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AN ANALYSIS OF YOUTH MINISTERS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
CHARACTER QUALITIES, LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES,  
AND LEADERSHIP FLAWS THAT FACILITATE  
OR HINDER EFFECTIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

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by  
Troy W. Temple  
May 2007

**APPROVAL SHEET**

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To my best friend Karla,

my wife and my love.

We have always labored together.

To my beautiful daughters,

Madeleine and Kathryn,

you are the gifts that I thank my heavenly Father

for every day,

and to my parents for your unconditional love and support

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CYM	International Center for Youth Ministry
KBC	Kentucky Baptist Convention
SCBI	State Convention of Baptists in Indiana
SBC	Southern Baptist Convention
SBTS	The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
YMS	Youth Minister Survey
YMI	Youth Minister Interview

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## PREFACE

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I thank my Savior for His unconditional love for a simple man who just wants his life to give God glory.

Troy W Temple

Louisville, Kentucky

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## CHAPTER 1

### RESEARCH CONCERN

Leading young people to mature faith is an adventure that involves passion and skill unique to the journey that is adolescence. Adolescence is traditionally defined as a “period of growth between childhood and adulthood” (Rice 2005, 1), involving an intense season of conflict with authority and irrational behavior. During this time in a person’s life, leadership is a crucial component for successfully reaching the maturity of adulthood. As noted by Henry Blackaby, “The twenty-first century is the most advanced age in history, but effective biblical leadership has never been more needed” (Blackaby 2001, cover). He goes on to define leadership as “moving people on to God’s agenda” (Blackaby 2001, 20). Adolescents are in a tenuous time of transition and questioning. They are in need of godly, spiritual leaders who can provide the guidance and training to move them on to God’s agenda for their lives. Youth ministers must be spiritual leaders who derive their leadership role from God and His Word. They must be leaders who have oriented their lives toward God for the purpose of modeling a God-focused life for those adolescents whom they lead. The youth minister is to embody the courageous and confident words of that great leader of God’s people, Joshua, when he proclaimed,

If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. (Joshua 24:15, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted)

Too many youth ministers find it difficult to be the leader and friend of adolescents and often find themselves leading to please students. Joshua's words above find a pleasure before an audience of one. He plants his leadership strategy firmly in the confidence that to please God is far more critical than to please students. This style of leadership is ultimately rooted in a deep love for God and His people, not instead of His people.

In this assignment to lead adolescents within the context of local church ministry, what does it take to effectively lead a local church youth ministry? Leadership in any realm requires specific abilities and qualities that often precede the leader's engaging the task or project. These abilities and qualities are often referred to as competencies. Competence is defined as "having requisite or adequate ability or qualities" (retrieved 28 April, 2005 from <http://www.webster.com>). Competence is respected in the professional workplace, perhaps most noticeably in the world of sports. In the world of sports, effective coaches must demonstrate their knowledge of the game, skills development, and game day management. The fields of medicine, law, education, and science all have criteria for determining effective work or leadership in their respective disciplines. These competent practices have been established from observing leaders in the field who have demonstrated specific characteristics that contribute to their effectiveness.

### **Introduction to the Research Problem**

As leaders and guides in the lives of the developing adolescent, youth ministers are responsible for facilitating spiritual development as well as other areas of adolescent growth. What competencies are required of youth ministers in order to be effective in the mission of local church youth ministry? Does the role of the local church youth minister

go beyond the discipleship of adolescents? Are leaders in local church youth ministry finding they need skills in developing a team of volunteers much like a coaching staff? Is it necessary for the youth minister to understand when to employ various styles of leadership? These are questions that this researcher believes must be addressed by current full-time youth ministers.

The medical field has established competencies and skills that are required of medical students before they are allowed to enter the operating room much less being allowed to perform the surgery. The surgeon must have a recognizable level of competence prior to entering the operating room. If his patient mortality rate is sub-par, it becomes obvious that the surgeon's level of competence is not acceptable. In the church, this is not always the case. Ministry positions are often filled with little more than an interview, a resume, and a couple of calls to references that the candidate has supplied. Often, senior pastors have a list of leadership competencies that they expect the youth minister to embody. Many times these expectations are not articulated to a level of comprehension that affords the youth minister a solid handle on the senior pastor's expectations. In spite of this, there are still youth ministers leading local church youth ministries with effectiveness. What character qualities, leadership competencies do they demonstrate? What leadership flaws have they guarded against to avoid ineffectiveness?

### **Leadership in the Church**

Over three decades ago, Kenneth Gangel identified the fatal flaw of church leadership as being a failure to “recognize not only a pragmatic, but also a biblical leadership style” (Gangel 1974, 10). Gangel attested that extensive research from the field of industrial management identified a leadership style that was outlined in Scripture.

It was a style that valued the individual and relationships not only as a means to an end, but an end itself. He listed three indicators of what New Testament leadership is not and three indicators of what New Testament leadership is. New Testament leadership is not political power, authoritarian attitude, or cultic control. Rather, it is nurturing, an example, and resembles biblical fatherhood. This is noticeably applicable for youth ministry. Adolescents need a mentor who will nurture. They need a leader who will model the truth of Scripture. They need a youth minister who will reflect the love of God the Father into their world.

If youth ministries are to be led by such leaders, then hiring leaders with these qualities must be the pressing issue in the process. A pivotal turning point in church leadership can be observed when congregations reset their DNA to reflect Scripture's intent to produce leaders who can reproduce leaders. Reproduction stands at the heart of the Great Commission, "Go therefore and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19).

To "go and make disciples" is a mission that promotes perpetual ministry; likewise, it allows vision to flow freely within the church. LeRoy Eims identifies disciples as people who go through the discipleship process then "in time repeat that process in the life of another" (Eims 1978, 18). Youth ministry leadership that sets its trajectory towards multiplying leaders stands ready to engage the challenge of a post-Christian culture. Implicit within the mission of Matthew 28:19-20 is the ongoing development of leadership within the church, leadership that produces leadership.

### *Ministry Tenure among Ministerial Staff*

Similar to the study proposed here, Larry Purcell found that in the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 1999, 41 full-time and bi-vocational pastors and 10 other staff

personnel were forcibly terminated (Purcell 2001). More recently, Jimmy Draper, former president of LifeWay Church Resources, stated that 100 ministers are fired every month in Southern Baptist churches (Draper 2003). In a recent article, Paul Turner of LifeWay Church Resources stated that “youth ministers were let go more than any other staff position in the church” (Turner 2005, 20). Turner cites various possible reasons for the forced resignation or firing of these youth ministers. Some are shown the door due to moral indiscretions. Others fell prey to financial woes, both personal and corporate. In many cases, released youth ministers found themselves caught in the transition of senior pastoral leadership. In all cases, a question arises. Would their positions have been less vulnerable and more valuable to senior pastors if they had demonstrated a high level of competency and effectiveness in their pastoral duties and the leadership of the youth ministry?

***Character Qualities, Leadership Competencies,  
and Leadership Flaws***

Are there identifiable character qualities and leadership competencies that every youth minister should possess? These may be difficult to identify due to the shifting terrain of local church ministry and a multiplicity of determining factors such as changing culture, social issues, and developing theologies. It appears that leadership competence would avert many forced departures. However, is leadership competence the sole determining factor for assessing the leadership ability of a youth minister? There are character qualities identified in Scripture that any believer should possess and others that are non-negotiable for leaders in the church. For example, in his first letter to Timothy, Paul lists no fewer than thirteen attributes or qualities that leaders, or those aspiring to be leaders, in the church must embody.

It is a trustworthy statement: if a man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take of the church of God?), and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Deacons, likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. (1 Timothy 3: 1-10)

Paul outlines more character qualities than he does abilities. He calls Timothy to reproduce leaders who are temperate, prudent, respectable, gentle, peaceable, not greedy or materialistic, dignified, and not proud. Paul also wants the leaders in the church to have good reputations in the community both inside and outside the church. If these character qualities are such a high priority, could it possible that some are more important than others? For instance, Paul speaks of the leader being a good manager of his own family and that if he cannot do that then he cannot be a leader in the church. This seems to be a flaw in the leader's character that disqualifies him for leadership positions in the church. Are there other potential leadership flaws that may render a youth minister ineffective?

In the end we come to three key areas that are important criteria for leaders in the church, character qualities, competency, and leadership flaws. Are there identifiable competencies, character qualities, and leadership flaws that allow or inhibit the youth minister to be effective in leading a local church youth ministry?

### *The Demand for Youth Ministers and Youth Ministry*

In local church ministry, there has been an increased focus on ministry to and for adolescents over the past several decades. David Adams, Executive Director of the International Center for Youth Ministry in Louisville, Kentucky, documented the onset of the “professional stage” of youth ministry development to be the early 1970s (Adams 1993). During this stage in the history of youth ministry, the church recognized the need to have ministerial oversight for young people. The profession of the youth minister has been supported by the creation of academic programs of study in colleges and universities around the country as well as around the world. The demand for youth ministers is as broad as ever. In Kentucky alone, there are 1,278 youth minister positions reported by SBC churches. The Kentucky Baptist Convention office currently reports that there are 52 profiles in their system from churches requesting youth ministers and 89 total requests for youth ministers, which includes those from Kentucky as well as outside the state. Churches are looking for leaders to minister to adolescents and their families like no other time in church history.

According to George Barna, 77% of Americans who accept Christ do so by the age of 21. This could mean that the most responsive people group in the United States is the adolescent population. Barna’s research states that “nearly half of all Americans who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior do so before reaching the age of 13” (Barna 2004, Barna report on evangelism 2004.pdf). The urgency is obvious. The church must seize the opportunity to reach them while they are young. This demands a call for highly competent, thoroughly trained leaders for local church youth ministry. This current generation of adolescents represents the largest generation of young people in the history of the United States. In 2001, statistics stated that this generation of adolescents would



number “76 million by the end of 2002. By the time immigration adds to their numbers, they will easily exceed the record-setting Boomers by several million people” (Barna 2001, 15). The demand for youth ministers is greater than ever.

Not only are the numbers outrageous, but their culture is unlike any previously seen in the church. According to Thom Rainer, the church stands at the beginning of an unchurched generation that is potentially the “bridge between the secular and the sacred” (Rainer 1997, 3). Rainer identifies the Bridger generation as one that will come of age early in the twenty-first century. But, who are the adolescents, really?

As has been described by G. Stanley Hall, adolescence is a time of storm and stress (Hall 1905). Adolescence is traditionally defined as a “period of growth between childhood and adulthood” (Rice 2005, 1), involving an intense season of conflict with authority and irrational behavior. Reflecting on this period of transition, psychologist Peter Blos characterized it as the period of the second separation-individuation process, which involves a radical disengagement from primary care givers. Expounding on this concept, Bruce Narramore characterizes adolescence as a process, a transition, of “growing out of the dependent relationships of childhood” (Narramore 1990, 30).

As the demand for youth ministers continues to grow, many who answer the call to local church youth ministry enter the field with training that amounts to little more than a one-day seminar. Even with the increase of academic training programs, churches are calling youth ministers who have not been adequately trained. The church has neglected to set a standard or prerequisites for the hiring of youth ministers and have often sought to enlist those who minimally express a desire or affinity for working with adolescents regardless of training or skill. Henry Blackaby maintains that “effective

leadership has become the panacea for every challenge society faces” (Blackaby 2001, 5). Warren Bennis has stated that “at the heart of America is a vacuum into which self-anointed saviors have rushed” (Bennis 1989, 36). It seems that this has also become the case in the ministry leadership of local church youth ministry. With the rise of the vacuum of leadership among the adolescent population, self-proclaimed youth ministers have rushed in to fill the void. Church leaders need a clear set of competencies and character qualities upon which to make hiring decisions in youth ministry.

### *Effective Youth Ministry*

Effective youth ministry is the desire of every youth minister. Church leadership carves precious resources out of the annual church budget to support a ministry to and for adolescents. Do youth ministers know what effective youth ministry is and do they understand how to achieve that effectiveness? Before that question is answered, we must ask, “What is effective local church youth ministry?” This question has been on the minds of youth ministers and youth ministry educators for several decades. Elmer Towns adds two criteria to Michael Rustin’s two criteria for success in youth ministry. “First, a youth program must be growing in numbers (increase in enrollment and/or attendance). Second, the youth must be involved in the total program of the church” (Rustin 1967). Towns adds “two other standards for effective youth work, the changed lives of teens and correspondence with the aims of the New Testament” (Towns 1973, 193).

Youth ministers for today’s local church are dependent on effectiveness as defined by the leaders in their respective congregations. However, it becomes a primary

task of pastoral leaders to work together to identify indicators of effective youth ministry and recruit leaders who can accomplish it.

The senior pastor is often the point person in the hiring process. Other times the search for a youth minister is led by a committee. In any case, these church leaders will select a youth minister based on expectations both stated and assumed. The expectations are predictably a reflection of character qualities and leadership competencies that the church leaders desire of the prospective youth minister. At the heart of these expectations are the desires for effective youth ministry defined by an increase in attendance, spiritual growth, decisions and baptisms, and overall activity. Youth ministers that struggle to meet these expectations do not find great fulfillment and often begin looking to change churches or even careers. Other youth ministers seem to be highly effective in leading their youth ministries to demonstrate both inward growth spiritually as well as outward growth numerically. This study is intended to identify the perceptions related to effectiveness from youth ministers currently leading a local church youth ministry full-time.

### ***Trends in Professional Training***

Youth ministry higher education is coming of age. Youth Specialties Academic Support Network currently lists over 160 colleges, universities, and seminaries that offer coursework and/or degree programs in the field of youth ministry on their web site (retrieved 3 May 2005 from <http://www.youthspecialties.com>). These programs represent a wide array of courses of study from a single course to a minor (15 semester hours) to a major (30 or more semester hours) in youth ministry. As the discipline matures in age and effectiveness, institutions of higher learning and various denominations are suggesting

and implementing certification programs for those who would be hired as youth ministers in local churches. Churches of the Southern Baptist Convention have employed unwritten criteria for youth ministers by using networks that are tied to specific trainers, schools, and educators in youth ministry. The United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has set up a certification system for youth ministry as well as six other areas of ministry. With the increasing number of litigations involving ecclesiastical leadership and adolescents, the need for leadership criteria for youth ministers is ever pressing. How do we determine the standard for competency in the field? Higher education must be positioned to equip leaders for local church youth ministry with more than a grasp of the knowledge of the field. There must be a developing credential that includes proficiency in leading a local church youth ministry. If that can be established, then specific competencies can be woven into the fabric of the training program.

There is an intense urgency when discussing pastoral ministry to adolescents that, by its nature, require leadership skill at the highest achievable level. The identifying of leadership competencies and redesigning of academic training programs may provide the basis for facilitating a new longevity and effectiveness in local church youth ministry.

### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify the character qualities and leadership competencies for local church youth ministers to be effective as well as potential leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective as perceived by full-time youth ministers in the United States.

## Research Questions

Five questions served as the basis for the investigation of leadership competencies, character qualities, and leadership flaws for local church youth pastors. The following questions sought to identify perceptions from youth ministers regarding local church youth ministry:

1. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary character qualities for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
2. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary leadership competencies for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
3. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning leadership flaws that may render some youth ministers ineffective?
4. In what ways, if any, do the perceptions of youth ministers concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of adolescents who attend weekly?
5. In what ways, if any, do the youth ministers' perceptions concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of years serving in full-time local church youth ministry?

## Delimitations

The study will be delimited to full-time youth ministers serving in the United States. The study will also be delimited to those churches listed in the database held by the National Network of Youth Ministries, San Diego, California at the time of this study.

## Terminology

In order to provide for an appropriate understanding of specific terms to be used throughout this study, the following definitions are presented with brief explanations.

*Senior pastor.* This term will be used to indicate the member of a local churches pastoral staff that is ultimately responsible for the leading of the congregation in

proclaiming the Word, casting the vision, and managing the associate staff as well as the auxiliary staff, i.e. maintenance.

*Full-time youth minister.* The term represents an individual whose sole income is from the local church. Their primary job description is to lead the church's ministry to adolescents including middle school students, high school students, and in some cases, college age students. This individual serves as a part of the total pastoral staff of the local church.

*Youth ministry stakeholder.* This term is used in this study to represent those individuals who are associated with the local church youth ministry by affiliation or active participation. They would comprise pastoral staff, parents of adolescent students who are youth ministry participants, adult volunteers, and student members of the youth ministry. This study will focus on the youth minister.

*Character quality.* This term will be used to represent intangible attributes of the youth minister that are displayed through attitudes and beliefs rather than through behavior.

*Competency.* An ability to do something at some level of proficiency usually composed of some combination of knowledge, understanding, skill, attitude, and values (Knowles 1973, 199).

*Leadership flaw.* This term will represent areas of weakness and "patterns of behavior that consistently lead to failure in leadership" (Zenger 2002, 159) as perceived by effective youth ministers.

*Adolescent.* The term adolescence comes from the Latin verb *adolescere*, which means "to grow" or "to grow into maturity" (Rice 2005, 1). The age parameters of

adolescence have been debated for decades. It has shifted due to developmental factors on adolescents such as physical, social, and emotional. For the purposes of this study, adolescents will represent young people in sixth through twelfth grade.

*Local church youth ministry.* Youth ministry has not always been as closely tied to the local church as it is today. The history of youth ministry has strong roots in a few significant para-church ministries such as Word of Life, Youth for Christ, Young Life, Campus Crusade and others. The term local church youth ministry is used in this study to describe youth ministry that is organized around the structure of an existing local church and is a component of the church's total ministry scope.

*Volunteer youth worker.* Volunteers are identified as those who are not members of the youth group as adolescents, but are adults serving above their vocational responsibilities and do not receive monetary compensation for their effort and work in the youth ministry.

### **Research Assumptions**

The following assumptions underlying this study are listed as follows:

1. The youth ministers included in the study have an informed understanding of what comprises effective local church youth ministry.
2. The youth ministers included in the study provided responses honestly based on their perceptions of effective leadership for local church youth ministry.
3. The list of compiled character qualities and leadership competencies are an appropriate representation of the qualities and skills needed for effectiveness in local church youth ministry.

### **Procedural Overview**

The researcher used the Youth Minister Survey (YMS) to identify the character qualities, leadership competencies for effective youth ministry as well as the leadership

flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective. The researcher gathered data from full-time youth ministers serving in the United States from the database of the National Network of Youth Ministries. The participants received the survey via an email message with a link to the web-based survey. The YMS gathered demographic information from the respondents as well as their perceptions regarding aspects of character qualities and leadership competencies. The participants were also asked to answer qualitative essay questions regarding potential leadership flaws among youth ministers. They were asked to offer real life examples for their answers to the qualitative essay questions. The researcher analyzed the data gathered according to the five research questions.



## CHAPTER 2

### PRECEDENT LITERATURE

A critical basis for any structure of leadership and church ministry for leaders in the local church must begin with a solid biblical construct that acknowledges the supremacy of the Creator's design for man and His church. It is heard in the assertion that "spiritual leadership will equip those called to lead with the tools to move God's people on to His agenda" (Blackaby 2001, cover). Furthermore, we must realize that, in all our academic endeavors to study and research leadership, it is God who sets the agenda for the leader's life. Leaders are developed over a lifetime. This provides an ideal backdrop for local church youth ministry leadership. The local church youth minister has the auspicious task of developing leaders among adolescents in their most pliable season of life. It is a strategic time to lead adolescents onto God's agenda.

