LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSULTANT MINISTRY

TO EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

IN NEED OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

A Thesis Project Submitted to
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

Thomas Eugene Hatley

Lynchburg, Virginia

March, 1994

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSULTANT MINISTRY TO EVANGELICAL

CHURCHES IN NEED OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Thomas Eugene Hatley

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993

Mentor: Dr. Carl Diemer

Studies and statistics on church conflict reveal a lack
of proper handling of many stressful situations. The
purpose of this paper is to design a consultant ministry to
assist churches in proper management of destructive
conflict. Few current consultant ministries are equipped to
adequately provide effective mediation. None were found
that would deploy a consultant team for this need. This
project analyzes church conflict and examines instances of
conflict in the Scriptures. It then establishes the
framework whereby a three-member team could minister to
churches in conflict.

Abstract length: 88 words.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Peggy
who is the love of my life,
and my best friend,

and to my children, A.J. and Daniel
who are my playmates,
and my greatest accomplishments.

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INTRODUCTION

Issues of conflict may take place in a church on a
variety of fronts. The leadership may have an internal
difference of opinion which leads to an unreasonable
choosing of sides and confrontation. A moral crisis may
surface in a key leader's life. Even doctrinal disputes can
arise. Personal or personality differences can manifest
themselves in such minor disagreements such as what side of
the auditorium a piano should be placed. Reports of church
arguments and splits are not new, but their number and
effect upon the cause of Christ is of great concern to all
caring Christians.

Conflicts are inevitable. Some conflict can lead to
constructive change. However, in many crisis situations
churches are doing a very inadequate job of turning conflict
away from its destructive tendencies and toward healing. A
trained consultant team could significantly increase the
number of churches that could make that turn.

The need for conflict management in evangelical
churches is growing. This can be seen in several ways.
First, wherever pastors gather, their conversations are apt
to focus on conflict issues of the past or present, in their

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own churches or in those of friends. Secondly, lay people are likely to relate similar stories from their church experiences. Proof of this growing concern is also seen by taking a look at recent publications on the subject. In both secular and religious writings, matters of conflict are being dealt with on a scale never before seen. All books, except three, which were discovered and found specifically dealing with matters relevant to this paper were written in the last fourteen years. Over one third were copyrighted in the nineteen nineties.

My experience in the pastorate the past twenty years has borne witness to the need for a better means of conflict management. On at least three occasions I would have used such a team. One of those three experiences ended in a church split which found me pastoring the group that relocated. Among my four closest pastor friends (all of whom I have known since the early days of my ministry before we experienced significant conflict) there have been seven church splits, six moral crises involving key leaders in the church, and six times they have had to move because of unresolved conflict. These are good men, and I feel that the numbers are all too typical of the problems facing the church today.

On a few occasions pastors have called upon me to aid them in a time of oppressive conflict. Those experiences demonstrated to me just how valuable an objective view can

be in a time of crisis. Because the pastor alone asked for my assistance, the effectiveness of my presence was limited. A consultant team of three people, which are asked for by either the church or the pastor and key church lay leaders, could be very effective.

Statement of Purpose

A consultant team, of at least three qualified people, is to be assembled, trained, and made available to evangelical churches which can use the expertise of the team to halt destructive conflict in their congregations.

Scope and Limitations

Not all conflict in a congregation is unhealthy. Furthermore, not all unhealthy conflict will require outside assistance in order to be successfully managed. The consultant ministry described by this project will be designed to deal with those emergency and crisis situations where a church split or staff dismissal or other such major destructive event is imminent.

This project will only address the need to provide assistance to evangelical churches. The reasoning for not including other churches is reflected by the need for a common authority. Consultants will appeal to the Scriptures as the logical arbitrator for many situations. In churches where there is no firm commitment to the authority of the

Bible there will be no common ground upon which the consultants can do their work. This can best be measured by looking at the articles of faith of a congregation and by questioning key leaders.

This paper will deal only with the need for a consultant team. Ministries already exist for one person to advise churches in conflict. Many of these ministries are denominationally provided. Such ministries are seen by this author as less effective than the team concept for many severe conflict situations. A team can assign a mediator to each faction and still have a third member remain neutral in case there is a need for arbitration. The team will not be seen as coming into the situation with the intent of choosing a particular side in the conflict. Thus the team has the greatest possibility to guide the fellowship into a win-win resolution of the controversy.

Definition of Terms

Certain key terms and their definitions are listed below. These should assist the reader in understanding this project.

Conflict: "a struggle to resist or overcome; contest of opposing forces or powers; strife; battle. (As a verb) to come into collision; be in mutual opposition; clash."[1]

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[1]Funk and Wagnalls New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language, (New York, New York: Publishers International Press, 1980), 274.

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(More about the meaning of conflict will be offered in chapter one).

Mediation: when someone steps between competing wills for the purpose of defining, clarifying, discerning and reconciling opposites. It involves the capacity to absorb tension, to suffer misunderstanding, to accept rejection, and to bear the pain of others' estrangement.[2]

Arbitration: a simple proceeding voluntarily chosen by parties who want a dispute determined by an impartial judge or panel of judges of their own mutual selection, whose decision, based on the merits of the case, they agree in advance to accept as final and binding.[3]

Negotiation: the process of bringing conflicting parties, with a common interest, into a workable agreement by use of bargaining. It necessitates each side yielding on substantive matters in order to establish a middle position acceptable to all.

Antagonist: "individuals who, on the basis of nonsubstantive evidence, go out of their way to make insatiable demands, usually attacking the person or performance of others. These attacks are selfish in nature, tearing down rather than building up, and are frequently

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[2]Adapted from David Augsburger, Conflict Mediation Across Cultures (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1992), 191.

[3]Adapted from Chappell,"Arbitrate...and Avoid Stomach Ulcers," 2 Arb. Mag., Nos. 11-12, pp.6,7; quoted in Frank Elkouri and Edna Asper Elkouri, How Arbitration Works (Washington, D.C.: BNA Inc., 1960), 1,2.

directed against those in a leadership capacity."[4]

Conciliation: The act of bringing into agreement, done usually by overcoming enmity or hostility. Can also mean to placate or mollify.[5]

Biblical and Theological Basis

The obvious intent of Scripture is for God's people to live together in harmony. We are admonished to be "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Yet, even the Bible records many instances of conflict within the Lord's congregations and between individual believers. These two truths call for methods of conflict management in today's churches.

The office of Mediator is part of the work of Christ (I John 2). He brought rebellious man to a right relationship with the Father. Therefore, Jesus is our first and best example of successful mediation. Other examples of conflict, mediation, arbitration, negotiation, and conciliation are part of the Old and New Testament narratives. Some of these will be studied as a part of this project, especially where contemporary usefulness may be apparent.

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[4]Kenneth C. Haugk, Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 25,26.

[5]Adapted from definitions of "Conciliation" and "Conciliate" in Funk and Wagnalls New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language, (New York, New York: Publishers International Press, 1980), 271.

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Review of the Literature

The material available in secular fields concerning conflict management, mediation, and arbitration is quite extensive. Much of that material will be useful to this study. Useful sources in this area that are distinctively Christian in nature are harder to locate. However, recent publications indicate a quickly escalating interest in a need for such materials.

Many of the Christian sources on this subject deal with issues other than congregational disharmony. Still fewer sources speak of the need of intervention through consultants. The concept of a consultant team to deal with conflict management in local churches has not been seen in any of the sources. A team approach to conflict management is proving useful in some arenas of the secular world. However, little or nothing is being developed in Christian circles with the team motif. Therefore, it seems that the need for this study and subsequent ministry are genuine.

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF CONFLICT

The root of the word "conflict" comes from a Latin
word, *fligere*, which means "to strike." The prefix, con,
means "with" or "together." Thus, the base definition of
"conflict" is "to strike together."[6]

"Conflict happens when two pieces of matter try to
occupy the same space at the same time. . . . This analogy
can be used in looking at conflicting goals of a group.
Conflicting goals are two purposes or objectives that cannot
occupy the same group at the same time."[7] Conflict is a
fact of life. It exists between God and the fallen, within
the individual, and between two or more people or groups.

All conflict is not deleterious. "Conflict as such is
not necessarily a problem, . . . On a values scale, conflict
is neutral. It can be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy,
creative or destructive."[8] In fact, the lack of conflict
can be a sign of an unhealthy organization or relationship.

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[6]Speed Leas and Paul Kittlaus, <u>Church Fights: Managing
Conflict in the Local Church</u> (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:
The Westminister Press, 1973), 28.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Haugk, 31.

Conflict has its source in the battle between good and evil, God and the devil, perfect holiness and flawed, rebellious man. Not all human contentions can be easily judged to have a purely right side and a purely wrong side. However, human conflicts are the results of rebellion against God and will not be resolved permanently until the Lord returns to set all in order. Likewise, the nature of strife is such that good and lasting solutions cannot be obtained without including God's principles and power in the processes of conflict management.

Categories of Conflict

There are three major levels of human conflict: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and substantive. Leas and Kittlaus offer the following definitions for these levels.

Intrapersonal Conflict

> Intrapersonal conflict is that struggle which a person has within himself. It may be different feelings warring with each other.

Interpersonal Conflict

> . . . We mean by interpersonal conflict that which is related to differences between people but is not related primarily to issues.

Substantive Conflict

> . . . Substantive conflict can be between two individuals, or between an individual and a group, or between groups. Substantive conflict has to do with conflict over facts, means, ends, or values.[9]

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[9]Leas and Kittlaus, 30,31.

The third level, substantive conflict, Leas seems to be able to isolate and consider as having its own management guidelines. While that may sometimes be possible, it will not be ignored that intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts can have a bearing on this third level and may need to be considered in problem evaluation and settlement.

A difference between healthy and unhealthy conflict must be established. Haugk expands the levels of conflict to five and sees the first three and one half as healthy levels and the remainder as destructive. Those who delight in escalating conflict for destructive ends are seen as antagonists. The diagram below shows the five levels of conflict and three levels of antagonism as Haugk describes them.

The objective of those operating at Level I, *Problems to Solve*, is to work out a solution to the problem, whatever it is. . . .

At level II, *Disagreements*, the objective becomes colored with a need for self-protection. . . . At this level, individuals move away from dealing with specifics and tend toward generalizations. . . .

Those operating at Level III, *Contests*, view conflict from a "win/lose" perspective. . . . What matters is winning, putting one's opponents "in their proper place.". . .

Parties operating at Level IV, *Fight/Flight*, have the objective of hurting their opponents in some way, getting rid of them or both. The organization is not a concern at this level. . . . At this level, the choices have crystallized into two: fighting or fleeing.

. . . the objective of individuals in conflict at this fifth level is purely and simply to destroy opponents, irrespective of cost to self or others.[10]

Most conflict can be resolved or managed without destructive consequences. However, when an antagonist is involved the normal rules for resolving conflict may need adjustment. According to Haugk an antagonist is not operating normally. . . . "Recent literature in the area of conflict resolution has begun to recognize that there are individuals who initiate and thrive on unhealthy conflict, persons who have no desire whatsoever to see conflict resolved."[11] Thus we see that in addition to the three levels of Leas and Kittlaus, and the five levels of Haugk, we must also discern whether conflict is being led by antagonistic or non-antagonistic influences, or perhaps an intra-mixture of both.

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[10]Haugk, 32-35.

[11]Ibid., 32.

Evidences of Conflict

Unhealthy conflict is like a disease. It will spread and contaminate the entire body if left unchecked. Also, like a disease, it will display symptoms. A proper and early diagnosis is essential to accurate prognosis and restoration of health. Therefore the signs of conflict need to be studied. Below is a list of symptoms offered by Speed Leas and Paul Kittlaus:

    internal division
    parish members informally organizing cliques and
        factions
    increasing use of voting to make decisions
    long-drawn-out, personally unfulfilling meetings
    sharply increased attendance at certain meetings
    decreasing attendance over the long run
    increased use of hostile language
    experiencing other members as enemies
    feelings of fear that the organization is out of control
    win/lose attitudes in decision-making
    people looking for conspiracies
    conspiracies
    increased discussion about the goals of the church
        indicating a breakdown of consensus
    increased incongruity between what people say at
        meetings and what they say over the phone concerning
        church matters
    unfocused anxiety and anger
    displacement: people looking for reasons to disagree
        without naming (or sometimes without knowing) the
        "real" problem
    acting out: over-responding or other incongruous
            behavior
    blocks of pledges not being paid
    members transferring membership
    every issue at every meeting experienced as part of a
        larger struggle
    communication patterns change
    friendship patterns change
    increasing mistrust of others
    painful pressure on the minister, evidenced by increased
        use of the theme of reconciliation in sermons,
        prayers, and hymns
    desperate "circuit-riding" calling by the minister,
        attempting to hold everything together

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minister developing a sense of personal failure
job-hunting by the minister[12]

When many of these symptoms appear, destructive
conflict is in progress. The causes of conflict can be poor
communication, poor leadership, neglect of matters of
concern to the fellowship, or even the failure to allow
healthy conflict to resolve differences. This latter cause
is common since many churches see all conflict as "bad" and
mask or avoid it. The result is that feelings are left to
boil and suspicions to grow.

Another aspect or cause of conflict is that of
antagonism. Some people are driven to stir up strife. We
often assume that everyone in a church wants to be in
harmony with the church body. Actually, antagonists thrive
upon the feelings of control and power that they receive
from causing trouble in a church. Such people can be
undetectable for years at a time, but when they attack, the
results can leave an entire church confused and torn.

Antagonists may suffer from personality disorders.

> Some specialists in the field of conflict
> resolution are now discovering that they have treated
> conflict too narrowly. Too often it was assumed that
> all parties involved in conflicts were mentally healthy,
> morally responsible, rational, and willing to
> compromise. Experience has shown that such assumptions,
> while applying to the great majority of individuals,
> overlook a very notable, vocal, and disruptive minority.
> the result has been to equip mentally sound and morally
> responsible individuals to work through healthy conflict
> with other mentally sound and morally responsible
> people, but to leave them at a loss when confronted with

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[12]Leas and Kittlaus, 16,17.

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antagonists.[13]

Because most church leaders are not prepared to deal
with pathological personality problems, frustration may
result when reasonable methods of resolving problems are
constantly averted by what was once thought to be a normal
church member.

> Pathological personality disturbances, unlike many
> neurotic, psychosomatic, and psychotic disorders,
> typically do not stem from defenses against anxiety or
> from personality decompensation. Rather they represent
> immature and distorted personality development,
> resulting in individuals who meet their needs in
> unethical ways at the expense of others. Their behavior
> tends to be irresponsible, impulsive, and selfish; they
> "act out" their desires and feelings with little or no
> sense of guilt or personal distress. Often these
> patterns of personality and behavior are recognizable by
> adolescence and continue into adult life. . . .
> Typically intelligent, spontaneous, and very
> likeable on first acquaintance, antisocial personalities
> are deceitful and manipulative, callously using others
> to achieve their own ends. Often they seem to live in a
> series of present moments, without consideration for the
> past or future. . . .
> In other cases psychopaths are capable of assuming
> responsibility and pursuing long-range goals, but they
> do so in unethical ways with a complete lack of
> consideration for the rights and well-being of
> others. . . .
> The psychopath not only poses a menace to
> acquaintances but may also set up family and friends as
> "marks" and create a great deal of unhappiness for
> them.[14]

Coleman presents five common characteristics which may
not be present in every antisocial person, but are typical
of psychopaths in general:

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[13]Haugk, 32.

[14]James C. Coleman, <u>Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life</u>
(Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1976),
369-371.

1. Inadequate conscience development and lack of anxiety or guilt. . . .
2. Irresponsible and impulsive behavior; low frustration tolerance. . . .
3. Ability to put up "a good front" to impress and exploit others, and to project the blame for his own socially disapproved behavior. . . .
4. Rejection of authority and inability to profit from experience. . . .
5. Inability to maintain good interpersonal relationships.[15]

Causes of this behavior are important to note. James Coleman divides them into three areas:

Constitutional factors.
1. Malfunction of inhibitory mechanisms in the central nervous system. . . .
2. Deficient emotional arousal. . . .
3. Stimulation seeking. . . .
Family relationships.
1. Early parental loss and emotional deprivation. . . .
2. Parental rejection and inconsistency. . . .
3. Faulty parental models and family interactions.
Sociocultural factors. . . . such as those found in our urban ghettos.[16]

A healthy understanding of how to detect and confer with people who may demonstrate some of the characteristics listed above is important to the success of a consultant team. For this reason and others, the inclusion of a trained counselor on the team will be a priority to the ministry.

Kenneth Haugk lists some signs that one or more antagonists are becoming destructive in a church. They are summarized below:

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[15]Coleman, 371.

[16]Ibid., 377-380.

Early Warning Signs

    * A chill in the relationship.
    * Honeyed "concerns."
    * Nettlesome questions.
    * Mobilizing forces and pot-stirring.
    * Meddling.
    * Resistance.

Later Warning Signs

    * Sloganeering. Antagonists often use one or more
emotionally laden slogans to spread troublesome
dissension.
    * Accusing. Antagonists frequently bandy about
one or more accusations.
    * Spying. In more or less obvious ways, an
antagonist may begin to spy on you.
    * Distorting. Antagonists frequently distort
reports of incidents, leaving grains of truth to
maintain credibility.
    * Misquoting Scripture. Antagonists frequently
misquote the Bible to provide proof that their campaigns
or behaviors are legitimate.
    * "Judas kissing." An antagonist is likely to
tell the person he or she is attacking, "I am your
friend, but this is something that I just have to do."
    * Smirking. A troublemaker might wear an
inappropriate smile or a cocky grin when he or she
encounters the person under attack.
    * Pestering. Antagonists sometimes pester church
leaders by constantly calling on the phone or by hanging
around after a service or a meeting, saying "I'd just
like a brief word with you."
    * Letter writing. Antagonists frequently send
letters or other communications.
    * Pretense. Antagonists often portray themselves
as champions of the underdog, or as underdogs
themselves.
    * Lobbying. Antagonists frequently lobby with
small groups in the congregation to create doubt about
one or more leaders.[17]

Observing a conflict situation in light of these

indicators will help to establish the type of strife which

is affecting the fellowship. It should be considered that a

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[17]Haugk, 80-85.

situation may be a mixture of antagonistic and non--antagonistic conflict.

Misconceptions About Conflict

A lack of understanding about conflict is a barrier to avoiding it. Here are seven misconceptions of the subject: (1) Conflict is abnormal. (2) Conflict and disagreement are the same. Ideological battles can take place even when people have little personal disagreement. (3) Conflict is pathological. While this may be true of the antagonist, it is seldom true with most people encased in controversy. (4) Conflict must be reduced or avoided. "Peace at any price" may only delay and intensify conflict. (5) Conflict is a personality problem. It is usually much deeper than this. (6) Conflict is linked only with anger. Actually, conflict can exist with many emotions or with none. (7) Conflict is the admission of failure. In fact, conflict is the natural reaction most congregations will have to change and growth. Successfully managing conflict will serve to strengthen the fellowship.[18]

A self-study program done at Fort Ord, California, provides us with a conflict checklist which may be helpful in analyzing whether a congregation is experiencing too much, too little, or just the right amount of conflict:

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[18]Adapted from Gangel and Canine, 129-131.

Too Little Conflict

1. Members do only what they are told.
2. Creativity depends solely on directives from above.
3. Members appear dull and without much energy.
4. Dull and boring meetings with little or no exchange of ideas.
5. Conversation among members is polite, but not stimulating

Too Much Conflict

1. Morale is poor as demonstrated by members frequently coming late to activities.
2. Frequent absenteeism by members.
3. Outbursts of anger.
4. Members being distant and uncooperative.
5. Continuous anxiety.

Just Enough Conflict

1. Morale is high--members are energetic and competitive.
2. Meetings have an open sharing of ideas.
3. Members are not fearful of one-another, knowing their ideas will be heard and conflicts resolved successfully.
4. Members are not afraid to ask about policies and procedures.
5. Members enjoy kidding exchanges.[19]

Not all conflict is adverse. The lack of healthy conflict can itself be very damaging to the effectiveness of any organizational body. The above lists and tables will be helpful tools for church leaders and for the consultant team that will be ministering to churches.

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[19]Conflict Management: Organizational Effectiveness Self-Study Program. (Fort Ord, California: U.S. Army Organizational Effectiveness Center and School, 1979), 28.

CHAPTER II

PRESENT AND FUTURE NEED FOR ASSISTANCE IN

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

This project was chosen because of a belief that the
need for the ministry it outlines is increasing. Others
hold this belief as well.

> It is our viewpoint that the major problem facing
> sincere Christians in this decade has little to do with
> theology, the occult, secularism, or humanism. These
> genuine threats have been with us since the inception of
> the New Testament gospel. Far more insidious, however,
> is our inability to work together, to function
> harmoniously and creatively, and to constructively
> manage conflict when it does erupt.[20]

A genuine need for consultant teams to minister as
conflict mediators will be disclosed by the survey,
interviews and other data which follows.

