Liberty University School of Divinity

Thesis Project Approval Sheet

Dr. Michael Whittington
Assistant Professor of Theology and Biblical Studies
Mentor

Dr. Dwight Rice
PACO Program Director of Community Care & Counseling
Reader
ABSTRACT

PASTORAL BURNOUT AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN PASTORS: A PRACTICAL AND BIBLICAL SOLUTION

Ronald Strong
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Mentor: Dr. Michael Whittington

Pastors are dropping out of the Christian ministry at an alarming rate. These spiritual leaders often experience burnout due to excessive demands, which lead to physical, emotional and spiritual exhaustion, impairing their pastoral effectiveness. Qualitative and quantitative surveys and interviews were used to determine the relationship between burnout and ministry effectiveness by focusing on three mitigating factors: physical, emotional, and spiritual rest. The results identified overall fatigue as the primary cause of spiritual aridity and pastoral failings. Using this research, this thesis provides a model for holistic health with specific solutions for ministry burnout, thereby, improving pastoral effectiveness.

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To all my children, Sadria, Ronald II and Roshawnda, I thank them for their undying support and encouragement. All have been a tremendous source of great knowledge and inspiration as I have written this project from the first word to its final completion, and I am eternally grateful. Thanks are to God for His indescribable gift. Philippians 1:6, as recorded in the Message Bible, says it best: “There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.”
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem surrounding burnout among African American pastors is the perception that all pastors must be emotionally stable and well adjusted. According to Patterson, “Pastors do not feel as though they are permitted to feel emotions as sadness, depression, hurt and anger. These pastors, both men and women, have served as leaders of the community and are perceived above struggling with common human issues, mental and emotional stress.”¹ These emotions and the inability to express them, add significantly to burnout and stress.

Patterson observed that, “Another problem is the long work hours to achieve the expected results. Many times, African American pastors will not delegate their authority because it is the expectation of the congregation that he/she is full time paid staff. It is crucial to study and research these leaders to provide preventative and curative measures to help pastors become more effective as pastors.”² Hopefully, these preventive and curative measures will assist in avoiding short-termed tenures and enhance long-termed ministry effectiveness.

The author, having served 30 years as a military chaplain and 43 years in the ministry, believes this enormous stress causes pastors to long for an escape. This longing for escape found in stressed-out ministers leads to short-tenure pastorates. According to James Taylor, “Consequently, short tenures produce instability within churches and clergy households, lack of trust surrounding the pastor/congregation relationship, and long-term ineffectiveness in areas of evangelism and discipleship.”³ Pastors burn out, and their families suffer mentally, physically, financially and spiritually. Short tenure is a growing phenomenon, evidence of the

² Ibid.
mismanagement of personal distress among ministers. These stressors produce suffering, anxiety, acute physical discomfort and exhaustion.  

**Statement of Limitations**

This tapered research approach involves a number of limitations. Firstly, this project does not include all denominations of African-American pastors. This approach may restrict the comprehensiveness of data and results, but the purpose is to concentrate on burnout management using relevant situations that are applicable to today’s ministers. Secondly, the survey used in the project is exclusive to the various main-line denominations and the geographical area of eastern Florida. Moreover, the surveys contain limitations based upon the amount of information and honesty provided by the participants. Thirdly, this project employs an anonymous survey and interview approach, which hinders long-term examination and evaluations. However, the author thinks the lack of lengthy observation does not limit the effectiveness of its principles, as the strong biblical clarification and examination secures the foundation and long-term effectiveness of the project.

**Biblical/Theological Basis**

The Bible deals with the theme of burnout in a classical way. Both Old and New Testament leaders experienced the crisis of stress and burnout in their ministry. Moses, Jeremiah, Elijah and Paul are good examples.

**Moses**

Moses is awe-inspiring. From a distance, he is a grand and epic figure, but when closely studied, he is a reluctant leader trying desperately to learn how to lead. It was God, working

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5 Ibid.

through Moses, who led the battle during the war, presented the rules and mediated disputes. Moses was not good at delegating power to others; however, due to the vast number of minor court decisions, this became necessary to maintain good order and discipline. While Moses delegated the minor decisions to others, he sat in judgment on all major cases. Delegation is the key to avoiding excessive stress. Jethro, who observed this practice, advised Moses to select officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Moses made these new selected officials to judge the people, and he judged only the challenging cases. After that, the Israelites didn’t have to wait long for judgmental resolutions, and Moses did not have to judge all cases. James Taylor writes about ministering to people today who are similar to the Israelites of Moses’ day. He writes of the Hebrews’ shallow spirituality and Moses’ ability to lead them. He encourages ministers to establish their own tent of meeting and go there to wait for God’s power, purpose and instruction.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah initiated his prophetic ministry in 626 B.C., in the 13th year of Josiah’s reign. He lived in Anathoth, located three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah’s ministry came from God, and he focused on preaching a message of judgment against Judah. This judgment consisted of the Babylonian Empire destroying the southern kingdom of Judah as a punishment for their covenant unfaithfulness, continuous sin and blatant disobedience against God. Delivering this message from God was a difficult task. Jeremiah’s first message, recorded in Jeremiah 2:1-3:5, blended God’s grace and compassion with solemn warnings of the dreadful

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7 See Ex. 18:13-26.
10 Ibid.
days to come if hearts did not turn back toward the Lord. Consequently, the prophet experienced extreme anguish and burnout.\(^\text{11}\)

Nevertheless, Jeremiah never hesitated from his position and the message that Judah and Jerusalem were going to be destroyed by a nation from the north, the people carried away into captivity. Jeremiah pronounced judgment upon the people for their evil practices in Jeremiah 7:20: “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place — on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground.’”\(^\text{12}\)

Jeremiah is an example of the stress placed on preaching to a stubborn, hard-hearted and rebellious congregation, as well as the stress of standing alone. F. B. Huey Jr. explains that Jeremiah responded to God with self-pity, received strength from God, and then returned to his prophetic ministry until the fall of Jerusalem and beyond.\(^\text{13}\)

In his commentary, James Taylor gives insight to Jeremiah’s burnout. He discusses Jeremiah lending money to his friends and the anguish he encountered in lost relationships, as Jeremiah lost all of his friends and found comfort in God’s Word.\(^\text{14}\) We still have the adage today: “Seldom lend and never borrow and that will save a lot of sorrow.”\(^\text{15}\) This wise saying is applicable for all pastors.

Elijah

Elijah was selected for his example of loneliness in the ministry. He did ministry alone, as recorded in 1 Kings 19:3-4: he did not take his servant with him when he fled, but went alone.

\(^\text{12}\) Ibid.
For some, loneliness causes distress, depression and regression, which ultimately cause burnout. Rejection is a lonely feeling. Explore Elijah’s situation; not only were Jezebel’s intimidations a cause of his lonely state, but also the people of Israel left Elijah feeling all alone. Elijah pleaded: “For the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life” (1 Kings 19:10, NIV).16

Elijah drew a picture of renegade Israel: They forsook God’s covenant by worshipping other gods, endeavored to eliminate and destroy the worship of God from the remembrance of the people and the land, and murdered the prophets so there would be no one to reprove their sin and proclaim the truth. Sorrowfully, Elijah responded by implying he was the only prophet left alive.17 In the prophet’s mind arose an unusual sense of loneliness. Confidently, he had over-estimated the king’s reaction to the miracles at Carmel and the confirmation of the people. Elijah had been exalted above measure; now, alone in the cave; the great prophet weltered in self-pity instead of demonstrating his faith in God.18 He saw no real reason to continue.19

Paul

The renowned evangelist Paul admitted that he experienced the condition of burnout, temptation to abandon his ministry and even losing the hope to live: “We don’t want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life” (2 Cor. 1:8, NIV).

16 1 Kings 19:10b.
17 Adam Clarke and Ralph Earle, Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967).
The apostle Paul further says:

Are they servants of Christ? I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, and I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked (2 Cor. 11:23-27, NIV).

The apostle Paul experienced many sufferings on different fronts. There were the Jewish officials who collaborated against him because of his conversion and preaching to the Gentiles. There were the Christians who couldn’t forget the memory of persecution of Jesus and his disciples. There were the Gentiles to deal with. All of these made Paul exhausted and burned out.

The Bible gives many examples of great leaders who suffered from the crisis of burnout, and they did their best to overcome it. Accordingly, pastoral burnout is not dishonorable; other biblical and spiritual leaders have experienced burnout to some degree.

**Statement of Methodology**

The methodology for this project includes an examination of the survey results, a literature review, and a detailed study of the narratives of Moses, Jeremiah, Elijah and Paul as they relate to managing and overcoming stress, distress and burnout. Understanding the causes of stress will aid in its management.

Chapter One will define and analyze the historical problem of burnout by discovering the factors that lead to burnout. This research will be based on the results of a survey of African American pastors from northeast Florida.

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In Chapter Two, a general understanding of burnout will be defined historically: What is the definition of burnout? What are the factors of burnout? What are the phenomena and effects of burnout? These lingering questions will be asked and answered in the chapter.

Chapter Three will first present burnout in pastoral ministry. After this discussion, it will describe a brief overview of the context of Afro-American churches and pastoral ministries, then treat the characteristics, dynamics and tools of measurement about the burnout of pastors.

Chapter Four will define the ministries of pastors in the northeast Florida area. In this chapter, some factors which threaten their ministry will be discussed, and then it will focus on the practical phenomena of burnout. In order to evaluate burnout specifically, a survey was sent to approximately 50 fellow full-time pastors who belong to Methodist and Baptist Churches. This survey was analyzed and evaluated to measure the pastors’ burnout and approaches for overcoming burnout.

Chapter Five will propose how to prevent and heal burnout in African American church pastors. It will propose common and biblical principles of prevention and overcoming burnout in the physical, mental and spiritual aspects. Afterward, the chapter will provide practical approaches at the individual, church and denominational level.

Finally, Chapter Six will provide conclusions, along with ministry implications and several helpful suggestions for African American pastors.

**Review of Literature**

**Books**

Richard A. Swenson writes about the importance of ministers, including boundaries into their busy schedules, in his book *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. He examines the adverse effects that twentieth-century progress
has made upon the human condition, and how the only solution to those unfavorable consequences is margin. Firstly, the principle of the book centers on the current condition of so many people living in the United States: stress, anxiety and disease. Secondly, the author explains the reasons for so many ailments in American culture: he attributes this trend to margin-less living or overworked. Thirdly, the author gives some very practical steps for creating boundaries. These practical steps for creating margin consist of, but are not limited to: creating a budget, setting appropriate boundaries, laughing, crying, resting, dieting, practicing contentment and following God’s vision for success instead of society’s.

*The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, by John Ortberg, is about keeping Christ as the center of one’s life and not mistaking information for transformation. Firstly, the author explains the difference between trying harder and training harder to achieve spiritual change by describing in detail the spiritual disciplines needed for genuine change. Ortberg defines these spiritual disciplines as the practice of celebration, the practice of slowing, the practice of prayer and the practice of servant-hood. He further states that these spiritual disciplines can be done through the practice of confession, practice of reflection and the practice of secrecy. Using the life of Abraham as an example, the author ends with the episode on Mt. Moriah, pointing to that event as a prime example of endurance and perseverance.

Fred Lehr highlights the issues related to the topic of ministerial anguish in his book *Clergy Burnout*. He explains the root causes of distress for clergy and the negative effects of codependence from the perspective of both clergy and the church. He encourages ministers to

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22 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
move from codependence to independence, and he stresses the importance of regaining balance, establishing proper boundaries and recovering power and purpose.\textsuperscript{26}

*The Emotionally Healthy Church*, by Scazzero, describes the differences and challenges facing clergy who do not understand the connection between the spiritual life and the emotional life. The author explains the hypocrisy and utter pointlessness of ministering within the context of a local church or mission without an understanding or application of the values of emotional maturity.\textsuperscript{27} The book advocates getting in touch with one’s emotional side in order to change the superficial and shallow spiritual climate that exists in many churches today. Scazzero takes the reader to the reality of ministry and exposes the hurt, anger, disappointment and conflict associated with emotionally unhealthy people. He also draws a marvelous word picture concerning the current demands placed upon a pastor. He describes the overwhelming burden of ministry as it relates to helping people in crisis situations who seem to only end up in even worse crisis situations later.\textsuperscript{28}

*Preventing Ministry Failure* handles the concept of managing ministerial distress extremely well, as the authors observe the issues related to ministering obligations over the long haul. The authors present exercises and self-reflections for clergy to better improve themselves in the struggle to remain effective in the ministry. Wilson and Hoffman study the problems contributing to clergy burnout and moral failure and offer principles of prevention. They build their principles around seven foundation stones: “Intimacy: Connecting to the Heart of Successful Pastoring”; “Calling: The Power For Effectiveness in Ministry; Stress Management--Avoiding Ineffectiveness and Burnout”; “Boundaries: Protecting What Matters Most”; “Re-

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 54.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
Creation: The Fuel to Re-energize Ministry”; “People Skills: Managing Our Most Valuable Resource”; and “Leadership Skills--Setting Ministers Apart from The Rest of the Sheep”.  

Reggie McNeal, in *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*, does a first-rate job at enlightening and enunciating the struggles faced by ministerial leaders. He provides a variety of leadership principles related to struggle in the ministry. The conflict strategies located within this book reinforce the minister and provide key principles for dealing with pain over conflict. He examines eight strategies: “(1) get over it, (2) choose your pain, (3) examine your critics, (4) look in the mirror, (5) get good advice, (6) be kind and honest, (7) forgive, and (8) make a decision.”

*Pastors at Greater Risk* explores sensitive topics such issues as job stress, congregational turnover, immorality and spiritual burnout. The authors focus on identifying, conquering and overcoming the risks of ministry.

*Defying Gravity: How to Survive the Storms of Pastoral Ministry* utilizes the analogy of a plane in flight to help pastors maintain a successful leadership altitude. Henderson develops the analogy by describing the leader’s dependence upon his instrument panel during the storms of ministry. He defines the nine measures of successful ministry that must be trusted as: (1) applied truth, (2) spiritual intimacy, (3) personal integrity, (4) biblical identity, (5) genuine accountability, (6) eternal significance, (7) healthy family life, (8) indispensable pain and (9) a captivating call.

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31 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
The Pastor’s Handbook contains a wealth of information on the subject of pastoral ministry. Bisagno provides clergy with practical tools for leading the people in spite of difficult circumstances. He expounds upon the minister’s role and responsibility in leading the church, defines the many different aspects of pastoral ministry and provides key insights to managing the affairs of the church. His heart and experience as a pastor provide a wealth of wisdom.

Well-Driven Nails covers several aspects of a minister’s role in preaching. Yawn writes, “We must declare what God has said regardless of which group of people stand before us. Ironically to do that, we must preach with a holy disregard for their opinions.” He elaborates on the importance of preaching and the challenges facing clergy from critics in the pews.

Rest in the Storm offers self-care strategies for ministers and clergy facing burnout. Jones explores biblical and practical guidance beneficial to clergy facing the stress of ministry. The book contains stories and testimonials from the down-to-earth style of pastoral ministry.

Becoming a Healthier Pastor helps pastors to understand themselves better by helping them reconnect with their family.

Pastor as Person: Maintaining Personal Integrity in the Choices and Challenges of Ministry, by Gary L. Harbaugh, emphasizes the delicate issues ministers face, such as stress, dependency, anger, feelings and faith.

William H. Willimon’s book, Calling and Character, involves ministerial ethics. He discusses the clergy’s character and calling, and offers suggestions and steps for preventing

David Hansen’s book, *The Art of Pastoring: Ministry without all the Answers*, provides insights into the messy day-to-day world of ministers. He also provides guidance on when and how to leave a ministry.

John W. Frye’s book, *Jesus the Pastor*, provides information about reviving the shepherd’s abilities through the eyes of Jesus. Frye explains how the Great Shepherd can equip and empower every pastor to handle spiritual discipline, struggle and revelation. Frye’s approach benefits this dissertation because he explains the need for mentoring among pastors. 

John Stott’s book, *The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor*, assists pastors in understanding and applying the significant values of the early church to the pastoral ministry of today. He conveys encouragement and insight to clergy facing an enticement to leave or compromise their ministry. Stott’s work encourages ministers to develop the church’s mission around the core principles of Acts 2: teaching, fellowship, worship, and evangelism.

The principles for managing stress, distress and suffering portrayed within this thesis project have a strong biblical foundation. Therefore, Biblical exposition derived from commentaries, Bible dictionaries and biblical encyclopedias is important. These resources

44 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
provide understanding, contextual framework and theological understanding of Jeremiah’s
depression in Jeremiah 15:10-21, Asaph’s slippery steps in Psalm 73, Elijah’s fleeing in 1 Kings
19:1-18 and Job’s despair in Job 1-42.  

Marvin E. Tate’s commentary, Psalms 51-100, volume 20 of the Word Biblical
Commentary, provides a discussion of the form, structure and setting of Psalm 73.  He shares
information and explanations regarding key phrases and rhetorical questions raised by Asaph: “Is
there knowledge in the Most High?” and “How does God know? Furthermore, Tate writes about
staying on course and avoiding the difficulties of ministry: “The power of the wicked is in large
measure their ability to arouse jealous craving in the hearts of the righteous.” Marvin Tate
gives sound advice to pastors and to avoid envious desires and wicked cravings.

Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships, by Larry Crabb, explains the
issue of connecting with a community of believers. He presents the proposition of the book:
“Releasing the power of God through our lives into the hearts and souls of others requires that
we both understand and enter into a kind of linking that only the gospel makes possible, a kind of
linking and relating that he calls connecting.” Crabb puts forth the idea that for pastors to
overcome distress, they must leave their safe-haven and reconnect with other followers of Christ.
Furthermore, he develops the concept that God intended the community of faith, not
psychotherapists, trained counselors or highly trained clergy, to connect with hurting people in
order to bring about healing and change.

50 Ps. 73:11.
51 Marvin E. Tate, Psalms 51-100, vol. 20 of Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990),
4-8.
52 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
Articles

In an article entitled “Spirituality and Burnout: An Incremental Validity Study,” Ciarrocchi, Golden, Piedmont and Rodgerson describe burnout as a combination of personality and work environment factors. They also discuss how clergy have been treated with little consideration about burnout.\(^{56}\) In another article, “Maintaining Personal Resiliency: Lessons Learned from Evangelical Protestant Clergy,” Brower, Burnett, McMinn, McRay, Meek and Ramey deal ably with the reality of pastors maintaining personal resiliency, and explored the lessons learned from past evangelical pastors. They further assert that despite the prominence of clergy in providing human services and the work-related stress they experienced, there has been no psychological research on pastors.\(^{57}\)

Thom Rainer’s article, “Two Big Distractions for Pastors,” discusses pertinent issues related to clergy stress. He points out that critics, as well as conflict among staff and key leaders, primarily distract pastors. He states the following: “79 percent of pastors say critics distract them from their ministries. Nearly 40 percent of them agree that they do. Though pastors of all church sizes felt this way, pastors of churches with over 250 in worship attendance were more likely to struggle with the critics. 48 percent of pastors say conflict among staff and/or key lay leaders is a significant distraction.”\(^{58}\) Rainer’s suggestion to pastors is to avoid the critics and the conflict.

In her article “Summary of Clergy Burnout and Resilience: A Review of the Literature,” Elizabeth Jackson-Jordon presents the factors related to clergy burnout, including: quality of relational skills, interactions outside the congregation, establishment of peer/mentor


relationships, the existence of high role expectations, personal spirituality and the ability to set healthy emotional boundaries. Recent studies using positive psychology as a framework have identified a number of personal and situational qualities that promote resilience in clergy; based on these findings, Jackson-Jordan suggests interventions that should be made by faith groups to better support clergy. She also makes recommendations for further research.\(^5\) This information will assist the author in supporting and helping pastors develop resilience by enhancing their relational and interactional skills.

A review of the literature presented in Clergy Health makes it clear that much more research is needed, particularly on issues of physical health and medical concerns. Collecting data on clergy health over a regular and ongoing basis would permit a deeper analysis of trends and early detection of problems. There is a specific need for information on the adequacy of access to health care for clergy, particularly those who are geographically isolated\(^6\).

In the article “The Relationship of Clergy Burnout to Self-Compassion and other Personality Dimensions,” authors Barnard and Curry characterize burnout as emotional exhaustion or low satisfaction. Clergy with high emotional exhaustion feel drained and discouraged, while on the other hand, clergy with high satisfaction report that the ministry gives purpose and meaning to their lives. Therefore, higher self-compassion is related to increased satisfaction in the ministry, and increasing self-compassion may prevent clergy burnout.\(^6\)

Benjamin R. Doolittle’s article, “Burnout and Coping Among Parish-Based Clergy,” investigates the correlation between burnout, coping strategies and spiritual attitudes of parish-

\(^6\) Laura K. Barnard and John F. Curry, “The Relationship of Clergy Burnout to Self-Compassion and other Personality Dimensions”, Pastoral Psychology 61, no. 2 (Spring, 2012).
based religious leaders in the United Methodist Church. Higher spirituality scores correlated with
greater personal accomplishment, but also greater emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.
The conclusive result was that certain coping strategies, including acceptance, active coping,
planning and positive reframing, may protect against burnout. The article will assist the author in
providing preventative and curative measures for burned-out pastors.62

Reports

In their report, Boyd, McKenna and Yosts write about pastoral agility in the *Journal of
Psychology and Theology*. These authors assert that there is little ongoing development of
pastors as leaders. The study provided focuses on pastors’ learning agility through a combination
of personal strategies and situational factors, enabling pastors to learn from their experience.

Diane J. Chandler, in her report, deals with pastoral burnout and the impact of personal
spiritual renewal, rest-taking and support system practices. This report will assist the author in
exploring preventative measures for pastors.63

Commentaries

*The MacArthur Study Bible* (NKJV) provides significant information about Elijah. The
message from the Lord to Elijah was that God is silently, progressively, and invisibly at work
accomplishing His plan.6491 Simon J. DeVries’ commentary, *1 Kings*, Volume 12 of the *Word
Biblical Commentary*, provides an overview and outline of the book of 1 Kings.65 The
commentary contains information regarding the geographical, cultural, political and religious
situation of Israel during the ministry of Elijah.66 DeVries researches the text and adds respected

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62 Benjamin R. Doolittle, “Burnout and Coping Among Parish-Based Clergy, Mental Health, Religion and
64 John MacArthur, *MacArthur Study Bible, Unleashing God's Word One Verse at a Time* (Nashville, TN:
Thomas Nelson, 2005), 733.
66 Ibid., 235-240.
insight to the narrative related to the prophet. John H. Traylor’s commentary, *1 and 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles*, Volume 6 of *Layman’s Bible Book Commentary*, discusses the encounter of Elijah with Jezebel and the happiness that turned to fear, flight, and despair.\(^{67}\)

George Arthur Buttrick’s commentary, *Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job*, Volume 3 of *The Interpreter’s Bible*, provides information regarding the steps Elijah took to overcome his distress and despair.\(^{68}\) Buttrick states, “First of all, Elijah had to get up. The body and soul will have their part to play in mastering mental depression. God does not care for minds lying on their backs.”\(^{69}\) The *Interpreter’s Bible* gives an awareness of Jeremiah’s personality and the struggles the prophet faced from a lifetime of rejection. This resource provides insight and exposition regarding Jeremiah’s call and conflict, and comments on Jeremiah’s response: “Alone for the people; but alone before the people: alone for God (because of thine hand); but alone also before God!”\(^{70}\) This resource will assist in helping clergy discover how to manage the distress of loneliness.

