ABSTRACT

THE PASTOR AS LEADER:

ASSESSMENT, CHANGE, AND GROWTH

IN PASTORAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ABILITY

by

David C. Crofford

The church of the twenty-first century is experiencing the effects of rapid cultural

and societal change. As leaders of the church, pastors are called upon to assist in

navigating these changes. However, many pastors are ill-equipped to do so because they

may lack the tools necessary to change leadership styles as the ever-changing situations

they face may warrant. Further, pastors may be unaware of the predominant leadership

style from which they currently operate, and/or are unaware that they can learn to lead by

adopting alternate styles of leadership.

To help gain an understanding of the problem, this study explored the leadership

perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors who were predominantly newer in

ministry in terms of years of service in the Southwest Ohio District. This qualitative

analysis sought to measure their self-reported leadership style and self-described

leadership ability both prior to and following a leadership seminar devoted to the

development of pastoral leaders.

Through the analysis of e-mails exchanged through the course of the seminar and

personal interviews conducted thirty days after its conclusion, the study found that the

majority of the pastors self-described their leadership style using labels that indicated a

tendency toward a collaborative, team-building approach, as opposed to more dynamic,

visionary styles of leadership. Further, the study noted a reluctance to self-describe leadership abilities, preferring instead to define these by prior training they had received. In addition, the results indicated little if any change in leadership style due directly to experiencing the leadership seminar, while acknowledging a possible need to do so in the future. Finally, in comparison with the leadership seminar they experienced, the participants noted the likelihood that other intervening factors may have contributed as significantly in their self-assessment of leadership style and ability.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

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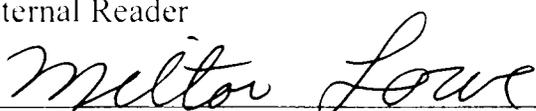
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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

A well-known and widely accepted leadership maxim emanating from the popular

domain states, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." In the context of the culture at

large today and, more narrowly, including those who have even a small grasp of the

importance of leadership in the local church, this phrase is simply accepted as settled

truth. Having served nearly an entire professional lifetime as a pastoral leader or staff

member in various local congregations, the anecdotal evidence for this belief has been

substantial. Invariably, when the life of the local church seems to be moving in the right

direction in the eyes of the congregation, these types of statements are often on the lips of

the congregants: "We have a great pastor, don't we?" "Our pastor sure is on the ball."

"Our new leadership team is making it happen." Unfortunately, the opposite can also be

true. When attendance stagnates, when budgets shrink and membership declines, the

tendency for blame is often placed at a pastoral leader's feet, irrespective of the fact that

reasons for growth or decline may not be as simple as the leadership maxim cited above

would express.

In a day of rapid cultural and societal change, many have studied and documented

multiple factors that impact the twenty-first century church (McNeal 1-6; Gibbs and

Bolger 17-23; Roxburgh and Romanuk 3-17; Van Gelder 47-67). While far beyond the

scope of this project, subjects such as population and demographic changes, generational

shifts in thinking, the influx of non-Western religions, and many others, all may be

considered as to their impact on the church. However, my contention that, while the

wholesale and uncritical adoption of this popular leadership maxim may be excessive. it is legitimate to consider the role that leadership, specifically, pastoral leadership, does play in the life of today's church.

To narrow this thinking still further, I contend that it is appropriate to address the issue of a pastor's ability to lead a congregation. A contemporary pastor needs a solid understanding of their own leadership patterns, which include the skillsets and knowledge base from which they endeavor to lead as they approach the complex issues and situations that today's pastors face. Further, a typical pastor needs to grasp the fact that their approach to leading a congregation need not be etched in stone. In addition, today's pastor needs to understand that their capacities for leadership can change, and evolve, and even be supplemented as they learn through both formal training and experiencing of challenging circumstances so typical of congregational life in the new millennium. Multiple researchers have found that this capacity for adaptation and learning how to lead more effectively not only possible, but vital for the success of an institution, and specifically for the one most germane to our study, the local church (Eichinger and Lombardo 12-15; Nauss, "Leadership Styles" 59-67; Scholl 11-40; Vroom and Jago 17-24).

Some examples may bring clarity. Pastors who possesses strong, visionary leadership skills may address a particular problem that calls for this type of leadership style and as a result enjoy a measure of success. However, the same problem confronted pastors who lead collaboratively might fail miserably because they do not possess the ability to change leadership styles. Conversely, visionaries may mishandle leadership challenges that an administrative or managerial-style leader would dispatch with ease.

The pastoral leaders who operate with fewer leadership tools at their disposal are far more likely to experience a lack of success. This deficiency in the sheer quantity of tools may be attributed to a lack of self-understanding as to how they typically function as leaders, or by simply being unaware that growth can occur in their personal leadership capacity.

A natural follow-up to the lack of tools in a leader's toolbox would be the assertion of exactly the opposite: there are times when pastors need to dispose of certain tools that have worked in the past, but are no longer suited for ministry in the twenty-first century. Recently, I became aware of some household tasks needing to be addressed that demanded use of a cordless drill. I had not used the drill for some time and upon descending to the garage, I located the drill and attempted to use it, only to discover that the batteries would no longer hold a charge, rendering the tool essentially worthless. In doing the research to replace it, I learned that battery technology had changed dramatically in the years since first purchasing the drill requiring the purchase of a new drill. Clearly, the new tool was much better suited for the tasks at hand than the old one would have been.

The parallel of this example with leadership in the context of today's ministry environment is striking. Eddie Gibbs asserts that perhaps the major challenge for leaders, particularly those who have already served in ministry for extended periods of time, is to acquire not only new skills but to strive to unlearn what they already know. Insisting that they dispose of their "predetermined, 'wired' and outdated and inaccurate mental maps" (9-10) he also contends that a change in both leadership roles and styles is not just an option but an urgent necessity (16).

Further complication of the pastors' self-understanding of leadership may occur when they consider the issue of pastoral leadership style through certain biblical and theological lenses. Scripture is authoritative for Christian pastors. Therefore, some contend that there is a given style of leadership that is biblically mandated. When considering the recurring theme in the apostle Paul's writings of what is known in the parlance of the Christian church as the spiritual gifts, in particular the gift of leadership, some may understand that there only one expression of that leadership which is valid. In other words, they would find only one style of acceptable leadership, one way of leading that is God has ordained of, making the appropriation of alternative ways of leading through secular means to be invalid. Others would go so far as to use the word worldly. However, still others who equally accept the authority of Scripture allow for a multiplicity of styles that they believe are also beneficial for the life of the local church. In an age where what generally defines the image of a genuine leader is the picture of the strong, dynamic individual, it is possible that a given local church can not only survive, but also thrive with a leader who does not embody the prevailing image of leadership.

Naturally, many of these issues are beyond the scope of one project. However, even though there exists a growing body of literature that has examined how pastors lead, the need for further study is ongoing. The need is particularly acute when one considers the rapid pace of change the church is experiencing. Alan J. Roxburgh employs the phrase *liminality* as descriptive of the epoch in which the church finds itself:

> ....the transition experience of a group as it is shifted into a place where its status and way of working in a given context are radically changed to the point where the group loses its sense of how to function in this new situation. (52)

His definition underscores the urgent need for pastors to bring effective leadership to congregations that find themselves unable to progress as they would like.

Given the changing times, there exists a need to examine and understand the leadership mind-set of those who are currently in ministry as vocational pastors, particularly as it relates to their understanding of what constitutes positive and strong leadership in today's local church environment. Such an examination would certainly involve an assessment of an individual's leadership style and what bearing, if any, they believe that it has upon their current success, or lack thereof, in pastoral ministry. This examination would be potentially beneficial to those who think that their approach to pastoral ministry does not fit the prevailing image of the strong leader as the only valid leadership option. Finally, even for leaders who already fully understand their primary leadership style, undergoing such a personal leadership evaluation may bring further benefits. For these individuals, their interest may lie in understanding their capacity to learn how to change and adapt their styles, especially when confronted with the complex situations in the church that demands flexibility from its pastoral leader.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors in the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change, if any, in their self-reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

Research Questions

In order to understand the relationship, if any, between the differing styles of pastoral leadership and the perceived leadership ability of pastors, as well as whether change occurred in either their self-reported leadership style or ability following their participation in the leadership seminar, the following research questions provided closer examination. The questions serve as the foundation of this study.

Research Question #1

What were the self-identified styles and ability of pastoral leadership utilized before the seminar by the pastors sampled from the Southwest Ohio District Church of the Nazarene?

Research Question #2

What were the changes in participants' self-identified styles and ability of pastoral leadership, if any, expressed after taking the seminar?

Research Question #3

What other influences, if any, have occurred in the lives of these pastors that may account for or contribute to the changes in the self-identified style of leadership subsequent to the seminar?

Definition of Terms

A common understanding of the terms employed is necessary to accurately gauge their meaning. This study defines the following key terms.

Leadership Style

Leadership style is something far different than simply a prevailing trend in types of leadership. Rather, in the context of this study, leadership style is defined as one of

many possible descriptive phrases that demonstrate the manner by which pastors provide needed direction and implement necessary planning. Leadership style especially best defines pastors' personal approach to interacting with and motivating the people of their congregations. The very term connotes that a multiplicity of possible approaches exist to leadership. I concur with the idea that leadership style demands, and even could be best defined, as "*a broad perspective on the range of behaviors that is required to be a truly effective leader*" (original emphasis; Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm 5). Foundational to this project, this concept serves as a major theme in the leadership seminar given to the group of pastors studied by this project. Further, in the context of a pastor's ministry as a leader of a local church, the style employed is of utmost importance. A pastor's style impacts multiple facets of church ministry which includes, but is not limited to, cultivating the milieu in which a church can be healthy, providing direction that points the way toward effective evangelism, and establishing the impetus that Christian believers need to become full-orbed disciples of Jesus.

Leadership Ability

While leadership ability shares some common elements with the definition of leadership style, nevertheless it remains distinct. Leadership ability is the capacity, whether innate or acquired or both, that a given pastor possesses needed to direct, plan, interact with, and motivate the people of the congregation.

Situations

For this particular study, situations are the variety of circumstances that are unique to pastoral ministry in the context of a local congregation.

Ministry Intervention

Many pastors are either unaware of their primary leadership style, or feel

consigned to being unable to change their particular style and adapt to difficult situations

that demand something different. Therefore, to enable a sampling of pastors from the

Southwest Ohio District Church of the Nazarene to identify their primary leadership

style, this project undertook a ministry intervention.

To begin this process, I initiated a meeting with the current district superintendent

of the Southwest Ohio District. Due to his perspective as superintendent, which gives him

direct access and knowledgeable insight into all eighty-four churches of the Southwest

Ohio District, he was uniquely qualified to aid in selecting pastors who would not only

best serve the purposes of this project but would also likely benefit the most from its

potential results. With the assistance of the superintendent, we designated a

representative sampling of ten pastors.

Next, a link to an online leadership questionnaire was provided to each pastor in

the sample. This questionnaire, titled *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership—DiSC strategies*

for Becoming a Better Leader, served simply as a thought starter intended to help each

participant begin the process of reflection as to their particular style of leadership. After

answering the questions, each pastor's responses to the questionnaire were sent

electronically to its originator. Immediately, an evaluation of the responses was provided

and returned directly to each pastor in report form in a computer-generated file i.e., PDF

format. The evaluation determined which of the eight leadership dimensions was primary

for each respondent and gave a brief descriptive summary of the traits that this leadership

dimension embodied.

After completing the pre-seminar questionnaire, each pastor attended a leadership seminar, taught once a week for a period of three weeks, for a total of three sessions. Next, approximately one month after the conclusion of the seminar, each pastor received an invitation to complete the same online questionnaire—*The 8 Dimensions of Leadership*. Finally, the participants submitted to an interview where they were asked what changes they experienced as a result of the seminar, not only in knowledge gained concerning their personal leadership style but also in their capacity to change and adapt, utilizing other leadership styles that would more effectively address the challenging situations pastors face. Further, the interview was open-ended, allowing the pastors to discuss some of the possible personal implications of the survey in the hope that these implications would be of future help in the area of leadership growth for each of them.

Context

The Church of the Nazarene, a Protestant Christian denomination, provides the wider context for this study. Ministering theologically from a Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, the church came into official existence in 1908 in Pilot Point, Texas. Since that time, the church has grown significantly. The worldwide church is currently home to more than two million members and has ministry presence in 156 world areas through twenty-six thousand local congregations. The church utilizes a democratic form of government, with authority localized equally between the laity and clergy. However, ongoing governance of the church is tasked to six general superintendents who oversee every district throughout the world.

In the United States, the Church of the Nazarene comprises over six hundred thousand members. The church is organized into groupings of local congregations, which

are known as districts. In the United States, the nation is divided into seventy-six districts.

In 2009, the Southwest Ohio District celebrated its fiftieth anniversary of existence. Geographically, the boundaries of the district extend north of Dayton, Ohio. In the southern part of the state, the district contains the major city of Cincinnati. To the east, the boundary reaches as far east as the small town of Peebles, Ohio, and to the west, the boundary extends to the state line of Indiana. Eighty-four churches are currently within the district in addition to a small number of church-type missions (CTM), which may be loosely defined as congregations in the process of becoming fully organized churches. Often, these churches are either relatively new or lack the financial resources to be fully independent, or both. In the church worldwide, including the Southwest Ohio District, ministers have various ways by which they may come to serve as local pastors. In the case of a smaller church, the pastor may be appointed by the district superintendent. In a larger church, through a call system, the pastor is confirmed through a sometimes lengthy process of voting by the local church governing board, which is known as the Church Board, followed by a congregational vote by the current local church membership. In addition, a pastor may serve any congregation in the church without necessarily having a seminary degree. Especially in a smaller church, the possibility exists that for a period of time, a pastor may serve with little or no formal theological or practical ministry training. This period of service would include the distinct possibility, even likelihood, that a pastor has had no guidance or training on church leadership principles.

Methodology

This study developed according to a qualitative approach. While not intended to serve as a tool of statistical measurement, the study included as its beginning point a preintervention leadership assessment tool. This internet assessment tool, which is based on the book *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership* by Jeffrey Sugerman, Mark Scullard, and Emma Wilhelm, was intended to enable the pastors sampled in the study to begin the process of thinking about their own leadership style. Further, based on their responses, the assessment tool determined which of the eight dimensions was their primary leadership style and directed them toward further study of this style in the book.

Next, each pastor attended a leadership seminar together with the other pastors who were the focus of the study. This seminar was eclectic in design and intended to expose the pastors in attendance to some current trends in leadership thinking, particularly as it relates to pastoral leadership. A copy of the outline of the seminar taught is included in Appendix A.

The seminar itself was designed to take place one evening per week over a period of three weeks, which totaled three sessions. Each session lasted approximately two hours. During the course of the three-week seminar, each pastor was asked to provide an e-mail to be sent to me as the seminar facilitator. The request to the pastors was that these e-mails be approximately sixty to one hundred words in length and were intended to serve as vehicles for feedback from each participant.

Approximately thirty days following the conclusion of the seminar, each pastor took the identical online assessment as they had prior to the seminar. The intent of this assessment was to stimulate each pastor to think once again about their personal style of

leadership and was in no way intended to be a statistical tool of measurement. As previously noted, this online assessment served simply as a thought starter for each participant.

Finally, the study employed a qualitative strategy of a semi-structured interview i.e., interview protocol. This interview had as its goal the description of change experienced by the participants in the seminar as related to the pastors' capacity to change and adapt to challenging church situations.

The collection of data took place by the use of qualitative methods. Specific questions were designed for use in an interview context the following leadership seminar. These questions served to obtain data regarding the participants' self-determination of whether or not the intervention made a difference in their perception of their ability to change their style of leadership when faced with challenging situations in their local church context.

Participants

The population for this study included pastors who are actively serving in ministry positions on the Southwest Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene. The process of determining the sample involved the active participation of the district superintendent of the Southwest Ohio District, Dr. Douglas Van Nest. The criteria involved purposive sampling (e.g., the selection of those pastors whom Van Nest thought could best benefit by developing their skills and abilities from the experience of the leadership seminar).

Instrumentation

The instrumentation involved in this project was selected and utilized in a manner consistent with a study that is qualitative in nature. I determined that a qualitative study, as opposed to one quantitative in nature, best fit the needs of the project.

One month after the presentation of the leadership seminar, participants were contacted individually, and I requested a personal interview. In preparation for the interview, I developed a series of questions to be employed in this project. These questions, known as the interview protocol, were asked of each participant interviewed. The protocol was intended to determine what, if any, changes were perceived by the individual participants as a result of their participation in the seminar. The interview protocol was by nature semi-structured, allowing significant, two-way dialogue to occur with each participant. A copy of the interview protocol is included in Appendix B. The questions in the interview protocol were grouped into three major categories, which directly corresponded to the research questions that are the primary focus of this project. A final question served to give the participant an opportunity to provide feedback regarding any specific area that the participant may have desired to share.

Variables

The independent variable was the leadership seminar that the participants attended. The dependent variable was the degree of change in the perceived ability of the participants to adjust their leadership style to handle a variety of situations that pastors face in local churches.

Data Collection

The first element in the process of data collection was in the area of the e-mails requested of each participant. During the course of the leadership seminar, which served as the intervention, each pastor was asked to submit a weekly e-mail to me in the area of leadership, particularly as it related to what their thinking or learning in response to, or as a result of, the leadership seminar they experienced.

In addition, due to the qualitative nature of this study, an interview took place with each participant. These interviews began one month following the completion of the leadership seminar. Significant efforts were made to reflect the words and sentiments of those interviewed accurately. In order to preserve the integrity of this process, recordings of the interviews were made and transcribed into the Microsoft Word. They served as the basis for the subsequent data analysis.

Data Analysis

Following the collection of the data obtained from both the e-mails and personal interviews, the data was organized chronologically into a Word document format. Subsequently, an effort was made to search for common patterns, categories, and themes recurring in the data, a process described as coding. Once the coding process was complete, various themes were identified and collated to facilitate identifying patterns.

Generalizability

This particular study reflects several delimitations. First, this study addressed only pastors who are currently in ministry assignments and coming from one specific district in the Church of the Nazarene. No intentional efforts were made to single out or involve any particular age group, gender, or geographical origin. However, the district

superintendent did express his desire that this study be beneficial to the pastors involved, and assumptions were made that those who were newer in ministry (i.e., having less years of ministry experience) would potentially fit this description. Therefore, the participants in the seminar tended to be newer in ministry, but not necessarily younger in age. Second, the study is not intended to advocate for a particular style of leadership, but rather serves as a tool to enable pastors to identify their predominant style and to lay the groundwork for the possibility of learning and growth in capabilities of church leadership.

The study is generalizable in this way: The seminar, which served as the intervention, contained many opportunities for growth and learning in the area of church leadership styles. In addition, participants received training in ways to develop their ability to adapt and change when faced with difficult local church situations. To the degree that participants, present and future, adopt its main premise that pastoral leaders cannot only benefit from learning their primary leadership style but also gain the capacity to adapt to ever-changing situations inside the local church, the study could possibly serve as a springboard of growth and change in other contexts than the one studied.