This review of literature begins by establishing an understanding of biblical leadership as identified in Scripture from various authors. The review then outlines foundational works concerning leadership competence from a general perspective then specifically with youth ministry. The next two sections handle the leadership dynamics of styles and situational leadership principles. Following these sections, the review of literature addresses team ministry in youth ministry and concludes the focus on leadership by addressing the area of leadership flaws. The final section of the review of literature identifies significant dissertation research that has contributing to the scope of this study. The progression of this chapter is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

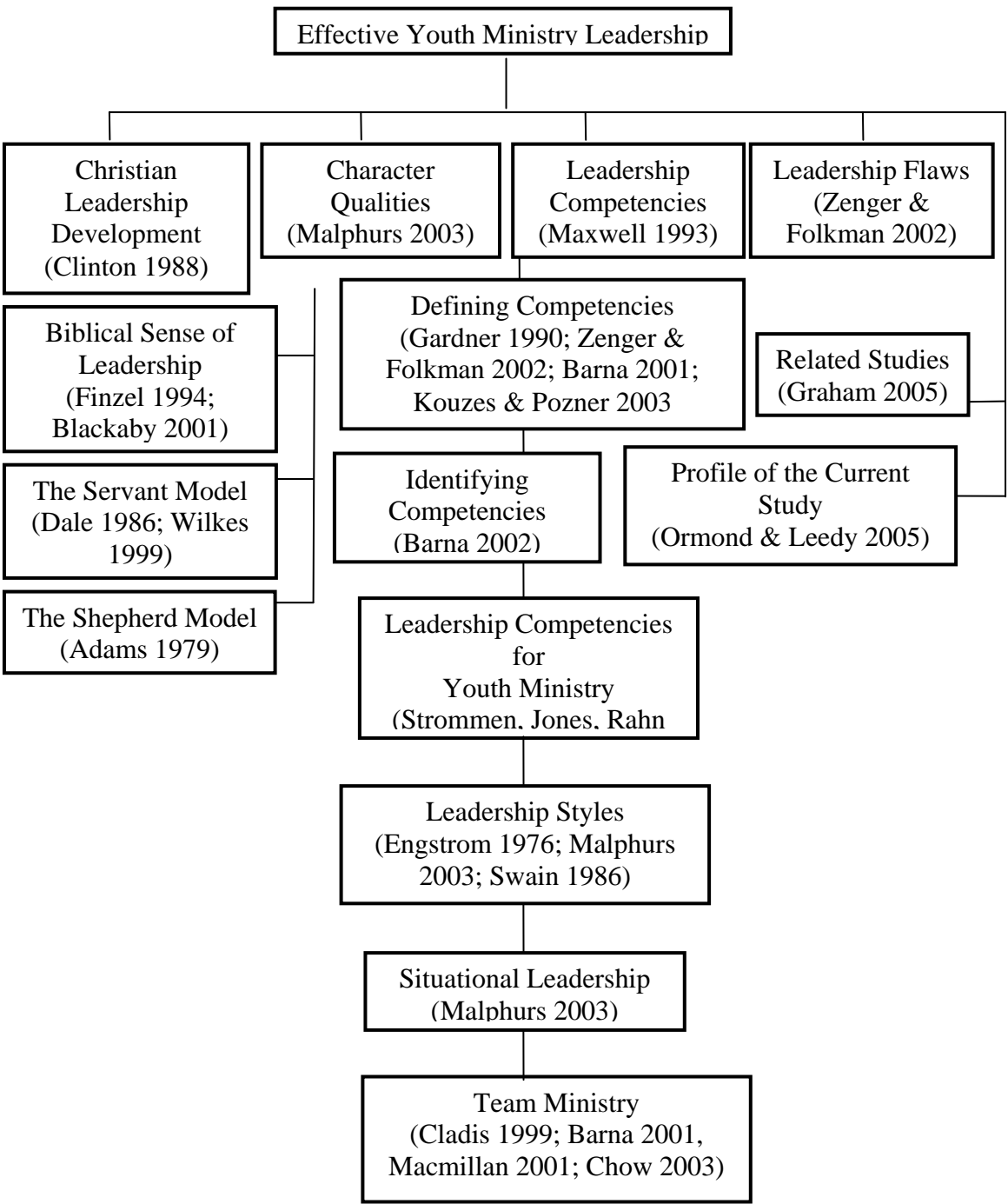


Figure 1. Literature Map

### Clinton's Stages of Christian Leadership Development

As we begin this endeavor, we initiate this journey by looking at Robert Clinton's six stages of Christian leadership development. According to Clinton, relationships and events are two primary methods that God uses to grow people into leaders (Clinton 1988). Local church youth ministry offers a wide array of events surrounding the adolescent and requires a skillful understanding of adolescent relational dynamics. Clinton's stages follow a simple progression as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Robert Clinton's six stages of Christian leadership development

Phase 1	Sovereign Foundations
Phase 2	Inner Life Growth
Phase 3	Ministry Maturing
Phase 4	Life Maturing
Phase 5	Convergence
Phase 6	Afterglow or Celebration

Clinton addresses a model of leadership development applicable to the youth minister that introduces a spiritual epigenetic paradigm of leadership growth. Each of these phases builds and precedes the next. The entire process is realized in the convergence of life's and ministry's experiences that allows the leader to find a vocation that yields great effectiveness. The process then flows into an all too allusive phase of what Clinton describes as an afterglow or celebration that few leaders ever realize. This becomes a season when the competence to lead has been melded with the character of the leader

who finds fulfillment in his golden years by building on the work that God did in and through them to leave a sturdy heritage for future generations. In the context of the youth minister's role, this season of leadership comes with a great sense of building a legacy in the lives of adolescents. It becomes imperative that youth ministers practice the disciplines of effective youth ministry that will facilitate longevity yielding this final stage of Christian leadership development.

Clinton believes that this model is seen in the lives of the great patriarchs of the faith. Moses, Abraham, Joshua, David, and the Apostles all found a measure of this afterglow to which Clinton refers. They concluded their ministries with a strong stride that finished the course well. Each of them left behind a heritage in their wake. They saw their most generative years under the canopy of grey wisdom. These leaders not only left memories, but they left men.

Youth ministers have an ideal setting for developing future leaders among the adolescents whom they serve. Clinton's stages may give insight to the ministry cycle that a youth minister should strive to attain. Youth ministers who have served for more than two decades seem to have the characteristic of those biblical patriarchs, in that; they build a heritage of young leaders in the wake of their ministry. The true strength of this type of ministry record is seen in ripple effect of the young lives that are changed as they impact future generations.

### **Character Qualities**

"Personal character is the core of all leadership effectiveness" (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 13). If this is true, then is there a difference between leadership in general and Christian leadership? Are there character qualities that exist regardless of faith in

Christ or not? In an interview with Aubrey Malphurs, Howard Hendricks made the assertion that “the greatest crisis in the world today is a crisis of leadership and the greatest crisis of leadership is a crisis of character” (Hendricks in an interview with Aubrey Malphurs, 2003). How do we define character? Malphurs describes it as “the sum total of a person’s distinct qualities, both good and bad, that reflects who he or she is” (Malphurs 2003, 18). He also asserts that “godly character encompasses those qualities that Scripture identifies with the Godhead” (Malphurs 2003, 18). Those godly character qualities can be identified as we examine Scripture for a biblical sense of leadership.

### ***Follow Me: A Biblical Sense of Leadership***

As this journey begins, we will set out to render an accurate understanding of how the Bible paints the portrait of leadership to be replicated by all who would follow after Christ. Biblical insights on leadership have been developed in too many works to number. Significant works, such as Oswald Sanders’ *Spiritual Leadership*, have long been the benchmark for leadership in the church and among the people of God. In setting out to shape the landscape of understanding leadership from the windows of heaven, there is no more fitting starting point than with Scripture. Initially, we must ask the question “What is leadership?” The answer then is directed towards Scripture. Hans Finzel said that leadership is influence and even more specifically, “a leader takes people where they would never go on their own” (Finzel 1994, 16). With a view from the local church, leaders “move God’s people on to His agenda” (Blackaby 2001, cover). Understanding Finzel’s definition of a leader in tandem with Blackaby’s, we must begin to see leadership within the church as leading God’s people to be on-task with God’s purpose to which they would never go on their own. The concept of leading in this sense

implies that to be leading, someone must be following. It is this dynamic that we begin with to uncover Scripture's insight into spiritual leadership germane to local church youth ministers.

It has been commonly said that if no one is following, then is anyone really leading? Jesus called the disciples with these words, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matthew 4:19). This statement issued a call and promised a purpose. Jesus served those fishermen an opportunity to go where they would otherwise not go on their own. True spiritual leadership is that which calls God's people to go where they would not go on their own. It inspires God's people with a purpose that will accomplish a great mission only attainable through faith in Christ. The spiritual leader must lead while understanding that people will follow.

### *The Servant Model of Leadership*

"Leadership is more than one person in a visible leadership role. It also involves service in quieter, less noticeable ways" (Black 1991, 123). Jesus' model of leadership was one that is restated and embodied in the words "servant" and "shepherd." We will develop the theology of the youth minister as a spiritual leader around these two concepts and in doing so, follow Christ. The model of biblical leadership that we seek to outline in this chapter is one that refuses to let go of the leadership precedent set by the Savior. The character qualities of a biblical leader can be identified in the patriarchs of the Old Testament as well as the church planters of the New Testament, but none are more pronounced than in the life of Christ. His leadership demonstrated the necessary competencies in the four core areas of character qualities, knowledge base, performance skills, and credentials with both efficiency and effectiveness.

## **Dale on Servant Leadership**

Service as leaders is the core of the leadership depicted in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. According to Dale, “Kings, judges, prophets, priests, and sages are mainstream examples of Old Testament leaders. Each provided a different kind of service to Israel” (Dale 1986, 26). As Dale outlines, kings served as God’s representatives. Unlike pagan kings, the kings of God’s nation were to lead the people, not lord over the people. As leaders of local church youth ministry, youth ministers can draw valuable insights from these examples.

### ***Old Testament Kings as Models for Church Leaders***

As representatives of God, the kings of Israel were not above the law but subject to it, as were the people. Dale observes that “Israel’s king was subject to God’s law the same as the people” (Dale 1986, 26). For this reason, the Old Testament records instances where the prophets rebuked the kings as seen with Samuel and Saul (1 Samuel 12).

### ***Old Testament Judges as Models for Church Leaders***

Dale describes the judges of the Old Testament as leaders who served as God’s “rescuers” who stepped in for a period of time, usually brief, to confront the people of God regarding their sin and rebellion and to bring them back to the precepts of God. “They provided temporary inspiration to deliver Israel from her self-destructiveness” (Dale 1986, 26).

***Old Testament Prophets and Priests  
as Models for Church Leaders***

As Dale outlines, the duties of these offices were designed to attend to the religious needs of the people. Dale cites the duties of the priests as leading “the worship activities of Israel and specialized mainly in religious ceremonies” (Dale 1986, 26). Prophets and prophetesses were leaders who “are difficult to translate into local church settings” (Dale 1986, 27). Eventually their role developed from religious dynamics to political action and led the people in worship, respectively. Each of these performed an act of service for God and with or to the people of God.

***Old Testament Sages as Models  
for Church Leaders***

According to Dale, the sages of the Old Testament were not as visible as the leaders just mentioned. “These educators/advisors served as mind-molders for royalty and public leaders” (Dale 1986, 27). Dale also labels them as being “godly tutors” (Dale 1986, 27). Like the priests, their leadership was behind the scenes.

Aspects of these various leadership positions display the characteristics of the servant leader needed in the local church youth minister. The youth minister today will find the need to lead from one or more of these roles as specific situations demand.

***New Testament Models of  
Servant Leadership***

As Dale indicates, the New Testament offers several examples for the church today. “Some, like pastors and deacons, served in local church settings” (Dale 1986, 27). In addition, Dale cites the New Testament leadership models seen in the apostles and the first missionaries of the church in the lives of Paul, Peter, Timothy, Barnabas, Silas,



James, and John Mark. Each of these examples provides great principles for the youth minister at every level of leadership.

### *Jesus' Example of the Servant Leader*

Without question, the most significant leader of the New Testament is Jesus Christ. Authors Robert Dale and Gene Wilkes give us an inside look at the dynamics of Jesus' leadership.

“From beginning to end, Jesus' ministry demonstrates servanthood” (Dale 1986, 27). We see in the beginning of Jesus' ministry that He was tempted to lay aside the role of servant leader for three alternatives that run rampant in the church today.

Dale lists the pleasure principle first. The devil tempted Jesus in Matthew 4 to adopt what Dale calls the “pleasure principle” by turning stones to bread and “satisfying legitimate and obvious physical needs” (Dale 1986, 27). According to Len Kagler, this has been a documented problem among youth ministers. Kagler writes that “of those [youth ministers] who lose their jobs in youth ministry, nearly 18 percent do so because of moral failure” (Kagler 1992, 55). All too often, church leaders wield their position and influence to afford themselves the opportunity for monetary gain or personal pleasure.

Dale continues with the power principle. Following this enticement, Dale identifies how the devil tempted Jesus to enact the “power principle” by accepting the position to rule over all the kingdoms of the earth. It would have been easily executed and even expected by the people. “The popular Jewish expectation envisioned a warrior Messiah like David, a General Patton—like commander who would assure that Israel's traditional enemies finally got their just deserts” (Dale 1986, 28). In contrast to servant leadership, the power hungry leader typifies what Hans Finzel describes as the top-down

leadership style that resembles that of a “military model of barking orders down to weak underlings” (Finzel 1994, 23).

Next, Dale identifies the parade principle. Finally Dale observes how Jesus was enticed to enlist the “parade principle” by launching off the edge and calling on angels to rescue Him from disaster. As we know, Jesus “refused a magical ministry and the popular curiosity it would have caused” (Dale 1986, 28).

Affirming Jesus’ example, Dale cites the service principle. Regardless of the pressure to regress to these poor leadership tactics, Jesus chose to display the “service principle” through which He touched lives, healed the sick, and gave hope to those who knew not hope. The conclusion of Jesus’ earthly ministry was preceded by the meeting in the dining room where “another outstanding example of servanthood is clearly visible” (Dale 1986, 28). He began the evening by washing the feet of His disciples (John 13:4-5). Dale calls this Jesus’ “leadership stance [that] is defined in the Nazareth Manifesto” (Dale 1986, 27).

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of our Lord. (Luke 4:18-19)

To offer a more tangible perspective on this dynamic of the leadership stance, Dale offers five valid insights that flow from what he calls a case study in the gospel of Mark as seen in Table 2. He states that Christian leaders are servants of people, servants of God, and servants with a mission who serve prophetically and are empowered by a God who suffered and rose again.

Table 2. Robert Dale’s “Servanthood” as a Leadership Stance: The Gospel of Mark, a Case Study

Christian Leaders Are Servants of People	Mark 1:1 – 4:34
Christian Leaders Are Servants of God	Mark 4:35 – 8:26
Christian Leaders Are Servants with a Mission	Mark 8:27 – 10:52
Christian Leaders Serve Prophetically	Mark 11 – 13
Christian Leaders Are Empowered by a God Who Suffered and Rose Again	Mark 14 – 16

Dale lays out several strong implications of the servanthood leadership stance that offer some deep insights when considering the competencies of youth ministers in the local church. Each of these implications centers on the leaders’ attention to others. “Servants lead out of relationships, not by coercion” (Dale 1986, 34).

The difference between the ability of the servant leader to draw productive efforts from people, and that of a more dominant leader, is the fact that the servant leader is zeroed in on the process as much or more as he is in the end product. The servant leader understands that people are the components of the organization, not the products.

Many organizations today fail to tap into their potential. Why? Because the only reward they give their employees is a paycheck. The relationship between employer and employee never develops beyond that point. Successful organizations take a different approach. In exchange for the work a person gives, he receives not only his paycheck, but also nurturing from the people for whom he works. And nurturing has the ability to transform people’s lives. (Maxwell 1995, 61).

Servanthood requires much of the youth minister, more than the dominating leadership style of the day would convey. It is a highly risky venture as it facilitates a closer proximity to those around him and therefore leaves him more vulnerable. Our faith

in Christ is no less demanding and risky. True “servanthood is full of crosses as well as towels and basins” (Dale 1986, 35).

### **Wilkes on Servant Leadership**

According Gene Wilkes, “Many churches and youth ministries struggle because they lack servant leaders” (Wilkes 1999, 5). Wilkes lays out a concept of church leadership that finds strength in humility unlike the leaders outside the church. As Wilkes describes, leadership in the church is tremendously different due to the dynamic the of lordship of Christ in the leader’s life. Wilkes says that “life under the lordship of Christ has different values than life under the lordship of self” (Wilkes 1999, 7).

It is what Paul records in Philippians 2:7, when he writes that Jesus “emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant.” The Greek word, *diakonos*, occurs twenty-nine times in the NASB New Testament. The English translation is servant and means “one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master” (Strong's Greek & Hebrew Dictionary). If that is the case, then how was Jesus a servant leader? He was the Messiah. How does Jesus execute the commands of another? The answer lies in these simple words, “yet not My will, but Yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

The youth minister must be God-centered. Jesus modeled servant leadership in that He was serving the will of God the Father first and foremost. The word “serve” is much like the word “servant.” It comes from the Greek word *diakoneo*, which is translated to serve or minister. It is found forty-five times in the NASB New Testament. Both of these words convey an “other-centered” agenda that takes the leader outside of themselves to the needs of someone around them.

Jesus' mark of leadership conveyed through servanthood was the antithesis of what a leader was perceived to be in the culture of His day. We find it no less of a quandary for our contemporary society that exalts "ladder climbing" mentality. Wilkes labels this attitude as "head table mentality whereby you feel if you are seated at the head table then you must be more important than others" (Wilkes 1999, 8).

We find this theme of servitude in Mark's gospel. Jesus confessed that His intention for ministering among God's people would not resemble that of the leaders to which they were accustomed. On the contrary, He asserted that His prime means of leadership was not "to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

### ***Principles of Servant Leadership***

Wilkes cites seven principles of servant leadership as noted in the following list (Wilkes 1999, 26):

1. Servant leaders humble themselves and wait for God to exalt them.
2. Servant leaders follow Jesus rather than seek a position.
3. Servant leaders give up personal rights to find greatness in service to others.
4. Servant leaders can risk serving others because they trust that God is in control of their lives.
5. Servant leaders take up Jesus' towel of servanthood to meet the needs of others.
6. Servant leaders share their responsibility and authority with others to meet a greater need.
7. Servant leaders multiply their leadership by empowering others to lead.

### ***The Shepherd Model of Leadership***

The two-fold dynamic of biblical leadership is rounded off with the examination of the shepherd as a model for biblical leadership. Service finds a resting place in the heart of the shepherding leader. Youth ministers often find themselves in

situations where they must shepherd the young lives of adolescents who are in transition from childhood to adulthood. The youth minister will identify with the words recorded in the gospel of Matthew. Jesus contextualizes the metaphor as a shepherd of sheep in Matthew 9, “Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). The metaphorical image that emerges in the mind is of the Great Shepherd watching over, caring for, giving direction to, and protecting His flock. This four-fold shepherding role is a mirror of the youth minister’s role in the lives of adolescents and their families.

### **Adams on Shepherd Leadership**

Scripture is not deficient of references to shepherds as leaders. Jay Adams asserts that the shepherding model of leadership found in Scripture involves at least these elements: responsibility, planning, organization, guidance, and example (Adams 1979, 322-25).

### ***The Shepherd as a Participant***

According to Adams, the shepherd is a participant with the sheep. The shepherd described in Scripture is with the sheep in the pasture. The psalmist paints the vivid portrait of the shepherd who watches over his flock in the night. He walks through the valley looking for the lurking evil in the cover of night. Shepherdly leadership is concrete, participative, involved leadership. The pastor who is the shepherd of the local flock or his congregation must be a protector who is quick to intervene in the event of a threat from a looming enemy seeking to steal one or more sheep. The only way the shepherd can know of this threat is if he is participating with the sheep, not distant and only attending to them when its time to move to new pastures or to the fold. As a

participant the shepherd leads the sheep to pasture, away from danger, and back to the safety of the fold. Ultimately, “the shepherd is an involved example” (Adams 1979, 321) and must depend on Jesus as the Good Shepherd to lead him.

### ***The Shepherd as an Organizer***

Second, Adams says that the shepherd found in Scripture must be an organizer. The shepherd of sheep must plan for the seasons, knowing where the most fertile pasture is and where the dangers lie. Proverbs warns that when there is an absence of leadership that is organized, the people are doomed to chaos. “Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained” (Proverbs 29:18). The prophet Ezekiel confirms this principle of leadership when he attests to God’s people being “scattered for lack of a shepherd” (Ezekiel 34:5). Adams cites Zechariah 13:7 where the prophet uses the phrase “strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered.” Adams remarks that sheep do not instinctively flock together. “Flocking, or the organization of individual sheep into a definable entity called a flock, is a principle activity of a shepherd” (Adams 1979, 323). The organization of the shepherd leader affects the propensity of the flock to remain together. This finds great application in the leadership character and competence of the youth minister. Adolescents and their parents need to know that the youth ministry is organized and not creative chaos. This facilitates the desire for adolescents to connect with the youth ministry and the local church as they can find their place.

### ***The Shepherd as a Planner***

Next, Adams presents the shepherd as a planner. Isaiah attests to the propensity of the sheep to wander (Isaiah 53:6). Consequently, “It is the Shepherd’s work to turn aimless wandering into purposeful travel leading at length to the still waters and to the

green pastures” (Adams 1979, 324). Not only does Isaiah record that every one of us has acted like sheep and gone “astray,” but he also indicts us for choosing our own way and not the way of the shepherd. Sheep instinctively scatter when there is no shepherd and wander aimlessly subject to their own urges. This finds a significant relevance in local church youth ministries today. We can observe the aimless wanderings of young believers who have not been given a plan for the youth ministry of which they are a part. This demands that organization and planning become primary competencies of the youth minister. It is essential that the youth minister, as a shepherd leader, allows God to chart the course and “record the vision and inscribe it on tablets, that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay” (Habakkuk 2:2-3). The leader must record and promote the vision or plan so the congregation will know that there is a destination ahead. “You cannot be a true leader unless you are capable of charting a desired destination for your followers” (Barna 1992, 108).