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\(^{69}\) Ibid.

\(^{70}\) Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO: UNIVERSAL UNDERSTANDING OF BURNOUT

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus.

—Phil 4:6-7.

Explanation of Burnout

Burnout is essentially a term borrowed from the world of mechanical systems. In the field of electrical science, it means the burning up of an electronic wire or semiconductor by the oversupply of electricity.\(^{71}\) In the field of aeronautics, it is used in cases where the operation of a jet apparatus or rocket engine is stopped by the exhaustion of fuel.\(^{72}\)

In *The Cost of Caring*, Christina Maslach defines burnout as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind.”\(^{73}\) However, Borritz, Kristensen and Christensen, notable burnout researchers, have taken issue with some parts of this definition, which has dominated nearly all of the relevant research and literature. Primarily, Maslach’s original definition suggests that burnout is only experienced by those in helping professions who deal with people. While this may be the most common professional area in which burnout is found, other technical professions should not be routinely counted out.\(^{74}\)

Webster’s dictionary defines burnout as follows: “To cause to fail, wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources.”\(^{75}\) Most people do not realize that the idea of burnout has different perspectives, while the most common view of


\(^{74}\) Ibid.

\(^{75}\) *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, “Burnout.”
burnout relates to its mechanical term. Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger, who created and coined the word “burn-out”, stated that a person can develop burnout and become drained similar to mechanical systems. Another way to explain burnout mechanically would be to look at how a person’s friction develops deep inside, which can lead to friction build-up; the inescapable result is a depletion of the individual’s resources, and a wear and tear of vitality, energy and ability to function.\(^{76}\) Essentially, Herbert Freudenberger defined burnout as a state of exhaustion and frustration experienced by anyone who does not take predictable precautions in spite of self-sacrifice in some relation to life’s journey.\(^{77}\)

Freudenberger also used the term to describe the implications of severe stress and high standards experienced by people working in “helping” professions. Doctors and nurses are examples of those who sacrifice themselves for others, and they often end up being “burned out” – exhausted, listless and unable to cope. Currently, the term is not only used for these helping professions, or for the obscure side of self-sacrifice; it seems burnout can affect anyone, from stressed-out achievers and celebrities to overworked employees and homemakers.

It is surprising, then, that there is no clear definition of what burnout really is, and this lack of a definition has its consequences. Since we don’t know the true definition of burnout and how to diagnose it, it is impossible to provide necessary treatment to those who are affected.\(^{78}\) This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed, as so far more than nine million people are affected by burnout situations. Since burnout can occur in people outside the realm of “people work” and can also affect millions of other people outside of the US, there is a great need to address burnout-syndrome.

\(^{77}\) Ibid.
\(^{78}\) Ibid.
Borritz, Kristensen, and Christensen have asserted that one of Maslach’s burnout components, depersonalization, is not a symptom of burnout per se, but rather a coping strategy that individuals use when suffering from burnout.\textsuperscript{79} These differences are not significant enough to demand the elimination of past research from consideration, but instead provide clarification intended to get closer to the core of the issue. They have expanded burnout by dividing it into three categories, each with a separate focus and definition: personal burnout, client burnout and work burnout.\textsuperscript{80} These categories overlap significantly with those proposed by Maslach, but differ slightly in their operationalization. This will be discussed further in the methods section.\textsuperscript{81}

Maslach, Jackson and Leiter, on the other hand, define burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion resulting from the stress of relational contact, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments that can occur among individuals who work with people. They identified three key aspects of burnout syndrome: (a) emotional exhaustion; (b) negative and cynical attitudes about one’s clients; and, (c) negative self-evaluation about one’s work with clients.\textsuperscript{82} In these definitions, burnout has been commonly observed among many in the human service profession, including teachers, counselors and clergy. Affected individuals suffer both personally and professionally.\textsuperscript{83}

Howard Clinebell, a renowned professional of pastoral counseling, defined burnout as a condition that flies for a moment, like a rocket that soars briefly after it runs out of fuel.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
Gordon MacDonald, in *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion*, parallels burnout with loss of passion. He equates this loss of passion with spiritual “dullness” which in turn has a striking resemblance to classic career burnout: loss of energy in spite of less “real time” spent in job performance.\(^{85}\)

In this chapter, the author will briefly introduce general theories of stress and burnout relevant to practical research on the factors of burnout among African American pastors. Burnout is not recognized as a distinct disorder in the DSM-5 (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*).\(^{86}\) The DSM-5 is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States, which is intended to be used in all clinical settings by clinicians of different theoretical orientations. However, burnout is included in the ICD-10 (*International Classification of Disease*), \(^{87}\) and can be found under problems related to life-management difficulty (Z73). Social psychologists Christina Maslach and Susan Jackson developed the most widely-used instrument for assessing burnout: the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) operationalizes burnout as a three-dimensional syndrome made up of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. \(^{88}\) Some researchers and practitioners have argued for an "exhaustion only" model that views the others as symptoms acting as the hallmark of burnout.\(^{89}\)

Burnout is a state of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional exhaustion caused by extended and intense levels of stress, causing the body to over-produce adrenaline. It leads to the


questioning of one's abilities and/or the value of one's work. In *Finishing Well in Life & Ministry*, Bill Mills and Craig Parro define burnout this way: “The point at which a pastor, church leader, or missionary gives up, unable or unwilling to continue in the ministry.” The daily pressures of ministry can sometimes overwhelm a Christian leader, leaving them feeling worn out and without energy to carry on. With the pressures of ministerial leadership, all Christian workers are susceptible to burnout. This is true across the board for pastoral ministry, music ministry, media ministry and youth ministry.⁹⁰ Burnout can be summed up as the silent killer.⁹¹

**Elements of Burnout**

According to burnout experts, everyone has the potentiality to experience burnout and many people experience it slowly. The causes of burnout that occur in pastors, as occupational workers, are not simple enough to express in one word. Burnout comes not only from the outside or inside of pastors, but also from the multifaceted operation of exterior and interior factors. According to Aronson and Pines, the circumstances crucial for burnout are typically related to job stress, strain and uncertainty. In professions involving people work, an individual may come to feel he or she is underappreciated, and that the benefactors of the work are not making progress to a degree that matches the worker’s effort. Other potential causes include working long hours, doing tedious work that demands attention to fine details and dealing with life threatening situations, common in professions such as law enforcement and firefighting.⁹²

Burnout does not occur suddenly in a worker; rather, it tends to start small and progress slowly. Maslach describes this process:

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“The burnout syndrome appears to be a response to chronic, everyday stress (rather than to occasional crises). The emotional pressure of working closely with people is a constant part of the daily job routine. What changes over time is one’s tolerance for this continual stress, a tolerance that gradually wears away under the never-ending onslaught of emotional tensions.”

Aaronson & Pines suggest that at home:

Burnout [syndrome] may be noticeable in strained relationships with family members which can develop vices such as alcohol abuse and overeating. One’s constant irritability, loss of motivation and decreased work performance can sometimes lead to turnover or attrition. The former symptoms may have even more of a negative impact than the latter, as decreased work performance in human service means individuals need assistance and are being inadequately supported.

One can easily imagine how burnout could be particularly harmful in ministry. Yet many of the features of the job of ministry make pastors especially susceptible to burnout: lack of feedback, the continuous nature of the work and having to constantly deal with the personal and spiritual issues of congregation members. Burnout among clergy can also arise as a result of unmet expectations with respect to church or the spiritual growth of congregation members, or due to financial difficulties within the church.

Rediger, Young and Fuller assert that burnout among ministers occurs as a result of the gap between expectations and “real time” feedback. Without this feedback, it is difficult for pastors to determine any met expectations; however, many pastors persevere by overcompensating with their work. Thomas Rainer calls this the “24/7 mentality,” and suggests that many pastors can't “turn off” work in their minds. Even on their days off, they are waiting for that next telephone call or next crisis. Thus, they never relax.

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Kisslinger states that burnout could lead to “burnout contagion,” and the decreased work performance that normally goes with burnout can result in increased workloads for other church leaders. This increased workload can create conflict within the church, and take an emotional and spiritual toll on those involved. In many cases, burnout stems from overworking in one’s job. Anyone who feels overworked and unappreciated is at risk for burnout—from the hardworking office worker who hasn’t had a vacation or a raise in two or three years, to the exhausted stay-at-home mom struggling with the heavy duty of taking care of three kids, the housework, and her aging mother. Burnout can wreak havoc. The author will explore some of the factors of burnout.

Prime Factor: Stress

Burnout is caused by distress (see Figure 1). Distress is a secondary occurrence produced by stress. In this aspect, stress becomes the cause of burnout. Therefore, chronic excessive stress becomes the cause of burnout, and if there is not an appropriate countermeasure, it will lead to sickly melancholia. Stress cannot be avoided from the outside as long as one lives; however, stress is not always used with a negative meaning. Han Selye, one of the most famous experts on stress, classified stress as having two kinds: “distress,” which brings about the psychological damage due to the repetition of excessive stress; and “eustress” (good stress), which brings happiness and a feeling of achievement or satisfaction. Many pastors are concerned with performance and productivity. However, Matt Periman, in his book What's Best Next, says it

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99 Ibid., 16-17.
best: “Productivity isn’t just about getting more things done, it is about getting the right things done—the things that count, make a difference, and move the world forward.”


Figure 1: The Human Function Curve

As illustrated above, increased stress results in increased productivity up to a point, after which things go rapidly downhill. However, that point or peak differs for each of us, so we need to be sensitive to the early warning symptoms and signs that suggest a stress overload is starting to push us over the hump. These signals also differ for each person, and can be so subtle that they are often ignored until it is too late. Rarely, others may be aware that we may be headed for trouble before we are.

Angela Morrow describes “stress as the body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response. Stress can come from any condition or

belief that makes you feel frustrated, angry, nervous, or anxious.” Morrow suggests that “stress is caused by an existing stress-causing factor or stressor.” Hans Selye states, “Any definition of stress should therefore also include good stress, or what Selye called eustress.” For example, he argues that one winning a race or election can be just as stressful as losing, or even more so. A passionate kiss and contemplating what might follow is stressful, but hardly the same as having a root canal procedure. The term “stress” originated from the Latin “stringer”, which means “tighten closely”, and afterward was used as “string”, “strest” and “straisse”. In the 14th century, the term “stress” meant “anguish”, “oppression”, “suffering”, or “adversity”. In the 20th century, “stress” began to be used as a medical term that referred to bad health conditions or mental diseases. In modern society, “stress” does not mean tension and oppression themselves, but rather a response to this tension and oppression.

According to Korczak, Kister and Huber, a demanding lifestyle can put people under extreme pressure, to the point where they feel empty, burned out, exhausted and unable to cope. Stress at work can also cause physical and mental symptoms. Possible causes include: always feeling either overworked or under-challenged, being time-pressured or having conflicts with coworkers. Extreme obligation that leads employees to neglect their own needs may also be a source of stress. Difficulties caused by stress at work are a common cause for being on sick

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104 Ibid.
105 Ibid.
106 Ibid.
107 Jong Mok Lee, Cause, Effect and Countermeasure of Duty Stress (Seoul: Seongwon Publishers, 1999), 21
leave; however, changes in the work setting and more concrete support in everyday life can help with problems in the workplace or stress from home care.\textsuperscript{109}

The authors state, “Exhaustion is a normal reaction to stress and is not a sign of illness.”\textsuperscript{110} They also ask, “Does burnout describe a set of symptoms that is more than a normal feeling of exhaustion? And how is it different from other mental disorders? Experts have not yet agreed on how to define burnout.”\textsuperscript{111} Korczak and associates argue “there is no such diagnosis as ‘burnout,’ unlike depression, which is a widely accepted and well-studied illness.”\textsuperscript{112} This is not the case with burnout. Some experts “think that there might be other symptoms behind being ‘burned out’”\textsuperscript{113} – depression or an anxiety disorder, for instance. Physical illnesses may also cause burnout-like symptoms.”\textsuperscript{114} The authors warn that diagnosing burnout too quickly could mean that the actual problems are not identified or treated properly.\textsuperscript{115}

Luban suggests:

If burnout is left untreated or unaddressed, it tends to get more and more severe, and can cause long-term physical, mental, and emotional damage. Physically, it can up a person's chances of medical issues such heart problems, strokes, digestive disorders, fertility problems, diabetes, weight gain, tooth grinding, and problems with the bones and muscles, among other things. Mentally and emotionally, long-term burnout can lead to depression and anxiety, forgetfulness, nightmares, mental breakdowns, and a risk of suicide.\textsuperscript{116}

According to Luban:

This condition also has an indirect effect on others, and can be dangerous in those working in jobs where others rely on them, like medicine. A burned out employee is much more likely to make mistakes and careless errors than one who is focused. The

\textsuperscript{109} Dieter Korczak, Christine Kister, Beate Huber, “Differentialdiagnostik des Burnout-Syndroms,” HTA Bericht 105 (in German).  Deutsches Institut für Medizinische Dokumentation und Information (DIMDI), Cologne, Germany, 2010.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Ruth Luban, Keeping the Fire: From Burnout to Balance (Laguna Beach, California: UK Press, 1994).
stress pressures demand too much of one physically and psychologically. Stressed people can still see, though, that if they can just get everything under control, they’ll feel improved. Burnout, on the other hand, is about not enough. Being burned out means one is feeling empty, devoid of motivation, and beyond caring. Pastors experiencing burnout often don’t see any hope of progressive change in their situations. If excessive stress is like drowning in responsibilities, burnout is being all dried up. While you’re usually aware of being under a lot of stress, you don’t always notice burnout when it happens.\(^{117}\)

Luban developed a chart of the differences between eustress and distress as follows:

![Figure 2: The Difference between Stress and Burnout](removed-for-copyright)

According to Korczak and Huber, certain symptoms said to be the result of burnout also occur in depression. These include extreme exhaustion, feeling low and reduced performance. Because the symptoms are similar, some people may be diagnosed with burnout when they really have depression. For that reason, pastors should be very careful not to self-diagnose too quickly, as this could mean they receive the wrong treatment. It would be a mistake, for example, to advise someone with depression to take a longer vacation or time off from work; this might help

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\(^{118}\) Ruth Luban, *Stress and Burnout in Ministry* (1996), Figure 2.
pastors who are exhausted from work to recover, but it might cause more problems for those with depression. These pastors might need very different types of support, such as psychotherapy or drug treatment. The authors say, “Some characteristics of burnout are very different from those of depression, even though they include alienation, especially from work. With depression, negative thoughts and feelings are not just restricted to work, but spread to all areas of life. Other typical symptoms of depression include low self-esteem, hopelessness and suicidal tendencies. These are not regarded as typical symptoms of burnout. Not every case of burnout will have depression at its root, but burnout symptoms may increase the risk of someone getting depression.”

**Personality Factors**

Kisslinger advocates that burnout is not caused solely by stressful work situations or too many responsibilities. Other factors add to burnout, including lifestyle and certain personality traits. What we do in our leisure time and how we look at the world can play just as big of a role in causing burnout as work or home demands. Personality traits can also contribute to burnout. Kissinger lists the following causes of burnout:

- The need to be in control; reluctance to delegate to others
- High-achieving, Type A personality
- Perfectionistic tendencies; nothing is ever good enough
- Pessimistic view of yourself and the world

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120 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
Workaholism / Martha Complex\(^\text{123}\)

In these types of people there is a need to control; they are reluctant to delegate to others. They are the people who have no time for a cup of tea or coffee at lunch because of immersion in occupational duties; the people who bring work home or who work over vacation. These people have a workaholic personality established as the principal standard, where they feel the value and worth of themselves in work or productive activity.\(^\text{124}\) Most of them have an obsessive character with a tendency to fall into workaholism and feelings of helplessness.\(^\text{125}\)

The Minirth-Meier Clinic reported a shocking fact that 90 percent of doctors and 75 percent of pastors examined there were obsessed with an expansive misconception:\(^\text{126}\) most of the burnt-out pastors were overwhelmingly the perfectionists who fell into workaholism. They epitomize the perfect and the obsessive. The degree of their devotion is great, and they do not decline any requests. Most of these perfectionists try to do their best in order to be recognized by others. Burnout appears to be a peculiar disease that occurs in people who have a profession that involves helping others. When these individuals try to achieve something beyond their abilities, they often experience burnout as a result.\(^\text{127}\)

Heroism / Messiah Complex

These are high achievers with a Type A personality. They are also workaholics, and workaholism brings more stress when coupled with heroism. This makes them fall into a messiah-complex. These pastors, as a matter of character, firmly believe: “I can do everything

\(^{123}\) A “Martha Complex” means the passion to prove one’s value by serving God and others with all one’s energy (Luke 10:38-42).


\(^{125}\) Ibid., 67

\(^{126}\) Ibid., 37

\(^{127}\) Man Hong Lee, *Burnout Syndrome of Pastor*, 385.
better than anybody else,” or “I must be the one to do it.” The reason that pastors fall into heroism is the belief that they should work as surrogate messiah until the coming of the genuine Messiah.

**Meticulousness**

These perfectionists try to do all things completely well, and have downright perfectionistic tendencies; nothing is ever good enough. They think that there is a place for all and all should be in its place. They devote themselves to their work in order to finish all things completely, and work day and night in order to satisfy the expectations of others. After establishing high and strict standards, they try to do their best in order to achieve perfection. Because they achieve above their level, they experience excessive fatigue by demanding so much of themselves as well as others.129

**Accomplishment / Success Syndrome**

Recently, the concept of pastoral success has meant the increase of attending members, the annual budget, volunteer aid and staff. These notions are not much different from those of secular success. In order to achieve these goals successfully, the quantity of the pastor’s occupational duties increases by geometrical progression. As the quantity of pastoral activity increases, it makes the pastor exhausted due to the increase of stress. However, Kent and Barbara Hughes have pointed out that this concept of success in ministry is incorrect. In their book, *Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome*, they defined “success [as] faithfulness, serving, loving, believing, prayer, holiness and attitude.”130 Pastors should establish a biblical conception

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in their ministry; confusion in their conception about successful ministry causes them to choose a secular mindset.

Most of the burnt-out pastors are perfectionists who fell into workaholism. They are ideal-oriented and obsessive. The degree of their devotion is great, and they do not reject any requests. Most of them try to do their best in order to be recognized by others. Burnout seems to be a peculiar disease that occurs in individuals who have a profession that involves helping others. When these individuals try to achieve something surpassing their ability, they often experience burnout as the result.\textsuperscript{131}

**Pessimistic View of Self and the World (Low Self-Esteem)**

According to Hong Lee, individuals with high self-esteem cope with stress more actively than those with low self-esteem.\textsuperscript{132} Pastors can keep harmony with others when they can keep harmony with themselves, and interpersonal relations can only be good when they are in good relations with themselves. When an individual has severe displeasure or dependency, they cannot acknowledge others properly and cannot accept praise. If they continue to have low self-esteem, they begin to have an inferiority complex. If they begin to develop severe inferiority, they may come to accept the other person’s words as an attack; and if they are dried up in mental energy, they fall into a crisis of ministry.

**Work-Related Factors**

**Excessive Occupational Activity**

William. H. Willimon declares that the work of church is endless.\textsuperscript{133} Generally, many people who have a professional job come home after a day’s work and relax; however, pastors

\textsuperscript{131} Man Hong Lee, *Burnout Syndrome of Pastor*, 385.
\textsuperscript{132} Dong Sup Jung, “The Way to Cope with the Stress of Ministry”, *Ministry and Theology* (November 1993), 256-257.
have no peculiar office hours or closing hours. They take care of their congregation on a 24/7 basis. There is no end to the work of the pastor; there are continuous worship services, funerals, weddings, visitations (absentee members, hospital patients, sick and shut in home visits and counseling), trainings, administrations and various other meetings. This excessive occupational activity causes the pastor to overwork and exhaust all his or her energy.

Pastors can escape from the heavy burden of work by managing their time well. Excellent time management helps ensure success, but inadequate time management brings failure. The work of a pastor is not only an endless task, but is also repetitive.\textsuperscript{134} The daily work which is begun at the early morning prayer meeting is repeated every day; the various services every week are repeated, and the various feast services and annual events are repeated each year as well. Nevertheless, the pastor cannot deliver the same sermons at the same events. Pastors should inspire vitality in the church and believers by designing new sermons and new events. Working in a chaotic or high-pressure environment causes:

\begin{itemize}
\item Unclear or overly demanding job expectations
\item Doing work that’s monotonous or unchallenging
\item Feeling like you have little or no control over your work
\item Lack of recognition or rewards for good work.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{itemize}

Repetitive Work Activity

Pastors who cannot give up their work even after they become bored due to the repetition of the same work every day, every week and every year, usually burn out and become less effective. Matt Periman said it best: “The core principle of effectiveness is to know what’s

\textsuperscript{134} Mark Short, \textit{Time Management for Minister} (Seoul: Togijangi Publishers, 1994), 32-34.

important and put it first. Don’t prioritize your schedule, schedule your priorities. This is the key to overcoming burnout.

Human Relational Factors

Unending Expectations of Congregation

Congregation members expect pastors to fulfill their endless expectations. Some want their pastor to be sincere, to be an excellent preacher, to have a wonderful talent in managing the financial affairs of the church and to be a capable counselor. Some congregants want their pastor to take care of the sick and the poor, and to have interest in their congregation’s individual spiritual needs. The expectations of the congregations are endless, and some are even impractical. There is no pastor who has both the talent that can satisfy so many of the members’ expectations and enough energy to do so.

Congregations expect that not only their pastor satisfy their individual needs, but also that they be a reputable leader in every aspect. Therefore pastors, who know this fact very well, invest a great deal of time in order to develop a “persona” that shows the good aspects of themselves to others. Persona has two functions. One function is to project their best features effectively, and another function is not to reveal hidden features to others. Mark Schultz said it best: “I watch my days turn into years, and now I’m wondering how I wound up here. I dreamed my dreams, I made my plans, but all I built here is an empty man.” The key here is being and showing that you are who you are.

138 As a psychological term invented by Carl Jung, it usually denotes the “role”, “face”, “features”.
140 Stephen Covey, Rebecca Merrill and Roger Merrill, First Things First (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 50.
Criticism from the Congregation 141

Criticism concerned with character

Congregations see the pastor as the clergy, and they consider him or her as a different human being from themselves. Therefore, they demand values and behavior of the highest level. If the pastor cannot satisfy this demand, they criticize him or her and become non-supportive of the pastor.

Criticism concerned with competence

The congregation questions the pastor’s ability. If he delivers the sermon in a low voice, they say that he is singing a lullaby. If she does not provide discussion, they say that she is a dictator. If the church becomes noisy from discussion, they say that he is incompetent. If she is cool-headed, they say that she has no love. If he manages matters perfectly, they say that he has no backbone. If she is young, they say that she is too rash. If he is too old, they say that he has become useless. 142

Criticism concerned with consecration.