Theological Foundation

A great deal of biblical and theological understanding of leadership is based uniquely on New Testament passages. However, a case can be made that there is room for an Old Testament foundation as well.

James P. Bartz utilizes Jeremiah 1:5 as a touchstone for this approach: "Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, I had holy plans for you: A prophet to the nations—that's what I had in mind for you." (Jer. 1:5, MSG). In Bartz's way of thinking, the foundation for leadership needs to be

understood as getting in touch with one's own uniqueness and giftedness as centered in

our identity with God (84). This understanding of Scripture does not allow for a one

single approach to how leaders are formed and developed or by what style they operate.

The fact that God singled out Jeremiah in a very personal way for leadership as his

prophet becomes an example of the distinctiveness God uses to develop those who serve

as his leaders.

In the New Testament, a variety of passages serve as examples for how leadership

is manifest in the life of the early Church. In one of the passages that treats the subject of

spiritual gifts, Paul makes clear that a proper understanding of leadership is best

understood as a gift of the Holy Spirit:

> We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is
> prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let
> him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him
> encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give
> generously; *if it is leadership, let him govern diligently*; if it is showing
> mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (emphasis mine; Rom. 12:6-8, NIV)

A close examination of this passage is significant, as much for what it does not convey as

for what it does. First, however, it does insist that leadership is indeed classified as a gift

(χάρισμα, charisma) of the Holy Spirit. The fact that given individual possesses this gift

makes clear that it is based on the action of the Spirit, as opposed to simple talent or

ability of the gifted individual.

Second, while scripture states that leadership is indeed a χάρισμα of the Spirit,

nothing indicates that a given individual is consigned to receiving only one gift. Aubrey

Malphurs couples the Romans passage on gifts with another of the gifts passages to

advocate the idea that it is possible for a believer to possess multiple gifts (193). Here is

the passage as found in 1 Corinthians 12:

> And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts. (1 Cor. 12:28-31)

Clearly, the passage does not exclude the possibility of individuals receiving more than one gift.

For Malphurs, the gifts of leadership (as found in the Romans passage) and administration (in 1 Corinthians) exist in a sort of creative tension with one another—both equally necessary and both gifts of the Spirit. Further, he would allow that while some Christians exist who can both lead and manage a given Christian organization out of necessity, not being necessarily gifted by the Spirit with both the spiritual gifts of leadership and administration at the same time, others possess both. In his way of thinking, such a person so extraordinarily gifted has incredible potential to accomplish much for the kingdom of God, as long as that person has also submitted to the training and experience that accompanies the needed development of the gifts he or she possesses (193).

Overview

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature on the subject of leadership style and the corresponding relationship to the ability to lead. Chapter 3 gives a detailed examination of the methodology utilized in conducting the study. Chapter 4 examines the collected data, and Chapter 5 assesses and interprets the data.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors in the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change, if any, in their self-reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

The literature on the subject of leadership is as substantial as it is diverse. While as a discipline, the study of leadership is just a few centuries old nevertheless, the sheer volume of study on the subject of leadership is deep and broad enough that it precludes everything but the most cursory overview. Understanding this, I advise the reader to understand that limitations abound, even to a review appropriate for a dissertation such as this one. The approach undertaken here will resemble that of liquid passing through a funnel.

The review begins with the subject of the definition of leadership. The reader will immediately see the wide diversity of thought and lack of unanimity that writers and researchers exhibit on this widest of leadership subjects. However the conclusion of this section will propose a working definition of leadership that reflects the aim of this study and, hopefully, a distillation of best thinking represented by the literature examined.

From a definition of leadership, the review proceeds to an examination of leadership styles. Once again, the sheer volume of material is daunting to consider, so this section is limited to an overview of thought concerning leadership style. It

emphasizes situational leadership, a concept developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard, enabling the reader to conclude that the literature is far from unanimous regarding its effectiveness and suitability for implementation in addressing ongoing leadership challenges. An additional leadership style, polycentric leadership as articulated by Suzanne Morse, is briefly examined. Finally, I proceed to a consideration of some current trends in the evaluation of leadership style and its bearing on leadership practice today.

As the research narrows, the review moves to an examination of pastoral leadership style, particularly as it relates to pastoral ministry in a contemporary setting. Included in this section are current perceptions of what constitutes strong pastoral leadership styles that are most functional in the exercise of ministry.

Additionally, two elements surround the interventional aspect of this project that merit consideration as a part of this literature review. First, the choice of a survey that is intended to serve as a thought starter for each participant. This survey, found as an online assessment tool, integrates with the book titled *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership* by Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm. Further, this project undertook a teaching component that proposes the possibility of change for those who participated in the leadership seminar. Therefore, the review briefly looks at what structural design, which is summarily understood as a very current form of educational pedagogy that intends to craft coursework in such a way that students are led through a significant learning experience. Finally, additional consideration will be given to the theological foundations that undergird the study.

The problem confronted in this study relates to the challenge of what constitutes effective pastoral leadership in the local church. In addition to the difficulty of arriving at a suitable definition of leadership, there exists the challenge of how pastors determine the primary leadership style from which they currently operate. Still another layer added to the problem is the belief by some in the existence of a supposed biblical endorsement of given leadership style. Finally, the study explores the possibility that pastors may learn and adapt to leadership styles other than the one they currently possess.

Definition of Leadership

To arrive at an authoritative, once-and-for-all definition of leadership is an elusive, if not impossible, task. While most everyone has at least a vague sense of what a leader is and does, determining a definitive definition remains extremely difficult given how amorphous the definition tends to be. Similarly, but in a much different genre, it is somewhat akin to the difficulty United States Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart encountered in his now-famous attempt to define obscenity. For Justice Stewart, the classic phrase, "I know it when I see it," while being extremely imprecise and certainly subjective, nevertheless became a practical if imprecise test for what constitutes a legal basis to describe obscenity (Jacobellis 197).

While in a much different vein, and certainly much more positive, defining leadership follows a similar line of thinking. Most people have had some exposure to leadership—whether in observing a given leader, or engaging in an activity alongside someone perceived as a leader, or in actually being a leader oneself. However, when it comes to the fundamentals as to what constitutes leadership, many believe they already

grasp the essentials. They may not be able to define what they believe, but they would know it when they see it.

The fact is, defining leadership is indeed a very subjective proposition, and the reader will certainly note that what is advanced in this study is no exception. One's definition depends on many factors, including preconceived ideas as to what leadership is or should be. Further, the context in which leadership is exercised affects the definition one to applies to the concept. Some examples would include leadership exercised in a business context or the social sciences. Certainly, these ideas extend to the search for a suitable politician. Barbara Karmel insists that the conceptualization of leadership cannot be divorced from its purpose (475).

The difficulty of definition continues with the thought that many people believe they have an accurate understanding of what constitutes leadership. Earlier, I stated that the study of leadership is as broad as it is deep. Consequently, there exists a significant body of research on leadership, and many voices possess an idea of what they believe should be its proper definition. Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass recount the effort by what they term a "prestigious gathering" of leadership researchers to arrive at a final definition. In a somewhat humorous anecdote, they mention a group gathering for a two-day meeting to discuss leadership. Interestingly, a full day was consumed simply arguing over the definition (15). To underscore the difficulty further, one researcher found 221 definitions in 587 publications he examined (Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* 15). Accordingly, many have given up on the task of arriving at a definition that will suitable, or, at the very least, have given up on the effort of arriving at one that will

be authoritative, definitive, and proper, one that will be universally accepted and understood by all who utilize the term.

Therefore, because of the many problems encountered in defining leadership, the temptation is to conclude that a suitable definition of leadership so elusive that appropriate guidelines and general parameters to achieve the task cannot be found. Despite the aforementioned difficulty at arriving at a universal definition, suitable to all, the evidence from the literature suggests the existence of some very broad and general descriptors that greatly aid toward arriving at a functional definition.

First of all, the literature indicates some consensus that leadership entails a person's ability to influence, motivate, or enable others (Hersey 16; Bass and Bass 23; Northouse, *Leadership* 5-6). Many agree that a leader does not operate alone. To be a leader presumes the existence of followers, and that these followers are impacted in some fashion by the leader. Of course, one would hope that the leader makes a positive impact on them. Regardless, part of the foundation of a proper definition of leadership should include the factors of influence, motivation, and enabling.

Secondly, leadership involves a directional element, but one wonders in what direction. Many would insist that for an effort to be considered as authentic leadership, the leader must possess the ability to direct the group or organization in which the leader participates to help that group move toward success. Leadership, then, is not static, nor can it remain theoretical, rather, it is active in that it moves followers and organizations toward achieving goals. Bass and Bass describe an intriguing effort undertaken in 1994 to arrive at a working definition of leadership. A group comprised of social scientists from a variety of cultures and languages made an effort to develop a suitable definition. A

particular emphasis was placed on elements that are regarded as universal as opposed to being specific to certain cultures. Interestingly, the finding was that leaders "contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members" (1516). One sees immediately the active element. To be effective and successful assumes active engagement and movement toward a goal.

The next element in arriving at a proper definition of leadership relates to what role it plays, if any, in society. While the specific context of this project revolved around the life of the church and the health of a local congregation, few would argue that the church is not a part of the wider culture in North America. As such, much study has been done as to the impact of leadership on society, particularly in the field of business, and here the evidence is substantial. The presence of authentic leadership is essential to business and society (Kellett 150).

Perhaps the most significant evidence for this belief in the need for authentic leadership comes from the near-ubiquitous chorus of voices that are raised when the perception exists that leadership is absent. Examples of this belief abound in nearly every facet of institutions that make up modern culture. As an example, even a simple internet search reveals such web-based articles as the following: "Lack of Leadership is why companies are hurting " (Chitwood 1). However, caution needs to be exercised here. To reiterate the contention from the introduction to Chapter 1, the widely and popularly accepted axiom for leadership today insists that everything rises and falls on leadership. However, to insist such is very likely to overstate the case. Jim Collins makes an intriguing parallel in his work investigating what he considers to be exceptional leadership. For him, to say that leadership is the answer to every ill is to revert to the

thinking that existed in the Middle Ages, where everything that exists was explained by the phrase, "God is the answer to everything." To say that everything can be attributed to leadership is to make people today no different from the way people thought in the 1500's (300). While this objection is noted, still I contend that the presence or absence of leadership in a society has a huge impact on its ultimate success or failure.

The next element that must be considered to define leadership is one that weighs heavily upon this project —namely, the impact of character. While the theological implications on leadership will be addressed later in this review, for the moment I contend that for the Christian leader, the intermingling of character and leadership is foundational. The positive presence of character in a leader's life is a given, and its absence in effect disqualifies the individual who would lead.

This understanding of the role of character is not universally embraced. Writing to financial service professionals, Glenn Boseman insists that research demonstrates that great leadership is comprised more by what one does than by who one is (37). Clearly, this perspective is results-oriented, and his observation may or may not be the case, even in the context he addresses. However, for the Christian leader, who one is and what one does must coexist. To be a strong leader means that the attributes of character one possesses must be impeccable. As an example, Paul's first letter to Timothy addresses overseers and deacons—two titles of leaders in the early Church. In the course of sixteen verses, the necessary character traits such as being above reproach, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, and nonviolent, etc. are laid out systematically as requirements for leadership (1 Tim. 3:1-16). For the Christian leader, the right to lead and the character possessed are inseparable.

The next facet of leadership that merits a closer examination and inclusion into my definition is the distinction between leadership and management. While these two ideas are very closely related, significant debate exists in the literature as to what, if any, that distinction is.

Some argue that the distinction is very clear and base their argument upon the criterion of age. From this point of view, leadership is considered one of the world's oldest occupations (Kotterman 25). By contrast, management is a relatively new phenomenon, resulting from the recent appearance of large, complex organizations that are primarily the fruit of the Western age of industrialization. In this mind-set, both concepts are important, even vital, to the success and ongoing vitality of an organization, but they are distinct one from another.

Another point of view arises from those who would contend that the divergence between the two comes from the focus of each, respectively. For leader, their preoccupation comes when their efforts are directed toward the behavior of other individuals or groups. Leaders seek to shape or to change how these individuals or groups act in order to effect change. Again, by contrast, the manager's focus is quite different. For this person, people are not the issue, except insofar as they contribute toward a much different end. The manager seeks the accomplishment of an organization's goals. If change occurs in how a given individual acts in the process, this result is fine as far as the manager is concerned, but it is not the ultimate consideration for the manager. The end in view is the success of the organization (Hersey 16).

In espousing this position, researchers sometimes go to great lengths to delineate the differences. However, even after significant efforts to make such distinctions, the end

result is still a blurring of these two concepts. For example, several researchers propose detailed figures and tables that attempt to describe clear distinctions between leadership and management only to conclude just a few paragraphs later with phrases such as "the vast amount of research into leadership versus management indicates that sometimes leaders manage and sometimes managers lead" (Kotterman 13), or simply "[T]here is a good amount of overlap" (Neera, Anjanee, and Shoma 18-24). Therefore, distinctions pale between the two.

So, where do we fall in this debate? It is obvious that there is no clear nor ultimately definitive answer. Perhaps the synthesis proposed by Vroom and Jago best reflects our position, where they suggest the following: "We see leadership as a process of motivating people to work collaboratively to accomplish great things" (Vroom and Jago 17-24). To dissect simply their point of view, I see this debate reflected in the idea of leadership, (i.e. motivating people) with the concept of management, (i.e. working collaboratively).

Leadership and Superior Traits

A final issue needing to be addressed in the consideration of a suitable definition of leadership surrounds the issue of ability. Specifically one needs to consider whether leaders' defining abilities might be innate or acquired and if their leadership is recognized because they are seen as superior in comparison to others.

The first section of the question relates to a question that is hotly debated in the study of leadership—whether leaders are born or made. Very similar to the discussion of leadership versus management, the distillation of the arguments may be boiled down to one word: yes. Evidence exists for both. For some, certain gifted individuals appear to be

"born leaders" (Neera, Anjanee, and Shoma 18-24) for others, their giftedness in

leadership at least appears to be an acquired trait (Frank 381).

For the former, early research on leadership presumed that leaders were simply

born possessing that trait. Explanations varied but included such thinking as leaders

coming to the forefront because of the social class in which they were born. While

notable exceptions exist to this thinking (e.g., Abraham Lincoln) the understanding was

that a person was far more likely to emerge as a leader when not burdened with the day-

to-day need for survival that was typical of the lower classes. A sub-theme of this idea

was the concept of breeding. In this way of thinking, leaders come from leaders, e.g.

much like a champion thoroughbred emerges from a bloodline of previous champions. Of

course, the emergence of a bred leader is only possible when coming from one of the

higher, more privileged classes who alone have the luxury of living materially

comfortably lives.

As research continued, to conclude that leaders were born that way was

insufficient. Studies moved from what was immediately observable—that leaders tended

to emerge from the more privileged classes—to something deeper. They considered the

possibility that recognized leaders may possess certain characteristics beyond the obvious

privileges of social class that others did not, which enabled them to emerge as leaders.

The conclusion among some researchers was strongly affirmative. One reported that the

average person occupying a position of leadership exceeds their peers in at least the

following categories: intelligence, scholarship, dependability in exercising

responsibilities, activity and social participation, and of course, the given in this

discussion, socio-economic status (Bass, *Leadership and Performance Beyond*

Expectations 21-32). However, in contrast with Bass, Ronald Heifetz, Alexander

Grashow, and Marty Linsky propose another alternative. They insist that the label *leader*

is affixed to individuals because they perform in a way that is pleasing to a group called

authorizers. Instead of being one to challenge the status quo, the leader becomes, in a

positive sense, the embodiment of the group's hopes and aspirations and negatively the

one who allows for the continuation of things as they are with the minimal amount of

disruption possible (26).

Peter Northouse sees this embodiment of the leader similarly but uses different

terminology. For him, leaders become the prototype of their group. They become the

personification of what is attractive and appealing to groups. These characteristics enable

leaders to emerge and ultimately give them influence within groups (6).

The examination of traits served as the natural bridge to the opposite position in

the question of leaders being born or made. While observing the same phenomenon,

certain researchers perceive that with the emergence of leaders who do not share the

privilege of advanced socioeconomic status and seemingly were not innately gifted as

leaders were able to acquire many of these same characteristics and assume their place as

leaders in certain contexts. While acknowledging the intensity of the debate over whether

leaders are born or made, many have reached the same conclusion as Frank: "Whether

leaders are born or made is a subject that will continue to be debated forever. It can be

seen, however, that many principles of leadership can be taught and learned by almost

anyone" (388). Perhaps most striking is that the evidence leads to the conclusion that

regardless of how leaders develop, leaders seem to possess certain traits and abilities that

enable them to function as leaders. The necessity of possessing these abilities are

reflected in many definitions of leadership and certainly factor into our formulating a workable definition for this project.

Therefore, I humbly advance the following definition of leadership that may serve as a foundation for this study: *Leadership is a process where gifted individuals of character exercise their influence on groups of individuals to motivate them toward the achievement of a goal, which by consequence advances the cause of those particular groups.*

Leadership Style

Leadership style is one of many possible descriptive phrases that demonstrate how pastors provide needed direction and implement necessary planning. It is their personal approach to interacting with and motivating the people of their congregation. Of course, leadership style is not limited to the pastoral vocation. The way in which individuals approach leadership—their style—transcends vocation and even culture and language. The literature provides evidence that an individual can learn, change, and adapt how they lead (McKenna, Boyd, and Yost 191; Lichtman and Malony 165-70; Nauss "Leadership Styles" 59-67). Hence, a leadership style can vary from context to context. In addition, a rapidly growing field of the study of leadership style exists that examines what is known as a charismatic approach. Some would advocate that the charismatic leader's ability to lead in this context may even be of divine origin (Thomas and Thomas 163).

To be a leader and to aspire to enable a group of followers to achieve common goals presumes that this leader has an approach to leadership that becomes the pathway by which that leader moves forward to realize the achievement of those goals. In an effort

to measure the effectiveness of a leader's style, researchers have set descriptive titles to

their observations of approaches to leadership. While the sheer quantity of these

descriptive titles is vast, these can still be distilled down into broader categories that

make the study of leadership style manageable. I will consider three: transformational

versus transactional leadership, charismatic leadership, and, finally, an examination of

situational leadership.