So, just as flocking is a shepherdly activity that overcomes the sheep’s tendency to scatter by bringing order and cohesion, so too leading toward a destination (green grass, still waters) is a shepherdly activity aimed at overcoming proneness to wander by setting forth goals and objectives for the flock. These two activities – organization and biblical goal setting – are so fundamental to shepherdly leadership that they run through every phase of it. (Adams 1975, 8)

This component of recording the vision or stating a purpose resonates throughout precedent literature on leadership. “Vision helps students and adults understand where God wants to take the ministry” (Chow 2003, 51). According to Barna, “God’s vision is deep enough to permit you to paint a mental portrait of the road of ministry and the destination for the congregation” (Barna 1992, 109). This aspect of shepherding is mandatory for the leader who seeks to lead God’s people. In fact, “people



are looking for something to give their lives to” (Stanley 1999 106). “Vision is the fuel that leaders run on. It’s the energy that creates action. It’s the fire that ignites passion of followers. It’s the clear call that sustains focused effort year after year, decade after decade, as people offer consistent and sacrificial service to God” (Hybels 2002, 31).

There is no more significant and crucial element to leading a team than that of vision. “If you can’t see where you are going, then you are unlikely to get there (Blackaby 2001, 56).

### ***The Shepherd as a Ruler***

The final role of the shepherd leader that Adams lists is that of a ruler. Adams contends that, by definition, the term conveys the shepherd’s authority to lead and manage. It is a prerequisite for leadership in the church as outlined in Paul’s writings. Paul says that he must have the ability to manage his own family before he can manage the congregation. The word Paul uses is the Greek word, *proistemi*, meaning “to put before, to set over, to rule” (*NASB Greek-Hebrew Dictionary*). It is used eight times in the Bible, all of them found in Paul’s epistles as seen in Table 3 with their English usage. There can be no doubt that shepherd leadership is a ruling leadership even as seen in Jeremiah 23 where God calls the kings, who are “destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture” (Jeremiah 23:1), shepherds. When God prophesies that He will use Cyrus, He declares, “He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desires” (Isaiah 44:28). There is a significant resemblance of the shepherd, king, and pastor throughout Scripture. In retrospect, we can trace the errors of great leaders in Scripture who failed consistently on one single issue. The most common failure of the leaders of the Bible is that they fell

short, in one or more instances, to follow and reflect the leading of the great Shepherd, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 13:20).

Table 3. Word study of the Greek word *proistemi*

Romans 12:8	. . . he who “leads”
I Thessalonians 5:12	“have charge over” you
I Timothy 3:4	“manages” his own household
I Timothy 3:5	“manages” his own household
I Timothy 3:12	good “managers” of the own children
I Timothy 5:17	elders who “rule” well

### **Leadership Competencies**

Leadership competence is the key component to this study. Youth ministers may have what Maxwell defines as positional leadership where the “person may be ‘in control’ because he has been appointed to a position, [but] real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow” (Maxwell 1993, 5). That confidence from followers is believed to be founded in the leader’s ability to perform his duties with an acceptable level skill. This makes it an issue of confidence. Zenger and Folkman quote a Chinese proverb that says, “Not the cry, but the flight of the wild duck leads the flock to follow” (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 83). This study intended to examine not only knowledge that youth ministers have attained through formal education and field experience, but to identify the best practices that allow youth ministers to be effective in leading a local church youth ministry.

### *Defining Competencies*

The job performance of a leader is often accentuated with modifiers such as “well,” or “poorly.” These convey a measure competence demonstrated by a leader in performing the responsibilities necessary for the position. This is seen in local church youth ministry as much as any other field. Youth ministers have knowledge of various tasks within youth ministry such as teaching, discipling, evangelism, adolescent development, and programming. But not all youth ministers have what John Gardner calls “intimate knowledge” (Gardner 1990, 50) of the tasks of effective youth ministry. Competence goes deeper to the level or effectiveness of the youth minister’s ability to perform the leadership tasks required for local church youth ministry. Leadership competencies among youth ministers are not widely documented, but what has been written can inform a concept of competency for youth ministers that may prove valuable for those training for future positions as well as those currently serving in local church youth ministry.

Previous research studies provide the foundation for this study with regard to ministerial leadership competencies. Four key works that will offer the foundational basis for understanding leadership competencies are from John Gardner, John Zenger and Joseph Folkman, George Barna, James Kouzes, and Barry Posner.

#### **Gardner’s Definition**

John Gardner in his work on leadership conveys competency to mean “the knowledge a leader has of the task at hand” (Garner 1990, 50). Although this understanding of competence does not reference the ability to perform skills effectively, it does give a foundational basis for developing a concept of leadership competencies as

related to this study. Gardner goes on to say that “obviously the knowledge required varies at different levels of leadership. The lowest levels must have intimate knowledge of the task at hand. Top-level leaders cannot hope to have competence in more than a few of the matters under their jurisdiction, but they must have knowledge of the whole system” (Gardner 1990, 50).

### **Zenger and Folkman’s Definition**

Competencies are generally understood as “the combination of knowledge, skills, traits, and attributes that collectively enable someone to perform a given job” (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 83). Zenger and Folkman label the competency movement “the most prevalent approach to leadership development in recent years” (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 83). The competency approach to leadership development is one that seeks to identify and define the competencies that are needed for a leader in a specific field to be effective, and then hire leaders who display those competencies. Zenger and Folkman affirm the logic of the approach, but they ask why it has not produced better leaders. Zenger and Folkman identify several flaws in the competency movement that make the assertion that the movement was too complex, had faulty assumptions, produced unintended consequences, and suffered from poor execution.

### **Barna’s Definition**

In an attempt to put ministerial leadership competencies into context Barna offers this definition: “Competencies are the actual efforts and abilities leaders deploy to motivate, mobilize, resource, and direct people toward fulfilling the vision God has provided for a group of believers” (Barna 2001, 90). This definition opens up a comprehensive list of fifteen leadership competencies which Barna admits is not

exhaustive but reflects what he observes “to be the most significant competencies in the lives of effective leaders” (Barna 2001, 96).

### **Kouzes and Posner’s Definition**

Kouzes and Posner write that competence is the number two leadership attribute that followers want in their leaders. They define competence in terms of the follower as believing that the leader knows what he or she is doing and that they are capable and effective (Kouzes and Posner 2003, 19). This understanding of competence brings the perceptions of followers to the leadership dynamic. This is clearly important to the youth minister who serves and leads people as a defining task of his position. As mentioned earlier, youth ministers are often terminated and are not certain why. There may be instances when the followers are not even certain why, but know that they do not believe the youth minister knows what he is doing.

### ***Identifying Leadership Competencies***

In the task of leading God’s people, we find that some are more effective than others. Specifically in local church youth ministry there are youth ministers that have found the formula for effective leadership in youth ministry. If youth ministers are to employ leadership competencies that lead to effective youth ministry, then the identification of those competencies becomes critically important. This section will look at several works that have proposed models for understanding leadership competencies.

### **Barna’s Study of Leadership Competencies**

According to George Barna,

The dominant competencies are well known: vision casting, effective communication, motivating participation, mobilizing people into efficient work

units, thinking and planning strategically, accumulating the resources required, creating a healthy internal culture, evaluating results and fine-tuning the process, handling conflict, reproducing and training leaders, and delegating tasks to skilled colleagues. (Barna 2002, xvi)

These eleven competencies are essential and extensive. While some would contend that the mandate of the leader is solely preaching or leading from the pulpit, it becomes quite apparent that leadership is demonstrated by many skills beyond the platform. The youth minister who is bent on following God's plan for His people will continually resolve himself to tweaking and adjusting the areas of his leadership skills that are weakest while exercising the areas that are strong.

Character, calling, and competency have been identified as the core essentials for any leader within the church by George Barna (Barna 2003, DVD "Challenges common to leaders"). All three will factor into the measure of effectiveness that leaders will experience. Competency is evaluated based on the performance or behavioral outcomes of leaders as they carry out their responsibilities. The determining issues with leadership competencies in church leadership positions are two-fold: (1) performance ability, and (2) performance standard.

It is the challenge of leaders to view Barna's list of dominant competencies as expected levels of performance behavior. The eleven competencies from the quote above are expected by the people, though not always articulated.

### **Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson's Definition**

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson list three leadership competencies. "Leading and influencing requires three general skills, or competencies: (1) diagnosing—understanding the situation you are trying to influence; (2) adapting—altering your

behavior and the other resources you have available to meet the contingencies of the situation; and (3) communicating—interacting with others in a way that people can easily understand and accept” (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 11). In view of these three categories, the effective youth minister will notice the need for situational leadership models.

### **Maxwell’s Five Levels of Leadership**

John Maxwell has identified *Five Levels of Leadership* (Maxwell 1993, 12). These levels begin with positional leadership where the leader is enabled to lead based on position or title. This does not assume that the leader is a good or effective leader. The concluding level is that of personhood where the leader enjoys effectiveness as people follow based on who they know the leader to be. The interesting change in leadership effectiveness is seen at level three where the leader moves into the production level. At this level, “people follow because of what you have done for the organization” (Maxwell 1993, 12). This demonstrates a level of competence, which is behavior with some standard for performance.

### **Mathis’ List of Ministerial Leadership Competencies**

In a study of basic ministerial competencies gained from seminary training at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Robert Mathis categorized competencies in three areas (Mathis 1995, 138-40):

1. Knowledge of information and procedures
2. Ministry skills in performing certain tasks
3. Attitudes, personal beliefs, or commitments needed by ministers

### *Leadership Competencies for the Youth Minister*

Although this area is in need of added research, several works have been written pertaining to competencies in youth ministry and among youth ministers. We will consider three studies that have contributed to this area.

#### **Strommen, Jones, and Rahn's Study of Leadership Competencies**

Youth ministers attest that they feel more competent when they seem to be more effective in their leadership of the youth ministry. "Experiencing success in any given task increases an individual's confidence level and feelings of personal satisfaction, providing the motivation for increased efforts at related tasks" (Strommen, Jones, and Rahn 2001, 203). Could the opposite be true, that a lack of success decreases the individual's confidence level and diminishes their motivation for increased efforts at related tasks? If this dynamic is applicable to youth ministry, then those youth ministers who lack motivation to increase efforts due to failure may also demonstrate a deficiency in leadership competence which contributes to those failures.

Although ministerial leadership competencies provide a relatively comprehensive list of needed attributes for youth ministers, there are categories of competence that find specific relevance for youth ministers. In a study that surveyed 2,416 respondents, Strommen, Jones, and Rahn addressed the following areas with regards to competence of youth ministers. The questions were worded as such:

1. I feel I make good decisions in my ministry.
2. I am a good organizer.
3. I feel competent in my job.
4. I am an effective youth minister.



5. I know why I do what I do.
6. I have a philosophy of youth ministry.

While these areas are often named as areas of frustration by youth ministers, they are not a comprehensive list of competencies for effective youth ministry. Two key areas addressed in this list are that of purpose and philosophy. Leadership competence that is void of purpose and philosophy often lacks a guiding plan and vision that is essential for effective youth ministry in the local church.

Dave Rahn cites a proposal delivered to youth ministry educators that suggested six areas of competency for youth ministers. Steve Gerali of Judson College led a team of youth ministry educators who developed the following list (Strommen, Jones, and Rahn 2001, 335-36): (1) communication and teaching skills, (2) administration and organization skills, (3) programming skills, (4) counseling/helping skills, (5) leadership development skills, and (6) research skills. These competencies were suggested in an attempt to establish a common standard for evaluating youth ministry training and education.

### **Dunn's Competencies for Youth Ministers**

In an article for the *Christian Education Journal*, Richard Dunn outlined a list of competencies (see Appendix 9) that addressed similar areas mentioned in the Gerali proposal. Based on the casual observation of the researcher, Dunn's list is a substantial compilation of necessary competencies needed for effective youth ministry.

### **Smith's Eight Habits for Youth Ministers**

In a similar but more condensed list, Tim Smith offers eight habits for youth ministers who seek to be effective (Smith 1995, 16-21).

1. Effective youth workers are lifelong learners.
2. Effective youth workers are service-oriented.
3. Effective youth workers radiate the positive power of the Holy Spirit.
4. Effective youth workers believe in others (and their growth).
5. Effective youth workers lead balanced lives.
6. Effective youth workers see life as an adventure.
7. Effective youth workers are team players and synergistic.
8. Effective youth workers are committed to personal renewal.

### **Adams' Critical Requirements of a Youth Minister**

David Adams of the International Center for Youth Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has specified a list of more than fifty critical requirements for a local church youth minister that includes credentials or training, knowledge, skills, character, and programming abilities. See Appendix 2 for the complete list that will be used to develop the YMS.

Among the lists of things to do and be as a youth minister can be found the important or right things that are really necessary for effective youth ministry. Duffy Robbins labels it, "doing the right things." "Doing the wrong things, even if they are done with great care, creativity, and intention, can still lead to ministries and ministers that crash and burn" (Robbins 2004, 23). This requires the youth minister to not only be

passionate about the adolescents he serves, but to be vigorous about the competencies that he develops and nurtures.

### **Leadership Styles**

Competence may also be demonstrated through the youth minister's ability to employ appropriate styles of leadership. Styles of leadership within church ministry will vary according to the environment and the individual leader. As much as any member of the pastoral staff, the youth minister must understand when and with whom to employ various styles of leadership to facilitate ministry effectiveness. According to Robert Dale, "style is our characteristic manner of expressing our values and of executing our work. Style refers to our distinctive approach to others and our ministry" (Dale 1986, 39). The way a youth minister directs the youth ministry team and manages resources is directly related to the style of leadership he employs.

#### *Engstrom's Leadership Styles*

According to Ted Engstrom, "style, by definition, is the way a leader carries out his functions and how he is perceived by those he attempts to lead" (Engstrom 1976, 67). Engstrom maintains that leadership style is dependent upon several variables such as personality, needs of the group, and specific situations. Each leadership style will find different levels of effectiveness with respect to each individual. Engstrom has categorized leadership styles in the following list of five:

- (1) *laissez-faire*: no structure or supervision given; members set own goals and standards of performance; leader is 'first among equals,' without authority, a resource man;
- (2) *democratic-participative*: provides some structure and framework within which members still largely set own goals and standards; leader and advisor with minimum authority;
- (3) *manipulative-inspirational*: some structure, usually confused and ambiguous; goals set by management with little participation but employees' acceptance sought by 'hard sell';
- (4) *benevolent-autocratic*: activities of

group largely structured; relatively close supervision; however, employees encouraged to make suggestions concerning their goals, working conditions, etc.; (5) autocratic-bureaucratic: activities of the group totally and arbitrarily structured; participation by group in any context totally discouraged; supervision is authoritarian and autocratic; questioning of orders is regarded as insubordinate. (Engstrom and Mackenzie 1974, 96-97)

These leadership styles are most useful when connected with followers and organizations that complement or display similar styles. The style used will be determined by the nature of the responsibilities assigned to the job or leader. In local church youth ministry, it is important to rely on a leadership style that capitalizes on the diversity of volunteers. The styles listed here have been widely referenced for many years. They do find some relevance in contemporary church leadership, but may need to undergo a renovation of character. Even Engstrom attests that there are a wide variety of leadership styles, “maybe as many different leadership styles as there are types of people” (Engstrom 1976, 70).

### ***Malphurs’ Leadership Style Theory***

A more recent resource on leadership styles is from Aubrey Malphurs. Malphurs laid out four different leadership styles that offer some great practical applications for developing leadership skills in today’s local church youth ministry seen summarized in Table 4.

These are “four dominant styles that balance task and relational behavior in a ministry context” (Malphurs 2003, 94). Malphurs lists directors, inspirational, diplomats, and analyticals as the dominant leadership styles with each having an ideal context, strength, and weakness. These styles of leadership can apply to the context of local church youth ministry with great ease.

Table 4. Malphurs' Four Primary Styles of Leadership

Style	Context	Strength	Weakness
Directors – The Strong Leadership Style	Task oriented, ideal for ministries in need of focus, need high control	Change agents, question status quo, hard workers	Does not work well with a ministry team, makes hasty decisions
Inspirational – The Personable Leadership Style	People oriented, ideal for ministries needing more relational orientation, need moderate control	Good troubleshooters in crisis, relates well with others, good motivator and enlister	Struggle with details, rules, and unpleasant tasks, unfinished projects
Diplomats – The Supportive Leadership Style	People oriented, ideal in ministries needing supportive and patient leadership, prefer slower ministry pace	Loyal, supportive, listens well, commonsense approach to ministry	Non-confrontational, non-assertive, does not say “no” enough
Analyticals – The Conscientious Leadership Style	Task oriented, ideal for ministries emphasizing detail, academic settings, pulpit driven churches	Conscientious, self-disciplined, consistent, dependable, careful accurate teaching	Often maintain status quo, get hung up on details and miss deadlines, critical of innovative leaders

#### *Swain's Four Leadership Styles*

According to Bernard Swain leadership style is “the complex and varying patterns of behavior and relationship among ministerial leaders and between these leaders and other people” (Swain 1986, 30-31). Swain’s research was gathered after studying and consulting with various churches from different denominations. Swain outlined four leadership styles that he maintains is based on a combination of various ingredients as seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Swain's Four Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	Description	Values	Strengths	Weaknesses
Sovereign	Centralized authority, hierarchical structure	Someone must lead so their will be a sense of order	Simplified decision-making process	Most people have a natural mistrust for authority, discourages initiative
Parallel	Authority is vested in a team who work along side each other	Places high value on division of labor and personal responsibility	Simple, does not require a lot of flow charts, neutralizes negativity regarding authority	Lack of communication and isolation can make people afraid to make decisions
Mutual	Teams involved at all levels	Stresses sharing of feelings, thoughts, ideas, and the work itself	Keeps one from being the "Lone Ranger" and creates more synergy	As the relationships go, so goes the work
Semi mutual	A hybrid of Mutual and Parallel styles	A division of labor with some joint accountability	Provides accountability, more realistic of how people work together	Makes it tough to integrate planning and performance, not clear who plans and who performs

Duffy Robbins agrees that "while most leaders would function in one style most of the time, an effective leader will likely operate within two or more of these styles depending on the circumstances" (Robbins 2004, 57). Speaking of Swain's leadership styles in the context of youth ministry, Robbins says the question is not which style to use but more accurately, "How can we build a recipe for a leadership style that best fits our strengths, mission, and ministry context?" (Robbins 2004, 57).

Each of these writers who have addressed leadership styles has pointed us toward the next dynamic of situational leadership. The writers above have recognized

that, while each leader relies primarily on a single leadership style, leaders must be able to adapt their style to particular circumstances when needed.

### **Situational Leadership in Youth Ministry**

Ken Blanchard's web resource specializes in developing leaders who can adapt their leadership to various contexts for organizations "to accomplish more, with fewer resources, in real time, organizations need strong, yet flexible leaders" (www.kenblanchard.com 2005, areas/situationalII.cfm). Local church youth ministry displays a wide array of opportunities for the youth minister to demonstrate skill in leading through different situations. Two works offer great insight for the youth minister regarding situational leadership, *Being Leaders* by Aubrey Malphurs and *Management of the Organizational Behaviour: Leading Human Resources* by Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson.

### ***Malphurs on Situational Leadership***

According to Aubrey Malphurs, "your leadership style is how you affect people" (Malphurs 2003, 135). In local church youth ministry, leaders are put in various situations that change from day to day. These diverse situations often call for the youth minister to adjust his leadership style. Malphurs maintains that each style of leadership has a context that is more appropriate than others. "Ministry context is critical because it affects the amount of influence a leader is able to exercise and it will ultimately determine the leader's effectiveness" (Malphurs 2003, 131). He mentions that every leader has a tendency toward a particular leadership style. When put in crisis situation, the leader will naturally react from his strengths. The situational leader is a leader who develops the skill of adjusting to the ministry climate when it goes through rapid or

temporary changes. The youth minister often finds himself in these leadership dilemmas. On these occasions that will arise in every leader's career, the leader must take some quick measures to modify his style for greater effectiveness and in some cases survival. Malphurs offers a simple strategy for practicing situational leadership.

### **Know Oneself as a Leader**

A ministry leader must know himself as a leader. The level of leadership and personal self-awareness is pivotal in the context of any leadership position but especially in the church. Malphurs contends that "a major factor of a leader's success in leading any church is doctrinal agreement" (Malphurs 2003, 133). He contends that there are two types of doctrinal beliefs, essential and non-essential. He says that the essentials are biblical tenets of orthodoxy" (Malphurs 2003, 133) and the non-essentials are beliefs on which not all evangelicals agree. According to Malphurs, the leader's core ministry values must be understood as they define the purpose of the leader's ministry. Malphurs then says the leader is to understand his leadership style and the ideal context for his primary style. In addition, Malphurs contends that the ministry leader must have a deep understanding of his own capabilities, as well as, his theology and philosophy of ministry. In understanding himself, the ministry leader needs to know what his ideal ministry circumstance is "in which the leader performs best" (Malphurs 2003, 133).