The pastor should be a spiritual person, because he or she stands at the front line of the spiritual battle. Congregations want a pastor who spends much time in prayer as well as one who preaches well. In order to have the aforementioned qualities, pastors should have a daily life of prayer, study the Bible devoutly every day, and always check themselves with the Word of God. The pastor should always remember: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

142 Ibid.
Element of Causes

Environmental Factors

Change of Values

George Barna asserts that the organization that accepts new trends, new information and new technology last of all is the church. This means that pastors and churches are out of date in this changing age. He warns that if pastors do not adapt to these sudden, changing times, they will die like the frog in the slowly warming kettle. Below are suggested value changes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Values</th>
<th>New Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of possessions</td>
<td>Quality of possessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Traditions</td>
<td>New Traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group identity</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting people</td>
<td>Proven integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction through work</td>
<td>Satisfaction through leisure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Suggested Value Changes

Threat to Survival

The threat that most pastors face is connected with the most basic elements of survival: namely, food, clothes and housing. The economic principle of a capitalistic society is that one’s labor should produce an adequate income; thus, more labor should produce more income. If a pastor cannot earn an adequate income from his or her hard work, the desire for work and productivity decreases. The average annual income of many African American pastors who work in small or new churches is lower when compared to the average American megachurch pastor. Surviving financially then becomes a serious matter.

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144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
Intellectual Factors

Most African American pastors generally deliver five or more sermons in a week:
Sunday morning service, Sunday evening service, Wednesday evening service, Friday night
service, six early morning prayer meetings, cell service, etc. The burden of continuous preaching
gives the pastor the feeling of oppression and becomes a cause of burnout.\textsuperscript{146} As the water behind
a dam will be exhausted if it continues to discharge, pastors can be burned out as preachers if
they cannot achieve self-development and spiritual renewal. They should always fill up with
fresh and live preaching.

Psychological Factors

C. Peter Wagner said that a pastor who wants to give devoted service to God in a biblical
manner will fall into two classical dilemmas without exception.\textsuperscript{147} The two dilemmas are the fact
that he should be mighty as well as modest, and that he should be a leader as well as a servant.
When a pastor examines himself in front of God, he will discover the bitter root in himself.
Improper motives, jealousy, quick temper, conditional love, inappropriate responses to suffering,
unjust disputes and unforgivable problems become stress, and this makes the pastor tired.\textsuperscript{148}
When these negative feelings continue due to the pastor’s own imperfect self or personal defects,
along with the feeling that he does not contribute to the church or to the lives of believers, the
thought that he is only a decoration, rather than an asset, serves to hinder his creative ministry.

\textbf{Burnout Signs and Symptoms}

According to Luban, “Burnout is a gradual process that occurs over an extended period of
time. It doesn’t happen overnight, but it can creep up on you if you’re not paying attention to the

\textsuperscript{146} Hae Ryong Ha, “Coping with Intellectual Exhaustion,” \textit{Ministry and Theology} (November 1993), 77-78.
\textsuperscript{147} Peter Wagner, \textit{Leadership for Church Growth} (Seoul: The Word of Life Publishing Co., 1999), 92.
warning signals. The signs and symptoms of burnout are subtle at first, but they get worse and worse as time goes on.”

She further explains, “Symptoms of burnout as warning signs or red flags which indicate that something is wrong that needs to be addressed. If one pays attention to these early warning signs, one can prevent a major breakdown. If one ignores them, one will eventually burn out.”

Luban suggests the following as signs and symptoms to burnout:

**Behavior signs and symptoms of burnout**
- Separating yourself from others
- Deferring, taking longer to get things done
- Withdrawing from responsibilities
- Avoiding work or coming in later and leaving earlier
- Using foodstuff, medicines, or spirits to manage
- Compelling to take out your anxiety on others.

**Emotional signs and symptoms of burnout**
- Increasingly cynical and negative outlook
- Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment
- Loss of motivation
- Feeling abandoned, confined, and overpowered
- Disinterestedness, feeling by yourself in the world
- Sense of failure and self-doubt.

**Physical signs and symptoms of burnout**
- Frequent headaches, back pain, muscle aches
- Feeling tired and drained most of the time
- Lowered immunity, feeling sick
- Change in appetite or sleep habits.

Psychologists Herbert Freudenberger and Gail North have hypothesized that the burnout process can be divided into 12 stages, which are not automatically followed consecutively:

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150 Ibid.
151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
1. The pressure to prove oneself

In the beginning people have extreme willpower, but the yearning to demonstrate themselves in the workplace turns into duress. This phase is characterized by drive and meticulousness. ¹⁵⁴

2. At work but inflexible

They try harder to show themselves to others, or attempt to be a part of an organization that is not appropriate for them; thus, people create extraordinary individual expectations. To meet these expectations, they concentrate solely on their job and take on an unusual amount of work. Their behavior becomes preoccupied with doing everything themselves to show that they are exceptional. ¹⁵⁵

3. Overlooking their needs

Their devotion is to work; they have no time and vitality for anything else. They view friends and family, eating and sleeping as unnecessary, since these diminish the time and liveliness that can be spent on work. ¹⁵⁶

4. Displacement of conflicts

They become aware that what they are doing is not right, but they are unable to see the source of the problem. ¹⁵⁷ This perception may lead to a calamity, which becomes frightening. The first physical symptoms appear. ¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.
¹⁵⁶ Ibid.
¹⁵⁷ Ibid.
¹⁵⁸ Ibid.
5. Revision of values

Freudenberger suggests that there is a change in perception. They become indifferent and emotionally blunt.\textsuperscript{159}

6. Denial of emerging problems

Freudenberger adds, “People may become intolerant and dislike being social. They may be seen as aggressive and sarcastic. Problems may be blamed on time pressure and all the work that they have to do.” \textsuperscript{160} Routine and physical grievances are evident.

7. Withdrawal

Freudenberger asserts that “minimal social contact turns into isolation.”\textsuperscript{161} Liquor or medications may be used as a release from obsessive addictions. These people often have a feeling of existence without confidence or direction. \textsuperscript{162}

8. Obvious behavioral changes

Freudenberger states, “Coworkers, family, friends and others in their immediate social circles cannot overlook the behavioral changes in these people.” \textsuperscript{163} Additional workloads may be seen as a problem and they will try to avoid it.

9. Depersonalization

Freudenberger says, “It is possible that they no longer see themselves or others as valuable. They no longer perceived their own needs.”\textsuperscript{164} They see their lives as worthless and inevitable.

\textsuperscript{159} Herbert J. Freudenberger, Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1980), 10.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
10. Inner emptiness

When there is inner emptiness, Freudenberger explains, “They feel empty inside and may exaggerate activities such as overeating or sex to overcome these feelings.”165 Individual sees themselves as unhappy, hopeless and fatigued.

11. Depression

If the symptoms of depression are present, Freudenberger adds, “Burnout may include depression. In that case, the person is exhausted, hopeless, indifferent, and believes that life has no meaning.”166 This phase is characterized by misery, self-dislike and collapse.

12. Burnout syndrome

Finally, Freudenberger explains that one of the many signs is, “They collapse physically and emotionally and need immediate medical attention. In extreme cases, suicidal ideation may occur, with it being viewed as an escape from their situation. Only a few people will actually commit suicide.”167 This stage brings about physical disease, mental and emotional collapse.

**Occurrences of Burnout**

Burnout can be divided into three domains as follows: physical, mental, and spiritual.168

**Mental Domain**

The phenomenon of mental burnout appears in the form of disillusionment or defeat in a person or a worker. During this period, the symptoms of anger, cynical ways of thought, negative attitudes or impatience may occur. The people who are suffering from burnout may feel frustrated because of helplessness, hopelessness, and self-doubt, and suffer from the blues.

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166 Ibid.
Another common symptom includes feeling guilty. This is the feeling of guilt that occurs due to too much responsibility or too strong of a self-sacrificing mind. Other mental symptoms of burnout are as follows: the feeling that one cannot achieve work completely, indifference, shortage of concentration power, low self-esteem, loss of self-identity, and mental disorder.

Physical Domain

Continuing stress or burnout can bring the following physical symptoms: backache, sore throat, migraine headache, insomnia, loss of appetite, gastric ulcer, hypertension, frequent coughs, indigestion and allergy. When stress and weariness continue more severely, they may cause heart attacks. Many people who are suffering from continuing severe stress or tension use narcotic drugs as a temporary prescription, either by the order of a doctor or of their own will. Though the narcotic drug may remove fatigue for a short time, it may cause adverse reactions that deepen nervousness.

Spiritual Domain

Some people experience spiritual exhaustion alongside burnout. They seem to lose the ability to grasp the situation or recognize their limits. They have the strong feeling that God is incompetent, and believe firmly that it is they who can manage their situation best. Not recognizing what they are doing, they try to reject relying on the power of God. With no quiet time or Bible reading, they feel as if they are in a spiritual vacuum where no one can help them. As time goes by, they come to recognize that their ability is not enough; they feel disillusioned and want to abandon life. They believe that others, including God, have abandoned them.

Clinton and Trent suggested:

…because the stress affects the mind, body and spirit, it poses a triple threat. The person needs to protect all three aspects of life:
To protect one’s mind: think truth, confess God’s power over stressful events, refuse to make mountains out of molehills, refuse to see only bad things, and set priorities.

To protect one’s body: increase your exercise regimen, get enough sleep, eat well and breathe deeply.

To protect one’s spirit: meditate on God and His Word, thank God for the good things in your life, learn to trust God more by confessing your lack of trust in stressful time, and learn to pray without ceasing—use stressful thoughts as cues to switch into a prayer mode.  

Stress can be caused by poor planning, disorganization and our inability to say “no”. Regardless of our occupation, social status or lifestyle, we all experience stress, and our reactions can result in our being overcome by it. Our days may be filled with different levels of stress or stressors. Everyone faces difficulties and trials; we cannot control when and where these encounters will take place. However, our reaction to the stressor should be to respond in a healthy way by choosing an attitude of burning on, not burning out. In the epistle of James, the author encourages the believer to count it all joy: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience” (Jas 1:2-3[NIV]). Proper planning, organizing and prioritizing are the keys to avoid burnout.

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169 Tim Clinton and John Trent, Marriage & Family Counseling (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 290.
170 Ibid., 290.
171 Ibid., 293.
CHAPTER THREE: BURNOUT IN THE PASTORAL MINISTRY

Understanding the Pastoral Ministry and the Pastor

Before you were called to be a shepherd, you were called to be a lamb.
—Diane Langberg

Pastoral Ministry

Tom Webster defines pastoral ministry in the following way:

Pastoral Ministry is a specialized, interfaith, non-denominational service and ministry of spiritual care to individuals facing spiritual, emotional, and physical life circumstances. Pastoral Ministries understands the pastorate to be a "holiness" work, expressing God's love and concern for humankind by developing good relationships, offering moral support, and making available the opportunity for spiritual counsel and guidance. Spiritual care through pastoral ministry includes careful listening, helping one realize God's presence and love in the midst of uncertainty.¹⁷³

Tom Webster believes that spiritual care must be negotiated with each person served, taking into consideration one's life history, world view, and faith-based system. Pastoral Ministry provides spiritual and emotional support by offering a caring touch, encouraging the expression of one's feelings, honoring one's religious questions, and incarnating the love of God to the world.¹⁷⁴

In pastoral ministry, pastors provide care to those who are having difficulty dealing with life’s issues. In its most universal sense, pastoral care refers to the ministries or services usually performed by a pastor. Some groups within the Christian faith use the expression to refer to more specific aspects of a pastor’s ministry, such as counseling and visitation. The core idea of “pastoral care”, however, is that pastors are to care. The word pastor comes from the Latin word for “shepherd.” A pastor is to be a shepherd or caretaker of God’s flock. The Bible describes a

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.
shepherd’s responsibility in I Peter 5: 2-3: “Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” Pastors are called to be servant-leaders for God.

Many people have a misinterpretation of what exactly pastors do, thinking that their primary responsibility is preaching on Sunday. The popular saying here is that pastors only work one day a week could not be further from the truth. Beyond preparing and delivering a sermon, pastors provide biblical counseling; visit the sick and injured in hospitals or prisons; and disciple members of the congregation through phone calls, text messages, lunch meetings and other social activities. Many pastors serve as chaplains in hospitals or for corporate agencies, the military, workplaces, schools or prisons. All of these ministries are facets of pastoral care. In reality, pastoral-care ministries are just as essential as the delivery of a sermon. Caring for a person who is struggling with a difficulty, being present during a time of agony, praying with someone in a crisis – these are the moments when spiritual breakthroughs occur. Ministering through a good, biblically sound sermon is absolutely necessary, but ministering through a personal touch, i.e., pastoral care, is just as important.

There is another meaning of pastoral care that should be mentioned. Recognizing the tremendous amount of stress and burnout many pastors experience, some ministries use the phrase “pastoral care” to refer to ministry to pastors. Isolated locations where pastors can get away for a time, counseling ministries for pastors and their families and even the pastoring of

176 Ibid.
pastors are aspects of this form of pastoral care. Perhaps the best understanding of pastoral care is that pastors are to care for their parishioners, and parishioners are to care for their pastors.¹⁷⁷

Henri Nouwen describes an image of the Christian pastor as a “wounded healer.” Not surprisingly, many studies about pastoral burnout are instinctive, coming from the researcher’s own personal struggles or problems. This chapter will continue with an outline of various theories about pastoral ministry and the pastor. After the discussion on the function and role of the pastor, the author will provide a brief overview of the context of African American churches.¹⁷⁸ Then the chapter will continue with the intent of analyzing certain dynamics of pastoral burnout, including its stages and the entire cycle. In addition, several helpful tools for pastoral burnout measurement will be presented.

Most pastors take care of those church members who have trivial matters by visiting or counseling the parishioners. The types of people who visit the pastor are diverse in their demands and are different from one another.¹⁷⁹ John Bisagno, in his Pastor’s Handbook, states, “For the young pastor, not yet battle hardened by the realities of life in ministry, the first response to problems may be to run. Opposition, criticism, misunderstanding, and conflict will be part of your daily fare.”¹⁸⁰ The author, having served in full time vocational ministry as a United States Army Chaplain for 30 years and befriending many pastors along the way, believes this longing for escape found in stressed-out ministers, leads to short tenure pastorates. Michael Wilson, Brad Hoffman and James Taylor say, “Consequently, short tenures yield uncertainty within churches and clergy households, lack of trust surrounding the pastor/congregation relationship and long-

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.
¹⁷⁹ Ibid.
term ineffectiveness in the areas of evangelism and discipleship.181 Pastors burn out and their families also suffer mentally, physically, financially and spiritually.182 Short tenure is a growing phenomenon that is evidence of the mismanagement of personal distress among ministers.183 The definition of distress is anxiety, suffering, acute physical discomfort and strain resulting from exhaustion or accident.184

John Stanford, in his book *Ministry and Burnout*, discusses the following nine factors about the pastoral ministry:

1) The job of the pastor is never finished.
2) The pastor cannot always tell if his work is having any results.
3) The work of the pastor is repetitive.
4) The pastor is dealing constantly with peoples’ expectations.
5) The pastor must work with the same people year in and year out.
6) Because the pastor works with people in need, there is a great drain on his energy.
7) The pastor deals with many people who come to him or the church, not for solid spiritual food, but for “strokes”.
8) The pastor must spend a lot of time on his “persona”.
9) The pastor may become exhausted by failure.185

In Willimon’s book, *Clergy and Laity Burnout*, he lists the following 15 factors necessary for further understanding of the pastoral ministry:186

1) The work of the church is never done.

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2) The church doesn’t give pastors a clear picture of the expectations and tasks they are supposed to fulfill.

3) Ministry tends to be repetitive.

4) Pastors must work with the same people year after year.

5) The church is a haven and refuge for people in great need, but it can be a place of great difficulty for those who attempt to minister to those needs.

6) Some people join the church, not out of any deep commitment of the true purpose of the church, but rather out of a desire to receive attention and affirmation from the church.

7) Persons in ministry must function a great deal of the time in what psychologist Karl Jung called the “persona”.\textsuperscript{187}

8) Church people may be exhausted by failure.

9) The church and its ministry are not valued by the surrounding culture. We live in a culture that values money and measures the worth of people by their salaries. Even the most altruistic pastors are valued less according to social culture.\textsuperscript{188}

10) Pastors must not give up in the situation of institutional decline, and they should do their best in the ministry.

11) Much of the church and pastoral ministry can become a “head trip”. The church deals with spiritual and intellectual matters, not with fleshly, carnal matters.

12) Poor time management wears down many in the church.

13) Ministry is often a mess.

14) Pastoral ministry requires the commitment, or at least the sympathetic support, of the pastor’s spouse.

\textsuperscript{187} The American Heritage Dictionary, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed., s.v., “Persona.”

\textsuperscript{188} William H. Willimon, Clergy and Laity Burnout (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 31-51.
15) Pastors and laity must be in general harmony with the denominational value system, theological stance and priorities.189

Through each litany of the expected and required things about the church and the pastors, there are certain common threads regarding the pastoral ministry: the job is endless and never finished; the work is repetitive; and the work drains the pastor’s energy to the point of exhaustion. The work of the ministry is not an easy job; often pastors are less appreciated; families are neglected; and pastors reach a level of no-return burnout.

**The Pastor**

Understanding the Pastor’s Function and Role

The work, function, and role of the pastor are varied and diverse in kind and scope. According to Roy Oswald, senior consultant at the Alban Institute, the three highest contributors to stress for pastors are: role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload. The following is a brief summary of his insights regarding the role of the pastor and how it relates to stress and burnout.

Role ambiguity occurs when a pastor does not have within himself a road map guiding him as to what it means to be a resident religious authority. This situation results in the pastor’s overextension in the role. The more ambiguous the role, the higher the stress level that is involved. Role conflict occurs when two or more people or groups have conflicting expectations for the pastor.190 Role overload has its source in role conflict; after hearing each person’s expectations, the pastor discovers how impossible it is to fulfill everyone’s expectations. Overload is the pressure to do more work, not completing the day’s work and the amount of

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189 Ibid.
work that interferes with what has to be done.\textsuperscript{191} If the work’s nature is more “intangible” and qualitative, overload is especially burdensome.\textsuperscript{192}

Seong Hee Lee addressed the functions and roles of the pastor as follows:

1) Counselor: the task of consoling people who face adversity and to encouraging them to persevere in personal and family life.

2) Administrator: the work to design, supervise and achieve the general programs of the church.

3) Teacher: the work to teach and supervise the educational programs of the church.

4) Scholar: the work to teach in the university or theological seminary, seminars, Bible studies or Sunday school, and to study and write.

5) Evangelist: achieving the various works of evangelism.

6) Spiritual guide: the work to help members possess a deeper and more mature faith.

7) Preacher: the work to develop oratory skills, to prepare sermons and to acquire the skills to dialogue and to address issues.

8) Reformer: the work of addressing the unrighteousness and vice of society, and to eliminate the absurdity of society and church.

9) Priesthood: the work of performing the service and to serve the general ceremonies of the church.

10) Musician: the work of managing the general programs of church music.\textsuperscript{193}

S. Joseph Kidder raises questions about what is the job of the pastor. What does the pastor do? Is there a job description? Is there a \textit{biblical} job description? One pastor answered,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{193} Seong Hee Lee, “The Self-Control of the Pastor”, \textit{Ministry and Theology} (November 1993): 221-223.
\end{flushright}
“Just go out there and make the people joyful.” Another encouraged pastor to visit, visit and visit more. Still another felt that the main role of the pastor is to bring new people to the church. According to the Scriptures, though, what should the pastor do? Do we have a model in the Scriptures that might help us understand the role? Kidder suggests that after many years of observation and careful examination of the literature, he found two distinctive pastoral roles: the traditional and the contemporary.

For many centuries, people viewed the role of the pastor as a servant caregiver who does the following:

1. Teaching/preaching of traditional doctrine.
2. Caregiving, such as visitation, counseling, comforting and taking care of the needs of people.
3. Performing rites of passage, such as baptisms, weddings and funerals.
4. Administration, such as taking care of meetings, putting together a bulletin, and developing programs for the church and evangelism.
5. And finally, serving as ambassador of the church to the community.

Kidder further explained that people expect pastors to perform these five caregiving tasks, and for pastors to also view their role in this manner. In reality, pastors did this for many centuries. Around the 1970s and 1980s, however, a new trend and understanding started to emerge. Many book authors and pastors of megachurches started to see the role of the pastor as a chief executive officer (CEO/leader), who casts a vision and rallies and motivates people to carry on the new vision in a changed and healthy environment.

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195 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
leadership today argue that if pastors continue to do what pastors have done for so many years, they will fail.  

Greg Ogden, in *Unfinished Business*, proposes that the pastor should be a visionary leader who constantly builds other leaders, casts a vision and changes the culture and structure of the church, doing all of this with an eye for mission, evangelism and growth. Kidder advocates that the new, insightful and useful ideas are weak theologically. The old model of a servant caregiver does not lend itself to growth, but creates a culture of people dependent upon the pastor; a role utterly inconsistent with the biblical principles of a priesthood of all believers. It also encourages people to focus on their needs, hindering the growth of the Kingdom of God.

Kidder continues to argue that the new model of a CEO/leader combines a mixture of biblical understandings and variation of professional practices. Most church growth books are basically books about leadership models adapted to the church. He strongly warns of the many dangers lurking behind this model. First, it might lead people to follow a charismatic personality rather than biblical principles. Second, this new model focuses on the needs of the local church to the elimination of the worldwide church. The emphasis of this model becomes the building of a megachurch rather than building a healthy church. Finally, any model we accept needs biblical and theological development. The role of the pastor should be based on a biblical model and have a strong theological foundation. Therefore, what guidelines are pastors to follow?

Kidder suggests the answer can be found in the ministry of Jesus. The New Testament account reveals that Jesus did five things: (1) Jesus built His relationship with His Father; (2) He preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God; (3) He met the needs of people; (4) He made

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197 Ibid.
198 Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 212.
200 Ibid.
disciples through the power of the Spirit; and (5) He gave His life as a sacrifice. These are the keys to true biblical ministry.\textsuperscript{201}

**Understanding the African American Church and the Pastor**

**The Black [African American] Church**

A. B. Scott defines the Black [African American] Church as “those independent, historic, and totally Black controlled denominations which constituted the core of Black Christians.”\textsuperscript{202} Clarence Bunch, in his thesis “Servant Leadership and African American Pastors,” suggests that the African American church has stood as a center for social and educational support and survival for African Americans.\textsuperscript{203} Dwayne K. Pickett, in his research on *Pastoral and Staff Leadership Training on the Growth of The South African American Church*, wrote:

The African American Church (the “Church” or the “Black Church”) stands today as the focal point of black community in the south as it have for more than a century. When blacks suffered the oppression of a systematically segregated society and of voting requirements intent on sustaining that oppression, the Church provided a place of hope and refuge otherwise absent in the Jim Crow south. The Church became, in fact, one of the first forces for positive change within the then “Negro” society. The escape from oppression that the church provided served as a source of empowerment within the black community.\textsuperscript{204}

Pickett suggests that for African Americans, the church has served as a refuge that instilled respect, dignity and inspiration to fulfill social need. He also suggest that historically, there are seven major independent, historic and totally Black-controlled denominations, which constitute the core of Black Christians founded after the Free African Society of 1787: the African American Episcopal (AME), the African American Episcopal Zion (AMEZ), the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church; the National Baptist Convention of America NBCA); the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. (NBCUSA); the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); and the Church of God in Christ (COGIC).  