The Transformational/Transactional Leadership Continuum

James McGregor Burns is generally considered the pioneer of the study of

transformational leadership (Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* 186). For

Burns, with later development by Bass, transformational leadership involves "leaders and

followers help[ing] each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation"

(Bass and Bass 1516). Transformational leadership is more people focused. The leader's

energies are directed toward the betterment of the group of people that they serve. In

contrast, transactional leadership is more directed toward achieving the goals of a specific

organization. In order to accomplish this task, leaders' energies go toward clarifying

expectations of role and task of those they lead. Very much performance based, the

transactional leader becomes, positively, the distributor of rewards for high achievement;

negatively, the same leader must discipline and redirect the efforts of employees who do

not meet expectations. Simply stated, transformational leadership maintains a long-term

perspective. It views the betterment (i.e., transformation) of the people through whom the

organization's goals will be achieved as the best way to achieve those goals. Conversely,

transactional leadership is more short-term in orientation. Primarily, it has in view the

goals of the organization, and the people belonging to it become the conduit or pipeline to

achieve those goals. Defined succinctly, "Transactional leadership is contingent reinforcement. The leader and follower agree on what the follower needs to do to be rewarded or to avoid punishment" (Bass, *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* 121). Ironically, the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Both can serve toward the fulfillment of a given organization's purpose. For transformational leaders, the betterment of those they lead often results in the achievement of their organizations mission and goals. When people are valued, empowered, and esteemed, they become more productive, hence, the organization moves forward. Likewise, for the transactional leader, the motivation of employees through external rewards can lead to the same. Transactional leaders, through the reward and punishment system, serve as catalysts to facilitate the growth and betterment of those they lead. Indeed, one of the key factors cited in the identification of a transformational leader is the power of influence. However, Northouse believes that this capacity to influence for the better is not limited to the transformational leader, but potentially extends to the transactional leaders as well. In this way of thinking, "transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates for them to do what the leader wants" (195). Therefore, regardless of the leadership style exercised, both types of leaders have the possibility to exert positive influence.

The relationship between transformational and transactional leadership may best be understood as a continuum. For a specific leader to be described as either fully transactional or fully transformational would likely be inaccurate. Neither should one consider either of these leadership styles as innately superior. In fact, the circumstances within which a leader finds himself or herself may dictate the approach necessary. For

example, a teacher is transactional when the moment arrives to give grades to students for work completed. Acting in an transactional manner is true as well of the manager who gives a promotion to an employee who exceeds the goals previously established. Northouse contends that what he calls the "exchange dimension" of transactional leadership not only exists but is very common throughout all levels and types of organizations (*Leadership* 485). The same teacher or manager in another context may exhibit transformational leadership skills that have nothing to do with the elements of transactional leadership. The approach is wholly contingent on the situation and the leadership skills and adaptability of the leader in question.

An additional factor in the study of the transformational style of leadership that merits a brief discussion is the idea of emotional intelligence or (EI). Made popular by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*, others have further developed and refined the idea. John D. Meyer and Peter Salovey described it as "the ability to process emotional information, more specifically an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and their relationships, as well as being able to reason out and solve problems" (qtd. in Sayeed and Shankar 593)." The sense one has in understanding EI is that it is an innate ability; it is something that operates in an almost subconscious manner for the transformational leader. It is not a conscious factor that a leader employs; on the contrary, it is the sense of being able to engage with people, to read where they are on an emotional plane in order to lead them effectively. Other writers take this idea yet a step further. They estimate that to be a successful transformational leader, one must possess high levels of EI. Otherwise, the aspiring leader is forced to adopt tactics that a leader operating from a positional power status employs rather than the much more desirable

position of operating within the capacity that comes from solid leadership based on

character and emotional rapport with those the leader desires to lead (Sayeed and Shankar

593-610).

Some believe that this capacity, though not innate in leaders, can be learned. A

primary contention of Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm is that once leaders determine

their primary dimension of leadership in which they typically operate, they are not

consigned to exercise their leadership exclusively that way. For example leaders who

have been determined to be a *commanding* leader according to the *8 Dimensions of*

Leadership model is, by the authors' definition, not innately gifted in being emotionally

astute. However, they insist that a level of emotional sensitivity can be learned, even

though it is the polar opposite of leaders' innate style. In giving the example of an

inclusive leader, Sugerman, Scullard and Wilhelm give a vivid description of that style:

> Make an a conscientious effort to connect with people personally, even if
> it's just making eye contact and nodding. By acknowledging them as
> human beings, it will be a lot easier to communicate … relate to the other
> person's perspective … Anticipate how they'll interpret what's coming out
> of your mouth … Remember, your words and emotions carry a lot of
> weight. (146)

 In short, a high level of emotional maturity must come into play in order for the

transformational leader to be successful. That this capacity cannot only be measured but

strengthened is fundamental to the approach that views subordinates as more than

employees but rather as "co-partners of leadership processes and as those who have stake

in the development of the organization" (Sayeed and Shanker 608). All of this discussion

reminds us of the basic concept of transformational leadership, which is leaders and

followers working collaboratively to advance the goals of the organization while empowering each other in the process.

A second style needing consideration, particularly in the larger scope of this project, is that of charismatic leadership. Rather than being considered as an entirely unique lens through which to view leadership style in general, Northouse understands charismatic leadership is perhaps best understood as similar or even synonymous with transformational leadership. (*Leadership: Theory and Practice* 187) Elsewhere, Bass uses the term "component." (*Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* 42)

While being a rather recent subject of research in the broader scheme of leadership styles, charismatic leadership does not lack for opinions as to what it looks like in action nor how it is most properly defined. John Potts traces not only how charismatic leadership is commonly understood today but also gives insight into the context of the development of the word charisma. While acknowledging evidence for its pre-Christian origins, he sees the most substantial development of the word in the thinking of the apostle Paul. Utilizing the Pauline term *charismata* (Greek plural) Potts contends that this word is to be understood as divine gifts of God's grace for the benefit of the Christian community rather than for simple personal prestige (46). It is to be understood as a variety of gifts (e.g., as enumerated in 1 Cor. 12) rather than something uniquely pertaining to leadership.

However, the understanding of *charisma* shifts with the passing of time. The next significant development comes, according to Potts, with the advent of Max Weber's development of the word. The focus becomes very individually oriented and resembles a much more contemporary understanding: "The term 'charisma' will be applied to a

certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (116). What remains, then, is to synthesize these two concepts. To illustrate this thought, he considers that the evangelical preachers Oral Roberts, Billy Graham, and Pat Robertson typify the marriage of these two ideas. They reflect the ability to be magnetic and commanding of an audience (Weberian) with the notion of being spiritually empowered (Pauline; 157).

Sheila M. Puffer gives three foundational elements of charismatic leadership. The first two involves the charismatic leader who comprises the characteristics of risk taking and attributions of expertise, (e.g., those who are followers believe that the leader has expertise). The final element is her definition of charisma itself, which can be understood as "a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure" (178). While the phrase "magic of leadership" may make one uncomfortable, charismatic leadership does involve certain intangibles of feeling that enter the picture. There may not be an easy explanation as to what charismatic leadership is, but it can be recognized. Conversely its absence becomes apparent. Perhaps most likely, an observer likely possesses some solid ideas as to who they know who exercises leadership charismatically.

The African-American clergyman Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fits the image well of what embodies a charismatic leader. His life tragically cut short in April 1968 by an assassin's bullet, King carried on his shoulders the hopes of millions of Americans in their quest for racial equality and full status as American citizens. His position as a leader in the civil rights movement is unquestioned, having been one of the founders of the

Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. In addition, perhaps his most famous

speech, given as the culmination of the 1963 march on Washington, cast vision not only

for those in attendance at the Mall in Washington, but also served to galvanize the hopes

of freedom-loving Americans everywhere who dreamed of a society free from

discrimination based on color and racial prejudice. He unquestionably fit Puffer's

definition of charismatic leadership: attributions of expertise, (e.g., viewed in the

African-American community as having the vision and know-how to lead the African-

American race to racial equality and full stature as American citizens), risk taking (e.g.,

standing shoulder to shoulder with his fellow blacks, enduring mistreatment and wrongful

imprisonment), and, of course, his uncanny ability to inspire by employing unparalleled

oratorical skill, which demonstrated his personal charisma.

In an effort to explain his remarkable charismatic leadership abilities, Curlew O.

Thomas and Barbara Boston Thomas attribute them to divine origin. They insist that

King possessed what they term a "blessed gift of grace" (163), a gift which was validated

by the social audience that Dr. King led. Further, they believe that this gift was given at a

precise moment in time in response to a prayer offered up by King at a crisis point in his

life, specifically, during the Montgomery bus boycott, which fits the definition of risk

taking as part of charismatic leadership. According to King, in response to his prayer, a

voice admonished him "to stand up for righteousness and truth," and that "God would be

at his side" (Jakoubek 143). When operating in the social science context, such notions

may sound overly mystical and not able to be measured by standard scientific measure.

However, this third element in the definition of charismatic leadership defies simple

description and efforts to measure it quantitatively. For King, this charismatic gift had

divine origins; in a broader, nonreligious sense, Merriam-Webster defines it as "personal

magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure (as

a political leader)" ("Charisma"). Regardless of one's personal belief, the fact remains

that the thousands who followed and revered King validated and recognized this, and the

evidence indicates that from this experience forward, he rose to the level of a charismatic

leader that set him apart from others (Thomas and Thomas 163).

King's situation may differ in degree, it does not stand alone. Others have noted

that in a dramatically different context, the same reality exists. Larry C. Ingram shows

that white Southern Baptist ministers, due to the processes of socialization, experience

both a structural and developmental aspect of charisma. This charisma provides the

ability of the Southern Baptist pastors to lead their congregations. Conversely, the

absence of or the decline in a leader's ability to charismatically lead the church often

results in the termination of that pastor's position as formal leader of the congregation.

Further, the process of developing the charisma necessary has been routinized; it follows

a predictable path that, once embarked upon, is recognizable and validated by the

congregation where the minister serves (119).

A third leadership model for considerion is the one most germane to the theme of

this project—situational leadership (SLT). SLT has its origins in the 1970s through the

work of Hersey and Blanchard (Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Pratice* 99).

Following its beginnings, the authors further developed their thinking that, by some

estimates, has become one of the most widely known theories in the domain of

managerial leadership (Thompson and Vecchio 837). The basic premise of SLT is that no

one single best style of leadership exists. Perhaps the best description comes from the

developers of the theory themselves: "Situational Leadership II is based on the beliefs

that *people can and want to develop* and *there is no best leadership style* to encourage

that development (Blanchard et al.,88).

In fact, what is best in terms of style will depend on two different variables.

Variable one is the level of motivation of the individual or group the leader is attempting

to influence, and variable number two is the capability of the individual or group in

question to carry out the necessary tasks for the furtherance of the organization's goals.

In the application of SLT, these two variables are put in quadrant form, termed a four-

square matrix, and are used to help the leader determine the appropriate style to employ

(see Figure 2.1).

High
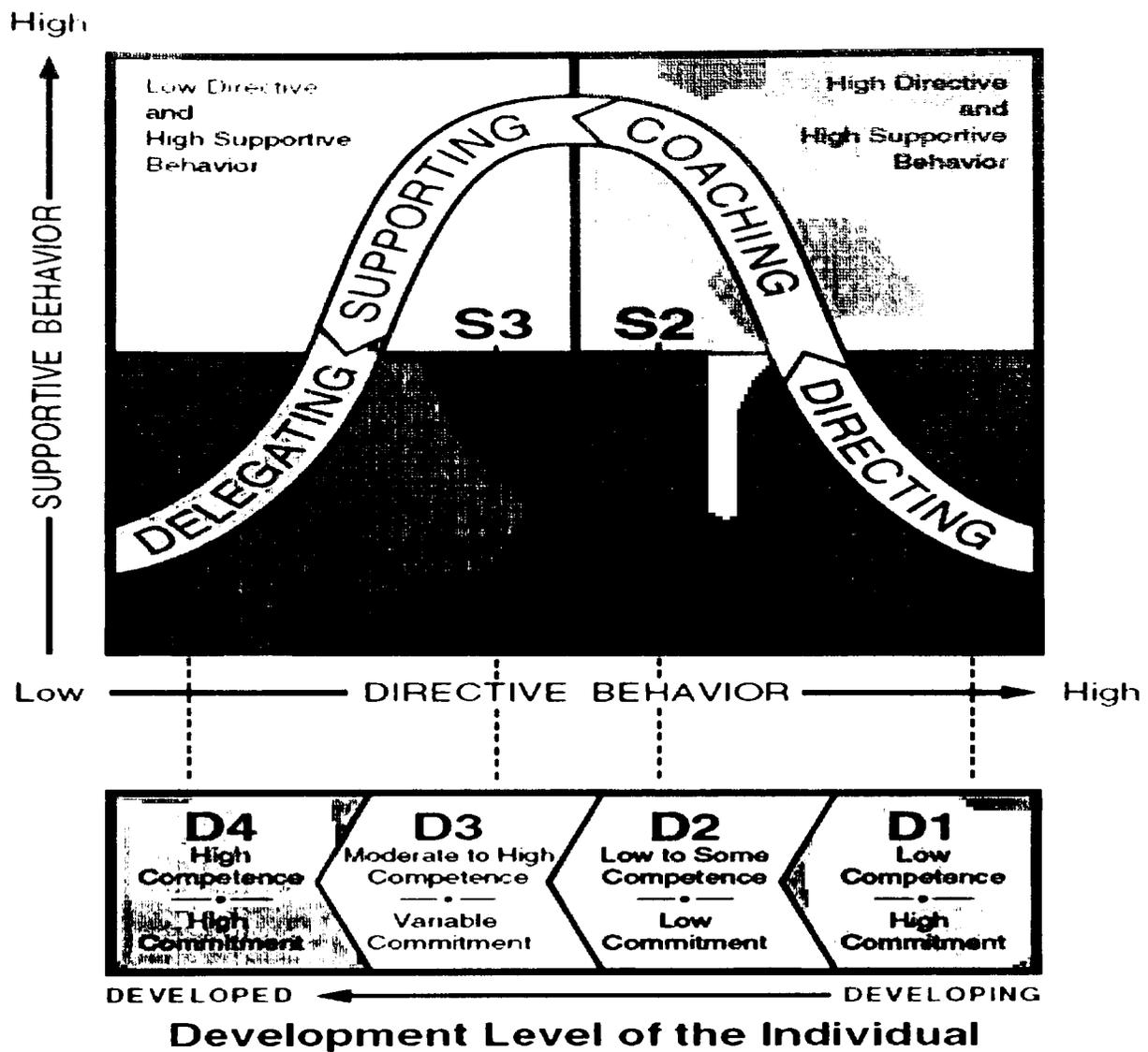
Figure 2.1 The Situational Leadership Model

In evaluating SLT, when comparing it with the charismatic approach, which

focuses on the abilities of the leader themselves, SLT is far more directed toward the

needs of the individual or group, which places it squarely in line with the

transformational leadership approach. In SLT, the leader's task becomes that of an

evaluator; they must determine where the individual or group falls in the matrix and then

craft the approach that corresponds to it. Conversely, charismatic leaders may be

sensitive to the needs of those they are influencing, but in the end they become almost

immaterial. Followers either respond to charismatic leaders as they demonstrate

capability and the willingness to risk and exude personal charisma, or they do not elect to

follow. Simply put, charismatic leadership is leader focused; transformational and SLT

leaders put the focus on those they lead and influence.

Like any leadership model, SLT is not without its detractors. Geir Thompson and

Robert P Vecchio contend that as an academic theory, SLT exhibits a lack of a strong

evidence-base (837). In other words, the major premises of SLT are not supported well

by testing and intervention. Others contend that SLT suffers from not being able to

establish some of its foundational principles. The interplay between the major quadrants

and the presuppositions behind them are fundamentally flawed (Graeff 285-91).

Regardless, SLT is widely viewed as pragmatic, and certainly successful

considering its wide inclusion in popular management textbooks (Thompson and Vecchio

837). Further, while pointing out its academic shortcomings, Thompson and Vecchio

allow for SLT to be an "attractive framework for discussing interpersonal relations"

(837). SLT has wide, positive application as demonstrated by its positive outcomes

measured in a large Midwestern university (Kivlighan 32-38). A particularly interesting

evaluation was conducted among emergency room teams. It concluded that lead

physicians who possessed strong SLT skills exhibited favorable patient and team

outcomes when contrasted with those who either did not possess these skills or chose to

lead other ways. I concur with Henry P. Sims, Samer Faraj, and Seokhwa Yun when they

assert, "Based on our own research, we believe that specific leadership behaviors can be

clustered together to form a "type" or "style" of leadership" (154).

Polycentric Leadership

An additional approach to leadership merits consideration that falls loosely under the rubric of leadership style. This approach to leadership may be considered as a personal style but could also be construed to encompass a more global, multifaceted approach that transcends the individual and is more descriptive of a wider community. This leadership style is termed *polycentric leadership.*

The term finds its genesis in the thinking of Suzanne Morse. She contends that successful communities find specific circles of leadership in multiple "centers" (qtd. in Hesselbein 234). In other words, the locus of authority is not necessarily found in one person or delegated authority but has multiple points from which leadership emanates. Each of these have a certain role to play and ultimately are guided by a common vision of what should transpire to further the cause, or goals, of the community in question.

One can easily see the potential value of this type of leadership style. If a goal transcends that of a single organization, the possibility of "buy-in" exists from many different constituencies of a community. If these centers of leadership can stay focused on the common vision, great potential remains for the wider advancement of the community in question. In particular, a polycentric leadership approach would serve well to advance a cause in a given community that far transcends the ability of a single entity to accomplish by itself. For example, the United Way relies on the cooperative leadership of many individual companies who are committed to the betterment of their communities. Without the cooperation of these multiple centers of leadership, the advancement of many philanthropic and social service organizations would be difficult, at best, to achieve. However, the reality of polycentric leadership in a given context could be

considered as somewhat nebulous. Many concerns remain, such as those surrounding who makes the ultimate decision to move the common good forward, who among the many leaders has the final responsibility, and who the right to determine whom that leader will be.

To narrow the focus for the project at hand, let us consider that an individual may choose to adopt a polycentric style of leadership. To utilize the example of a pastor in a local church setting, he or she may recognize that a problem being confronted by his or her local parish far exceeds their ability to address as a local congregation. As a practical example, many inner-city parishes find themselves surrounded by problems many cities in twenty-first-century America are experiencing, such as high rates of crime, drug usage, chronic homelessness and ethnically transitioning neighborhoods. Pastoral leaders, however gifted, often realize quickly that their power to effect change through their own personal leadership is extremely limited, given the finite ability of any one congregation to address situations of this magnitude. However, a deliberate strategy of cooperative leadership with the wider resources and leadership of the community may be the answer to addressing these extremely challenging issues. Morse says, "The challenge for the twenty-first century community is to be realistic about changing circumstances and challenges, innovative about the responses, and bold about the action that is needed" (230). In specific situations, a deliberate choice to embrace polycentric leadership may be part of the answer.

As with nearly any aspect of life, the ability to measure the success of a particular leadership style from a distance may vary considerably from evaluating its effectiveness in day-to-day life. For example, one must measure the impact of how leaders vary their

leadership style upon the individual of group that they are trying to influence in the everyday leadership situations they face.

In response, the style of leadership embraced seems to make a significant difference in the satisfaction felt by followers of a given leader. This difference appears to be true across the types of enterprise established as well as cultural orientation. In a study of university students, a variety of small groups were exposed to three unique styles of leadership, defined by the authors of the study as authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. Each group dealt with practical questions that impacted their lives on campus as students, such as how grades were to be administered, the choice of social activities on campus, and the potential implementation of a service component as a required part of course work. However, the approach made to the various groups utilized a facilitator trained to employ one of the three leadership styles. As the study concluded, students were invited to critique each of the approaches. At the end, the researchers concluded that students clearly preferred the democratic approach as compared to either of the other two (Foster 4-6). Other studies serve to confirm this conclusion in other arenas, particularly when decisions need to be implemented by volunteers (Peterson 1117). Certainly, one sees the parallel here with the local church context, which itself is so heavily volunteer oriented. However, a cautionary note needs to be sounded as well. Evidence exists that in a multilevel organization, the higher the level and importance of the group in question, the less impact that a given mix of leadership skills and styles seems to make (Greenwood and McNamara 141-52). In other words, when working with people who are gifted and highly qualified, a leader who only changes their approach to leadership by varying their style is much less likely to secure significant change in that

particular group. For those who are aware that leaders possess the ability to change their style, they are much more likely to demand a substantive, as opposed to stylistic, change to see a given organization move forward.