### **Know One's Leadership Context**

Secondly, Malphurs calls the ministry leader to know his church or leadership context. He includes the same aspects of understanding as above but adds the aspect of knowing the church's level of trust as well as the churches power structure, and demographics and psychographics (Malphurs 2003, 139-43).



### **Compare Oneself as a Leader with the Ministry Context**

According to Malphurs, the ministry leader must understand how he matches with the church through comparing himself with the church in the areas just mentioned. “Comparison accomplishes leadership placement” because “it seeks to put the right leader in the right place at the right time for maximum kingdom effectiveness” (Malphurs 2003, 144).

### **Make Necessary Adjustments**

Finally, Malphurs notes that the ministry leader will then need to make adjustments based on the first three steps. He lists three options, (1) adjust leadership, (2) change the context, or (3) leave the ministry situation (Malphurs 2003, 151-54).

### ***Barna on Situational Leadership***

George Barna offers an interesting perspective on situational leadership that can be helpful when talking about youth ministers and youth ministry. Barna addresses situational leadership at three levels: (1) micro, (2) mezzo, and (3) macro. He maintains that most situational leaders provide micro-level leadership which deals with individuals immediate or contained needs.

With mezzo-level leadership, the leader’s responsibility pertains to a wider parameter of individuals with broader “social implications” (Barna 2002, 27). He views this level of situational leadership as a training or proving ground that may take the leader to the next level.

Barna states that “many situational leaders become paralyzed over the potential of leading large groups of people or making world-changing decisions” (Barna 2002, 28).

However, Barna maintains that the basic elements of leadership are the same only with various levels of intensity for each level. He reminds the situational leader that their “objective is not to become the world’s greatest leader; it is to provide adequate leadership that will help people to get through challenging moments so that they may respond to the mezzo- and macro-levels leadership of habitual leaders” (Barna 2002, 29).

***Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson  
on Situational Leadership***

“Managers must be able to identify clues in an environment” and “adapt their leadership styles to meet the demands of the environment (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 171). One of the most comprehensive works on situational leadership of late is that of Paul Hersey, Ken Blanchard, and Dewey Johnson. They dedicate a significant amount of text to the subject that offers an intensive look at situational leadership.

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson maintain that with situational leadership, “there is no best way to influence people. Which leadership style depends on the readiness level of the people the leader is attempting to influence (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 173). Their model focuses on two leader behavior classifications. The first is “task behavior” defined as “the extent to which the leader engages in spelling out the duties and responsibilities of an individual or group. These behaviors include telling people what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it” (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 173). They assert that task behavior is marked by one-way communication. The primary concern is helping the individual complete the task. The second classification is relationship behavior which is “the extent to which the leader engages in two-way communication. The behaviors include listening, facilitating, and

supportive behaviors” (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 173). Often this behavior is high when an individual needs encouragement to accomplish a task.

The model used by Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson plots the level of task behavior on one axis and the level of relationship behavior on another axis. The intersecting point yields the style of leadership as it falls into one of four quadrants. Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson maintain that no one style will be effective in all situations. The styles are described as follows (Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 2001, 174):

1. Style 1 (S1). This style is characterized by above-average amounts of task behavior and below-average amounts of relationship behavior.
2. Style 2 (S2). This leadership style is characterized by above-average amounts of both task and relationship behavior.
3. Style 3 (S3). This style is characterized by above-average amounts of relationship behavior and below-average amounts of task behavior.
4. Style 4 (S4). This style is characterized by below-average amounts of both relationship behavior and task behavior.

This model of situational leadership offers a simple understanding of the various leadership styles that may be necessary for specific circumstances.

### **Team Ministry**

“Team-based ministry is the most effective model for leading and organizing Christian ministry for the twenty-first century” (Cladis 1999, ix). Teams often achieve greater feats than individuals. One thing is definite; teams share the thrills that come with victory as well as the agonies that follow defeat. The team allows individual players to pool their talents, training, and experience to build a force to advance the mission of the church further and more effectively. “When you become part of a team, you’re not giving

up your individual goals; you're not sacrificing personal success. You are setting your sights on an even higher goal so that you can magnify your successes" (Williams 1997, 128). Through casual observation and personal experience of the researcher, it is apparent that effective youth ministers are competent to recruit, train, place, and network a team of volunteers that will serve the mission of the youth ministry. This section will identify key works that outline solid team ministry principles that can be applied to youth ministry.

### *Cladis on Team Ministry*

In addressing the critical need for team-based ministry, George Cladis says that "a healthy church leadership team with trusting relationships radiates health and vitality throughout the church organization and its whole system of relationships" (Cladis 1999, ix). He says that building a collaborative team is necessary if churches are to surpass simple maintenance ministry and accomplish the mission for their congregation in their community. He identifies a few considerations for building a collaborative team.

#### **Discover Gifts and Match Them with Passion**

Cladis states that many leaders pull teams together to accomplish tasks that they have no calling or passion for doing. "The more that team life connects their gifts and skills to the arena of their God-given burden, the more likely you are to have built an effective team for the long haul" (Cladis 1999, 98).

#### **Share a Common Philosophy of Ministry**

According to Cladis, teams are unable to function properly without a common philosophy that facilitates harmony. He states emphatically that "this is one of the most

serious problems teams face and one of the most difficult and painful truths I have learned” (Cladis 1999, 99). This will affect the ability of the team to work towards a goal.

### **Build Team Accountability**

Cladis observes that the type of one-on-one accountability that is most prevalent in churches today often polarizes the senior pastor and individual staff members. Cladis suggests a model of team accountability where the individual is responsible to the entire pastoral leadership team rather than a single member. “Instead of having a one-on-one accountability relationship with the team leader (usually the pastor forte primary leadership team), each team member (*including the pastor*) is accountable to the whole team for his or her work” (Cladis 1999, 103).

According to Cladis, in creating a team accountability, “team members become more clear about their responsibilities and the ways their individual contributions fit” (Cladis 1999, 104) the team’s mission. He says that each team member should be evaluated by the group with ongoing dialogue among members of the team and that team accountability will form “clear team expectations and thus helps team members find their work meaningful and fulfilling” (Cladis 1999, 104).

Cladis continues to say that team members will make mistakes and that healthy leadership teams will learn from an individual’s errors and aid the team member in strengthening weak areas ultimately strengthening the team. He also cautions that forming a collaborative team takes time and interpersonal interaction should not be replaced by email or voice mail. Cladis states that “teams that spend time together tend to develop relationships of a quality that has resounding positive effects through out the congregation” (Cladis 1999, 106).

### *Barna on Team Ministry*

George Barna states that “to lead people means that you motivate, mobilize, direct, and resource them so that they are able to fulfill a vision that they have agreed is appropriate and worthy of their pursuit” (Barna 2001, 20). Barna differentiates a leadership team from a work group or committee. He offers this definition of a leadership team.

A small group of leaders who possess complimentary gifts and skills. They are committed to one another’s growth and success and hold themselves mutually accountable. Together they lead a larger group of people toward a common vision, specific performance goals, and a plan of action. (Barna 2001, 24)

Barna highlights seven elements of this definition that can help us comprehend the leadership team dynamic as seen in the following list (Barna 2001, 25-27).

1. *Small group.* Barna defines this as 3 to 5 people citing that less than 3 leaves you without enough people to get the job done and more than 5 increases inefficiency as well as compromise.
2. *Leaders.* Barna asserts that a leadership team must be an assembly of leaders not just people willing to work. “A leadership team is of no significance unless it is helping followers to understand, adopt, and accomplish a common vision.”
3. *Complementary gifts and skills.* Barna recognizes that this is an important attribute of a leadership team. “The leaders have a combination of gifts and skills that complement one another.”
4. *Committed to one another.* According to Barna, the team naturally draws on the community dynamic of relationships. As such, they must be concerned for each other’s growth regardless of whether they are close friends outside the leadership team.
5. *Common vision.* Barna suggests that this is the uniting factor of team leadership. “It is the corporate vision that brings the team together and facilitates its passion to move forward as one.”
6. *Goals and plan.* Barna calls it “mere fantasy” for a team to have no goals or plan. Such a team becomes a mere “social club.”

7. *Mutual accountability.* According to Barna, this is a distinctive of leadership teams. Leadership teams must determine “to evaluate their own efforts and enable one another to live up to specific standards.”

The dynamics of team ministry identified by Barna will prove beneficial when applied to local church youth ministry leadership.

### ***MacMillan on Team Ministry***

Pat MacMillan has produced a solid work on team leadership that is a comprehensive guide to understanding as well as implementing what he calls “high performance teams. MacMillan defines a team as “a group of people committed to a common purpose who choose to cooperate in order to achieve exceptional results” (MacMillan 2001, 30). His definition supports much of the material reported above with an emphasis on exceptional results.

#### **Common Purpose**

Similar to Barna, MacMillan places a high level of importance on the team ascribing to a “common purpose.” He states that “the power of a team flows out of each team member’s alignment to its purpose” (MacMillan 2001, 35). Common purpose provides the basis for team accomplishment over individual accomplishment.

#### **Crystal Clear Roles**

MacMillan continues to survey team leaders through five additional elements, the first being “crystal clear roles” (MacMillan 2001, 35) so each team member understand his or her responsibility to the team and the expectations for accomplishment of their given tasks.

**Accepted Leadership**

The leadership MacMillan calls for is that which is “capable of calling out the levels of initiative and creativity that motivate exceptional levels of both individual and collective performance” (MacMillan 2001, 37). He mandates leadership that is clear and competent.

**Effective Process**

According to MacMillan, “high performance teams identify, map, and then master their key team processes” (MacMillan 2001, 37). MacMillan maintains that the processes function much like a playbook would for a sports team or blueprints to a construction crew. Not only do they lay out the plan, but they require an orderly process to carry out each aspect of the plan. Each team member is actively involved in the process according to their “clear, specific role based on their function, skills, and expertise” (MacMillan 2001, 37).

**Solid Relationships**

MacMillan addresses a dynamic of team leadership that has been alluded to by both Barna and Cladis. MacMillan asserts that a common misconception is that team members must be close friends in order to be effective. Not only does he contest this false idea, but he states that “the diversity of skill, experience, and knowledge need effectively and creatively to divide the task almost precludes high levels of friendship” (MacMillan 2001, 37). He says that the differences of the team members need to be balanced with “trust, acceptance, respect, courtesy, and a liberal dose of understanding” (MacMillan 2001, 38).



**Excellent Communication**

MacMillan is not referring to simply talking or emailing. He specifically identifies excellent communication as “the art of straight talk; there is little wasted motion from misunderstanding and confusion” (MacMillan 2001, 38). This type of communication, MacMillan says, is the key to collective thinking and synergistic solutions to daily dilemmas.

***Chow on Team Youth Ministry***

David Chow focuses the topic of team leadership specifically for youth ministry. His book is written to offer help and insight for youth ministers in building a team-centered youth ministry. Chow defines a team-centered youth ministry as a “ministry with a diverse team of healthy, spiritually mature adults who share leadership and decision-making responsibilities, united by a vision to minister to young people and their families” (Chow 2003, 16). This definition provides a template for the keys to effective team-centered leadership.

**Diverse Team**

This definition lays out three key components to team-centered ministry. First, we have a “diverse team” (Chow 2003, 16), many parts of one body, performing different but necessary tasks to ensure the completion of the mission. This embodies the writings of Paul in Romans 12 where he references the body having many parts that each has a different function. The members of a volunteer youth ministry leadership team will have various gifts and abilities that are needed and must be used for the whole team to be effective.

### **Shared Leadership**

Second, we find the need for “shared leadership” (Chow 2003, 16). This is not just in title but predominately in function. The diverse team shoulders the leadership responsibility in making decisions, establishing guidelines, and lines of authority.

### **United by a Vision**

Finally, we see that the team-centered ministry must be “united by a vision” (Chow 2003, 16). Inherent in a team is the common purpose for which the team is striving. Team players “understand that they need others and that God has designed the church family to work with each other, not against each other” (Chow 2003, 38). An ancient Chinese proverb says, “If your vision is for one year, plant wheat. If your vision is for a decade, plant trees. If your vision is for a lifetime, plant people” (Chow 2003, 116). The goal is to lead the team to the place where it can accomplish the mission and enlist others.

Chow outlines a process for finding the right leaders, training them, and caring for them. According to Chow, the team leader must understand how a team develops after it is assembled. He lists four stages of team development (Chow 2003, 135-37).

1. **Excitement.** At this stage, there is often much enthusiasm as the team is at the beginning of a new journey. During this stage, Chow states that the leader’s role is to “bring focus to the team by clarifying goals, addressing expectations, and providing opportunities for the team members to get to know each other.”
2. **Adjustment.** Chow says that as the team members get more accustomed to each other there may be “a certain degree of ambiguity as team members are figuring out what is and isn’t acceptable.” It is the leader’s job to establish what is and is not acceptable.
3. **Conflict.** As the team continues to develop, Chow notes that with greater familiarity comes a freedom to express opinions more honestly giving way to conflict from misunderstandings.

4. Performance. Chow's final stage of team development is the stage when the "team is operating at its peak performance." Roles are clear and understood and the team is focused and working together.

These principles serve as a pertinent base for developing a team-centered youth ministry and offer solid material for the goals of this study.

### **Leadership Flaws**

As we have seen, there is solid evidence for character qualities and leadership competencies needed for effective leadership of a local church youth ministry. But leadership effectiveness has two sides, strengths and weaknesses. Could it be that so much emphasis is placed on the strengths a leader possess that he is blind to the weaknesses that slowly emerge until they bring about severe results? In the research by Zenger and Folkman, they have identified five patterns of behavior that consistently lead to a failure in leadership. Possessing one or more of these virtually makes it impossible for a person to be perceived as an effective leader. The following list that they identified can provide the youth minister with a battery of areas to keep under close observation (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 160-67).

1. Inability to learn from mistakes
2. Lack of core interpersonal skills and competencies
3. Lack of openness to new or different ideas
4. Lack of accountability
5. Lack of initiative

Effective leaders are able to identify weaknesses in these areas and adjust or change their mode of leading. Youth ministers are susceptible to these blind spots that could lead not only to their ineffectiveness but possibly their termination or being "let go." This study

sought to gain responses from youth ministers regarding fatal flaws in youth ministry leadership that can mean instant failure for the local church youth minister.

### **Related Studies and Research Designs**

Prior research that contributed to this study is represented by several key dissertations that have addressed leadership competencies for local church ministry, youth ministry as well as dissertations that provide a precedent for the design of this study.

#### ***Purcell on Ministerial Leadership and Survey Design***

In Larry Purcell's study of the perceptions of the congregation compared to the perceptions of the senior pastor regarding ministerial leadership, he used an instrument that will provide the foundational component for the Youth Minister Competency Survey and Youth Minister Questionnaire. Purcell used an expert panel to establish fifteen competencies. He then designed a Likert Scale questionnaire that was use for the study.

Purcell's work will aid in the comparative analysis of perceptions between youth ministers and those categorized as effective youth ministers. In his study, a comparative analysis was done using data from members of church congregations and senior pastors.

Purcell's work will also provide insight for the development of the list of competencies.

#### ***Scroggins on Interview Design and Protocol***

Jimmy Scroggins focused his study on training indigenous youth workers globally through the International Mission Board. His study provided insight to the

development of the interview section of this study. Scroggins gathered data using the interviews as well as distributing surveys.

***Mathis on Ministerial Competencies  
and Survey Design***

Robert Mathis produced a dissertation that addressed perceptions of ministerial competencies from the perspective of faculty, trustees, and students from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He developed a Likert Scale survey that focused on three categories of competencies: (1) knowledge, (2) skill or ability, and (3) attitude.

Mathis' study provided additional insight for comparing responses between participants. He used mean score and standard deviation to analyze the data, and then displayed the results in a format that showed differences between participants.

His list of ministerial competencies supported the development the YMS for this study.

***Graham on Competencies for Youth Ministers***

Jim Graham's dissertation at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary focused on competencies for youth ministers. He directed his study on Southern Baptist churches. He used a method that allowed for "collaboration and consensus among groups to identify important competencies effective youth ministers must possess" (Graham 2005, 37).

Graham employed the Delphi technique for his methodological design. The study was set up for three rounds of surveys that worked toward a consensus of responses. These three rounds yielded a list of the top one hundred youth ministry

competencies. The survey also used a seven-point Likert scale to rate the importance of each competency.

### **Profile of the Current Study**

The precedent literature covered in this chapter is only the tip of the iceberg of the vast understanding and incredible body of knowledge needed to become proficient as a leader in the church, specifically a local church youth minister. The youth minister must develop character qualities that reflect a God-centered approach to leadership which is fully reliant on God to bring about growth to his ministry with adolescents, their families, and volunteers. In addition, he must demonstrate competencies for effective leadership of the various components of a local church youth ministry. It was observed that the central component to effective leadership of a local church youth ministry is the ability to establish and manage a team. Focusing on adolescents in the church, youth ministers must be found to have a better than average understanding of the world of the adolescent, both developmentally and culturally. There is no doubt that the youth minister has responsibility to develop and execute a biblical strategy for youth ministry. He must stay aware of potential leadership flaws that could undermine the vision for the youth ministry he leads.

In developing this research study, a mixed method design was used, qualitative and quantitative, but focused on a phenomenological study design which investigated the perceptions of full-time youth ministers through surveys. In a phenomenological study, the researcher “attempts to understand the perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of a particular situation” (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, 139).

The survey instrument that was used is based on precedent literature and the research from dissertations listed in the previous section. The works of David Adams and Jim Graham provided a basis for youth ministry competencies as well as insight to analyzing perceptions between participants. The work by James Scroggins offered insight into the field of youth ministry training. Graham's dissertation also proved to be valuable in the design of the online instrumentation.

The resulting task is for academic training to build into their programs active learning in these areas of ministry leadership. Undoubtedly this study seeks to affirm or inspire youth ministry training institutions of higher education, but with the emphasis on practical demonstration of knowledge applied during training that allows the student to identify character qualities as well as be aware of competencies that need development and leadership flaws that need attention and accountability.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

By examining the perceptions of full-time youth ministers in the United States, the researcher identified the primary components of three categories of youth ministry leadership: character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws.

#### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify the character qualities and leadership competencies for local church youth ministers to be effective as well as potential leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective as perceived by full-time youth ministers in the United States.

#### **Research Questions**

Five questions served as the basis for the investigation of leadership competencies, character qualities, and leadership flaws for local church youth pastors. The following questions sought to identify perceptions from youth ministers regarding local church youth ministry:

1. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary character qualities for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
2. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary leadership competencies for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
3. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning leadership flaws that may render some youth ministers ineffective?



4. In what ways, if any, do the perceptions of youth ministers concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of adolescents who attend weekly?
5. In what ways, if any, do the youth ministers' perceptions concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of years serving in full-time local church youth ministry?

### **Research Design Overview**

The researcher used the Youth Minister Survey (YMS) to identify the character qualities, leadership competencies for effective youth ministry as well as the leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective. The researcher gathered data from full-time youth ministers serving in the United States listed in the database of the National Network of Youth Ministries. The participants received the survey via an email message with a link to the web-based survey. The YMS gathered demographic information as well as their perceptions regarding aspects of character qualities and leadership competencies. The participants were also asked to answer qualitative essay questions regarding potential leadership flaws among youth ministers. The researcher analyzed the data gathered according to the five research questions.

### **Population**

The population for this study is full-time youth ministers serving in the United States and listed in the database from the National Network of Youth Ministries (NNYM) San Diego, California. Currently, NNYM has 7,415 full-time youth ministers listed in their database.

### **Samples and Delimitations**

The sample used in this study was chosen by simple random selection from the NNYM database. The sample yielded a total of 1,225 email addresses of full-time youth

ministers serving in the United States. Of that number, 271 were invalid email addresses leaving a total 954 valid email addresses. According to Creative Research Systems online Sample Size Calculator, a sample size of 315 will be needed allowing for a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5 (retrieved from <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>, April 2, 2007).

For the purpose of this study, youth group size is defined in terms of the average number of adolescents who attend at least once a week. The sample is grouped into four strata according to the parameters in Table 6.

Table 6. Sample strata attendance categories

<i>Size of the Youth Ministry</i>	<i>Average Weekly Attendance</i>
Small	50 or less
Medium	51 – 100
Large	101 – 250
Mega	251+

Table 7. Sample strata youth ministry tenure categories

<i>Ministry Tenure</i>	<i>Number of Years in Full-Time Local Church Youth Ministry</i>
the Novice	Less than 1 year
the Rookie	1 – 4
the Professional	5 – 9
the Veteran	10+

The sample has been delimited to full-time youth ministers with a minimum of one year of experience in local church youth ministry. The youth ministers are grouped according to ministry tenure in four categories beginning with the novice and concluding with the veteran as seen in Table 7.