Pickett suggests that eighty percent of all Black Christians are in these seven denominations. According to research conducted by Pickett in 2011, the number of members reported within each denomination is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Membership (millions)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AME</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMEZ</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CME</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COGIC</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC-USA</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBCA</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNBC</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: African American Church Memberships

Others of the smaller denominations include: The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (CME), The Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International (FGBFI), The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) and nondenominational churches.

C. F. Stewart, on the other hand argues, that out of the suffering and chaos the African American church, the Black church became not only a refuge and hospitality center for the oppressed, but the creative and cultural life center that empowered Black people to translate that suffering into creative acts of positive change.  

In the 21st century, the Black church has changed. Although there is no reachable data on the age of members and church location and size to validate, changes in the church. A census of

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members and churches shows that changes vary from denomination to denomination. In previous years, there was a steady growth of churches and members in some denominations.  

Despite these changes, the Black church still remains as the only Black institution that continues to be formed and developed by African Americans. This is mainly because as Du Bois (1895) believed, the African American church had six specific functions. The first function is to raise the annual budget; the second is to keep and increase its members; the third is to create social interaction and intercourse; the fourth is to establish moral standards; the fifth is to promote general intelligence to the masses; and the sixth function of the African American church is to create social betterment.

In summary, the historical context, sociological significance, the combined subtleties surrounding church, community and people and the function and dialectic model of the Black church suggest the single leadership that it requires. Lincoln and Mamiya indicate that churches still play important roles as the African American community addresses social issues related to crime, racism, health care, etc. This simply underscores the continued need for unique leadership in the African American church. As Edwards states, “Clergy must understand and utilize appropriate leadership styles to be effective pastors, since the Black church continues to be agent of social change in the African American community.”

The Expected Role of African American Pastors

Understanding African American Pastors

William B. Howell, in his article “The Role of the Black Minister in his Parish Ministry,” suggests that the African American pastor is the head of the church. He/she is the chief staff person and, in some churches, the only professionally employed person. It is expected of him/her to be able to carry the church forward. The pastor must be the guiding personality in the congregation. The pastor’s administrative role unlocks many complications for his/her ministry to the people. As he/she directs the members in planning and implementing the program, many occasions are presented for comforting and aiding the religious needs of groups and individuals.

Howell further elaborates that the contacts, the meetings, the classes and all the face-to-face encounters contain numerous ministering opportunities. He states, “They have answered the call to the ministry because they like and want to help people. Those pastors without the above characteristics are mostly in the pastorate and tend to abandon it.” 211 Black [African Pastors] preachers can be strengthened in the appreciation of their administrative role if they can see the creative possibilities of having strong administrative skills to ease the stress of the job.

Howell suggests that good administration creates or enhances desirable values and outcomes for members of the African American church. Disvalues may be created when administration is poorly or carelessly done: for example, starting meetings late can discourage some of the most effective people from coming another time; vagueness about the agenda creates disorder in people’s minds and often in the progress of the meetings; and failure to plan results in drifting. 212 Therefore, it benefits the preacher in charge and all of those associated with him/her

212 Ibid.,13.
to plan and execute the plan wisely. The end results of planning may strengthen persons and
groups in their abilities, attitudes, habits, fellowship and spiritual understanding and dedication.

The record of the past, recent or distant, holds no special comfort for this moment, except
that it suggests that there is in our midst a viable, stable vehicle that can be successfully utilized.
It will not come by praying, and preaching or singing alone. It must come by employing the
instruments, skills and expertise of the administrative body under the direction of its Black
preacher to make his witness that we are, indeed, sons and daughters of the Father. 213 Taking into
account the fact that many pastors are not trained administrators, Howell continues to argue that
a Black preacher’s administrative roles and expectations are plural in number. When the pastor’s
various administrative duties are listed and grouped into meaningful classifications, the many
roles begin to become clear. 214 The following is a list of these administrative roles using the
acronym D.O.C.T.O.R., with a brief discussion of each.

The African American Pastor as Director

The African American pastor is the leader of the congregation; therefore, the pastor is
expected to direct the members of the church to develop their organization and programs and
execute them with proficiency. The pastor is the individual to whom the congregation goes for
guidance. Sometimes the pastor’s self-image may be fed by the amount of attention he/she
receives, second only to that of preaching. The growth of the pastor’s self-pride and overbearing
confidence then becomes prevailing. The church members’ expectations are for the pastor to be
someone of whom the congregation can seek preferred advice, as well as answers to their
problems and questions. Some pastors are sparkling over with an extra amount of energy and
passion to move the congregations forward. However, there is an ever-present danger that these

213 Ibid.
214 Ibid.
pastors will be pushed too fast and too hard for the quick developments and high-level performances of the church ministry. An African American pastor is expected to have an idea of organization and keep the need for program development in mind, and to pursue it with enthusiasm for the church members, who do not understand either the idea or the need. One writer warns, “The failure to recognize that administration is the art of likelihood, which may lead to the other extremes of having too much too quickly. Thus, this realization may create additional problems.”\textsuperscript{215} Not only does it create additional problems but requires more time to solve problems.

Problem-solving is a matter of undoing history, but usually there is too much history to undo all at one time. The great misfortune of history to the administrator is that it is unavoidable, and the effects will be repeated if the causes are not changed. This means that the administrator must change the \textit{why} of an organization before he/she can change the \textit{way} of it. The rate of speed is only one of the two dimensions of this change. An extremist in organization development must often violate both dimensions of change. If he/she violates either, however, the results can be devastating. One of the toughest aspects of problem-solving is knowing how far to go.

“However, the administrator must carry out his/her function within the framework of other people’s abilities and deficiencies, and he needs more than ordinary patience and toleration.”\textsuperscript{216}

Pastors should consider delegating administrative duties to qualified parishioners.

\textbf{The African American Pastor as Organizer}

The African American Pastor is an organizer, and is expected to be able to form and sustain the union of the church. “He must have the administrative skills necessary for setting up organizations or, rather, for guiding the congregation in the processes of shaping and re-shaping.

\textsuperscript{216} Ray E. Brown, \textit{College and University Business} 35, no. 3 (September, 1963): 70.
He or She must have the candid ability to understand personal relationships and use them constructively.” 217 The pastor must have the ability to capture new ideas and put them into action. He or she is expected to know how to nurture and deliver his/her ideas so that they will be understood and accepted. The pastor cannot single-mindedly insist on the reception of his/her own ideas entirely, but must be prepared for their reformulation through discussion with the right groups in order to receive positive results.218

**The African American Pastor as Counselor**

This role is a part of the administration role, and is closely related to the organization role. “The pastor has caring functions to complete in relation to the needs arising out of the roles of the officers and leaders and to other personal needs of the congregation which are discovered as they work with him in the church’s program.”219 Not only should the African American pastor’s congregation be counseled along these lines, but also on the moral laws of our nation. The church must be reminded of the passing of systems that were born in injustice, nurtured in inequality and reared in exploited actions.

The African American pastor is expected to bring to the minds of the congregation that life is interrelated. All people are caught in an inescapable network of empathy, and tied in a single garment of destiny.220 The pastors’ job as a counselor is to help people overcome their challenges, issues and problems, such as depression, infidelity, anxiety and abuse. Pastors should

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219 Ibid.
220 Ibid.
provide diagnosis and treatment based on the Bible and know both how use the Bible and to refer their members to appropriate helping agencies.  

The African American Pastor as Teacher

It is the expected role of the African American pastor to develop the congregation in detailed leadership proficiencies. This is done by teaching functions. These teaching functions may be carried out more or less formally in groups or classes. “There is a learning-by-doing process in which the pastor gives the workers instructions and guidance in their roles. The pastor may teach the theological significance and religious relevance of the work which the church member is doing.” But the parishioners have to be responsible for taking on the mantle of learning.

This creates a wider dimension in the pastor’s mind. The pastor's teachings may reveal that the African American church must remain a spiritual center to keep the hopes of the African American community alive. The African American church must deal centrally with the essential issues of our community: jobs, better educational facilities for African American people, the importance of voting, mobilization for selective patronage, etc. The pastor’s teachings may give insight that the African American church must lead the people into becoming mobilized and organized in the political, economic and social arenas. His or her teachings may point out the problems that African American churches face in attempting to change the status quo, or the need to acquire power to participate meaningfully in developing and managing new structures of their own. The pastor’s teachings should give insight to the I-self and I-thou relationships. The

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“love yourself” doctrine will have to engender and sustain a “selflessness” unlike it has done before, and “love your neighbor” must mean more than a humiliating tolerance of man’s inhumanity to man. It is the expected task to ascertain, through Jesus Christ, what God is saying about the “what” and “how” of the ways of mankind in this world.  

Through the resolves of the African American pastor, the church should come to realize that life’s humanism is not one in the traditional sense, whereby faith is in man’s natural abilities to realize sublime purposes. Man has not come to the striking belief that the human race is beyond the frailties of injustice, oppression, suppression and hatred. With this in mind, the church becomes humanistic enough to know that the problem is of man, and the solution will be found in what man can become. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. African Americans worshipping in African American churches are so close, and yet, so far apart. By recognizing the fact that the house that is divided cannot stand, many congregants may come together in brotherly love and achieve humankind’s full purpose.

The African American Pastor as Orator/Preacher

Traditionally, the expected role of the African American pastor was that of an emotion-arousing orator. There was no emphasis placed on doctrine, content ethics or Christian teachings. The African American preacher depended upon the emotions of his/her preaching in order to make up for the lack of knowledge, and emphasized and stressed doctrinal or emotional specialties. The untrained African American pastor paid little attention to the daily needs and problems of the people. The pastor often made the first half of the sermon message a reading of some sermons from a book, provided the intellectual part from the sermon book, and

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223 Ibid., 13.
225 Ibid.
226 Ibid., 16.
made up the difference to the first part by offering a hodgepodge of emotionalism for Aunt Sue. This message was a “pie in the sky.” It was a message of the better life to come after one had crossed over Jordan. The pastor’s ego was uplifted to see the people ecstatic.

Today, the climate is different. The times have changed. People have changed. African American people no longer want a message revealed to them of what is to be obtained on the other side. African American congregations now want a message of relevance for their times. African American congregations want the African American preacher to articulate to them about a God who can make it possible to enjoy some of life’s earthly benefits here on Earth.  

They want to hear a message that informs them of the conditions upon which mankind may enter into a genuinely human relationship with God. In particular, they want to hear a message that helps them develop a faith and confidence that will mend the fabric of human relationship. They want to hear a message that will guide them in an experience that will enable them to accomplish their goals and purposes. African American people also want communication that informs them of poverty programs, economic compensation and opportunities in this pluralistic society that have not materialized.  

These are the issues that the modern African American pastor must address at present. Pastors preaching must speak true, authentic words for the oppressed, the downtrodden, the deprived, the captive, the poor, the rich, the illiterate and the intellectual. Presently, one hostile moment of worldliness is a belief that life is to be realized at any cost to self. Thus, here lies the Christian paradox: through the Gospel we must see Jesus as a truth relevant to humanity’s need to rise higher. The Gospel is to be preached to all. It is a gospel to save the humanity of African American people, but the Gospel is beneficial for all. Therefore, the African American

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228 Ibid.
preacher’s message must have within its content something more than that which causes the people to enter in a foot-tapping, hand-clapping, highly emotional, ecstatic worldly experience, but also content that serves to balance the life of God’s people on earth.\textsuperscript{229}

**The African American Pastor as Recruiter**

It is necessary for the African American pastor to take the lead in finding and securing the acceptance of people to fill the many places of responsibility in the church. He or She must match people and positions with abilities, and not because of likes and dislikes, or because of the extra five dollars slipped into his hands, or the favor rendered to him/her on some occasions. The African American pastor must find those within the congregation who are developing, or may be developed for useful places of service.\textsuperscript{230}

Pastoral burnout is not only “individual” issues, but also more “systemic” issues within diverse systems. Therefore, to understand more accurately the dynamics of stress and burnout among African American pastors, one must consider the systems in which they live, such as family, church, community and American culture. Furthermore, one must have some basic knowledge of this context.

**Challenges of the African American Pastor**

**Self-Relationship**

The effectiveness of pastoral leadership focuses fundamentally on the support systems available to pastors and their families. These systems historically have been fragmented and inadequate, causing program ineffectiveness and personal stress among pastors. The degree to which African American pastors are effective is crucial to the health of the church. Pastors with strong support systems based upon sound theology, spiritual disciplines, management training, insurance systems and outplacement services have a better chance of producing strong, effective

\textsuperscript{229} Ibid.,14.  
ministries, as compared to unhealthy leaders producing unhealthy, ineffective leadership. Not only can ineffective leadership caused by certain types of stress and stressors produce poor ministries, but it can also produce unhealthy people living out unhealthy doctrines. These issues have a spiritual effect on pastors. These choices may lead to stress and, ultimately, burnout.

There is probably no mission more important for the parish pastor than the development of an effective ministry. This includes a ministry with support systems that would allow the pastor to function and operate much more effortlessly than handling the problems alone. Pastors themselves are definitely concerned with the quality of their own service, and with making it as helpful and productive as possible. Clearly, the central figure in the African American church was/is the African American pastor or preacher. Ruben Speaks, a renowned author, suggests that African American pastors have no exact counterpart in the Caucasian church, and to attempt to see the Caucasian minister or pastor from the same perspective is to risk confusion: the African American pastor includes a facet extraordinary to the Black experience.

This experience has been accompanied by stress since the beginning of African American life in America. It is a problematic element to define, but it is recognized, reported and expected by practically all observers who have given careful attention to Black and white pastors in their respective roles as religious leaders. The degrees of difference are quite pronounced. For example, when African American parishioners become members of Caucasian churches, a common complaint centers around their disappointment with the way the Caucasian pastor fails to fulfill the role expectations of the African American parishioner. African American parishioners expect their pastor to be a part of both the spiritual and social aspects of their lives.

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233 Ibid.
The African American pastor is expected by African American parishioners and community to provide leadership, vitality and understanding in a struggle to change the unfair economic, social and political burdens of their lives in America. The African American people expect the potential of self-actualization, or uninhibited fulfilled potential. However, the author’s perspective is that Caucasian churches force evangelism and African American churches force social gospel. These two different approaches are both valid, and both can cause stress. Stress and burnout is an equal opportunity employer. It can affect race, color, ethnicity and gender. It is a “silent killer”.

According to Maslow and Berger, each person has an inner nature (being) and an inborn motivation to express this nature. In order to achieve this expression, basic survival needs must be met. Since so much time and energy of pastors is often spent trying to meet the needs of shelter and safety, the usual drives for love, esteem and fulfillment are stunted. In today's society, much of a person's time is centered on basic survival: food, water, shelter. Pastors are no exception. Many times, other needs are not met, causing a vast emptiness in the person. This nonstop hindrance can create stress and burnout.

E. Fromm has discussed the plight of the individual in detail. He suggests that man is a part of nature, subject to its physical laws and unable to change them; yet he transcends the rest of nature, or lower beings. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures.

In present psychological thought, the self is viewed as a crucial value, along with self-esteem. It is viewed as essentially an individualistic concept. Yet pastors, and African American pastors are no exceptions, working from a source of Christianity, are expected to do the opposite:

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235 Ibid.
to lose the self-daily inch by inch in order to conform to the image of Christ, and to be overtaken by the presence and personhood of the Holy Spirit.²³⁸

This issue can cause a huge conflict in the pastor or clergy person, who must also live in the secular world where the pastor is bombarded with messages to the contrary: the self is at the center of human worship and the material world, and is the only reality. These messages often omit God from their thought, admiration and worship. In this struggle between the secular and spiritual world and their opposing faiths, pastors must strive to remain balanced. For example, if they choose to be ill-informed of their own human limits as men or women, they will fail life’s tests. This may cause the beginning and growth of insecurities, self-doubt, and self-delusion.²³⁹

Further, these self-relation issues can limit the minister’s effectiveness as a human being in life roles such as husband, wife, lover, friend, parent and others. Although secular self-esteem theorists have recognized that one's self-esteem develops in a social context, basic teachings remind the pastor that there is no referent outside the self. However, in the Christian direction of things, self-esteem is basically bipolar. It is a personal feeling rooted in the practical knowledge of God and self-esteem. The experience of self-esteem is man’s last but one chance, resulting in a passionate response, to seeing the self in his light.²⁴⁰ It is this individual who finds conflict with the larger social order. Pastors must lose their self-relationship in accepting religious teachings. This never-ending conflict creates and maintains a certain level of stress among pastors.

Speaks has discussed a need to awaken pastors to an awareness of false self-perceptions and their devastating expectations.²⁴¹ He suggests that pastors must realize and face the fact of their humanity. This humanity provides them with certain weaknesses, which make pastors

²³⁸ Ibid., 38-51.
²³⁹ Ibid.
vulnerable to diseased lifestyles; because of these varied, stressful life experiences, internal and external, pastors become sick. Certain standards, created by society and the church and with which pastors have to contend, can cause anxieties. Ultimately, such stress impacts their effectiveness and can eventually lead to their demise; the demise of African American pastors is occurring frequently in this society. There is a void of research on pastors as individuals in general, and minority pastors in particular. The burnout concerns of pastors and clergy are still very much an issue for discussion, although apparently not yet scholarly researched.

Church Relationships

An African American pastor's job description includes working with the congregation, preaching, teaching, assisting members with various problems and stimulating attendance at worship. Maintaining adequate relationships with the congregation, church council and members and handling the membership program are also part of the job. The fixed policies and practices of the church are sometimes an administrative Calvary for pastors. Pastors can become engulfed in red tape at denominational and/or local board levels of the corporate church structure, which often hinders church advancement and decreases spiritual effectiveness.

Anxiety may be present when the pastor handles administrative and legal concerns of the church. There is usually someone to whom the minister must be accountable. Anxiety occurs when ministers get progress reports from their supervisors or church boards, similar to other corporate entities. But who counsels and supports the pastors? Who or where does he or she turn to for counsel? Hands and Fehr, in their book *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy*, expressed it best: “Clergy who recognize that they are relatively isolated need to take the initiative to find or

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242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
244 Ibid.
create the kind of peer spiritual community in which they live and grow.”  

“[Pastors] need to form association and groups in which they can give one another much needed appreciation, affirmation and encouragement.”

Religious functions

A religious function is defined as official acts and prayers that are a part of divine ministerial obligation. Performing their rites appropriately may also cause pastors anxiety. The church as employer, in its corporate form of organized religion, has a profound impact on the pastors, their staff and their families. This impact is similar in many ways to all corporate employment, and may frequently contribute to significant stress among its pastoral staff.

In most supervisory careers, living one's work is considered in many instances to be workaholism, but in ministry to live one's work is a sign of holiness and divine calling. However, the degree to which ministers want such total identification of life and work is increasingly problematic; it is extremely easy to confuse one's representation of God with one’s self as God, or the need to exhibit divine characteristics in spite of one’s humanness. The corporate church must be convinced that pastors face unique problems, which will not go away or improve without significant structural and program changes. Additionally, the church is the appropriate agency to intervene because the church is the direct link to clergy/pastor’s activity.

Teresa Marciano discusses the very special problems of those pastors who are employees of the corporate church, as compared to ministers who are independent of a denominational

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246 Ibid., 68.
structure. These problems are: (1) The entrenched nature of ministerial life in corporate church life; and (2) tensions over measures of success, and status competitions between the legendary/spiritual dimensions of the church, its unequalled goals and its existence in a secular world.  

Therefore, the minister mirrors the work of the whole corporate church. The cause of stress in the ministerial/church relationship is primarily due to the needs of the ministers when unmet by the denomination. Marciano and Walsh provided major early development in what is known about the minister as church employee, and the potential this relationship has to produce effective ministers. Marciano observed the church as an employer to search for a correlation between churches and corporations in their quest to meet employee needs. She found that the impact of the corporate church on its ministers and their families is equivalent to the interweaving of features of insights/perception and values into a fabric that will loosen if any part is separated from another.

All corporate church office's responsibilities are complicatedly connected. The breakdown of one office can cause system-wide dysfunction, and the pastor’s role becomes uncertain and stressful. Marciano concluded from her study that, in order to reduce isolation, turnover and defection (stress and burnout), the church should develop in-reach. In-reach is the basic recommendation for the future, wherein the singular benefits of religious beliefs and actions are offered as renewal and support to those who offer them daily to others. In other words, an in-reach program gives pastors assistance and support to avoid unnecessary stress.

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252 Ibid.
253 Ibid.
Walsh, on the other hand, extensively researched feedback barriers, which occur when individuals receive minimal feedback and attempts to obtain feedback are blocked. Results from this research suggested that a lack of feedback from supervisors hinders an employee's primary link to information.254

Job Satisfaction

Employee efficiency is dependent on the employer’s administrative clarity in its goals, purpose and objectives; so it is with pastors and their congregations. Open communication and feedback were found to be vital for positive, mutual growth of both employee and employer. The clearer employees are of their job description and tasks, the better their performance.255 The healthier their performance, the more shared pleasure is received by both employee and employer. This can reduce the amount of job stress and enhance ministerial effectiveness. The previously discussed examples of research are limited in number, and portray a bareness in the literature on the general clergy body and African American pastors’ participation in particular. The corporate church models studied by Marciano do not provide any discussion of African American denominations and how they compare and/or differ. It appears African American clergy and denominations are rarely researched. However, the life of Jesus Christ is the perfect example for today’s pastor in the exact undertaking of the function and role God has assigned him. Christ submitted His time to the will of the Father, never losing sight of the overall mission, even while He was surrounded by multitudes of people waiting for Him to meet their needs.256

254 Ibid.
255 Nuss, "Helping Young Leaders Avoid Burnout," 67-68.
The Sense of the Call

When most African American pastors look back at their early years of development in the ministry, when the sense of the call became overwhelming and their time to act was imminent, there was confusion and jubilation. These situations and circumstances of life are different for each individual who experiences them, but the sense of being driven toward a higher objective is essentially the same for each individual. Many pastors consider this sense of the call the most important indicator that an individual has been singled out by the Holy Spirit for designed ministry in any form. Perhaps the first real challenge is to face up to that sense of call and be open to the changes brought on by this life-changing experience.257 As followers of Jesus Christ, believers are taught that following Christ is to give direction and appeal to one’s life.

Most pastors found that the sense of the call imposed, invaded and overturned their plans, pointing them in a completely different direction in life. Part of accepting the sense of the call is an understanding that there is ongoing receptiveness in the ramifications for oneself and one’s family. It is one of the most difficult challenges that must be accepted when accepting God’s call into the ministry, whether in or out of the parish. This sense of the call has often left the spouse and family in the dark. Whether it is the pastor or the spouse, accepting the call is to accept the possibility of a transient life. It is not an easy attitude to accept,258 but as in all things, God will always supply the grace and power to do whatever is required: “Each time he said, ‘My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness’. So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me” (II Cor 2:9, NLT).

