The time saved by faster computers, internet, faster cars and email must be going somewhere. The world has more and more time savers and less time. People are busier and all of the saved time is already spent. Busyness is not holiness. People rush themselves almost to death and yet God who is relational seeks us, not things. He desires that we seek Him and not things (Matthew 6:33).

Block parties and Bible studies do take time. The time has to come from somewhere. In the story of the sisters (Luke 10:40), Martha and Mary, Martha was impressed with how much she was doing. She even mentioned to Jesus, don't you care that I am doing all of this work and my sister is sitting there? His reply was Mary is doing what is best. This should not be misinterpreted as people not working. It means that they should work on what is important to Jesus. Jesus is interested in lost souls. If you were more involved with leading lost souls to Christ, you would be doing what is best.

The time to witness could be taken from watching television, talking on the telephone, or surfing the internet. People spend enormous amounts of time surfing the

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[122] David Wheeler, *Developing Strategic Evangelism, Back to the Basic, class notes,* (Liberty University, Class notes June 2007)

net to save time and money. Some of that time could be spent on saving souls. A block party could be an annual event. A Bible study could be done in four weeks or up to six months. The time will depend on the person establishing the study.

A Bible study could be done with one person or one dozen people at once. There would be 48 weeks left in a year after a four week Bible study. A person could literally replace two half hour television programs a week and have a Bible study for four weeks and still see the rest of the season finale. Bible study is important to God. A person could literally teach another person to lead a Bible study and be done in four weeks. The twelve people could literally teach twelve additional people and the total number of souls impacted would continue to grow. Neighbors could reach hundreds, and hundreds can reach thousands, and thousands can reach millions. A whole community can be reached.[123]

An immature pastor may not have a broad enough perspective. It can be frustrating to solve a problem only to find two new problems linked to what was supposed to be a solution. This is not uncommon with immaturity. An example would be planning an outreach or block party. The pastor may find that the intentions were good yet insufficient planning has attracted people that he and the congregation are not prepared to receive their minister.

Insufficient tools and insufficient planning skills can add to the burden of reaching a community. In all of the excitement of starting something new, there are times when small details are dropped or forgotten. There may be situations when major details are forgotten also or many small and less significant details override critical issues.

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[123] Ibid.

Transitioning a community requires great detail, energy and most of all complete planning. When the ministry's purpose or mission is clear they can focus on a segment of the community or people group. They can discuss the call to that community and people according to the plan of God. Once direction is clear, then processes such as Back to Basics and the use of "Plan-It" software can be extremely helpful.[124] "Back to Basics" and "Plan-It" can be initiated if the pastor and congregation know the direction God is taking them. The maturity of the pastor and the congregation will help them stay focused in the midst of varying details and interpretations of the plan.

In the vision given to the pastor, clear focus needs to be placed on the end results. The plan may initially appear to include one specific block or group of people. God may reveal something additional later. God will equip the pastor and the congregation as He progresses them. "Plan-It" is a very powerful and elaborate tool to combine people and resources as well as timelines to accomplish God's plan. This fascinating tool allows the operator to enter into the data base the events, people and other resources, and budgets. The software will accumulate all of the data and provide a calendar, a budget, which is also accumulative, and a timeline.

Planning a "Block Party" will be enhanced because many of the details have been built into the software.[125] This instrument allows the pastor, committee and congregation more time to research other needs to make the outreach a success. The better the input the better the reporting will be. The more insight and maturity the input group has the more likely the success of the outreach.

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[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid.

Software will not replace surveying the community, the people, or having financial data. Skills, spiritual gifts and personalities of the ministry team are not built into the software but are so critical in matching the team to make the process successful. All of the planning in the world does not force people to work together successfully. It is critical not to let the software become the key objective but cause it to remain a tool for reaching the community. A person can be effective in pointing people toward Christ Jesus for the purpose of salvation by using the software.

Planning for discipleship and follow-up is also important. Once the community starts to come, the congregation and leaders must be prepared to receive them and assist them to become fishers of men's souls as well. An immature approach may be to win a block instead of the whole community. Christians should win a community then the next community and the next community.

Global Spiritual Growth

Christians at times wonder where people find time to think about what is going on around the world when so much is going on in their own world, congregation or community. There are numerous keys to the solution.

Pastors and Christians start with you when thinking of global spiritual growth. A person must know who he is and how he fits into the Kingdom of God. A pastor must assess his influence on the congregation, community and the global economy. It may be that he has no global impact. He may not know that until he inquires of God. Has He equipped you for global impact? Has He called you to a region of peoples group? There

may be something in your background or training that specifically equips you to serve in a specific area. You may not know unless you inquire.

Practice "Servant Evangelism" on your congregation.[126] When you have served where you are placed and been obedient, you can ask about other opportunities. Getting better at serving requires practice. There are so many opportunities that are not captured in a day. Serve food at the church picnic, wash dishes or take out the trash. Bring lunch for the staff members. Find some unique service to do and perform it without recognition.[127] You could clean someone's lawn or offer to go to the store for them. There are so many ways to demonstrate the love of God to your congregation.[128]

Fine tune the practice in the community and then take the process to the world. Steve Sjogren volunteered to clean the toilets in a neighborhood gas station.[129] This approach is a very spiritually mature approach because the focus remained on presenting Christ to others. The intent is to introduce them to Jesus.

Conditions and people change and the method of reaching them changes as well. Most of us grew up in a culture where missions took the form of establishing schools, or hospitals or setting up a campaign for sanitation. Global missions and evangelism today are more closely merged. Mature Christians are being sensitive to the changes in order to minister and share the Gospel. Evangelism became campaigns to reach campuses or countries. The real challenge today is to do them both.

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[126] Ibid.

[127] Steve Sjogren, Dave Ping and Doug Pollock, *Irresistible Evangelism,* (Loveland CO: Group Publishing 2004) 101

[128] Ibid. 101

[129] Ibid. 101

Humanitarianism is a good ministry yet people still need salvation. Evangelism is good yet people still need discipleship. A good mature approach is to do them together in a comprehensive strategy that will reach people for Christ by meeting their physical and spiritual needs. Next, we need to spread the Good News and teach converts to disciple others. In this manner, the process of multiplication can take place.[130] The Kingdom of God will increase. The world will be impacted for Jesus Christ.

[130] Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman 2006) 226 227.

CHAPTER FIVE

Solutions

Chapter Five discusses solutions for the personal continual development of pastors. This vocation is so much more involved than preaching on Sundays. When ministerial issues change, the preparation of pastors will need to change. While it is not widely recommended, some pastors stop training at the time of their call into ministry. They are called and they jump into the pastorate not understanding the full implications of ministry. Solutions are needed to keep them in the ministry. This chapter, as it unfolds, shifts from problem identification to problem solving. While it will not be all inclusive it will offer some solutions for success.

Self Analysis

Some pastors are wise and go to Bible College or seminary and believe studying will solve all of their educational challenges. They may believe the education places them automatically in a successful position. They find that college or seminary alone does not solve all the challenges of the ministry.[131]

Solutions are not always found in more training, courses, books, or workshops. Many solutions are already available and many other creative solutions can be added.

A major solution for pastors is to test their spirituality as well as their personality type. A pastor has to know his personality and leadership style. Dr. Mels Carbonell

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[131] Derek Prime & Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor* (Chicago: Moody Press 2004) 102.

states, it is all about controlling not changing, the personalities.[132] While continually growing, a pastor must learn many personality traits that may help or hinder his ministry. The ultimate goal is to have a personality like Jesus Christ. Having an extreme personality makeover is actually letting God make the pastor over so that he reflects His personality. God gave each pastor a specific personality type to make him special. Everyone should have a diagnosis and prescription to improve their personalities so they will be more aware of their motivation and become more effective with their relationships.[133] The pastor needs to know himself to effectively minister to others. He must know the depths of his own understanding or lack of understanding.[134]

A pastor who has not matured must continue to grow past the stage of consuming milk in order not to hinder the church with his limited knowledge or limited experience. He must become more mature as people grow and move to consuming solid food and not remain on milk like a small baby. A pastor who has not experienced life can not usually give counsel from experience but must respond strictly from an academic perspective. A pastor who has not had children is challenged to give from experience how to direct them. Although he may have brothers and sisters or neighbors or students he has not been a parent. Parental advice then becomes academic or passed down.

When a pastor knows himself, he can learn what changes, training and adjustments need to be made. Knowing when changes are being made in your life is

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[132] Mels Carbonell PhD, *Extreme Personality Makeover,* (Uniquely You Resources, Blue Ridge, GA 2005) 7.

[133] Ibid 16.