This necessity to adapt one's leadership style appears to hold true across the differences of culture. While not the specific subject of this study, it merits a brief consideration. Don I. Jung and Bruce J. Avolio found that a distinction exists between what they term individualistic versus collectivistic cultures. In individualistic cultures, such as those in Western, predominantly Caucasian societies, individuals have a tendency to be motivated by goals that further their own self-interests; conversely, in collectivistic cultures, such as found in predominantly Asian nations, the tendency is to support the group's goals and interests. The pursuit of individual goals and advancement roughly corresponds to the transactional style of leadership; for those motivated by group advancement, one finds a degree of linkage with the transformational style of leadership. The research strongly suggests that the administration of the same leadership style had vastly different effects on the two groups. Further, they concluded, "Certain leadership styles may be more or less effective than others depending on the ethnic group followers belong to and the tasks that are being performed" (216). Thus, it appears that the ability to vary leadership style is necessary to be effective in leading cross-culturally.

One further consideration merits examination. For the most part, this discussion of the impact of leadership style has been limited to the reaction to it by followers. Obviously, the response by followers is an important, even vital consideration. However, the consequences of a leader's inability to adapt may go significantly beyond a given employee's or group's feelings and perception. Potentially, they extend to the very

survivability of an organization. Satyabir Bhattacharyya studied the ability of entrepreneurs to transition from the style of leadership necessary at the inauguration of their business enterprise to a style necessary to further the growth and advancement of their business. Two of his findings were key not only to his study but also to the premise of this project: (1) he found that some of the very characteristics that enabled the founding of a business can serve to undermine its future growth if the leader does not change, and (2) most leaders can learn to change their approach if they are willing to admit that their old methods no longer work (107-15). While he is writing in a business context, to consider that a similar inability of pastors to adapt the style of leadership may have potentially fatal consequences for the cause of Christ's church creates great cause for concern.

Contrarian Views to the Concept of Leadership Style

As with any approach to a subject of significance, opposing points of view merit close attention. The consideration of leadership style and its impact is no exception.

A first objection encountered is that the ability to adjust and adapt leadership style seems to flow more from who individuals are by their very nature as opposed to a consciously learned style that can be given a name. For example, some contend that a follower is much more attuned to leaders' attitudes, emotions, values, and behaviors than simply how they exemplify the skill of leadership (Zhu et al. 152). If they are worthy of emulation in a moral sense, they will be followed, as opposed to stereotypical slick leaders who glibly manifest what they think others want to see in order to move organizations forward. In a certain sense, this thinking is much closer to a charismatic style of leadership, where leaders are followed because they are perceived to possess the

ability to navigate risk and to manifest expertise. However, the third characteristic of

charismatic leadership, which is the requisite possession of a certain personal magic,

distinguishes what I are trying to say here. While a charismatic leader may possess great

moral rectitude, by definition possession of this admirable level of character is not

forcibly the case. The objection to the concept of leadership style is that this leader

possesses moral and ethical traits worthy of emulation. Who the leader is is more than a

collection of leadership tools, which can be taken out of the leadership tool box and

utilized at whim, only to be returned to the box in preference of something else when the

need arises. Succinctly stated, leaders lead out of who they are as opposed to

implementing the leadership tools (or styles) they possess.

A final objection comes from the thinking of Joseph C. Rost. Himself a professor

of leadership, his objection to the concept of leadership styles is as strongly worded as it

is passionately felt:

> No one seriously interested in developing human beings as leaders can
> possibly believe that leaders should be taught or trained to change their
> styles when they are involved in different situations according to some
> prescriptive model that is based on pop psychology at best or on
> statistically analyzed questionnaires at worse. The idea that varying style
> with different situations is a mature, deeply human, and civilized approach
> to leader development is ludicrous on the face of the issue ("Leadership
> Development in the New Millennium" 95).

Rost's thinking does merit a thoughtful response. As I have already shown, others

operate in the academic realm of leadership study who have concerns about leadership

style, particularly SLT. I have noted that SLT is on much shakier ground as far as

substantiation in testing and intervention than would otherwise be desirable in a theory

widely prescribed and utilized. Rost raises a further concern:

> Leaders are told to vary their leadership styles depending on the situation, and so these styles are switched on and off much as we switch electricity on and off when we enter and leave dark rooms. Again, is that an authentic approach to development or a manipulative approach? (92)

The caution expressed about the possibility of the application of leadership style being manipulative needs to be heard. However, even with all of these objections, in the final analysis exposes a level of doubt. For example, one may question whether simply applying a variety of leadership styles truly facilitates achieving the goals of an organization. However, if no questions arise because of concerns about moral or ethical compromise associated with the employ of stylistic change, then what is pragmatically effective creates a result both valid and desirable.

Pastoral Ministry and Leadership Style

In this examination of leadership style, I now turn to the subject that most motivates this study: the intersection of leadership style and the role of pastor. Concerns surface surrounding the origin of leadership in a pastoral role, as well as expectations that accompany what being a pastor entails in today's church environment. For example, some question the boundaries pastors must operate within. Whether they are limitation based on the leadership skills that they may have been born with, exposed to in their upbringing, or even imposed by the church setting they serve, be that denominational or independent, these merit consideration.

Little doubt exists that pastors have expectations placed on them for leadership that serve as a background in which they must operate. Pastors exercise their craft in the midst of a stage that becomes the touch point in which leadership is exercised. Most often the background is set long before leaders appear on the scene. Much of the pastors milieu

is predetermined long before they ever begin the exercise of pastoral leadership. Some of the factors include, but are not limited to, the church's spiritual and theological underpinnings. Certainly, one notes great similarities in the pastoral role across denominations and theological persuasions. However, by way of a practical example, a pastor in the Presbyterian tradition, who may serve a congregation consisting of several thousand members, operates far differently by constraint of denominational polity and structure than an African-American pastor who is planting a storefront church and must create policies and guidelines to enable this newborn congregation to grow. Susan L. Lichtman and H. N. Malony, in a study of the California-Pacific Conference of the United Methodist Church, found that denominational expectations of pastors who served there met with very specific demands detailed by the leadership of that conference, such as the need for pastors to exercise a high degree of influence over others' activities, the development of many one-on-one, personal relationships with other people, and effective functioning in a variety of group settings (167-69). In addition, despite the perceived decline by some of influences in the twenty-first- century American church, vestiges remain of wider cultural expectation for pastoral leadership. Some of these may be as simple as what a given group of people accept as appropriate dress for the pastoral leader as a prerequisite to exercise their ministry. Multiple practical examples exist of this reality, which extend to the necessity for the pastor to wear a robe in certain traditions while leading worship; in others, for the male pastor to wear a tie and jacket; in yet others, in order for ministers to participate as chaplains in a police setting, they must wear the clerical collar as a visible sign readily understood by the general public as a symbol of ministry.

Sometimes, the expectations of pastors for how to exercise leadership move from

the external and visible, such as the illustration of appropriate dress, to the subtle,

behind-the-scenes level of expectations that pastors discover only after being in a given

local church context for some time. These expectations can rise to a similar level of what

missionaries encounter when they begin work in a culture and people not their own. One

writer's observation is poignant here: "But the fact is that all people engaged in Christian

ministry bring to their work a culture and tradition of ministry and leadership"

(Lingenfelter 15). As a young pastor, I experienced this need for cultural adaptation

firsthand with the challenges associated with preparing for the first funeral I conducted

just a few days after moving to my first parish. Even though the move to this church was

only a matter of three hours by car and was in the same state, the church contexts were

vastly different. Further, the customs associated with conducting a funeral in this local

congregation were different enough from the previous church where I had served as

associate minister that, without guidance given by some compassionate laity prior to the

service, I would have conducted the funeral with multiple gaffes. I would have been

guilty in the eyes of the congregation of exercising ministry with a genuine lack of

leadership skill.

This personal story is simply anecdotal evidence to what Allen H. Nauss notes is

a cultural change in the minds of laity as to the level of expectation of leadership

performance. New forms of media, the emerging and changing role of women, and

liberalized values have come into play whereby pastors are expected to perform not only

competently, but even effectively (Nauss, "Leadership Styles of Effective Ministry" 59).

Because of these changes, pastors cannot simply operate with the leadership tools they

inherit. New circumstances and situations call for the exercise of leadership with tools

pastors acquire throughout the span of their ministry.

Certainly one of the most distinguishing and visible traits of a church is its size,

both in terms of physical plant and the size of a congregation, whether measured by the

number of members, number of attenders, or other benchmark. Simply stated, a large

congregation has different leadership needs than that of a smaller congregation. A study

of the literature seems to indicate that, depending on the style of leadership to be

exercised, the need may be different in the large church setting than in the smaller

congregation. As discussed, the exercise of SLT would look the same regardless of

church size. However, the appropriate choice of other styles of leadership may be based

on the scope and complexity of larger churches in contrast with those of smaller size. A

practical example may serve to illustrate. Although disagreement exists, Carl F. George

suggests that a church can even quantify the number of attendees that serves as a growth

barrier for a given congregation (125-81). Often, the number cited is two hundred

(Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* 130). Therefore, if one accepts the

validity of this barrier, and if a church is going to break through this numerical barrier,

the pastor is going to have to change their leadership style. C. Peter Wagner gives titles to

this leadership style change, utilizing both a biblical term and one that a pastor in the

American context will readily understand. In his way of thinking, a pastor can embrace

the idea of being a shepherd while the church remains small. In this distinctly biblical

image, the shepherd is able to engage personally and be very hands-on with all the

members of the flock at this stage because the sheer number of sheep is manageable.

However, the moment arrives where pastors struggle to see continued growth, because of

the time constraints and inability to add any more to a full workload. A shift of leadership style must happen, and some suggest that this shift must take place somewhere around the barrier of two hundred attendees. The pastor must change, using the imagery suggested by George, from being a sheepherder to being a rancher (133). The pastor reorients, and instead of being hands-on with each and every sheep, he or she now equips others, whether paid staff or laity, to do the shepherd's work. The pastor's new leadership role as rancher becomes more supervisory and less pastoral, at least in the need of having to have direct and immediate contact with everyone who is part of the church; he or she directs the others who then answer to the pastor (Nauss "Pastor as Leader" 116; Wagner 130). While the shepherd-rancher concept may have value to assist the pastor in the realization that the leadership role must change in relationship to the size of the congregation, some have found that the needed leadership role is far more nuanced. Instead of a simple choice between acting as shepherd or a rancher, one researcher found no less than seven leadership styles necessary, based on a gradient ranging from congregations of very small size (less than thirty-five in attendance) to a megachurch (over two thousand) (Schaller 28-35). The research seems clear that the size of the congregation the pastor serves demonstrably affects the required style of leadership.

Another facet of a pastor's leadership style that should be considered is the sheer quantity of time a pastor spends exercising leadership. In considering the vocation of pastor, most in ministry would anticipate prior to their entry into the pastorate that their primary roles would consist of preaching, teaching, counseling, and visitation. However, with the change in perception of what the pastor's role should be, and with concomitant rapid cultural change, the pastor has had to adopt other key roles in the exercise of

ministry today. One of them certainly has been the necessity of exercising strong pastoral

leadership. Attempts have been made to quantify what percentage of a pastor's day is

spent in leadership or managerial-related functions:

> The data revealed that 24% of the total desk work time and 25% of the
> total verbal contact time were within the administrative domain, which
> includes supervision of staff. The frequent use of tours by the pastors in
> this study for observing the actions of the paid and volunteer staff further
> confirms this dimension of the pastoral working role (Kuhne and
> Donaldson 155).

It is immediately evident in reading these findings that some very significant implications

appear for pastoral ministry. First, for leadership and managerial functions to consume

one out of every four minutes of a pastor's day is a significant change from the traditional

role of a pastor of years past. Whether or not this change is positive can be debated.

Certainly for leadership functions to consume a full one-fourth of a leaders' time means

that less time is available for preaching, counseling, visiting, and teaching, which are

among the traditional roles of a pastor and which serve as the vital core of why pastors

are needed.

If anything, an acceleration and deepening of this change in the subsequent years

has occurred since Gary William Kuhne and Joe F. Donaldson's findings. In a process he

calls *liminality*, Roxburgh vividly describes the situation that groups experience today

when faced with adapting to rapid change. For these groups, which include the church,

the pace of cultural change is so rapid that the group may lose its status and way of

working to the point that it may even lose its sense of how to function in a new situation

(52). While Roxburgh may have developed the descriptive term for this process, others

have noticed this phenomenon occurring many years prior (Nauss, "Problems" 141-51).

When a church finds itself in such a situation, it needs a leader that can adjust and adapt, including the possession of the ability to acquire new leadership tools. The issue is not a matter of previous skills being somehow deficient or invalid in their day. Rather, the world has changed and continues to do so and at a rapid pace. Further, I am not arguing that the necessity for the change of pastoral leadership style will be more readily embraced even if all of the parties concerned recognize that it is necessary. Human nature prefers the path already known even though it may no longer lead to the desired destination. When change is required, the untried path becomes a source of anxiety not only for the group experiencing the anxiety, but also for the leader who must take them there. Expectations of how a leader has led in the past may be shattered, and decided discomfort may exist among those who now have to learn to adopt new expectations from the leader and the organization (McKenna and Yost 292).

A second needed factor is simply a further development of the traits of the pastor's character, particularly as expressed in the deepening of personal humility. If character and leadership are inseparable, then the reality of pastors immersed in a sea of rapid change and seeking to adapt, as well as to adopt, the new tools necessary to allow the church to thrive under their leadership, must also be concerned about the ongoing development of their character. For this adaptation to take place, then leaders must recognize that growth in humility should factor into the process of character development.

While humility is a decidedly Christian trait, it is not uniquely so. Beyond the bounds of Christian and even pastoral leadership, others recognize the importance of the existence of humility in leaders. In the widely read and popularly received book by Jim

Collins, he dissects a number of companies and organizations that he thinks have been

enabled to make the transition between what he terms "good" organizations to "great"

ones (8). In his analysis, a major factor that enables these organizations to make the leap

is the quality of character of the person at the helm of leadership. "Level Five Leaders"

(21), as he terms them, which is the descriptive titled used for those who receive his

highest possible rating, two characteristics are present in each of them—humility coupled

with intense professional will (21). As previously noted, transactional leadership, which

concerns itself with organizational outcomes, contrasts with transformational leadership,

which is more concerned with the individuals that comprise the group or organization. If

those leaders operating from a transactional mind-set may exhibit a tendency to power

through desired outcomes, exerting authority that comes solely from the position of

leadership they hold, then leaders who operate from the transformational leadership

perspective identify far more closely with Collins' findings. For this kind of leader, who

sees the value of personal character development, including the trait of humility coupled

with intense resolve, leadership emerges from building trust and influencing followers

through integrity of character and depth of relationships (Lingenfelter 111). Pastors self-

identify humility of character as key to their ability to function as pastoral leaders

(McKenna, Boyd, and Yost 197).

In order to understand the concept of humility in the pastoral leader, one needs to

know how to recognize it. Two scenarios may help illuminate this issue. The first

situation calls for a dramatic, swift, and decisive course of action from the person in

leadership. These types of situations are readily found in the political realm. One example

comes from President John F Kennedy's need to act swiftly and dramatically when

confronted with the truth that the Soviet Union was arming Cuba with nuclear-tipped rockets just ninety miles from the shores of the United States. Another, more recent example would be President Obama's decision to strike when presented with the likelihood that Osama bin Laden's whereabouts had been determined inside of Pakistan. Some would contend that these types of decisions reflect presidential leadership. Few would argue that American presidents do not occasionally have to make this kind of dramatic decision. To return to the pastoral context, at times pastors must make bold, significant decisions that dramatically impact the life of their churches. Even if done in conjunction with others' input, a major change in worship style employed by a congregation or a decision to press forward with a major building program are but two of many possibilities of a dramatic leadership decision a pastor must make. If the decision is successful, in the political realm the resultant success becomes source material to tout the accomplishments and visionary leadership of the president, particularly to sustain a case for election to a second term. For pastors, the growth of the church because of a correct decision can become a bullet point on their résumés and a selling point when decisions are being made to transition to the next place of leadership. The point here is not to denigrate positive, bold, or dramatic decisions. The need for decisiveness in pastoral leadership does occur. Neither am I saying that the need for the occasional dramatic decision and humility of character are mutually exclusive. However, I do contend that the far more frequent need is for long-term, consistent, routine, humble leadership exercised over the long term.

One of the main points of argument of this project is the need for the pastor-leaders to be adaptable in the styles of leadership they utilize given the multiplicity of

situations they will confront. However, adaptability in leadership does not always

necessitate dramatic circumstances. Situations rarely require complex responses,

especially when a simply response will suffice. One writer noted why this explanation

holds true:

> The vast majority of difficult, important human problems—both inside
> and outside organizations—are not solved by a swift, decisive stroke from
> someone at the top. What usually matters are careful, thoughtful, small,
> practical efforts by people working far from the limelight. In short, quiet
> leadership is what moves and changes the world. (Badaracco 9)

Leadership exercised outside of the limelight is certainly part of the definition of

humility.

Another facet in the discussion of pastoral leadership style is the concept of

process. The development of a leader is a process that is never fully completed. Leaders

are lifetime learners. They seek to acquire new tools to add to their leadership toolbox,

recognizing that through the acquisition of new and better ways to lead they become

better servants and improved leaders (Blanchard and Miller 29). While a pastoral leader's

development may be measurable, it is gradual. The ability of a pastoral leader to acquire

the leadership skills necessary to change and adapt often comes through life lessons

borne of experiences that occur over time and often through difficult moments. These

situations serve as vehicles to initiate the process of leadership character formation and

learning.

The Development of Pastoral Leadership

On the issue of how pastors develop leadership ability and the capacity to adapt

their personal style to various situations they encounter, the subject of the efficacy of

prior training in preparation for such situations versus growth and learning on the job

should be addressed. Some contend that traditional training received by leaders best facilitates their growth and learning. Others insist that challenges faced through trial by fire while serving as leaders serve as the superior method for leadership growth.

The business world indicates that while leaders are doing working and encountering the day-to-day challenges of leadership, capacities to lead are best developed (McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison 251-52). Evidence for this conclusion finds exists in the lives of prominent leaders such as King. For King, the twin elements of leading African-Americans into what was essentially uncharted waters, namely the struggle to achieve full equality not previously known in America, coupled with the arrests, misunderstandings, and competitiveness within the civil rights movement itself, all lend support to the thought that while on-the-job experience and circumstances that greatly challenge the leader are the best teachers.