### **Limitations of Generalization**

The findings of this study will not necessarily generalize to those who are not full-time youth ministers. The findings of this study will also not necessarily generalize to youth ministers serving outside the United States. The leadership competencies will not necessarily generalize to other ministerial positions in the church.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher used a survey that employed closed form responses and open ended questions to identify the character qualities and leadership competencies needed for to be an effective youth minister. The survey gathered demographic information as well as perceptions regarding aspects of character qualities and leadership competencies. The survey employed a qualitative essay question to identify potential leadership flaws among youth ministers.

### ***Development of the Youth Minister Survey***

The instrumentation that was used in this study was developed using an expert panel in the field of youth ministry. The Youth Ministry Survey (YMS) was developed using precedent literature as well as prior dissertation research, all covered in Chapter 2. The survey also relied on observations made by the researcher during fifteen years of youth ministry leadership. The primary dissertation resource that was used for the

development of the instrument was that of James Graham (2005). The list of critical requirements compiled by David Adams (2003) was also used in the development of the YMS. The “Five Fatal Flaws of Leadership” identified by John H. Zenger and Joseph Folkman (2002) was utilized to guide the qualitative essay question regarding potential leadership flaws in leaders of local church youth ministry.

### **Close-Form Survey**

The closed-form section of the survey instrument required the participant to provide demographic information. This section showed a numbered list of sixteen groups of items or statements related to the youth minister’s character, competency, and potential leadership flaws. Each grouping contained three items or statements to be ranked by the participant. The participant ranked each item on a scale of 1 (primary), 2 (secondary), and 3 (necessary).

### **Qualitative Essay**

This section of the instrument provided the participant with a question that required a short answer. This allowed the researcher to find additional insights that strengthen the perceptions of leadership flaws in local church youth ministry leadership.

### ***Summary of Instrument Assignments***

The survey items, statements, and questions used in the instruments are demonstrated to correlate with each of the research questions as seen in Table 8.

### ***Expert Panel***

The researcher used an expert panel to develop and finalize the survey instrument and qualitative essay question. According to Leedy and Ormrod, using a panel

of experts “to scrutinize an instrument to ascertain its validity for measuring the characteristics in question” increases the likelihood of face validity of measurement instrument (Leedy and Ormrod 2005, 93). Upon approval, the researcher invited the following individuals to participate on the panel. The expert panel consisted of: Mark Senter, Chairman, of the Department Educational Ministries at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and author of *The Coming revolution in Youth Ministry* (1992); Karen Jones, Chairperson of the Department of Missions and Ministry at Huntington College as well as serving on the staff of the Link Institute, which is committed to the development of the practice of youth ministry; Scott Stephens, Student Ministry Team Leader, LifeWay Christian Resources; Bob MacCrae, Professor of Educational Ministries at Moody Bible Institute; and Len Kageler, Chairman, Department of Christian Education and Professor of Youth Ministry, Nyack College, Nyack, New York.

Table 8. Assignment of survey items, statements, and questions according to research questions one through five (sample)

<i>RQ</i>	<i>Survey Demographic Question</i>	<i>Survey items or statements</i>
RQ1		Part 3 #'s 1-7
RQ2		Part 3 #'s 8-16
RQ3		Part 4
RQ4	Part 2 # 6	Part 4
RQ5	Part 2 # 9	Part 4

The expert panel was asked to review the survey instrument for validity of content as well as layout. The expert panel was asked for suggestions that relate to clarity of instructions, statements, and questions. Upon completion of the review by the expert panel, the researcher made necessary revisions to the survey and qualitative essay

question. The revised instrument was resubmitted to the researcher's dissertation committee to be approved for field-testing.

### ***Field-Testing of Instrument***

Once the revised instrument had been approved, the researcher field-tested the instrument using full-time youth ministers from churches partnered with The International Center for Youth Ministry at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. This field-test population is excluded from the study and is not reported in the results in chapter 4. The field-test participants were asked to provide feedback on the instruments clarity. Once the feedback from the field-test group was gathered, the researcher made necessary adjustments to the instrument and resubmitted it to the dissertation committee. Upon approval, the researcher made a formal request to use human subjects by submitting the Assessment of Risk to Human Subjects in Research form to the Research Ethics Committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

### **Procedures**

Upon approval of the prospectus, the researcher progressed with the finalizing of the survey instrument to be delivered to the expert panel. Following this, the researcher made necessary revisions to the instrument. Next, the researcher field-tested the instrument and made necessary revisions after gathering feedback from the field-test group. The survey instrument was then be submitted to the dissertation committee for approval and subsequently to the Research Ethics Committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Upon receiving approval by the dissertation committee and the research ethics committee, the researcher began contacting the sample drawn from the list of full-time

youth ministers held by National Network of Youth Ministries. The instrumentation was developed as stated in the previous section.

Upon receiving approval of the ethics committee and researcher's supervisor to use the proposed sample population, the instruments were distributed to the list of compiled participants. Each participant was contacted via email and invited to take the survey through a web-based medium.

### *Survey Administration*

An invitation to participate in the survey will be sent via email with instructions to access an internet address that connect the participant with the web-based survey site. The researcher used a web-based resource, [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), to host and administrate survey.

The data was collected from the web-based survey in a comma-delimited text file that was exported to SPSS. The data was compiled and descriptive statistics were produced using SPSS which allowed for displays to be produced. The data was then analyzed as to its relevancy with the research questions. The data was analyzed according to demographics and prioritized into three categories: (1) youth ministry character qualities, (2) youth ministry leadership competencies, and (3) youth ministry leadership flaws.

The final step of the study provided conclusions that were drawn from the research findings. The analysis of the data was structured according to the research questions and reviewed in light of the research hypotheses. These rendered perceptions that youth ministers have of the character qualities, and leadership competencies needed for effectively leading a local church youth ministry.

Following the analysis of the data, the research proposed points of application for the field of youth ministry and youth ministry education. These insights are intended to bolster the effectiveness of local church youth ministers as well as facilitate curriculum review in academic youth ministry training programs globally.



## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the research findings that were gathered using the research design discussed in the previous chapter. The data being displayed are the relevant statistical findings from participants' responses that were provided on the Youth Minister Survey (YMS). The findings were evaluated according to the purpose of the current study which was to analyze the perceptions that full time local church youth pastors have regarding the character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws that facilitate or hinder effective youth ministry. This chapter will display the raw data as well as provide displays in the form of tables and/or figures to allow the reader to understand the method of collection and the relationship to the current study. These displays and data will also aid in the interpretation of the conclusions to be covered in the next chapter. The final section of the chapter will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research design and offer recommendations for improving the strength and accuracy of the design.

#### **Compilation Protocol**

An invitation to participate in the Youth Ministry Survey was sent via email with instructions to access an internet address that connected the participant with the web-based survey site. See Appendix 6 for a sample email message that was used. The researcher used a web-based resource, [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), to host and administrate

the survey. From there, the survey participant entered a password that was provided and continued to take the survey. See Appendix 7 for an example of the survey instrument.

The data was collected from the web-based survey in a comma-delimited text file that was exported to SPSS. The data was compiled and descriptive statistics were produced using SPSS which allowed for displays to be produced. The data was then analyzed as to its relevancy with the research questions and displayed in tables according to the five categories of (1) youth ministry leadership character qualities, (2) youth ministry leadership competencies, (3) youth ministry leadership flaws, (4) the variance of the data with regards to tenure of ministry, and (5) size of current ministry participation of the participants.

The researcher used the YMS to identify the character qualities, leadership competencies for effective youth ministry as well as the leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective. The researcher gathered data from full-time youth ministers serving in the United States listed in the database of the National Network of Youth Ministries. The YMS gathered demographic information as well as participants' perceptions regarding aspects of character qualities and leadership competencies. The participants were also asked to answer qualitative essay questions regarding potential leadership flaws among youth ministers. In addition, the participants received the researcher's contact information in the event they had questions regarding the YMS or if they had trouble accessing the survey via the web-based software and link.

### ***Scoring Protocols and Inclusion Criteria***

A total of 1,225 email messages were sent to youth ministers in the United States that were included in the database list from the National Network of Youth

Ministries. Of that number, 271 were invalid email addresses leaving a total 954 email messages that were sent to valid email addresses. There were 352 that responded, resulting in a response rate of 36.9%. Two factors determined whether or not the researcher included the data from a respondent's survey: (1) the respondent must have been a full-time youth minister for a minimum of one year, and (2) each respondent must have been serving in local church youth ministry full-time in the United States.

Based on these protocols, data from forty-four surveys were eliminated. Nineteen did not meet the criteria of being in full-time youth ministry for a minimum of one year. Twenty-one were not serving in full-time youth ministry representing church leaders who did have partial responsibilities with the youth ministry but it was not the main focus of their position. Fourteen others did not complete the demographic section or the item ranking section of the survey. The statistics displayed in this chapter have been gathered from the remaining surveys, comprising 32.29% of the 954 full-time local church youth ministers that were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. This falls within the acceptable sample size according to Creative Research Systems online Sample Size Calculator. The online sample size calculator determined that a sample size of 274 will be needed allowing for a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 5 (retrieved from <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>, April 2, 2007).

The Youth Minister Survey used in the study instructed the participants to rank each item's level of importance for effective youth ministry. They were instructed to mark only one number for each group of three items. The survey participants were also informed that the survey assumed that all of the items were needed for effective local

church youth ministry but they were instructed to rank each item according to their perceived level of importance when grouped with two other items using the following options: (1) primary, (2) secondary, and (3) necessary.

The chapter will also provide two additional main headings that will (1) show the findings and displays, and (2) offer evaluation of the research design.

### **Findings and Displays**

This section will present the results of the Youth Minister Survey by organizing the data by two main categories. The first category will render demographic information that will show the relationship between the data and the survey participants. Each demographic statistic potentially offers insight to the findings of the YMS. For example, the age of the youth minister, the education of the youth minister, or the region of the country where the youth minister serves all yielded variances of primary importance when they ranked the leadership characteristics and leadership competencies, as well as potential leadership flaws.

The second category will be divided according to the original research questions and the data displayed where there were significant or noteworthy findings. These sections will also include displays to show how various demographic information affected the results of the survey.

#### ***Demographic Characteristics of the Sample***

Of the 308 surveys used, 35.4% ( $n = 109$ ) were between 21 and 30 years old, 42.2% ( $n = 130$ ) were between 31 and 40 years old, 17.5% ( $n = 54$ ) were between 41 and 50 years old, and 4.9% ( $n = 15$ ) were between 51 and 60 years old.

There were three other demographic statistics that were not addressed in the

research questions but allow the reader to gain more insight to the responses and the results of the study. These additional demographic statistics are displayed in the corresponding figures or tables below. Survey participants responded to demographic questions regarding church size at their current church, church location, and number of years at their current church.

The size of the churches represented in the study was led by churches with less than 300 people. Of the 308 churches, 31.5% ( $n = 108$ ) of the churches were in that category followed by 26.3% ( $n = 81$ ) of the churches with 301-500 people and 19.5% ( $n = 60$ ) of the churches with 501-1000 people. The remaining two categories represented 19.1% of the survey participants. There were 9.7% ( $n = 30$ ) churches with 1001-2000 people and 9.4% ( $n = 29$ ) churches with 2001 or more people.

Church location is displayed according to the following designated categories: rural, town, city, inner city, and suburb. The survey participants determined the most accurate location designation based on their opinion and personal observation. Youth ministers from suburban churches (31.5%,  $n = 97$ ) outnumbered those from churches in towns (26.3%,  $n = 81$ ), cities (26.3%,  $n = 81$ ), rural areas (13.6%,  $n = 42$ ), or the inner city (2.3%,  $n = 7$ ). When viewed side by side, one can see that the majority of full-time youth ministers who responded are not serving in rural or inner city churches or they are not list with the National Network of Youth Ministries.

Nearly half (48.4%,  $n = 149$ ) of the survey participants have been at their current position less than five years. The remaining participants are led by those who have been serving at their current youth ministry for 5-9 years (29.2%,  $n = 90$ ), followed by those who have been serving for 10 or more years (20.1%,  $n = 62$ ), and, finally, by

those who have been serving for less than a year (2.3%,  $n = 7$ ).

The remaining demographic data was gathered in order to address research questions 4 and 5. These questions addressed the size of the current youth group and the total number of years of ministry experience that the respondent has, respectively, and if those factors contributed to the perceptions reported on the YMS.

### Survey Responses and Results by Region

The researcher also analyzed the data collected according to the region of the United States in which each participant serves. The regions were categorized using the guidelines from The Barna Group as listed in Table 9.

Table 9. Breakdown of United States regions and participants

Region	States	Participants
Northeast	Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia	41
South	West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma	125
Midwest	Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas	77
West	Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Alaska, Hawaii	65
	Totals	308

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

The frequencies and percentages concerning regional responses are displayed in Table 10. The response from youth ministers serving in the South Region (40.6%,  $n =$

125) was considerably higher than the other three regions. The researcher suggests that the reason for this may be due to either a greater number of full-time youth ministers in that region or a greater number of full-time youth ministers in that region who have registered with the National Network of Youth Ministries.

Table 10. Breakdown of United States regions and participants

Region	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Northeast	41	13.3	13.3
South	125	40.6	53.9
Midwest	77	25	78.9
West	65	21.1	100
Totals	308	100	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### *Description of Data Coding and Organization*

The Youth Minister Survey was designed to gather perceptions of full-time youth ministers that would reveal those items pertaining to the character, competence, and potential leadership flaws of the local church youth minister. The researcher and his assistant gathered the data and coded the survey items. Each survey item was coded according to its set which also included two other items. Each item was then ranked against the other two items. The sets are displayed in two tables: character sets (See Table 9) and competency sets (See Table 10).

The data were also coded according to the descriptors that were derived from precedent literature and used to develop the YMS (see Table 13). The researcher identified eight areas with the first three being related to character and the remaining five being related to competence. This is also reflected in the sets in Table 11, sets A through

G, and Table 12, sets H through Q.

Table 11. Youth Minister Survey Character Sets

Group	Item
Group A	Demonstrate a passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families
	Be above reproach in conduct with youth and adults
	Be authentic so what they say matches what they do
Group B	Have a humility grounded in obedience to God
	Seek to be led by the Spirit
	Know Christ as their personal Savior
Group C	Be a supporter of the senior or lead pastor in word and attitude
	Contribute to church staff unity
	Demonstrate integrity in finances both personal and ministerial
Group D	Have a high regard for the truth
	Demonstrate personal discipline in their personal life: body, mind, time management
	Be committed to moral purity
Group E	Be approachable by students and parents
	Have a genuine love for teenagers
	Possess a desire to learn as evidenced by his/her attitude, attendance of continuing educational opportunities, and outside reading
Group F	Have regular personal devotions
	Be emotionally stable with very few mood swings
	Be a self-starter, requiring very little supervision
Group G	Maintain a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ
	Honor, respect, and demonstrate a healthy relationship with spouse
	Demonstrate a lifelong calling to youth ministry



Table 12. Youth Minister Survey Competency Sets

Group	Item
Group H	Be an effective leader of small groups
	Be an effective communicator to groups of 50 or more
	Be an effective communicator to groups of 100 or more
Group I	Be able to teach training sessions for volunteers
	Be an effective interpersonal communicator with parents of adolescents
	Possess above average administrative skills
Group J	Be able to plan and manage a budget effectively
	Be able to lead a ministry team
	Be able to communicate spiritual truth in relevant ways
Group K	Be able to lead students to faith in Christ
	Be able to effectively manage time
	Demonstrate active listening skills
Group L	Be able to set and evaluate short term goals
	Have the ability to manage a support staff including secretarial and intern positions
	Be able to effectively delegate responsibilities
Group M	Have a minimum of 30 hours of undergraduate and/or graduate youth ministry coursework
	Have attended a minimum of 6 training seminars in leading a local church youth ministry
	Have undergraduate training in Bible and theology
Group N	Have a philosophy of youth ministry that is biblically based
	Have a strategy for connecting with the public school campus
	Have a strategy for recruiting volunteer leaders
Group P	Possess a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible
	Display a comprehensive knowledge of youth culture
	Demonstrate awareness of developmental issues related to adolescents
Group Q	Be able to administrate and work well through office procedures and systems
	Demonstrate an understanding of discipleship and how to implement it both corporately and individually
	Believe and teach sound, biblical doctrine

Table 13. Youth Minister  
Survey Category List

1	Character
2	Personal
3	Attitude
4	Program
5	Skills
6	Leadership Style
7	Team Development
8	Education

### *Statistical Test and Measurements Used*

To examine the relationship between the items of primary importance and the items selected as secondary or necessary as dependent on demographic information by respondents, chi square analyses were done. The chi square tests allowed the researcher to determine if the variance between the number of youth ministers who said an item was or was not primary was significant according to demographic information such as size of the youth ministry in which the respondent currently serves and the number of the respondent has been in full-time youth ministry.

Chi square analyses were also employed to analyze research questions four and five. These allowed the researcher to examine the relationship between number of years of ministry experience and the perceptions of full time youth ministers in regards to character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws. They also allowed the researcher to examine the relationship between the current size of the youth ministry attendance and the perceptions of full time youth ministers with the same factors.

The Youth Minister Survey included seven character sets. Each set contained three items that were ranked from 1-3 within each set. Each chi square paired one item

with one of three variables; (1) region, (2) size of youth ministry, or (3) years of ministry experience. Research questions 1-3 will be displayed comparing associated significance between the four regions. Research questions 4-5 will be displayed comparing associated significances within their respective categories. The seven sets related to leadership character had a total of twenty-one items.

Survey respondents were given three options for each item: (1) primary, (2) secondary, and (3) necessary. Respondents were given the assumption that each of the items is needed for effectiveness in local church youth ministry. In order for analyses to be conducted using the data collected, items were recorded within SPSS 13. Those items that had been ranked as (1) primary remained the same while the categories of (2) secondary or (3) necessary were recoded into a new variable of “not primary”.

### *Findings Related to Research Question 1*

Research question one sought to identify the primary leadership characteristics that full-time youth ministers perceived to be primary for effective local church youth ministry. There were eleven items that returned an associated level of significance.

#### **Findings for Character Set A**

The first item related to leadership character that was noteworthy looked at the priority placed on the youth minister’s passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families. Surprisingly, this was not determined to be a primary leadership characteristic. A total of 307 participants responded to this item with 84% ( $n = 258$ ) classifying it as not primary (see Table 14).

Table 14. Frequency for *Demonstrate a passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	49	15.2	16.0	16.0
Non-Primary	258	80.1	84.0	100.0
Total	307	95.3	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

This is a rejection of this item being a primary leadership characteristic for local church youth ministry. This item is include in item grouping A, which included *being above reproach in conduct with youth and adults* as well as *being authentic so what they say matches what they do*. The other two items were nearly split. This demonstrated that there was an overwhelming rejection of youth evangelism when considered against issues of personal integrity. However, a youth minister who desires to see adolescents and their families evangelized is demonstrating integrity by following through with what he or she would say, expressing leadership authenticity.

### **Findings for Character Set B**

Much like the item cited above, the second item to yield a significant level of variance revealed a rejection of *humble obedience to God* as a primary leadership characteristic (see Table 15). There were 88.2% ( $n = 284$ ) participants that ranked this item as non-primary. The responses were very similar with the item that stated the youth minister *seek to be led by the Holy Spirit* which was ranked as non-primary by 94.7% ( $n = 288$ ) (see Table 16). Both of these are understandable considering the third item of character set B was that youth ministers *know Christ as their personal Savior* (see Table 17).

Table 15. Frequency for *Have a humility grounded in obedience to God*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	21	6.5	6.9	6.9
Non-Primary	284	88.2	93.1	100.0
Total	305	94.7	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 16. Frequency for *Seek to be led by the Holy Spirit*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	16	5.0	5.3	5.3
Non-Primary	288	89.4	94.7	100.0
Total	304	94.4	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 17. Frequency for *Know Christ as their personal Savior*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	270	83.9	87.9	87.9
Non-Primary	37	11.5	12.1	100.0
Total	307	95.3	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Character Set C

Character set C asked youth ministers to rank three items related to leadership character that are needed for cooperative relationships and financial integrity. The survey participants found two of them remarkably non-primary, and they were divided regarding the third. When it came to being a supporter of the senior pastor, the participants were almost equally divided with 50.7% ( $n = 155$ ) ranking it as primary and 49.3% ( $n = 151$ ) ranking it as non-primary (see Table 18).

Table 18. Frequency for *Be a supporter of the senior or lead pastor in word and attitude*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	155	48.1	50.7	50.7
Non-Primary	151	46.9	49.3	100.0
Total	306	95.0	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

In comparison, they saw contributing to staff unity (see Table 19) and financial integrity (see Table 20) as non-primary, 75.2% ( $n = 230$ ) and 75.4% ( $n = 230$ ) respectively.

Table 19. Frequency for *Contribute to church staff unity*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	75	23.6	24.8	24.8
Non-Primary	230	71.4	75.2	100.0
Total	306	95.0	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 20. Frequency for *Demonstrate integrity in finances both personal and ministerial*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	75	23.3	24.6	24.6
Non-Primary	230	71.4	75.4	100.0
Total	305	94.7	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Character Set D

Character set D offered one of the most interesting observations. The results

revealed a seemingly indifference towards the youth minister having a high regard for truth as displayed in the frequency table (see Table 21). Character set D includes two other items, the first deals with the personal discipline of the youth minister's life physically, mentally, and with his or her time. The results of the survey showed this item not to be the primary item in this set (see Table 22).