[134] Tim Clinton, Arhcibald Hart, and George Ohlschlager, *Caring For People God's Way,* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 29.

important. It means finding out what God is doing or where God is leading you.[135] When you do not know who you are, it may be difficult to know where you are going or where you are being led. Perhaps some pastors missed the call of God because they did not know who they were. Perhaps they heard the call of God but were afraid because they did know if they could make it. They did not know themselves. They did not trust God to know them either. All calls to ministry are personal and different for each pastor. The call is not be the will of man but by the will of God.[136] (Ephesians 1:1 and 2 Timothy 1:1)

Moses represents a complete cycle of knowing trusting and growing. He was trained early in the finest schools in the country, he was connected to the inner circle and he had authority. He fled and spent forty years in the wilderness. He heard a voice from a burning bush. He knew his name and answered the voice. God had whispered his name. Moses at forty was a likable character but Moses at eighty was less attractive to some people. Too old! Too tired! Smells like a shepherd. Speaks like a foreigner. Yet God sent him. Moses stood in awe of God. God selected him.[137]

When God calls a person it is imperative for them to answer that call. There are several compelling reasons why God still has His lines of communication open with His people. Charles Stanley references God's communication in this manner:

> First and foremost, He loves His people just as much as He loves the people of Old and New Testament days. He desires to fellowship with us just as

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[135]Henry Blackaby, *The Power of the Call*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers), 27ff. Blackaby treats this topic in several of his books. The reader is referred to the bibliography for more possibilities.

[136] Henry T. Blackaby and Henry Brandt, *The Power Of The Call*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers) 27.

[137] Max Lucado, *When God Whispers Your Name*, (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1994) 17.

> much as He fellowshipped with them. If our relationship with Him is a one- way conversation and there is no communication or dialogue between us and the Lord Jesus Christ, then there isn't much fellowship. Fellowship is not when one person does all the talking and the other does all the listening. Fellowship has to go deeper than conversation. In John 14:15 states that if we love God we will also be obedient to Him. God still speaks to pastors today because He wants to develop a love relationship that involves a two-party conversation. He speaks through His Word. Man speaks through prayer.
>
> The second reason God still speaks today is that man needs His definite and deliberate direction for his life, as did Joshua, Moses, Jacob and Noah. As His children, men need His counsel for effective decision making. Since He wants men to make the right choices, He is still responsible for providing accurate data and that comes from speaking to men. God is never without answers. Man may fail to ask but God is never absent or without answers. Man may have in his own mind what he wants an answer to be but he must still consult with God for the truth.
>
> A third reason God speaks today is that He knows man needs the comfort and assurance just as much as did the believers of old. Men had Red Sea experience, when their backs were to the wall and they did not know which way to run. They had failures just as Joshua and the people of Israel did at Ai. When man has such defeats, God knows his needs for His assurance and confidence. The most important reason is probably that God still wants His people to know Him. Man receives a double bonus when he consults with God. He obtains correct information and God gives him an assurance. Sometimes it seems too good to be true.[138]

God wants a pastor to know Him and to know where he is assigned. That is the place where God can use him the most effectively. God has a plan and He invites man to join Him in His plan to accomplish His work.[139] This is a crucial concept and when maturity sets in, it will be all the more clear. The plan is God's. He does not ask man to alter it or delete it just to follow it. In exchange for man's obedience, God has many promises. Some of the promises are:

Isaiah 49:23- Thou shalt know that I am the Lord, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

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[138]Charles Stanley, *How to Listen to God,* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985) 9

[139] Henry Blackaby and Claude King, *Experiencing God,* (Broadman and Holman, Nashville 1994) 65-70.

Isaiah 30:18- Blessed are all that wait for him

Isaiah 64:4- Wait on the Lord

Isaiah 40:31- Wait on the Lord[140]

1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10 Turned to God from idols and serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven.

Acts 1:4- He charged not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father.

The promises seem so clear that if a pastor waits for God and follows God's plan, he will be blessed, receive promises, and not be ashamed. One struggle is that pastors hear of opportunities to move to other ministries and if the number of members in the congregation is larger or the pay is higher, he may say he is being called to the new church. This does not clearly define spiritual growth. A pastor needs to know the type of ministry and the type of role he is called to before deciding that bigger or more is better. The Bible is filled with people who sought the face of God for His will in their situation. After they discovered His will, they went to work to make it a reality. Some faced great hindrances and obstacles, and obstacles and some even laid down their lives for the sake of the gospel. The risks are there, however, when pastors remember where the dream came from, and what He promised was not so frighten at all.[141]

Continual spiritual development may include hands on experience in the existing ministry. An example may be counseling couples in distress or a family with teen issues.

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[140] All scriptural references are from the New King James version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988) unless otherwise noted.
This space is not needed.

[141] H. B. London Jr., & Neil Wiseman, *They Call Me Pastor*, (Ventura, Regal Books) 185.

Even still other experiences may include conducting a funeral or conducting a board meeting or community service. This does not include how to address politicians who wish to use his pulpit for political reasons. There will always be something new but the better the experience going into an assignment, the better the response by the pastor. The key is to continue growing and being more equipped to handle multiple issues which may not have any rest period between them.[142]

God prepares leaders with a specific place and task in mind. Training methods are adapted to the mission, and natural and spiritual gifts are given with clear purpose. An example is Paul, who never could have accomplished so much without direct training and divine endowment. Jesus trained His disciples superbly for their future roles. He taught by example and by precept: His teaching was done "on the way." Jesus did not ask the disciples to sit down and take notes. His classroom was along the highway of life. He placed them in an internship program.[143] The qualifications of a pastor are clearly pointed out in 1Timothy 3:2-7. Preliminary qualifications include:

- He must be above approach
- He must be the husband of one wife
- He must be temperate
- He must be self controlled
- He must be respectable
- He must be hospitable
- He must be able to teach

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[142] Henry T. Blackaby and Henry Brandt, *The Power of the Call* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997) 186.

[143] J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership,* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994) 51.

- He must not be given to drunkenness
- He must be gentle and not violent
- He must not be quarrelsome
- He must not be a lover of money
- He must mange his own family well
- He must see that his own children obey him with proper respect
- He must not be a recent convert; or he may become conceited
- He must also have a good reputation with outsiders

A man can not accomplish such a list of qualifications in a few short years. If by some chance he attains some of the qualifications in the first year considerable time is required for the other qualifications and maintaining the ones learned previously.

Another key quality is discipline. Before a pastor can conquer the world he must first conquer himself. A leader is a person who has learned to obey a discipline imposed from without, and has then taken on a more rigorous discipline from within. Those who rebel against authority and scorn self discipline, who shirk the rigors and turn from the sacrifices do not qualify to lead. Many who drop out of ministry are sufficiently gifted but have large areas of life floating free from the Holy Spirit's control. Lazy and disorganized people never rise to true leadership. Many who aspire to leadership fail because they have never learned to follow.[144] Continual spiritual development requires vision and wisdom. Wisdom is not self proclaimed but wisdom from God. Leader who have experienced God know the difference.

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[144] J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 54.

Leaders take lessons from the past. People of vision gauge decisions on the future; the story of the past cannot be rewritten. Wisdom is the faculty of making the use of knowledge, a combination of discernment, judgment, and similar powers. If knowledge is the accumulation of facts, and intelligence the development of reason, wisdom is heavenly discernment. It is insight into the heart of things. Wisdom involves knowing God and the subtleties of the human heart. More than knowledge, it is the right application of knowledge in moral and spiritual matters, in handling dilemmas, in negotiating complex relationships.[145] Wisdom is knowing that the answer for one situation is not identical for similar situations.

Wisdom is nine-tenths a matter of being wise in time. Wisdom gives a leader balance and helps to avoid eccentricity and extravagance. If knowledge comes by study, wisdom comes by Holy Spirit filling. The leader can apply knowledge correctly through the Holy Spirit.[146] Continual growth is dependent upon wisdom and discernment. Neither individuals nor organizations will advance without wisdom.

The greatness of an organization will be directly proportional to the greatness of its leader. It is rare for organizations to rise above their leaders.[147] Giant organizations do not emerge under pygmy leaders; certainly leadership involves some specific skills, but ultimately leadership is more about being than about doing. Leadership development is synonymous with personal development. As leaders grow personally, they increase their capacity to lead. As they increase their capacity to lead they enlarge the capacity of

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[145] Ibid 57.

[146] Ibid 57.

[147] John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws Of Leadership*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998) 1.

their organization to grow. Therefore, the best thing leaders can do for their organization is to grow personally.[148] Organizations, with leaders who grow continually, will be in a better position to sustain their existence for longer periods of time.

Academics will play a large role in preparation of leaders and so will job training or internships, however, a pastor must not forget to pray without ceasing. He may think he has God all figured out and can skip ahead in the assignment but God maintains leverage in that He is more interested in relationships than our accomplishment and acumen in church business.

Prayer places us into the presence of Almighty God and His plans. In Jeremiah 29:11 the scriptures read "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you not to harm you." If a leader is to prosper and if the church he shepherds is to prosper then his prayers will have to be persistent.