Results from a Survey of Pastors

One hundred pastors were sent a seven-question survey
concerning church conflict. These pastors were selected at
random by a church receptionist using a directory of
Southern Baptist Churches. Some of the questions were based

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[20]Kenneth O. Gangel and Samuel L. Canine, Communication
and Conflict Management in Churches and Christian
Organizations (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1992),
v,vi.

upon the past experiences of these men. One question dealt with a current assessment of conflict in ministry, and one question was requesting a response as to the openness of these men to using a consultants' ministry in their own future. Forty-four pastors returned the surveys.

Of the forty-four pastors the average length of time in the pastorate was just over twenty years. Seventy-seven percent of these pastors had faced severe conflict in their churches. There were sixty-four instances of severe conflict reported on their answers. That means that each pastor had related to an average of one and one half conflicts. Every fourteen years, on average, a pastor faced major, destructive conflict.

Eight church splits were recorded among these pastors. That means that every fifth or sixth pastor had to shepherd during the division of a congregation.

Sixty-four percent of the pastors were forced to deal with severe moral failure in a key staff member or lay leader. Thirty percent have had to face that situation on more than one occasion. On average, there was reported a case of damaging moral failure in the life of a church leader every nineteen years and eight months.

The question which addressed the present situation was especially revealing. Eighty-six percent of the pastors said that conflict was either as severe as it was in their early ministry or worse. Only three of the pastors

indicated that it was less than it was in earlier days.
Nineteen indicated that conflict was worse than in the past,
and nineteen said it was about the same.

On the question as to whether or not a pastor would
use a consultant team in the future to help handle conflict
the answer given was yes or leaning toward the affirmative
for twenty-seven of the shepherds. That means that sixty--
one percent of the pastors are open to such a ministry.

Results from Interviews with Pastors

Three pastors were personally interviewed. All three
are successful shepherds today. One has been in pastoral
ministry for sixteen years in Oklahoma. He has endured
three church splits, only one of which came when he was the
senior pastor, and that was as he was serving as an extended
interim. Currently, he is pastoring a growing church which
began as the result of a split less than two years ago. The
second pastor interviewed has been pastoring for seventeen
years. He is currently in his tenth year as pastor of a
church in South Dakota. About fourteen years ago he
pastored a church in Oklahoma that went through a split
after terminating him without biblical grounds. He took the
group that left and began a new work. The third pastor has
been in the pastorate for twenty-eight years in Arkansas.
His church has over thirty-four hundred members and has a
reputation for successful and unusual ministries.

The one thing that ties these three men together is

that they are known for facing great conflicts and enduring them with great faithfulness to the Lord. They are ideal barometers of where conflict has been and where it is going.

The Oklahoma pastor faced several instances of moral failure on the part of pastoral staff. On one occasion a man had been in three churches and had relations with dozens of women, and nothing had been done to stop him. In each instance the church leadership was aware of the problem but chose to quietly push him off on another church rather than deal with the situation biblically. When asked if such situations are escalating he said, "I believe them to be more frequent." Concerning what he knows of conflict from other pastors the answer was, ". . . almost everyone I know has experienced similar situations, or just outright conflict."

The South Dakota pastor echoed these sentiments. Below are some of the comments shared during his interview:

> . . . The pastoral/congregational conflict many times is because of a lack of communication, other times it is a lack of understanding of pastoral authority. . . . I think in the instances back in my second pastorate (where there was a split) it was definitely a power struggle between the pastor and the deacons.

> . . . I've had other pastors who have shared their experiences with me and it was almost as if we had been in the very same situation. I do think that there are personality types, usually the people that are the cause of the conflict are the people that are lacking in spiritual maturity, people that perhaps do not have high self-esteem or that do not have harmony in their home and as a result are trying to gain status at the church and somehow in that effort to grasp that authority they cause problems for the spiritual leadership.

Concerning the need for a consultant ministry this pastor responded, "I think it is important for someone with a cool head, someone very objective and unbiased to come in and deal from a biblical basis and bring some sanity and clear up the issues."

The third pastor was rich in experiences, old and new, regarding the subject. He said that the number one problem he had faced was staff problems, and the number two problem was authority. ". . . some of my biggest problems have come from people who just reject biblical authority." Also he states that, ". . . anyone who has been a pastor for twenty-eight years has been in deep conflict or he hasn't been faithful to God."

Concerning the growing problem of conflict in churches he says, ". . . So I see that this is a time of the intensity of evil. Whether we will crater back down and have some times of peace like we had in the fifties or the twenties in America, I do not know." This highly respected and experienced pastor added, ". . . I do feel as a pastor overwhelmed by the conflict raging around me."

Below are some of this shepherd's comments on how conflict affects a pastor and how a consultant ministry to help pastors and churches is needed:

> When a pastor is hurt it is like an N.F.L. athlete when he is hit. He may be an all-pro, now he's lying on the field. He was side blocked and it knocked everything out of him. He is hurt, he's in pain, he's confused and he is weakened. Now, that happens to the best of us, so all we can do is make a biblical response to it, that

may take a day, it may take six months, it may take ten years, depending on the severity of the hit.

There needs to be a network of brokenness where God can raise up some men who have stayed in the battle and know what it is to endure, who can help pastors endure conflict.

<u>Analysis of Other Statistical Material</u>

The results of recent studies done by the Barna Research Group reveal pastors feel less adequate to handle leadership and matters of conflict than they do things related to preaching. In rating themselves, pastors rank their skills in order of their effectiveness as follows:

<div align="center">

Scriptural knowledge
Teaching
Model a Christian lifestyle
Preaching
Being a good spouse
Demonstrating compassion
Developing relationships
Church leadership
Counseling
Evangelism
Staff management[21]

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Notice that skills needed to effectively deal with or avert conflict are near the bottom of the list. Concerning this ranking Barna writes, "Many pastors, by their own admission are neither gifted nor trained to be leaders and are frustrated with ministry"[22]

A 1991 survey from the Fuller Institute of Church Growth offers the following statistics concerning how

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[21]George Barna, <u>Today's Pastors</u> (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1993), 71.

[22]Ibid., 14.

ministers feel about the pressures of the pastorate:

* 90% of pastors work more than 46 hours a week.
* 80% believed that pastoral ministry affected their families negatively.
* 33% said that being in ministry was an outright hazard to their family.
* 75% reported a significant stress-related crisis at least once in their ministry.
* 50% felt unable to meet the needs of the job.
* 90% felt they were inadequately trained to cope with ministry demands.
* 70% say they have a lower self-esteem now than when they started out.
* 40% reported a serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month.
* 37% confessed having been involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church.
* 70% do not have someone they consider a close friend.[23]

From the above we can see that pastors do not always feel adequate to take the church through times of great stress because they are also under great stress. Because the pastor feels inadequate for such situations some of the techniques of process consultation will be used in this ministry. This method has the benefit of training church leaders in the skills of conflict management as they are being helped through a current problem.

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[23]H.B. London, Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman, <u>Pastors at Risk</u> (U.S.A., Canada, England: Victor Books, 1993), 22.

CHAPTER III

LIKELY CONFLICT SITUATIONS WHICH THE CONSULTANT

TEAM MAY FACE

The focus of this consultant ministry is on three areas of conflict commonly experienced by churches. These are: leadership conflict, any conflict that has a church near a split, and instances of moral failure involving church leadership. Notice that in all three of these instances the pastor will play an important role. That does not infer that he is the problem, but that the issue is so close to him or growing up around him in such a manner that he and the church will have trouble sorting out the issue properly without intervention from an effective conflict ministry.

In an era of specialization where people can make a good living turning the same bolt on an assembly line all day, the pastorate has multiplied in its demands on the man of God. The pastor of today may truly be the last Renaissance man. He must preach as well as the preachers his people see on television and hear on Christian radio. He must lead a staff effectively, serve as business administrator, counselor, fund-raiser, theologian, educator, social worker, evangelist, communications expert, public

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relations expert, and the church ornament at a multitude of
fellowships. He is to do all of this while on twenty-four
hour call and additionally serve as peacemaker for all
problem situations.   Dr. Meier and Dr. Minirth have this
word to pastors:

> For instance, you don't punch a time clock. You
> don't have weekends free to get away with your family.
> When people have a problem, any problem, they will call
> you. Whenever a person finds a particular project
> important, it is expected to be equally important to
> you, and often your cooperation and help are expected
> too. Pastoring is an open-ended job. It is never
> finished. There's always more to be done.[24]

The predisposition of this consultant ministry will be
to encourage the pastor and strengthen him in the eyes of
his people whenever possible. It is hoped that as the
consultant team helps to calm the conflict that they can
also build up the skills of the pastor in conflict
management, thus improving the effectiveness of his ministry
while reducing his stress load.

Leadership Conflicts

There are very few leadership conflicts which do not
involve the pastor. If he is not one of the principles in
the conflict, his leadership is considered to be at stake if
the conflict persists. By "leadership" we mean any person
of influence, whether formerly holding an office or not.
This could be a pastor, staff member, deacon, Sunday school

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[24]Paul Meier and Frank Minirth, <u>What They Didn't Teach
You in Seminary</u> (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson
Publishers, 1993), 29.

teacher, committee chairman, large contributor, or just someone who has a considerable following in the church.

When the pastor, staff, deacons, or lay leaders are attacked by someone in the church, even if that person is not a leader, then that would also qualify as a leadership conflict.

Control is at the root of leadership conflict. There is a desire of at least one person to have power that does not belong to him. The results will usually include poor communication, stirring people to "take sides," and a spirit of bitterness that poisons many innocent bystanders. The desire for control will often be driven by an issue, someone wants their way and takes steps to secure a certain outcome. If a leader gets in the way or causes them to lose, then the result may be a power struggle that lasts beyond that one issue. Other times the desire for control is driven by a poor self-image or personality issues.

Leadership issues can be especially devastating to a church when staff is in conflict. Each staff member usually has his own following. When that following is "used" by the staff member to "win" their cause at the expense of the pastor or another staff member, the results are feelings that may be so damaged as to never completely heal.

Sometimes the leadership conflict is the result of pastors over-pressing their authority.

> Regardless of his church's size, every pastor is tempted
> to use power abusively, often every day. An ego craving

to be in control, a problem which nauseates pastors in lay people, is even more poisonous to a pastor. Embers of spiritual vigor are going out in many congregations because there is a civil war for control in progress.[25]

However, there are often many instances of people abusing pastors and church leaders without just cause.

> With frightening regularity the battle for control repeats itself. Of course, it is not solely the minister's need to exert his authority that precipitates conflict. In every congregation there are usually people who have never learned to submit themselves to those in authority over them.[26]

> Ministers are frequently victims of politics in the parish. Practically every congregation has a few influential people who can either cause or prevent significant actions. To have a clique running a church unofficially is disgusting, but to have families who have money calling the shots surreptitiously is not only devastating to the democratic process, but makes it impossible for the pastor to mount and service a program. Poor rich people can wreck a church and destroy ministers.[27]

When leaders are in conflict or when they are under attack, the results are crippling to a congregation. As consultant teams face such situations a great deal of effort will be made to expose the Scriptures to the problem. Mediation will not just seek to bring the sides together, it will try to bring them into harmony with the teachings of the New Testament. That would be the only way to prevent the situation from repeating itself.

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[25]H. B. London, Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman Pastors at Risk (U.S.A., Canada, England, Victor Books, 1993), 48.

[26]Louis McBurney, Every Pastor Needs a Pastor (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1977), 73.

[27]G. Curtis Jones, The Naked Shepherd (Waco, Texas: Word Publishers, 1979), 131.

Factions Nearing a Split

From the survey it can be stated that this is a situation that is less frequently faced than are the other conflict events. Fewer than one in every five pastors surveyed has pastored a church during a split. However, this problem may do more damage to the witness of a church than any of the others.

Churches that are near a split are usually entrenched in "choosing sides." The emotions run so deep that it is difficult for the leadership to make wise decisions. The consultant team will move in and use mediation, coupled with cool heads, to bring perspective to the situation.

The issues in such a conflict can range from substantive matters, such as doctrine, to frivolous issues, such as what color the piano should have been painted. The consultant team will be careful to mediate between the sides on non-substantive issues. However, on substantive issues the truth of the New Testament will have great bearing on the direction the team steers the outcome.

Leadership in Moral Crisis

This is probably the most prevalent crisis faced in churches today. The survey revealed that among forty-four pastors there were forty-five instances of such moral failure. In that same group only eight cases of a church split were recorded. Thirty percent of those pastors have faced moral failure among leadership more than once.

The issue when a key leader falls into sexual sin becomes "what do we do?" There is such a diversity of opinions on this matter. The consultant team will be pressed to lead the church to maintain its integrity without creating other hard feelings in the fellowship. Usually members who are gifted as prophets want to openly expose the whole issue. Those with the gift of mercy want to forgive and forget because we "all make mistakes."

Where possible the team may want to keep things as quiet as possible. However, if many people already know then clandestine activity merely makes all the leaders seem guilty of hiding truth from the people. To go too far with mercy could jeopardize the church. For example, if a pastor or leader has sexual relations with a young woman in the church and the church allows him to remain in leadership, what should be done to warn members who may come to him for marital counseling? Also, if he were to have relations with someone under age, the church could be liable because the person was known to have such a lifestyle and nothing was done to protect the people from him.

This is a complicated issue. The consultant team will need to be firm. In all instances the guilty person will need to repent and apologize. In many instances the person may need to leave the church. This may seem cruel; however, the church must protect the sheep, not the wolves. Compassion should be shown those who fall. If it is a staff

member, then proper counseling should be offered.
Additionally, a financial package may be offered which would
allow his family an adjustment period. Both the counseling
and the financial help would be put in place at the church's
expense. Such assistance may be conditional, based on
indications of repentant spirit and a willingness to be
faithful to counseling. Where a staff person or other
leader may stay in the church, steps must be taken to insure
there will be no repeat offenses by strictly limiting
leadership parameters.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SITUATIONS

SEEN IN SCRIPTURE

The Scriptures are the true source of guidance for all
matters in the church. This applies to conflict management
as well. Attention will now be turned to what is recorded
in God's Word about some conflict events.

God's Management of Conflict in the Garden of Eden

All conflict comes from sources other than God.
Satan's rebellion in Heaven was the first conflict (Isaiah
14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-17). In Genesis 1:25-26 we find
that the Lord had created a perfect world and a perfect man
and woman to have dominion over that world. Conflict on
earth began when Satan deceived Eve and when Adam fell into
compromise in disobeying God (Genesis 3:1-8). Gangel and
Canine point out that from the fall of man comes contention
on at least five levels: Man's fellowship with the Creator,
person to person relationships, mankind and the environments
of nature, man and the demonic world, and man's internal
struggle with self.[28]

From the example of the first couple we observe that

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[28]Gangel and Canine, 155.

as long as God's Word was obeyed, healthy relationships endured. Thus, a basic presupposition for conflict management will be that when all concerned are moving toward proper alignment of their lives with the truth of God, the outcome will be a growing unity. Conversely we observe that when one or more of the principals in an altercation is unwilling to conform to the teachings of the Bible, the probabilities of successful conflict management are greatly diminished.

The Lord dealt with this rebellion swiftly. There was first a confrontation with all the parties involved. For Adam there was a time of accountability brought to bear. Next, three curses each were placed upon the serpent, the woman, and Adam. Thus, accountability for their actions was established. Lastly, a point of redemption was established.

The redemption passage, theologically known as the *protevangelium*, is seen in the curse upon the serpent (Genesis 3:14-16). There we are told of a seed of woman that will crush the serpent's head. In response to this, Adam names his wife, Eve, the mother of all living. The only way he could have thought of her in such a fashion, especially after she had led him to death and expulsion from the garden, is by believing the promise of a redeemer coming through woman.

While redemption is provided, even for this first couple, it must be realized that there were consequences for

the rebellion. Man would now have to face death, life would be hard, and there was no longer access to the garden.

From God's example we can learn much about how to handle conflict. However, only He has the ability to handle it from the position of having none of the blame for the strife. Here are a few principles which can be gleaned from the Genesis passage: (1) People and their sins are responsible for human strife. (2) Proper confrontation plays an essential role in turning conflict toward a healthy conclusion. (3) A plan for redemption of the situation should be designed as the goal of the mediation process. (4) The cost of providing redemption will often call for sacrifice. This is demonstrated by the Lord when He, as the "seed of woman," was bruised in order to provide salvation.

Moses' Management of Conflict in the Multitude

Moses was no stranger to conflict before he became the leader of the wilderness congregation. The first eighty years in the life of Moses and the confrontational series with Pharaoh were preparation. God was training Moses to manage the pressures of leadership. He would need this training when leading nearly two million of his kinsmen.

For the purpose of understanding conflict resolution in a congregation, we will consider the actions of Moses as it related to the multitude. Specifically, we shall deal with two rebellions against the leadership of Moses: the

refusal of the people to obey God in regard to entering the promised land (Numbers 13), and the rebellion of Korah and Dathan (Numbers 16).

These two stories run strikingly parallel to one another. God revealed His will to Moses. Then the people are led by a few rebellious, self-appointed spokesmen to choose an alternate authority. At this point, in the first narrative, the Lord threatened to smite the people with a pestilence. In the second account, God sends a plague that begins to sweep across the multitude. In both instances Moses intercedes for the people, throwing himself between the Lord and His judgment of the congregation. Lastly, in both instances, God honors the requests of Moses, but a great penalty is paid by the people on both occasions for their rebellion.

The lessons on conflict management we can learn from these accounts are useful: (1) Strife begins when God's Word is not followed. (2) Congregational conflicts may stem from attempts to replace God-given leadership with manufactured authorities. (3) Rebellion will bring damaging consequences. (4) Godly leadership will overlook the pain of personal rejection by the people and be willing to seek their welfare at his own expense. (5) God will honor a leader who, like Christ, is willing to die for his people, even when they are rejecting him. Moses did this when he placed his own life on the line for his people

(Exodus 32:32).   (6)   Even when a leader does all the right things, he may still have people rebel, and may still have to suffer with the people after the problem has subsided. Moses, Joshua, and Caleb were not in violation of the Lord's command.   Yet they had to spend forty years in the wilderness in order to lead the people.

David's Management of Conflict with Saul

Much of the conflict seen in groups and congregations stems from personal clashes between leaders.   The following analysis of the relationship between David and Saul will focus on the friction that can arise when two people are positioned for the same leadership role.

Saul had become king of Israel at the insistence of the people.   His purpose was to be an example to the people of the oppressions an earthly king will bring upon a nation. Samuel warned them that a king would draft their sons for military service, tax their incomes, and oppress many of the people into being slaves for the government (I Samuel 9:11-18).   Yet, the people insisted upon a king.

David was to be the beginning of a new type of king. He was to represent the leadership of the Lord.   He was to also introduce the lineage to the Messiah, Who would someday reign upon David's throne over all the earth.

For several years after David was anointed as king, Saul was still on the throne.   The people became enamored with David as a national hero after he slew Goliath.   The

jealousy of Saul grew into an explosive hatred of young
David. The result was that Saul sought several means to end
David's life.

During the time of Saul's pursuits of David, David had
several opportunities to end the conflict by destroying
Saul's life. He also could have inspired the army to turn
on the king. Few would have blamed David for defending
himself by ending Saul's life. However, the integrity of
David would not allow him to lift a hand against the king.
He responded to such opportunity with, "The LORD forbid that
I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's
anointed, . . ." (I Samuel 24:6; 26:11)

The result of the conflict is that Saul eventually
died in battle, along with his son Jonathan, and David was
made king of Israel. David would experience other conflicts
in his reign as some of his sons rebelled against him, yet
the Lord defended his reign, even at the expense of the
lives of some in David's kingdom.

Many times in a church there are conflicts for the top
leadership position. Often, the pastor is not seen by the
church as the "main leader." Pastors come and go, and many
churches have an unstated commitment to a certain layman or
a body of people or deacons that they see as the "real
leader(s)" of the congregation. Conflict arises when the
pastor comes to an impasse with the person or people that
have the tenured leadership over the people. When that

happens, one or the other, or both, will seek to remove the other from power. It is at this point that many pastors simply avoid the conflict by moving to a new pastorate.

In the Bible the pastor is seen as God's choice as the key leader of the church. However, the pastor trying to slay the Sauls within his congregation has often had to face damaging confrontations. Below are observations based upon the elements of the story of David and Saul that may be of use in times of negative engagement between leaders: (1) The anointing of God to a future position does not justify the forced removal of a current leader. (2) Possession of authority gained by tenure or approval of the people does not mean that such authority is biblical or sanctioned by God. (3) Integrity requires loyalty and respect for the positions held by leaders even when those leaders are undeserving of the same. (4) God's leaders can expect that the Lord will be their chief defender, thus allowing them to be less defensive of their own calling or leadership role. (5) Even when every proper step is taken by a leader, an antagonist will not be satisfied.