258 Ibid.
Unrealistic Expectations

African American pastors, as well as other pastors, have a common affliction of unrealistic expectations. These unrealistic expectations are the overture to much dissatisfaction, displeasure and disappointment. The real needs of today’s society are constantly in flux and unstable. Pastors realize that people are involved in churches for various reasons, some of which are not healthy. Often parishioners who attend church become involved in churches because of their neediness, and some of these needs are virtually impossible to address on a pastoral level. These parishioners are great people, but sometimes their needs exceed the pastor’s capacity to support and assist them. African American pastors must be aware of all these variants in order to be effective in the ministry.  

Research studies have shown that the expectations of the congregation are different to the expectations of the pastor. G. Lloyd Rediger has listed a group of common expectations for both pastor and parish, which are clearly self-centered in both instances and give indications of why pastors and congregations seem to be out of sync early in a pastor's tenure:

The Congregation's Expectations: Be a good preacher—preach the Word but don't make us uncomfortable; Be a good teacher—teach us and our children what we want to learn; Be there when we need you—crises, death, special events; Don't do things that embarrass us; Be a CEO, a therapist, a computer specialist, a community leader, a negotiator, a problem-solver, a fund-raiser, and keep our church looking nice and operating well. The Pastor's Expectations: All of the above, except for wanting to preach, teach, call, and lead in ways that I think they need, without making them angry at me; An adequate financial package, workable equipment, and a compatible administrative assistant; Parishioners' support of my programs, and if there is conflict within the pastor be helpful in effective ways; Respect and happiness for my spouse and family here.”

These expectations are undeniably normal, but are clearly centered on personal needs rather than those of the Church of Christ. Many of the expectations that pastors bring into the pastorate are without substance and will not work in the real world. Many pastors are not

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260 Ibid.
prepared for the challenge. Psychologist Samuel Blizzard, author of *The Role Conflict of Urban Ministry*, states that individuals in ministry are often plagued by problems of role conflict, that role conflicts are built into pastoring tasks and are the basis of much personal anxiety.\(^{261}\) These concerns and expectations are distractions from the indispensable nature of the ministry.

**Awareness of the Congregation**

Another significant challenge is that African American pastors have to come honestly to the awareness that the congregation to whom they minister reflects the society in which they live. Pastors must also own up to the fact that they are polluted with the same cultural shaping as their parishioners, and recognize and accept their own human frailties and flaws. Once those flaws are pointed out, however, pastors are hurt and betrayed, or feel lonely and isolated. Henry Nouwen reminds us of our task as pastors and counselors: “Human counselors should see as their primary task the work of helping their parishioners to become aware of the movements of the divine Counselor and encouraging them to follow these movements without fear … into the silence of God … and to feel at home there.”\(^{262}\) He further suggests, “Ministers are tempted to join the ranks of those who consider it their primary task to keep other people busy … But our task is the opposite of distraction … how to keep them from being so busy that they can no longer hear the voice of God who speaks in silence.”\(^{263}\) Pastors must be aware that one cannot judge the mistakes of others when they ignore their own faults.


\(^{263}\) Ibid., 63.
Generational Differences

Yet another challenge is the generational differences among parishioners and their choice in styles of worship. According to sociologists, we are well into the postmodern era; this has created an essential change in social forms, causing businesses, organizations and families to re-think effective operational practices and social interfaces. Churches are not exempt. Gen X and Gen Y may have the same needs, but demand a worship experience that is not like the contemporary worship of the 70s, 80s and 90s. These generations are not likely to attend a megachurch as was the case in the 80s and 90s. They are drawn more to neighborhood or community churches that focus on spiritual principles based on God having a more spiritual touch in their lives. 264

Pastors, and particularly African American pastors, have to be prepared to conduct three different services: traditional, with old-time hymns and hand clapping and shouting; contemporary, with contemporary praise songs using electric guitars, drums and other musical instruments; and that which is rooted in high church liturgy, rites, ritual and music. Many pastors, including African American pastors, are stuck in the traditional and contemporary service mode and find it difficult to move on. A proactive change must take place in order to meet the future challenges of the pastoral ministry.

Managing Stressors

People and cultures of the future will look back on our era of history with interest and wisdom. One of the trademarks of our time will be the intense stress of our high-tech lifestyle. A critical challenge for African American pastors is learning to manage stress and to avoid burnout. Many pastors discount the stress as they experience the work of the ministry. The stressors of

ministerial life are little different from those which impact executives in the secular business world; the key is learning to recognize the stressors and stress symptoms that are the essence of pastoral challenges.

Spaite and Goodwin advise that to manage stress is to prevent related health conditions such as panic attacks, depression, digestive problems, fibromyalgia, abdominal symptoms, heightened adrenaline surges, interrupted heart rhythm and restrictive coronary blood flow. Many books and literature pamphlets pertaining to stress are written by psychologists, medical doctors, socialists and pastors. These books and literature reside in libraries and university bookstores, but most go unread. The tragedy of the issue of managing stressors is that pastors will continue to flow through ministry situations without adequate knowledge and training to deal, not only with the problem of their parishioners, but with their own stressors. Nouwen states, “While pastors view their involvement with people in the social and faith communities in which they live and work as guiding people towards a life of wholeness and integrity, they themselves, because of their own inner woundedness, struggle to live a life of wholeness.”

Pastors should consider becoming physically and spiritually whole.

Remaining Physically and Spiritually Fit

Gary Thomas, author of Every Body Matters: Strengthening Your Body to Strengthen Your Soul, strongly advocates physical fitness offered to God, followed by God, as having enormous spiritual, emotional and physical benefits to pastors. He challenges pastors to be physically fit. He quotes Dr. Kenneth Cooper, who noted that one reason people fail to take care

of their bodies is that “most people have a relatively weak belief in the need for good eating.” Dr. John Arey, editor of the Kardiagram journal, a Methodist Counseling and Consultation journal, recalls a number of people who have visited him for counseling who have neglected and abused their bodies: “Self-care is a legitimate concern, and one that people of faith need to reclaim as not only a right but an obligation. Self-care means balancing a concern for others with a concern for one’s own well-being.” If pastors do not care for themselves who will?

A similar view is held by Eileen Scully, who believes that the challenge to be well is rooted in the sacramental promise of communion and baptism. As the Body of Christ is called to completeness, so pastors are called to a new way of life which was fashioned, well-ordered and blessed by God, acquired for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. “Just as the church has come to express a theology of ordained ministry that is rooted in and serves the baptismal ministry shared by the whole church, so too, issues of clergy wellness cannot be seen in isolation from the wellness of the whole body.” Pastors should consider the wellness of the whole body as a commitment unto the Lord.

These points of view are echoed by G. Lloyd Rediger, who believes that pastors are peculiarly unconcerned about their physical fitness and well-being and make less provision for their agendas and time schedules. Their own self-care is set aside in favor of other ministry requirements. These obligations intrude and take over the very essence of their beings. Rediger

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further asserts that there is a theological disconnect when pastors fail to model fitness for their congregation.\textsuperscript{270} Pastors are driven by guilt to denying the body in order to enrich their spirits.

Thomas adds, “Becoming spiritually and physically fit are two ways that we can grow in our inner and outer strength, as well as in our ability and willingness to endure hardships. The end result is that we...may become truly useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.”\textsuperscript{271} Pastors collectively are guilty of denying our bodies in order to deepen our spirits. Yet the priority of self-control of the spirit is more necessary than discipline of the body.

Rediger believes that our denial process is that we imagine we can become fit in one part of ourselves while remaining sagging in others. He says that when we do this, we ignore the basic biblical principles of completeness of the body, mind and spirit, which are interactive and interdependent. One cannot be fit only in spirit or mind or body; all three either support each other’s mutual fitness or suffer mutual illness. Rediger concludes by saying that even if one has genuine intentions and a sincere spiritual fervor, it does not matter if the body becomes flabby or the mind intoxicated with unhealthy thoughts.\textsuperscript{272} The challenge is that pastors must think holistically when it comes to maintaining fitness so that they can increase sensitivity to their God’s voice, gain new energies for God’s service and live healthier and productive lives as they serve God and others.\textsuperscript{273}

Remaining Emotionally Established

Pastors face the challenge of remaining emotionally healthy, yet many African American pastors are ill prepared in the matter of emotional and mental health. Some pastors are not prepared to deal realistically with the emotional demands of ministry. Bernice Patterson suggests

\textsuperscript{270} G. Lloyd Rediger, \textit{Fit To Be a Pastor} (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 17-19.  
\textsuperscript{272} G. Lloyd Rediger, \textit{Fit To Be a Pastor} (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 17.  
\textsuperscript{273} Ibid.
that the help-seeking tendencies of African Americans, as a whole, have long been a source of confusion to the field of counseling. Moreover, according to the available literature on help-seeking, there is an apparent deficit of information on the help-seeking habits of clergy members in the African American community. Patterson also asserts that current literature focuses primarily on African American clergy and their roles in facilitating the development of professional counseling relationships for their parishioners, rather than on their ability to seek out professional counseling relationships for themselves.

The focus of Patterson’s study was to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of African American clergy related to their views, attitudes and barriers to help-seeking. This research study utilized a qualitative phenomenological methodology. Eight self-identified African American licensed and ordained clergy members participated in an initial face-to-face or phone interview and a brief follow-up phone interview.²⁷⁴

The data was analyzed using a modified form of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method, originally put forth by Mousakas (1994) and later modified by Creswell (2007). Six themes emerged from the participants’ narratives: (1) the humanness of clergy; (2) mental health stressors and experiences; (3) wearing the mask of health; (4) taking everything to God first; (5) issues of confidentiality; and (6) personal expectations for therapists. Patterson suggested that these six themes fit into one of three domains: views on help-seeking, attitudes toward help-seeking and barriers to help-seeking. The meaning of these themes was discussed in relation to how the field of psychology could better understand and serve this population therapeutically. In addressing these six themes, Patterson masterfully concluded that African American clergy have served a pivotal role in the African American community for countless years. They have served

as leaders, counselors, political advocates, civil rights activists and preachers of the gospel. These men and women selflessly serve others and direct their parishioners to the appropriate services in order to increase the health and stability of those they serve.\textsuperscript{275}

Research to date has not adequately studied this population’s help-seeking tendencies, needs and concerns. This current research has demonstrated that African American clergy have a unique lived experience, and it deals with the views, attitudes, and barriers to help-seeking that must be further explored and addressed if the field of psychology hopes to provide relevant quality care to all those who need such care and seek it out. It has been the goal of this research to provide help for the helpers by giving a voice to the multitudes of hurting leaders.\textsuperscript{276}

John Arey asked the big questions for pastors as they provide ministry: Can they adapt to change? Can they deal with reality? Are they free of anxiety and related symptoms? Are they willing to listen without judging? Can they direct instinctive hostility into creative and constructive outlets? Do they have the capacity to love the unlovable?\textsuperscript{277} All these questions direct the pastor’s need to prepare for dealing with hurting, needy and flustered parishioners. These are people living in an impersonal world, looking for personable pastors to bring help, healing and hope:

The challenge to emotional wellness is to keep one’s heart and complete – the heart of one who is aware of the importance of maintaining emotional health in order to protect or keep one’s ability to love, care for others as Christ love and cared for us. It is in pastors knowing one’s self, accepting who he or she is, their faults and needs, their hopes and fears and above all their limitations. The utmost challenge is to keep one’s mind and heart focused on Christ.\textsuperscript{278}

\textbf{Understanding the Types of Pastoral Burnout}

\textsuperscript{275} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{278} Ibid.
Pastoral burnout can be experienced in many ways. Pastors have bodies, souls, minds and spirits, which are an integrated part of the holistic self. They may experience the following types of burnout, which often come together and have a compounding effect on each other:

- **Physical burnout** can be prompted by lack of sleep, exercise and physical effect of stress. The overloaded schedules, work, and other stressful activities can drive pastors to forget to eat healthy, exercise and to keep a regimented routine. When speaking on burnout from ministry, John Piper said, “Nothing brought me closer to quitting than sleeplessness.”

  If left unimpeded, physical burnout can cause aches and pains, a change in eating habits, a weakened immune system and a feeling of being tired all the time.

- **Relational burnout** is associated with emotional burnout and can cause strained relationships with other church leaders, parishioners and counselees. Routine interactions with energy-draining parishioners and other people make the pastors vulnerable for this type of burnout. Emotional and physical exhaustion between church members can cause pastors to isolate themselves to get a break from their energy draining sources.

- **Emotional burnout** is usually experienced when pastors/shepherds feel they have no one to turn to for advice. They have no one to shepherd them. This type of burnout can inflict chaos on a pastor’s marriage and family life due to the feeling of isolation. Emotional burnout can cause pastors to be impassive to their normal emotions which can lead to a sense of failure and self-doubt.

- **Spiritual burnout** is felt when pastors neglect their own spiritual lives while trying to minister to the lives of others. Many pastors do not have a mentor in their lives and fail to seek the life-strengthening power of God for spiritual refreshment. They lack encounters with God through prayer, scripture reading and fellowship.

However, pastors, especially African American pastors, have difficulty asking for help from others when they are physically, relationally, emotionally or spiritually burned out. The life of Jesus Christ is a prime example for pastors today of the meticulous responsibility they have in the role and function that God has assigned them. Jesus submitted His time to the will of the

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281 Ibid.

282 Ibid.

283 Ibid.
Father, never losing sight of the overall mission even when He was surrounded by multitudes of people waiting for Him to meet their needs.284

Use of Burnout Measurement Tools

Techniques for measuring ministry burnout are numerous. Pastors may measure burnout indirectly by checking their symptoms; however, one can precisely measure its degree by using a measurement instrument. This section will address three means of assessing burnout.

Assessment Measurement Tools

The following includes some of the measurement tools located in the appendix of this research on burnout among African American pastors: 1) Oswald Measurement tool (See Appendix C); 2) Rediger Measurement Tool (See Appendix D); 3) Collins Measurement Tool (See Appendix E); and 4) Time Management Tool (See Appendix F).

Scripture and Prayer as Spiritual Tools

Stress is part of life. Stress leading to burnout, however, does not need to happen. Christians do not need to “deal with stress” like nonbelievers do. Instead, believers have the promises of the Bible to depend upon:

- “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11:28-30) ESV.
- “Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.” (Ps 55:22) ESV.
- “[Cast] all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Pet. 5:7 ESV)

284 See Mk 1:35-39; see also Jn 6:1-15.
Burnout can be avoided by following the injunctions of the Scripture to cast our burdens on the Lord and depend upon Him for the strength pastors need in daily ministry. These suggestions may help pastors to avoid burnout:

- **Protect:** There are certain aspects of your life that you must be vigilant about protecting. Protect your personal time with God. Protect your time with your family. Protect the occasional time to relax, reflect and rejuvenate from the demands of the ministry.

- **Pray:** Prayer is essential. To neglect prayer is to neglect your lifeline and source of strength. Pray frequently. Pray always.

- **Peers:** Enjoy friendship. Leadership can get lonely. Find a friend, or a peer, who can understand your situation and help you work through the challenges that you face.285

**Time Management Priority Tools**

Possessing a healthy sense of purpose and direction can help to clear the myriad distractions that crowd our lives and push us toward burnout.286 Take some time to focus on the big-picture goals of your life, your ministry and your family. Prioritize your time, your energy and your actions toward achieving realistic goals. Staying frenetically busy at a slew of activities and programs can be disillusioning.287

Beyond these three sources, there are more descriptive articles about issues concerning pastors in psychological literature and on countless websites, as well as more general resources on life-balancing not specific to clergy that may be helpful.288

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286 Ibid.
287 Ibid.
288 Ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING BURNOUT OF PASTORS IN NORTHEAST FLORIDA

The previous two chapters discussed some theories of stress and burnout in pastoral ministry, especially in the context of African American churches and pastors. With the research literature as background, this chapter will discuss the experiential research used in this study on selected African American pastors. It will analyze burnout in African American pastors in northeast Florida by analyzing the results of the survey and the burnout focus group.

Description of Sample and Procedure

Sample

Participants in the survey comprised northeast Florida clergy, both male and female pastors, who work in church districts of various denominations.

Procedures

The sample was obtained by asking permission from individuals to conduct this research. After obtaining approval, survey packets that included a cover letter, consent form and burnout inventory were distributed to participants in early April 2016. Approximately 50 survey packets were sent to pastors in the area, and 26 participants (52%) completed the survey with usable data for the research. Some pastors had a traditional, conservative character; others declined to answer the questionnaire by saying that the subject did not apply to them. Five respondents were not in a paid pastoral position, six were not pastors and two surveys were incomplete.

Other participants were sent the same survey packet by mail. A total of 50 survey packets were sent to these pastors, who were requested to return the completed survey sheets within two weeks of receipt. Of these, only 10 packets (20%) were returned with usable survey sheets within the time period. Of the 10 packets returned, five female pastors returned the packets on time and...
fully completed. These two survey methods (survey and focus group) resulted in a total participant pool of 29 participants from whom responses were received, yielding a 58.0% response and participation rate. It is the assumption of this research that the participants completed the questionnaire honestly and to the best of their knowledge of their situations.

Results of the Survey

Demographic Variables

Twenty-one demographic variables from the survey were considered in this data. The significant numbers from the data are based on the results of each category in the questionnaire intended for pastors in northeast Florida, as well as the results of the Burnout Inventory by Collins. Frequency distribution and contingency tables were utilized for the statistical data.

Gender

Table 1: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age

The second question in the survey concerned the age of participants. Table 2, below, shows the frequency and percentage for each category respondents’ age. The findings indicate that, of the total respondents, 26 pastors, 2 pastors (7.7%) were under 35, and 1 (3.8%) was between the ages of 41-45. The sample also contained a total of 3 (11.5%) between the ages of 46-50. Noticeably, 7 (26.9%) respondents were 51-55, while 5 (19%) were between the ages of 56-60. Only 4 (15.3%) were between the ages of 61-65, and 4 (15.3%) were over 66. According to this result, a majority of the pastors in northeast Florida (26.9%) are in their fifties.
Table 2: Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 66</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education Level

Table 3 presents a description of the sample in terms of highest level of education attained. The findings indicate the highest level of education completed by the participants, with 4 pastors (15.3%) completing some Bible school, 10 pastors (38.5%) completing four years of general college, 6 (23.1%) completing theological seminary and 6 (23.1%) completing some other graduate school.

Table 3: Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible School</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the 10 pastors, 38.5% had earned a Bachelor’s Degree; 6 pastors (23.1%) had earned a Master’s Degree; and one pastor (3.8%) had earned a M. Div. Degree as their final
academic degree. Meanwhile, 1 pastor (3.8%) had a D. Min. Degree, and no pastors (0 %) reported having obtained a Ph.D. Degree.

**Years in the Ministry**

Table 4 shows length of time spent in ministry of pastors in the area of northeast Florida who have ministered from under 5 years to over 25 years. One participant (3.8 %) has served less than 5 years. On the other hand, 19.2% of respondents reported that they have ministered at an African American church for between 6-10 years. The survey results also indicated that a total of 24.6% have been in ministry between 11-20 years. Interestingly, eleven respondents (42.2%) have had over 25 years of ministry experience.

Table 4: Years in the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presence at Sunday Morning Worship Service**

Table 5 presents a description of the sample in terms of attendance at Sunday morning worship service. The findings indicate that 31% of the participants ‘churches have fewer than 30 members; 19.2% have between 31-50 members; and 19.2% have between 51-100 members. Two churches (7.7 %) have between 101-200 believers, and only 6 (23.1%) are large churches of over 300 believers. These findings show that a majority of churches in northeast Florida (77.9%) have small congregations of fewer than 100. Only 9 of the respondents (34%) are working at churches with an attendance over 100.
Table 5: Sunday Worship Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency($f$)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-300</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301-500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-1000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors Threatening Ministry

Table 6 depicts factors threatening ministry. More than one quarter of participants indicated that economic difficulty, conflict and increasing worry and impatience were main factors that threatened their ministry. Findings showed that 12% of pastors thought that extreme fatigue, lack of intellectual ability, excessive work and loss of ministry vision were secondary threats to their ministry. Only 7.7 % of the pastors considered stagnation and loss of passion as a threat to their ministry. Interestingly, 27% of pastors indicated that increased worry and impatience, along with conflict, were the top factors in threatening their ministry.

Table 6: Factors Threatening Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency($f$)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme fatigue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stagnation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of intellectual ability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of ministry vision</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive work</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic difficulty</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing worry &amp; impatience</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison with colleague</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of passion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weekly Hours Spent on Ministry

Table 7 shows frequencies for the hours spent per week on ministry. A total of 15.4% of respondents reported working less than 20 hours. Ten pastors (38%) worked between 21-40 hours a week; 4 pastors (15.4%) indicated working between 41-50 hours a week; 3 pastors (12%) reported working between 51-60 hours a week; and 4 (15.4%) of the respondents answered working between 61-70 hours a week. The frequency value for respondents working 70 or more hours a week was 3.8%. Conversely, none of the participants worked under 20 hours a week. According to these results, a majority of pastors living and pastoring in northeast Florida 46% are working over 40 hours a week. This excessive work causes pastors to overwork and exhaust their energies. As a result, they may feel stressed and overwhelmed in their pastoral ministry.

Table 7: Weekly Hours of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Sermons Delivered Each Week

Table 8 shows a description of the frequency of sermons delivered in a week. The pastors who deliver between 2-4 sermons in a week show the highest frequency value among the participants (57.7%). On the other hand, 9 (34.6%) of respondents reported that they deliver only one sermon a week. Results indicated that only 2 pastors (7.7%) deliver 5-7 sermons a week. Surprisingly, none of the participants answered that they deliver 8-14 sermons a week. These
results show that most churches in the North Florida Region provide their members with an early morning prayer meeting every day or every weekend.

**Table 8: Number of Sermons Per Week**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annual Income Level**

Table 9 provides a description of the sample in terms of the level of annual income. The findings indicate that a total of 57% of respondents have an annual income of under $20,000; 12% have an income of $20,001-$30,000; and 12% have an income of $30,001-$40,000. Only one pastor (3.8%) among the participants answered that he had an annual income of $40,001-$50,000, and none had an income of $50,001-$70,000. Four pastors (15.2%) had an income of $70,001-$100,000 or more. In view of the time in ministry and the number of members in attendance, generally the annual income appears to increase according to the number of hours worked and the number of members. Increasing the working period usually brings about not only an increase of members, but also of annual income. Finally, this result shows that most pastors in the northern Florida are serving their churches in a difficult economic situation. Nevertheless, many African American pastors are loyal and doing their best in their ministry without considering the economic difficulty as important.
Table 9: Annual Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,001-$30,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,001-$40,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,001-$70,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,001-$100,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 presents an income comparison of other pastors in the area. The findings indicated that 5 pastors (19.2%) thought that their income was a little higher than their colleagues; 5 pastors (19.2%) thought their income was a little lower than their colleagues; and a total of 16 pastors (61.6%) thought their income was much lower than their fellow pastors.