Jesus prayed often to His Father. He was persistent. A pastor must follow the pattern of prayer if he expects to grow continually and lead others to mature spiritually. If Christ being God Himself needed His Father, how much more will pastors need to talk to their heavenly Father? It is not a sign of weakness but one of courage and wisdom. Scriptures read from Proverbs 22:3 reads, "A wise man sees trouble and turns from it but a fool sees trouble and keeps going and pays for it." When a pastor prays to his Father, he learns how and when to turn from trouble. Growing continually and causing others to do the same requires prayer, wisdom, and discernment.

Causing or preparing others to grow requires involvement. The pastor may be the first to receive the vision. Yet with Nehemiah, he had to convey the vision to the people

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[148] Henry and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership,* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2001) 31.

in order for them to participate. When each person knows his role he can prepare, plan and participate to his maximum. God's plan is that man makes disciples, and baptizes them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Because Jesus died for us, man does not have wait for a priest, pastor or public figure to allow him to pray to the Father for direction. When the church is one in spirit as it should be, then the prayers, planning, and participation should be in concert with the Holy Spirit. A good concept here is growing together for the glory of Christ Jesus. Seminary may not equip the pastor for all of these issues. It may be helpful to seek a mentor in the ministry. One who has studied to show himself approved, and has walked the miles and spent time with God in prayer. John Maxwell and Henry Blackaby are excellent mentors.[149]

A good mentor will engage in prayer and cause a pastor to think about change. This includes any change God wants to make in the pastor, ministry or the congregation. John Maxwell details such thinking in his text "Thinking for a Change." There are eleven steps that will revolutionize a pastor's approach to successful ministering.[150] This process from Maxwell includes the involvement of others. If the pastor could accomplish all tasks alone then the congregation would not be needed. Without a congregation there is not a body of believers and the pastor would simply be preaching to himself. If anyone was going to do everything by himself it would have to be God the Father.

The focus earlier has been on the vision for the church, yet there must be focus on the individual vision as well for individual growth in Christ. God gives the pastor

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[149] John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Lows of Leadership*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998) 225; and Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001) 235.

[150] John C Maxwell, *Thinking for a Change*, (New York: Center Street, 2003) 59-251.

vision for the church and for his individual growth. Every Christian is expected to live each waking moment in light of the special calling God has placed on his life. That special ministry He has designed for the pastor in His vision for him and his personal ministry.[151]

A pastor has been given a special privilege and a responsibility in leading a church. God entrusts His vision to the pastor to guide him. The pastor is responsible for leading the congregation in its ministry and overall development.

In the same way, God expects each pastor, whether he leads a church or not to take command over his life. The pastor must use his life to further God's kingdom. Every Christian is called to live a life of ministry. The pastor's greatest obligation while he is on Earth is to know God more intimately and to bring even greater glory to His name by his ministry. To assist pastors in that effort, God wants to share His vision with them.

Just as the pastor is the leader of the church, he is called to be the leader of his personal life and to live that ministry in accordance with God's expectations and desires for him, as outlined through the vision He gives the pastor.

Earlier the concept of personal make over was introduced. Whether you use Myers Briggs, DISC, ACS, or some other instrument get to know yourself. Each person should know what he is like and seek to become more like Jesus in worshipping Him and in serving Him. The pastor should know himself, know his circumstances, know God and receive counsel from others. God has set the pastor aside for a special task He wants him to accomplish.

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[151] Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001) 57.

The manner in which the pastor disseminates information about his vision or the church vision may differ from the manner the congregation receives it. A pastor needs to know this so the vision can be cast in a mature and effective manner. Each pastor will have to persevere in prayer until his own ministry is clear in his own heart. He must aggressively seek and understand what God is calling him to do that distinguishes him and his ministry from every other believer and ministry, and makes him a unique ambassador for Christ.

As an ambassador for Christ, a pastor must have a global perspective. He must have a philosophy of life that influences his lifestyle and his decisions. Few pastors pursue the gift of insight for the flock they shepherd. This aspect should not be overlooked. Paul, Nehemiah, David and others aggressively sought to understand what God was calling them to, that distinguished them from every other believer and that made them unique as ambassadors for Christ. Spiritual growth is not just individual but for the benefit of the kingdom.[152]

Spiritual Maturity - A Definition

Spiritual maturity is a process that begins when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Savior. He or she is born again of the Holy Spirit and then chooses to live "in Christ." The Apostle Paul said that spiritual growth is an ongoing process. "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward

[152] George Barna, *The Power of Vision*, (Regal, Ventura 2003) 138, 139.

what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14). Even the Apostle Paul had not arrived, yet he continually pressed toward the prize. Therefore, in order for Christian maturity to develop in a pastor's life, he must make a choice to learn God's Word, allows God to renew his mind, and then be obedient to what he learned. Romans 12:1-2 says, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will."[153]

Spiritual Maturity—Accomplishing Growth

Spiritual maturity is learning how to walk in obedience to God. It is making the choice to live by God's viewpoint rather than your human viewpoint. Galatians 5:16 and 25 give the key, "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature…Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." The word "walk" in verse 16 is from the Greek word *peripateo*, which means "to walk with a purpose in view." The word "walk" in verse 25 is translated from another Greek word *stoicheo* and it means "step by step, one step at a time." It is learning to walk under the instruction of another. That person is the Holy Spirit. Since believers are indwelt by the Spirit, they should also walk under His control. How can you learn to walk in the Holy Spirit's control? You study God's Word! 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17 instructs us, "Do your

[153] PC Study Bible, Matthew Henry Commentary, New King James version5E (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007). Referenced October 12, 2007.lisher?

best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." This is good practical instruction on how you become spiritually mature. It is not done by osmosis, but it is done by choosing to apply God's Word in everyday circumstances. As you walk step-by-step, applying God's Word to your life, you will grow spiritually.[154]

Spiritual maturity should be a priority for every pastor. "Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 5:13-14). As a believer, you are not to be milk-fed. Instead, you are called to chew on the "meat" of God's Word. Discover God's truth by in-depth Bible study and feed yourself spiritually. Then apply that sustenance to your life as you walk in the Holy Spirit.[155]

Spiritual Maturity – Living in Christ

In order to experience spiritual maturity, you must also understand that growth comes by grace, and it is God alone who is your resource. 2 Peter 1:3-9 reminds you that God is the source. "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

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[154] PC Study Bible, Matthew Henry Commentary, New King James version version5E (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007). Referenced October 12, 2007.

[155] PC Study Bible, Matthew Henry Commentary, New King James version version5E (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007). Referenced October 12, 2007.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. If you possess these qualities, in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective, and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins."[156]

When a pastor becomes a child of God, he is given all he needs "in Christ" to become a spiritually mature believer. However, he is responsible to make a choice**!** Will he choose to use and apply God's principles to your life? The wonderful thing about being in submission to God's maturing process is that he will be changed! He does not have to worry about becoming mature. God does the changing! He will transform a pastor to the image of Jesus Christ as he humbly surrenders to His Holy Spirit and learn His Word. Hebrews 13:20-21 says, "May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."[157]

Bible College versus Seminary

[156] Ibid

[157] Ibid

The pastor has received salvation, accepted the call to ministry and knows he needs to be more mature in the Lord. Perhaps, the pastor has taken a personality, spiritual gifts and a skills test. He may believe he has been called to a particular neighborhood, church denomination or people group. It is imperative for the pastor to prepare for ministry. He may seek an education from a Bible college or seminary. There may be some areas where the pastor has strength and some areas of weaknesses. The type of education and location of the education will be determined in a number of ways. The scope of the job and the background of the pastor must merge in a manner that fulfills the requirements of the position. More pastors today according to Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, authors of "Pastors in Transition", are entering the ministry later in life. This may mean that they have work experiences and perhaps educations that may not have been available in past years or decades. There are varying experiences that may be supplemental to serving in ministry.[158] These experiences include but are not limited to education, business, sociology and worship as well as human services and human resources. Education may range from certificate, associates, bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees. Whatever the background, the key results is to become Christ-like, utilize the past experiences while growing and maturing in Christ Jesus.[159]

Hoge and Wenger's work is supported by Duke University Seminary. The survey ranged over 600 protestant pastors in five major denomination groups. (United Methodist

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[158] Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Errdman Publishing Company 2005) 11, 238.