The Old Testament Prophets and Conflict Management

The calling of the Old Testament prophets was to be God's moral and ethical spokesmen. The Hebrew word for prophet, *nabhi*, means literally a "spokesman" or

"speaker."[29] It was part of the prophet's duty to be
confrontational.

> To their contemporaries they were the moral and ethical
> preachers of spiritual religion, calling the nation to
> obedience in conformity to the Mosaic legislation. They
> fearlessly rebuked vice, idolatry, infidelity,
> oppression, unfaithfulness, iniquity, and social, moral
> and political corruption wherever it was to be found.
> It was their calling to show the people "their
> transgression, and . . . the house of Jacob their sins"
> (Isa.58:1). The last prophet of the Old Testament
> cried: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I
> commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even
> statutes and ordinances" (Mal.4:4).[30]

A prophet would often find himself confronting a king,
a corrupt priesthood or both. Often there would be no
conflict until the prophet issued his warnings. This is
because his wisdom often ran against the human logic of the
day. The role of the prophet was often reform. Great times
of revival would often result from his ministry. At other
times the people would reject his message, punish or
imprison the prophet, and see the nation suffer the loss of
God's blessing. Whatever the result, the role of the
prophet was the same, represent the truth.

In conflict management there is often the temptation
to have "peace at all costs." The mind-set of many
Christians is that people need to be happy with one another,
even if it means we must set aside the principles of God's
Word. The same truth exists today that held true for

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[29]Hobart E. Freeman, <u>An Introduction to the Old
Testament Prophets</u> (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), 37.

[30]Ibid., 49.

Israel. There is a third party to consider. The factions
at odds with each other in the fellowship are not the only
persons that matter. God must be honored in the mediation
process. Above all others, He must not be offended. The
one great lesson we gain from the prophets is that any
solution which violates God's revealed teachings is an
unacceptable settlement.

The Management of Conflict by Jesus Christ

No one ever had to face conflict on the levels Jesus
experienced. From His birth, He was forced to avoid contact
with combatants in order to survive, as His father took Him
to Egypt for protection.

In His ministry, the Lord often challenged the
religious zealots of legalistic Judaism. He was unafraid of
their attempts to discredit Him and able to astound them
with questions they could never begin to handle. These
confrontations indicated that Jesus was not seeking to build
a bridge to peace with these religious leaders. He was
determined to establish truth in contrast to their system of
self-righteousness. Thus, the confrontations were needed,
and ultimately healthy.

The political leaders of the day were often factors in
the ministry of Christ. Some of those leaders were corrupt
and in league with the corrupt religious leaders of the
region. All these men felt threatened by the growing
popularity of the Galilean.

Jesus was unafraid of confrontation. However, He sometimes chose to avoid conflict and stay out of areas where a confrontation might impede or prematurely end His ministry. For example, the death of John the Baptist may have been ". . . among the motives which influenced the removal of Christ and His Apostles from Capernaum. . . . first into the dominions of the Tetrarch Philip, on the eastern side of the Lake, and after that 'into the borders of Tyre and Sidon.'"[31]

Another example of this ability to withdraw at key times is seen later in the ministry of the Lord. During the latter days of Christ's ministry,

> . . . the antagonism of His enemies had grown more bitter, culminating in a renewed attempt to stone Him in the Feast of the Dedication, . . . There was only one place left to His choice for the work of the remaining brief months before He should face the last issue in Jerusalem--the half-heathen province of Perea across the Jordan. . . . He had success here, away from the prejudiced atmosphere of Jerusalem."[32]

This strategic retreat extended the effectiveness of the ministry of Jesus. Additionally, it gave Him control as to when the final, climactic confrontation would take place.

There was much agony in the spirit of Christ in that last Passover week. When the final hour came He was

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[31]Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), 654,655.

[32]J.W. Shephard, The Christ of the Gospels, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), 405.

submissive to the will of His Father. With every Heavenly
defense at His command, and with every right to defend
Himself, Christ chose instead to die at the hands of wicked
humanity. He had picked the cause and the time and place of
the conflict. Then He, by His resurrection, positioned
Himself to settle all the conflicts of all the ages.

A bounty of precepts can be drawn from the example of
the Messiah. (1) It is not "un-Christlike" to avoid some
conflict situations. (2) It is not unchristian to engage in
confrontation of those who oppose biblical truth. (3) When
conflict must be faced, it is best if the circumstances of
the encounter be arranged by a godly leader. Letting
disgruntled, antagonistic people set the agenda will seldom
produce productive ends. (4) Even when a perfect leader
lives a perfect life, conflict remains an unavoidable part
of ministry. (5) The godly leader must be willing to pay a
high personal price, risking rejection by the people he
loves, in order to handle conflict in the manner the Bible
and the Lord may lead him.

Conflict Management in the Early Church

The early church had many of the same conflicts faced
by churches of today. There were major doctrinal disputes,
such as those faced by the Jerusalem Council. There were
personality conflicts, such as the one between Paul and John
Mark. There were moral failures, such as those written
about in I Corinthians.

For solutions to these conflicts the early believers could turn to the Apostles and the indwelling Holy Spirit. Today, we do not enjoy the personal presence of apostles. However, we do have their teachings in the New Testament, which is actually better. Thus, we may face conflict knowing that we are as well armed to engage a situation as any church in the first century.

In the case of the interpersonal problem between Paul and John Mark, the solution was to build separate ministries (Acts 15:39,40). Thus, sometimes a parting of the ways is an acceptable solution. It should be noted that there is evidence that these two reconciled in later years (II Timothy 4:11).

Concerning congregational examples, the Jerusalem Council is the most significant and detailed pattern for managing conflict in the New Testament. The conflict was a doctrinal one, over whether circumcision is needed in order for someone to be a Christian. Men from Judea were teaching this false doctrine, and Paul and Barnabas ". . . had no small dissension and disputation with them, . . ." (Acts 15:2). Paul and Barnabas had been very successful in taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. As they were journeying toward Jerusalem for a ruling on the matter, the momentum of the controversy grew.

Once in Jerusalem, Peter spoke in support of the position of Paul and Barnabas. Next, the missionary team

spoke of the great deeds done by the Lord among the Gentiles. The matter now rested upon the shoulders of James, the half-brother of Jesus and the pastor of the Jerusalem church. He quoted from the ninth chapter of Amos how the Lord would have His name known among the Gentiles. He then said, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:19,20).

We note that the debate at Jerusalem was participated in by lay people, missionaries, and apostles. James, one of these apostles, was also the pastor of what was then the hub church of the Christian movement. His decision, called his "sentence" by the King James Version, was the final word in the stance the church would take. The Greek word for "sentence" is *krino*, and means "to render a judgment." Thus, the translation is true to the text. The response of the people was positive. They joined the apostles in sending Paul and Barnabas and others to Antioch with the good news of the ruling.

There are many ideas concerning church conflict management that can be discerned from this story: (1) It is good that controversy be debated by trained and God-called church leaders. (2) The truth of the Gospel should determine solutions, especially when doctrinal matters are

the focus of debate. (3) The role of the pastor as key leader and doctrinal expert should not be discounted or ignored. The people affirmed the decision of the leaders, and particularly of the pastor. (Because of his role as guardian of the pulpit, a church should only consider calling as pastor a man who is theologically sound and who demonstrates biblical scholarship.) (4) News of the decision should be well communicated to those whom it affects.

In Corinth we find a church which was proud of its ability to tolerate sexual sin among its members. They thought this was a sign of their higher understanding of "grace." Paul rebuked them and considered their pride in such a matter, a shame. He insisted they use church discipline on those living immorally. He confronted them and insisted on repentance before such members be allowed to be welcome in the fellowship again (I Corinthians 5:7,11).

In churches today there is an explosion of such sin. Even among pastors and church leaders there is a growing tolerance of such action, and again, Christians like to think such tolerance is proof of their superior understanding. The current moral compromises will not subside until, like Paul, church members and leaders confront those in such a lifestyle and insist upon repentance. Pastors and other church leaders who are so compromised will need to repent and oftentimes leave their positions in that fellowship, because they can no longer

live up to the qualifications of I Timothy, chapter three. The masking of such sins by church leaders has done more harm to the reputation of the church than perhaps any compromise of this century.

CHAPTER V

ADVANTAGES OF USING CONSULTANT TEAMS

IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SITUATIONS IN THE CHURCH

In observing the early church, it may be noted that in times of extreme duress one or more apostles could be contacted and asked to render a judgment. They saw benefit in appealing to an outside source when conflict had stirred emotions. Apostleship held a much stronger position to effect relief in troubled times than would be held by a consultant team. However, the benefit of objectivity which those in the conflict would be lacking could be brought to bear by such a team.

Objectivity may be the greatest need in periods of extreme stress and emotional pressure. The lack of impartiality will block the skills needed for proper management of a crisis. Wisdom, communication skills, and a calm, even temperament are usually impaired by the high tensions of the struggle.

Gangel and Canine list other benefits of using third parties or mediators:

1. They reduce irrationality.
2. They reduce nonrationality.
3. They help the bargainers explore alternative
        solutions.
4. They provide opportunities for graceful retreat or

face-saving.
5. They facilitate constructive communication between opposing parties.
6. They regulate the costs of conflict.
7. They regulate public intervention or interference.
8. They identify and promote the use of additional resources not initially apparent to the parties.
9. They establish and reinforce norms and rules of procedure.[33]

Congregations that attempt to settle their own heated disputes often leave a trail of broken relationships. These hurts can stunt the growth of a church in both number and spirit. This is because most decisions reached without outside help will either be win\lose or lose\lose. When an outside mediation force carries much of the "blame" for the conclusions, then inner church relations can remain strong. The mediation team leaves town and carries much of the lingering resentments with them.

In addition, the effects of poorly managed strife are often damaging to the witness of a church in its own community. When a church makes the effort to call in a consulting team and lives by the conclusions which are acquired by a mediation process, then the community is impressed. A stronger witness is the benefit of successful mediation. People will be drawn to a church where chaos is turned to cooperation. They will think that such a church may be able to help them place into order their chaotic lives. The people of the community will be more apt to conclude that Jesus really does make a difference.

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[33]Gangel and Canine, 218-220.

Some conflicts are simply above the skills of the

average pastor and congregation. That is not to say that

there is something missing in a church. Holtz advises:

> It is no disgrace to require help to solve today's
> problems. Quite the contrary, it is foolish to fail to
> recognize the facts of life today and the frequent need
> of help in coping with complexity.
> . . . Take, for example, the case of an oil-field
> fire. The oil-field experts know how to fight fires at
> the wellhead with explosives and cap the well, and
> ordinarily they do so almost routinely. But sometimes
> such fires defy conventional methods and rage on despite
> the best efforts to extinguish them. What is the
> oil-field executive to do then?
> There are specialists--let's call them
> consultants--who can be called on to help with these
> fire-fighting efforts. Perhaps the best-known and most
> successful specialist in fighting the difficult-to
> extinguish oil-field fire is "Red" Adair. He has been
> called on to fight oil-field fires in just about every
> oil-producing country in the world. He is the "court of
> last resort" when an oil-field fire defies all
> conventional efforts to extinguish it.
> Why call on Red Adair? Quite simply because
> possibly no one else in the world can put that fire out.
> When to call on him? As soon as it becomes evident that
> in-house efforts to put the fire out are not going to be
> successful or that the fire is of such magnitude as to
> be beyond the abilities of the local resources.[34]

A well trained, ministry experienced consultant team will be

able to extinguish those out-of-control ministry infernos

that rage beyond the capabilities of the average church.

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[34]Herman Holtz, Utilizing Consultants Successfully
(Westport, Connecticut; London, England: Quorum Books,
1985), 6.

CHAPTER VI

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE CONSULTANT TEAM AND THE CHURCH

WHICH ARE REQUIRED IF SATISFACTORY RESULTS

ARE TO BE OBTAINED

When there is conflict, the best means to begin
working to a solution is to retreat to common ground. For a
consultant team to be effective, common ground must be
agreed to by the church and the consultant group. Those
presuppositions established by the consultantship will
therefore limit their willingness to enter as a third party
to those fellowships which can not agree to and share those
presuppositions. The following study sets forth the
theological and ecclesiastical points which must be agreed
upon before a mediation process can begin. Included in the
study are some scriptural foundations for the stated
positions.

Theological Considerations

This paper is titled as a consultant ministry to
evangelical churches. The reason for such a limit is that
evangelical churches usually have agreed on certain
doctrinal issues. The primary point of agreement is that
the Bible is the inerrant, plenary, and verbally inspired
Word of God. The primary source-book for this consultant

ministry is the Bible. If that cannot be agreed upon, then there is no basis for conflict management and no common ground from which the intervention team may operate.

Based upon this first, and most important consideration are several other assumptions: (1) That the Bible takes precedence over any rulings of man. (2) That Christ is the divine Savior of all who believe. (3) That there is no salvation apart from Him. (4) That although He was sinless, He died a substitutionary death on the cross, and that He rose physically from the dead as the Scriptures state. (5) That salvation comes to an individual when they repent of their sin, turn to Christ by faith, and entrust their life to Him as Lord and Savior. (6) That the Holy Spirit indwells every believer. (7) That the church is the body and bride of Christ in the earth, placed here to carry out His purposes. (8) That Jesus is coming again to establish His rule over all mankind.

If part of the congregation will concur with these theological considerations, but another part will not concur, then participation will be determined as follows: If the articles of faith of the church are in line with the conservative evangelical tradition, and if the pastoral leadership of the church agree with that position, then the consultation process can move forward.

Ecclesiastical Considerations

Ecclesiastical matters are not distinct from the theological prerequisites. However, their consideration is of such length and importance as to warrant their treatment in a separate section.

The first consideration in this area is that of autonomy. Churches that have a hierarchial relationship to a denominational structure will not be the type of churches for which this consultant ministry is targeted. If a church is self determinative, then correcting problems in the fellowship will restore harmony. However, if the denomination or an outside board must be considered at every step, then the process becomes so cumbersome as to be ineffective.

Secondly is the matter of church polity. There are three forms of church government. Episcopacy would be led by a principle officer, known as bishop. "He is the supreme officer, but is expected not to govern without taking note of the special functions of the other orders"[35] Another form is Presbyterianism. "This system emphasizes the importance of elders, or presbyters."[36] The local church elects its elders who governs its affairs. The pastor is the "teaching elder." "In all courts parity between

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[35]Baker's Dictionary of Theology, s.v. "Episcopacy, Episcopal." by Leon Morris.

[36]Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, s.v. "Church Government." by Leon Morris.

teaching and ruling elders is important."[37]
Congregationalism is the third common form of church
government. ". . . The chief scriptural buttresses of this
position are the facts that Christ is the head of His church
(Col. 1:18,etc.), and that there is a priesthood of all
believers (I Pe. 2:9)."[38] In this system the congregation
governs itself and delegates authority as it sees fit.

The congregational churches, in which Baptists are
included, shall be the focus of this ministry. Usually,
these churches use voting to make decisions. The pastor,
and all other officers of the church, are subject to the
congregation. There have been times in history when
congregational churches held the position of pastor in
higher regard than is seen in many quarters today. An
example of this can be seen by comparing the Baptist
confessions of faith concerning the church included as an
appendix of this paper. Many conflicts in congregational
churches today may be averted by pastors recognizing their
accountability to the church body, and by church members
respecting the office of the pastor.

What matters most is that the congregation see itself
as a Theocracy, that is, God ruled. The matters of polity
then become a process used to discover the will of God.
Such a view will often be the stated government of a church,

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[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid.

but in reality a fellowship can devolve into a power struggle where people demand their "rights" and form coalitions to get "their way." For effectiveness to be restored, the stated polity of a church must acknowledge its decision-making process as a tool for finding the mind of Christ. Thus, the consultant team can use that established polity as a constant reminder to those in conflict that our duty is to vacate personal desires in order to find the mind of Christ.

Thirdly is the belief by the assembly that people are accountable for their actions to both the Lord and the church. This is what was formerly known as church discipline. "Church discipline, properly defined, refers to the faithful application of biblical principles and procedures within a local congregation to preserve doctrinal purity, holiness of life, and useful efficiency among its membership."[39] Following are the main teachings of some of the key passages concerning the processes for church discipline:

> *Matthew 18:15-17.* Attempt to settle differences personally first. If needed make a second attempt with one or two brothers in attendance with you. If these steps fail then take the matter to the church. If he rejects the word of the church then he should be considered as an unregenerate man.
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> *I Corinthians 5:1-11.* No fellowship is to be shared with someone who claims to be a brother but is "a

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[39]George B. Davis, "Whatever Happened to Church Discipline?" <u>Criswell Theological Review</u> 1, no. 2 (Spring 1987): 345.

fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner." Those who do not repent of such are to be given over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

*Romans 16:17,*18. Those who cause divisions and offenses are to be "marked." That is, they are to be announced to the congregation that other believers will know to avoid them.

II Thessalonians 3:6,14,15. Believers are to withdraw from other believers who walk disorderly and in contradiction with the teachings of the apostles. Such are to be "noted," that is, tell others about him. Christians are to have no fellowship with such a person, yet, they are not to see him as an enemy, but to admonish him as a brother.

Many churches today which are in conflict are in neglect of the study and application of these and other similar Scriptures. Being in neglect of these would not keep the consultant team from agreeing to help that congregation. However, a congregation would have to agree that such teachings are still valid for application in today's local churches.

The final area of importance in regard to ecclesiology is the need for agreement on the role of biblical leadership. A by-product of the calling for "rights" in America today has been the tendency for churches to be more demanding of their leadership. As though this were not enough, the lack of trust and respect for authority in general, has led to suspicions and revolts of church leadership, even when there is no evidence that warrants such mutiny. To be effective in helping a church through conflict, a consultant team must know that the majority of

people in the congregation, and much of the key lay-leadership are willing to see the roles of pastor, associate pastors, and deacons as the New Testament defines them. This does not mean that the church must understand those roles at the time of the conflict. It does mean that they are willing to modify their understanding of those positions if they are shown that their perception is out of line with the Bible.

The pastor, or senior pastor, is the position most important to be agreed upon. Oftentimes conflicts arise because people are trying to redefine the pastor's role for him, or trying to assume the role of director of the pastor, or are even trying to take the authority that the pastor is given by the Lord as their own. Much of this comes because of a lack of agreement as to role definitions. Gangel and Canine point out how this relates to conflict:

> 1. If we are in conflict, the closer my role definitions and your role definitions agree, the greater the possibility for effective management of the conflict.
> 2. The more congruent my actual behavior and the mutually defined roles, the greater likelihood of beneficial management of the conflict.
> 3. The older we become, the closer our actual behavior is expected to match our role-defined behavior.[40]

The role best agreed upon is that one stated in Scripture. "It is now generally agreed that the fluid terms of 'elder' (*presbuteros*), 'bishop' (*episcopos*), and 'pastor'

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[40]Gangel and Canine, 193.

(*poimen*) all refer to a similar role in the church."[41] In

fact, Acts 20 records the use of all three of these terms to

refer to the Ephesian elders (though the word for pastor is

in a verbal form and is translated "to feed"). A similar

use of the terms is repeated in I Peter 5:1,2.

Concerning the Acts passage, a note in the Criswell

Study Bible comments:

> Here the believers from Ephesus are called "the
> elders" (*presbuteroi*, Gk.). In v. 28 Paul calls them
> "overseers" (*episkopoi*, Gk.). Further, Paul exhorted
> these church leaders to "feed the church of God." The
> verb "feed" is derived from the Greek word usually
> translated "pastor." These three terms accordingly do
> not indicate levels of authority but rather diversity of
> function. The same man or men did, and usually do, hold
> all three responsibilities and offices at the same
> time.[42]

Thus, the titles of pastoral leadership indicate he has

multiple responsibilities: overseeing, shepherding, and

being a man of integrity.

Having defined the role of the pastor, it is now to be

demonstrated how the church should relate to this role.

Ogden offers an accurate analysis:

> To the Thessalonians Paul writes, "We beseech you,
> brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are
> over you (*proistamenos*) in the Lord and admonish you,
> and to esteem them very highly in love because of their
> work" (I Thess. 5:12-13). Paul tells Timothy that those
> who "rule well (*proestotes*) are worthy of double honor,
> especially those who labor in preaching and teaching" (I
> Tim. 5:17). This is the same word used to describe a

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[41]Greg Ogden, <u>The New Reformation: Returning the
Ministry to the People of God</u> (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 149.