Table 10: Income Compared to Other Pastors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much higher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little higher</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little lower</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much lower</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 represents the employment status of the participants’ spouses. The findings indicated that 14 pastors’ spouses (53.4%) were employed full-time, and 5 spouses (19.2%) had part-time employment. A total of 4 spouses (15%) were not employed; instead, they volunteered their services and only received a love offering. Three pastors (12%) were not married.

Table 11: Spouse Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods for Overcoming Burnout

Taking time off

Table 12 presents a report in terms of pastors taking a day off from ministry. The findings indicate one-half of respondents (50%) take a day off regularly. 30% of pastors reported that they take a day off each week often, and only 20% reported almost never taking a day off.

Table 12: Day Off from Church Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 shows the frequency of time spent with family. The findings indicate that more than half of the pastors (53.8%) spend time with their families. However, more that 42.4% spend little or no time with their families, and only one pastor (3.8%) spends time with his family often.

Table 13: Family Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 14 indicate vacation frequency and number of vacation days. The findings for Table 14 indicate that less than one-half of respondents (42.3%) usually have a vacation every year. Noticeably, 50.0% of respondents reported that they never have a vacation, and only 7.7% of pastors take a vacation often.
Table 14: Vacation Days Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14 indicates that 12% of the participants take a week off from work each year. Only 2 pastors (7.4%) reported taking 8 days off, and one pastor (3.8%) reported taking 12 days. Unpredictably, 73% of pastors reported taking 14-21 days of vacation time. One pastor (3.8%) indicate that he or she takes “many” days off.

Table 15: Vacation Days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-21 days</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many days</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 indicates that 12% of the participants take a week off from work each year. Only 2 pastors (7.4%) reported taking 8 days off, and one pastor (3.8%) reported taking 12 days. Unpredictably, 73% of pastors reported taking 14-21 days of vacation time. One pastor (3.8%) indicate that he or she takes “many” days off.

Mutual Understanding of the Work of the Ministry

Table 16 indicates the participants’ perception of their congregations having an understanding of the problems of pastors and their family. The result showed that only 6 pastors (23.1%) felt that the church had a good understanding of the problems faced by pastors and their families, while 14 pastors (53.8%) indicated that the church had very little understanding of their problems. However, only 6 pastors (23.1%) indicated that the church had no understanding of the problem of pastors and their family. The results indicate that pastors thought their churches had little understanding of their problems overall.
Table 16: Church Understanding of the Problems of Pastors and their Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Self-Understanding**

Table 17 indicates the number of pastors who have thought of leaving the church. Over half the participants (61%) have had thoughts of leaving the church sometimes, but 6 pastors (23.1%) indicated that they would never leave the church. Additionally, 2 pastors (7.7%) had thought of leaving often, and another 2 (7.7%) wanted to leave their church now.

Table 17: Thoughts of Leaving the Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to leave now</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 represents the impulse to quit the ministry entirely. Less than half the pastors (46.2%) said that they would never quit the ministry, while almost an equal amount (42.3%) indicated that they sometimes felt they wanted to quit the ministry. Three participants (12%) indicated that they felt like quitting the ministry very often or even every day.

Table 18: Impulse to Quit the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency(f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pressure in the Ministry

Table 19 depicts the feeling of pressure in the ministry. One third of the pastors (32%) felt the pressure is much higher than expected; 6 pastors (23.1%) felt that the pressure was higher than expected; 7 pastors (26.9%) felt the pressure is the same as expected and 5 pastors (19.7%) felt that it was lower or much lower than their expectations.

Table 19: Pressure in the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much higher than expected</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher than expected</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as expected</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower than expected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much lower than expected</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding family needs

Table 20 depicts the pastors’ assessment of their spouse and children’s pressure in the ministry. The findings in Table 20 show that 6 pastors (24%) thought their spouse’s pressure was much higher than they expected, and 1 pastor (4%) reported just higher. 9 pastors (36%) thought that the pressure was the same as expected, and 6 pastors (24%) reported pressure lower or much lower than their expectations. Three pastors (12%) were not married.

Table 20: Spouse Pressure in the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much higher than expected</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher than expected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as expected</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower than expected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much lower than expected</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable (Not married)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21 represents children’s pressure in the ministry. Less than a quarter (23.4%) of pastors said that their children felt pressure in the ministry at much higher rates than expected.
Only 1 participant (3.8%) thought his children’s pressure in the ministry was more than expected, and over 30% thought it was the same as expected. 38.8% thought their children felt pressure in ministry lower or much lower than expected. One pastor (3.8%) had no children.

Table 21: Children's Pressure in the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much higher than expected</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher than expected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as expected</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower than expected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much lower than expected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable (No children)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stress-related illness

Table 22 represents stress-related illness. 5 pastors (19.2%) felt that they had suffered from stress-related illnesses. Amazingly, 11 participants (42.3%) felt that they had little stress-related illness and 10 participants (38.5%) felt they had no stress-related illness at all.

Table 22: Stress-Related Illness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Solving pressure in the ministry

Table 23 indicates how pastors solve their feelings of pressure in the ministry. Over 80% use Bible reading and prayer as means of escape and rejuvenation. 30-46% of pastors have dialogue with colleagues, travels, listen to music, exercise and meditate. Many pastors use eating, singing, shopping, visiting prayer mountain, sleeping and other means to relieve stress.
### Table 23: Solving Pressure in the Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (f)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible reading/Prayer</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue with colleagues</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting prayer mountain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing-a-song</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to music</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-charging</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating food</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary

This study on the burnout among African American pastors was conducted to find the areas of burnout which need professional counseling attention. The four clergy dimensions studied were the minister as a person, family leader, church leader and community leader. The results provided information on various aspects of the pastor’s life, which can be divided into three areas: Section A: Demographic Factors (Questions 1-4); Section B: Factors Threatening Effectiveness (Questions 5-15); and Section C: Factors of Stress and Burnout (Questions 16-22). These sections will be discussed for the purpose of implementing ministerial counseling services, as well as providing an initial foundation for research in the area of African American pastors’ counseling needs, awareness and knowledge.

Many of the general findings from this study are discussed in the review of literature on ministerial stress, but there are little to no comparative studies which provide these types of findings related to African American pastors. Chapter One mentioned that clergy stress is
multiphase because of its spiritual nature, and is a concept understood to be the result of environmental pressures, task overload and role conflict. The results of this study show different levels of stress within the various ministerial roles. However, none of the existing literature discusses these particular areas of stress and clergy feelings as they relate specifically to African American pastors. Therefore, there are no comparative studies or literature available to assist in the discussion of these findings.

Section A: Demographic Factors (Questions 1-4)

The ministerial profile provided by the survey revealed that typical survey respondents were African American male and female pastors, 51-59 years of age, married and living in a southern rural community. They have at least two children, possess an undergraduate degree and have twenty-five years or more of ministerial experience. It was rewarding to find the majority of ministers had completed a four-year degree or received graduate training, including seminary.

These demographics can help people to realize the kinds of basic stress that many clergy endure today. Moreover, many people often believe that the older minister, aged sixty-five and above, would be lacking in educational credentials, yet this study has found that African American ministers in the twentieth first century are becoming more educationally astute. This gives them an advantage when they address shrewd parishioners; when educated pastors face parishioners who possess advanced degrees, they are able to communicate effectively.

In summary, these four demographic areas provide a window for peering into the life of African American pastors today, and act as possible roots for much of their stress educationally, socially and spiritually.
Section B: Factors Threatening Effectiveness (Questions 5-15).

This section rated ministerial effectiveness across various roles. The factors of greatest threats were increased worry, impatience, conflict and economic difficulty. Most of the pastors worked at least 40 hours per week, and 57% of pastors preached 2-4 sermons per week. Many pastors (62%) thought that their incomes were much lower than their peers. One surprising fact was that half of the pastors surveyed did not take vacations. Several members of the focus group indicated that the reason for the lack of vacation was due to insufficient funds within the church budget and/or the lack of trusted pastors to fill in during their absence. In addition, many pastors believe their congregations have little understanding of the problems facing pastors and their families. The above factors can have a frightening outcome on the effectiveness of pastors and their ministry to the people of God.

Section C: Factors of Stress and Burnout (Question 16-22)

This section reported the ministers' feelings of stress as a person and a leader. The items discussed are the desire to leave the church, the impulse to quit and the pressures on the minister, spouse and family. A majority of the clergy indicated that their work as God’s servant and the interpretation of the Gospel were factors in their stress. This could indicate that it is difficult to interpret the Gospel, therefore making it difficult to separate the work of being God's servant and understanding the Gospel. The role expectations of their significant others and the task of fulfilling leadership roles were also very stressful for these clergy. Many of the factors discussed in the demographics section comprise a major element of the pastor’s stressors. Many times, the pastors’ limitations become profound determinants of their behavior.

In question 17, many pastors revealed they have thought about quitting the ministry, but the possibility of quitting was out of the question for most. "My peers' expectations of me," once
again demonstrated the stressful relationship pastors have with how they are viewed. The pastors also disclosed that their personal and marriage life and ministerial activities were the areas of most stress. There is seemingly a constant of "anxiety in making the mark," that is, being all that is expected of them. The literature suggests that often clergy feel the "fishbowl" effect in life, where even the smallest mistake is noticed and magnified many times. Another reason for the intensified concern in these areas may also be due to these individuals actually being the pastors’ support group or "lifeline". For the lifeline to become disenchanted could and can mean psychological and emotional death.

Question 18 deals with the pastor’s feelings of being under constant examination by church members. This frame of mind is often discussed in literature written by pastors, regarding not only their difficulty with the challenge of their "fight with the flesh" but also their struggle to know and understand their humanness. In their search to be "Godlike", many times clergy are fearful of being too human. Therefore, they may become subtle, self-protective or even doubtful about their behavior. Once again, the "fishbowl effect" is evident. In summary, these particular factors appear to show the feelings of the pastors who responded. These clergy are sensitive to and have need for intimate support and a "Godlike" character, which appears to cause more stress than other concerns in their lives.

\[290\] Ibid.
\[291\] Ibid., 107.
CHAPTER FIVE: PREVENTION AND RESTORATIVE MEASURES OF BURNOUT IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

If Christ lives in us, controlling our personalities, we will leave glorious marks on the lives we touch. Not because of our lovely characters, but because of His\textsuperscript{292}.

–Eugenia Price.

Dr. Ken Nichols in his book \textit{Masterpiece} said it best: “We may not notice how God is changing us from the inside out, but over time, those who are watching us will be able to see the difference.”\textsuperscript{293} As discussed in Chapter Four, common approaches to cope with burnout used by pastors in northeast Florida include meditation, exercise, Bible reading and prayer dialogue with others, study for renewing, listening to hymns, and so on. Most strategies that African American pastors suggested represent spiritual and conservative methods. This chapter will bring to light practical and biblical ideologies used for overcoming burnout, as well as practical approaches at the individual, church and denominational level.

\textbf{Practical Principles for Overcoming Burnout}

There are various methods for overcoming and preventing burnout. Individuals who study burnout have suggested common principles for overcoming burnout that are operative and effective for those in ministry. These principles have assisted many pastors. Listed below is a chart comparing three writers’ understanding of the practical principles of overcoming burnout.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ken Nichols, \textit{Masterpiece} (Friendswood, Texas: Baxter Press, 2014), 68.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archibald D. Hart</th>
<th>Dong Sup Jung</th>
<th>Frank Minirth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Actual rest</td>
<td>1. Pastor should know he’s not God, but frail</td>
<td>1. Use time cleverly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Unswerving life</td>
<td>2. Take sufficient diet rest and exercise</td>
<td>2. Keep priorities straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Take sufficient breaks and sleep</td>
<td>3. Confirm the gifts and taste of oneself</td>
<td>3. Keep relax time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Flexibility</td>
<td>4. Practice to change viewpoint</td>
<td>4. Assurance that one indwells in Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kindness</td>
<td>5. Have frequent private time only for oneself</td>
<td>5. Watch meticulous thoughtfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Manage anger well</td>
<td>6. Develop humor skills</td>
<td>6. Discover the real significance of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Self-control in all things</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Overhaul your ministry plan and schedule[^296]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5: Practical Principles of Overcoming Burnout**

These suggestions of overcoming burnout share some common threads of advice: rest, exercise, time management, spiritual and physical management and knowing yourself.

**Burnout Does Not Necessarily Mean Failure**

Most burnout occurs because of poor conditions or circumstances rather than bad people. Pastors don’t have to be ashamed of their burnout, and they should not consider burnout the evidence of their failure. Many pastors fall into personal despair and deep depression because they consider burnout to be evidence of their failure.[^297]

**The Pastor Should Recognize That He or She is a Fragile Person**

Many pastors submerge themselves in the ministry without taking care of their physical self, the body. First of all, pastors should always remember that they are weak. Pastors are apt to “play

[^296]: Minirth, *How to Burnout*, 143.
God” unconsciously; Eugene Peterson states that the pastors are heading for trouble when he or she forgets that he or she is a person. He calls this a “blasphemous anxiety to do God’s work for Him.”

Every Pastor Will Face Burnout at Some Time

Archibald Hart, a psychologist at Fuller Theological Seminary and an expert on melancholia, warns that pastors today are just like pastors before them. John Wesley, Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon often experienced hypochondria. He warns that contemporary pastors are especially apt to fall into burnout and hypochondria. Therefore, pastors should cope with burnout by remembering that burnout is neither a shameful matter nor a sin.

Seek God’s Help

Great leaders of the Bible, like Moses, Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, overcame the crisis of burnout with the help of God. Everyone needs God’s power. People who are suffering from burnout should seek His strength, recognizing that they cannot do it on their own.

Biblical Principles of Overcoming Burnout

Moses

Moses is breathtaking. From a distance, he is an outstanding and heroic figure; yet looking meticulously, he can be considered a somewhat unwilling leader trying urgently to learn how to lead God’s people under God's direction. He led battles during the war, offered guidelines and refereed arguments. However, many of the Israelites had to wait for their instructions, and Moses became very tired of needless business. Moses was not good at passing on power to others. After Moses learned the benefits of delegation, however, the Israelites didn’t have to wait in courts for long, and Moses’ ruling and wisdom was used for the more difficult cases. Delegation is the key to avoiding unnecessary anxiety. Jethro, who had observed the practice of

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298 Eugene H. Peterson, The Contemplative Pastor (Seoul: Good Seed Press, 2008), 27.
300 Ibid.
delegation, advised Moses to select officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Moses appointed selected officials to judge the people, and he judged only the challenging cases. After that, the Israelites didn’t have to wait long for judgmental resolutions and Moses did not have to judge all the cases. James Taylor quotes Gordon McDonald when writing about ministering to people today who are similar to the Israelites of Moses’ day. He writes about the Hebrews’ shallow spirituality and Moses’ ability to lead them. MacDonald encourages ministers to establish their own tent of meeting and go there to wait for God’s power, purpose and instruction. Below are the lessons learned from Moses.

**Avoid Working Too Much**

Dubler raises the question of what to do when pastors are working too much. He suggests that pastors receive counsel from close friends or peers, especially those whom the pastors know best. He further suggests that pastors ask their wives or husbands about their work ethic. After taking their advice, Dubler states that pastors should take their issue to God for confirmation and do whatever God says to do: “The son of God are led by the Spirit of God” (Rom. 8:14, KJV).

The lesson explained is that pastors should rely on God and learn the art of delegating.

**Delegate Authority for Serving**

Dubler states that pastors should delegate, but that if the task involves teaching, they should find qualified people. Delegating requires work, but it will be rewarding at the very end. He suggests that there are two factors to every responsibility. The first factor is essentials, which Dubler warns that pastors not delegate. The second factor, however, is additional workload;

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301 See Ex. 18:13-26 [NIV].
pastors should review their workload, and whatever is additional they should delegate. Dubler argues that desiring to do more will add to the pastor’s workload until they come to a breaking point. Yearning to do more will add stress and overload, but delegating tasks gets the job done faster and better. Even if those who delegated fumble the ball, the ball can be recovered. As the workload increases, says Dubler, the wise leader trains others to help.  

**Address the Problem**

Dubler warns that if the problem is not addressed, it will get worse. He cautions pastors by saying that men of God are not exempt from the penalties of breaking natural laws, and just because pastors are involved in “God Work does not exempt [them] from burnout.” He further states that human apparatuses have limits, and pastors should confront their limits.

**Unstring the Bow**

Dubler warns, “There is nothing spiritual about an early death.” He suggests that pastors unstring their bow, lay it aside and take the Sabbath day away from work.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah started his prophetic ministry in 626 B.C., in the 13th year of Josiah’s reign. He lived in Anathoth, three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah’s ministry came from God, and he intensively preached a message of God’s judgment against Judah. This judgment consisted of the Babylonian Empire destroying the southern kingdom of Judah as a penalty for their covenant unfaithfulness, continuous sin and deliberate waywardness against God.

Conveying this message from God was a challenging task. Jeremiah’s first message, recorded in

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306 Ibid.
307 Ibid.
309 Ibid.
310 Ibid.
Jeremiah 2:1-3:5, blends God’s elegance and kindheartedness with fervent forewarnings of terrible days to come if hearts did not turn back toward the Lord. Consequently, the prophet experienced extreme anguish and burnout.\footnote{311}{F. B. Huey Jr., “Jeremiah Lamentations,” in \textit{The New American Commentary}, vol. 16. (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press), 199.}

Nevertheless, Jeremiah never hesitated in his position and message that Judah and Jerusalem would be destroyed by a nation from the north, the people carried away into captivity. Jeremiah pronounced doom upon the people for their evil practices in Jeremiah 7:20: “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place — on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground’.”\footnote{312}{Ibid.}

Jeremiah provides a case in point of the anxiety placed on preaching to an obstinate, hard hearted and disobedient congregation, as well as the strain of standing alone. F. B. Huey Jr. explains that Jeremiah responded to God with self-pity, received strength from God and then returned to his prophetic ministry until the fall of Jerusalem and beyond.\footnote{313}{Ibid.}

James Taylor, a fellow student, writes that J. Vernon McGee’s commentary gives understanding to Jeremiah’s burnout. He deliberated on Jeremiah lending money to his friends, and the anguish he encountered in losing relationships. He lost all of his friends, but found comfort in God’s Words.\footnote{314}{James W. Taylor, “Key Principles and Concepts in Overcoming and Managing Stress, Distress and Anguish,” (\textit{Doctoral Dissertations and Projects}, Liberty University, 2013), 128.} We still have the adage today: “Seldom lend and never borrow and that will save a lot of sorrow”.\footnote{315}{Ashwani Roy, “Lend Money and Lose Friendship.” Retrieved from http://www.poetry.com/poets/202695-AshwaniRoy/519525 (accessed December 3, 2014).} Jeremiah lesson is that proper relationships are vital to ministry.

\textbf{Avoid Isolation}

Jeremiah’s constant loneliness and isolation finally got the best of him, and he became discouraged. He sank into the same quagmire where many believers get stuck when they think...
their efforts are not making a difference and that time is ticking away. Jeremiah was emotionally spent, even to the point of doubting God (Jer. 5:18), but God was not finished with him. Jeremiah 15:19 records a lesson for each believer to remember in those times when they feel alone, useless and discouraged and that their faith is wavering: “Therefore this is what the LORD says: ‘If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me; if you utter worthy, not worthless, words, you will be my spokesman. Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them’” (KJV). God was saying to Jeremiah, “Come back to Me, and I will restore to you the joy of your salvation.” These are similar to the words penned by David when he repented of his sin with Bathsheba (Ps. 51:12).³¹⁶

Rely on God

Jeremiah was given the assignment of conveying an unpopular and condemning message to Israel; one that produced in him great mental anguish, as well as making him despised in the eyes of his people. God says that His truth sounds like “silliness” to those who are lost, but to believers it is the very words of life (1 Cor. 1:18[ESV]). He also says that the time will come when people will not tolerate the truth (2 Tim 4:3-4). Those in Israel in Jeremiah’s day did not want to hear what he had to say, and his constant notice of judgment infuriated them. This is true of the world today, as believers who are following God’s instructions are warning the lost and dying world of looming judgment (Rev 3:10). Even though most do not listen, pastors must continue to rely on God and announce the truth in order to rescue everyone from the terrible judgment that will inevitably come.³¹⁷ Jeremiah had a very close relationship with God. Over time, he learned to trust God with the optimistic outcome of many painful trials.

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³¹⁷Ibid.
This is what Jeremiah once said to God: “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You” (Jer. 32:17, KJV). Pastors should know that no matter what happens, God is in charge. He is sovereign and our Creator. Jeremiah chronicled the following words, reflecting that God saw him through his adversities in a time of dreadful national crisis: “Blessed is the man [or woman] who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought” (Jer. 17:7-8, KJV).

**Know Your Limits**

Pastors need to learn to focus on their limited human outlook on life, giving in to God's marvelous viewpoint and His way of viewing things:

Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD (Jer. 9:23-24, KJV).

Pastors need to re-visit the reality of humanness, surrender their inabilities, and rely totally on God.

Elijah

Biblical principles gleamed from Elijah show God’s compassionate dealings and give pastors the principles they can apply when handling burnout today and in the future.

**Respite and Sustenance**

Charles Swindoll writes that God provided Elijah the physical rest and nourishment that he needed. God did not preach a sermon, nor rebuke, shame or blame Elijah. Instead:
God said, “Take it easy, my son. Relax!” Then he lie down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.” He looked around and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. (1 King 19:5-6, NIV)

When pastors understand God’s plan for their lives, they will rest assured that He will provide their needs according to His riches in glory.

**Intimacy with God**

God allowed Elijah to see that He still remained in control of circumstances and was active in the prophet’s life. The extended communication between the two of them (1 King 19:9-17, NIV) demonstrates God’s continued concern for the prophet.

**Assigning of New Tasks**

Only after Elijah had exposed his feelings did God give him new but lighter tasks. God assigned Elijah a series of tasks that he was capable of handling, such as anointment. Finally, Jeremiah introduced a method of overcoming burnout. “I say to myself, The LORD is my portion; therefore, I will wait for him. The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD” (Lam 3:24-26, NIV).

People are not adapted to withstand or endure for a long time. However, one of the most important principles in the Bible is “endurance.” God will strengthen the heart of those who wait on Him. Although the symptoms of burnout may vary in intensity and combination, and although they can be recurring or progressive, burnout can be overcome if one looks to God, and waits for only God to provide hope.

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319 Ibid.

320 Ibid.
Acquainted Friends

God provided Elijah with all things necessary for the recovery of burnout. He even sent Elisha to be a fellow worker, disciple and successor to him (1 King 19:21). Pastors should not be idle in resting properly and taking care of their health. It is very important to remember that God’s first remedy was to provide rest and nourishment when Elijah burned out. In summary, God healed Elijah’s burnout by providing his basic needs. Elijah needed the rest and nourishment, which God provided. He needed fellowship with God, proper perspective of himself and a sense of self-worth, so God assigned him a task he could handle. Finally, the prophet needed close relationships with others, so God provided his disciple and servant, Elisha. 321

Principles from Jesus

Jesus sent His disciples out for a proselytizing trip by twos, giving them the authority to evangelize, then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to Him, Jesus sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.322 His instructions to them were as follows: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no bag, and no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra tunic. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them" (Mk 6:7-11, NIV).