[159] Ibid

Church, Presbyterian Church, Assemblies of God, Evangelical Lutherans, and Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod) the survey report shows:[160]

Question	UMC	PCUSA	ELCA	LCMS	A/G
Training in Seminary is not practical and realistic enough	59%	64%	55%	53%	54%
Training in Seminary is not deep enough spiritually	55%	58%	55%	53%	40%
The calling and deployment needs to be reformed	79%	58%	60%	46%	66%

Several factors influence the change in the training required from seminaries. The percentages reflect the number of pastor who commented to the respective questions. The influences are post-modern culture, better and more educated laity, changes in legal ramifications and changes in responsibilities for pastors and ministry leaders. There is a shift from social work, community involvement and welfare.[161] The pastors in the survey expressed their recommendation that training for pastors change and reflect practical

[160] Ibid 238

[161] Ibid 17

training, more spiritual training and the manner pastors are assigned. This is a sampling of a larger survey.[162]

When a pastor has accepted the call and determined he needs to attend Bible College or seminary, he has to consider denomination, vocation and location. He has to know his specific or general call. He needs to consider what type of ministry he is called to. Since older graduates are coming out of seminary, and they have less denomination loyalty, a pastor will benefit from a study of the denomination or of church history.[163] Pastors called to be a church business administrator will need accounting, finance and legal training. Pastors are called to lead worship they must have training and experience in that music and worship. Versatility in ministry is helpful but no one person is expected to be able to do everything within that ministry. If they could perform all the duties, some laity would not be necessary.

Presbyterians and Lutherans require seminary training. They have a single category of ordained ministers. Methodists, on the other hand, have six levels of clergy. They have a large group (32,000) of seminary trained clergy who have served on assignment for three years. Upon completion of the probationary period, they have ministry status until retirement. In exchange for this security, they are obligated to serve where placed by the bishop.[164]

Assemblies of God on the other hand have more local authority. Congregations own their buildings and have authority to hire and fire their own clergy. They tend to

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[162] Ibid 238

[163] Ibid 11, 12

[164] Ibid 22.

have more part-time ministers, plant more churches and invest in church growth programs. Licensed ministers are examined for two years before they are ordained. They must take correspondence courses and be interviewed by local sectional committees.[165] There is no indication in the above study that they must be seminary trained.

Training required for successful ministry includes vision and mission casting, strategic planning, budgeting and leadership development. The depth of study for these topics may vary depending on the pastor and the assignment.

Walk with God

An accepted call, Biblical education and spiritual maturity are important elements to a pastor walking with God. A pastor may know what to do theoretically or theologically but he must follow through to the end and walk with integrity. This is where the real truth of his walk is displayed.

Prayer, Bible study and time for meditation are important in the spiritual growth of a pastor. They are important in the close personal relationship with God that allows them to live in confidence with God.

Matthew 6:34 reminds pastors not to worry about tomorrow. God is sufficient. Proverbs 3:5, 6 reminds believers that in all of their ways to acknowledge Him and He will direct your path. Walking with God is allowing Him to direct your path. So it is with pastors. They must allow God to direct their path. They must trust Him with all of their heart and lean not to their own understanding. They must walk in integrity with confidence in Christ Jesus. It is the reading, studying, meditating, and obeying the Word that keeps the pastor in tune in his life with God.

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[165] Ibid 23.

Prayer is the principle and main work. Prayer has priority over the ministry of the Word and it must come first. It is by prayer that the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is effectively unsheathed. Prayer perfectly complements the ministry of the Word. In Acts 6, the apostles established the pattern for themselves and for pastors when they determined that others should be appointed to do the duties that hindered their performing their most important tasks "prayer and the ministry of the Word".

It is one thing to say that prayer is a priority and another thing to practice it. Prayer is crucial because of the spiritual battle in which we are engaged. The strength of Jesus Christ, obtained through prayer is the necessary and sufficient resource for victory.[166] A pastor can not intercede for others when he does not pray for himself and/or with his family. Prayer and preparation for teaching and preaching go hand in hand. A pastor who does not pray can not teach others by example to pray. Prayer should be a priority when visiting and counseling others. Prayer is an essential key in spiritual growth.[167] The purpose of praying to God and walking with Him is to glorify God. Walking with God gives a picture of a pastor who is continuing to travel with Him as opposed to a one time issue. Walking with God gives a picture of being a companion. If a pastor is to grow spiritually mature he must be a companion of God and pray to Him without ceasing.[168]

Continuous Education

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[166] Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor,* (Chicago: Moody Publishers 2004) 68, 69.

[167] John F. MacArthur, Jr. *Keys to Spiritual Growth,* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company 1976) 105.

[168] PC Study Bible, New King James version 5E (Thomas Nelson Publishers 2007)

Praying without ceasing, walking with the Lord and continuing education are essential to spiritual maturity. A pastor can never keep growing in the Lord on the strength of past experiences. A pastor must move forward in the will of God. That will mean testing and challenging. A new revelation of Him usually is accompanied by a corresponding obstacle, a difficult situation, or darkness that is designed to strengthen the core of our faith. There are no cheap price tags on going deeper with God.[169] Yesterday's solutions may not match today's situations. The reason we have yesterday's solution is for a point of reference not a final statement. A practical example would be using stone wheels on today's cars or trying to repair the latest Mercedes with a Model T tool. The tools worked well for the time. In today's world, they may just be a reminder that tools are needed and they need to fit the current vehicle. In a ministry setting, what worked on the old board or choir may not work with the new church and congregation. Each different situation may require even the slightest change to bring desired results. God keeps enough of a change in order to allow us to continue to have faith and trust in Him.

A pastor would not think of driving a car by looking only in the rear view mirror. Times and people change. Hymn books have given way to song sheets, which have given way to overhead projection. The Generation of Bridgers will not be ministered to as the depression aged generation. Continuous education is required to know what is important in attracting the unsaved. This does not in any way mean to compromise the Gospel. It means getting into the unsaved person's available space to minister to them.

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[169] Jack Hayford, *Pursuing the Will of God, (*Sisters: Multomah Books 1997) 83.

Christians are to be in the world but not of the world. Spiritual growth is not just growing alone but caring for the souls of others and evangelizing the lost.[170]

New approaches to evangelism may be needed to enhance receptivity to the Gospel. The Bridger Generation is electronically inclined. When trying to get their attention, talking about 1930 printing presses may not hold their attention. Jesus taught using the everyday examples of the day and they were effective for the day. He talked about planting and sowing and the people of the day understood. When the presenter of the Gospel can bridge the conversation a person may be converted to Christ.

Servant Evangelism may cross over the bridge from yesterday to tomorrow. This means showing people the love of God in a practical sense. The challenge may still be in the discipleship portion of the relationship.[171] Continuous education may mean learning from past experiences and making adjustments to the strategy, core values, or training process. These may all be needed to win souls for Christ.

The total focus must be to winning souls and not getting caught up in the processes of improvement. The process must not become the project. Contextualization of the message means learning to present Christ in a manner in which the culture and people can accept the Truth. Continuous change may be as broad as learning a new language or culture or simply learning the meaning of some to the "hip hop" music. Ministry goals may shift and the strategy may have to be adjusted to reach the desired results. When what you are doing to reach the unsaved is not working a change is needed. Pastors must change to get God's work done. Barriers will continue to exist in

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[170] Elmer Towns, *Twenty First Century Evangelism* (class notes August 2004)

[171] David Wheeler, *Class Notes*, (Liberty University, Evangelism Class 2007)

life and continuous training and education will be instruments to help overcome those barriers.[172]

Courses and workshops should not be taken haphazardly but should enhance the pastors' abilities or understanding to carry out the plan that God has established for that body of believers. If the material is going to sit on a shelf, it may not be wise to spend the funds or give up the time. Continuous education may also be in the form of job assignments that are temporary or long term.

Job Assignment

A job assignment may be the solution to learning another segment of ministry. Pastors serving in assignments as associate or assistant pastors may assume responsibilities for new or additional roles such as Christian education, missions or assimilation of new members. Job assignments should not be random but purposeful. They should build the person and help him to mature as well as advance the ministry and community. There may be times when a person is placed in a position because there is no one else to do the task. This may be a hindrance to the ministry and the person involved. Training, education, spiritual gifts, as well as DISC, ACL and other well known tools such as PLACE Ministry may be helpful in determining the correct placement for the person and the ministry.

There may be times when a ministry looks for openings and attempt to place laity in the existing positions. The position may be critical or no longer needed based on the ministry's current strategy. Outdated jobs should be reevaluated and examined against the vision, mission and current infrastructure of the ministry. A determining factor is

[172] Elmer Towns and Ed Stetzer, *Perimeter of Light*, (Chicago, Moody Press 2004) 136.

based on what God is calling the ministry to accomplish. Jobs need to fit together to achieve the goal God has given.[173]

One positive effect of proper placement is to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the ministry. A mature pastor will need to know the direction God has given him and know the components of the ministry in order to direct the work of the ministry.

Directing

Casting the vision, describing the mission, and developing the strategy should be directed by the pastor. He must know how the pieces fit together and be able to track progress and redirect the work if it is not on course to bring God glory.

The broken vessel may not be the lay person but the leader. Directing the work of others means being capable, compassionate and compelled to complete assignments given by God. When a pastor is directing others, it means his being under the direction of God. Good leaders are good followers.