[42]<u>The Criswell Study Bible</u>, note at Acts 20:17, 1979.

bishop who must rule (*prostenai*) or manage his own household as a prerequisite for being able to care for the church of God (I Tim. 3:5).

It is noteworthy that this verb, which is descriptive of what leaders do, is considered by Paul to be a *charisma* of the Spirit (Rom. 12:8). The Arndt-Gingrich lexicon summarizes the intent of this word for leadership in two parts: (1) "be at the head of, rule, direct"; and (2) as if to capture the manner in which the leadership is to be exercised, "be concerned about, care for, give aid."

The second verb for leadership, *hegeomai*, is found in Hebrews 13:7,17,25. This word creates a similar picture of the role of leadership and the expected response from the body as *proistemi*. "Remember your leaders (literally, the "ones leading you," *hegoumenon*), those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life and imitate their faith"(v.7). Stressing the proper response to leadership, the author of Hebrews writes, "Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you" (v.17).[43]

Concerning biblical leadership we observe that the pastor holds a great deal of authority, and that he is accountable to God and to the congregation, as a body, for his ministry. His accountability to the congregation is reflected in that they can call him, dismiss him, and the pastor should give reports and recommendations to the fellowship. The members of his flock are to treat him with respect and follow him as is indicated in Scripture (Hebrews 13:7,17,24). This is certainly a stronger position of pastoral authority than is evident in most churches today. Pastors are not to be "lords over God's heritage" (I Peter 5:3). Therefore, to be an effective leader, church members

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[43]Ogden, 149,150.

must willingly follow him. When a pastor has to fight for his authority, he appears to be a dictator. As in marriage, submission must be voluntary, it cannot be forced. However, church members need to know that when they fight against God's man, they are violating Scripture and damaging the fellowship.

As the consultant team explores the possibility of helping a congregation, this position on the role of the pastor will be shared. If key people in the church are offended by this position, then the process will be immediately halted.

CHAPTER VII

FRAMEWORK OF THE CONSULTANT MINISTRY

This chapter contains the core material relevant to this consultant ministry. There is a reasoned order to this framework. The major developmental steps appear in the order in which they need to be generated and implemented. This framework is not intended to be static, but to serve as a logical beginning. Implementation will reveal many changes and needed additions. As much as possible, contingencies are anticipated and provided for in this initial structure.

Building the Consultant Team

Any consultant ministry will be only as good as its consultants. A heavy emphasis will be placed on securing the best people possible to serve as consultants. Nothing can take the place of the experience, character, and training that has come from a lifetime of faithful service to the Lord's church. Once secured, these teams must have adequate training to insure their effectiveness in this consultant format and to coordinate them as to the roles each will play on any particular team. The number of teams formed will only be limited by the number of good, qualified

people willing to serve and the demand that comes from the churches.

Types of Personnel Needed

The ideal conflict management team would be hard to define. Every situation is different. The model team for one predicament may not be the best squad for a dilemma that included a different mix of circumstances. Consultants should be assigned to churches according to the need of a particular congregation as compared with the giftedness, temperament, training, and negotiating style of a particular team member.

The main essentials of a good consultant are matters of character such as the following:

Christian Maturity: Qualified consultants must have demonstrated a lifestyle of service to the Lord and faithfulness to their local church.

Spirit-controlled life: Anyone who is to minister to Christians must be operating with spiritual victory in their own life. They must be able to operate beyond human reason. That is, they are humbly walking in submission to the Lord's leadership, seeking His will in all things, consistent in prayer and private devotions.

Wisdom: To lead people through conflict requires the ability to discern what is the proper choice in the midst of emotion and confusion.

Leadership: Once proper direction is determined, people must be led to choose that course. Consultants must have that rare balance of not dominating people, or being dominated by them, as they are guiding them to proper action.

Each team should be composed of at least one layman and one pastor, who may be a former pastor. This will

assure balance and representation for almost any situation. Some situations would be well suited to have at least one woman on the team. Therefore, a good number of ladies should be trained and ready to serve as consultants. Since much of the work done in mediation will require counseling skills, a trained counselor would be an important part of an effective team. When available, good Christian counselors would be placed on ministry teams.

Consultants who live in different parts of the country could be trained. This would increase the likelihood that a given church could have people come to help them who are from their general area. This would help to bridge any cultural gaps and would keep costs down as well.

Process for Choosing the Team Members

Consideration of worthy partners in this ministry will include evaluation of experience, talents, spiritual gifts, temperaments, and personality. A team must be able to work well together, as well as work effectively with churches. Abilities should be complimentary but not redundant. Three of the same type of people will only weaken the team or limit its range of effectiveness.

Recruitment will be the initial means for finding possible consultants. Respected leaders will be asked for names of people who would do well in this type of ministry. Those names given will be contacted and asked to consider the ministry. If interested, information will be sent to

familiarize the prospect with all that is involved in such a commitment. They will then be asked to prayerfully consider whether or not a commitment to a consultant ministry is one they believe the Lord would have them to make.

When a recruit has studied the materials relevant to this ministry and is open to pursuing the matter further, then a formal interview will be conducted. The interview is to be held by one of the main directors of the ministry. Prior to the interview, references will be requested and checked so that any questions about the persons past can be answered before they are formally tied to the program. One or more of the training instruments may be requested to be completed by the director prior to the interview. Upon completion of the interview, if the director conducting the interview is satisfied the person would be effective as part of the organization, then the individual is offered that opportunity.

Training the Consultant Team

Once recruited, the future consultant is to be prepared. Preparation will begin with materials to be learned at home. Also, at the beginning of this training process the conscript will complete a series of tests to determine giftedness, talents, temperament, and such. The training will then progress to a training conference or retreat where newcomers to the ministry will be briefed on basics relevant to ministry effectiveness and continuity.

Material to be Studied Independently

The first at-home work to be completed is a series of tests that will aid program leaders in understanding the future consultants. These instruments are meant to offer the personal knowledge of each individual needed to build effective teams. Without such tools the merging of people into teams would take months of trial and error experimentation. Such guesswork is unacceptable when churches are at stake. The testing implements to be used are here listed and described:

> *Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis:* This tool will give indications in nine temperament areas. "The T-JTA is used to measure a number of important and comparatively independent common personality variables or attitudes and behavioral tendencies which influence personal, social, marital, parental, family, scholastic, and vocational adjustment. It is designed to aid the counselor in ascertaining and evaluating the significance and role of these traits in the overall problem or circumstance."[44] Of particular help to this ministry is the analysis of objective versus subjective reasoning.
>
> *Basden-Johnson Spiritual Gift Analysis:* This evaluation rates giftedness in eighteen areas. Of special consideration will be how someone scores in wisdom, administration, leadership, discernment, prophecy, exhortation, mercy, shepherding, and teaching.
>
> *L.E.A.D. Personality Inventory:* How a person leads or follows will determine how they would best relate within the team. This evaluation will aid in properly balancing the leadership styles within the team. The scoring areas are Leader, Expressor, Analyst, and Dependable. The inventory is published by Interlink Consultants, Ltd.

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[44]Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis Manual, 1984 Revision. (Los Angeles, California: Psychological Publications, Inc., 1984), 1.

Personal Profile System (D.i.S.C): This tool is particularly helpful in grouping consultants into a teams. "The goal of this practical approach is to help you create the environment which will ensure you greater success. At the same time, you gain an appreciation for the different motivational environments required by those with different work behavioral styles."[45]

Other testing tools may be added to or substituted for the above where their use would be more practical.

The at-home studies will include a series of books and tapes. Books to be read will include Church Fights: Managing Conflict in the Local Church, by Leas and Kittlaus; Be a People Person, by Maxwell; and Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict, by Haugk. Additionally, parts of this paper will be required reading. The audio tape series, How to Handle Conflict, Criticism, and Difficult People in the Church, by Dr. Walt Lacy, will also be included in the training materials. A video series Church Leaders Under Fire, by Priority One Ministries, has great value and will be viewed as part of the at-home study program. Lastly, a consultant's manual will be sent to the trainee for study. Being familiar with all of this material will reduce the amount of time needed in formal training. Two months will be allowed for these materials to be completed.

Personal Training from Experienced Consultants

The home studies program will be followed by a three--

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[45]Personal Profile System, (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Carlson Learning Company, 1993), 2.

day training retreat. This intensive study program will assure the program leaders that every consultant knows the basics concerning conflict, conflict management, and the consultant group's particular strategies. These retreats will accommodate groups of from three to fifteen. Groups larger than this would be too difficult to facilitate.

The training conference would begin with personal interviews with each student. These interviews will focus on the results of the instruments completed concerning giftedness, talents, temperament, leadership style, and personality. From the interview and the scores of the tests, a personal profile on each person will be formed. This profile will be useful in certain sessions of the seminar where team building and conflict situations are discussed and evaluated.

The next phase of training will be to walk the seminar students through a general education of the nature of conflict and conflict management. Definitions are established and principles reviewed that will form a common vocabulary, thereby facilitating all future team efforts.

Next, the team members are taught principles of engagement, diagnostic techniques, strategy, and situation management. Temporary teams will be formed and assigned conflict situations. They will then work through the methodologies they have learned to formulate a plan of action for that predicament. In the latter half of the

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retreat, much time will be spent in such "hands on" kinds of activity.

The last few hours of the seminar will be spent in building possible team combinations for anticipated future deployment into crisis circumstances. There will be occasions when teams must be composed from persons who did not go through training together. However, whenever possible consultants who are familiar with each other will be brought together. The familiarity of team members would make it easier for them to work in anticipation of one another's actions.

For the most part, this training will be contained in the materials produced in the consultant's manual. However, anytime new and better training material becomes available, especially on a video format, then that will be integrated into the training process. If video taped, debriefing sessions following consultation at churches could prove to be valuable training material. Additionally, parts of the basic training sections of the conference may be placed on video, for review of consultants wishing to keep their skills sharpened.

Statement of Prerequisites

A clear understanding must be established between consultants and the church. To assure a clear understanding is in place, a statement of prerequisites will be sent to the church with the first contact that is made. While a

promotional brochure may not contain this statement, the first piece of material to be given to a church, after a promotional brochure, will be this declaration. If contact is made by a pastor or church in need, the prerequisites will be stated, faxed, or some way communicated before an agreement for intervention is established. This document will be the basis upon which an agreement with the church may be established.

In formulating a list of common client-consultant problems Charles Ford states, "Often a consultant will accept an assignment and not indicate clearly to the client what form his help will take."[46] Establishing a collective base upon which to build the conflict management relationship is critical to the success of intervention.

> The cooperation between you and your consultant must be predicated upon a mutuality of understanding as well as of confidence. In fact, it is even more than that; it is actually a mutuality of trust that is necessary between the two of you, for a truly effective and fruitful working relationship.[47]

The prerequisite statement would read as follows:

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[46]Charles H. Ford, "Developing a Successful Client-Consultant Relationship," in The Client-Consultant Handbook ed. Chip R. Bell and Leonard Nadler (Houston, Texas: Gulf Publishing Co., 1979), 11.

[47]Holtz, 60.

Statement of Prerequisites for
a Successful Consultant/Church
Relationship

To assure churches that our consultant ministry
would prove helpful to them, we have formulated
the following statement of presuppositions.
These are to act as the common ground for the
ministry process that will be shared. If the
church or its key leaders cannot agree on this
statement, then a different consultantship
should be sought out. These prerequisites are
theological and ecclesiastical in nature.

* The Bible is the Word of God. It is God--
breathed and therefore retains the character of
the One Who gave it. The Bible is inerrant and
verbally inspired in all of its parts. The
Bible is to be the guidebook for all matters of
faith and practice both for the church and for
individual Christians.

* Jesus Christ is the Son of God, sent to
reveal the Father and to obey Him by providing
redemption for all who will believe. He was
born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a
substitutionary death on the cross, rose
physically from the dead, and appeared to His
disciples after His resurrection. He is the
head of the church. He commissioned her and
leads her through the ministry of the Holy
Spirit, Who is the presence of Christ in the
believer and in the church. Jesus will come
again, as He promised, and will establish His

kingdom in the earth.

* Theologically, this ministry is led by
consultants who are of the conservative
evangelical tradition.

* The local church which is to be helped by
this ministry must be self-determinative, at
least in so far as the conflict and its
solution are concerned. (This ministry is not
designed to work with the hierarchial systems
some denominations employ.)

* Members of a church are to see it as governed
by Christ. The "rights" of members must be of
second concern. The Lord is the person to be
considered, and His truth honored, in all
matters of conflict management.

* Members of a local New Testament Church are
accountable to the Lord, the church body, and
each other.

* Church leadership is defined by Scripture.
Such leaders are to be seen as gifts from the
Lord (Eph. 4), and are to be respected for
their calling and ministry's sake. The pastor
is appointed by God, recognized as God's man by
the church, and upheld by the constant prayers
of the saints. Pastors are to take the
oversight (leadership) of the church but are
not to lord their authority over their flock (I
Pet. 5:3).

The driving force of our consultant ministry is

the desire to help churches manage conflict in
such a manner as to enrich the fellowship of
the body, while maintaining or strengthening
its witness in the community. If we can be of
service to you, please contact us for more
information.

Sometimes there are factions in the church which would
adhere to the above statement while others would resist it.
In such a case, a judgment call will be made as to whether
or not the consultant ministry will proceed in assisting
that fellowship. In most instances, if the articles of
faith of the congregation and the pastor are in affirmation
of the document, then the intervention process may proceed.

There is a risk of not retaining as many consultant
opportunities by stating these prerequisites at the
beginning of a relationship. However, the success rate will
be much higher when the church and the consultants
understand and agree to the exigencies by which the
intervention process will function.

The Agreement with the Church

An agreement, in writing, should be reached with the
church as to the nature of the relationship with the
consultant group. The church should vote to approve the
agreement after an explanation is given them. Meetings or
telephone conversations with the pastor and/or key leaders
will help to define what is to be expected of the

relationship.

> There are two aspects to the contract: One is the formal decision as to how much time will be devoted to consultation, what services will be performed, and what form and amount of payment will be used; the other aspect concerns the actual "psychological contract"-what the client basically expects to gain from the relationship. . . .[48]

Because circumstances will seldom be exactly the same in church situations, agreements cannot be precisely the same. Therefore, some of the content of the agreement form will be predictable. The sections that must be specifically tailored for each church will be written into the agreement when interviews have established the needed content.

The client and the consultant have certain expectations. The client should be able to expect:

> * *Objectivity*. You have a right to expect the consultant to be objective in both the analysis of your problems and synthesis of recommended solutions. That means that the consultant should approach those problems with an open mind and not be unduly influenced by patent solutions that may have worked (and may not have worked) in prior applications.

> * *Intelligent Effort*. This may seem hardly worth saying, but experience proves dismayingly often that even the most highly educated and most experienced specialists do not always display what we call intelligence, especially not that brand known as common sense.

> * *Fresh Ideas and Creative Imagination*. . . . You should expect to get new and fresh ideas that are formulated specifically for your own individual needs. You should expect the consultant to be imaginative, innovative, creative, and resourceful as well as knowledgeable in general.

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[48]Edgar H. Schein, <u>Process Consultation: Its Role in Organization Development</u> (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969), 84.

* *Openness*. You have the right to ask questions freely
of the consultant, and you have a right to expect the
consultant to be frank and communicative, answering
questions easily and completely and not withholding
anything.

* *Good Judgment*. . . . You must, in many cases, entrust
the consultant with virtually a blank check in certain
respects and are therefore forced to depend on the
consultants good judgment. You therefore have a right
to expect the consultant to *think* before every action,
but especially before every action which entails an
obvious risk of some kind.

* *A Fix on Total Costs*. Rarely can anyone, even a
consultant, do more than estimate the total cost of a
custom project, and it would be unfair to expect more
than that. On the other hand, the consultant represents
himself or herself as an expert in a particular field
and so should be able to make a reasonably accurate
estimate of the total cost of the task to be performed
and not expect to be issued a blank check.

* *Integrity*. It is essential that a consultant respect
your confidentiality and not permit himself or herself
to get into a position of conflicting interests. You
have a right to expect that the consultant will respect
your confidence and never reveal confidential or
proprietary information or use that information in any
way that is adverse to your interests.[49]

In addition to these should be added the following:

* *Biblically Based*. The client (church) should expect a
good knowledge of the Word of God to be held by every
consultant who attempts to minister in their fellowship.
Also, the church is right to expect the conclusions and
recommendations to be biblically consistent.

* *Prayerfulness*. The church should expect consultants
to have a consistent Christian walk that includes a
strong prayer life. Additionally, consultant teams
should pray together, and where appropriate, pray with
people in the church.

The second part of the agreement will focus on what

should be expected of the client (church) by the consultant

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[49]Holtz, 60-62.

team. Edgar Schein of the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology addresses this:

> On my side, I have to be as clear as I can be in what I expect of the organization. . . . For example, I expect a willingness to diagnose and explore problem issues; I expect a willingness to take some time to find out what is going on rather than rushing in hastily; I expect to be supported in my suggestions as to how to gather data; I expect organization members to be committed to the project, and not to be dragging their feet or persisting in a veiled resistance.[50]

Building upon the ideas of this statement, the basic parts

of the agreement can be constructed. The statement

addresses the expectations the consultants should have of

the church.

> * *Openness*. The consultants should be able to expect that the people in conflict will reveal enough of what is happening as to make the consultant's job possible.
>
> * *Expediency*. The nature of the crisis and the need of consultants to make best use of their time should motivate all concerned to stand ready to assist them in the consultation process. In some cases this will mean schedule changes, late night meetings, or even time missed on the job. If the matter is worth bringing in a team from out of town, it is worth making sacrifices to accommodate.
>
> * *Commitment*. This commitment is to the process. The church should give proper respect and weighty consideration to the suggestions and conclusions the consultants may have to offer. Commitment to enter mediation and negotiation situations with a healthy, open attitude is also needed.
>
> * *Integrity*. The church members should operate with the same levels of integrity as is expected of the consultants. The church as an organization is expected to hold to agreements, as are the consultants.
>
> * *A Biblical Base*. Expectations are that church leaders

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[50]Schein, 85.

will not allow the Bible to be displaced by human reason. Processes for conflict management that are biblically congruent are expected to be respected by the congregation.

* *Prayerfulness*. Often conflict will put people to talking to others so much and so often that prayer time will be reduced. The church is expected to emphasize personal, family, small group, and church-wide prayer.

The basic expectations of both client and consultants listed above, will compose the part of the agreement that will remain the same with each church. Matters that will be negotiated with each church are:

* *Duration*. The amount of time needed to work through the problem should be estimated, and when possible, a date when engagement begins should be set.

* *Levels of Involvement*. To be explored with leadership are the stages of conflict management which may possibly need to be used. In almost every situation, advocacy, mediation, and negotiation will be employed. Whenever these fail to bring the desired results, arbitration may be needed. The need for arbitration can be anticipated and placed into the agreement at the outset as a fallback contingency. However, in most instances arbitration will be chosen as a separate agreement when other methods are proving unfruitful. Whenever the choice of arbitration is made it must then be established as to what will be the level of arbitration: non-binding or binding.

* *Fiscal Considerations*. The expenses of the team will be estimated and that estimate will be given to the church. The church will be expected to provide all travel and transportation expenses. The amount charged for the consultation itself will need to be established. A pro-rated system will be established so that smaller churches will be able to afford this ministry. Terms for time of payment will also be placed into the agreement.

Part of the agreement will be a statement that the key leaders of the church have read and agreed to the statement of prerequisites. The pastor and key leaders, along with a

leader in the consultant firm, will sign copies of the
agreement. Written into the agreement will be a statement
that it will not be binding in secular courts. Christian
agreements should stand on their own.

Preliminary Investigation

Basically, the preliminary investigation is different
from the secondary investigation in that it is the work that
can be done before the consultant team actually arrives at
the church site.

> A number of steps can be taken in the office
> before beginning work at the client premises. Probably
> the most important of these is to gain a thorough
> understanding of the client and the industry of which he
> is a part and background information on the principle
> people to be dealt with.[51]

Facts gathered in the agreement stage are now
enhanced. Telephone conversations with key people will give
hints as to the structure and strategy the team will use.
It is best if this preliminary analysis is done by the
member of the team who is to remain neutral. In some
instances the key people in a conflict can be sent
investigative tools such as a temperament analysis or
leadership evaluation exam. Also, survey instruments can be
deployed at this early stage. Surveys could include key
leaders or even be expanded to every member of the church.

Copies of recent newsletters, minutes from business or

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[51]Alfred Hunt, The Management Consultant (New York:
Ronald Press, 1977), 84.

committee meetings, a church history, recent church calendars, staff job descriptions, deacon body job descriptions, committee job descriptions, attendance reports, staff and key leader biographies or resumes, organizational charts, statistics on the community, financial reports, a breakdown of the membership and attendance by age group, and other such readily available material should be sent as soon as possible to the investigative leader. When expediency is essential, such materials can be sent by computer modem, fax machine, or overnight delivery. Such data will provide a frame upon which the team can mount the canvas of an understanding of the church. Upon this canvas the outline for managing that church's particular conflict will be sketched.