Growth in leadership does not always arrive through having a 100 percent success rate even through times of trial. Learning through moments of failure is cited as a vehicle through which the pastor-leader grows. In fact, some researchers conclude that situations resulting in negative outcomes may ultimately provide more potential for learning and growth than those that stem from uniquely positive circumstances (McKenna, Boyd, and Yost 190-201).

By contrast, others have highlighted the fact that organizations, religious and secular, continue to invest heavily in leadership training programs. Specifically, in the pastoral leadership context, Nauss has found that in large congregations of eight hundred members and above, pastors need to have "assertiveness in leading" ("Ministerial Effectiveness" 65) as a part of their skill set. Further, he concludes that "support for the

training and use of a directive leadership style probably bears careful consideration by seminaries and clergy (65)." Evidently, he understands that this specific capacity is teachable in the classroom, and can be learned outside of the context of on-the-job experience. However, notwithstanding the opinions on either side, in the end very little is known definitively as to how pastoral leaders develop (McKenna, Boyd, and Yost 192).

Whatever the ultimate outcome of the situation faced by a pastor-leader, for it to be a teachable moment and an opportunity for growth in leadership ability, they need to maintain emotional control even if trying to operate under extreme pressure. This is in no way a new problem being confronted by today's pastor-leader. Paul the apostle gives a glimpse of the pressures faced in his own unique ministry context. In writing to the church in Corinth, which itself experienced great turmoil and necessitated significant leadership intervention by the apostle, he writes: "We do not 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.) Later in the epistle, after recounting a long list of sufferings that he and his traveling companions faced when endeavoring to plant churches and expand the kingdom through the preaching of the Gospel, he states, "Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches." (2 Cor. 11:28) Transporting a similar situation into today's context, the ability of a pastor to exert leadership is affected by the emotional stability shown by the pastor. Robert B. McKenna and Paul R. Yost describe this capacity as the ability of a leader to self-regulate and contend that this capability is critical to the success of the leader. In their estimation, leadership is "less about a place within a corporate hierarchy, and more about a person's ability to remain emotionally under

control in the midst of increasing pressure to lose control" (292). The situation faced by a

pastor who is tasked with conducting a local church governing board meeting where a

situation becomes emotionally charged serves as a practical example. Whether dealing

with sharp disagreement over an issue with pastoral staff, lack of unanimity for a

proposed building program, discord over what worship style a local congregation will

choose, or any number of other potential issues, the pastor must demonstrate emotional

control, thereby retaining the ability to lead pastorally.

For pastors who would be effective leaders, the concern goes beyond the ability to

exhibit personal emotional control in stressful situations. They need to possess EI. In

pastoral ministry, a high level of EI is crucial to good leadership. The ability to be in a

situation and understand it becomes vital for pastors, particularly when in conflict

management. For instance, understanding comes when pastors observe and correctly

interpret body language. Examples may include when a person exhibits body language

that is agitated, passive, aggressive, threatening, or confrontational. Pastors also need to

be sensitive to the emotional content of the words selected , as well as vocal inflection

and intonation, in the situation presenting itself. Further, communication by silence also

bears on a situation. The use of humor by others can deflect the tension felt by an

individual, and pastors possessing a high level of EI can detect this type of deflection

used to hide what people are truly feeling. No two situations are exactly alike; therefore,

ministry leaders who are able to vary their mode of conflict management based on

circumstances and what they intuitively pick up from the people involved assists them in

guiding the conflict toward a successful solution. While the capacity to exercise EI is

largely intuitive, some researchers contend that ability that goes beyond intuition can be

learned and that such training is indeed valuable (Gambill and Lineberger 30; Nauss "Ministerial Efffectivess" 66).

The next facet of pastoral leadership style extends beyond the boundary of pastors themselves. Increasingly, researchers find that teamwork multiplies organizational capacities to achieve desired objectives, which is one of the major components of the concept of leadership itself. To return briefly to Roxburgh's concept of liminality, change occurs at such a rapid pace, even gifted individuals find it difficult, if not impossible, to lead adequately given the complexity of situations and multiplicity of factors faced that impact any organization. Some writers believe that team leadership is the avenue to be taken in today's context. For them, it is a solid approach for avoiding the pitfalls of self-sufficiency in leaders and becoming the way for those who are led— the followers themselves—to embrace a strong sense of ownership and involvement (Dorff 26-27; McKenna and Yost 294-95).

A note of caution needs to be sounded concerning pastoral team leadership as well as the concept of leadership in general. One must consider just how far ahead can a leader be and still be considered a leader. In other words, the possibility of limits to the visionary aspect of leadership exists, such as being too visionary would create. The problems of followers truly hearing, let alone accepting, the path the leader is trying to advocate represent the potential danger of these limitations. There may be a possibility for a leader's vision to be so dissimilar to what their followers are prepared to accept that the leadership being offered is rejected outright as being too extreme. In response, leaders must protect themselves against too much divergence from their followers. Dorff has even quantified this divergence:

> Rabbi Irving Greenberg captures that part of the puzzle when he asserts
> that "a leader can be, at most, 10 or 15 percent ahead of his people," that if
> you either simply reaffirm what your group has said and done all along, or
> if you are more than 15% ahead of your group, you are no longer its
> leader. (26-27)

Dorff's thinking serves as both a safeguard and an apologetic for pastoral team

leadership. To lead pastorally as a part of a team means that the pastor is much less likely

to lead from an ivory tower. He or she will be engaged in the give and take of interaction

with people. As such, team leadership serves as a corrective to being either too far ahead

or too far behind where the church needs to be and tends to anchor the pastor's vision

with a very real and tangible sense of reality and practicality.

Moving from the idea of team leadership, the discussion shifts to another concept

that is a natural fit in this study of pastoral leadership styles, which is specifically the

concept of servant leadership. This well-known and oft-cited expression finds its genesis

in the thought and writings of Robert K. Greenleaf. To understand Greenleaf's

contribution to leadership, one needs at least examine briefly his background, which has

so greatly impacted his thinking and writing.

Growing up in a home where his father was at best a nominal church attender,

Greenleaf eventually found a level of faith through the Society of Friends. He was deeply

impacted through the lives of some of the great Quakers including, John Woolman,

whose life Greenleaf holds up as a standard by which great leaders ought to be measured,

because of Woolman's extraordinary power to effect non-coercive persuasion (165).

However, even prior to the example of Woolman, Greenleaf acknowledges the

servanthood expressed by Jesus in New Testament writings and recognizes its normative

role in the development of his concept of servant leadership. Servant leadership has many

parallels with the thinking of transformational leadership. For example, one of the hallmarks of transformational leadership is a sharp focus on the individual being led. In a similar way, servant leaders are more concerned about the betterment of the person being led than they are about their own welfare. Servant leaders exercise the role of leader in a spirit of humility.

To say that the servant leader is at all times weak and passive inaccurately expresses the concept. For Greenleaf, particularly in the area of casting vision, "to lead is to go out ahead and show the way when the way may be unclear, difficult, or dangerous..." (114). Obviously, this belief is anything but passive or weak. Further, servant leadership maintains a similar focus to the transformational model of leadership. Servant leadership is others focused and seeks the good of those who are followers, not simply the benefit of leaders themselves.

A particular concern of Greenleaf's is similar to the concern of any leadership style the leader needs to possess. His concern is that the idea of servant leadership could simply one day become a gimmick, something that achieves a fashionable status for a particular length of time only to be cast aside when a newer, trendier way of leadership appears on the scene. His insight is poignant: "Such a move might have a short-lived aspirin effect, but when that effect wears off, it might leave the institution more ailing than it was before, and another gimmick would need to be sought" (145). Given the continual and substantial amount of materials published concerning leadership, I understand Greenleaf's caution.

Since Greenleaf's initial treatment and development of servant leadership in the early 1970s, servant leadership has emerged from being simply a loosely defined set of

characteristics and normative principles to something around which researchers have

tried to build a theory (Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* 223). As such,

Northouse understands servant leadership to be more a behavior than a trait, and one

where altruism is considered as the central component of the leadership process, which

becomes the unique contribution of the theory (234).

Certainly, as is true with each of the styles already discussed, a watchful eye

needs to be exercised to protect against any concept of leadership becoming simply the

newest thinking to appear, or some kind of panacea. The fact that a given leadership style

may be the most recent, the most talked about, or the most fashionable does not mean that

it is the most valid or supercedes all that has gone before. This sobering possibility was

certainly Greenleaf's fear in advancing servant leadership and one that seemingly may

apply everywhere. In the subsequent decades since Greenleaf's initial presentation of

servant leadership, some researchers have found a certain quantity of followers whose

distinct preferences for the type of leader under whom they personally flourish run

counter to the servant leadership model (Liden et al. 161-77).

The Adaptability Factor and Pastors' Ability to Learn New Skills

The fear that a new style of leadership should be avoided simply because it is new

should not prevent pastors from having an inquisitive spirit. Indeed, evidence exists that

pastors' willingness to try new approaches to challenging circumstances is the very basis

for their ultimate success in overcoming whatever those circumstances may be.

Much like the medical profession, which has general practitioners and specialists,

pastors have similar divisions. Some researchers actually employ the word *generalist*,

and contend that it is the ideal ministerial style because it gives pastors the possibility of

being flexible and adaptable when faced with ever-changing circumstances (Lichtman

and Malony 167-69). Certainly, this concept goes well together with Roxburgh's concept

of liminality as previously discussed.

Some consideration needs to be given concerning why some pastors adapt well,

even thrive, as generalists in comparison with others whose adaptation is much less

certain. King's life is an example. First, King was not simply the leader of the civil rights

movement, as significant as that may be. His adult vocational life was spent in Christian

ministry as a pastor, which is certainly germane this discussion. Some believe his

extraordinary leadership gifts were divinely imparted and that he reflected the personal

magic of charismatic leadership that is so difficult to define. However, King also

confronted circumstances that, if not unparalleled, were certainly extremely difficult.

Certainly, great motivation, even pressure, weighed upon King to adapt as the way to

survive, let alone thrive. King's ability to change and adapt on the job, bringing to bear

influences in his past such as the nonviolent model for protest demonstrated through the

life of Mahatma Gandhi, enabled him to lead the civil rights movement successfully.

Indeed, King's example fits the bill for those leaders who have high learning agility,

enabling them to learn new skills in response to tough, challenging circumstances

(Eichinger and Lombardo 12-15). While the evidence from King could be considered

anecdotal only, other researchers have found that what emerged from an ongoing

leadership study of pastors that examined events that shaped the leadership of senior

pastors was "a taxonomy of high pressure, on-the-edge experiences that shaped these

pastors as leaders and influenced their overall vocational direction" (McKenna, Boyd,

and Yost 191). The key to understanding this ability of pastors to adjust leadership styles

appears to be motivational; pastors who are motivated by the challenges of on-the-job, high pressure situations are those who adapt and thrive.

Pastors demonstrate further evidence of this reality by their response to the hard-earned lessons of leadership. Among the many roles that pastoral leadership exercises—counselor, preacher, mentor, administrator, many make a deliberate choice to pass on what was learned by developing leaders within the congregation. Kuhne and Donaldson found several statements from a study of senior pastors enlightening: "I want to work myself out of a job by building competent leaders....I intend to reproduce myself in others..."..., "Only equipping the laity to minister will provide the necessary personnel to reach out to the community in significant ways..." (147). Clearly, building competent leaders resonates in the hearts of pastors who themselves have learned important leadership lessons.

The comments from these pastors communicate that intentionality is a desirable, even critical feature to possess in the exercise of pastoral leadership style. Pastors who are intentional in their choice of how they will lead—whether in their reaction to the difficulty of current circumstances or simply in transmitting to others lessons learned in the trenches of ministry—will be the ones who are effective. Nauss' findings are insightful:

> At every level of size and for practically every function, the skills of intentional ministry are necessary for effectiveness. This would suggest that a minister who is not intentional, but merely reacts to the pressures created in the job, is passive, or is even deliberately "laissez-faire," abdicating the responsibility for leadership, will very likely not become effective. (Nauss "Pastor as Leader" 125)

The conclusion appears valid that intentionality and effectiveness are linked closely together.

What Nauss believes is necessary is also achievable. Some pastors discover that their particular style of leadership tends toward the authoritarian end of the leadership spectrum, which fits the classical image of a strong leader. Others find that their leadership style trends toward the complete opposite which is democratic, or collaborative in nature. Of course, many pastors locate themselves somewhere in between these two extremes. However, no matter where pastors finds themselves on the continuum, they may still utilize the skills associated with those styles that they do not innately possess.

Pastoral Leadership—Gifting versus Role/Responsibility

To help understand pastoral leadership, some consideration of the exercise of leadership outside of the pastor's personal giftedness is necessary in order to grasp a full-orbed picture of what today's pastor faces. A fuller treatment of giftedness is described later in this chapter. However, to help understand the concept, I propose that the concept of a gift is a divinely imparted ability given by the Holy Spirit to assist the overall functioning of the Church. For example, the New Testament records lists of gifts (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor.12:7-11; Eph. 4:7-13), including gifts of teaching, leadership, encouraging, and prophesying, etc.

In the biblical understanding of giftedness, the pastor is gifted by the Holy Spirit in one or more areas. He or she may possess the gift of encouragement, for example, as well as the gift of teaching. Often, because this gifting is divine in nature, pastors tend naturally toward the exercise of their spiritual leadership by exclusively employing that particular gift. The sense that pastors perceive whether through personal observation or by feedback from others, that they are particularly effective in ministry when leading

through utilizing their gifts. For pastors with the gift of encouragement are most

comfortable when engaged in leadership that encourages the people they are called to

serve.

However, the role of the pastor extends far beyond the exigencies of one

particular gift. Pastors may possess multiple spiritual gifts, but even those who are

extremely gifted still have biblical responsibilities and roles that demand the exercise of

leadership despite the fact that he or she may not be gifted in specific areas. For example,

pastors who are gifted in teaching may shy away from ministries of compassion (i.e., the

biblical gift, "acts of mercy," Rom. 12:8) because they have yet to determine their exact

spiritual gifting and believe they are not gifted in that area even though the Holy Spirit

has gifted them or indeed may not possess that divine gift. Nevertheless, pastors not

possessing the gift of leadership in that area does not absolve him them of the

responsibility to provide for the compassionate care of people in need.

One can readily imagine the potential tension and struggle such a situation may

provoke in pastors. Knowing that one has a responsibility in a given area yet having no

gifting has the capacity to create stress for the minister. As Susan Muto and Adrian Van

Kaam point out, the perception of ineffectiveness can create a sense of frustration,

impotence, and irritation. If this perception is allowed to persist, the pastoral leader can

easily move into a self-protective mode, instead of openhearted and genuine ministry:

> What moves us forward in a forced way are functional benefits. Our career
> may be in jeopardy! Depleted are the transcendent aspirations and
> pneumatic inspirations that give meaning to what we do. What cools is our
> compassion. We become secretly indifferent. We try to hide our angry or
> resentful feelings behind a wooden grin, but it feels as if our face is about
> to fall off. Once ministerial presence begins to wane, slovenly actions
> follow (31).

Muto and Van Kamm's statement illustrates well how difficult for pastors who valiantly

try to pursue effective ministry yet find themselves in similar situations.

This thinking is echoed by William H. Willimon, who gives a practical example

of how this reality manifests itself in pastoral ministry. His experience is that a high

percentage of seminary men and women have introspective personalities and as such are

very content to spend large quantities of time alone with God to reflect on mystical

matters. However, he states, "The ordained ministry is not primarily about that. Pastors

are ordained by the church to lead the church...." (277). For him, a pastor's role and

responsibility is "convening and empower lay congregational leaders" (278). Therefore,

the pastor must understand that his or her role is to lead in concert with others rather than

simply allow ministry to be "an expression of the traits of the lone leader" (278-279).

Clearly, pastors must learn to lead beyond the boundaries of their personalities and work

collaboratively with others, enabling ministry to move forward.

Pastors' giftedness and role are not necessarily synonymous. The pastor's

conception of leadership in ministry must transcend innate giftedness and incorporate a

willingness to empower and equip others in areas that are not necessarily personal

strengths but are necessary for the well-being of the local congregation to which he or she

is called.

Introductory Survey

As an introductory tool and as an anticipatory element for the leadership seminar

that served as the intervention for this project, each participant took an online survey. The

intent of the survey was not to obtain quantitative data that could be used as a baseline for

evaluating measurements but served as a thought starter and as a basis for self-evaluation

for both pre- and post seminar purposes. The survey is a series of questions, divided into two major parts, that integrates directly with Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm's work.

The two parts of the online exam served to assist examinees in the determination of their primary leadership dimension. Part 1 presented with several screens of one-word challenges. For example, the first screen showed the words *adventurous, cheerful, careful, outgoing* and *calm*. The examinees, in turn, evaluated themselves by means of a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "Never or almost never" at one extreme to "Always or almost always" at the other end of the continuum.

Part 2 invited the examinees to self-evaluate by means of four phrases presented per screen. These phrases consisted of expressions, such as, "Finding new opportunities for my team," or "Getting comfortable making unpopular decisions." On each screen, the examinees assessed which of these, in their opinion, represented the phrase which expresses their greatest need, as well as a second phrase they determined to be the second most important area of improvement needed.

At the conclusion of the online exam, the internet survey process continued to the next step of compilation and assessment of the participants' responses. Immediately, participants receive a reply, informing them of their primary leadership dimension, which is part of Figure 2.2.
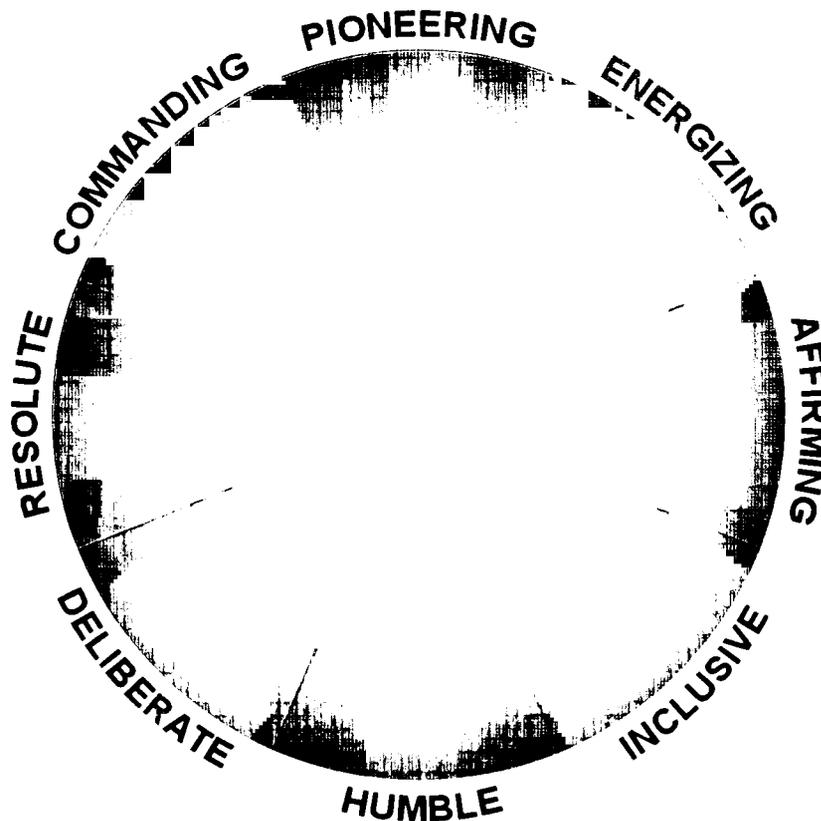
Figure 2.2. The Eight Dimensions of Leadership model.