Delegation

Effective delegation can make or destroy a ministry. Knowing when to delegate, when to investigate and when to allow constructive failure is an art.[174] It can be a solution to many burnout, dropout and turnout victims. You can not delegate responsibility without proper authority to address needs. The ultimate responsibility for the ministry continues to rest with the pastor. Delegation can be a teaching tool if

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[173] Frank Schmitt, *Managing the Local Church*, (EDMN 972 lesson 2) (Lynchburg, Liberty University 2006) 1-18.

[174] Derek Prime & Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor*, (Chicago, Moody Publishers, 2004) 242.

understood and implemented properly. Assigning all unwanted tasks or assigning and not offering constructive support is not proper delegation.

Delegation should benefit everyone involved. It can ease the burden of great pressure on the pastor. When he shares his load others learn and more can be accomplished. Delegation can be for a specific task for a time period or for an area of ministry as a full time assignment.[175]

Vision Casting

Without a vision, the people perish. (Proverbs 29:18) When the leader does not know where he is going, he will lead others to the same destination. A pastor/leader needs to know, from God, where he is being lead in order to be able to tell others how to get there. If people do not have confidence in a leader they will not follow him. If a leader is going on a journey and no one is following him, he is just going for a walk.[176] Vision must be shared in order for people to want to get involved. The pastor must forecast where the ministry is going and what role each person or leader is to perform.

Strategic Planning

In the Law of Navigation, John Maxwell said anyone can steer the ship but it takes a leader to navigate the course.[177] The pastor must know where God has told him to go and how God wants him to get there. When the wind changes and personnel change

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[175] Ibid 247.

[176] John Maxwell, *Twenty One Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson 1998) 143, 153

[177] Ibid 33

the leader has to pray to know what to do next. If he does not, he will lose integrity. There are times when multiple strategies are operable simultaneously. The leader has to know to whom he can delegate, how much to delegate and when to pull all of the efforts back together to present to God.

Strategic planning is a helpful tool when the pastor knows himself, the congregation, community and vision. Strategic planning requires getting deep into the details of all of the components involved. Interactive issues may have an adverse impact if done improperly or with the improper timing. The pastor has to know if his church is in a growth mode, plateaued mode or declining mode. The conditions require quite different strategies. It is important for the pastor not to fall asleep at any stage but to be cognizant of what it will take to navigate the ministry back on the course God has planned. Now the complexity of all the planning is this, the pastor is accountable to God for saved souls. He is responsible to the flock to keep them fed. He must protect them, teach them and prepare them for multiplication. He must manage the facility, handle conflict and manage his family well and have his children under subjection. The pastor must visit the sick, funeralize the dead and baptize the new convert. Perhaps no human can accomplish all that is mentioned but God can. Strategic planning is not a one hour meeting once a week. It is daily and it is constantly changing. The pastor must have unquestionable connection through prayer with God the Father. The pastor must have faith.[178]

Objective Setting

The process of objective setting is taking a container of Lego blocks and placing them in order so they can be used to build a structure. Ministry is the same way. The

[178] Jerry Falwell, *Building Dynamic Faith*, (Nashville, World Publishing 2005) 120-123.

pastor must have an idea of what to build and when and who to include in the ministry. Objectives are measurable, for a specific purpose and for a specific time frame. When objectives are met, they form the building blocks to accomplish the mission and stay on course with the vision. Objectives help equip the laity and develop the disciples and keep the pastor strong in his integrity. Developing a good church business plan is critical for the pastor, congregation and community. It will be of great assistance if financing is needed for building expansion. Objectives are valuable for accomplishing goals and also if the ministry intends to build or expand their ministry.[179]

Objectives may include reaching a number of people through evangelism or prayer in the current year. The strategy will be how to accomplish the task. The laity may visit or call a certain number of prospects per week or call in a certain neighborhood. Delegation can be very critical in this process. A solution may be to train all of the laity, men, women and children to reach others. This is the "believers" assignment anyway.

Training and all assignments, programs and budgets must be linked together in order not to lose resources. The "Church Business Plan" becomes training, directing, and praying tools to stay the course of what God has assigned.[180] rences?

This may seem too much for one person to manage and it is. God sends workers for the harvest. He provides instruments in technology. The average size for most churches in America is one to two hundred members. Beyond two hundred members the pastor really needs help.

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[179] Frank Schmitt, *Managing the Local Church*, (EDMN 972 lesson 21) (Lynchburg, Liberty University 2006) 1-11.

[180] Ibid

Technological Changes

Managing one hundred to twenty thousand members in any organization can be a challenge. Spiritually pastors should have a working knowledge of technological equipment and processes. They do not have to be experts but having a working knowledge will allow him to make more mature decisions. Some of the technological opportunities include e-mail which can be used to contact countless members and staff or other churches in seconds. Internet is available to reach community, state or regional and national issues.

Member data bases are important to match giving with the financial record. Financial records are normally the first thought in record keeping. There are data bases to track and provide reports on members, new members, budgets, and programs. This is just naming a few opportunities.[181] Software is available to schedule the building usage, and plan events. Technology can be used to provide bi-lingual support.

A spiritual pastor may want to track the progress that is being made toward the church business plan, project development, staffing or building expansions. The mature pastor will not plan to do all of the work alone but will need to know who to delegate to and when to pull the information back together.[182]

Preparation for preaching can be enhanced by using BlueLetter.com, PC Study Bible, or Church Helpmate. This is a list of examples and is not intended to be comprehensive. These are just a few tools available to assist the pastor and his staff in managing the work of the Lord.

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[181] John P. Jewell, New Tools For A New Century, (Nashville: Abingdon 2002) 67.

[182] Frank Schmitt, *Creative Use of Computers*, (Liberty University 2006) class notes.

Pastors operate on a twenty-four hour schedule like other professionals. Time management, people management and resources management are essential in effectively getting the ministry work accomplished.

Computers can calculate figures, provide word processing, and technical connections but they are not personal. God calls pastors, believers and congregations to have a personal relationship with Him. Computers can free some of the pastor's time so he can address the personal relationships. Pastors need time to address prayer, evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development.

Evangelism

Technological changes can assist growth but evangelism must still be done. Dr. Dave Wheeler addresses evangelism in two genres. Servant Evangelism is showing the love of Christ in a practical way. Back to Basics is a new process in old terms to stir Christians to live out the Great Commission. When pastors are not researching their own ministries, they have time to teach leaders how to evangelize, disciple and multiply.

Dr. Wheeler, in his upcoming work on "Back to Basics" utilizes the terms of plowing, planting and harvesting. The concept is to look back to what God intended. God created mankind to worship Him. Jesus taught using parables. Many of His examples included farming themes. It was uncomplicated but very effective. Unless a seed falls to the ground and dies, it will not produce life. The Seed must fall on fertile soil. Jesus promised to send another like Him. The One sent would be a teacher and counselor. Paul came along to teach and used examples of farmers, athlete, and soldiers. "Back to Basics" takes you to the relational aspects of plowing, planting and

harvesting.[183] The solution is not in things but in the people whom God has selected. There is nothing new under the sun, but rather there is a time and place for everything. The pastor matures and comes to recognize everything needs to be prayed for, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mentoring

One additional solution for the maturing of pastors is mentoring. Having a mentor who has faithfully served in ministry is important. Seminary and Bible College are wonderful preparatory vehicles. They cover tremendous materials and yet they are not all comprehensive and completely current. A mentor who has and is serving can serve as a bridge for a pastor. Circumstances and conditions change but God never changes. He is the same. A mentor is living through current changes and can provide a current perspective. Even books printed in the current time period have some historic information. Internet can give current information; however, the reader must confirm the authenticity of the source and its author.

When the research is completed, getting the proper match for a mentor is as important as properly matching Bible College, Seminary, and a church with the pastor. God has not called everyone to the exact ministry and location. Training and equipping is important and so is being on the assignment God is calling the pastor to do.

Personal Development

Meditating

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[183] David Wheeler, *Evangelism Class*, (Liberty University 2007) class notes.

Spiritual growth is becoming more like Jesus rather than more like the world. When Jesus sought to be more of what the Father God wants Him to be, Jesus went to Him and asked. He went to Gethsemane and expressed His agony and distress. (Matthew 26:36-46). Meditation is communing with God and listening in order to be obedient to Him and His Word.

Quiet time

Oddly enough, quiet time is about being quiet before the Lord. It is not about talking. What makes a man Godly is not what he says but the presence of God in his life.[184] Nehemiah prayed for months before he went before the king. In his quiet time he asked for instructions. When he had the instructions he carried them out. God's mission was accomplished. (Nehemiah 1)

Accountability Groups

Pastors should have a Barnabas, Paul and Timothy in his life. A pastor needs one accountability pastor who is older, a mentor, one peer at the same or similar level and one disciple, younger or less experienced to train. They must be honest and willing to ask the hard questions. A pastor must know the quality of the man he asks to mentor him. As the leader goes so goes the followers. (Acts 13)

Confirming the Call

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[184] Henry Blackaby and Tom Blackaby, *The Man God Uses*, (Nashville, Broadman and Holman Publishers 1999) 81.