At some point before the first on-site meeting the team will need to meet and be briefed ". . . on the details of the engagement, how it is to be carried out, their role in it, and general background on the industry and company (church) and its key people."[52] At this briefing decisions are made as to how to proceed and assignments are made to the two consultants serving as advocates. In their separate roles, one advocate is assigned to each of the two main factions and the third party remains in a neutral posture. Assignments are made according to the best matches possible between the skills of the consultants and the needs of the

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[52]Hunt, 85.

factions which are to be mediated.

A final pre-intervention assessment of the conflict will determine whether or not the church is truly ready for solutions.

> Assessment provides information so the formal or informal consultant can decide whether to reduce conflict if there is too much or to promote conflict if there is too little. Detailed information provides a data base about the nature of the conflict and the possible ways one might intervene to change the system. The following generic issues characterize this phase.
>
> 1.   *Tractability*. Does the conflict offer some hope of success, given the intervener's time, energy, skill, and the funds available?
>
> 2.   *Divisibility*. Can one intervene in only one issue or segment that might be the most manageable?
>
> 3.   *Timing*. Is it too early, are the parties hurting enough to welcome intervention? Or is it too late, has it gone too far?
>
> 4.   *Intervention Options*. What possible approaches could be used for this particular situation?[53]

The agreement with the church may need to be flexible enough so that formal intervention will take place at the most opportune time. This preliminary investigation is the best point from which to assess this and is the last opportunity the team will have to delay or defer its entrance.

Secondary Investigation

There are two basic processes in the investigation process: fact gathering, and interviews. Of the two, the

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[53]Joyce Hocker and William Wilmot, Interpersonal Conflict) Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1985), 190.

interviews are the most important. Other data will be largely ". . . used to supplement, augment, and verify the data collected in the interviews."[54] As a Certified Public Accountant, Hunt makes the following observations concerning the investigative work of the consultant:

> Interviewing . . . is a skilled technique, which, if properly used can be most helpful in obtaining pertinent information and all the nuances regarding it, from people who are best qualified to provide it.
> Interviews are used to determine how things are done and what is wrong with the way things are being done, and to obtain suggestions for improvement.
> A task that is almost as difficult as conducting a skillful interview is that of retaining the data obtained in the interview.
> . . . (such information) must be carefully reviewed and classified so that it will be available to the consultant when he sits down and analyzes all the information he has gathered so that he can begin structuring his recommendations prior to writing the report or developing the system.
> Similarly, statistical data that have been collected must be carefully analyzed to be sure that they are pertinent to the subject and that their impact is completely understood by the consultant.
> An important step to be kept in mind during the fact-finding function is the interchange of data between the members of the consulting team. . . . Because information found by one consultant in one area can significantly affect both fact-finding in other areas and conclusions in general. Failure to exchange information can often lead to conclusions that are based upon incomplete data.
> In a large engagement, it is usually necessary to have regular meetings of the engagement team wherein each member summarizes for the team leader and other members of the team: what he has found, what conclusions he has drawn from his findings, and what recommendations he has in mind.[55]

Using these ideas as the outline for understanding the

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[54]Hunt, 87,88.

[55]Hunt, 88-91.

investigative process, attention is now focused upon the details of interviewing and fact gathering.

Interviews

Preliminary investigation should have revealed the main characters in the conflict. Interviews should now be scheduled with them. The advocate consultant for each main faction will interview those people whom they are to represent. Interviews may be either with a whole group or with individuals. Interviews have a two-fold purpose, to gather the needed facts from the viewpoint of the key players, and to establish a relationship of trust and confidence between the consultant and the people he will work with in conflict administration.

> . . . in the interview itself, my own method of asking questions and the content of what I ask will project a certain image of me. If I want to establish a collaborative, helping relationship with the person being interviewed, I must behave in a manner congruent with such a relationship. . . . My questions have to be understandable, relevant, meaningful, and open. The respondent should be able to interpret his own answers. There should be no trick questions, hidden meanings, obscure interpretations, or the like.[56]

Ground rules for the interview should be stated at the beginning. Interviews should begin by assuring the interviewee that anything said during the interview will be confidential with regard to the source but not as to the content. If the person's name is ever to be used, the

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[56]Schein, 100.

interviewer will first ask permission of that person. People should be told that there are some set questions that will be asked as part of the interview, but that there is freedom on both parts to journey into unanticipated areas.

When time is of the essence, due consideration should be given to the value of small group interviews. Of this Leas and Kittlaus state, "Small-group discussion is our preferred way of gathering data in a local church. It's fast, it's immediate, the data are immediately verifiable, and one can work at several levels of conflict at once."[57] This method also has the benefits of getting the conflict out for all to see, allowing feelings, opinions, and ideas to be fully aired, and it is useful to those who may be shy and intimidated by the private interviews.

Having group meetings led by the consultant can also make possible some constructive group activities. Note one such suggestion. "Have the group draw a time line of the significant events that have gotten the conflict to where it is now."[58] Someone in the group could actually do the drawing on a marker board. Dates are placed on the chart with one line descriptions next to them stating the major events of the conflict. Placing the plan on a time line, or stating it in some similar fashion, can be the foundation for moving those in the conflict toward a plan of resolution

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[57]Leas and Kittlaus, 98.

[58]Leas and Kittlaus, 100.

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or management.

Fact Gathering

Any means of acquiring information, other than by interviews, is classified under this heading. Generally these include direct observation, acquisition of existing data, and surveys or questionnaires. Much of the information that is in existing sources will have been acquired during the preliminary investigation. The data gleaned from direct observation and surveys waits for the arrival of the consultant team.

Direct observation is a simple enough method of inquiry. While much information could be given through other means, there is one main reason that direct observation is productive--the consultant brings objectivity into the process. One of the main reasons a consultant is successful in almost any field is that he is not blinded by the familiarity, emotions, and preset attitudes that belong to those who have built their life around the organization.

> The process requires an observer to witness the church at work (or in conflict) and to make note of the behavior that he sees. He then feeds back the observations he has of what people are doing that, in his opinion, tends to continue the conflict and to obstruct the resolution of the conflict in a healthful and productive way. We have been careful to use the words "behavior" and the phrase "what people are doing." It is almost never helpful to describe why people are behaving as they are, nor is it helpful to try to analyze what their behavior means.[59]

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[59]Leas and Kittlaus, 105.

There are several ways of constructing surveys.
Surveys can contain open-ended questions which are basically
sentence-completion statements. They can also contain
scaled response statements where the instrument asks people
to rate a statement on a scale of one to ten or one to
seven. Lastly, the survey may contain multiple choice
statements or questions. A survey may even contain all of
these forms.

There is data and understanding that comes from a
survey that can be skewed when taken from other sources.
Those in the heat of the conflict tend to believe that
everyone in the congregation is as consumed by the matter as
are they. A survey of the entire church will bring
perspective to the mediation process. Other benefits of
surveys are:

> The answers are easy to interpret.
> The results are quantifiable.
> It is a very fast method for gathering data from large
> groups.
> There is wide acceptance of the method.
> Anonymity may bring to light previously undisclosed
> sentiment.[60]

As we have seen, there are many sources of knowledge
at the disposal of the consultant team. Key to much of
their success will be how quickly this information can be
assembled and how well it can then be evaluated.

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[60]Leas and Kittlaus, 94.

Assessment of the Conflict

The process of assessment chosen by this consultant ministry is double-sided. That is, there are two conflict assessments that take place simultaneously. The consultant team will be assessing the predicament privately, using their own skills and taking advantage of their objectivity. However, the church will also enter a time of conflict assessment. Many of the principles used in process consultation will be part of the methodology used by the consultants.

In process consultation, the consultant team will help the church leadership guide the church in assessing its own conflict. The consultants will still be main figures, but they will not be seen as coming to the rescue of an inept pastor, staff, and lay-leadership team. The church will work through the conflict evaluation so they can learn how to better manage future conflict situations.

> Process consultation, in contrast, involves the manager and the consultant in a period of joint diagnosis. The process consultant is willing to come into an organization without a clear mission or clear need, because of an underlying assumption that most organizations could probably be more effective than they are if they could identify what processes (work flow, interpersonal relations, communications, intergroup relations, etc.) need improvement. . . .
> The importance of joint diagnosis derives from the fact that the consultant can seldom learn enough about the organization to really know what a better course of action would be for that particular group of people with their particular sets of traditions, styles, and personalities. However, the consultant can help the manager to become a sufficiently good diagnostician himself, and can provide enough alternatives, to enable

the manager to solve the problem.[61]

There are points at which Schein's model does not fit a church as well as it does a hierarchial company structure. There is merit however in teaching and leading key leaders to grow as conflict managers themselves. Also, if the church finds a way to manage conflict according to conclusions and a game plan that they and their leaders have developed, then a sense of unity will linger long after the consultant team has returned home.

Every conflict has a "heart" that is masked by the surface issues of the altercation. The consultant team, in private interaction, will usually discover this "heart" before everyone but the most insightful in the congregation. The team must guard against disclosing their assessment too early. It would be best for the congregation to see it themselves at an assessment meeting. Then the consultant team could release their findings as confirmation of the evaluation of the church.

> We strongly recommend against putting the information in a written, formal report, primarily because these reports don't get read and they are rarely understood. A summary of the findings should be presented by the referee using a black-board and chalk . . .
>   Categorizing the information is always helpful. . . . When we are acting as referee, we prefer to follow this procedure in analyzing the data: Ask all the affected parties to attend a "feedback meeting" at a given time and place. The referee chairs this meeting and explains to the people what he understands to be the information from the data-gathering by pointing to all the data on the newsprint and giving supporting detail

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[61]Schein, 5,6.

to substantiate each point.
        . . . it is quite important that plenty of time is
taken for all persons to share in the analysis of the
conflict situation and to have a hand in modifying it to
meet their specifications of satisfaction.[62]

The Formal Intervention Process

Formal intervention is just that part of the

management process that brings all preliminaries to a point

of decision. How decisions are made and the level of

involvement needed by the consultant will determine the

nature of their role. They may be mediators, negotiators,

or arbitrators, or any combination of these, or all three.

Usually, the deeper the conflict, the greater the role

played by the team. The lighter levels are mediation and

negotiation. If binding or non-binding arbitration is

called for then the conflict must be of a severe nature.

While formal intervention takes place deep into the

consulting process, a measure of intervention began with the

first phone call to the consulting service.

> The correct assumption is that every act on the part of
> the process consultant constitutes an intervention, even
> the initial act of deciding to work with the
> organization. The very fact of having asked for help
> and having had someone accept some responsibility for
> helping, changes the perceptions and attitudes of some
> members of the organization.
>   . . . the process consultant must think through
> everything he does in terms of its probable impact on
> the organization. He must assume that all of this
> behavior is an intervention of one sort or another.
> Finally, he must use data-gathering methods which, at
> the same time, will constitute valid and useful

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[62]Leas and Kittlaus, 106,107.

interventions.[63]

Proper handling of the intervention opportunities, as mentioned by Schein, will have built a trust between the key people in conflict and the consultants. Upon this trust will be placed the formal intervention process.

Mediation

A review of the definition of mediation will provide a healthy introduction to this section:

> <u>Mediation</u>: When someone steps between competing wills for the purpose of defining, clarifying, discerning, and reconciling opposites. It involves the capacity to absorb tension, to suffer misunderstanding, to accept rejection, and to bare the pain of others' estrangement.

Mediation is the best level at which to solve a conflict, assuming that direct, two party, negotiations have failed. Mediation should, in most instances, include only the key figures in the conflict. Because these fundamental players tend to carry a great deal of the emotional baggage produced by the altercation, consultants playing the role of mediator must be psychologically and emotionally ready for their roles. There is much of the conflict that they must absorb. Augsburger demonstrates how this knowledge of the role of mediator is similarly viewed in many cultures:

> "The peacemaker gets two-thirds of the blows," warn the Montenegrin people, who have been better known for retaliation than reconciliation.
> "The hardest blow of the fight falls on the one who steps between," the Scottish proverb observes in cynical, yet clinical, accuracy.

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[63]Schein, 98.

A Spanish proverb counsels: "Between a hammer and a pliers do not stick your nose."

"The mediator is struck from both sides," The Kurdish proverb states.

The experience of mediation, a universal experience to be sure, is one of stepping between colliding forces, competing wills, and clashing temperaments.[64]

Not only must the mediator be willing to do all this, he must also be willing to get little of the credit when the task is satisfactorily complete.

> The peacemaker is a bridge
> walked on by both sides.
>
> You can either make peace
> or get the credit for it.
> But you cannot do both.[65]

At the outset of mediation the factions should be warned as to the results of failure. Such results may be: destruction in which only the fittest survive to continue the work of the church, but what is left may constitute a shallow victory; the use of stringent negotiation where the possibility of a win/win situation is transferred to at best a win-part/lose-part proposition for both sides; arbitration, which may be binding, where control of the outcome is given to an outside person or panel, but where the decisions rendered are binding on all parties; legal action, where the courts force the issues, and where the Bible principle to not go to court against a brother is

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[64]Augsburger, <u>Conflict Mediation</u>, 195.

[65]A poem/proverb quoted without source in Augsburger, <u>Conflict Mediation</u>, 187.

violated, and where the church is shamed before the whole community. Sharing these alternatives to successful mediation will serve to motivate all involved to work for the win\win outcome that successful mediation can bring.

Mediation performs several key functions. It allows the factions to:

1. Talk with each other in a verbal style that is natural, comfortable, and mutually intelligible to all participants.

2. Ventilate anger and frustration in a free, appropriately open, and therapeutic fashion.

3. Receive an increased sense of power and personal worth from the attention of their neighbors who find these problems important.

4. Gain access to a readily available, quick, and inexpensive forum.

5. Equalize or realign status and interpersonal power struggles by promoting an egalitarian ethic.

6. Reestablish and realign the persons, place, and sense of belonging in the relevant social group, whether it be the family or the community.[66]

Augsburger makes good use of several charts which outline the roles and guidelines of a mediator. These charts are here reproduced.

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[66]Augsburger, <u>Conflict Mediation</u>, 195.

A Continuum of Mediator Roles

OBSERVER	CHAIRPERSON	ENUNCIATOR	PROMPTER	LEADER	ARBITER
The passive mediator's presence encourages positive communication and interaction. Deliberate passivity may be an effective strategy with two active and equal participants.	The mediator keeps order and tends to direct procedure, reiterate points of agreement, give priority or emphasis, set schedules, and curb interruptions or repetition.	The mediator enunciates rules, norms, and values. He or she directs and interprets the information and offers sign posts that point down traditional pathways.	The mediator contributes tentative and limited suggestions. This attempt to clarify information and encourage coordination uses restatement, reflection, summary, questioning, and focusing.	The mediator directly injects opinions, makes recommendations, evaluates preferences and demands of either party, and proposes solutions and their modifications.	The mediator acts as a go-between, messenger, interpreter, and persuader. Proposing solutions and making counterproposals can bring the two toward solution.

A mediator rarely takes a single role, and the strategy frequently changes in the sequence of stages. The early stages — establishing an arena, composing an agenda, and establishing limits — more frequently use the left three styles. The later stages — narrowing differences, bargaining, ritual affirmation, and execution of the agreement — more often utilize the three styles to the right. Leadership is needed in transitions between stages; within stages the mediator may lapse toward passivity. (Gulliver 1979, 219–27)

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[67] Ibid, 194.

Mediational Model

Each level rests on the foundation
of the previous agreements.

LEVEL THREE: CONTRACT

9 AN INVOLVEMENT IN REACHING AGREEMENTS AND IN FINALIZING COVENANTS WITH BINDING POWER. Commitment springing from participation and personal involvement in processes.

8 AN OPENNESS TO REVEAL PERSONAL NEEDS AND WANTS. The ability to express feelings, define needs, and share wants.

7 A WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE IN A PRIVATE MEDIATION PROCESS. Acceptance of a dispute resolution procedure rather than resorting to flight, force, or legal channels.

LEVEL TWO: PROCESS

6 A BALANCED POWER DIFFERENTIAL DURING NEGOTIATIONS. Status and power differentials equalized during the process.

5 A BALANCED CONCERN FOR SAFETY OF BOTH COMMUNITY AND PROPERTY. Social respect — status and face — valued as much as property, profit, and goods.

4 A BALANCED CONCERN FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND GOALS. Achieving agreement as important as reaching individual goals.

LEVEL ONE: CONTEXT

3 A BASE OF CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP. A commitment to ongoing relationships with the other participants.

2 A BASE OF TRUST IN GOODWILL AND NEGOTIABILITY. A confidence in the rationality and negotiability of the other party.

1 A BASE OF PERSONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS. A context of common culture, community, or social relationships. [68]

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[68] Ibid., 196.

In both of the previous charts we see many of the processes used in the investigation. There will be obvious overlapping with the other areas involved in consultation. In both charts the role of the consultant grows in significance as the process nears completion. The first chart, the roles include arbiter, but the job description under the term more closely resembles that of a negotiator.

Below are some guidelines for mediators that Augsburger has reproduced from Folberg and Taylor.

Guidelines for Mediators

Proposition 1. People try to escape what they perceive as negative or destructive (pain) and go toward what they perceive as advantageous and positive (pleasure).

Proposition 2. People make more complete, and therefore better, decisions when they are consciously aware of feelings created by conflicts and deal effectively with those feelings. ("Dealing effectively" means integrating the feelings into decisions without allowing emotions to overwhelm rational concerns.)

Proposition 3. The participants in a personal dispute can generally make better decisions about their own lives than can an outside authority such as an arbitrator.

Proposition 4. The participants to an agreement are more likely to abide by its terms if they feel some responsibility for the outcome and develop a commitment to the process used to reach agreement.

Proposition 5. In mediation the past history of the participants is only important in relation to the present or as a basis for predicting future needs, intentions, abilities, and reactions to decisions.

Proposition 6. The more accurately a mediated agreement reflects the needs intentions, and abilities of the participants, the more likely it is to last.

Proposition 7. Since the participants' needs, intentions, and abilities will probably change, the

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process should include a way of modifying the agreement in the future. Thus change is seen as a constructive and viable part of the agreement and must be considered in the mediation process.

Proposition 8. The mediation process is substantially the same for all participants and all situations, but techniques, scheduling, and tasks to be accomplished must vary to match the circumstances, the participants, and the uniqueness of the mediator.[69]

The purpose of mediation is to bring conflict to a halt or to turn it into manageable, constructive conflict. When the consultant team observes that the mediation process is accomplishing its desired goals, action should be taken to assure the victory.

Verbal agreements should be cemented into a written settlement. The mediation team can aid greatly here by suggesting wording for proposals that will be acceptable to everyone. When both sides have found the wording acceptable, then the settlement should be promptly drafted. Minutes, not days, should pass before the verbal agreement is put into written form. Time will only give opportunities to second guessing that could refire the controversy.

Within the agreement should be points of accountability that will assure no one can escape the deal without loss of personal integrity. The parties that have reached positive conclusions are usually in a good mood and can be led to firm accountability provisions. Factions can be accountable to one another by having monthly meetings of

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[69]Ibid., 198.

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the key players to pray and constructively discuss the progress of the settlement. Third parties within the church, which are respected by both sides, can also be designated as watchmen to determine when someone is in violation of the agreement. The mediators can also agree to call periodically, or one or more of them could return at some set date in the future to assess compliance with the agreement.

Another paragraph in the settlement should define who will clarify any future misunderstandings as to the intended meanings of the words or phrases in the settlement document. "The disruption created by these subsequent questions can be greatly diminished if the parties have agreed in advance as to how disputes over the meaning of their agreement will be resolved."[70] In most cases the agreement should state that the neutral consultant should determine such meanings after conferring with the other members of the consultation team.

One other factor should be injected concerning mediation. This factor actually governs all of the consultants efforts. There is a natural third party to consider that is not usually involved in secular negotiations. That third party is the Lord and His will as revealed in His Word. Consultants cannot allow those in conflict to consider as an option any conclusion that is in

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[70]Sam Kagel and Kathy Kelly, The Anatomy of Mediation (Washington D. C.: B.N.A. Incorporated, 1989), 156.

violation of the clear teachings of the Bible.

Negotiation

The dictionary defines negotiation as "discussion to bring about some result, esp. involving bargaining."[71]   We have expanded that definition: Negotiation is the process of bringing conflicting parties, with a common interest, into a workable agreement by use of bargaining. It necessitates each side yielding on substantive matters in order to establish a middle position acceptable to all.