Table 21. Frequency for *Have a high regard for the truth*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	125	38.8	41.3	41.3
Non-Primary	178	55.3	58.7	100.0
Total	303	94.1	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 22. Frequency for *Demonstrate personal discipline in their personal life: body, mind, time management*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	69	21.4	22.6	22.6
Non-Primary	236	73.3	77.4	100.0
Total	305	94.7	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

The last item in the set pertained to the moral purity of the youth minister. Once again, the participants revealed a seemingly indifference for moral purity as a primary character quality for effective local church youth ministry as seen in the frequency table (see Table 23).

Table 23. Frequency for *Be committed to moral purity*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	112	34.8	36.6	36.6
Non-Primary	194	60.2	63.4	100.0
Total	306	95.0	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

There was a decided variance between those who ranked it as primary (36.6%,  $n = 112$ ) and those who ranked it as non-primary (63.4%,  $n = 194$ ).

Table 24. Frequency for *Be approachable by students and parents*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	67	20.8	22.1	22.1
Non-Primary	236	73.3	77.4	100.0
Total	303	94.1	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 25. Frequency for *Have a genuine love for teenagers*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	213	66.1	70.1	70.1
Non-Primary	91	28.3	29.9	100.0
Total	304	94.4	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Character Set E

Character set E considered three items that deal with both the youth minister's heart for people and his priority for personal and professional growth. *Having a genuine love for teenagers* was asserted as a primary character more clearly than the other items



in this set (see Tables 24 and 25).

### Findings for Character Set F

This character set only had one item of interest which pertained to the youth minister's commitment to spend personal devotional time with God. It should be encouraging that a primary characteristic identified by this study is for the youth minister to have regular personal devotions. The participants responded with certainty as seen in Table 27.

Table 26. Frequency for *Possess a desire to learn as evidenced by his/her attitude, attendance of continuing educational opportunities, and outside reading*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	23	7.1	7.6	22.6
Non-Primary	279	86.6	92.4	100.0
Total	302	93.8	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

When placed opposite of being emotional stable with very few mood swings and being a self-starter, requiring very little supervision, the priority of personal time alone with God was the primary character quality perceived for effective local church youth ministry. The opposing items in this set received a solid ranking for being non-primary. Emotional stability was ranked as being non-primary by 93.1% ( $n = 283$ ) of those who answered. Being a self-starter was ranked as a non-primary item by 80.6% ( $n = 245$ ). This set may not have been an accurate grouping based on the importance of personal time with God carrying more weight than many other items, but especially being a self-starter.

Table 27. Frequency for *Have regular personal devotions*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	224	69.6	73.4	73.4
Non-Primary	81	25.2	26.6	100.0
Total	305	94.7	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 28. Frequency for *Maintain a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	281	87.3	92.4	92.4
Non-Primary	23	7.1	7.6	100.0
Total	304	94.4	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 29. Frequency for *Honor, respect, and demonstrate a healthy relationship with spouse*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	16	5.0	5.3	5.3
Non-Primary	287	89.1	94.7	100.0
Total	303	94.1	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Character Set G

The final character set revealed that each of the three items varied notably. The item that received the ranking as a primary character quality was similar to that of character set F. Maintaining a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ was ranked by 92.4% ( $n = 281$ ) of the participants as being a primary character quality for effective local church youth ministry (see Tables 28, 29, 30).

Table 30. Frequency for *Demonstrate a lifelong call to youth ministry*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	7	2.2	2.3	2.3
Non-Primary	295	91.6	94.7	100.0
Total	302	93.8	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### ***Summary of Findings for Research Question 1***

With regards to leadership character qualities, the results of the survey revealed four items that youth ministers ranked as primary with little ambiguity. It should be noted that these items were ranked as primary within their character set and the results may or may not be similar when placed opposite other items.

The four items that were most decidedly ranked as primary in their set are as follows: (1) Know Christ as their personal Savior, 87.9% (see Table 17), (2) Have a genuine love for teenagers, 70.1% (see Table 25), (3) Have regular personal devotions, 73.4% (see Table 27), and (4) Maintain a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ, 92.4% (see Table 28).

There was one item that seemed to stand out being ranked as non-primary in their character set by the youth ministers. Once again, it is acknowledged that this item may or may not have received the same ranking when placed opposite other items. The item that was ranked significantly as non-primary in character set A is that the youth minister should *demonstrate a passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families*, 84% (see Table 14).

There was an identifiable indifference with one item where there seemed to be a division between either which item was primary or which item was non-primary. For

example, being a supporter of the senior or lead pastor in word or attitude was ranked as primary by 50.7% ( $n = 155$ ) and was ranked non-primary by 49.3% ( $n = 151$ ). Within this character set, the participants ranked contributing to staff unity (75.2%,  $n = 230$ ) and demonstrating integrity in finances both personal and ministerial (75.4%,  $n = 230$ ) as non-primary. This seems to assert that these two are non-primary more than the assertion that supporting the pastor is primary.

### *Findings Related to Research Question 2*

As with research question one, research question two is connected to various sets in the YMS. Research Question 2 sought to identify the primary leadership competencies for effective local church youth ministry. The Youth Minister Survey included nine competency sets. Each set contained three items that were ranked from 1-3 within each set. Research question 2 deals with the skills and abilities that are needed for effective leadership of a local church youth ministry.

#### **Findings for Competency Set H**

This set included three items that focused on the youth minister's ability to communicate effectively in several environments. The ability for the youth ministry leader to effectively lead small groups was seen to be a primary quality (78.1%,  $n = 235$ ) over the skill to effectively communicate to groups of 50 or more (12.7%,  $n = 38$ ) and groups of 100 or more (8.4%,  $n = 27$ ). This may be related to the fact that 57.8% ( $n = 189$ ) of the participants come from churches with 500 or fewer people.

Table 31. Frequency for *Be an effective leader of small groups*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	235	73.0	78.1	78.1
Non-Primary	66	20.5	21.9	100.0
Total	301	93.5	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Competency Set I

The interesting item in this set was in regard to the youth minister *possessing above average administrative skills* with 88.4% ( $n = 266$ ) ranking it as non-primary (see Table 32).

Table 32. Frequency for *Possessing above average administrative skills*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	35	10.9	11.6	11.6
Non-Primary	266	82.6	88.4	100.0
Total	301	93.5	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

The other two items in this set revealed some indifference between primary and non-primary. *Being an effective interpersonal communicator with parents of adolescents* (49%,  $n = 148$ ) was ranked over *being able to teach training sessions for volunteers* (39.2%,  $n = 118$ ) as being primary.

### Findings for Competency Set J

Competency set I included items that dealt with budget management, leading ministry teams, and communicating truth in relevant ways. The significant item in this set

was the last item. In contrast to managing a budget (3.6%,  $n = 11$ ) and leading a team (25.1%,  $n = 76$ ), youth ministers said that a primary leadership competency for effective local church youth ministry was that the youth minister *be able to communicate truth in relevant ways* (71.2%,  $n = 215$ ).

### **Findings for Competency Set K**

This competency set revealed an interesting primary item. Youth ministers ranked *being able to lead students to faith in Christ* (78.8%,  $n = 238$ ) as primary. Only 16% ( $n = 49$ ) of the youth ministers in this study ranked *demonstrate a passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families* (see Table 14) as a primary character quality. There seems to be incongruence between the character quality and the expectation of the competency.

### **Findings for Competency Set L**

Youth ministers responded with 85.6% ( $n = 256$ ) perceiving that *having the ability to manage a support staff including secretarial and intern positions* was a non-primary leadership competency. This is continuing a trend from competency sets I, J, and K where they ranked administrative skills, budget management, and time management as being non-primary.

### **Findings for Competency Set M**

For competency set M, youth ministers ranked one item as being non-primary with the remaining two being somewhat split, leaving no decisive primary competency (see Table 33).

Table 33. Frequency for *Have a minimum of 30 hours of undergraduate and/or graduate youth ministry coursework*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	73	22.7	24.5	24.5
Non-Primary	225	69.9	75.5	100.0
Total	298	92.5	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 34. Frequency for *Have attended a minimum of 6 training seminars in leading local church youth ministry*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	86	26.7	29.2	29.2
Non-Primary	209	64.9	70.8	100.0
Total	295	91.6	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 35. Frequency for *Have undergraduate training in Bible and theology*

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Primary	138	42.9	46.2	46.2
Non-Primary	161	50.0	53.8	100.0
Total	299	92.9	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

### Findings for Competency Set N

This set produced a primary leadership competency that affirmed the need for youth ministers to have a biblically based philosophy of youth ministry with 89.5% ( $n = 272$ ) ranking it as primary. In this set, youth ministers ranked both of the other two items as non-primary convincingly. *Having a strategy for connecting with the public school campus* was ranked as non-primary by 95.4% ( $n = 288$ ). *Having a strategy for recruiting*

*volunteer leaders* was ranked non-primary by 94.0% ( $n = 284$ ). This could be an indication that campus ministry and volunteer recruitment are included in a philosophy of youth ministry. Even so, it does indicate that having a biblically based philosophy of youth ministry is a higher priority than the other two.

### **Findings for Competency Set P**

Knowledge of the Bible outweighs the opposite items in this set. Youth ministers attest that youth ministers *possess a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible* is primary with 87.2% ( $n = 265$ ) ranking it as such. The priority of a *knowledge of youth culture* (5.6%,  $n = 17$ ) and an *awareness of adolescent developmental issues* (6.8%,  $n = 22$ ) pales when faced with the need to know the Bible.

### **Findings for Competency Set Q**

The final competency set confirms the findings from other sets where youth ministers rank administration as non-primary. The difference is that with this final set administration is placed opposite of *believe and teach sound, biblical doctrine* which was ranked as being primary by 76.9% ( $n = 233$ ).

### ***Summary of Findings for Research Question 2***

When the youth ministers answered survey questions regarding leadership competencies for effective local church youth ministry, the items that were identified as being primary are either related to communication skills or knowledge of the Bible. There were three items related to the youth minister needing communication skills for effectively leading a local church youth ministry.

The three communication items that were most decidedly rank as primary were



as follows: (1) Be an effective small group leader (78.1%,  $n = 235$ ), (2) Be able to communicate spiritual truth in relevant ways (71.2%,  $n = 215$ ), and (3) Be able to lead students to faith in Christ (78.8%,  $n = 238$ ). It should be noted that 2 and 3 are closely related to the youth minister having knowledge of the Bible.

Three other items stood out as being ranked primary for effective leadership of a local church youth ministry. As stated, these items affirmed the priority for the youth minister to have a solid, biblical knowledge. They were as follows: (1) Have a philosophy of youth ministry that is biblically based (89.5%,  $n = 272$ ), (2) Posses a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible (87.2%,  $n = 265$ ), and (3) Believe and teach sound, biblical doctrine (76.9%,  $n = 233$ ). It is to be understood that these items are affirmations of what the youth minister needs for effective leadership in local church youth ministry only when placed opposite the items in their respective competency sets.

Interesting note is that each one of the items related to administrative skills was ranked as being non-primary in every case when placed opposite the items in their respective sets.

### **Findings Related to Research Question 3**

The data for the first two research questions in the study were quantitative in nature in that they gathered responses pre-determined answer options. The first two research questions addressed character qualities and competencies. The third research question redirects the research method as well as the focus of the area from quantitative to qualitative and from positive leadership attributes to potential leadership flaws.

Research question 3 allowed the youth ministers to write their responses to the following question, “Do you believe there are leadership flaws that would render a youth

minister ineffective in leading a local church youth ministry?” They were provided five entry fields to list these leadership flaws. A gross total of 1,193 flaws were listed. A majority of respondents 95.5% ( $n = 294$ ) listed at least one leadership flaw (see Table 36).

The entries were clearly categorized according the Youth Ministry Survey Category List (see Table 13). As noted earlier, the YMS Category List is structured with the first three categories dealing with leadership character qualities and the remaining five categories deal with leadership competency. Table 37 shows that the largest number of entries for leadership flaws was entered as character, personal, or attitude (56.8%,  $n = 678$ ). The remaining leadership flaws comprise 43.2% ( $n = 515$ ) of the total responses. Education accounted for 5.4% ( $n = 65$ ) of the entries cited as leadership flaws for those leading local church youth ministries. Out of the 294 entries as Flaw 1, 34.4% ( $n = 101$ ) were categorized under character, 12.2% ( $n = 36$ ) were categorized as personal, and 18.7% ( $n = 55$ ) were categorized as attitude (see Table 38). The remaining entries for Flaw 1 were categorized under leadership competencies (34.7%,  $n = 102$ ). The leadership flaws will be addressed further in the sections dealing with research questions 4 and 5.

Table 36. Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent (%)	N	Percent (%)	N	Percent (%)
Flaw 1	294	95.5	14	4.5	308	100.0
Flaw 2	287	93.2	21	6.8	308	100.0
Flaw 3	259	84.1	49	15.9	308	100.0
Flaw 4	198	64.3	110	35.7	308	100.0
Total	155	50.3	153	49.7	308	100.0

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 37. Leadership flaws entered by category actual

<i>Category</i>	<i>Flaw 1</i>	<i>Flaw 2</i>	<i>Flaw 3</i>	<i>Flaw 4</i>	<i>Flaw 5</i>	<i>Total</i>
Character	101	81	28	13	9	232
Personal	36	37	62	45	37	217
Attitude	55	53	53	40	28	229
Program	12	23	14	20	15	84
Skills	25	24	49	44	29	171
Leadership Style	35	24	26	14	21	120
Team Development	18	24	14	13	6	75
Education	12	21	13	9	10	65
<i>Total</i>	294	287	259	198	155	1193

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

Table 38. Leadership flaws entered by category percentage

<i>Category</i>	<i>Flaw 1</i>	<i>Flaw 2</i>	<i>Flaw 3</i>	<i>Flaw 4</i>	<i>Flaw 5</i>	<i>Total</i>
Character	34.4%	28.2%	10.8%	6.6%	5.8%	19.4%
Personal	12.2%	12.9%	23.9%	22.7%	23.9%	18.2%
Attitude	18.7%	18.5%	20.5%	20.2%	18.1%	19.2%
Program	4.1%	8.0%	5.4%	10.1%	9.7%	7.0%
Skills	8.5%	8.4%	18.9%	22.2%	18.7%	14.3%
Leadership Style	11.9%	8.4%	10.0%	7.1%	13.5%	10.1%
Team Development	6.1%	8.4%	5.4%	6.6%	3.9%	6.3%
Education	4.1%	7.3%	5.0%	4.5%	6.5%	5.4%
<i>Total</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

#### Findings Related to Research Question 4

The first of the two research questions that address the results of the Youth Minister Survey form a demographic perspective. Research question 4 sought to identify whether or not the size of the youth minister's youth group influenced the priority of each item in the character sets as well as the competency sets. It also looked at whether or not any variances occurred in the leadership flaw section of the YMS.

As seen in Table 39, the majority of participants said that they currently serve in churches with small to medium youth groups. It was this researcher's speculation that

the size of the youth group would have some bearing on the priority each youth minister placed on each item.

Table 39. Frequency of participation by youth ministry size

	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Small	118	38.3	38.3	38.3
Medium	103	33.4	33.4	71.7
Large	56	18.2	18.2	89.9
Mega	31	10.1	10.1	100.0
Total	322	100.0	100.0	

Confidence interval = +/- 5%

There were five items that revealed a significant level of variance. Each of these items returned an associated level of significance of less than .05 ( $p \leq .05$ ). There was one item from the character sets and there were four items from the competency sets that were statistically significant. To examine the relationship between the sizes of the youth ministry where each respondent currently serves, a chi square test was conducted to watch for possible items that would confirm or refute the hypothesis.

***Character Quality “Know Christ as Their Personal Savior”***

Knowing Christ as personal Savior was ranked by the total respondents as being a primary by 87.9% ( $n = 270$ ) (see Table 17). When this item was considered in relation to the size of the youth ministry, there was significant difference between respondents from different size youth ministries. With an alpha level of .05, the effect of youth ministry size on whether this item was primary or not primary was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n=307) = 9.65, p = .02$ . The mega churches ranked this item as primary

less (71.0%,  $n = 22$ ) than medium (91.2%,  $n = 93$ ), large (89.3%,  $n = 50$ ), and small (89.0%,  $n = 105$ ) churches.

***Leadership Competency “Be an Effective  
Leader of Small Groups”***

This item also statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n = 301) = 11.95, p = .01$ , when the size of the youth ministry was considered. As the size of the youth ministry increased, the priority of the youth minister having the ability to *be an effective leader of small groups* dropped. The small churches demonstrated the highest percentage (87.8%,  $n = 101$ ) of youth ministers who said that this was a primary competency for effective local church youth ministry. With the Mega churches, 66.7% ( $n = 20$ ) ranked this item as a primary leadership competency.

***Leadership Competency “Be an Effective Interpersonal  
Communicator with Parents of Adolescents”***

Interpersonal communication skills were ranked by 59.5% of youth ministers from small churches as primary. With an alpha level of .05, the effect of youth ministry size on whether this item was primary or not primary was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n = 302) = 9.11, p = .03$ . The remaining categories of youth ministry size show a decline in the percentage of respondents that ranked this item as primary, the lowest being the Mega church youth minister (38.7%,  $n = 12$ ).

***Leadership Competency “Have Attended a  
Minimum of 6 Training Seminars in  
Leading Local Church Youth Ministry”***

The priority on continuing education by means of informal training is ranked as a primary leadership competency by 29.2% ( $n = 86$ ) of respondents. Once again, With

an alpha level of .05, the effect of youth ministry size on whether this item was primary or not primary was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n = 295) = 7.94, p = .05$ . The significance is seen in the high percentage of youth ministers who ranked this item as not primary with 76.3% ( $n = 87$ ) of youth ministers in small churches leading that statistic. Large churches were the lowest (55.6%,  $n = 30$ ) of the four categories to rank this item as not primary.

***Leadership Competency “Have Undergraduate Training in Bible and Theology”***

Undergraduate training in Bible and theology was not ranked as a primary leadership competency by the overall respondents (46.2%,  $n = 138$ ). It did see a slight increase over the previous item involving informal training. Although, when the size of the youth ministry is factored in, the results still present this item as a low priority. With an alpha level of .05, the effect of youth ministry size on whether this item was primary or not primary was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3, n = 299) = 9.6, p = .022$ . It is ranked by a greater percentage of youth ministers in small churches as primary (53%,  $n = 61$ ) and slightly declines with 48.3% of youth ministers from Mega churches ranking this item as a primary leadership competency for effective local church youth ministry.

***Youth Ministry Size and Leadership Flaws***

The data for the leadership flaws was in the form of qualitative data. This study requested that each respondent write in any leadership flaws that they considered fatal to the effectiveness of the local church youth minister. When the data on leadership flaws was discussed above, it was stated that the majority of the write in statements were categorized as character, personal, or attitude (see Table 38).

When the data was considered with the demographic factor of youth ministry size, some interesting observations were identified. The issues of character and attitude received similar attention as with the results with the total respondents. The top category to receive write in responses for Flaw 1 was that of character with small churches leading the way with 42.0% ( $n = 47$ ) citing a character issue as the first flaw that hinders effectiveness in local church youth ministry. A total of 34.4% ( $n = 101$ ) of all respondents cited a character issue as the first flaw. Character received the greatest number of write in flaws in three of the youth ministry size categories. Mega churches cited attitude issues as the first flaw (39.3%,  $n = 11$ ). This trend continued with the items listed as Flaw 2. Issues of character and attitude remained the top write in items (28.2%,  $n = 81$ ).

For Flaw 3, the response shifted and focused more on skills than with the first two flaws. The top category was seen to be “personal” which received 23.9% ( $n = 62$ ) of write in statements for Flaw 3. The skills category saw an increase with 18.9% ( $n = 49$ ) citing issues that related to ministry skills as flaws that render a youth minister ineffective.

The entries for Flaw 4 were similar to the entries in Flaw 3. The entries in Flaw 4 saw personal (17.4%,  $n = 45$ ), skills (17.0%,  $n = 44$ ), and attitude (15.4%,  $n = 40$ ) leading the way. The entries for Flaw 5 still held strong in the categories of *personal* and *attitude*, but there was an increase in the category of *leadership style* (13.5%,  $n = 21$ ).

Overall, the factor of youth ministry size did vary by a great difference from the total results. It was observed that smaller churches cited categories related to character more often than larger churches. In addition, education did not seem to be a

concern when it comes to effectiveness in youth ministry. The respondents did not cite education as a leadership flaw with great regularity.

### **Findings Related to Research Question 5**

Research question five asked, “In what ways, if any, do the youth ministers’ perceptions concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of years serving in full-time local church youth ministry?”