Leaders like Saul may think once called always called. They forget to check in daily with God for His instruction. They forget to confirm what the daily instructions are. When they get off track they look for God and He is where they left Him. (1 Samuel 13)

A pastor confirms his call by reading scripture, prayer, maintaining an intimate relationship with God, and examining his obedience to God.[185]

Tools of Implementation

Implementation of God's plan has to include disciples making other disciples. This is the process used with Barnabas, Paul and Timothy and Titus. (Mathew 28:19)

The obvious tools are prayer, formal studying, job assignments, and mentoring. Other critical keys to implementation of God's plan are development of character, such as Christ-likeness, caring for His people, proper delegation. The plan to be implemented is winning souls into the kingdom. When people accept Christ they should be taught to multiple for God's glory.[186]

Assimilation

This process has been implemented well at Saddleback Church.[187] It is important for pastors to know if they are in the assignment God has for them and they must assist other in finding their assignment and being assimilated into the congregation. Rick

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[185] Ibid 52, Henry T. Blackaby and Henry Brandt, *The Power Of The Call*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997) 25, 166, 123, 127.

[186] Derek Prime & Alistair Begg, On Being a Pastor, (Chicago: Moody Press, 2004) 49, 35, 149

[187] Rich Warren, *Purpose Driven Life*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) 227.

Warren used the term of being SHAPED for serving God.[188] Spiritual maturity is serving where God assigns you. This may not be in the most ideal conditions or location the pastor desires. Being assimilated and getting others into place to serve is an act already designed by God for His glory. Spiritual growth has to enhance the individual as well as the organization and most importantly enhance the Kingdom of God.

Technology

Technology is a tool to attract and win souls for Christ. It is not the end. A pastor should not be drawn to smoke, mirrors and electricity. Staying on course is staying focused on Jesus Christ. Technology may assist with tasks that are time consuming and the pastor can utilize that time to minister in other areas.

Placement Assessment

The proper placement of pastors, laity and congregations is in the Lords hands. The challenge is not for the pastor to assume God made a mistake in the assignment he is in. He should assume God has a purpose for the assignment he has made. Larger congregations are not always better. Larger budgets are not always better. God has promised to supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19). In Hebrews 13: 21, 21 scripture reads, Now may the God of all peace, who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you compete in every good work to do His will in you what is

[188] Ibid 234

well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. It is God who prepares and places the pastor where God can receive the glory. ace

Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are for God's use not for selfish ambition. All of the gifts coming together make up the body of Christ for His glory. The pastor has to know his own gifts and the gift of those serving with him. A left handed glove can be used for catching balls. It may be more effective on a left handed person. It may not be probable to get every person isolated on his or her strongest gift and that gift only.

Placing a pastor or lay person in their weakest area for prolonged periods would not be healthy for the person or the congregation.

Community Study

Learning the community and its' demographics is important for the growth of the pastor. An immature pastor will preach anything. Mature pastors in line with God's will preach to needed and hurting souls as well as souls that need reproof and encouragement. A pastor needs to know the condition of the flock.

Denomination Study

A pastor needs to know what his denomination stands for and what he believes. He also needs to know what other churches in the community believe. He should know those with whom he labors. Some denominations have great resources. Stated another

way God has provided his resources to some denominations differently than others. All of the resources are His. Denominations should play less of a factor if all believers believe in Jesus Christ and His death, burial and resurrection.

Local Churches

Local churches do not "belong to" the pastor. They belong to God. Any time as pastor wants to know the condition, status or future of the local church he needs to check in with the owner. He needs to be aware what other churches in the community are doing. The competition is not the other local churches but the enemy of God. Local churches can find points of agreement to strengthen the outreach of the community.

All solutions should lead to salvation for lost souls according to the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 16 – 20).

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

The Personal Continuing Spiritual Development of Pastors

Pastors need to grow continually to draw closer to God and to be better equipped to serve His people and lead lost souls to Christ Jesus. This project has discussed symptoms of lack of spiritual maturity in chapter one. The reasons for lack of continual spiritual development have been discussed in chapter two. Chapter three addressed the reasons for lack of maturity in pastors. During chapter 4 the discussion was centered on the impact that immaturity has on those around the pastor. Chapter five provided research on potential solutions to spiritual growth. This chapter provides a summary or conclusion for the research.

Symptoms

Pastors across multiple denominations are leaving the ministry for varying reasons.[189] In 2001, the Pulpit and Pew committee headed by Dr. Jackson Carroll was commissioned to study former local church ministers who left their assignments. Their assignment was to report feedback and recommendations. The sample was of over 600 men and women across five denominations.[190] The loss of leadership has an impact on the work of God. God gave a command in the Great Commission for people to go into

[189]Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition,* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005) viii, 18.

[190] Ibid xi.

the world and make disciples baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

The pastors left due to burnout, conflict, misconduct, terminations or to move to other opportunities.[191]

When a pastor leaves the ministry, changes are made for the pastor, his family and the congregation. In a Presbyterian study in 1998, more than 11% of ministers ordained in 1990 to 1992 left the ministry entirely.[192] The question of supply and demand has to be questioned. Pastors not only share the Gospel, they teach others to do the same.

In Acts 1:8 it states that you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and all of Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. In Romans 10:14 Paul states "How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things. But they have not all obeyed the gospel." Pastors are used to carry out the work of the ministry. Many have been leaving ministry and they leave for varying reasons.[193]

In 1 Peter, it states that as new born babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

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[191] Ibid 36.

[192] Ibid 28.

[193] Ibid 39

The instructions in Acts 1:8 state for the pastor to go in the power of the Holy Spirit, witness of God, and make disciples in all nations. Pastors are sent and they must be prepared. The initial preparation may not be appropriate in all situations. In the beginning of the ministry a pastor may be prepared to serve from the milk of the Word. He must however, continue to grow if he is to taste and see that the Lord is gracious. The continuous personal and spiritual development of pastors is essential for the strengthening of the pastor and preparing him to develop others as servants of the Kingdom of God. Some pastors either fail to grow or they burnout trying, others drop out of ministry, and there are those who are turned out or terminated.[194]

The most precious work on the earth and in the eternal Kingdom is that of a man called to serve the Creator, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as a pastor. This research is intended to draw attention to the need of pastors to continually grow and to point out some recommendations for solutions to keep the pastor in ministry for the full length of his call. LifeWay Research was developed in 2006 to investigate the needs of churches and pastors and to provide valid data to solve issues in ministries.[195]

The power of the call is not the same for all pastors.[196] Some are called to local ministries, some to national assignments and others to global assignments. Whatever the call and wherever the call, pastors must be equipped. They must be sensitive to the call and they must be aware of the assignment. The pastor must also remain in constant communication with God in order to know that he is still in the will of God. Many

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[194] Elizabeth A. Proctor, *Professional Burnout, Detection, Prevention and Coping, The Clergy Journal, Ministry Issues*, September 2005. Accessed September 11, 2006.

[195] Thom S. Rainer, *LifeWay Research: Lighting A Path From What Is To What Should Be*, www.lifeway.com, accessed July, 13, 2007.

[196] Henry Blackaby, *The Power of the Call*, (Nashville: Broadman, 1997) 27, 28.

leaders got off course such as Jonah, David, Samson and Peter. Jonah went in the opposite direction that God told him to go but still ended in the place God intended (Jonah1:3, 3:1-3). David had an affair but confessed his sin (2 Samuel 11:1-5, 12:1-13). Sampson set his sight on the wrong woman (Judges 16:1, 6, 20, 21). Peter denied the very Christ whom he followed but was restored (Mark 14:66-72, John 21:15-17).

God, who is faithful, restored them to service in some form and he can do the same for today's pastors. The lack of awareness is a lack of asking. Matthew 7:7 and 8 states "ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you for everyone who asks receives and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." Pastors have the power of the Holy Spirit and they must ask God what needs to be done (Acts 1:8; Matthew 6:33).

Some pastors grow for a season and stop. They either get too busy or change their priorities. Pastors are not immune from pride, sexual sin, dishonesty, or a host of other sins. They have sins of commission or sins of omission. They are called but not infallible. The absence of the presence of the Holy Spirit leaves the pastor vulnerable to the tricks of the devil.[197]

It is possible for pastors to become so focused on the ministry that they forget who called them. They get so busy they forget to check in with God by prayer and reading and meditating on the Word of God. When this occurs, they may become burned out. They may want to drop out or they may become a victim of termination. In any of the circumstances, the pastor loses and, so does his family, as well as other families who are placed under his direction. In the spiritual warfare the world is in, leaders are prime targets for the enemy of God (Galatians 6:1-5).

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[197] Ibid 109, 110.