Even when mediation has failed to produce total harmony between the factions, it has usually yielded agreement on many of the issues surrounding the key issue(s). Those matters where agreement has been reached should be established, in writing, before negotiation begins. Thus, the way is cleared to negotiate only on those matters left unresolved, significantly uncomplicating the process.

The nature of negotiation should be explained to each side. This is a *quid pro quo* environment, something for something. If any party is so stubborn as to declare none of their position as negotiable, then the matter should move immediately to arbitration. The participants should be cautioned that failure at this level could lead to arbitration, in which they could forfeit any control of the

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[71]New Websters Dictionary and Thesaurus, (Danbury, Ct.: Lexicon Publications Inc., 1992), 669.

outcome.

Having eliminated some of the problems at the
mediation level, a concrete statement should be formed
stating the problem.

> A good problem statement states the concern in one
> complete indicative sentence. The sentence contains at
> least three of the following items, preferably all four.
> The sentence tells:
>> Who is doing (or not doing) something;
>> What is being done (or not being done);
>> To whom it is being done (or not being done); and
>> When or where it is being done (or not being
>>> done).
> . . . Any group that wants action has to get definite,
> which literally means "set limits." Definiteness can
> empower a group.[72]

Also, this one sentence problem statement should be as
concise as possible.

Two important things have now been established: what
the position of the two factions are, and what is the common
problem. The consultant team now works to help each side
determine what it can give in negotiations in exchange for
something on the other side. Since our team has had an
advocate working for each faction, this process can be
carried on in a short time. Advocate consultants meet with
their constituents and then bargain as a three-member team.
Each of the advocates may want to bring one witness to these
bargaining sessions. This will protect the credibility of
the advocates, especially with the group of people to whom
they are ministering.

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[72]Leas and Kittlaus, 150.

If things seem to be stalling out, task force groups may be formed on each side to work on possible solutions. These task forces may then need to be combined into one study group. That group should be given a set time at which to report their findings. A list should be formed of possible solutions. From this list one "best choice" solution should be chosen and presented to the consultants who will then use it as a force to bring key leaders to conclude the matter expediently.

As positions change, the consultants will shuttle back and forth to keep the process active. When an agreement is established verbally it will then be placed on paper immediately. In some instances it can be signed by the consultants and the key parties on each side. Matters of enforcement and future interpretation will be handled as has been outlined in the section on mediation.

Arbitration

Arbitration, by definition, is a simple proceeding voluntarily chosen by parties who want a dispute determined by an impartial judge or panel of judges of their own mutual selection. The decision made in arbitration is based on the merits of the case. The principals agree in advance to accept the decision as final and binding. This is basically the last stage a church may enter to resolve a problem without going to civil magistrates.

Taking a matter to court is not permitted by Scripture

when it is brother against brother. However, in today's world Christians are ignoring this admonition and proceeding to file cases anyway. In a church, it only takes one disgruntled member to file the suit that will cause the church embarrassment, ineffectiveness, and sometimes, large sums of money. The courts have shown a tendency to allow properly rendered rulings by churches to stand. It seems the civil authorities usually do not wish to invade church conflicts. This is all the more reason for churches to settle matters themselves, even if it requires arbitration.

Arbitration is a process used to benefit bystanders. Mediation and negotiation have revealed that factions are unbending. In a church, this usually means that the majority of the membership is held hostage by the conflict. While arbitration is usually agreed upon by both parties in conflict, the church should remember that it has the authority to insist on arbitration, with penalties in place for those parties which do not comply. In fact, this is sometimes the only way a congregation can bring a matter to a reasonable end.

The first order of business in arbitration is to determine who will serve as the arbiters. The consultant team would be a logical choice for several reasons. First, there is precedence for a three-member panel and advantages to the same:

> The tripartite arbitration board, . . . is one made up of one or more members selected by management, an equal

number selected by labor, and a neutral member who serves as chairman.

One advantage of using a tripartite board is that the neutral member may get valuable advice and assistance from the partisan members.

Awards of tripartite boards, when they are unanimous, tend to carry more weight than awards by single arbitrators.[73]

Additions can be made to the panel in addition to the consultant team. A representative from each side could be added making it a five-member team. However, the decision of the team is to be considered binding even when it is not by unanimous vote.

The process can move along by one of two basic processes. One is that

. . . "both disputants will submit their "final offer" on a disputed matter to an arbitrator who will be asked to declare one or the other of the offers to be the outcome. The arbitrator has no discretion to impose a compromise solution. The theory behind this "final offer" system is that both parties will be motivated to put forth reasonable final offers, thereby enhancing prospects for settlement without any need to call in an outsider.[74]

The other option is to give the panel the authority to set the final ruling anywhere between the two positions. In most church situations this latter option is usually best.

Another choice to be made is whether or not the arbitration panel is rendering a binding or non-binding decision. If binding, then the position of the panel is the

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[73]Frank Elkouri and Edna A. Elkouri, How Arbitration Works (Washington, D.C.: B.N.A. Incorporated, 1960.), 60,62,63.

[74]Kagel, 186,187.

official position of the church as soon as it is announced.
The better option is to allow the decision of the panel to
be non-binding. Thus the church can make changes before it
votes the decision into force. This latter method will
actually bring more motive for compliance than binding
arbitration because the church body has officially
established the matter as closed.

As with mediation and negotiation there is the need to
properly enforce and clarify the final document. The
accountability for enforcement of the provisions of the
final ruling can be established as suggested in mediation.
However, the church may desire a more hands-on type of
enforcement panel from among third party members of its own
congregation. The consultant team may, once again, be the
choice to clarify the meanings of the final document, should
they become confused in the future. Again, this would be
for the church to decide. However, these matters of
enforcement and clarification should be part of the final
ruling.

Disengagement and Long-Term Maintenance

Disengagement is the process by which the consultant
team withdraws from the conflict situation. This process
should be neither too hasty nor too lengthy. Some
connection with the congregation, in the matters of
follow-up, can go on for months. However, the exit of the
team from the church, a written report to the church

leadership, and assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention can and should be done within two weeks of the time that an agreement was reached by the church on settlement of the main conflict issue.

The Review with Church Leadership
Concerning Conflict Management

Before the consultant team leaves, a meeting with church leadership should be held. At this meeting several things need to be accomplished, therefore several hours will need to be set aside. The purpose of this meeting is to review the consultant process, establish a follow-up plan, offer some suggestions from the team on how leadership should proceed, and recommend and offer any training that would be helpful to the leadership. Thus, the departure of the team physically does not mean the ministry of the team is suddenly withdrawn.

> The departure of the consultant . . . can create a power vacuum, the need for new, untried behaviors and development of fresh emerging relationships.
> An abrupt departure by the consultant can be quite threatening to the client, an unnecessary distraction sure to impact the project's effectiveness.
> Fortunately, it is possible to alleviate this problem. The departure of the consultant can be carefully planned and recognized by both the client and the consultant.[75]

A brief review of the progress made during the time the consultants and the church worked together will establish the atmosphere in which a follow-up program can be

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[75]Bell and Nadler, 210.

discussed.   In this program dates for accountability should

be reviewed.   Possible return visits should be placed on the

calendar.   Methods and frequency of correspondence between

church leaders and team members should be discussed.   The

purpose of disengagement is to place church leadership on

confident footing as to its future effectiveness, and not to

extend their dependence on the consultant team.

> Once the work is completed, the third party exits
> from the system.   In both formal and informal
> intervention, the goal is to set the parties free so
> they can manage their own relations.   An intervener who
> does not work himself or herself out of a job is not
> doing the job properly; the parties must become
> independent of the third party.[76]

The final hour of this last meeting with the

leadership should concentrate on suggestions for the

immediate future.   What leadership should have learned from

the conflict will be reviewed.   Some of the methods used in

conflict management would have been based upon process

consultation.   The leadership should be able to review and

learn from what the consultants had accomplished by this

method.   Then they would be able to benefit by adopting a

similar approach to keeping things on track.

This should be a time of encouragement and

affirmation; however, leadership weaknesses should be stated

forthrightly.   Suggestions for improvement through training

would be made at this time.   These could include conferences

and training seminar opportunities, books to read, videos

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[76]Hocker and Wilmot, 198.

and audio tapes to study, and/or courses to take. Points of
strength on the church leadership team will be emphasized as
the meeting draws to a close.

Reporting and Evaluating

Within two weeks of the team departing the church, a
report should be generated and sent to the church's
leadership. This report will briefly review the entire
process of conflict management as conducted by the
consultant team. The account should be, ". . . to the
point, and written in an easy-to-understand fashion. Good
reports are organized in a logical way, and will often make
effective use of graphs and charts."[77] The purpose of the
report is to bring closure to the process. Any matters of a
financial nature should be taken care of by the time this
report is issued.

Also included with the report is a request of a few of
the key leaders for an evaluation of the consultant team and
the processes used during intervention. The form of such
assessments should be to-the-point and easy to complete.
Long, time-consuming assessment forms are seldom returned.
The consultant team should do their own self analysis as
well. These assessments will aid the consultant ministry by
revealing areas where improvements should be made.
Therefore, the ministry leadership should review the

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[77]Hunt, 93.

evaluations on a regular basis.

Closure does not mean there will be no further
contact. Any agreements reached may include some further
contact. The situation may change and call for another
visit. Training seminars may be scheduled that would bring
one or more of the consultant team back at other times.

> If all has gone well, closure should bring a
> feeling of satisfaction to both the client and the
> consultant. They should feel they have been mutually
> helpful and have a high personal regard for each other.
> With great satisfaction, we have experienced, as have
> others, that old clients can become new friends.[78]

Financial Considerations

Two matters of finance seem to stand in contrast to
one another. A ministry of this magnitude will not succeed
without proper financial backing; yet, there must be
developed a means of making the ministry affordable to
churches of all sizes. To accomplish both items, several
steps will be taken in the formation of the ministry.

First, the people who will serve on consultant teams
will not be full-time employees of the ministry. People
from other occupations will be asked to serve on a team
three or four times per year. Thus, they will not be
totally dependent on the consultant ministry for their
livelihood. A benefit of this is that they will never lose
touch with the "real world" of church ministry. Whether
pastors or lay people, the consultants will bring a sense of

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[78]Bell and Nadler, 214.

reality to each situation that the full-time "experts" can sometimes lose.

Secondly, Christians and churches that have a special interest in such a ministry as this will be given an opportunity to undergird the ministry financially. Even a modest financial foundation will hold down the costs so that churches will not have to pay consultant fees that are prohibitive.

The consultant ministry needs a strong source of accountability. To obtain this, the ministry will place itself under the authority of a local church. That local church will be asked to appoint the majority of the members who are to make up the governing board of the organization. The ministry would then be required to report to that church, on a regular basis, concerning the progress of the consultant work. It would be hoped that such a church would take a financial interest in the ministry and could perhaps help with office space and communication needs.

Lastly are the matters that relate financially to the churches that receive the consultant ministry. In the case of medium and larger churches, the church would be expected to pay all the travel, motel, and living expenses incurred. Where smaller churches are concerned, the travel expenses may be waived. However, the other expenses will be paid by the church as incurred (staying in homes will be acceptable where there is a need to hold down costs).

The honorariums or fees shall be paid by the
congregation according to the size of their budget. Two
methods of payment would be acceptable. One would be a lump
sum payment that would be paid within one month of the team
leaving the church field. This could be appropriated by a
love offering, but must equal at least one percent of the
previous year's budget receipts. A second method would be
for the church to write monthly checks to the consultant
ministry in an amount equal to one percent of the budget
income. This type of payment would last for twelve months
and thus not place a great financial strain on the
congregation.

The combination of the financial approaches listed
above would be assisted by a healthy amount of volunteer
labor to handle matters such as office work and bookkeeping.
Those helping to begin the ministry would be told of the
sacrificial attitude that would be needed in the early days
of the program. Time and financial strength would bring the
ability to be increasingly generous to those working in the
ministry.

CHAPTER VIII

PROJECTED SCENARIOS

There are three main situations in which this
consultant ministry will specialize. They are: leadership
conflict, near split pressures, and instances of moral
crisis involving leadership. In many instances elements of
these three will overlap. However, there is enough
difference in the situations to warrant a different approach
to each one. These scenarios are meant to anticipate the
basic steps the consultant team will take as the
intervention progresses.

These scenarios are meant to be "suggested" guidelines
for the consultants. Every situation will carry with it a
measure of uniqueness. Consultants will have the freedom to
exercise the flexibility needed to adapt a proper plan to
each conflict dilemma.

Instances of Leadership Conflict

First, a call is made by a church leader to a director
of the consultant ministry. During that call the type of
conflict is identified. If the conflict is of a nature that
the consultant ministry is not skilled to undertake, then
the church leader is referred elsewhere for assistance.

When the call reveals a conflict in leadership, the ministry director discusses with the church leaders what would happen should both parties desire to proceed with formal intervention. Note, some situations may be described as an issues conflict when it is in reality a leadership problem. If the problem is described as "people are upset in our church over whether or not to relocate," then probing will reveal whether that is truly the impasse or that a conflict of leaders is at issue. The question should be asked, "Have the key leaders who are on opposite sides of the debate been on opposite sides in other issues?" The answer may prepare the team for what real issues are at stake.

A copy of the statement of prerequisites is faxed to the church leader. The agreement may also be sent at this stage. The leader is asked to present the data to other key leaders in the church. The financial policy of the ministry is also discussed at this stage. Basically, everything will flow according to the outline of the previous chapter.

Since this particular conflict is between leadership, the preliminary investigation will require a good amount of detail on the personalities involved. A temperament analysis, a personality instrument, and a leadership inventory tool will all be sent and completed before the team arrives at the church. It should be stated that not all leaders are pastors, deacons, and committee chairmen. A

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key member of the church who has a good amount of influence should be considered a leader because their opposition to the pastor or other leaders can have the same effect on the congregation as opposition from a leader who holds some title.

The consultant team is formed and a team captain is assigned (the one who remains neutral). The team sets a time to meet at the church site to begin formal intervention into the conflict situation. The captain assigns a consultant to act as an advocate/mediator for each side of the conflict. Personal information and test scores are assessed before the first interviews. The advocates interview their key leader(s) while the neutral consultant interviews any leaders who seem to be caught in the middle of the crisis.

After the initial interviews the team will work up an appraisal of the conflict. The assessment will identify all known contextual factors and will determine the principals' power ratios and their ethical orientation (do they fight fair?). The first determinative is: does a win/win scenario seem possible? From this determinative flows all other determinitives, thus guiding the consulting process:

     <u>If win/win is possible</u>: it should be determined whether or not the core of the impasse is one founded on personalities or issues.
     <u>If issues are the core</u>: the leaders should be led to work together to identify interests, define their differences, create options. The mediators will then lead them to win/win resolutions and structure a presentation to other leaders and the church, thus

establishing follow through accountability.

If personalities are the core: the consultants will establish some mediation ground rules to protect the leaders from further hurting one another. Critical incidents from the past are identified. Destructive patterns are then distinguished. A formula for future relations is constructed. Forgiveness and healing are established and the formula agreed upon by all sides. A statement of mutual support is given to the church and their forgiveness requested if the personal conflict has damaged the fellowship.

Should neither pattern lead to a healthy solution then the church may need to move to arbitration.

If win/win is not possible: determination must be made as to whether or not the parties are disengaged. That is, are they communicating?

If principals are communicating: key people should be told that the leaders-in-conflict are entering into negotiation. This will motivate the principals to succeed because they know others are watching to see the outcome. Proper procedures to guide the discussions and confidentiality are established. Destructive behaviors are identified. Barriers to protect the principals are established and the process can then follow the win/win patterns. If negotiations fail to return the situation to a win/win scenario then third party arbitration may be recommended as a means to benefit the congregation.

If principals are disengaged: fair fight and dirty fight proclivities are identified. Ground rules for a fair fight are established and other key leaders are asked to endorse the format. The principals are told of the ground rules, that they carry the endorsement of their peers, and that those peers are awaiting the outcome of good negotiations. If negotiations are refused then the consultants may lead the church to arbitration. If the negotiations are acceptable then matters of context, and behavior are agreed upon and the process reverts to the win/win scenario.[79]

Upon reaching a conclusion, either by agreement or arbitration, the team will exit from the church, write the follow-up report, and thus bring closure to the procedure.

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[79]Much of this process is adapted from a flow chart, which is copied in appendix one, by Hugh Halverstadt, Managing Church Conflict, (Louisville, Kentucky: John Knox Press, 1991), 201.

In accordance with the high regard this ministry will have for the office of the pastor, no action or conclusion suggested by the consultants will ever be structured to do damage to the pastor or diminish his ministry. The exceptions to this are when the pastor has disqualified himself. Teaching heretical doctrine or extreme moral failure are instances where the conclusions may call for a pastoral change. Yet, even then care will be taken to maintain a positive regard for the office and calling of pastor.

Instances of a Church Nearing a Split

When conflict has escalated to a point where a majority of the church has been forced to choose sides and reject the people in the opposite camp, then a split is imminent. In such a crisis, time is of the essence. The conflict management team may need to move into such a situation in less than forty-eight hours. One additional Sunday may be all that is needed for a circumstance to push the situation into a split. Otherwise, the patten followed here is the same as mentioned in the first scenario.

The church is already split ideologically. The first priority for the team is to identify the key characters. At the same time the key issues are isolated. With this information the team can determine whether or not the conflict is based in the church leadership. Where leadership is the problem, the leaders-in-conflict are dealt

with according to the leadership scenario previously
described.

Another possibility is that the church is splitting
sociologically. There can be generational matters or
ministry emphasis matters to consider. Churches can split
over style of worship, or the direction of the church, or
any matter where great change is required. In such
instances leaders representing the different camps should be
agreed upon and the mediation and negotiation process should
begin. As before, the conclusions are brought back to the
body and reconciliation established.

A further possibility must be considered, the presence
of one or more hard-core antagonists.

> Hard-core antagonists are seriously disturbed
> individuals. They are psychotic, out of touch with
> reality. Their psychosis is almost always of the
> paranoid variety, which by its nature is not as easy to
> detect as other psychoses. Many paranoid individuals
> can appear normal some (or even most) of the time.
> Hard-core antagonists tend to have incredible
> tenacity and an unbelievable desire to make
> trouble, . . .
> Hard-core antagonists may be the type of people
> the apostle Paul had in mind when he warned the leaders
> of the congregation at Ephesus: "Take heed to yourselves
> and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made
> you overseers. . . . I know that after my departure
> fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the
> flock" (Acts 20:28-29).[80]

This type of antagonism is not concerned with a solution.
Like a child who likes to pit one child against another in
order to gain control of the family, an extreme antagonist

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[80]Haugk, 27,28.

loves to attack authority in order to create chaos. In

chaos the antagonist is in control. The problem with these

belligerent people is that they are willing to endure any

amount of personal pain or loss to see that the person or

organization they are attacking is also damaged.

For the consultant team that discovers a severe

antagonist there may only be one recourse, to suggest to the

church that such a member be disciplined by the body.

> . . . while disciplinary procedures exist "on the
> books," congregations often make every effort to avoid
> putting them into practice. . . . In the case of
> antagonists, this reluctance is extremely unfortunate
> and inappropriate. Once you have determined that you
> are dealing with an antagonist, you no longer need to be
> so cautious; indeed, you must not be.
> When specific disciplinary actions are called for,
> the leader's responsibility is not to equivocate or bend
> the regulations, but to carry them out. In this area
> there is no room for improvisation.[81]

No amount of compromise will ever appease such a person.

The desire to save one wayward soul here could cost the

congregation in ways from which it may never fully recover.

Once the antagonist is identified and brought into

some form of discipline the team will want to suggest ways

to strengthen the communication system of the church. Trust

will be renewed where good communication is established and

where people sincerely desire the best for the fellowship.

The team is then ready for exit and closure.

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[81]Haugk, 156,157.

Instances of Moral Crisis Involving Church Leadership

Recent reports are numerous that pastors and other church leaders are disgracing the ministry because of adulterous lifestyles. As disgraceful as these reports are, the manner in which churches handle such episodes is equally damaging. In one instance a pastor's adulterous lifestyle with many women was discovered several times by the deacon body over a five-year period of time. Each time the pastor repented, the deacons forgave him and swept the matter under the rug. The result was that only when the secular news revealed the problem did the deacons take any biblical action. An outside consultant team would be of great value in such situations where it is obvious that even experienced leadership lacks either the knowledge or the courage to deal with a matter properly.

With the first phone call the ministry director may determine whether a team of consultants or a single consultant is needed. If the problem has led to the congregation choosing sides as to how the problem is to be solved, then a team will be required. As with some other situations, speed may be important. The longer such a matter is unresolved the more likely leadership will appear incompetent.