For instance, participants receive the indication that they had a *deliberate* primary

leadership style. From there, participants were encouraged to explore the significance of

this assessment in *The 8 Dimensions* book by Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm. In the

report generated following the assessment, participants received information not only

about their primary dimension but also those who designed corresponding portion of the

pie chart darkened it to make identification easier.

While these leadership dimensions are in what the authors call a "circular

relationship (Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm 7)," they are at the same time

"nonhierarchical and nonsequential" (7). The significance is that according to the authors, a leader will have a place on the circle that is indeed his/her primary leadership dimension, but this in no way hinders them "from moving to an adjacent or opposite style depending on the situation or role" (7). Their contention that the ability of leaders to adjust leadership style due to changing circumstances is possible was the premise and perspective of this project.

Structural Design

As mentioned in chapter 1, the independent variable employed in this project consisted of a leadership seminar, administered to the group of ten pastors on the Southwest Ohio District Church of the Nazarene. Since a leadership seminar by its very nature purports to teach, then how the seminar teaches merits close consideration.

A consideration of the factors involved in the development of the seminar is germane to this project. When one prepares an intervention of this nature, which has the potential of not only influencing the outcome of the research, but also of having an ongoing impact in the lives of those taking the seminar, then the preparation of the seminar, as well as the seminar itself, should reflect best practices in current educational philosophy.

With this goal in mind, I intend to present a brief examination of some of the philosophical underpinnings regarding structural design and how it bears upon this project.

Perhaps no goal is more elusive for educators than to find ways to help a student arrive at what L. Dee Fink has termed a "significant learning experience" ("Creating Significant Learning Experiences" 1; "Power" 13). When put in the context of a

traditional learning setting, the goal of this desired experience transcends a student

simply coming to class, spending the allocated time under the tutelage of the professor,

taking required exams, and preparing written exercises, in order to obtain a desirable

grade for a course. Instead, educators think that a significant learning experience should

encompass something far more, embracing goals that are much more far-reaching and

result in change that impacts well beyond the classroom.

In order to create a significant learning experience, researchers endeavored to

define what this experience should entail. Building upon the early work of Bloom,

taxonomy of characteristics that define what this experience looks like has been

articulated ("Creating Significant Learning Experiences" 29). In Fink's taxonomy, six

elements intersect in a type of matrix that defines significant learning: foundational

knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn.

Further, he believes that all six of these characteristics which comprise significant

learning can be reflected in a given course ("Power" 14).

The difficulty arises in the pedagogy chosen in the attempt to achieve a significant

learning experience. Traditionally, educators have made extensive use of the classic

lecture form to transmit specific content to the student, with some estimating the level of

lecture usage between 73-83 percent (Blackburn et al. 32-48). However, growing

uneasiness exists about the exclusive use of traditional lecturing as the primary

pedagogical form because of its demonstrated inability to achieve the learning experience

so desired for many students. Instead, the research literature suggests that student

involvement in learning must go beyond listening; they must actively read, write, discuss,

and engage in higher-order thinking in order to make the learning experience significant

(Chickering, Gamson, and American Association 4).

A variety of reasons have been advanced to account for why educators resist

making the changes necessary in light of these findings. While the limited scope of this

project precludes full entrance into the discussion, one reason advanced by Fink is

certainly relevant to the preparation of the seminar:

> Sometimes faculty feel a shock at having to think about student learning in such a different way. This shock prompts them to wonder whether we have abandoned their original goal of communicating the content of a course in the process of widening the scope of the course to include other desirable kinds of student learning. My answer to this is, "No we have not abandoned course content." We have simply given it a new name, foundational knowledge, and then wrapped several other important kinds of learning around it. (Fink "Creating Significant Learning Experiences" 57)

To interpret his thinking, those involved in course preparation may have the fear that to

fully embrace alternate forms of pedagogy in an effort to create significant learning

experiences may mean the abandonment of effectively teaching the quantity of material

necessary to reflect a level of mastery of the course by the student. In essence, this fear

transforms into a type of competition. Creative, interesting teaching that appeals to the

student and embodies a variety of teaching methods but which may or may not

accomplish full knowledge of a subject, competes with traditional lecturing, which will

likely be understood by the professor as a good-faith effort at transmission of the

coursework but not necessarily adequate reception by the student.

These two approaches need not be necessarily mutually exclusive. In order to

arrive at both a solid mastery of content, coupled with a high level of student motivation

through the utilization of significant learning experiences, researchers suggest changing

the point of departure from which one begins the task of course development. Using a concept known as *backward design*, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe suggest that both may be accomplished (63). What makes the idea of this approach to course design backward is the perspective from which one begins. Instead of beginning the course development process in the traditional way (i.e., starting with the choice of textbooks, favored lessons, and preferred approaches made by the *teacher*), one begins with the end in view. This end is described as what the desired outcome would be for the *student* upon the completion of the course. These outcomes include any standards or goals that may already exist, which indicate successful mastery of a given subject, and also include any evidence of learning (or specific performances) required by the standard that the student should be able to demonstrate. Wiggins summarizes the approach: "It reminds us to begin with the question, What would we accept as evidence that students have attained the desired understandings and proficiencies—*before* proceeding to plan teaching and learning experiences?" (8). From this beginning point of having the outcomes and desired proficiencies in view, the development of the course proceeds with the selection of teaching and learning experiences that work to ensure this end. Naturally, an educator must utilize tools that measure whether or not this process is truly happening. Traditionally, these tools have involved tests and grading.

In the seminar that comprises the intervention portion of this project, tests and grading in the traditional sense are not realistic to implement. However, while testing and receiving grades may not fit as a measuring tool for this project, a reasonable and desirable outcome for those who participate in the seminar consists of receiving feedback as to what they are learning and how they may be changing as a result of what they are

learning. Fink insists that "good assessment is assessment that does more than provide a basis for assigning a grade; it educates as well." ("Power" 15) In employing an acronym which he calls "FIDeLity" feedback, the educator helps to make certain that growth and change is happening. "FIDeLity" stands for Frequent, Immediate, Discriminating, and delivered "Lovingly," (i.e., in a user-friendly way) (15). In practice, throughout the course of the seminar, great care has been taken to make sure that a variety of techniques that measure how the student is applying what is learned have been utilized. The importance of this approach is particularly vital, because students need to understand that a seminar on leadership lasts for a limited period of time, whereas learning to apply the principles of leadership with no teacher present nor classroom setting is vital to lifelong change.

Theological Framework

Human institutions need leadership. While Christians believe correctly the Church is not, strictly speaking, a human institution, indeed tracing its beginnings to divine origins, it is also correct to say that churches are comprised of humans, and, therefore, need leadership. Indeed, the case can be made that the provision of godly leadership given to the Church is an act of kindness bestowed by a gracious and kind God. Derek Tidball goes a step further, insisting that from a biblical worldview, leaving people without leadership is not a sign of a mature democracy, but rather is a symbol of anarchy (13-14). This reality stands as part of the unseen foundation to this project, yet one that is vitally necessary if the Church is to fulfill in any significant measure Christ's mandate to "go and make disciples of all the nations," as he articulated in Matthew 28:19. In other

words, this mandate makes the ability of the pastoral leader to provide flexible, quality leadership to the church vitally necessary.

While the contexts of the biblical world are vastly different from those of America in 2014, it remains for us at the very least to sketch a theological framework upon which this project rests. This framework is composed of two parts. First, I will consider a biblical approach to leadership, using examples from both the Old and New Testaments as sources for this approach. Second, I will briefly treat the idea of spiritual formation and its impact on the Christian leader.

When considering the biblical approach to leadership, the principles of leadership remain valid despite the disparity between contexts of the biblical and that of today. While any single project cannot examine exhaustively every scripture pertaining to leadership, two representative examples serve as texts that apply to this project. First, I will examine a passage from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah's life. Second, I will treat passages chosen from the writings of the apostle Paul, the first-century missionary, church planter and theologian. By way of utilizing some exegetical and practical material, I will endeavor to establish some theological leadership foundations.

An Old Testament Representation of Leadership—Jeremiah 1:5

The calling of Jeremiah as prophet to his own people is a biblical piece of evidence in support of the classic argument that leaders are born, and not made. The verse reads, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5). In analyzing the language used, there is some consensus by the commentators that in Jeremiah's case, God's plan to utilize him in the prophetic leadership role was determined even before his

conception (e.g., Dearman 49; Keil and Delitzch 39; Miller 580). J. Andrew Dearman goes further and links the verb that the NIV renders as "set apart" to its roots, meaning "to be holy" (49). For the person so designated, he or she is consecrated to the task given by God and receives the assurance of God's presence and guidance. Further, because the individual is "set apart" for divine use and purpose, the word transmitted by the prophet (leader) is assuredly God's word for the occasion in which it is given (49).

What is not communicated in this verse as the reader is the divine *why*. The question rises from facts such as, instead of Jeremiah, God could have selected someone else. Or, the foreknowledge of God may contain something concerning his choice of the prophet to which we as mere humans are not privy. Finally, some think that Jeremiah may have either possessed by nature, or with divinely equipped, with a genetic character trait that tends toward superior leadership in the process of being set apart. Scripture is silent on these topics. However, clearly the spirit of humility was reflected in the prophet's life and in his reluctance, even resistance, to affirm his position of leadership. Jeremiah simply followed next in a long line of luminaries in Israel's history who sought to avoid the task to which God was calling them, one for whom "great fear and an immense sense of personal unworthiness were common threads in their response to God's call and commission" (Duke 185). This biblical and theological observation accords well with Collins' more contemporary thinking that great leaders need to possess humility as a fundamental trait of character (21).

A New Testament Representation of Leadership—Romans 12:8

Direct, word-for-word references to leadership are rare in the New Testament. Most such citations relate to the idea of giftedness. However, the concept of leadership is

very much in evidence beyond direct word usage. This notion is particularly true in the pastoral epistles of Paul, notwithstanding the contention of Efrain Agosto that in-depth, scholarly study of Pauline leadership remains a somewhat nascent discipline (1).

The idea of leadership is perhaps most explicit in a list of spiritual gifts as recorded in Romans 12:6-8. Leadership (Greek, *ho proistamenos*) means literally, "the one who stands in front" (Greathouse and Lyons 151; Longman and Garland 131), a very clear and easily envisioned symbol of what this leadership represents. Less clear is just who is specifically being referenced in this type of leadership. One thought would be to contrast those who already have status and position in the Roman world, who are already wealthy, or those of prominent birth. Another thought refers to those who hold positions of leadership in the Church who also happened to belong to the underclass of the day, such as household slaves who have become Christians. Included in this second category would be those whose status as church leaders remains as a subject of great contention, even today, namely, the possibility of women in leadership, described by James D. G. Dunn as part of what he terms as those belonging to the "socially vulnerable" (731). An additional layer of uncertainty is introduced when considering the possibility of certain individuals who may possess some kind of divine endowment, a *charisma*. Further complicating the uncertainty, the definition of *charisma* enters into play. William M. Greathouse understands *charisma* to be a divine "thumb in the back" (151), while at the same time *charisma* could be simply the expression of natural endowments. It seems that no one can say with any certainty. Moving to the other end of the spectrum, rather than possessing some kind of supernatural *charisma*, one possible understanding insists that

these leaders are simply those who have been duly elected by an ecclesial process, and are only being encouraged to dutifully carry out their leadership mandate.

We may never know fully. Time and distance prove to be obstacles too difficult to overcome. Nevertheless, some tentative thoughts can be advanced to help understand and explain New Testament leadership.

First, God, in his sovereign wisdom and insight, has the ability to match the needs of the church with the capabilities of the leader. Whether this matching process involves the raising up of a leader with the specific qualities a church needs or simply allowing a given leader who is already in place to change and adapt to difficult circumstances can be debated. Regardless, this divine ability to match need and capability seems to be what God had planned in the variety of circumstances encountered in the New Testament, particularly in the churches directly addressed in Pauline literature.

For example, in the Corinthian letters, leadership was needed that required a firm hand, and a sizable share of that leadership was exercised by the apostle Paul himself. However, when considering the wider New Testament context of Pauline leadership, the evidence for this firm hand is far less substantial, and as David Horrell suggests, is limited to the scriptural record (325). In other words, precious little extant from other sources supports the contention that the locus of leadership was primarily centered in the itinerant missionaries such as Paul and Peter.

Nevertheless, given the paucity of proof, Agosto contends that Paul exercised pastoral leadership in three stages: personal visit, use of an emissary, and, as a last resort, the writing of a letter (108). In the Corinthian context, written evidence exists that Paul used all three (1 Cor. 2:1; 16:10, 12; 2 Cor. 2:4; 13:1), such was the severity of the

situation. By contrast, the Roman correspondence knows nothing of a personal visit (with the caveat that Paul strongly desired to visit the Roman church; see Rom. 1:11, 15:23). No evidence of a need for Paul to address a pressing issue such as church discipline appears, similar to the one experienced by the church in Corinth. Instead, from a purely leadership point of view, Romans seems to be a vehicle by which Paul seeks to establish leadership credibility by extensively writing on theological matters (Agosto 112-13). The apostle's thinking in modern parlance could be expressed, "Because I know biblical theology, I have the right to be a leader among you." As one can see, the needs of the church in Rome and Corinth were significantly different and thus required a completely different approach to leadership. Further, this example may be a biblical indication of the theme of this paper: different circumstances necessitate the application of different leadership styles.

A second thought arises from the study of this passage: the giving of leadership to a local congregation is an expression of God's grace to that congregation. To reemphasize Tidball's thinking, for a congregation to be left without leadership is not mature democracy but a symbol of anarchy. Romans 12:8 stands as an example of this common need for congregations to have leaders. Instead of being left without leadership, in Pauline thinking leadership provided to a local church fellowship becomes a sign of God's grace extended to them and is an indication that God has the ability to match the leadership skills and abilities of a given leader to the need of the hour for that local church (Tidball 15; Wright 710).

A treatment of the expression of leadership in the earliest New Testament congregations remains to be considered. Some indications from scripture exist as to the

variety of approaches Paul himself as leader likely took with churches, which was of course dependent on their specific circumstances. Some recognize two distinct possibilities: first, the potential that congregational leadership was resident or homegrown. Others think it possible that leadership was strictly apostolic in nature (i.e., confined to itinerants). Further, allowing for resident leadership stimulates thinking concerning the personal character traits of those who assumed the reins of authority, raising questions concerning the interplay of these individual traits with the style of leadership exercised.

The existence of a framework of leadership in local congregations seems to be a given. From the evidence of the Romans 12 passage alone, for Paul to write about a gift of leadership to Christian believers, yet for that leadership to not exist in reality within the Roman church, would logically render his writing on the subject unnecessary. Support for this position comes from some of the other Pauline correspondence. In 1 Thessalonians, for instance, Paul charges this congregation: "Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, *who are over you in the Lord* and who admonish you" (emphasis mine; 1 Thess. 5:12). Even though we see no form of προΐστημι (leadership) in the grammatical text, yet clearly a hierarchy is indicated. Additionally, proof of this hierarchy is found in the letter to the churches in Galatia: "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor" (Gal. 6:6).

Resident, homegrown leadership manifests itself through specific social structures. To understand how this process transpired, there is an interesting metaphor that may assist in helping to grasp how first-century church leadership may have

emerged. D. J. Feddes contends that one must look prior to the writings of Paul to

understand how leadership may have emerged. He traces a model of leadership to the

teachings of Jesus himself, where a particularly striking example is noted of a leader who

is compared to a steward of a household (Matt. 24:45; Luke 12:42). The leader is the one

who is tasked with managerial responsibilities. Contrary to the modern image of the

leader who secures the corner office and commands a privileged parking place, the

steward, as recorded in the Lukan passage, is tasked with a seemingly mundane

responsibility. He is to make sure that the other servants receive their food allowance at

the proper time. The steward-manager thus tasked in Jesus' teaching and who faithfully

carries out his responsibility is commended because he does not "pull rank" or "parade

the power," but rather, serves (Feddes 284). Paul carries this image of leadership over to

his own writings—indeed, to his own personal approach to leadership—and embraces the

image of leader as servant. Thus, the personal character traits of humility manifested

through a life of servanthood, which typifies ideal New Testament leadership.

A second trait of resident leadership in the early Church was its close linkage with

the household structure. In the Pauline mind-set, the privilege of church leadership is

directly tied to one's ability to lead one's family successfully.

> A person's family is a crucial indicator of his suitability for leadership,
> both because it is tangible evidence of what the person is really like and
> because it correlates with others' perception of him. Leadership depends
> not only on someone's capacity to lead but also on others' willingness to
> follow him. Usually a person's character and leadership ability will be
> apparent in his family. (290)

Consequently, Paul connects the two in 1 Timothy, where he categorically states, "If

anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's

church?" (1 Tim. 3:5). Clearly, linkage exists between the privilege of church leadership and the faithful management of one's own family.

One additional observation is worth noting at this juncture. For Paul, church leadership did not need to emerge from the privileged classes socioeconomically, even though societal structure predisposed certain wealthy elites toward positions of privilege and power. Once again, in the context of his own disciples struggling among themselves with the concept of who would be the greatest among them, the teaching of Jesus had already noted some time before Paul that Gentile kings "lord it over them " (Luke 22:25), and those who were known as Benefactors "exercise authority over them" (Luke 22:25). However, Jesus concludes, "You are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves" (Luke 22:26). Paul builds upon Jesus' teaching and desires to empower all believers, regardless of socioeconomic status, to have the ability to take up leadership roles in the church as long as it is based on the desire to serve and not to rule (Agosto 105-06).

Spiritual Formation and the Pastoral Leader

The second theological consideration for the pastoral leader centers around the concept of spiritual formation. Spiritual formation is not something limited to pastoral leadership. Ideally, it is something that should be characteristic of all Christian believers. A glimpse from the pages of Scripture shows the apostle Paul longing for such formation in all the Galatian believers: "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you" (Gal. 4:19).

However, the spiritual formation hoped for among the rank and file believers of Galatia as well as among Christians across the intervening millennia becomes the very

foundation by which the Christian pastor must operate. In his treatment of Christian leadership, Mel Lawrenz paints the picture of a leader that must first be a passionate follower of Jesus. He insists, "In the end we have nothing to offer people unless we follow Christ ourselves. Jesus set the baseline: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me' (Matthew 16:24)" (44).