If the pastor is well grounded but has not protected his family, the enemy will attack his family. There are many issues related to divorce among pastors and other Christian leaders.[198] The children of pastors may also be targets of destruction. They have many expectations thrust upon them and if they do not meet those expectations, they receive many types of punishments. Some of these punishments have long term effects. There have been some pastors who have committed suicide in their despair.

One clear direction for success in ministry for any and all pastors is never quince the Holy Spirit's presence. Spiritual maturity is developed when the pastor realizes that he needs God every step of the journey and he needs to protect his family every step of the way.

Reasons for the lack of spiritual growth in pastors

Pride and arrogance are evil task masters. They are issues that God hates. They blind pastors and others around them. Pastors may believe they have learned all they need to know and fail to develop further. They may not become spiritually mature. This failure to grow requires attention because ministry is not all about the pastor but the work of God.[199] Pastors cease to grow when they exchange God's agenda for their agenda.[200]

Some pastors may believe they have received the power of the spirit of preaching and no longer have to study. In scripture, 2 Timothy 2:15, states, a person must be diligent to present himself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed,

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[198] Dean R. Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition,* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 36, 40.

[199] Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1995)

[200] Derek Prime & Alistair Begg, On Being a Pastor, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004) 63.

rightly dividing the word of truth. The pastor must not only study but must be diligent about his studies. The approval comes from God and He will determine if His Word is being rightly divided. Education for a pastor is essential today because of the laity he will lead. They have become vastly more educated than the past generations. Misquotes and miscalculations made in person or text or even email are not readily accepted.[201] Continual development will reduce continual errors which could lead to turnout.

Knowing what to study and where to study is essential. A good mentor comes in handy at a time when decisions like these are being made. A pastor starting with no education needs to start at the very beginning and obtain all the help available. There may be a rare occasion where education may be frowned upon depending on the educational level of the congregation. On the opposite side of that dilemma, some congregations will only accept candidates with masters and/or doctorate degree(s). This does not reveal what is to be studied. Courses to study depend on the pastor and the areas in which he requires help. Basic communication and grammatical skills will be beneficial in presenting the gospel yet speaking well and not being theologically sound is another challenge. Theological soundness is mandatory. A pastor can not properly represent God in lies. He must know truth and he must speak truth. Theological soundness may be interpreted differently between denominations. Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Baptists do not see eye to eye on every issue. The central focus therefore must always be on Jesus. The pastor must reveal the truth about Jesus and the plan that Jesus has for him and His church.[202]

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[201] Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Pastors in Transition*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005) 5.

[202] Ibid 62.

There is a dangerous gap between education and training. Education does not have to end with information and knowledge. The primary gap is in application or experience. It is the application of knowledge and information. Application means to move to into action.

There have been times when recently graduated students applied for a job and the employer asked the earth shattering question of experience. They may not have any experience and the job is given to someone who has experience. Pastors need to implement their college and seminary training into practical application. This is an excellent topic for a future study.[203]

Training may be in Bible College, Seminary, or college. The key to education and training is not for the accumulation of information. It is for preparation for the work to be done. In the case of the pastor, it is preparation for Kingdom work. College work should be taken seriously. Each course should be an addition to the information already learned. Training in a practical sense is asking God which learned issues are appropriate for the situation at hand. All churches and ministries are not the same. Even if they were, the different people in them make them unique. During many years, pastors and lay persons have traveled to workshops and seminars and classes to find solutions to their problems. They may have found a program that works well in a specific setting, culture, denomination or congregation. In an effort to find solutions for their church, pastors and laity go home and announce they have found the answer. They want to implement the new program and repair the church and the congregation. There may be some progress; however, there are also times when programs fail. One

[203] Ibid 215.

challenge for pastors is to stop and reflect on what was learned, versus what was intended to be learned. The training for the program may be incomplete or incorrect for the call of the pastor. It may be in its early stages or may work in specific environments. An example would be an outreach program in a community where relationships are close. That same program may not be as effective in New York City. Training for evangelism in New York City has to be customized.[204]

Continuing education is like self study that offers additional building blocks to accomplish God's work. Pastors should never forget that the work and the harvest belong to God. Additional reading can enhance knowledge in an area pastors need strengthening or a field of study they want to expand. They may feel called to an area they are not currently ministering in. An example is determining if the pastor is called to missions. Pastors could read *Let The Nations Be Glad*.[205] John Piper discusses the importance of the Word of God and prayer can bring clarity regarding God's instructions. Reading is important and should not be limited to religion or seminary text. Pastors need to be versed in numerous subjects. They should, however, focus on what God is calling them to do. Books should be tested for understanding. A person reading and answering himself is headed for a narrow discussion. Reading should be tested by the author's work, his research, colleagues, but most of all by his life. If

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[204] Ed Stetzer & David Putman, Breaking the Missional Code, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006) 105.

[205] John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 2003) 45.

pastors read books but do not discuss their readings with others or compare what they read, they may be in danger of settling for their own opinion.[206]

Seminars

Seminars usually can add a large volume of information in a short period of time. In a week's time, pastors can walk away with large amounts of information based on other people's knowledge and experience. It is usually enough to fill up a bookshelf. If they are not careful enough, the information will do just that, fill up a bookshelf as opposed to being used for the growth of pastors and their congregations.

The information may be relevant in its presentation because it was custom fitted for the organization it was designed for. The success of a seminar is not in the delivery of information or techniques but in the application of the material when the pastor returns home. Seminars must be purpose driven like all other work set apart for the Lord.[207] They must be supplemental in the continual development of the pastor, his family, congregation, and community.

When pastors are attending seminars to improve themselves only, they are in danger. This is another means of developing themselves in order to show the greatness of the Lord to all they come in contact with (Psalm 66). When they have further developed, they can assist others. Assisting others means being able to look at seminar material and see the benefit for others and customizing the material for those around

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[206] J. Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994) 154.

[207] Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Life,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan , 2002) 235.

them to benefit so that the kingdom can expand. Reading material and attending seminars are not just for the pastor but must be seen as a means of expanding the kingdom of God. A purpose driven life can support a purpose driven church.[208]

Workshops

Workshops are more hands on training. They tell participant what to do then show them by practice how it can be applied. The process of developing spiritually is in asking God whether a workshop is best for the pastor and the congregation God has given him. The purpose of attending must be clear or the material will continue to fill the bookshelf when pastors return to their congregations.

The implementation of concepts from a workshop may be influenced by whom pastors allow to walk with them. The frustration of trying to get people to see concepts second hand can be reduced by allowing disciples to grow as part of the process and to participate in workshops. People have to feel a part of the process in order to be involved.[209]

The Impact of Spiritual Growth

Pastors may limit their perspective based on their own eyesight. God however is Omniscient. He sees all and knows all. Can two walk together unless they first agree to come together and decide to walk together? (Amos 3:3) Spiritual growth is impacted by

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[208] Ibid 161, 162.

[209] John Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership,* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson 1988) 149.

walking with other pastors and most of all with God. Spiritual maturity helps breed spiritual maturity. A spiritually mature pastor can lead others to the level he has traveled. An immature pastor will do the same. Two concepts come back to rest: The Law of the Lid and the fact that iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17).[210]

Individual Growth

Individual growth is not just in the call of God.[211] It includes the constant walking with the Lord and experiencing Him daily. Pastors will continually grow when they become more like Jesus Christ Our Lord daily. Repentance is getting rid of the things that hinder us from being more Christ-like and replacing the sin for the righteousness of Christ.

Pastors must develop integrity. Integrity is following God and in leading others to follow God. People have to believe in the leaders (pastors) before they will follow them.[212]

Family Growth

God talks about family from Genesis to Revelation. He starts with Adam and Eve. He talks about Cain and Abel. He speaks of Christ's return for his bride. He starts in His Word with a marriage and concludes with another type of marriage. The

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[210] Ibid 1

[211] Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God,* (Nashville: Broadman 1994) 126, 127.

[212] Fred Smith, *Integrity* (Minneapolis, Bethany House 1999) 115.

message seems clear that family matters to God. In 2 Timothy, the Bible states that pastors must have the respect of their wives and children. It further states that if they can not manage their homes, how can they lead the church? The home is a training center for the family. It is the place where young people learn how to follow God's leadership and how to serve Him. God never stops teaching His children and the pastor can not stop teaching his family.[213] Teaching is a life style and not a lesson. Children learn more from what they see than what they hear.

A lifestyle of learning takes time and presence. Sending children to church or to a ministry without follow-up is taking a chance with their spiritual growth. When a new child is born into a family, there is great joy. All of the hopes and dreams for this new member are expressed. The hope is not in the poor habits being passed down, but the hope for the next generation. The hope is for the work of the Lord to continue. The work is for the next generation to carry on and the Kingdom of God to expand.[214] The family must know the plan God has for them in order to know where they are going.