The first is to determine who is involved. If someone other than the pastor is at issue then the consultant(s) will work closely with the pastor. If the leader is on

staff then the authority to deal with that person rests with the pastor. If a deacon or leading person is at issue, the team will work with the pastor and a few key deacons or other leaders in resolving the problem.

With the parameters of involvement set, the next matter is to determine the facts. Is there proof? Has someone confessed? How widespread is the knowledge of this problem? Did the immorality take place with someone in the church? Is there a legal question involved? If guilt is established then attitudes must be assessed. Is there repentance? If so, is it genuine? If guilt is not established then steps must be injected to remove any further suspicion, such as establishing constant accountability.

If guilt is confirmed, then an assessment must be done to determine what action should be taken. Where a pastor or staff member is involved and more than a few people have knowledge of the problem then termination is inevitable. However, great care should be shown for those involved. Counseling and financial assistance should be provided so that transition into the future can be made. The church must realize that sometimes pressures it places on staff are contributing factors to such sin, though there is no excuse for the adulterers.

Where only a few people are aware of the moral failure of the pastor or staff member and the affair did not involve

a church member, then a slightly different approach may be attempted. The staff member or pastor may be given a sixty to ninety day sabbatical where he is to receive counseling and work to improve his marriage. Before he returns the consultant team and key leaders will be advised by the counselor as to whether the person is "fit for duty." If they are deemed to need more time away from the ministry they will be discharged as mentioned above.

Even when changes are made by the person and he is seen as a small risk, a new field may need to be considered as soon as possible. However, if he moves he should advise the chairman of the new search committee of the events of the previous year. The consultant team may want to suggest in most cases that a pastor or staff person leave the ministry for several years, establish that his behavior has changed, and strengthen his marriage before considering a return to church work.

This process may seem extreme and harsh to some. However, if left unchecked, this behavior usually becomes repetitious and can cause great damage to the cause of Christ. No matter how well someone performs a ministry, if they cannot maintain the qualifications of the Bible for that position then they forfeit their ability to lead.

When the moral problem is with a deacon or key lay-leader the situation is only slightly different than that already discussed. The person should resign positions of

leadership and possibly leave the church, if the other person(s) involved are members. Again, counseling should be made available.

In any instance involving leadership, concerns for those in adultery should finish second to the need to protect the reputation, witness, and fellowship of the church. This is greatly lacking in the manner in which many of these situations are handled, hence the need for consultant intervention.

Lastly, where most of the church and community are aware of the moral failure, a need for the church to be aware of the reasons for a person leaving should not be neglected. When people confess sin, and seek forgiveness a healing can take place. Also, when Christians honestly deal with their failures the world respects the church. When we try to hide known sin under a guise of pretense, we become uncredible and phony to the community.

The overall duties of the consultant team may be to just walk the church leadership through biblical processes. However, when the conflict is causing the congregation to choose sides and a person in leadership tries to hang on to forfeited authority, the team will need to proceed as with other instances of conflict.

CHAPTER IX

TEN-YEAR PROJECTION OF THE CONSULTANT MINISTRY

The need for this ministry has been established. How soon churches will take advantage of this ministry when faced with extreme situations is not known. Evidence from the surveys would indicate that most pastors would at least consider using such a ministry when facing an emotional issue that is so consuming as to threaten the welfare of the congregation.

Below is a charted ten-year projection:

Year 1: Ask my local church to serve as guardian for this new ministry. Have them appoint a five member board to which the ministry can be accountable.

Put financial plan into action.

Secure a trained counselor or pastor who has a strong interest in helping churches to head the ministry. This should be someone with good organizational skills. Teach that person the ministry objectives and begin to help this director to recruit and train future consultants.

Hold at least one training seminar for people recruited to be consultants. This should include at least six people (two teams).

Share with pastor friends concerning the ministry, secure their prayer support. Offer to these pastors the aid of the ministry should they need it. As an early client they would be granted special financial considerations. What is needed are some trial cases where the flaws of the program can be revealed.

Year 2: Develop and implement the publicity plan. This

would include the brochure and letters to pastors.

Conduct two or three interventions. Intensive evaluations should follow each of these and the program adjusted for maximum effectiveness.

Hold at least one new training session to train two or three more teams.

Year 3: Conduct four to six interventions. Reviews continue after each to allow for refinements of the program.

Publicity is reworked and letters of recommendation are included with them.

Another training seminar produces three more teams.

Year 4: Conduct eight to twelve interventions. Review the program biannually in light of the exit assessments.

Hold two training seminars which will produce at least four new teams. Total active teams, after accounting for attrition, is now nine.

A first annual ministry convention is held. All connected with the ministry are encouraged to attend. The consultant program and its results are presented. Fellowship is encouraged by sharing a meal together. A brief time of training is held as a refresher course for consultants. The entire event will be done in half a day.

Year 5: Conduct fifteen to twenty interventions. Reviews of the program, based on exit assessments, will now be done on an annual basis.

Two training seminars will be held to train eight new teams. The total number of active teams will reach fifteen. Experienced teams will begin to take on several assignments per year.

Two regional directors are now placed into service to allow for further expansion. Directors may come from team personnel.

Second annual convention is held.

Publicity is reassessed.

Year 6: Conduct twenty-five to thirty interventions.

Six training seminars will be held, two by each director, producing at least eighteen new teams. Total number of teams is now thirty.

Two additional regional directors are established.

The third annual convention is held.

Year 7: Conduct fifty to sixty interventions.

Ten training seminars will be held, two by each director, producing thirty new teams. Number of teams now reaches fifty.

Two additional regional directors are established.

The fourth annual convention is held. The convention is now a day and one half in length.

Publicity is reassessed.

A book is written about the program and the need for proper handling of conflict in churches.

Year 8: Conduct ninety to one hundred interventions.

Fourteen seminars will be held, two by each director, producing forty-two new teams. Number of teams is now eighty-five.

Two additional regional directors are established.

The fifth annual convention is held.

Seminars for training churches in how to prevent conflict are begun. Some consultants and directors will be trained to lead these.

Year 9: Conduct one hundred fifty to one hundred sixty interventions.

Eighteen seminars will be held, two by each director, producing fifty-four new teams. Number of teams is now one hundred twenty.

Two additional regional directors are established.

The sixth annual convention is held.

Publicity is reassessed.

Seminars for training churches continue. Pastors

retreats are added to the training program to equip
pastors in preventing and/or handling conflict properly.

<u>Year 10</u>:   Conduct over two hundred interventions.

Twenty-two seminars will be held, two by each director,
producing sixty-six new teams. Number of teams is now
over one hundred fifty.

Two additional regional directors are established.

The seventh annual convention is held, lasting two full
days.

A second book about the ministry and the shifting needs
of churches and pastors is published.

Seminars for churches and retreats for pastors continue.

The possibility for developing video or tele-
communications aspects of the ministry are explored.

Ministry is to undergo a stringent ten-year review and
reassessment.

   With close to one hundred thousand churches in the

United States the need for assistance may always be larger

than this ministry can grow. In any one year as many as

five thousand of these churches will experience severe

conflict. This ministry could eventually grow to meet about

ten percent of those churches.

CHAPTER X

METHODS OF MAKING THE CONSULTANT MINISTRY

KNOWN TO PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS

"Virtually everyone who enters the consulting business faces the same two basic challenges; how to generate leads and then how to turn leads into clients."[82] A marketing plan for a ministry to churches is further complicated by the nature of church work. "Selling" a ministry is frowned upon. Therefore the approach must be subtle and yet convincing.

Churches and pastors greatly desire to "succeed." If a program is working in other churches then fellowships will seek-out that program in order to be as effective as possible. The key to marketing this consulting ministry is to establish a few successful encounters in the first two years. Upon that success, and with the strong network among evangelical churches (word of mouth is still the best means of advertising), the marketing of the program will be strong enough to keep pace with its growth.

As the paper has revealed, there is a need for at

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[82]Thomas L. Greenbaum, The Consultants Manual: A Complete Guide to Building a Successful Consulting Practice (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1990), 7.

least two documents: the prerequisites statement, and the agreement. Added to these will be a brochure briefly describing the program. All of these materials will be generated with marketing strategy in mind. Also, a detailed ministry description will be generated which will answer many church leaders' questions as to how the consultant program will operate in their church. In marketing, these elements are meant to address such areas as information, purpose, professionalism, costs, and probable outcomes. This is not advertising, but is important to the marketing mix of the ministry.

Concerning advertising of the ministry, there are several approaches that will be coordinated to compliment one another. The brochure can be sent out in an area where a pastors meeting is to be held. Permission to speak for a few minutes to the pastors about the program can be obtained. The brochures will go out ten days before the meeting and will target the pastors in the area of the conference. A ministry booth can be set up at the conference which will accommodate personal exposure and may lead to scheduling intervention consultations. Another aspect of the ministry booth may be to offer counseling to pastors who need help in surviving conflict situations. This free counseling will build relationships, prove the professionalism of the organization, and impress pastors by demonstrating that this is not another of those "get rich

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off the church" consultant schemes. The conference will be followed by a letter being sent to all the pastors and church leaders who attended (if such a list is attainable) and phone calls being made to follow-up on those who talked personally with consultants at the ministry booth.

Another possible means to gain opportunities to minister to churches would be a toll-free conflict management "hot-line" for pastors and church leaders. Many leaders need advice in a crisis. This "hot-line" would have the two-fold benefit of helping leaders to de-escalate conflict as soon as possible, and it would be a means for securing intervention opportunities. Questions about the ministry could be asked, fears allayed, and information clarified and expanded.

Any means of promoting the ministry that enables its image of servanthood and professionalism to shine through would be considered as a possible component of the marketing plan.

CONCLUSION

The unevangelized populace has never before scanned the church with such intensity. People desire to know whether or not Jesus can really change lives and whether or not churches are fellowships of the caring and changed. Too often the causes of the gospel have been damaged by disgruntled, and oftentimes unregenerate, church members. Obviously, the average church is either not equipped to deal with such people or has lacked the courage to do so.

The desire of those implementing this ministry is to help churches to resolve differences in the congregation. When differences are correctly managed, the respect the church has in the community is enhanced, and the leadership of the church is strengthened.

Consultants will be adequately trained before being placed into the field. Professionalism will be demonstrated in all aspects of the program or else expansion will be delayed until quality controls are in place.

The local church will be honored at every point of contact by the consultant ministry. The pastor will be respected and is assumed to have the leadership granted him by the Scriptures. Due cooperation will also be granted to other church leaders. At no time will the consultant team

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presume the right to exercise authority over the local congregation.

The foundation for this ministry is the Bible. If asked to compromise truth for the sake of peace the consultant team will refuse the request. A settlement reached at the expense of insulting the Lord will only result in the church losing spiritual power. However, solutions that honor the Lord will bring life to the fellowship and strengthen the church's credibility in the community.

APPENDIX ONE

INTERVIEWS WITH PASTORS

Interview with Robby Roberson

Pastor of Grace Place Baptist Church

Midwest City, Oklahoma

Q.   How long have you been in a leadership position in a church?

A.   16 years.

Q.   Have you ever been part of a church that was so deep in conflict that it split?

A.   Yes, I have.

Q.   Would you relate the key issues in the conflict and how they proceeded?

A.   I have been a part of that three times. The first time was an issue of leadership. A power struggle with leadership. The second time was a moral issue where a pastor and his wife were divorcing. The third time was another power struggle over leadership.

Q.   Have you ever been in a position of leadership when a key leader was found to be in extreme moral failure? How many times? Relate what actions the church took in response to that moral failure.

A.   That has happened twice. Once with a pastor, once with a co-pastor. The first incident was probably from poor performance in the home in the marriage, not necessarily morally. Initially the church did very little but love them and hoped the problem would just go away. They encouraged the pastor to reconcile with his wife.

Interviewer's Note: The lack of action led to a split. Over half of the church and nearly all of its leadership left.

The second occasion the co-pastor was morally bankrupt. The leadership of the church didn't know this at the time he was called. When the moral failures surfaced the church leadership tried to get the co-pastor to seek help for his problem. He eventually left for another field.

Interviewer's Note: When he left he repeated the offenses dozens of times with women in his next pastorate, making it the fourth church where such occurred. In each instance leadership was aware of the actions and never was adequate discipline brought forward so that the cause of Christ would not continue to suffer indignities by this man.

Q.   Do you think that those situations were handled properly?

A.   No, I don't think so.

Q.   Do you think such instances of conflict are more or less frequent than when you began your ministry?

A.   I believe them to be more frequent.

Q.   Would you ever consider using a consultant team, that was trained in conflict management, were you to go through a similar crisis in the future?

A.   Yes I would.

Q.   Are there any other experiences in your ministry or in the ministry of someone you know that you feel could have been handled better, or where a severe crisis could have been avoided if an outside consultant ministry could have been used?

A.   My first response to that is that almost everyone I know has experienced similar situations, or just out-right conflict, and secondly, I'm not sure what the benefits would be because I've not used that type of ministry before.

Q.   What advice would you give to young church leaders who are in the midst of their first stressful bout with church conflict?

A.   Seek counsel from others who have gone through it.

Q.   Do you have any other comments on this subject?

A.   I think the more that can be done to help the better. Usually such conflicts are beyond the leadership abilities of the church.

Interview with Rob Grimm

Pastor of First Southern Baptist Church

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Q.   How long have you been in the pastorate?

A.   Seventeen years.

Q.   Have you ever entered into times of extreme conflict
in your churches? If so, how many times have you been at a
level of extreme conflict?

A.   I think all pastors have times of stress and conflict
in their pastorates. It's a high profile job dealing with
people. I would say there have been two occasions. One
early in my ministry, in my second pastorate when I went
through a brief time of severe conflict that actually led to
my termination. Another time was in my pastorate in South
Dakota, during a building program, which is another extreme
time of pressure, and I believe that I learned a great deal
from both of those times of conflict, and now look back on
them and see them as growing times in my life and in the
life of my family and in my ministry.

Q.   During those times of conflict, what do you feel were
the sources of conflict? First of all the sources as far as
the issues were concerned and secondly as far as the
personalities that were concerned, were the sources of
conflict.

A.   They are usually small issues that are nothing but
surface causes that are the results of root causes. The
pastoral/congregational conflict many times is because of a
lack of communication, other times it is a lack of
understanding of pastoral authority. In the instance of the
building program it just becomes a level of stress and
pressure caused by the pressure of building a new building
and the time that it consumes. Personality conflicts,
sources of irritation, all kinds of human elements that
enter into these confrontation and conflicts. I think in
the instances back in my second pastorate it was definitely
a power struggle between the pastor and the deacons.

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Q.   Do you see any similarities in personality types in the antagonists with whom you have had dealings? Is there any similarity in the way they operate that you can see as familiar, not just in your experiences, but in relating to other pastors, do you see antagonists as having similar approaches in the way they issue the conflict?

A.   Very definitely, I've had other pastors who have shared their experiences with me and it was almost as if we had been in the very same situation. I do think that there are personality types, usually the people that are the cause of the conflict are the people that are lacking in spiritual maturity, people that perhaps do not have high self-esteem or that do not have harmony in their home and as a result are trying to gain status at the church and somehow in that effort to grasp that authority they cause problems for the spiritual leadership.

Q.   Concerning conflict in general, what advice would you give a pastor?

A.   Anytime someone brings an allegation against you, first of all you need to ask yourself, before becoming defensive, is this true? If the criticism has some merit, look deep within yourself and make the necessary adjustments. If you need to ask forgiveness, if you need to make some apologies then there needs to be a humble effort to do that. On the other hand, if it's false accusation, which many times it can be, then I think you need to let it go. Don't give it even dignity of addressing it, but again not trying to be defensive, but let God come to your defense and let him deal with it.

Q.   Rob, what advice would you give to a pastor concerning his family, when going through a time of crisis like that.

A.   Well, I was very fortunate in my first instance thirteen years ago, I had two sons and they were very small and during that forced termination they were not greatly affected by it. I am very fortunate to have a very strong and spiritual and godly wife who was a constant support, a very loving spirit through that thing, and she has not been one to take up an offense for me even during those times but realized as God's man I was well able to trust in the Lord and we together as a couple have always taken that approach to conflict in the church.

Q.   We know that you can do everything right and still see conflict as we see evidenced in the life of our Lord. But, if men like you had some training in matters such as mediation and arbitration, in addition to their life experience of going through experiences like this if they

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were made available to you during a time of crisis do you think you would draw upon their abilities or wisdom to assist or counsel you in a time of conflict in the future?

A.   Very definitely, I believe that in the last conflict we had, during the building program about five years ago, a director of missions was asked to come in and mediate between myself and one of my deacons and it was a very positive thing. It ended up in total reconciliation and I think it is important for someone with a cool head, someone very objective and unbiased to come in and deal from a biblical basis and bring some sanity and clear up the issues. If that person is given the proper hearing, they can be a great asset to a conflict management in a church.

Interview with Dr. H.D. McCarty

Pastor of University Baptist Church

Fayetteville, Arkansas

Q.   How long have you pastored?

A.   This is my twenty-ninth year.

Q.   Have you been part of a church when it was in deep conflict at a level of which a split was threatened?

A.   Well we have been able to hold off the split, I think. But anyone who has been a pastor for 28 years has been in deep conflict or he hasn't been faithful to God. We have lost over the twenty-eight years between one hundred and one hundred and twenty-five families as best as I can see it (due to conflict). Most of them in the last several years. My own church's particular problem is I have a philosophy of church leadership, I want to have maximum diversity, in wondrous unity, under biblical authority, which creates the greatest potential to bring glory to God. Many people don't do that because they can't stand it. Many people have left me because they say U.B.C. is too broad. Some of the charismatics have left, some of the fundamentalists have left, some of the ideological "church is only for Sunday morning" have left. But we have never had a split, these have just filtered out. But I was thinking "Lord, what is the difference in U.B.C., is it my ego, is it because I think I'm involved in it? But then the Lord reaffirmed to me just what I told you. He said, "No H.D., your vision is my vision because maximum diversity in wondrous unity under the authority of My Son in Heaven bringing glory to Me forever is My divine plan. That is what Heaven is going to be. Every church should try to be a little colony of Heaven on earth. So as long as you have that diversity, the weakness of the flesh, not only in the people you lead, but in your own leadership is going to cause flaking off, which is good for you, because that type of tension drives you to authenticity.

Q.   What would you say are the key issues of conflict that you faced in your years in the pastorate?

A.   One would be staff leadership. I think that would be
the first one. If you can't get the staff with you, you
won't get the church with you. In Arkansas we've had to
hire cheap, inexperienced men, which always hurts you. And
we pastors are the worst employers on earth because we tend
to trust people and then believe in our ability to help
them. You start out with the syndrome of hiring people to
help them and to help you, which you finally give up on
after a few years because that usually doesn't work. Josh
McDowell told me recently, "You cannot counsel and manage
the same person at equal levels, it just doesn't work." The
first great conflict has been staff unity of mind.

The second great conflict, at least in our day and time, is
authority. My folks are mostly white collar, they think
they know about everything. And some of my biggest problems
have come from people who just reject biblical authority.

The third area of conflict is what I call cooperate
consciousness. When I was young and first came to the
church, they were on their knees, less than one hundred
people. In fact the total budget of the church when I came
here is less than what we pay in hospitalization costs
today, $40,000. As I paid the price, I didn't take raises,
I worked long hours, I was on the campus, I was with my men
in discipleship groups, and the church exploded. I said,
when I get older the people will appreciate what I have done
and let it be a little bit easier on me. But the conflict
came when the older people died and moved on and the younger
people who came along have never known. Just like there
came a generation that knew not Joseph, and every pastor has
to fight that in a long pastorate.

The fourth area of conflict would be doctrine. Not that
there has been a disagreement on doctrine, but you find
yourself incapable of leading enough people deeper to where
they understand the criticalness of the biblical revelation,
the walk in the Holy Spirit, and the unity that has to come.
In the Sunday school or some kind of organizational quorum
has to be there to get the job done.

The fifth area that I have had in these last ten years has
been satanic conflict. When I came up here people said,
"Well, I wish you luck." I thought to myself, I'm going to
need more than luck if I'm going to take on Satan. And
every pastor should have a commitment to prayer. In fact, I
have a little statement that the true biblical pastor,
especially in these larger churches, we are not the chief
executive officer of a human organization, we have to be the
crucified leader of a spiritual movement. This fifth area
of conflict can only be conquered by your own death, your
own purity, which is what most ministers don't have the

encouragement even to do it because they are in competition, don't have the deep fellowship with other men they need.

Q. Have you ever had to face the situation where a key leader who was on staff or a key lay leader was found to be in extreme moral failure. If so, would you relate the essence of that and what action, if any the church took.