The sense of followership of Christ cultivates the soil of Christian leadership. Because leaders follow hard after Christ, they must employ the disciplines that lead to Christian formation and that give them the authority to lead on behalf of Christ. Lawrenz continues the thought by developing the image of a compass, and by asking questions:

> Any good leader will stop occasionally and ask: What gives me the right to influence other people? Where did I get the idea that I'm so smart? Who do I think I am? And then good leaders will look at that compass, which pointed him or her in this direction in the first place. A higher order, a purpose, a summons, a calling. Poor leaders will not look for the compass. They don't care about right or wrong, good or bad ... A good influencer looks at the compass of moral order and realizes: I'm not so smart. I'm not very powerful. And I know I'm not good enough myself to define the good life for someone else. But it appears that I have an opportunity and a calling to dip into a higher wisdom, to try and live it, and to pass on those gifts. That is where the power of spiritual influence begins. (30-31)

This "compass," this "higher wisdom" is the power of spiritual formation as leaders base their life on Christ, and allows him to form them spiritually.

This process is not short-term, nor is it ever fully achieved even in this lifetime. Instead, the spiritual formation of leaders may be best described as a journey marked by distinct phases, or stages, that indicate the sovereign actions of God in their lives.

The work of J. Robert Clinton highlights this mode of thought and serves as some of the foundational teaching of the leadership seminar that was an important part of the teaching component of this project. Clinton begins as others do with the belief that the

development of leaders' character is the absolute need for those who aspire to lead in Christian ministry. He states succinctly, "Our greatest challenge as leaders is to develop a godly character" (57). But just as the process of spiritual formation unfolds gradually in a believer's life, so the Christian leader's growth and formation as a leader can be marked in stages; to use Clinton's term, "processes" (58). These processes are divided into the major categories inner-life growth, ministry maturing, guidance, and life-maturing. In particular the first process, that of inner-life growth, that has the most direct bearing on spiritual formation, and which serves as the foundation for all the rest. It is here, in the process, where God forms the leader and by a series of challenges, tests them to see if they can be found faithful and prepared for a life of leadership. Each challenge corresponds with a basic trait of character that must be in place for the leader to serve effectively. These challenges, which Clinton terms as "checks," (58-73), surround the areas of integrity, obedience, and the Word (58-73). Without the leader having passed these "checks," or challenges, successfully, he/she does not move on further in the process of deepening and usefulness as a Christian leader.

The implications for the pastoral leader are significant. The deepening process of spiritual formation and the usefulness of a given Christian leader are tightly intertwined. Says Lawrenz, "The best leaders are the best followers" (37). To be fully formed as a leader, one must submit to being in the fullest sense a follower of Christ.

Research Design

Chapter 1 indicated that this project reflects the choice of a qualitative research approach. For many years, approaching research utilizing the qualitative approach was not well established in the social sciences. However, that reality has now changed. Some

consensus now exists as to what constitutes valid qualitative inquiry (Cresswell 180), and its acceptance is general and widespread (Marshall and Rossman 39).

I contend that a qualitative approach is the most likely to yield data and insights sought in a project of this nature. At the core of a study of pastoral leadership, the researcher is dealing first and foremost with a person. Then and only then can one proceed on to the next reality, which is that human beings also have the role of being Christian pastors. In explaining the rationale for qualitative design, Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman contend that "it is essential in the study of people to know just how *people* define the situation in which they find themselves" (emphasis mine; 46). If they are correct, research reflecting qualitative design is suited to understand best pastors who themselves seek to understand their personal situations related to leadership ability.

In addition, the qualitative approach is well-suited for this project because of its emphasis on meaning and its ability to discover dynamics that are not easily measurable quantitatively. At best, quantitative sentiments that are hidden to the casual observer defy measurement. However, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to learn the perspectives of the participants, probing sentiments—what one researcher calls the "inner dynamics" (Bogdan and Biklen 31-32)—of people, and to seek to make sense inductively of the evidence presented.

A further consideration of the utilization of the qualitative approach for this project is criteria advanced by Marshall and Rossman, which they summarize as *informational adequacy* and *efficiency* (42). The thought here is in employing the qualitative strategy for research, the relationship established between the researcher and participants helps to ensure the sufficiency of the information obtained from the project

proposed. Researchers choose the qualitative approach if the interviews satisfy the demands of the project. In addition, the project must respect the constraints of time, access, and cost for both the researcher and participant.

Finally, the qualitative approach in this project most accurately reflects my personal background, which cannot be fully divorced from this study, and corresponds largely with the participants who are its focus. Gretchen B. Rossman and Sharon F Rallis elaborate on what they term a feature of qualitative research: "Unlike the allegedly objective social scientist, the qualitative researcher values his unique perspective as a source of understanding rather than something to be cleansed from the study" (9). As a pastor currently engaged in vocational pastoral ministry, I share certain commonalities, both professional and personal, that are shared with the participants in this study. Qualitative research recognizes that these commonalities may exist, and while the researcher always must be on guard for latent bias, this method seems ideally suited for a project of this nature.

Summary

A review of the literature pertaining to pastoral leadership has revealed numerous insights that serve as underpinnings for this research project. First, the literature indicates that determining a perfect definition of the term *leadership* is an elusive task. However, the same review indicates certain threads that are reflected repeatedly in more widely accepted definitions of leadership, including (1) The ability to influence, motivate, or enable others; (2) Leadership that is not static but seeks the effectiveness and success of organizations of which leaders are members; (3) The cultural and societal need for leadership: (4) The impact of leaders' character on their ability to lead; (5) Distinctions

drawn by many between leadership and management; and, (6) The question of whether leaders are born or made.

Second, the review of the literature showed a wide variety of leadership styles as reflected in a given leader's approach to the task. While an exhaustive review of all leadership styles is not possible in one project, the literature review revealed the relative merits of transactional versus transformational leadership, the impact of a leader's personality through charismatic leadership, and the widespread acceptance and adoption of situational leadership. The literature notes dissent among experts regarding leadership style, indicating that some do not accept the concept, but attribute variances in leadership to personal character traits, which differ from one leader to the next.

Third, the review of literature indicates multiple factors that impact the exercise of pastoral leadership, and, therefore, the style a pastor must learn. Church cultural expectations, size of congregation, the quantity of time needed to exercise leadership, the character of the pastor, and the rapid pace of cultural change are all specified in the literature as coming to bear upon the pastor's leadership style. Further evidence from the literature demonstrated the ability of a pastor to learn new forms of leadership that to them are not necessarily innate yet better address the leadership needs of the context in which they minister. Examples of this ability to learn new leadership styles included the adoption of servant leadership.

Fourth, the question of structural design was addressed as reviewed in the literature. The pertinent studies noted a significant change in the educational philosophy of how best to develop approaches that facilitate student learning. Through the adoption

of backward design, the literature reveals the ability of this student-needs focus to creative significant learning experiences.

Finally, a theological framework regarding leadership was addressed from both an Old Testament and New Testatment perspective. While the literature, particularly concerning Pauline concepts of leadership, is still in the nascent stage, evidence exists of a variety of leadership needs and approaches from a biblical point of view.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

Among the many factors that impact the twenty first century church, the challenges encountered by pastors in the area of leadership rank among the most significant. The challenges include the uncritical acceptance of simplistic leadership maxims by both pastors and laity, as well as the thinking that only one biblically mandated style of leadership exists, which is often understood to be the model of the strong, authoritarian leader. Further, the difficulties often extend to pastors, due to their lack of knowledge of how they lead (i.e., question of leadership style) and ability to change, adapt, or acquire new skills (i.e., question of ability).

The purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors in the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change, if any, in their self-reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

Research Questions

This study purports to order to understand what the relationship is, if any, between the differing styles of pastoral leadership and the perceived leadership ability of a given pastor. Further, the project measures whether change occurred in either their self-reported leadership style or ability following their participation in the leadership seminar. Therefore, I propose the following research questions for closer examination:

Research Question #1

What were the self-identified styles and ability of pastoral leadership utilized

before the seminar by the pastors sampled from the Southwest Ohio District Church of

the Nazarene?

In order to determine these styles and abilities, I conducted a personal interview

with each participant approximately thirty days following the completion of the

leadership seminar. During the course of the interview, questions were asked of the

participants relating to their personal assessment of what they believed both their

leadership style and leadership abilities were prior to experiencing the seminar. As a way

of encouraging their personal thought and reflection in these areas, each pastor was sent a

hyperlink to an online leadership assessment questionnaire from Sugerman, Scullard, and

Wilhelm, titled *The Eight Dimensions of Leadership*. This questionnaire was intended to

serve only as a thought starter to each pastor's assessment process. No data was obtained

from it or evaluated for the research. Indeed, the results of the questionnaire were only

available to the participant, and the manner of how the originators of this assessment

processed and scored each pastor's questionnaire is unknown to me. A simple, one-page

report in PDF format showing the results of this assessment is generated and sent via e-

mail to the participant only. The communication to me of any knowledge of the results of

the leadership style indicated by this assessment to me as the researcher was strictly

voluntary on the part of the participants. A sample copy, similar to the one-page report

that would have been received by each participant, is included in Appendix C.

Research Question #2

A second research question flowed logically and chronologically from the first.

What were the changes in participants' self-identified styles and ability of pastoral

leadership, if any, expressed after taking the seminar?

In many respects, research question #2 serves as the opposite bookend of the first.

For this question, the methodology employed is nearly identical for that of question 1.

Once again, during the course of the interview, questions were asked pertaining to what

changes the participants perceived in their leadership style and abilities following the

completion of the seminar.

To assist the pastor/participant in thinking through these issues, and in an effort to

jump start the process, each one was encouraged to retake the online questionnaire, *The*

Eight Dimensions of Leadership. Employing the same caveats concerning this

questionnaire as noted for Research Question #1, the participant was at complete liberty

to share or not to share the results of this questionnaire with me.

Research Question #3

A final research question is proposed for this project. What other influences, if

any, have occurred in the lives of these pastors that may account for or contribute to the

changes in the self-identified style of leadership subsequent to the seminar?

The effort to understand the answers to this question was multi-pronged in

approach. First, as a part of the beginning session of the leadership seminar taught, each

pastor was requested to prepare and send me an e-mail the following week. While the

content of the e-mail was ultimately the choice of the pastor writing it, I suggested to

them that the subject revolve around personal reflection on the materials that had been

taught and the impact, if any, on their life or ministry. This verbal request for a weekly e-mail was an effort to keep each pastor engaged in leadership thinking between class sessions and in the time period between the conclusion of the seminar and the personal interviews. Finally, inquiries pertaining to each of the three research question were posed during a personal interview with each participant. A copy of the interview protocol is included in Appendix B.

Population and Participants

For this project, the population from which the participants were drawn was limited to every district licensed and ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene in the Southwest Ohio District.

To understand the scope of this population fully, an explanation of the ministry categories is in order. In the Church of the Nazarene district licensed ministers are persons who have qualified for this credential under the following criteria: (1) they testify to being called of God to exercise ministry to the Church under the polity of the Church of the Nazarene; (2) they have been granted what is known as a local preacher's license previously by their home congregations, allowing them to exercise ministry in those locations; (3) after a minimum of a year as a locally licensed ministers, they are interviewed by a district board of ministers to determine their fitness for ministry; (4) their educational credentials are examined and, depending on the findings, are placed at the appropriate level of study in the program that leads to ordination; and (5) depending on the ministry context, as district licensed ministers they may be assigned to local church pastorates or staff (associate) ministry.

The ordained minister reflects the next and final step of credentialed ministry. Ordained minister must fulfill the following obligations: (1) they must have fully completed all educational requirements for ministry; (2) as district licensed ministers they must have served three years full-time or part-time years of service deemed to be the equivalent of three full-time years as pastor or associate; (3) they must be approved for ordination by a board of ordained ministers, and, (4) they must secure the approval of the general superintendent in jurisdiction, who performs the rite of ordination. Because both ordained pastors and district-licensed ministers comprised the research population, participant educational levels and abilities varied greatly.

Criteria for Selection

The district superintendent and I chose who would be included in the project. This process was admittedly subjective. In the course of the discussion for selection, the following criteria were utilized:

1. Length of time in ministry. While no pastor was necessarily excluded because of age, those with less experience ministry were more likely to benefit from the project.

2. Education level. Those who were younger and less experienced in ministry also tended not to have yet completed all of the study required for ordination. This seminar might possibly help fill a gap in leadership preparation.

3. Gender and race. Intentionally, female pastors were included in the invitations. As a part of the wider population of ministers, females in the Southwest Ohio district are a very small proportion of either district-licensed or ordained ministers. The same is true of African-American ministers. An invitation was extended to one of two clergy in the

district who is African-American. No invitations were extended to ministers of other ethnic groups (e.g., Hispanic) due to potential language issues.

4. Size of sample. The invitation to participate was extended to twelve individuals. The decision was made to limit the size of the seminar to facilitate interaction and to fit the size of the meeting room.

Of the twelve invitations extended, eleven responded positively. Of the eleven who agreed to participate, nine individuals were active participants. The other two ultimately did not participate due to sickness (one individual) and a death in the family (one individual).

Participants

Table 3.1 shows a variety of specific information regarding the composition of the nine individuals participating in the leadership seminar. The information includes a descriptive tag identifying each participant (e.g., Participant A, B). Additional descriptors consist of labels indicating gender, age range listed in five-year increments, race, and number of years in pastoral ministry.

Table 3.1. Participants in Leadership Seminar

Identity	Gender	Age Range	Race	Number of years in pastoral ministry
Participant A	Male	40-44	White	8
Participant B	Male	45-49	Black	15
Participant C	Male	50-54	White	20
Participant D	Male	25-29	White	2
Participant E	Female	50-55	White	5
Participant F	Male	40-44	White	5
Participant G	Male	45-49	White	10
Participant H	Male	45-49	White	9
Participant I	Male	50-54	White	5

Design of the Study

The design of the study undertaken with the participants drawn from the

population of pastors of the Southwest Ohio District Church of the Nazarene was chosen

in an attempt to evaluate three factors related to their pastoral leadership accurately: (1)

their self-perception of the leadership style and abilities they utilize in directing the local

congregations they serve, (b) the impact, if any, of a leadership seminar that each of the

participants experienced following their self-evaluation of their existing leadership style

and abilities, and (3) what changes, if any, occurred in their perception of how they lead

as a result of the seminar. As a qualifying factor in this process, the self-evaluation,

particularly as evaluated in the post-seminar interview, allowed for the participants to

consider the possibility of leadership style change as being due to factors other than

participation in the leadership seminar.

As mentioned previously, the major components of the study included the

following items:

- A personal invitation to participate in the project by letter from the district superintendent. This invitation came as the result of collaboration between the district superintendent, as the governing church authority responsible for the minister on the Southwest Ohio District, and me.

- A leadership seminar. I taught the seminar over three consecutive Tuesday evenings for a period of two hours per evening. In preparing the seminar content, effort was made to utilize leadership material reflecting current thinking in both secular and Christian leadership (see Appendix A).

- Correspondence and communication. Each participant was verbally encouraged to correspond by e-mail with me between sessions of the course. The intent of the e-mail was to serve as an opportunity for the participant to reflect on what he or she was learning, as well as a chance to interact with me.

- Pesonal interviews. Finally, I attempted to personally interview each participant thirty days following the completion of the seminar. This interview, digitally-recorded, became a basis to evaluate what change, if any, each participant experienced. These interviews, as well as the e-mails exchanged, are the source data for chapters 4 and 5 of this project.

By design and by choice, this project used a qualitative approach. As discussed in Chapter two, the reasons for a qualitative approach center on the key relational aspects of the project's purpose. If Marshall and Rossman are correct, the qualitative approach for this specific project best satisfies the criteria of *informational adequacy and efficiency* (75). I made every effort to minimize the costs and demands on the participants. These efforts included being sensitive to travel and time constraints, as well as costs involved.

For example, the participants paid no fees to attend the seminar. This effort to minimize costs was due in large part to the district superintendent seeing the potential value of the project and making resources available to me to enable its successful completion. An example of the focus on cost savings included priority scheduling of the space located at the district office, which is geographically central to virtually any potential participant on the district.

A second element in the choice of a qualitative nature of this project revolves around the relationships between the participants and me, as researcher. Prior to the seminar, I had some level of acquaintance with every single participant. The relationships transcended that of researcher and participant. Instead, they reflected at multiple levels from that of ministerial colleague to friend. Rossman and Rallis understand this level of connection to be one of the positive factors in the qualitative project, and consider it a potential source for better understanding rather than something that has to be "cleansed" from the study (9).

Instrumentation

The instrumentation involved in this project was selected and utilized in a manner that is consistent with a study that is qualitative in nature. One month after the presentation of the leadership seminar, I contacted participants individually to request personal interviews. In preparation for the interviews, I developed a series of questions to be employed in this project. These questions, known as the interview protocol, were asked of each participant interviewed. The protocol was intended to determine what if any changes were perceived by the individuals as a result of their participation in the seminar. The interview protocol was by nature semi-structured, allowing in-depth, two-

way dialogue to occur with each participant (see Appendix B). The questions in the interview protocol were grouped into three major categories that directly corresponded to the research questions, which were the primary focus of this project. A final question served to give the participants an opportunity to provide feedback regarding any specific area that they may have desired to share.

Expert Review

The instrument utilized for this study was a personal interview. The questions for this interview, known as the interview protocol, were reviewed by the DMin committee tasked with directing and assessing this project, including the project's mentor, Dr. Thomas Tumblin. The committee approved their use for the conduct of this study.

Variables

For the study undertaken, the independent variable was the leadership seminar that the participants attended. The dependent variable was the degree of change in the perceived ability of the participants to adjust their leadership style to handle a variety of situations that pastors face in the local church.

Concerning intervening variables, the study allowed for the potential of their existence and implemented appropriate controls. The third category of the interview protocol asked a question of the participants that acknowledged the possibility of other factors that may have contributed to their self-assessment of perceived change in their leadership style. Specifically, the question read, "Have there been any changes in your personal life that may account for changes (if any) in your style of leadership? If so, what do you understand those to be?"

Data Collection

In chronological order, the first data collected was the e-mail correspondence requested from each participant to be sent to me. At the beginning of the leadership seminar, I made a verbal request that each participant send a brief (sixty-one hundred word) e-mail to me. Potential subjects for the e-mail were suggested to the pastors, such as, "Think on what we have discussed during the course of the class time together. What things stand out to you?" or, "Is there a leadership theme which resonates with you? If so, explain," or, "What has challenged your personally in the area of leadership since we last met together?" The intent of the e-mail was that it be a vehicle for reflection on what the pastor was learning or experiencing in the area of leadership. Following receipt of each e-mail, I responded individually and personally to each e-mail received, acknowledging not only receipt of the communication but replying specifically and directly to any questions or comments raised. This pattern of e-mail and reply continued through the duration of the seminar, which lasted for three weeks.

The primary source of data was the personal interview with each participant. For this interview, the timeline unfolded as follows:

1. The first night of the seminar, I made a request of each individual participant to schedule a personal interview. Details about the interviews were disclosed, including what was thought would be the approximate length of each interview (thirty minutes), when they would occur (thirty days following the completion of the seminar), the voluntary nature of participating in such an interview, as well as my willingness to meet with the participants at the location of their choosing.

2. The final evening of the seminar, a reminder was verbally given that an interview would be requested.

3. Approximately one week before the anticipated beginning of the interviews, an e-mail request to schedule the interviews was sent.

4. Replies to the e-mail request were gathered and specific time slots scheduled.

5. Follow-up phone calls were made to individuals if responses via e-mail were not received.

6. Personal interviews were conducted in the time frame and place requested by each participant. The interviews were conducted in a variety of places, which included personal offices at the church where the pastors served, various restaurants, and private homes.