Upon completion of the same statistical tests as performed with research question 4, the researcher did not find any significant level of variance in the responses based on the variable of full-time ministry experience. There were no significant results pertaining to either character qualities or leadership competencies.

When it came to considering leadership flaws, the researcher observed that issues regarding character and attitude received attention similar to the results from Research Question 4. An interesting observation was that *Rookies* and *Professionals* responded with items related to character more often than the other categories.

### **Evaluation of the Research Design**

The final section of this chapter will offer reflections and evaluation of the research design with specific attention given to strengths and weaknesses of the methodology used for this study. These reflections are intended to allow future researchers to improve on the work produced here as well as for future studies in the field of local church youth ministry leadership and training.

The purpose of this study was to identify the character qualities and leadership competencies for local church youth ministers to be effective as well as potential



leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective as perceived by full-time youth ministers in the United States. This has been accomplished through data collected from a sample of full-time youth ministers in the United States and listed in the database of the National Network of Youth Ministries. The perceptions of full-time youth ministers were examined and some significant items related to both character and competence emerged as being primary leadership qualities needed for effective leadership of local church youth ministry.

### *Strengths of the Research Design*

The sample size represented a cross section of both church sizes and locations. This was intentional to allow for a broader application of the research findings. Additionally, the sample was designed to include churches from various denominations including mainline protestant, non-denominational, and Southern Baptist. The database obtained from the National Network of Youth Ministries included records from all denominational youth ministers. This too was intentionally built into the design in order to access a more comprehensive representation of the youth ministry in the United States.

Connecting with the National Network of Youth Ministries (NNYM) proved to be a valuable asset. That organization has done a commendable job at networking local youth ministers as well as other leaders in the field of youth ministry at large. NNYM allowed the researcher to access youth ministers that would have been otherwise unreachable within the scope and timeline of this study.

Use of the internet-based survey with SurveyMonkey.com also added a solid component to the research design. The online delivery format allowed the researcher to customize the survey with various filters, and completion options. The researcher was

able to manage the contact list via email more efficiently than with localized software due to the fact that it was integrated within the survey function and always accessible via the internet. Survey Monkey also allowed the researcher to gather and analyze the data in multiple formats as well as receiving downloaded reports for either Excel or SPSS 13. The service provide by Survey Monkey was also good value with a small monthly fee for unlimited responses and survey questions.

### ***Weaknesses of the Research Design***

The initial weakness of the research design would be the scoring or method of ranking each of the items in the survey. Since the researcher chose not to use a Likert scale method of scoring each item, it was not possible to run common statistical tests that may have allowed the data to reveal more detailed results. The methodology employed by this study, forced choice, may it necessary to use categorical in all statistical analyses. Having a Likert-type scale would have enabled analyses to be conducted using interval data. The option of recoding the data into categorical data would have also been available.

It would have been both preferable and beneficial to have more respondents to as well as a more balanced representation of youth ministers from each size of church and youth ministry. Although this would be difficult if a random sample is the goal as in this study, it would have strengthened the results and applicability.

The researcher could have organized the sets of items for the survey more effectively, with similar items being grouped together. For example, competency set J included: (1) Be able to plan and manage a budget effectively, (2) Be able to lead a ministry team, and (3) Be able to communicate spiritual truth in relevant ways. These

items deal with three different areas of local church youth ministry leadership. The obvious item that was ranked as primary was the last one which focused on teaching spiritual truth (71.2%,  $n = 215$ ). This would have rendered a more useable set of data that would have positioned the leadership character qualities and leadership competencies in tighter sets opposite each other.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides an examination of the research questions and draws conclusions based on the findings. Implications are discussed that will pertain to the training and employing of local church youth ministers in view of identified leadership character qualities, competencies, and flaws. The researcher will connect the findings to precedent literature and identify areas where more research should be done to further advance the field of local church youth ministry and the training of youth ministry leaders.

The researcher sought to identify a list of youth ministry leadership character qualities and competencies through a forced choice, online survey. Youth ministers were randomly selected from a database provided by the National Network of Youth Ministries. The desire of this researcher was to identify a list that will provide a guideline for training youth ministers in institutions of higher education. This list will also serve as a guide for youth ministers in assessing their leadership development and effectiveness and may offer insight for senior pastors and church personnel committees when filling youth ministry positions in their churches.

#### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative and quantitative study was to identify the character qualities and leadership competencies for local church youth ministers to be

effective as well as potential leadership flaws that may render youth ministers ineffective as perceived by full-time youth ministers in the United States.

### **Research Questions**

Five questions served as the basis for the investigation of the leadership competencies, character qualities, and leadership flaws for local church youth pastors.

The following questions sought to identify perceptions from youth ministers regarding local church youth ministry:

1. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary character qualities for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
2. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning the primary leadership competencies for leading an effective local church youth ministry?
3. What are the perceptions of youth ministers concerning leadership flaws that may render some youth ministers ineffective?
4. In what ways, if any, do the perceptions of youth ministers concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of adolescents who attend weekly?
5. In what ways, if any, do the youth ministers' perceptions concerning character qualities, leadership competencies, and leadership flaws vary according to the number of years serving in full-time local church youth ministry?

#### *What Are the Primary Character Qualities for Leading an Effective Local Church Youth Ministry?*

The first research question addressed the perceptions that full-time youth ministers in the United States had regarding the primary leadership character qualities that are needed to effectively lead a local church youth ministry. The youth ministers were given seven character sets of items pertaining to various character qualities that were reflected in the precedent literature. Each youth minister that responded was instructed to identify each item as being primary, secondary, or necessary for effectively

leading a local church youth ministry. There were four items in the character sets that received a notable assertion that they are primary characteristics. Youth ministers ranked these items as primary with little ambiguity. As mentioned in chapter 4, it should be noted that these items were ranked as primary within their character set, and the results may or may not be similar when placed opposite other items.

### **Know Christ as Their Personal Savior**

*To know Christ as their personal Savior* was ranked by 87.9% of the responding youth ministers as being a primary leadership characteristic. Although this should not be a surprise, it does offer some insight into the character of youth ministers in the United States who have networked with the National Network of Youth Ministries. NNYM affirms, through their network covenant, that everyone who joins the network embody a personal holiness that is described as being *established in Christ* (Retrieved 10 April 2007 from <http://youthworkers.net/index.cfm?fuseaction=join.step1&Country=US>). This obviously cannot guarantee that each person who participated in this study knows Christ as their personal Savior. It does speak to the value that NNYM has placed on its membership and to the value that its members place on it as well.

The priority of having a relationship with Christ is the essential character quality for effectively leading a local church youth ministry. Jesus told His disciples, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). The requirement for leadership begins with the simple but often under-valued leadership variable, salvation of the leader. Of the five works cited in chapter 2 for compiling a list of competencies for youth ministers, only one include the youth minister’s personal relationship with Christ. But before the youth leader can effectively perform ministry skills for the long run, their

spiritual foundation-n must be true and sure. One cannot allow his knowledge in youth ministry to become out of balance with his faith in Christ. Scripture offers instruction regarding this in 2 Peter 1:5-8 where Peter gives a recipe for effectiveness and fruitfulness in life. He lays out a list of qualities that begins with faith, then goodness, then knowledge. Knowledge falls two spots behind faith. The ultimate goal of the disciple is to reflect the character of his teacher. The youth minister's Teacher is first and foremost Jesus Christ. The youth minister can only be what Christ is inside of him before what Christ will do outside of him. Spiritual leaders must derive their leadership role from God and His Word. The youth minister should be a living example just as Paul desired to be when he said "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). John Maxwell states that "real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow" (Maxwell 1993, 5). Adolescents, their families, and youth ministry volunteers will follow the youth minister who is recklessly pursuing a relationship with God. They find that they cannot always trust the youth minister, but they can trust the God he serves.

Overall, the youth minister must be a leader with a strong, godly character that draws on his relationship with his Creator before tapping into the reservoir of knowledge and understanding. Proverbs states in several chapters, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). Knowledge starts with our right relationship with God.

### **Have Genuine Love for Teenagers**

The objects of the ministry of Christ are people. Youth ministers ranked this item as a primary leadership character quality with 70.1% of respondents affirming it as

such. Youth ministers often find themselves in situations where they must shepherd the lives of adolescents who are in transition from childhood to adulthood. If the youth minister is connected to God's heart through a personal relationship with Him, he will reflect God's care for people and specifically for adolescents. Jesus modeled this as a vital leadership characteristic in Matthew 9 where it reads, "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

The youth minister must have a genuine love for teenagers that moves him beyond his love for youth ministry. Youth ministers sometimes get caught up doing youth work and lose sight of youth ministry. A youth minister who has a genuine love for teenagers is compelled by that love to connect with adolescents and their families. Youth ministers who display this brand of passion for teenagers will be compelled to be seen on their school campuses, to attend after school events, to frequent local businesses where teenagers work, and to visit with teenagers in their homes as well as to host teenagers in the youth minister's home.

Character set E, which contained *having a genuine love for teenagers*, looked at three items that deal with both the youth minister's heart for people and his priority for personal and professional growth. The results were understandably driven by the importance of people to the heart of God. This is the mark of a shepherd leader. A youth minister who is a shepherd leader employs involved leadership that delivers care and concern to the minutia of their adolescents' lives.

It is somewhat surprising that while youth ministers placed a high value on knowing Christ and loving teenagers, they also ranked *demonstrating a passion for*



*evangelizing adolescents and their families* as not primary. It seems to follow that if teenagers are loved and the leader is a follower of Christ, then the best way to show love for adolescents would be for the leader to invest his time in introducing them to Christ as well. This does not assume that the youth ministers who responded to this survey are not interested in seeing adolescents and their families come to know Christ. The item was ranked not primary by 84% of the respondents. The reader should know that it was set opposite of two items which dealt with personal integrity, which is a trait that must be highly valued by any leader. *Being above reproach in conduct with youth and adults* was ranked as primary by 41% and *being authentic so what they say matches what do* was ranked by 43% as primary. Understanding that these items are critical to biblical leadership, this researcher believes that there should have been a greater concern for the spiritual lives of adolescents than was displayed.

### **Have Regular Personal Devotions**

Youth ministers saw *having regular personal devotions* as primary with 73.4% ranking this as a primary leadership quality for effective youth ministry. This item is closely tied to the fourth item that was decidedly ranked as being a primary leadership quality by 92.4% of respondents, *maintaining a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ*. The other items that continue to paint the portrait of an effective youth minister and were ranked as primary by the respondents intersected with authenticity, fidelity to truth, and supporting the senior pastor.

The objective of research question 1 was to identify the primary character qualities that youth ministers must have in order to be effective leaders of local church youth ministry. The current study offers valuable insight to the character of the youth

minister. He must be a follower of Christ who maintains a close, personal relationship with Christ by spending time in the Word. He must be trustworthy with actions that follow his words and be committed to truth. He must display a genuine care and love for teenagers and be loyal under the leadership of the senior pastor.

***What Are the Primary Leadership Competencies  
for Leading an Effective Local  
Church Youth Ministry?***

Ultimately what one does is a reflection of who he or she is becoming.

Investment in oneself as a leader demands that one connect with God and continue to learn. Youth ministers are often terminated and do not understand why. Based on casual observations and professional experience, this researcher believes that too many youth ministers rely on their character without executing a strategy for doing the ministry. James makes it clear that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). The identification of youth ministry leadership competencies in no way guarantees effectiveness. Only the employment of those competencies can escort the youth minister into the wide open spaces of fruitful youth ministry. A Chinese proverb reads, “Not the cry, but the flight of the wild duck leads the flock to follow” (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 83). The competency movement has been labeled “the most prevalent approach to leadership development in recent years” (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 83). George Barna offered perhaps the simplest definition of leadership competencies which includes both efforts and abilities. Therefore competence is something a leader does. It is also something a leader has. Barna also states the purpose for the leadership competency. He asserts that leaders are to “direct people toward fulfilling the vision God has provided for a group of believers” (Barna 2001, 90). This requires that the youth ministry leader be intimately connected to the

heart of God and His Word so that he will know God's vision for the youth ministry.

It is the role of the youth minister to be an equipper of the body of Christ for the work of the ministry. Youth ministers must become skilled at managing resources and maturing believers. Two areas of competence that are necessitated by the mandate in Ephesians 4:11-13 are (1) communication skills and (2) knowledge of the Bible. These items were ranked as being primary more often than others. Communication skills in various environments were identified as being primary. The youth minister must develop the ability to effectively communicate in small groups. The immediate thought is that youth ministers must be able to lead small group Bible studies or teach Sunday School. While these examples may be necessary, they are not a comprehensive representation of the need for solid interpersonal communication skills. Youth ministers are leaders that must be effective in interpersonal communication with parents, volunteers, and church staff members. These are critical competencies for effective leadership in local church youth ministry. Mistakes in interpersonal communication are the downfall of many youth leaders. Communication is the second competency listed among the eleven that Barna states are the dominant leadership competencies (Barna 2002, xvi).

Youth ministers must also become skilled at the art of public or platform communication. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 9 that he was "compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I did not do it" (1 Corinthians 9:16, NLT). This involves a solid mastery of biblical knowledge, the topic being discussed, and knowledge of adolescents, who are the audience. Having a comprehensive knowledge of youth culture and having an awareness of developmental issues related to adolescents were not ranked as primary, but both are necessities for preparing messages that will effectively communicate

relevant truth to adolescents. A youth minister's integrity must come from spiritual authenticity. "Any claim of knowing God is pointless unless the speaker is really acquainted with God" (Miller 1994, 64).

The youth minister's communication skills are also critical for leading the volunteer team. There will consistently be a need for volunteer teams to join together for youth ministry leadership meetings. This researcher has found very few youth ministry leaders who enjoy meetings. The youth minister who is able to develop the skill of efficiently running a meeting can develop a strong, loyal core of youth ministry volunteers. Not only will the youth minister find himself in an environment where he is running a volunteer meeting, but he will also need to develop the skill for leading meetings with parents, both within large training seminar environments and small parent meeting environments.

Not only did the youth ministers respond by ranking communication as a primary leadership competency, but they also said that *possessing a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible* is a primary competency for local church youth ministry. Churches have often employed youth ministers based on their energy and youthfulness without much consideration for the training or knowledge the youth minister has or how much he may be lacking. In this study, however, youth ministers did rank academic or informal conference training as primary by a significant margin. The highest of the three in the competency set was *having undergraduate training in Bible and theology* with 46.2%, of the youth ministers who responded ranking it as primary. The problem is that previous items mentioned above are directly related to academic training. There is an obvious incongruence with these items and the value to

communicate and have a knowledge of the Bible.

Formal education must become a priority if the discipline of youth ministry leadership is to become more effective and productive in accomplishing the Great Commission. Youth ministers also cited the importance of having a biblically based philosophy of youth ministry as primary. Youth ministers will need to commit the time for necessary preparation whether through formal education, informal seminars, or through personal study and accountability with a more experienced and more spiritually mature youth minister.

The need for leadership competency does not end there. Jay Adams, in his book *Shepherding God's Flock*, asserts that the shepherding model of leadership includes the following five areas that are frequently overlooked: (1) responsibility, (2) planning, (3) organization, (4) guidance, and (5) example (Adams 1979, 322-25). Both responsibility and example relate to character while planning, organization, and guidance relate to competency. The current study found that the youth ministers did not favor administrative responsibility well with 47% affirming delegation as a primary leadership competency for leading an effective local church youth ministry. Youth ministers, by and large, do not attend to the administrative responsibilities with great passion or integrity. Youth ministry educator Dave Rahn (Strommen, Jones, and Rahn 2001, 335-36) cites a proposal where six areas of competency are suggested. The first one is communication and teaching skill. The second one on the list has to do with administration and organization. David Adams suggests that the youth minister must demonstrate the ability to: (1) work effectively in an office environment, (2) administrate and work well through office procedures and systems, and (3) manage a secretary, just to name three (see

Appendix 2). Administrative competencies cannot be labeled and dismissed as not primary if the youth minister is to be effective in leading a local church youth ministry. The effective youth minister must learn the skills for leading administratively as well as in communication and knowledge.

Three other items stood out as being ranked primary for effective leadership of a local church youth ministry. As stated, these items affirmed the priority for the youth minister to have a solid, biblical knowledge. They were as follows: (1) Have a philosophy of youth ministry that is biblically based (89.5%,  $n = 272$ ), (2) Posses a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible (87.2%,  $n = 265$ ), and (3) Believe and teach sound, biblical doctrine (76.9%,  $n = 233$ ). These items only serve to support the need for formal education in youth ministry.

### ***What Are the Leadership Flaws That Some Youth Ministers Ineffective?***

The thought has occurred to this researcher that we may have put so much energy into identifying the strengths needed for effective youth ministry leadership that we have neglected to attend to the areas of weakness. In their book, *The extraordinary leader: Turning good managers into great leaders*, Zenger and Folkman identify five patterns of behavior that consistently lead to a failure in leadership. Possessing one or more of these virtually makes it impossible for a person to be perceived as an effective leader. (Zenger and Folkman 2002, 160-67). These are very practical flaws as well as common. As listed in chapter 2, they stated that leaders must be able to learn from their mistakes, possess core interpersonal skills, be open to new ideas, have accountability, and have initiative.

Research question 3 redirected the research method as well as the focus of the

area from quantitative to qualitative and from positive leadership attributes to potential leadership flaws in local church youth ministry. While the youth ministers who responded to this part of the survey provided 1,193 entries of potential leadership flaws, there were a majority of entries that pertained to leadership character qualities. As reported in Table 36, 56.8% of the entries for potential leadership flaws were related to issues of character. The leadership flaws that were entered were clearly categorized in the categories in Table 11. As stated, the flaws cited issues of character, but they also cited areas of competence such as not being able to interact with parents of teenagers. Many of the entries were in response to the items that were identified as primary. Overall, the youth ministers' concerns that were expressed in this section of the survey were congruent with their responses in the section of the survey where they ranked each item.

***Does the Size of the Youth Ministry Affect  
the Perceptions of Youth Ministers?***

After considering the perceptions of full-time youth ministers in general, the researcher sought to determine if there were variables that had any impact on the perceptions of youth ministers. The first demographic that was considered was that of youth ministry size. The researcher believes that youth ministers with smaller youth groups would possibly rank items differently from youth ministers with larger youth groups. Based on the experience of the researcher and personal observation, the researcher believes that the needs of a youth minister in a smaller setting are different than in a larger setting.

The researcher found that smaller churches tended to value certain items more than larger churches. Youth ministers from small churches ranked the competency of leading small groups as primary by 87.8%. Youth ministers from mega churches ranked

that item as primary by 66.7%. This implies that youth ministers in larger churches are either not leading small groups as often or that the items they saw to be primary were of greater importance in their ministry environment. Another theory for this occurrence deals with the definition and understanding of small group communication. The common understanding of small groups is within the context of a Bible study or Sunday School class. Unfortunately, youth ministry leaders have failed to recognize other environments in which small group communication occurs.

By natural dynamic, youth ministers in smaller churches must communicate in small group environments. Many times the youth group of a small or medium church is a small group in and of itself. Youth ministers in large or mega churches also need small group communication skills in order to be effective at guiding planning meetings with volunteer leaders as well as holding effective parents meetings.

Youth ministers in larger churches ranked *interpersonal communication with parents of adolescents* significantly less than youth ministers from smaller churches. The mega church youth minister ranked this item as primary by 38.7% while the small church youth minister ranked it as primary by 59.5%.

### ***Does the Amount of Ministry Experience Affect the Perceptions of Youth Ministers?***

The second hypothesis posed by the researcher was that if a youth minister had more experience the items the he would identify as being primary would possibly be different or at different percentage levels than youth ministers with less experience. Youth ministers who have been in full-time local church youth ministry for more than ten years would potentially have a different value on what the primary character qualities and leadership competencies are for youth ministers to be effective. The researcher did not



find any significant variance between youth ministers who had different levels of ministry experience.

### **Research Implications**

There are several implications that emerge from the analysis and interpretation of the research that will provide the necessary foundation for the application of the research findings.

### ***Personal Spiritual Maturity***

The precedent literature sets a strong foundation for the need of Christian leadership. Howard Hendricks has stated that “the greatest crisis in the world today is a crisis of leadership and the greatest crisis of leadership is a crisis of character” (Hendricks in an interview with Aubrey Malphurs, 2003). If Hendricks is accurate, then the implication for youth ministers is unmistakable. Youth ministers must first be connect with God in a personal relationship. Henry Blackaby has declared that “spiritual leadership will equip those called to lead with the tools to move God’s people on to His agenda” (Blackaby 2001, cover).

Those who train youth ministers cannot neglect the spiritual nurture and development of future youth ministers. This study calls for a reinforcing of personal spiritual growth that aids the youth minister in remaining consistently grounded in his relationship with Christ.