According to James R. Edwards, sending the disciples in pairs obeyed Jewish custom, and was continued in the early church. Several factors point to how their stress may have increased to burnout levels: 1) the triumph of spiritual combat (“and gave them authority over evil spirits”); 2) the partaking of daily bread and only trusting God (“Take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no bag, and no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an


It is not difficult to sense just how stressful that time must have been for the twelve disciples. After that, when the disciples returned from the missionary trip, Jesus proposed three ways to recover from the stressors that could lead to burnout (Mk 6:31).

**Change of Dwelling**

Jesus did not simply say, “Take a break”! Instead, He told His disciples, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” Christ knew that His disciples could not experience relief from stress as long as they were in contact with so many people coming and going that they had no chance to eat. Therefore, the change of place and separation from work helped prevent burnout.

**Change of Action**

Jesus, who sent his disciples on their assignment, now tells them to “rest up”. The particular word “rest up” used by Christ means “take a rest sufficiently.” The change in activity from “work” to “rest up” assists in the prevention of stress and burnout.

**Change of Time for Adequate Rest**

In compliance with Jesus’ word, the disciples went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. However, when they reached that solitary place, there were already crowds waiting for them (see Mk 6:32-33). Nevertheless, the boat journey itself was at least a short change of place, and it helped the disciples to recover from the stress and tension. The lesson that is learned from the twelve disciples is that it is necessary to have a change of time and place and activity to take rest when stress reaches its limit.

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323 Ibid.
According to Merriam-Webster, “solitary” is defined as “alone; without companions; unattended”. It was “a quiet place”; “a solitary place”, which means a deserted or lonely place away from cities and communities. The gathering of the disciples to Jesus means that in the midst of business and busyness they were accountable to Him alone. The greater demands on them, the greater their need to be alone with Jesus. Edwards, in *The Gospel According to Mark*, suggests that pastors not only perform work confidently, but also develop themselves and find their worth through work. Self-development can assist pastors in averting stress and burnout, which they experience in their lives during their ministries.

With continual neglect of spiritual discipline, pastors may eventually be forced to leave the ministry or grow so wounded that they cannot go on. Three things are important. First, a spiritual life of communion with God is essential for pastors to prevent burnout, and to maintain their spiritual vitality. Second is continuing education. It is an error for pastors to assume their education has ended with seminary graduation. Education is nearly as important as spiritual discipline in a pastor’s individual life. Continuous studying is required for effective ministry in this rapidly changing society. Effective ministry cannot be achieved without acquiring new knowledge and information. Therefore, the pastor should not be lazy in acquiring new theological knowledge and information and providing the sources to believers. Pastors who take advantage of growth opportunities provided by continuing education are less likely to burn out.

Thirdly, hobbies, leisure and social activities are an opportunity for pastors to slow down and relax. The pastor’s individual life is not limited to relationships with God, the church and believers. Because of the peculiarity of ministry, many pastors think that they have a vocation

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327 Ibid.
that has no leisure time. However, pastors should recognize that they need hobbies, leisure and social activity just like others. These are more than just free time and relaxation. Leisure permeates all of an individual’s life and is related to faith. If pastors are not concerned with spare time, it is difficult for them to endure their ministry.\textsuperscript{328}

The researcher conducted a focus group meeting which consisted of 8 people: two wives, three male pastors, 2 female pastors, and one female pastor who has serves as co-pastor with her husband. The following preventative approaches were addressed.

\textbf{Preventive Measures at the Individual Level}

\textit{Time Management and Priorities}

The focus group suggested that pastors should balance their time between self and family. Hands and Fehr assert that “Relationship to oneself has also to do with time. This aspect of life has gotten out of portion with many clergy.”\textsuperscript{329} They further exert that “Time is life and life is more than ministerial tasks.”\textsuperscript{330} Many clergy working too much and too long; simply put, it is a result of their inability to ask for help or delegate. These pastors avoid their inner emptiness and deficiency in the spirit by overworking their weekly hours, often in unproductive and unprofessional busywork.

On the practical level, Hands and Fehr make a good observation. Pastors, who have one full day off per week, a month’s paid vacation and seven paid holidays per year, have less time off than parishioners. Parishioners working full time usually get two days off each week, two weeks paid vacation and seven paid holidays; they have 121 days off compared to the pastor, who has only 79 days off in a year. That is a difference of 42 days!\textsuperscript{331}

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{328}] Keun Won Park, \textit{Today’s Pastor} (Seoul: Korea Christian Society, 2003), 107.
\item[\textsuperscript{329}] Ibid.
\item[\textsuperscript{330}] Donald R. Hands and Wayne L. Fehr, \textit{Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy: A New Psychology of Intimacy with God, Self and Others} (New York: Alban Institute, 1993), 77.
\item[\textsuperscript{331}] Ibid.
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At the spiritual level as it relates to time, it is vital to recognize time as a gift. Time is to be enjoyed gratefully and used responsibly. Hands and Fehr say it best: “It is an ever-renewed, incalculable opportunity to live in the present moment... In reality, we do not have ‘all the time in the world’ to squander as we see as we seek to achieve our true destiny, ‘what God intends’ for our lives.”

Self-Appreciation

The focus group suggested that many pastors fail because of a lack of consistent self-care and self-appreciation. Hands and Fehr suggest that, “self-appreciation means knowing one’s own worth, knowing one’s strengths and talents as well as one’s limitations and weaknesses.” Hands and Fehr suggest that, “Clergy, like others in the helping professions, often do their best to be good for others as a way of earning self-esteem.” The focus group suggested that clergy, in a practical sense, need to become a part of a peer group, thus developing their relationships with others and eventually with God. From a biblical perspective, pastors should have an intimate relationship with self and God.

Preventive Measures at the Family Level

Emotional, Spiritual and Physical Health of the Family

The focus group suggested that pastors need to focus on the spiritual, interpersonal and physical health of their spouses, children and other extended family members. They added that spouses are the real and honest eyes and ears of the pastors. Burns, Chapman and Guthrie call it the “strategic role.” “We don’t mean the functions a spouse may perform in the congregation. Rather, we mean the role spouses have in sustaining their pastor-partners in the work of ministry.” If pastors and spouses maintain a healthy relationship, the result will be a healthy

332 Ibid., 78.
334 Ibid., 67.
church. The consent of the group is that pastors need to invest more time in their families. These suggestions were similar to Burns, Chapman and Guthrie in their book, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors told us about Surviving and Thriving*. They suggested that “since Jesus taught that the world will know we are his disciples by love we demonstrate toward one another, then the first place should be at home (John 13:35).” They identified five stressors that usually occur in pastoral families. These five stressors are:

- the “normal” pressures of marriages and family life
- the nature of ministry: always on the job
- the conflicting loyalties of church and home
- abandonment from always being on the job
- the unmet needs of ministry spouses for confidants

Regular Review of Marriage and Family Life

The first category that Burns, Chapman and Guthrie address is the normal pressures of married couples. They suggest that, “Pastoral families confront common dilemmas all families face, including the demand of house-hold chores, typical family conflict, and community involvement, childcare are activities for children as they grow. Add to these challenges the life crises and financial struggles faced by most pastoral couples.” The preventive measure suggested by Burn, Chapman and Guthrie is for pastoral couples to regularly review their marriage and family life and to seek counseling as appropriate.

Self-Care and Regular Time Off

The second category is ministry as a lifestyle more than a job. This study’s survey revealed that pastors felt that they were always on the job, the concept of a 24 hours a day and 7 days a week workload instead of a normal 9-5 job schedule. Burns, Chapman and Guthrie

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336 Ibid.
337 Ibid.
338 Ibid., 171.
339 Ibid.
suggest that pastors need better self-care and regular time off. Pastors also need to guard their spouses from becoming an emotional dumping ground, and provide healthy boundaries and conversation about emotional ministry situations. Finally, pastors need to assure their children that they are not the blame for ministry stress and that God is providing them the strength for challenges of the ministry.\footnote{340}{Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman and Donald C. Guthrie, \textit{Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving} (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2013) 177.}

**Spiritual Growth for Family**

The third category is conflicting loyalties of church and home. “Many pastors generally do not have the mindset that differentiates between work and personal time”, say Burns, Chapman and Guthrie.\footnote{341}{Ibid.} They suggest that spiritual growth and care is likened to daily exercise and proper diet: constant involvement pays off in the long haul. Ministry couples need to confront tension between church and family by negotiating the specific challenges that occur in the ministry setting.\footnote{342}{Ibid., 186.} Pastors must take healthy steps to understand the strategic role of their spouses; form ministry partnerships with them; work with them to manage the congregation’s expectations, even by intentionally disappointing others; manage the unique ministry dynamics of dual relationships and actively support the spiritual growth of their spouses.\footnote{343}{Ibid., 186.}

**Healthy Relational Connections**

The fourth category is abandonment by a spouse who is always on the job. Many pastors’ spouses feel abandoned, which can threaten the health of the pastors’ families, and thus the ability of pastors to remain productive. It is vital that pastors and their family consider healthy relational connections by taking time off, keeping a regular date night, taking solitude from the phone and keeping a short account of the wrongs. This record-keeping must start at home and
then the church. The results can be a more relationally mature congregation as the pastor and spouse model and lead what they learn as mature people of God.

**Spousal Confidant Relationships**

The fifth and final category is the need of ministry spouses for confidants. Burns, Chapman and Guthrie suggested that “Pastors are not the only ones who have a special need for trustworthy relationships. Ministry spouses need confidants as well.” It is imperative that couples develop and pursue partnership and a confidential relationship. Burns, Chapman and Guthrie said it best: “The well-being of the church and of the pastors themselves is contingent on growing, a nurturing relationship with their spouses and children.” Few things support and strengthen a pastor more than their relationship with their spouse.

**Preventive Measures at the Church Level**

**Intercessory Prayer for Pastors**

The focus group suggested prayer on behalf of the pastor. Elmer Towns writes that intercessory prayer is a prayer which is undertaken on behalf of others, and includes any and all types of prayer for other people. We need intercessory prayer more than ever before, as people have more desperate needs than ever before.

Although all people need intercessory prayer, Peter Wagner argues that pastors should have more intercessory prayer than members of the church because pastors have more influence with others, and they are on the frontlines of a spiritual war. Certainly, the apostle Paul asked others to intercede for him. For example, in Romans 15:30, Paul exhorted the prayer of all Roman believers on his behalf: “I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in

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345 Ibid., 197.
my struggle by praying to God for me” (Rom. 15:30, NIV). He also urged the Colossians to intercede for him: “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains” (Col. 4:2-3, NIV).

Furthermore, Peter, when asking others to intercede for him, did not limit his request to those with a special calling to intercession: “So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him” (Acts 12:5). Notice it was “the whole church” that prayed for him, not just those with a gift of intercession. Clearly, intercessory prayer for pastors is a part of the command for all churches and believers.

In the book, Prayer Shield, Wagner proposes the reasons that every pastor needs intercessory prayer as follows.

**Pastors are Objects of Spiritual Battles** 348

As the responsibility of Christians becomes more mature, they are more likely to be the object of spiritual warfare. If Satan has the authority to choose, he will want to destroy the leader first, and will mobilize every means and method for the purpose. The adversary knows where the pastors are exposed, and he strikes at their weakest points. Richard Foster, author of Money, Sex and Power suggest that money, sex and authority are the strongest trap of temptation for pastors.

**Pastors Have More Responsibility and Exert More Influence Over Others** 349

The duty of pastors includes approval entrusted from God and recognition from believers at the same time. Therefore, sin that a pastor commits before God and others causes more disappointment and wounds to others than the iniquities of other believers. The sins of the pastor impact directly the church as well as the church members. 350

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348 Wagner, Prayer Shield, 63-65.
349 Ibid.
350 Ibid., 65.
Pastors Get More Attention than Church Members

Because pastors are leaders of people, they are apt to be the object of rumor and criticism. Pastors are observed in detail, and little is left in secret. Intercessory prayer not only heals spiritual, emotional and physical illness, but also becomes the prevention method for those illnesses.\textsuperscript{351}

The adversary will continue attacking church leaders, especially pastors, as long as they are exposed, but the greater power is on our side. Charles and Virginia Sell state, “Interceding is a way to participate in someone else’s ministry, something the Bible calls a “partnership in the gospel (Phil 1:3[NIV]).”\textsuperscript{352} Through intercessory prayer, pastors can be reinforced with God’s strength and protection.

Pastoral Support Groups

The focus group suggested peer support or support groups. Prevention and healing of pastoral burnout is a combined effort of pastors and the members of their church. It is difficult for pastors to care for themselves if their churches are uncooperative and unconcerned. Even though the author did not ask participants in this research about pastoral support groups specifically, a similar issue is found in some pastors’ responses to item 15 of the survey: “Does your church understand the problems of pastor and his family?” Of the participants of the survey, 54% answered “A little” and 23% answered “None”. Only 23% of the pastors indicated “Very much.” In other words, most African American churches are abandoning their pastors and their family’s problems. A thriving ministry does not occur by osmosis, but it does occur through individual parishioner support and support groups. Most researchers in the burnout field concede the notion that pastoral support groups are an effective means to ameliorate burnout.

\textsuperscript{351}Wagner, \textit{Prayer Shield}, 63-65.
Chandler offered eight benefits of a pastor’s support group that include the development of (a) in-depth fellowship, (b) a sense of belonging, (c) a fresh perspective, (d) leadership confidence (e) a venue for emotional expression, (f) healthy affirmation and confrontation, (g) a reduction of pastoral competition, and (h) encouraging longer pastoral tenures.  

Chandler also traced the development of a support group to the Israelites, when Moses and his supporters banded together amidst a fierce battle against the Amalekites. When Moses’ hands grew tired, Aaron and Hur took a stone and put it under him, and Moses sat on it. They held his hands up so that his hands remained steady till sunset. By doing so, the Israelites overcame the Amalekites army with the sword (Exodus 17:8-16). A support group is an effective means of helping pastors suffering from burnout.  

A pastor’s support system must be developed and available on multiple levels. Loneliness and isolation are pervasive and common problems for pastors. The lack of an active and effective support group contributes to lack of affirmation, encouragement, emotional wholeness and overall physical well-being. On the other hand, effective support groups provide a remedy to burnout, and start the recovery process when the problem begins to develop. In a study by Halstead, he attempts to explain the pastor support system by dividing it into three categories: emotional support, esteem support and tangible support.  

First, emotional support is an expression of accepting of what a pastor’s role demands. This expression would take account of the struggles he or she experiences. This support is offered by members who listen, encourage and care for pastors by doing various helpful acts for them. These groups can also foster a sense of appreciation. Expression of appreciation is more useful than any other form of emotional support.  

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Ibid.
The second type of support to pastors is esteem support. Esteem support may take place in many locations. Recognition of the professional status of a minister is helpful for the congregation, instead of launching complaints against their pastor. This effort also can lead to the membership expressing a willingness to follow the lead of the pastor, and a sincere desire to offer a better salary even if the church is unable to do so. This esteem support also could be evident in the role that many staff members accept: serving as a buffer for the pastor.

The third type of support is tangible support. Tangible support involves churches having special events such as a banquet or minister appreciation month. All church members are told the selected month that they are going to be doing something to show their appreciation. Ways to show this support could be mailing or emailing a post card, aflower put on the pastor’s desk, a plate of cookies or an invitation to dinner. Childcare can be offered to the family of the pastor if appropriate. The most common form of tangible support is financial support. This includes offering the pastor a sufficient salary and benefits package. This strategy, along with employment of the pastors’ wives, is sometimes accepted, but is often a source of conflict between the congregation and pastor. Tangible support can also be demonstrated through gifts, trips and vacations.

The Sabbatical

The sabbatical is a resource available in the practice of preventive care and renewal for pastors. Especially, African American pastors need to take responsibility for the sabbatical themselves, with unapologetic firmness and clarity, after years of ministry pressure. As shown in Chapter Four, the surprising results showed that only 42% of respondents take vacations, while 50% of the 26 pastors “infrequently” or “never” take an annual vacation. This means that many African

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355 Jackie Lynne Halstead, “Ministers’ Perception of Support Received from Their Congregation” (PhD diss., Iowa State University, 2000), 72-76.
356 Ibid.
357 Ibid.
358 Ibid.
American pastors or their churches do not perceive the tremendous benefits of a sabbatical. The benefits of a sabbatical, for both pastors and churches, need to be clearly understood. This is not meant to be an extended vacation. A sabbatical should not generally be connected with vacation time, nor is it intended to be a time of study or for the sole purpose of intellectual pursuits. Rather, its objective is to take time for renewal, spiritual regeneration and enrichment.

M. J. Dawn writes that a sabbatical should involve five specific areas. First, a time for personal and family renewal; this is for the purpose of reconnecting and reestablishing true one-to-one relationships that go much deeper than just living in the same house. Second, the sabbatical should include physical, intellectual and emotional restoration that will help to improve the pastor’s functionality, spirituality and personal introspection. Third, the sabbatical should include time for the pastor to develop in new areas professionally. Professional growth is essential in the process of renewal because it allows the pastor to be stretched by others, and it takes the pastor out of the repetitive cycle of the week. Fourth, the sabbatical should be a time for spiritual growth, in order for pastor to experience strengthened personal relations with God. Spending time away and alone with God is like recharging car batteries when they have run down.

Finally, the sabbatical should be taken to interact with peers, colleagues and those on the same professional journey. Often pastors find themselves far more isolated than the congregation understands; pastors need time to visit with friends or other pastors and to attend other churches, to gather unique perspectives that will help them break out of the pastoral year after year cycle.

Churches need to realize their pastors will benefit in many ways from a sabbatical. Moreover, this sabbatical not only benefits the pastors, but also greatly benefits churches and congregations.

360 Ibid.
361 Ibid.
Several churches whose pastors have taken sabbaticals have been amazed at the changes in preaching, Bible studying and other church programming.

Financial Reward

It is a sad reality that pastors often evaluate themselves by their salary. Unfortunately, according to the results of this survey, many pastors in northeast Florida were not satisfied with serving their churches on a low income. Item 10 of the questionnaire asked, “How do you think your income compares with the others?” A total of 60% of participants indicated “A little lower” or “Much lower.” As indicated previously, a pastor’s income level affects their burnout level. The result of correlation between pastors’ income and their burnout score also revealed that pastors who have higher income levels show much less stress or burnout than those who have a lower income.

Carroll found that dissatisfaction with salary and benefits contributes to pastors doubting their call, as well as the consideration of leaving the church for another church-related position or even for a secular position. Therefore, churches should satisfy the basic needs of the pastors in order to prevent burnout. Providing sufficient financial rewards can make pastors feel their value.

Preventative Measures at the Denominational Level

In order for practical strategies for overcoming burnout to be effective, pastors and churches should collaborate on works with their denomination. In some cases, problems and corresponding objectives can be managed at the local level between pastors and church leaders. Truly addressing issues related to systems and theological or professional domains, however, may require an approach at the denominational level.

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362 See Appendix C.
364 Ibid.
Follow-Up System for Pastors

There is a need for continual learning and leadership development through a follow-up system for pastors beyond seminary training. Preferably, the internship system would be strengthened for African American pastors. Methods should be introduced and utilized like with intern education at medical institutes, training for officers at the military academy and training for candidates of judge at the Judicial Research and Training Institute.\(^{365}\) In the same way, new pastors need to receive intensive internship training under a senior pastor of long experience.

Unfortunately, there are many examples of many pastors working in the ministry situation without being prepared properly, because the various denominations of African American churches do not support the follow-up system for pastors and existing local churches. Rather, the denominations offer financial support to pastors who are planting new churches, enforcing the policy to prioritize the expansion of African American churches throughout the United States.\(^{366}\) It is inevitable that African American pastors who don’t have enough of an internship process experience much stress by having to adapt in their ministry through trial and error.

Pension System for Pastors

Most pastors devote themselves to the church and gospel for their whole life, sacrificing their body, mind and material resources. A pension system should be thoroughly in place in order for pastors not to suffer from material difficulty after their retirement. While there are few differences according to the local churches, it is true that the present situation is very poor. At present, some pastors are provided pension plans. These pastors are able to devote themselves to the ministry and retire without any anxiety. In addition, a counseling system and retreat center, operated at the denominational level, should be provided to the pastors for reflection, rejuvenation and revitalization. These professional institutions would counsel and help pastors suffering from excessive stress and


\(^{366}\) Ibid.
burnout. Unfortunately, there is no counseling system for pastors at the local level, and so far, pastors cannot find retreat centers where they can to rest from their ministry. A counseling system and retreat centers could provide pastors the opportunity to recover physically, mentally and spiritually.

Training and Control

The Bible also says that physical training is of some value (1 Timothy 4:8), and that being in good physical shape will aid a pastor’s effectiveness for Christ. Along with adequate exercise, adequate sleep also is important for physical care. Many studies show that most adults need about eight hours of sleep per night to function at their best and to stay healthy, and children need even more. When we don’t have enough sleep, we tend to be irritable, have decreased control and ability, are more depressed and have a harder time concentrating.

Physical Control

Medical professions have maintained that being in good physical condition makes a noticeable difference in longevity and good health.

Time Control

Eugene Peterson suggested that the pastor must learn how to be an “unbusy pastor.” He proposed that investing time in scheduling, making lists of things to be accomplished, and prioritizing those lists can help pastors not to waste time that they should use to do their tasks. Therefore, pastors should learn how to manage their top priorities, and to concentrate on their work efficiently. It is not only an act of saving energy and time, but also an act of preventing and overcoming burnout.

Also, regarding time control, Swenson talks of the debilitating impact of work overload as a result of technological advances that give more personal accessibility through

367 Frank Minirth, Burnout, 128.
communication: web access, cell phones, e-mails and answering machines. These communication advances must be managed, or continual stress and burnout will result.\textsuperscript{369}

Oswald suggests that by taking personal time, pastors can find their own rhythms of rest in order to function best over the duration of their calling. This acts as the first step in responsible self-control. In particular, Oswald recommends that pastors take daily rests, weekly rests, quarterly rests, yearly rests and sabbatical years for personal replenishment. These rest periods will break the cycle of greater pastoral responsibility and increased stress and burnout, and allow for delegation of tasks and the development of others.\textsuperscript{370}

**Emotional Control**

The pastor experiences both happiness and rage as a person; thus, pastors need the knowledge to take care of their emotion as well. The following questions may help pastors to control the emotional aspect.

a) How often do you think positive thoughts?

The way in which we think has a great deal to do with how we feel. Thoughts that are negative, derogatory or critical foster stress and depression and should be evaluated. Pastors should be determined to be more positive, kind and forgiving in the things they think.

b) How often do you laugh?

Laughter is a sign of good mental health. Medical studies indicate that laughter releases chemicals called endorphins in the brain, promoting feelings of well-being. Conversely, the absence of frequent laughter may be an external symptom, indicating the presence of deeper emotional conflict. The Bible says that a cheerful heart is good medicine (Proverbs 17:22). An


individual who has experienced burnout should not be rushed back into situations involving major stress. Instead, taking lighter tasks that can be handled more easily helps rebuild the self-esteem of the burnout victim.  