A. Yes. And I think the thing to do there is try to keep it as hidden as possible. Not deceptive, but some of us, all of us struggle with that. Here may be a pastor who is not committing adultery, at least physically, but he has sure done it watching T.V. or something. To me that is just about as serious as someone committing adultery physically. One of them is found out quicker by men but both of them by God. I had a man one time who was involved and I kind of let him slip out over a three month period. And then later on, about seven years later, one of my staff members said he was afraid of me because of the way I fired this certain person. See, he had held this against me for seven years, thinking I was unjust when in reality I had let him slip out in three months because he was having an affair. One of the men that left me and went to First Baptist wanted me to bring people to the front of the church and denounce them. He said I wasn't biblical in practicing church discipline. I think that church discipline has to come from the people. The presence of God in the people, not just from a proclamation from the preacher at the pulpit. I can get up and say anything I want, but unless the people are behind me it is no good. And if I don't say anything at all, some people think I am watering down the message, I don't think so. You could accuse Jesus of watering down His message because He didn't say everything that He could. He said, "I have much to tell you, you cannot bear it." And so his message was somewhat limited to the hearers. I think that in those things that they ought to be dealt with by the elders, but the process should be that if you find out that one should go, then two should go, and that usually handles it.

Q. Do you think that such instances of moral failure and conflict are less frequent today or more frequent than when you first began in the ministry?

A. As I read history, I question that the height that we are giving to these most critical days holds as much weight as we would like to say. We are seeing in American culture differences we've never seen before in the last thirty years. But if you read a history of Christians in the Roman empire, under Caligula and Nero there couldn't have been any worse despots. You read the history of England and how Crammer was burned at the stake just because he wouldn't

come back to Catholicism, history and life have always been brutal and harsh. For a man to lose his family, for a wife to lose her husband, for the family to go bankrupt, or your children to be raped and killed and murdered, when you are dead you are dead, it doesn't make any difference whether a sword does it or an H-bomb does it, you are dead. So I see in every generation there are times of more peace and greater war. In America, right now we are living in a time of greater chaos. Depending on your theology, the last times. I was seeing what Paul was saying to Timothy in II Timothy, and a word that I had read for years had never made sense to me until just the last couple of months, where Paul said they would be abusive. Abuse, man when I was a boy, abuse was not a problem. So I see that this is a time of the intensity of evil. Whether we will crater back down and have some times of peace like we had in the fifties or the twenties in America, I do not know. I know that Christianity is exploding throughout the rest of the world, it's only in recession in America and Canada and in some of our Western European countries. So I do feel as a pastor overwhelmed by the conflict raging around me.

Q.   What advice would you give to young leaders who are in the midst of their first distressing bout with church conflict.

A.   Very simple, I have a motto that I have come back to again and again. Instant obedience, radical purity, everlasting endurance. It will pass. The pressures we feel are to drive us to authenticity. And the only way that comes is through brokenness. So a man in conflict must see that conflict as not being from Satan, but as being used by the Father. I believe that the Scriptures teach that God will not allow what He cannot use. If it's allowed, God will use it. If He cannot use it, it is not allowed. So the warrior leader sees conflict as an opportunity and what is wrong with these young pastors is what's wrong with me. There is no one available to counsel them. I could have gone through my time a lot quicker if I would of had some mentor to help me.

When a pastor is hurt it is like an N.F.L. athlete when he is hit. He may be an all-pro, now he's lying on the field. He was side blocked and it knocked everything out of him. He is hurt, he's in pain, he's confused and he is weakened. Now, that happens to the best of us, so all we can do is make a biblical response to it, that may take a day, it may take six months, it may take ten years, depending on the severity of the hit. Out of our pain comes healing. Out of our confusion comes wisdom, out of our weakness strength. The biggest problem with young pastors is they don't realize they are in intense, brutal, spiritual combat. And they are

wimps and they have not determined to be a warrior about what's ahead of them.

Q.   The purpose of my dissertation is to develop a consultant's ministry to help pastors and churches with advice, mediation and such to help avert church splits or massive exodus'. Do you see that such a ministry would be used today or do you see that pastors as not quite ready for a consultant type of ministry in their church?

A.   It is something I'm seriously considering doing. The consultant helps one to endure. The key to victory and growth and spiritual ministry is endurance. The Bible speaks of upomone, patience, staying under pressure. I have a motto that the pastor is called to do one thing. Not to build a Sunday school, preach sermons, visit, go to the hospital, build the buildings, or all the rest of that stuff. The primary responsibility of the pastor is to demonstrate resurrection. When you say to your people I walk through Monday through Saturday, every Sunday I'm going to rise again. Until a pastor can demonstrate resurrection his people are not going to follow him except for fleshy reasons.

Can our denomination do it? Up to this point it doesn't look like that's the focus. They do have some things along that line. But certainly a man who had been in denominational work for many years would be somewhat limited handling the pressures of the pastorate. Secondly, would young men who think they can handle things be open to such a ministry? Thirdly, most of the things that we have, the evangelism conference, the revival now conferences, crusade conferences and such doesn't really help the man where he is. You go hear some man preach his sugar stick and you walk away more discouraged than helped. There needs to be a network of brokenness where God can raise up some men who have stayed in the battle and know what it is to endure, who can help pastors endure conflict.

This would need to be marketed. Once the testimonials get out you'd have more of a ministry than you could handle.

APPENDIX TWO

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The following letter and survey form was mailed to one hundred pastors.

Dear Fellow Pastor,

I am conducting a survey as part of a thesis project at Liberty University. Would you be so kind as to participate by filling out this form and returning it in the enclosed envelope? It should take only a few minutes of your time (I know how reluctant I am to fill out those long ones). The title of the project is <u>The Development of a Consultant Ministry to Evangelical Churches in Need of Conflict Management</u>. You need not give your name and address unless you would want a copy of the results of this survey. If you so request, one will be sent to you without charge.

My heart is to help pastors and churches to good solutions in what seem like impossible situations. I have pastored for 20 years and know the joys and distresses of the contemporary pastorate. Thank you for your time and for your ministry for our Lord.

<div style="text-align:center">Sincerely,

Thomas E. Hatley</div>

Pastoral Survey

1. How long have you been in pastoral ministry?_____

2. Have you ever had to deal with severe conflict that threatened the fellowship and testimony of the congregation?_____

3. If the answer to the previous question was yes, how many such occurrences have you experienced?_____

4. Have you ever been part of a church when conflict led to a split?_____ If the answer is yes, then please state how many times._____

5. Have you ever had to deal with severe moral failure in the life of a staff member or a key lay leader?_____ If so, how many times?_____

6. Please circle one of the following letters, and answer in light of what you sense is the case in evangelical churches in general.

> a. I feel church conflicts are worse than they were in my early ministry.
> b. I feel church conflicts are less severe and frequent than in my early ministry.
> c. I feel that the level of conflict in churches is the same now as it was in the early days of my ministry.

7. Would you be inclined to use a consultant team that was trained in the handling of conflict through mediation and other methods the next time you were to experience severe conflict in your congregation? This team would consist of three people who were experienced church leaders (at least one pastor and one lay leader would be on each team) and committed to a firm belief in the infallibility of the Scriptures._____

Please feel free to state your comments on the back of this survey.

Check here if you want a copy of the survey results._____

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

LOG OF SURVEY RESULTS

Number of surveys mailed: 100

Number of surveys returned: 44

Surveys were sent to churches in Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Choice of churches was determined at random by a receptionist at Immanuel Baptist Church of Rogers, Arkansas.

Below is listed data gleaned from each of the seven questions.

Question 1: *How long have you been in pastoral ministry?*

The average time in the pastorate was 20.16 years.

Experience in the ministry of pastors who returned surveys:

0-10 years	12 pastors
11-20 years	11 pastors
21-30 years	11 pastors
30+ years	10 pastors

The 44 pastors represented 887 years of pastoral experience.

Question 2: *Have you ever had to deal with severe conflict that threatened the fellowship and testimony of the congregation?*

no answers:	10
yes answers:	34

77% of the pastors surveyed have faced severe church conflict.

Question 3: *If the answer to the previous question was yes, how many such occurrences have you experienced?*

Of the 34 who answered "yes" to the previous question there were 64 instances of severe conflict.

When factored over the entire 44 pastors in the survey this represents 1.45 conflicts per pastor. It also represents one major conflict every 13.9 years of ministry.

The breakdown of conflict among the 44 pastors was as follows:

0 conflicts	10 pastors
1 conflict	16 pastors
2 conflicts	9 pastors
3 conflicts	7 pastors
4 conflicts	1 pastor
5 conflicts	1 pastor

Question 4: *Have you ever been part of a church when conflict led to a split? If the answer is yes, then please state how many times.*

37 pastors reported no splits. 7 reported splits and one of those saw two splits. One in every 5.5 pastors have faced a split.

Question 5: *Have you ever had to deal with severe moral failure in the life of a staff member or a key lay leader? If so, how many times?*

28 of 44 pastors answered yes (64%). 13 have faced it more than once (30%). There were a total of 45 cases in the 28 pastors.

Question 6: *Please circle one of the following letters, and answer in light of what you sense is the case in evangelical churches in general.*

> a. *I feel church conflicts are worse than they were in my early ministry.*
> b. *I feel church conflicts are less severe and frequent than in my early ministry.*
> c. *I feel that the level of conflict in churches is the same now as it was in the early days of my ministry.*

38 pastors said conflicts were as bad or worse than in the early days of their ministry (86%).

19 pastors answered "a"
                    19 pastors answered "b"
                     3 pastors answered "c"
                     3 pastors did not answer

Question 7: *Would you be inclined to use a consultant team that was trained in the handling of conflict through mediation and other methods the next time you were to experience severe conflict in your congregation? This team would consist of three people who were experienced church leaders (at least one pastor and one lay leader would be on each team) and committed to a firm belief in the infallibility of the Scriptures.*

            19 pastors gave a clear "yes" to this question.
            15 pastors either said "no" or gave answers that
                seemed unfavorable to using such a ministry.
             8 pastors gave answers that were favorable to using
                the ministry, but were not "yes" answers.
             2 pastors left the question blank.
            61% of the pastors either said "yes" or gave an
                affirmative answer of some sort to this question.

Below are listed some of the pertinent comments that were offered by some of the pastors who returned the surveys:

    One pastor said that though he had never pastored a church during a split he was "called to three churches after severe conflict."

    Another pastor stated that he had only faced one bout of severe conflict but that "the problem had continued for three years."

    After answering "no" to question #4, one pastor commented, "though one church I pastored split 5 years after my departure from differences in the membership that were present when I was their pastor."

    A pastor stated that he faced the problem of infidelity in the life of a church leader three different times, and each was in the life of a deacon.

    On question 7, one Southern Baptist pastor answered "no" and then gave the following reason, "infallibility is a non-scriptural doctrine which in itself would scare me away from such consultation - I see as many 'infallibility' believers (pastors) with splintering churches as I see 'liberal' believers (pastors) with splintering churches."

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On question 7 another pastor writes, "I would possibly use them for a personal consultation. Probably not in the actual crisis solving."

On question 7, after a "no" answer, another pastor writes, "We already have people in place who are capable of handling such a matter: D.O.M., local pastors, wise lay-leaders. Besides, I would trust my congregation to know the situation, to know me, and to do what was best, more so, than any outsider. I speak from experience. In 1986 I was divorced, though I didn't seek it or want it. I told the congregation very honestly and openly. The congregation tried to save my marriage, but they failed. But they did not ask me to leave or resign. They loved and encouraged me. After 17 years, I am still their pastor."

Concerning conflicts one pastor wrote, "In the 21 years of my pastorates there have been probably about ten or twelve; only one was severe. There could have been more but I think how we respond as a pastor determines what will happen. In every conflict I have sincerely turned it over to the Lord. He has given wisdom and a spirit of calm. I've learned that it is God's business to change people and that He is sovereignly in total control."

One pastor who had 20 years in the pastorate wrote, "My feeling and experience is that conflict is more prevalent and open in our churches now than before. Authority and submission to it are constant causes, but so is the general dissatisfaction level in all people today, including Christians. Another cause it seems to me is how we determine success. As long as we do it as the world does we will continue to suffer from the "change the coach" syndrome. I've not been in a church that split, but I've certainly experienced conflict, and used to think 'that will never happen to me' but now I know any pastor can be caught up in the conflict ball and swept away. We all need help if for no other reason than to know we are not alone in the struggle."

On question 7, one pastor answered "no" and said, "reason I would not, 1) probably cost too much, 2) new people would not be able to understand the entire situation or people."

Concerning question #6 a pastor of 26 years comments, "I am presently pastoring (completing my 11th year) a wonderful fellowship. The reason I circle (a) is because of what I hear from other pastors. My personal conflicts were in a former pastorate and was the result

of a power structure that was in place when I accepted the church. I did not realize how strong it was until I had been there a while."

Another pastor wrote, "I feel that the pastor and deacon chairman should be able to work through the conflict. Of course, a phone call to such experts might be advisable."

APPENDIX FOUR

BAPTIST CONFESSIONS OF FAITH ON THE CHURCH
(As printed in W.L. Lumpkin's Baptist Confessions of Faith)

The Baptist Confession of 1688
(The Philadelphia Confession)

This is the most generally accepted Confession of the Regular or Calvinistic Baptists in England and in the Southern States of America. It appeared first in London, 1677, then again in 1688 and 1689, under the title A Confession of Faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many Congregations of Christians, Baptized upon Profession of their Faith in London and the Country. With an Appendix concerning Baptism. It was adopted early in the eighteenth century by the Philadelphia Association of Baptist churches, and is hence called also, the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

. . . 4.   The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the Church is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof, but is no other than Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called of God: whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.
    5.   In the execution of this power wherewith he is so intrusted, the Lord Jesus calleth out of the world unto himself, through the ministry of his Word, by his Spirit, those that are given unto him by his Father, that they may walk before him in all the ways of obedience which he prescribeth to them in his word. Those thus called he commandeth to walk together in particular societies or churches, for their mutual edification, and the due performance of that public worship which he requireth of them in the world.
    6.   The members of these churches are saints by calling, visibly manifesting and evidencing (in and by their profession and walking) their obedience unto that call of Christ; and do willingly consent to walk together according

to the appointment of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord and one to another, by the will of God, in the professed subjection to the ordinances of the gospel.

7. To each of these churches thus gathered, according to his mind declared in his Word, he hath given all that power and authority which is any way needful for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline which he hath instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting and executing of that power.

8. A particular church gathered and completely organized according to the mind of Christ, consists of officers and members; and the officers appointed by Christ to be chosen and set apart by the Church (so-called and gathered) for the peculiar administration of ordinances, and execution of power and duty, which he intrusts them with or calls them to, to be continued to the end of the world, are bishops or elders and deacons.

9. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the office of bishop or elder in the church is that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church itself, and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the eldership of the church, if there be any before constituted therein; and of a deacon, that he be chosen by the like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands.

10. The work of pastors being constantly to attend the service of Christ in his churches, in the ministry of the Word and prayer, with watching of their souls, as they that must give an account to him, it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, but also to communicate to them of all their good things, according to their ability, so as they may have a comfortable supply, without being themselves entangled with secular affairs; and may also be capable of exercising hospitality towards others; and this is required by the law of nature, and by the express order of our Lord Jesus, who hath ordained that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

11. Although it be incumbent on the bishops or pastors of the churches to be instant in preaching the Word by way of office, yet the work of preaching the Word is not so peculiarly confined to them but that others also, gifted and fitted by the Holy Spirit for it, and approved and called by the Church, may and ought to perform it.

12. As all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have opportunity so to do, so all that are admitted unto the privileges of a church are also under the censures nd government thereof, according to the rule of Christ.

13. No church members, upon any offense taken by them, having performed their duty required of them towards

the person they are offended at, ought to disturb any church
order, or absent themselves from the assemblies of the
church or administration of any ordinances from the
assemblies of the church or administration of any ordinances
upon the account of such offense at any of their fellow-
members, but to wait upon Christ in the further proceeding
of the church.

14. As each church, and all the members of it, are
bound to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all
the churches of Christ, in all places, and upon all
occasions to further it (every one within the bounds of
their places and callings, in the exercise of their gifts
and graces:, so the churches (when planted by the providence
of God so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for
it) ought to hold communion among themselves for their
peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.

15. In cases of difficulties or differences, either
in point of doctrine or administration, wherein either the
churches in general are concerned or any one church, in
their peace, union, and edification; or any member or
members of any church are injured, in or by any proceedings
in censures not agreeable to truth and order: it is
according to the mind of Christ that many churches, holding
communion together, do by their messengers meet to consider
and give their advice in or about that matter in difference,
to be reported to all the churches concerned; howbeit these
messengers assembled are not intrusted with any church power
properly so called, or with any jurisdiction over the
churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over
any churches or persons, to impose their determination on
the churches or officers.

The New Hampshire Confession of 1833

We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a
congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant
in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the
ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising
the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his
word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors,
and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are
defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

The 1925 Statement of Faith
of the Southern Baptist Convention

A church of Christ is a congregation of baptized
believers, associated by covenant in the faith and

fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of
Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts,
rights, and privileges invested in them by his word, and
seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Its
Scriptural officers are bishops, or elders, and deacons.

The Baptist Faith and Message of 1963

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a
local body of baptized believers who are associated by
covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,
observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His
teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges
invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the
gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through
democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In
such a congregation, members are equally responsible. Its
Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the
body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the
ages.

APPENDIX FIVE

OTHER CONSULTANT MINISTRY POSSIBILITIES

Once a conflict management consultant service to
churches has been established, other consultant ministries
may be possible. Those ministries that seem likely for
future development are:

Conflict Management Hot Line

This possibility was briefly discussed in the paper.
Pastors and church leaders in conflict are more likely to
seek advice before intervention. This ministry could
provide the needed advice and bridge the pastor to further
help within the consultant ministry.

In many cases, this "hot line" could assist pastors in
averting destructive conflict. Many calls would become
counseling sessions as pastors and others could use the
phone ministry as a means of discussing the problem without
fear of a breach of confidence.

If possible this would be a toll free number. The
phone would be manned by a trained consultant or an
answering service would set an appointment for a consultant
to call back at an agreed upon time.

Total Church Consultant Ministry

Societal and ecclesiastical changes take place so
quickly as to leave many congregations at a loss to keep
pace. Many pastors and churches have never done a community
study, or a self study. They jump from program to program
hoping one will somehow work for their church.

A "Total Church" consulting program would guide a
church through a complete study of all the factors which
should be considered to determine where a church stands,
where it should be going and how it should get there. Much
of the work would be done by the church so they could

perform a similar evaluation in the future without
assistance.

A consultant team would visit a church for a Sunday
through Wednesday. During that time they would train pre--
selected committees in how to do their share of the study.
Also, staff and key leaders would be interviewed and tested
during this time.

Some of the areas to be studied and analyzed would be:

Leadership:

    Staff:
- Role acceptance
- Team relationships
- Team compatibility
- Team attitudes
- Team happiness
- Financial needs
- Family needs
- Health needs
- Emotional needs
- Training needs

    Lay leaders:
- Role acceptance
- Team relationships
- Team attitudes
- Family needs
- Emotional needs
- Training needs

Church:

- History
- Statistical profile
- Physical resources profile
- Membership profile
- Leadership profile
- Organizational profile
- Ministry profile
- Financial profile
- Effectiveness profile

Community:

- Community definition
- Demographics
- Community evangelistic profile
- Community ministry profile
- Community religious profile
- Community contextual factors profile

<u>Synthesis</u>:

>Purpose statements
>Ministry goals
>Five-year planning
>Marketing
>Restructuring and change
>Matters of revival and awakening

This consultant ministry would take six months to complete this study. A full report would be presented to the leadership, most of which would have been generated by the church committees. The finished product could be offered to and approved by the congregation. A commitment revival could be held to launch the conclusions and objectives of the study.

Such a study would bring confidence to a pastor and church that they knew themselves, their area, and the most effective ministries for their situation. The tendency to drift along with whatever popular program is available would be halted. A pastor and people with known goals and roles would be left in its place.

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        Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1985.

VITA
Thomas Eugene Hatley

PERSONAL
    Born: March 20, 1953
    Married: Peggy Jean May, October 23, 1971.
    Children: Andrea Jean, born February 8, 1974.
             Daniel Eugene, born December 17, 1978.

EDUCATIONAL
    B.A. Criswell Bible College, 1978.
    M.A. Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, 1985.
    M.A. Dallas Baptist University, 1985.

MINISTERIAL
    Ordained: May 5, 1974, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church,
             Caney, Oklahoma.

PROFESSIONAL
    Pastor, Mt Carmel Baptist Church, Caney, Oklahoma,
        1973-1976.
    Pastor, Frink Baptist Church, McAlester, Oklahoma,
        1976-1981.
    Pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, McAlester, Oklahoma,
        1981-1986.
    Pastor, Lochwood Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas,
        1986-1992.
    Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Rogers, Arkansas,
        1992-present.