### ***Genuine Love for People***

Jesus said that the greatest commandment was to love God with everything you are and to love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). The character of the

youth minister is closely connected to the first and greatest commandment while this point is a direct reflection of the second greatest commandment. The allegation is apparent. Not all youth ministers are in youth ministry because they love teenagers. Many are using youth ministry to build a resume or otherwise pass the time until they move on to something more appealing. The respondents this study ranked *demonstrating a lifelong call to youth ministry* as not primary by 97.7%. It stands to reason that youth ministers' behavior is speaking louder than words. Youth ministers must be encouraged to connect with a ministry position that matches their calling and passion.

### ***Poor Communication Skills***

By all observations, this study has returned a call to improve communication skills for youth ministers. For years, educators have instructed ministry students in leading small group Bible studies; however, little has been done in the area of interpersonal communication. Youth ministers have often avoided confrontation as well as situations where biblical guidance was needed in a smaller setting. Youth ministers have multiple opportunities to impact the family and growth of parents who have teenagers. Youth ministers must build up trust in order to open the channels of healthy communication. "Trust is the *sin qua non* of communication" (Miller 1994, 18) or without which communication is not possible.

### ***Accurate Application of Biblical Truth***

Youth ministers are at the frontline of cultural expression. Adolescents introduce the most extreme elements of our society to the church each week. The youth ministers who responded to this survey cited the need to communicate truth in a relevant way as a primary leadership competency. This requires better education and discussion in

Bible knowledge, theology, apologetics, and youth culture. Youth ministers are to prioritize adequate time to prepare if they are to become the powerful communicators that adolescents need. This is a critical aspect of communication. Time allows for a more accurate grasp of the topic. “The longer you as the speaker stay in the study, mulling the “stuff” of the speech in the mind, the more credible the truth will appear in the delivery” (Miller, 1994, 23).

### *Lack of Administrative Skills and Concern*

Organization and youth ministry have been characterized for decades as two mutually exclusive terms. Youth ministers are involved in exciting activities, trips, and events. This is often perceived as just having fun. Youth ministers must first establish a strong, biblical philosophy of youth ministry that will then allow the youth minister to direct concerns back to a purpose that is designed to accomplish the mission of the gospel. Furthermore, youth ministers must begin to employ healthy administrative practices.

### *Youth Ministers from Smaller Churches Have Greater Relational Needs*

Youth ministers from smaller church affirmed small group leadership as a valuable competency. The implication is that youth ministers from larger churches do not value small group leadership as a primary leadership competency. This may or may not be true. However, the need to redefine and equip youth ministers to employ small group leadership principles is clear. Youth ministers are being called to lead through a diverse array of small group environments as they lead teams of volunteer leaders as well as student ministry teams. The “team-based ministry is the most effective model for leading

and organizing Christian ministry for the twenty-first century” (Cladis 1999, ix).

### **Research Applications**

In the end, this study can provide youth ministry educators with several key insights that would be the impetus for new initiatives in the field of youth ministry higher education. The aspiring youth minister would do well to establish a mentoring relationship with a church ministry veteran who can advise a course of action for youth ministry preparation. Potential youth ministry leaders should develop a youth ministry leadership inventory that would aid them in assessing areas of deficiency as well as affirm areas of strength.

To strengthen academic curriculum, institutions of higher education that offer degree programs in youth ministry would do well to outline their curriculum according to leadership character qualities and leadership competencies that have been researched and published. This study could offer insight for the development of such a curriculum. Such a curriculum should include three associated areas.

### ***Character Development and Spiritual Growth***

The youth ministry student would begin a mentoring relationship with a faculty advisor or local ministry leader. They would meet minimally once a month to assess the student’s progress and assign the next step in the student’s leadership growth plan. This would involve both professional ministry mentoring as well as spiritual discipleship.

### ***Skills Assessment***

This is the area where the youth ministry student would chart his growth and experience base. He would map out when and where he would gain specific youth

ministry primary competencies such as small group leadership, large group presentation, various administrative tasks, and volunteer leaders' meetings.

### ***Youth Ministry Forecasting***

It is crucial that the youth ministry student chart his future in ministry.

Developing a vision for where God is calling a youth ministry leader will allow the youth ministry student time to investigate potential ministry styles and locations that God may use to ignite passion for a specific people and place. It will also aid in determining the unique skills that would be needed in that future ministry context. For example, the youth ministry student may begin to explore youth ministry opportunities in an inner city context. It would become imperative that he seek out opportunities to experience youth ministry in the inner city under the supervision of his youth ministry mentor.

### **Further Research**

This section offers suggestions for additional research to be explored in the field of local church youth ministry and youth ministry training. This study has identified multiple leadership character qualities and leadership competencies. The researcher makes the following recommendations for future research:

1. Replicate the current study after modifying the scoring method and developing a Likert-scale that would allow the researcher to use standard deviation and mean in order to rank the items according to their score.
2. In addition, the researcher recommends reorganizing the character and competency sets into similar groupings.
3. Additional research in defining successful youth ministry would be beneficial for current youth ministers as well as youth ministry educators.
4. A study that would measure the actual level of leadership character qualities and competencies that a youth ministry possesses. This will enable further research that compares what one perceives as important with what they live and practice.

5. A longitudinal study that would chart the growth and development of a youth ministry during the tenure of a youth ministry and identify what leadership character qualities and competencies he employs.
6. An analysis of mentorship of youth ministers and the factors that influenced the development or lack thereof of leadership character qualities and leadership competencies.
7. An examination of how a youth ministers' theological beliefs impact the perceived effects of what a youth ministry's purpose is.
8. Expand this study to include youth ministry parents, volunteers, and teenagers.

## APPENDIX 1

### INSTRUMENTS USED TO COLLECT DATA

The following instruments were used to collect the data needed for this study. The items listed in this section are found in the appendices following Appendix 1.

Appendix 3: Letter Requesting Expert Panel Participation

Appendix 4: Instructions for Expert Panel

Appendix 5: Sample Email Message Invitation for Youth Ministers

Appendix 6: Youth Minister Survey

APPENDIX 2  
EXPERT PANEL

**Description of Expert Panel**

The expert panel consisted of:

Karen Jones, Ph.D., Chairperson of the Department of Missions and Ministry at Huntington College as well as serving on the staff of the Link Institute which is committed to the development of the practice of youth ministry.

Scott Stephens, Student Ministry Team Leader, LifeWay Christian Resources.

Len Kageler, Chairman, Department of Christian Education and Professor of Youth Ministry, Nyack College, Nyack, NY.

Bob MaCrae, Professor of Educational Ministries at Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL.



### APPENDIX 3

#### LETTER REQUESTING EXPERT PANEL PARTICIPATION

October 26, 2005

Dear [Expert Panel],

I am conducting a research study that seeks to analyze the character qualities and leadership competencies necessary for effectively leading a local church youth ministry. The study also seeks to identify potential leadership flaws that may render a youth minister ineffective. As a part of this process, I am inviting you to participate in this study as an expert panelist due to your leadership, training, and research in the field of youth ministry. If you accept this invitation, I will send you a copy of the survey instrument to be used in the study as well as instructions stating my expectations for your evaluation. Upon completion of the study, you will be receiving a summary of the results.

I know that this will require a significant portion of your time and express my deepest gratitude for even considering this request. Please send me any questions that you may have before you respond to the invitation. I can be reached through email at [ttemple@sbts.edu](mailto:ttemple@sbts.edu) or via cell phone at 502-338-8023.

Once again, thank you for your time and your continued investment in the lives of adolescents worldwide. It is a privilege to partner in training tomorrow's leaders today.

Remaining in Him,

Troy W. Temple, Assistant Professor,  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,  
Associate Director, The International Center for Youth Ministry,  
2825 Lexington Road  
Louisville, KY 40280

## APPENDIX 4

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPERT PANEL

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a contributor on this expert panel. Your investment will allow continued development in the training of leaders for the local church in youth ministry. Please evaluate the Youth Minister Survey (YMS) in the following ways:

1. Read the instrument through, noting the following with regards to the participant taking the survey:
  - a. Items requiring further explanation that may not be clearly understandable.
  - b. Items that need to be moved for better flow of the survey.
  - c. Items the need to be re-phrased to avoid excessive negative tones.
  - d. Additional insights pertaining to the list as printed.
2. Do the survey questions sufficiently address the issues of calling, character, and competence as related to the youth minister?
3. Suggest items that should be added or deleted to allow the survey greater efficiency as related to the study.
4. Please make any recommendations concerning the on-line format and delivery that would help or hinder the validity of the survey including but not limited to clarity of instructions, statements, and questions.
5. Upon completion of this review, please return the survey with your evaluation to the researcher via postal mail or email (listed below), whichever is the most convenient.

Completed evaluations may be returned to:

Troy Temple  
313 Fairwood Ave  
Jeffersonville, IN 47130  
or  
ttemple@sbts.edu

APPENDIX 5

SAMPLE EMAIL MESSAGE INVITATION  
FOR YOUTH MINISTERS

January 2, 2007

Dear [FirstName],

First of all, Happy New Year! I hope the message finds you ready to jump on the fresh start of 2007.

My name is Troy Temple and I am the Associate Director of the International Center for Youth Ministry in Louisville, KY. After 16 years in local church youth ministry and youth ministry training, I am completing an Ed.D. in Leadership with a focus on local church youth ministry leadership. It's been a great experience so far. I would recommend that every youth pastor pursue the highest degree possible.

As part of my current dissertation research, I am conducting a survey of full-time local church youth pastors from various denominations. You have been randomly selected from a list a youth pastors serving in the United States. This research will help shape the on-going training of leaders for local church youth ministry.

Would you give 15 minutes to take the survey? Here is a link to the survey. The password is "disciple" (no quotes):

[SurveyLink]

Let me know if you have trouble accessing the survey. Feel free to email me.

If you do not wish to participate, please click here to be removed from our list

[RemoveLink].

Thanks for your participation and investment in training future youth ministry leaders for the church.

Remaining in Him,

Troy W. Temple,  
Associate Director  
The International Center for Youth Ministry,  
Louisville, KY  
troy@fourtemples.com

## APPENDIX 6

### YOUTH MINISTER SURVEY

#### **Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the character qualities, leadership competencies, and potential leadership flaws related to effective local church youth ministry. This research is being conducted by Troy Temple for purposes of dissertation research. In this research, you will rate each item in the Youth Minister Survey on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this Youth Minister Survey, and entering your E-mail address below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Demographics: A little about yourself and your church.

1. Are you currently serving in a position as a youth minister?

- (a)  Yes, in Kentucky
- (b)  Yes, in the United States, but not in Kentucky
- (c)  No

2. What full-time and/or part-time staff members currently serve at your church?

- (a)  Worship Leader
- (b)  Executive or Administrative Pastor
- (c)  Youth Pastor
- (d)  Adult Pastor
- (e)  Children's Pastor
- (f)  Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age
- (a)  under 21
  - (b)  21-30
  - (c)  31-40
  - (d)  41-50
  - (e)  51-60
  - (f)  over 60
4. Education: Please indicate the highest level you have attained in each category?
- (a)  High school diploma or GED
  - (b)  Undergraduate degree (non-ministry related field)
  - (c)  Undergraduate degree (with ministry focus or major)
  - (d)  Graduate or seminary degree
  - (e)  Post-graduate or doctoral degree
  - (f)  other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Size of Church: Average attendance in Sunday morning worship service.
- (a)  less than 300
  - (b)  301 to 500
  - (c)  501 to 1,000
  - (d)  1,001 to 2,000
  - (e)  2,001 or more
6. Size of Youth Ministry (Middle School & High School combined weekly participants):
- (a)  less than 50
  - (b)  51 to 100
  - (c)  101 to 250
  - (d)  251 or more
7. Church location: Which best describes the community in which your church is located?
- (a)  rural
  - (b)  town
  - (c)  city
  - (d)  inner city
  - (e)  suburb

8. Length of years at present church:

- (a)  less than 1 year
- (b)  1-4 years
- (c)  5-9 years
- (d)  10 or more years

9. Ministerial Experience: Length of years in vocational or bi-vocational local church youth ministry:

- (a)  1-5 years
- (b)  6-10 years
- (c)  11-15 years
- (d)  16-20 years
- (e)  more than 20 years

10. Number of years at current church:

- (a)  less than 5 years
- (b)  6-10 years
- (c)  11-15 years
- (d)  16-20 years
- (e)  more than 20 years

Mark the number to the right of each statement as it applies to the youth minister. Only one number can be used for each set of three items.

1 = primary, 2 = secondary, 3 = necessary

Group	Item	Primary	Secondary	Necessary
A	Demonstrate a passion for evangelizing adolescents and their families	1	2	3
	Be above reproach in conduct with youth and adults	1	2	3
	Be authentic so what they say matches what they do	1	2	3
B	Have a humility grounded in obedience to God	1	2	3
	Seek to be led by the Spirit	1	2	3
	Know Christ as their personal Savior	1	2	3
C	Be a supporter of the senior or lead pastor in word and attitude	1	2	3
	Contribute to church staff unity	1	2	3
	Demonstrate integrity in finances both personal and ministerial	1	2	3
D	Have a high regard for the truth	1	2	3
	Demonstrate personal discipline in their personal life: body, mind, time management	1	2	3
	Be committed to moral purity	1	2	3
E	Be approachable by students and parents	1	2	3
	Have a genuine love for teenagers	1	2	3
	Possess a desire to learn as evidenced by his/her attitude, attendance of continuing educational opportunities, and outside reading	1	2	3
F	Have regular personal devotions	1	2	3
	Be emotionally stable with very few mood swings	1	2	3
	Be a self-starter, requiring very little supervision	1	2	3
G	Maintain a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ	1	2	3
	Honor, respect, and demonstrate a healthy relationship with spouse	1	2	3
	Demonstrate a lifelong calling to youth ministry	1	2	3

H	Be an effective leader of small groups	1	2	3
	Be an effective communicator to groups of 50 or more	1	2	3
	Be an effective communicator to groups of 100 or more	1	2	3
I	Be able to teach training sessions for volunteers	1	2	3
	Be an effective interpersonal communicator with parents of adolescents	1	2	3
	Possess above average administrative skills	1	2	3
J	Be able to plan and manage a budget effectively	1	2	3
	Be able to lead a ministry team	1	2	3
	Be able to communicate spiritual truth in relevant ways	1	2	3
K	Be able to lead students to faith in Christ	1	2	3
	Be able to effectively manage time	1	2	3
	Demonstrate active listening skills	1	2	3
L	Be able to set and evaluate short term goals	1	2	3
	Have the ability to manage a support staff including secretarial and intern positions	1	2	3
	Be able to effectively delegate responsibilities	1	2	3
M	Have a minimum of 30 hours of undergraduate and/or graduate youth ministry coursework	1	2	3
	Have attended a minimum of 6 training seminars in leading a local church youth ministry	1	2	3
	Have undergraduate training in Bible and theology	1	2	3
N	Have a philosophy of youth ministry that is biblically based	1	2	3
	Have a strategy for connecting with the public school campus	1	2	3
	Have a strategy for recruiting volunteer leaders	1	2	3
P	Possess a solid and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible	1	2	3



	Display a comprehensive knowledge of youth culture	1	2	3
	Demonstrate awareness of developmental issues related to adolescents	1	2	3
Q	Be able to administrate and work well through office procedures and systems	1	2	3
	Demonstrate an understanding of discipleship and how to implement it both corporately and individually	1	2	3
	Believe and teach sound, biblical doctrine	1	2	3

## APPENDIX 7

### CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS OF A YOUTH MINISTER

by David E. Adams, D.Min.

August 26, 2004

#### **CREDENTIALS AND EXPERIENCE**

1. Calling of God
2. Undergraduate degree – major in Youth Ministry
3. Five hundred (500) hours of supervised training
4. Master’s degree – highly recommended

#### **KNOWLEDGE**

5. Overall knowledge of the nature of ministry
6. Well-rounded and thorough knowledge of the Bible
7. Has a biblical strategy for ministry
8. Displays a comprehensive knowledge of youth culture
9. Is aware of developmental issues related to adolescents
10. Demonstrates a complete understanding of discipleship and how to implement it both cooperatively and individually
11. Is knowledgeable of the organizational culture of church and para-church structures
12. Possesses a desire to learn as evidenced by his/her attitude, attendance of continuing educational opportunities, and outside reading

#### **CHARACTER**

13. Demonstrates an intimacy with Christ
14. Has regular personal devotions
15. Faithful in church attendance and leadership meetings
16. Displays supportive attitude toward pastoral leadership

17. Displays supportive attitude toward other church staff
18. Contributes to church staff unity
19. Family testimony
20. Honors, respects, and demonstrates healthy relationship with spouse
21. Demonstrates a consistent Christian examples as a parent
22. Spouse displays consistent Christian testimony and church loyalty
23. Children display consistent Christian testimony and church loyalty
24. Moral integrity
25. Is perceived as being above reproach in conduct with youth and adults
26. To the best of your knowledge has not been guilty of any moral indiscretions
27. Pays bills on time and is debt free
28. Keeps promises and commitments
29. Personality is compatible for ministry
30. The applicant is emotionally stable with very few mood swings
31. The applicant is a self-starter, requiring very little supervision

## **SKILLS**

32. People skills
33. Relates well with Middle Schoolers
34. Relates well with High Schoolers
35. Relates well with College/Career students
36. Relates well with parents of teens
37. Relates well with lay staff
38. Public speaking
39. Communicates well with groups of 20 or less
40. Communicates well with groups of 30 - 75
41. Communicates well with groups of 100 - 500
42. Management skills
43. Works effectively in office environment
44. Administrates and works well through office procedures and systems
45. Maintains office hours consistently, always on time

- 46. Returns phone calls and written correspondence
- 47. Knows how to manage a secretary
- 48. Effectively performs ministerial duties (visitation, prospect follow-ups, etc.)

### **PROGRAM**

Is effective in developing and leading the following youth programs:

- 49. Incorporation of volunteer help
- 50. Sunday School with a "master teacher," co-ed large group approach
- 51. A small group, layperson lead Sunday School
- 52. Evangelistic outreach program
- 53. Teen choir or chorale
- 54. Weekly mid-week discipleship or outreach program
- 55. Teacher training meetings
- 56. Parents' meetings
- 57. Youth activities

## APPENDIX 8

### DUNN'S COMPETENCIES FOR A YOUTH WORKER

1. Time Management
2. Ability to take responsibility for self
3. Ability to set and manage moral boundaries
4. Accurate self-assessment (personality, gifts, etc.)
5. Defined calling to ministry
6. Capacity for personal spiritual nurture
7. Holistic self-care (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual)
8. Ability to process personal failure
9. Ability to maintain relationships with family, peers, colleagues, and mentors
10. Ability to initiate relationships with students
11. Ability to sustain and nurture relationship with students
12. Active listening skills
13. Ability to help students analyze personal challenges
14. Knowing when and how to refer students to professional help
15. Ability to build mutual commitment with leadership team to shared values, goals, and processes
16. Understands the nature of conflict and resolution
17. Able to grow through interpersonal conflict
18. Able to provide leadership

19. Ability to set and evaluate short term goals
20. Capacity to purposefully structure youth ministry program
21. Knows how to relate program to broader church ministries
22. Can create and implement an action plan for a specific activity
23. Can create and implement an action plan for a major event
24. Able to delegate appropriately and efficiently
25. Able to respond redemptively to leadership failures
26. Able to facilitate and evaluate feedback system and make adjustments accordingly
27. Able to prepare and maintain a fiscally responsible budget
28. Capacity for evangelism with individuals and groups
29. Able to speak and teach thematically
30. Skills for expository speaking and teaching
31. Skills in inductive Bible study
32. Skills in small-group leadership
33. Skills in general tasks of group communication
34. Able to describe, analyze, interpret and predict youth culture
35. Ability to respond relationally and strategically to youth culture
36. Able to provide appropriate discipline
37. Concerned with lifelong learning about the nature and practice of youth ministry

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## ABSTRACT

### AN ANALYSIS OF YOUTH MINISTERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHARACTER QUALITIES, LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES, AND LEADERSHIP FLAWS THAT FACILITATE OR HINDER EFFECTIVE YOUTH MINISTRY

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This study is an examination of the perceptions youth ministers have regarding the character qualities and leadership competencies needed for effective youth ministry. The study also examines the perception that youth ministers have regarding potential leadership flaws that may lead to ineffective youth ministry.

The researcher surveyed a sample from 1,300 full-time youth ministers representing youth ministers serving in the United States from various denominations as well as no denomination. A survey presenting a list of character qualities and youth ministry leadership competencies was sent to the sample. The respondents were instructed to rank each item from 1-3, 1 = primary, 2 = secondary, 3 = necessary. They were then instructed to list up to five potential leadership flaws that they believed would render a youth minister ineffective.

The researcher analyzed the data in light of significant prior research for common themes that demonstrated a needed emphasis in youth ministry education and training.

Key words: Youth ministry, youth minister, youth ministry education, adolescents, character qualities, ministerial leadership competencies, leadership flaws, church leadership, leadership effectiveness, leadership styles, leadership failure

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