**Preventive Measures at the Community Level**

The focus group suggested the following to assist the pastors in prevention of burnout.

**Delegation**

Pastors should delegate some community responsibility to the members of their church board and/or staff. Some participants suggested the creation of a community outreach committee to assist the pastor in involvement and outreach to the community, similar to Moses; when his stress level was unbearable, Moses delegated Jethro, his father-in-law, to carry on the mission. The committee would serve as the pastor’s extended hands in community involvement, which would then free the pastor to do other activities within the local parish. This committee creation would not negate the personal involvement of the pastor, but rather free him of being overcommitted and give him time for rest and relaxation. Additionally, Hands and Fehr suggest that participating in community activities provides face-to-face relationships with peers. Pastors stand with the community as facilitators and focal points of their congregations.

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372 Focus Group held August 23, 2016, Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, Palatka, FL.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN PASTORS COPING WITH BURNOUT

This involvement in the research of burnout has profoundly impacted the writer’s life and ministry. On the one hand, the effect of burnout has been negative for many pastors the author has known during his life, resulting in depression, exhaustion and eventual resignation from their ministry assignments. On the other hand, the impact of burnout has also been optimistic, resulting in some pastors creating a balanced life and realistic ministry objectives. The understanding of burnout has instilled three durable convictions that provide helpful direction, not only for the author’s life, but also for other African American pastors who are coping with burnout issues and may be unaware of it.

The first conviction is that pastoral burnout is a serious issue among pastors today. Pastors who were bursting with eagerness and excitement about their ministry become exhausted and lose their passion. They are not able to cope with the heaviness, prospects and disappointments that are a part of their ministry. The author believes that the initial and foremost step in dealing with pastoral burnout is to be conscious of the grave nature of the problem.

Another conviction is that a clear and strong biblical view should be reinforced to help pastors understand and deal with burnout. It is helpful to appreciate that God’s servants, such as Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul and even Jesus Christ, experienced burnout. God, however, continued to use their lives as a vehicle for achieving His purposes. The Bible also provides the underpinning basis for a theology of ministry and strategies for essential components in preventing and healing pastoral burnout. The author is convinced that most pastors would be prepared to handle the issues of burnout if they had a clear, biblical perspective on the subject.
The last conviction is that it is possible to overcome pastoral burnout. Pastors serious about overcoming burnout must make self-care a priority and prudently manage their ministry. This requires answerability, discipline and commitment, but will result in a well-adjusted personal life and ministry. The author is confident that pastors can avoid serious burnout if they simply take care of themselves and make a serious effort to manage their ministry.

Beverly Potter says, “Those who accept the challenge find an opportunity to actualize a richer, fuller life.”\(^{374}\) The author is determined to assist pastors in accepting the challenge of completing the recovery process from burnout. One of the first major decisions for a burned-out pastor is whether to leave the church. For some members, a pastor’s decision to leave may look like an escape; however, it is a vital decision that could restart and rejuvenate his life again.

**Recommendations**

Based on the results of this study about burnout among African American pastors, and personal experience of burnout in pastoral ministry through 30 years of service in the Armed Forces, the author suggests the following recommendations for African American pastors coping with burnout. These recommendations, prepared by the author, follow the acronym “A.D.A.Y.O.F.F.”

**Allow Accurate Goal Setting**

Many African American pastors get into trouble very quickly because of unrealistic goals. They strive for highly abstract goals that are almost impossible to reach; these goals are often vague, making it hard to know if a goal has been reached. Many pastors work diligently toward this type of ideal, only to be frustrated and defeated. Sometimes they see some progress, but the ideal is never reached and failure is inevitable. Therefore, establishing realistic goals is one way to manage is pastoral burnout.

There are several important steps in this goal setting process. First, it is necessary to set goals that are in harmony with the pastor’s strengths. Archibald Hart urges, “Identify your strengths and the talents God has given you, and then concentrate on these.” Pastors actually hinder their ministry when they set energetic goals that are beyond their own strength and talent.

Secondly, pastors must make sure their goals are specific and measurable. There should be specific signposts that enable them to measure their progress toward the goal. It will become very frustrating if a pastor is never sure how things are going; therefore, it is important to identify when something has been accomplished and that progress has been made. This is a basic fact of goal setting, but it is sometimes ignored due to enthusiasm for God’s work. Pastors must make sure that motivation toward their goals is clearly marked by specific sub-goals.

Thirdly, pastors have to take time to evaluate their goals. The general direction of their life and ministry should be evaluated several times each year. Other, more specific ministry goals need to be evaluated on a regular basis. This process of evaluation allows for the adjustment of goals that may be unrealistic. Failing to reassess and readjust unrealistic goals will almost surely lead pastors to burnout. Another important element in this process is to identify small successes. Many burned out pastors would likely be encouraged if they evaluated their goals and celebrated small gains. Paying attention to partial successes will make a big difference in their ministry.

The final step in the goal-setting process is focusing on the process and not just the results. Pastors can be so obsessed with the ultimate goal that they miss the significant ministry that is a part of the process. Jerry Edelwich offers wise advice when he says, “Focus on the

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375 Archibald D. Hart, *Coping with Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing), 19.
376 Ibid.
377 Ibid.
process, not the result.” As pastors, we need to learn this important lesson. There is more to goals than the end result. We need to recognize and appreciate the ministry that is offered through the process.

Delegate

Jerry Edelwich states that learning to delegate responsibility is the ultimate change pastors can make to avoid burnout. Pastors who efficiently delegate tasks to other people are able to focus on the important areas of ministry. Delegating to others keeps pastors from overworking until they are dazed and stressed out over ministry responsibilities. Many pastors, however, resist delegating tasks to other people because delegation can be very time intensive and annoying.

In many cases, pastors feel that it is easier to do the work themselves, and sometimes the hard work of volunteers or lay persons may not be useful. Nevertheless, pastors must refuse to simply revert to doing everything themselves. Another reason pastors fail to delegate to other people is because there is a need to be in control, but their unwillingness to give up control can be detrimental. Many pastors have a great deal of control in their churches, but often become insecure when part of this control is released to others. Releasing control can be beneficial, however, as lay persons will assume greater responsibility and find joy in the church ministries. Yes, the laypersons may make mistakes occasionally, but it is a lesser price to pay if pastors can be released from some of their decision-making duties. Pastors who are able to delegate responsibilities and powers are building in protection against burnout.

Allow for Your Limitations

Burnout is inevitable if the pastor tries to meet everyone’s expectations. Pastors should know their limitations, and should not try to live up to all those expectations by fantasizing about

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379 Ibid.
being more than they really are. Many African American pastors, however, do not seem to be conscious of their own limits, and as a result they place weighty demands on themselves.

Myron Rush argues that dedicated Christian leaders, more than any other group, tend to thrust themselves too hard and too far. He suggests that pastors could avoid burnout by being aware of their own limitations. This failure to identify limits is rooted in a pastor’s desire to be wanted and depended upon. They thrive on being capable of helping people and serving the wants of the congregation. Some pastors are so motivated by this point that they have an open-ended policy to respond to every need as soon as possible. These pastors have lost control of their lives because of their failure to set limits.

There are ways pastors can protect themselves as they learn to recognize their limitations. First, pastors need to start accepting and respecting their own limits. This is very basic, but it is at the core of balancing their lives by setting limits. Second, pastors can protect themselves by learning not to do everything for people. They need to teach their congregations so they will not turn to the pastor for every need. Once new boundaries are established and people seek others to meet specific needs, pastors will be liberated. Finally, pastors can safeguard themselves by letting the grace and adoration of God inspire them. It is easy to be driven by our own needs, or by the insistent needs of our congregations, but these deceitful motives can be very destructive and will often cause burnout. Therefore, every pastor needs to be encouraged by the affection and the grace of God.

Charles Swindoll wrote about his wife when he attended a leadership forum: “The pastor’s first line of human accountability is his wife. God offers divine answerability and wives

381 Ibid.
382 Ibid.
383 Ibid.
provide human accountability.” Pastors need to invite their spouses to give an account of their communication, beliefs and attitude. It is essential that pastors be willing and prepared to share with their spouses the issues that are in the forefront of their lives. Problematically, many African American pastors infrequently share with their spouses when they are physically exhausted and emotionally drained in their ministries. Even though some pastors are effective and prosperous in pastoral ministry and preaching at their church, they may experience stress and burnout if problems occur with their spouse at home. Therefore, it is required that pastors strive to maintain a happy relationship with their spouses.

Yield to the Leading of the Holy Spirit to Servant-Hood

Thom Rainer captured how a pastor feels: “I had trouble admitting that I had an ego problem. I always wanted things my way. God got to me and showed me that my calling in life is to serve others. It is absolutely amazing to see my leadership passion restored as I put myself last to the needs of others.”

Paul’s letter to the Philippians summed up the idea of servant-hood quite concisely when he said:

Now if you have known anything of Christ's encouragement and of his reassuring love; if you have known something of the fellowship of his Spirit, and of compassion and deep sympathy, do make my joy complete--live together in harmony, live together in love, as though you had only one mind and spirit between you. Never act from motives of rivalry or personal vanity, but in humility think more of each other than you do of yourselves. None of you should think only of his own affairs, but consider other people's interests also. (Phil 2:1-4, Phi)

The Today’s English Bible says it like this: “Don't do anything from selfish ambition, or from a cheap desire to boast; but be humble towards each other, never thinking you are better than others. And look out for each other's interests, not just for your own” (Phil 2:3-4, TEB).

This can only be done by constant yielding to the Holy Spirit for help. Servant-hood is not faintness, but strength. Pastors are leaders, and although they have the authority to lead others, pastors must humble themselves to serve the people under their shepherd’s care. This effort takes great humbleness and strength.

Organize to Work Smarter – Not Longer

Pastors can very rapidly get into a monotonous routine of working longer and harder in an effort to catch up. The complex concern is they rarely catch up, and in their eager efforts they actually become less productive. Therefore, pastors need to absorb the important lesson of working smarter instead of longer and harder; they need to make explicit changes in the way they approach the work of ministry to reduce stress and become more effective. This should include the entire area of organizing their weekly schedule and appointments.

Find Time to Review the Calling of God to Motivate the Ministry

For many pastors, it is easy to lose the pleasure of ministry; their lives will become a grind unless they understand and allow the calling of God to influence their ministries. Pastors must give attention to God’s will and His calling. If pastors are inspired and motivated to please others more than God, they can occasionally lose their ministry passion. On the other hand, if pastors do not consider the difficulties of others, but only their individual and personal goals and desires, they may fall into a ministry of complacency. Therefore, because of the awesomeness of the call of God, pastors should understand of the calling of God before they embrace the ministry.

A good example for discussion is found in John 11: Martha was very upset with Jesus because He did not arrive in Bethany when her brother was still sick. If He had arrived in

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Bethany earlier, Lazarus, her brother, would not have died, but Jesus waited two days after hearing about Lazarus’ illness before traveling to Bethany. While Jesus loved Mary and Martha dearly, it was evident that Jesus did not set His agenda by their desires. Jesus established His agenda according to God’s will and His calling. Likewise, in John 2, at the wedding feast at Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle of turning water into wine, He responded to His mother’s request by saying, “Dear woman, my time has not yet come” (John 2:4). Jesus made it crystal clear to Mary, His mother, that He would accomplish this miracle not according to her demands, but those of God, the Father. The point is that the focus of ministry should be not on the demands of congregations, but rather on God’s calling and His demands.

Find Time for Adequate Personal Rest and Renewal

Counselors, pastors and burnout experts advise for pastors to set aside personal rest time only for themselves. It is essential for pastors to have private, quiet and solitary time, just as Jesus took personal time to pray and meditate in a private place, even though He was very busy and surrounded by crowds. This suggestion can be especially helpful for pastors who are experiencing slight burnout or are in the early stages of burnout. Pastors need to move away for short periods of time and rest from the heaviness of ministry. Rush emphasizes the importance of getting away from the source that created the burnout. He states, “I can assure you that burnout recovery will not be possible unless you separate yourself from the source of the problem.”

Pastors in burnout often fail to escape from the circumstances that created their problems. They need rest and time away from everyday pressures, but many times African American pastors in particular fail to understand or appreciate the renewing and rejuvenating benefits of adequate rest time. They may take a day off now and then, but they do not make a complete

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break from the source of their burnout because of their heavy involvement in their pastoral work. Just as alcoholism is dangerous, however, workaholism is also very dangerous. It is rare for pastors to feel regret or agitation if they do not work.

Therefore, every pastor should check themselves to see if they are falling into workaholism. Longevity does not equal effectiveness if pastors are burnt out. A good illustration of this comes from the times of the French Revolution, when labor productivity decreased to 40% due to the change from a 7-day work week to a 10-day work week. After that, it changed again to a 7-day work week because labor productivity had not increased at all.390

God established the sequence of work activity and rest for men (Exodus 20:8-10), and every pastor should recognize that they are not the exception. Today, many pastors carry the weight of constantly giving of their time and energy while receiving no renewal of their own physical, emotional and spiritual batteries. It is very vital for pastors to remember that sufficient personal rest time can provide the required regeneration and allow them to return to work refreshed, renewed, revitalized and rejuvenated.

This research propose an explanation of the numerous reasons, phenomena and areas surrounding burnout among African American pastors. The study gained phenomenal results regarding burnout and proposed ways to overcome it. Although burnout can be hurtful and disheartening, it can also be the beginning of greater acceptance and increased consciousness as it relates to maintaining a balanced life. Burnout is not a satisfying experience, but the results can be very positive in the context of unique pastoral ministry.

390 Young Hoon Lee ed., “Work, Activity and One Day Rest,” *Fountain of Life* (September-October 1997): 144. For another example, Lenin of the old Soviet Union changed the work system to an 8-day work week for the improvement of labor productivity, but he changed it back to a 7-day work week when labor productivity did not increase.
Ministers should recognize the fact that every pastor has the possibility of suffering from burnout, and we all are our brother’s keepers. Burnout can be prevented and overcome by the power of God, individual and collective accountability and the love of family and friends!
APPENDIX A

Survey on Pastoral Burnout

This survey questionnaire is for the study “Burnout among African American pastors”, a dissertation for a doctorate in ministry. This dissertation is going to establish strategies that protect and prevent African American pastors from the danger of burnout.

It would be an invaluable resource to help the pastors in burnout if you express your experiences and opinions honestly.

1. Sex? □ Male □ Female

2. Age? □ under 30 years □ 31-35 years □ 36-40 years □ 41-45 years □ 46-50 years □ 51-55 years □ 56-60 years □ 62-65 years □ over 66 years

3. Educational Level? (Check all that apply) □ Bible School □ College □ Theological Seminary □ Graduate School □ Your present degree ________________

4. Number of years in the ministry? □ under 5 years □ 5-10 years □ 11-15 years □ 16-20 years □ 21-25 years □ 26-30 years □ over 31 years

5. How many congregation members participate in the Sunday worship service at your church? □ under 30 □ 31-50 □ 51-100 □ 101-200 □ 201-300 □ 301-500 □ 501-1000 □ over 1000

6. What are the factors which have threatened your ministry? (Please check all relevant items.) □ extreme fatigue □ weariness □ skepticism □ loss of identity □ increasing worries and impatience

□ frequent illness □ stagnation □ suicide urge □ sense of alienation □ conflict □ difficulty of sleep □ loss of interest about work □ instability of emotion □ frustration □ feeling of helplessness

□ loss of ministry vision □ rebuke of believer’s □ decrease of appetite □ loss of passion

□ considering leaving the church □ unrealistic expectation of the spouse □ loss of self-respect □ too frequent preaching

□ excessive business □ deviation of children □ infringement on private life □ comparison with a colleague

□ lack of intellectual ability □ economic difficulty □ difficulty in controlling emotions
7. **How many hours do you work in a week?** □ under 20 hours □ 21-30 hours □ 31-40 hours □ 41-50 hours □ 51-60 hours □ 61-70 hours □ over 70 hours

8. **How many times do you deliver a sermon in a week?** □ 1 time □ 2-4 times □ 5-7 times □ 8-10 times □ 11-13 times □ over 14 times

9. **Which is your annual income from your church?** (including salary, expenses for ministry activity, traveling expenses, annuity & insurance and other income) □ under $20,000 □ $20,001-$30,000 □ $30,001-$40,000 □ $40,001-$50,000 □ $50,001-$70,000 □ $70,001-$100,000 □ over $100,000

10. **How do you think your income compares with the incomes of other pastors?** □ much higher □ a little higher □ same □ a little lower □ much lower

11. **What job does your spouse have?** □ full-time job □ part-time job □ none

12. **Do you have one day a week off from your church ministry job?** □ regularly □ often □ almost never

13. **Do you think that you have enough time with your family?** □ yes □ no □ often

14. **Do you have regular vacation each year?** □ yes □ no □ often If you have, how long is your annual vacation? □ □ days

15. **Does your church understand the problems of the pastor and his/her family?** □ very much □ a little □ none

16. **Have you ever thought to move to another ministry place by leaving the church?** □ I have never thought of it □ I have thought of it sometimes □ I have thought of it very often □ I want to move right now

17. **Have you ever felt an impulse to quit your ministry to escape from the crisis of ministry?** □ never □ sometimes □ very often □ everyday

18. **How much are you pressed in your ministry?** □ much higher than expectations □ higher than expectations □ same as expectations □ lower than expectations □ much lower than expectations
19. How much is your spouse pressed in your ministry? □ much higher than expectations □ higher than expectations □ same as the expectations □ lower than expectations □ much lower than expectations

20. How much are your children pressed in your ministry? □ much higher than expectations □ higher than expectations □ same as expectations □ lower than expectations □ much lower than expectations

21. Have you ever experienced stress-related illness? □ very much □ a little □ none

22. How do you solve the pressure in your ministry? (Check all that apply) □ Bible reading and prayer □ dialogue with colleague’s □ traveling □ visiting the prayer mountain □ meditation □ singing a song □ listening to music □ exercise □ shopping □ sleeping □ recharging □ eating □ food □ chattering □ others

※Thanks for your sincere response. If you would like to provide me with additional information, please contact me by following e-mail address or phone number as follows rasstrong@att.net or (904) 315-8928.
APPENDIX B

Grit Scale (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews & Kelly, 2007)

Directions for taking the Grit Scale:
Please respond to the following 17 items using the following scale:
_ Very much like me
_ Mostly like me
_ Somewhat like me
_ Not much like me
_ Not like me at all

Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers!

1. I aim to be the best in the world at what I do.
2. I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.
3. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.
4. I am ambitious.
5. My interests change from year to year.
6. Setbacks don’t discourage me.
7. I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.
8. I am a hard worker.
9. I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.
10. I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.
11. I finish whatever I begin.
12. Achieving something of lasting importance is the highest goal in life.
10. I think achievement is overrated.
11. I have achieved a goal that took years of work.
12. I am driven to succeed.
13. I become interested in new pursuits every few months.
Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (Kristiansen et. al., 2004)

Part 1: Personal burnout.

Scale:
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

1. How often do you feel tired?
2. How often are you exhausted physically?
3. How often are you exhausted emotionally?
4. How often do you think: “I can’t take it anymore”?
5. How often do you feel worn out?
6. How often do you feel weak and susceptible to illness?

Part 2: Work burnout.

Scale for first three questions:
- To a very high degree
- To a high degree
- Somewhat
- To a low degree
- To a very low degree

1. Is your work emotionally exhausting?
2. Do you feel burnt out because of your work?
3. Does your work frustrate you?

Scale for last four questions:
- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

4. Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?
5. Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?
6. Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?
7. Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?
APPENDIX C

Oswald’s Measurement Tool\textsuperscript{391}

For each question, circle the number from 1 to 6 that best describes you. Then add all your answers for your total score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have a negative or cynical feeling about the people with whom I work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic about congregations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pessimistic about congregations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have enthusiasm for my work (I enjoy my work).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High internal energy for my work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lose of enthusiasm for my job work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I invest myself in my work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>High invest emotionally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Try to recede and resign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I experience fatigue and irritation daily.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheerfulness, high energy much of the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tired and irritated much of the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. My humor has a cynical, biting tone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>My humor which is positive and joyful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My humor which is cynical and sarcastic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I decrease gradually the time with my congregation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eager to be with congregations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Try to avoid from congregations</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I am becoming less flexible in my dealings with congregation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always open about the need of my congregation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Becoming more rigid in dealing with congregations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I think that someone supports my work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking fully supported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking alone and isolated</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I try to achieve an important task but always fail.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always successful in accomplishing task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always frustrated in accomplishing task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{391} Roy M. Oswald, \textit{Clergy Self-Care} (Lanham, MD: Rowman Littlefield, 2014), 61-64.
APPENDIX D

Rediger Burnout Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Constantly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feel persecuted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have low energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Feel trapped</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Worry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Have no interest or pleasure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feel little excitement in anything</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feel hopeless about the future</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Feel fumbling or accident</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Have considered suicide</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Feel worthless</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Worry that your mind is falling</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Feel lonely or ignored</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Have temper outbursts</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Cannot concentrate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Feel others are watching you</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Feel sloppy and careless</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Blame yourself or others for awry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Cannot pray or meditate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Feel God has abandon you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Inventory</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I feel exhausted and run down</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I am irritable</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I get frustrated easily</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel helpless</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I have trouble sleeping</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I am discouraged</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I tend to be critical of others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I tend to be critical of myself</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I want to get away from people</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I would like to change my job</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I feel spiritually dull</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I think that my job is stressful</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I feel under constant pressure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I have difficulty being with troubled people</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I am impatient</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I lack enthusiasm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

Mark Short’s Time Management Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I regularly write a list of something to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My goals are clearly spelled out in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I keep a desk appointment book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I maintain a pocket data book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I always do one task at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I avoid “blind alleys”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I provide enough time in my schedule for emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I know at what time of the day I do my best work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I try to schedule my most important tasks at that time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I can quickly find needed items in my files</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My desk is cleared off at the end of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I try to get to the office before my secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I am able to warm up to my work quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I have a regular exercise program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Certain problem solving can be delayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>There are some folk in the church better equipped to do certain tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rather than I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I set deadlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I delegate whenever possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I have a screening system for telephone calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I can dispose of certain reading materials that come across my desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I am on time for 9 out of 10 engagements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I try to leave my work at the office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>My office is neat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>I have the ability to facilitate people who just “drop in”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I do advance planning on my personal schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total
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Scully, E. "Beginning to Think about Clergy Wellness." Ministry Matters (Spring 2003).


152


VITA
Ronald Strong

PERSONAL

Born: June 14, 1952.


Children: Sadria, Ronald II and Roshawnda

EDUCATIONAL

B.S., Florida Memorial University, 1975.


Master of Strategic Studies, U.S. Army War College. 2001

MINISTRY CREDENTIALS

Licensed: December 19, 1971, Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church

Ordained: January 19, 1975, Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church.

PROFESSIONAL

Military Officer, Chaplain, 1978-2008, United States Army.

Director of Christian Education, Mt. Tabor First Baptist Church, Palatka, Florida.
April 25, 2016

Ronald Strong
IRB Approval 2457.042516: Burnout Among African American Pastors: A Practical and Biblical Solution

Dear Ronald,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School