Congregation Spiritual Growth

The pastor gains experience in leading his family and extends that experience throughout the congregation. Just as the family sees hope in the new life of a child, the congregation must see hope in people coming to the Lord.[215] Congregation growth is

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[213] Jerry Pipes, *Building a Successful Family,* (United States 2002) 65, 66

[214] Lovett H. Weems, Jr., *Take the Next Step,* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 2003) 69, 70.

[215] Ibid 70.

not just borrowing family members from other families in the community. It is causing existing members to grow spiritually.

Community Spiritual Growth

God is not confined by walls. People in ministry, however, confine themselves to the walls of their buildings. A community where every person has accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord is an exciting thought. A community would be exciting where people were not so divided on Sundays and where growth was in new souls being saved and not transfer of memberships. The solution may be in the definition of community and how to reach souls for Christ. Just as the purposes of individuals are defined, and congregations' mission statements are defined, so can the purpose of communities be defined. The mission statement for the community does not have to focus on reducing crime if more energy and resources are placed in defining the winning of souls. When a community knows its purpose, the vision can be seen more clearly.[216]

Global Spiritual Growth

Congregations and communities may take on world wide missions without knowing or practicing winning souls at home. They may look to other continents for places that need their assistance and head off to the mission field. This may be their calling and if it is there should be no second guessing. The answer seems to be in Matthew 28:19, 20 which states, go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,

[216] Ibid 47.

baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age Amen. On a global scale that equates to all nations, all people groups and person receiving and growing in Christ. All congregations, all communities and all churches are not handling their share of the responsibility.

Solutions and Conclusion

There are multiple solutions for continual spiritual development of pastors. Among the solutions are having the pastor to know who he is. He must spend time with God in His Word and he must spend time in prayer and meditation. Having a spiritual mentor is also important. A spiritual mentor could be an active pastor or former pastor who has walked the life for Christ. Additionally, having an accountability group is important. The accountability group may include one's spouse, peers and an older or more experienced pastor or pastoral group.[217]

Hode and Wenger made recommendations based on their study of over 600 pastors across five denominations. Their recommendations are as follows:

1. Seminaries should do more to prepare ministers for the practical aspects of ministry.
2. Denominations should improve the call process.
3. Denominations should provide ongoing support for pastors.
4. Denominations should support pastors in conflict or crisis offering support from external sources where necessary.
5. Congregations should articulate their genuine goals.
6. Congregations should be realistic about expectations.
7. Congregations should provide relief from workloads when pastors are facing conflict or crisis.[218]

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[217] David Wheeler, *Liberty University, Developing Evangelistic Strategy, class notes. 2007.*

[218] Dean Hoge and Jacqueline E. Wenger, *Pastors in Transition*, (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 2005) 220.

A local survey was sent to three Baptist pastors to request their recommendation for spiritual growth. Their responses are summarized below:

- All had been in ministry for five or more years. Two had more than twenty years.
- Two of the three had experienced burnout. The other experienced dropout.
- Their recommendations for increased maturity include, reading, prayer, studying the Word of God, and walking with stronger Christians.
- They obtained help from seminaries, workshops, mentors, and peers.
- One pastor recommended soul winning as a means of growth and keeping the fire burning for the Lord.
- Another pastor recommended setting priorities, planning and pondering or meditation for growth and maturity and staying on course with God's work.[219]

Millions of people are affected by the decisions pastors make. The continual spiritual development of pastors will help determine the future of ministry work for the next generation. Christians must be better prepared than leaders of the world or they will not have influence locally or in a global setting. The comparison of leadership by congregations will be challenging for pastors. This does not intend in any way to reflect that Christian leaders should be of the world and seek their methods as a means of operating the church. It does mean however that they must be as effective or more effective than leaders in the world.

Maturity for pastors and other Christians is an ongoing and continual recognition that the Lord is the One who makes possible all good things in our lives. Mature believers proclaim this truth in all circumstances. Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father.[220]

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[219] Local survey instrument 2007 to local Baptist Pastors.

[220] Charles Stanley, *Success God's Way,* (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishing Company 2000) 233.

Most pastors do not have a worldview of life. Fewer have worked though the process of gaining God's special gift of insight for their lives. They should aggressively seek to understand what God is calling them to do that distinguishes them from other pastors that makes them a unique ambassador for Christ.[221] The pastor must pursue the identity of God's vision for the ministry of the church. God's plan is critical for His glorification. Pastors must mature continually to be useful in the hand of God. Millions of lives are depending on the continual spiritual development of pastors.

[221] George Barna, *The Power of Vision*, (Ventura: Regal 2003) 139.

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George Wayne Thomas
Vitae

3600 Point Elizabeth Drive
Chesapeake, Virginia 23321
(757) 483 3852
E-mail georgeandbevt@netzero.net

Education

DMIN candidate, Liberty University (Lynchburg, Virginia) 2007
MDiv. equivalency, Liberty University (Lynchburg, Virginia) 2004

MS, Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, Virginia) 1975
BS Hampton University (Hampton, Virginia) 1969
Maggie L. Walker (Richmond, Virginia) 1964

Employment Experience

1999 to present
Calvary Evangelical Baptist Church- Pastor of Pastoral Care, 2003 to present. Developed a ministry to care for, visit and indoctrinate new and existing members into the current ministry.

Church Business Administrator, 1999 to 2003. Managed the daily operations and staff as well as preach and fill other duties as designated by the senior pastor.

Licensed and Ordained into the ministry. (2000 and 2003)

RR Donnelley and Sons 1998 and 1999. Manager: Managed the Human Resources and Health Departments. There were approximately 400 employees at the facility.

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation 1996 to 1998. Director: Director of Human Resources and Employee Relations for the Hotel Division. The division had approximately 1800 employees.

Safelite Glass Corporation 1995 and 1996 Manager: Managed Human Resources and Safety. The facility had approximately 500 employees.

Hoechst Celanese Corporation 1989 to 1995 Manager: Managed Human Resources, Labor Relations and Training. The facility had approximately 700 employees.

Reynolds Metals Company 1976 to 1989 Assistant Director/Manager: Managed Human Resources, Labor Relations, Safety, Training and Security. Served in multiple divisions and locations to 1500 employees.

Xerox Corporation 1975 and 1976 Territory Sales.
Virginia Power Company 1970 to 1975
Johnson and Johnson 1969 and 1970

Professional Conferences

Pastors Conference, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fl. (01, 02, 04)
Pastors Conference, Urban Alternative, Dallas, Texas (99)
Global Conference on World Evangelism, Pretoria, South Africa (87)
Labor Negotiations, University of Michigan 1990
Leadership Development, Notre Dame 1982
Business Communications, University of Richmond 1977
Business Development, Michigan State University 1991
Quality Assurance, University of Louisville 1981

Professional Organizations

National Association of Church Administrators
American Association of Christian Counselors
Society of Human Resources Management
American Society of Safety Engineers
Principle's Council, Western Branch High School, Chesapeake, Virginia
Phi Beta Lambda Business Society

Achievements and Awards

Who is Who of Business Men in the Mid West
Who is Who of Business Men in the South?
Who is Who of International Business Men
Saint Joseph Michigan Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Training 5 yr award.

Previous Boards

Board of Directors J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College
Board of Directors- Richmond Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors- Richmond Area Program for Minorities in Engineering
Board of Directors- Portsmouth Public Schools
Board of Directors- Roanoke Public Schools

Honors

Man of the Month, Calvary Evangelical of the Month 1994
Workshop for Couples, Fifth Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, 2002
Workshop on Ministry, Mission and Vision, Ebenezer Baptist, Portsmouth, Virginia 2001.
Workshop on Christians in the Work Place Ames Iowa 2003
Workshop Current Issues Men Face in 2004
Key Speaker, Maggie L. Walker High School Reunion 2004

Speaker for local National Day of Prayer 2004
Workshop Speaker, Pastors Conference, Les Caye, Haiti
Workshop facilitator at Global Conference On World Evangelism Pretoria, South Africa 1998.

Volunteer Efforts

Deacon 1987 to1989 (relocated)
Preach in southeast, central and northern Virginia
Preach at Sentara Nursing Home
Teach Couples Sunday school approximately 50 members
Coached Little League soccer, basketball and baseball 8 years
Couples Ministry 5 years
College and Career Teacher 7 years

Personal

Born in Richmond, Virginia October 7, 1946
Married- Beverly R. Thomas (Howard University)
Daughter- Joylene W. L. Thomas (Meharry Medical College)
Son- Derek W. Thomas (Liberty University)
Son Anthony W. Thomas (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Daughter in law Anna O'Campo Thomas (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Daughter in law LaToya Smith Thomas (University of Missouri)
Granddaughter Isabella Ester Rose Thomas
Grandson Tarvaris Smith
Grandson Isaiah E A Thomas

Church Affiliation and Ministry

Calvary Evangelical Baptist Church
205 Gust Lane
Portsmouth, Virginia 23701

Couples Ministry
Teach Faith Sunday school- Couples
Men's Ministry
Evangelism Ministry
Prayer Ministry