For each interview, the typical time allotted unfolded with personal greetings and exchanging of casual conversation. This introduction was followed by the presentation to the participant of the documents to be signed to establish the ethical guidelines the interview and its results would follow. Next, the participant was made aware of and consented to the audio recording of the interview.

At the conclusion of the interview, my personal thanks were conveyed, and typically some informal conversation ensued, to be followed immediately by the conclusion of the time together. Upon return to my office, transcription of the entire interview, word for word, was made from the digital recording into MS Word software.

Data Analysis

In transitioning to the question of data analysis, the thinking of Tim Sensing may be insightful: "It is difficult to separate the activities of data collection and data

interpretation. Data interpretation begins the first day you begin gathering data" (194). In the context of this study, his observation proves correct. Because of personal contact with the participants at both the seminar level as well as being ministerial colleagues, the two tasks of collection and analysis often blurred.

However, in an effort to increase the validity of the findings, I put specific procedures in place. These procedures were applied equally and consistently to the two sources of data (i.e., e-mail and personal interview). Elements of the approach for qualitative analysis as suggested by Cresswell informed the approach (180).

First, the interviews and e-mails were compiled with the individual responses placed in their entirety in sequential order. Second, the interviews and e-mails were read from start to finish in an effort to get a sense of the whole. Third, common ideas and thoughts were identified and assigned specific codes. Finally, these codes were identified and grouped into major themes. The themes became the basis for the establishment of the findings.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations are important, if not vital, in a project of this nature. The willingness of the participants to share personal information to enable a study related to pastoral styles and abilities depends on their confidence that the information shared will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and procedures that ensure their anonymity. In order to fulfill these ethical guidelines, the following procedures took place:

1. Training. The Institutional Review Board at Asbury Theological Seminary, which ultimately grants approval for research studies of this nature, required that online

training concerning proper ethical standards that comply with federal guidelines be taken. I underwent this training and received a certificate of approval.

2. Consent letter. A consent letter was given to each participant that detailed the nature of this study and specific details concerning the collection of data and its use in determining findings. Each participant was asked to sign and date the letter before any collection of interview data was undertaken (see Appendix D).

3. Assurance of anonymity. Repeatedly during the course of the leadership seminar as well as the recording of the personal interviews, participants were reminded that their responses would remain anonymous, including the assigning of alternate labels to describe the origin of any data provided (e.g., Participant A) rather than any given names.

4. Management of data. Participants were assured that upon the successful completion of the study process, all data, whether written or electronic, would be destroyed.

5. Security. Throughout the collection process, I took precautions to restrict access to all data. For example, the source recordings and e-mails were kept in password-protected files for data gathered both by computer and digital tape recording.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

Among the many factors documented as having an impact on the church of the twenty-first century, the question of pastoral leadership enters the discussion. To lead congregations, pastors today need to possess the self-knowledge necessary to assess how they lead. Further, they need to acquire the skill sets necessary to navigate the ever-more rapidly changing social and cultural environment in which the church finds itself. Finally, given this increasingly fast-paced and demanding milieu, today's pastors must attain the ability to change to meet the challenges when the circumstances warrant.

Given these challenges, I contend that it is appropriate to address the issue of pastoral leadership in today's environment. Further, I believe that an examination of how a specific group of pastors who currently are leading a congregation will give insight into the problems today's pastoral leaders are facing. Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors in the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change, if any, in their self-reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

Participants

As noted in Chapter 3, the participants in this study were drawn from a population of those who serve as ministers in the Church of the Nazarene in the Southwest Ohio District. I, along with the district superintendent of the Southwest Ohio District

collaborated in the choice of those who would be asked to be participants in the leadership seminar. The criteria included the requirement that the pastor be currently engaged in pastoral ministry in the district. Further, priority, but not exclusive, consideration was given to those who were newer in years served and overall experience in pastoral ministry.

In the consideration of participants, effort was made to invite ministers from a variety of ages and backgrounds. As reflected in Table 3.1 (see pg. 96), the group contained a variety of ages, both genders, and included a non-Caucasian. It should be noted that while the Southwest Ohio District is comprised of other language and cultural congregations, including a variety of Hispanic churches, as well as some from African and Ethiopian backgrounds, it was felt that the language barriers involved in trying to implement a leadership project of this nature would prove to be too difficult to overcome. Table 3.1 (p. 96) reflects the composition of the participants for this study.

The goal was to obtain a group of approximately ten pastors who would consent to be involved at some level in this project. Personal invitations to participate were extended to twelve pastors, of which ultimately nine responded affirmatively.

Of the nine participants, I interviewed seven at the conclusion of the process. An eighth individual, with whom I was not able to conduct an interview, submitted an e-mail response. Additionally, seven participants with whom interviews were conducted also responded via e-mail throughout the course of the leadership journey. While substantial effort was made to obtain 100 percent feedback by all participants, which by design of the leadership seminar was to include regular e-mail correspondence with me as well as the personal interview, that goal was not obtained. The percentages achieved were

identical: 78 percent of participants were interviewed, as well as 78 percent of participants were involved in e-mail correspondence.

As the findings are reported, they will include insights gleaned from sources: first, the personal interviews, which were recorded, transcribed, and coded; second, the personal e-mail correspondence, which was also coded; and, third, personal observations and reflections from me as the researcher. Some of these observations and reflections came from notes obtained at the moment of interview of the participants; others came from the interaction received during the teaching of the seminar itself. Certainly, much reflection found its origin in the responses to the personal interviews conducted. This approach is encouraged for documentary analysis in a qualitative research project by Mary Clark Moschella, who advocates a literal, interpretive, and reflexive reading of the data (172-73).

Research Question #1

The first findings that this project addressed revolve around the following question: What were the self-identified styles and ability of pastoral leadership utilized before the seminar by the pastors from the Southwest Ohio District Church of the Nazarene?

As may be expected from a variety of pastors, the responses were many and varied. Many of the participants utilized the exact style-phrasing from Sugerman, Scullard and Wilhelm's *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership*. These self-phrased expressions may be best explained because each pastor was asked to take an online leadership style assessment that is published by the writers of this work. This online assessment, while not designed in any way to obtain statistical data, was intended to serve as a thought

starter for the participants. In order to facilitate an understanding of the pastor's

responses, see Figure 2.2 (p. 71). Table 4.1 represents a summary of the participants and

their self-reported leadership styles.

Table 4.1. A Summary of Participants' Self-Reported Leadership Styles (prior to seminar)

Identity	Self-Reported Leadership Style (prior to seminar)
Participant A	No reply
Participant B	No reply
Participant C	Humble, laissez-faire
Participant D	Humble
Participant E	Affirming
Participant F	Humble
Participant G	Affirming
Participant H	Resolute, laissez-faire
Participant I	Inclusive

Of the seven individuals interviewed, six identified themselves using the labels

from the *8 Dimensions*. Three of the participants, Participants C, D and F, found that they

reflected the *humble* designation. Another two—Participants E and G—self-identified as

affirming, while Participant H found that in both assessments, pre- and post seminar, the

results determined a *resolute* style of leadership. Yet another self-defined as *inclusive*. In

examining the responses of the participants who used these labels, their utilization of

them was strictly voluntary on their part. No effort was made, either in the course of the

interview or in the e-mails exchanged during the leadership seminar process, to elicit

description using the *8 Dimensions* terminology. Such a manner of self-disclosure may

possibly be explained by the impact of both the online pre-intervention assessment as

well as the extended time spent on teaching the *8 Dimensions* during the leadership seminar. However, other participants' employed terms outside of *8 Dimensions* labeling. Further, even though I supplied the mechanism to each participant to take the pre- and post seminar assessments, I had no access at any time to any results. In addition, the only knowledge I had of the participants taking the online assessment at all was their voluntary disclosure of that fact.

An analysis of the responses may indicate some patterns related to age and years of experience. For example, there is an indication that age may have some bearing on the participants responding toward the *humble* dimension of leadership. The participants who used this descriptor to be their self-described leadership style, participants D and F, were part of the youngest two age groups, ages 25-29 and 40-44, respectively. In contrast, participants in the oldest age groups self-described by employing labels the furthest removed from the *humble* dimension, specifically, *affirming* and *resolute*. These labels were utilized by participants G and H in the 45-49 year old age group, and by participant E, belonging to age group 50-54.

When the factor of number of years in the ministry is introduced, the pattern is developed even further. For example, Participants D and F are not only part of the two youngest age groups, but they also are among the youngest in terms of years of ministry, reflecting two and five years, respectively. Once again by contrast, the participants showing the most divergence from the *humble* style of leadership tend toward a longer tenure in ministry, specifically, five years (Participant E), nine years (Participant H), and ten years (Participant G). While great reluctance should be shown to draw any kind of definitive conclusions, increasing age and more years of the experience in the ministry

appear to be factors that shape the pastoral leader away from the more conservative leadership styles (such as *humble*) and toward the more dynamic styles on the other end of the spectrum (*resolute* and *affirming*).

Another factor that some might consider as germane to understanding the responses of the participants would be relative church size. Differences expressed by pastors may be accounted for by the leadership styles of those leading larger churches in comparison with pastors of smaller congregations. While the point may be valid, unfortunately it transcends the scope of this particular study. According to statistics provided by the Global Ministry Center of the Church of the Nazarene for 2013, the average morning worship attendance for a Nazarene church in the USA/Canada region for 2013 was ninety-seven ("Statistics by Region 2013"). However, for each of the churches represented by the pastoral participants in this study, their average morning worship attendance falls below this benchmark. Therefore, any attempt to distinguish participant responses based on a larger or smaller church criterion would be arbitrary at best.

The interview helped to clarify some of the participants' thinking. Participant D reflected upon the leadership seminar experience:

> "I didn't read as much in detail as to the others [leadership styles] and how they were described, but "humble" definitely seemed to fit what I thought of myself. The main thing I felt for humble leaders was that I want to be without blame and it made sense for me."

This observation was equally true for the two pastors that defined themselves with the label *affirming*. One of them, Participant G, stated: "I really connected with the assessment online and the affirming leadership style, so-to-speak. It really did do a picture of me in that I'm not a strong leader, in the sense that it has to be my way or the

highway." Clearly, the interview following the process of experiencing the seminar served to assist some of the participants in clarifying their leadership thinking.

Participant I strongly resonated with the label *inclusive* For him, it was more than simply a descriptive concept of leadership style but had strong implications for the conduct of his ministry. Being *inclusive* in style, he sensed a natural tendency to reach out and include as many as possible in his circle of influence. However, he also understood that being inclusive creates its own potential difficulties, with the real danger that "if I drop everything and give you a hand, … I can't get done my primary task as a pastor and that is to be on my knees before God and be in the Word." This pastor sensed that he has been able to "refocus" in order to avoid some of those distractions, all the while safeguarding his leadership style as being as inclusive as possible.

The only participant to indicate *resolute* as his leadership style, Participant H, strongly disagreed with the designation. Through the course of the interview, this participant reflected on the meaning of the word and defined it as signifying, "I can't stop for anything…. I'm going to just keep going and maybe that's not the best definition of who I am…." The sense of the word portrayed was that of leaders who tended to run roughshod over those whom they had authority, and this picture painted a negative image in his mind of what kind of leader he wanted to be.

A point of interest regarding those who used the *8 Dimensions* labels was the complete absence of several of the dimensions, notably, the *energizing, pioneering*, and *commanding*. The absence of any of the pastors to be self-described with these styles is to be noted, particularly because these labels are the ones most commonly associated with strong, visionary styles of leadership. The labels used by the majority of the pastors—

humble, affirming, and *inclusive*—point strongly to a collaborative, team-building style of leadership.

At this juncture, a word of explanation may be in order to try to understand the lack of response from Participants A and B. First, the reasons being advanced are mainly speculative. Concerning Participant A, following his initial acceptance to be a participant in the seminar, I personally learned of a severe family illness situation that compromised his participation in the leadership seminar itself. No explanation was offered to me regarding missing the subsequent sessions. Perhaps he felt that further participation was futile, because he was already behind the rest of the group.

Participant B initially attended, and, gauging by the level of dialog during the seminar, was even eager about being a part of the seminar. He was willing to schedule the personal interview when I followed up with a phone call. However, subsequent e-mails and phone calls were left unanswered and unreturned.

Again, and this thought is purely speculative, the possibility exists that these participants were less motivated to continue because of a low level of personal investment into the seminar. No level of financial involvement on the part of the participant was required, no academic credit to be gained or lost was received, and no public acknowledgement that the participant had been an active part of this seminar was observed. Perhaps because it appeared that nothing substantial would be lost by not participating, there was less motivation to do so. Further, on a personal level, of all the participants, I personally knew them the least at any level, be it friendship or as colleagues. They were geographically some of the most distant from me as well, which may explain some of the challenges.

In addition to the terms borrowed from the *8 Dimensions*, several pastors shared a common description of their leadership style, which in essence was an approximation of what is termed *laissez-faire* leadership. Participant C, while not quite wanting to use the term itself, said, "I'm pretty laid back, so I wouldn't go as far as using the word laissez-faire, but I am very much consensus driven, trying to get everybody on the same page and move ahead from there." Participant H, who strongly disagreed with what the *8 Dimensions* assessment had determined, thought that the better description likely came nearer to the concept of being *laissez-faire*. Acknowledging that the seminar has helped him "gain more of an awareness of my styles," during the course of the interview, he also remembered one of the key illustrations from the leadership seminar. He recounted, "The biggest thing I remember from that whole thing [seminar] is the Dusty Baker comments about laissez-faire and how everybody walked all over him. And people would say, 'yeah I can see that that's how I can be, too.'" To understand his comments, Dusty Baker was the former manager of the Cincinnati Reds, and the example of his firing was taken from a newspaper columnist's assessment as to why Baker was fired. This example was included as an illustration in the leadership seminar (Daugherty). This self-assessment was consistent with his e-mail correspondence, where he mentioned, "'Lassez-faire' [sic] is exactly the phrase that I have used to describe my leadership style." Even beyond the descriptive labels of the *8 Dimensions,* no pastor described himself or herself in a term even approaching the more dynamic or visionary style of leadership.

The determination of the participants' leadership abilities were more difficult to obtain, at least in the sense of having a clear picture of what they themselves believed their abilities to be. According to the responses received, the sources of the various

participants' learning about leadership became apparent. However, these did not necessarily translate, in their view, to possessing the ability to lead.

To a certain degree, some of the participants sensed their abilities as leaders to being tied to previous learning and experiences. Participant E saw a link to her ability to be a pastor and learning leadership on the job as a nurse: "All nurses have to be in charge, and pastors have to take charge. That's been it. Nurses have to learn in the fire and pastors learn in the fire..." For others, experience gained in prior management experience (Participant I) with its accompanying "brown-bag leadership lunches" and experiences with other managers develop their capacities as leaders. For some, it has been abilities gained because of informal reading about leadership (Participants C, D, and E). For still others, growth in leadership came through formal training, whether at the graduate level (Participants C and D) or through a denominational initiative (Participant C). Specifically, this participant experienced training through the Small-Church Institute, an effort by the Church of the Nazarene to enable smaller churches to grow, desiring that they eventually move from small church to medium-sized church, and potentially attain even large-church status. In the interview process, Participant C believed that this initiative was not an unqualified blessing, as some of the principles the Institute sought to convey were not so much regarding leadership, but conveyed the sense that a smaller church would be more valuable if it could achieve medium- or large-church status, a premise that this participant could not share.

Participant D shared the concern that learning about leadership, whatever the vehicle employed, does not necessarily translate into possessing the ability to lead:

> So I had the knowledge of it [leadership] and I could explain what kind of
> leader I wanted to be, but in praxis not always leading the way I needed to.

> That frustration is more even if I know which way I want to go. I'm frustrated because I can't get to do what I need to do and do what needs to be done. I'm frustrated for my lack of courage to do what needs to be done.

For some leaders, participant D's experience lends credibility to the thought that learning about leadership and possessing the ability to actually lead are not necessarily synonymous.

Another, Participant C, expressed a similar concern. After saying he was not surprised by the initial assessment of style, he said, "I think leadership has to come out of your personality, and *there are times I wish I were different but I'm not* [emphasis mine]." This sense of uncertain leadership ability was also reflected by Participant G. For this pastor, even with many years of pastoral experience, he expressed in an e-mail, "The poor result of many years as a leader in the church has me to be seeking a stronger leadership style." Apparently, a link exists in the minds of these participants between strength of personality and a stronger leadership style.

Yet another idea centers around the concept of leadership ability stemming from spiritual empowerment by God. In one of the e-mails used in correspondence with me, Participant I conveyed his thinking by illustrating from a blog post by Wesley Leake. This participant mentioned that ability to lead comes not so much from being inherently gifted but from insisting that in the past "God has chosen ordinary people, most of whom were not looking for a divine assignment. Nevertheless, God saw something in their hearts that led him to assign particular tasks" ("Spiritual Leadership"). For him, spiritual leadership transcends innate giftedness or human capacity, but is divinely determined.

Research Question #2

What were the changes in participants' self-identified styles and ability of pastoral

leadership, if any, expressed after taking the seminar?

Table 4.2 notes the self-assessment of the participants in response to the

questions, and compares and contrasts what they self-reported to be their leadership style

both before and after the seminar.

Table 4.2. A Summary of Participants' Self-Assessment of Leadership Style (after completion of seminar)

Identity	Self-Reported Leadership Style (prior to seminar)	Self-Reported Leadership Style (after completion of seminar)
Participant A	No reply	No reply
Participant B	No reply	No reply
Participant C	Humble, laissez-Faire	Humble
Participant D	Humble	Humble and courageous
Participant E	Affirming	(Uncertain)
Participant F	Humble	Deliberate
Participant G	Affirming	Affirming
Participant H	Resolute, laissez-faire	Resolute
Participant I	Inclusive	Inclusive

An examination of the interviews with the participants gives insight into the

changes, or lack thereof. The first category included those who reported changes.

Through the course of the interview, when asked the question about change,

Participant F quickly responded, "I think that the classes that we did—I know I missed

one—was very helpful to me and helped me to find who I was and who I didn't want to

be anymore.... It flipped on some things for me." He continued, "I thought I have

changed in the last month or so or even two months in my leadership style, so it's been

really good to see that change and how I reacted to that." Evidently, change occurred for

him as a result of the seminar.

Participant G retook the online leadership style assessment, and the results

indicated no change. However, this result contrasted sharply with his expectation of what

he thought the assessment tool would reveal. He used phrases such as, "It [his leadership

style] has changed so much," and "I believe I have been changed," yet his self-

assessment still came up as *affirming*. Additionally, this pastor chose to share with me in

the course of the interview some very practical examples of how he has changed, which

in his estimation were dramatic, to underscore his belief that his leadership style indeed

was different, the evidence of the online assessment notwithstanding. For example, his

local congregation had had a negative experience with an individual tasked with plowing

the church's parking lot clear of snow. Participant G indicated that in times past, he

simply would have avoided dealing with the situation by having a lay leader confront the

individual. He recounts the change:

> The board did not want the one guy we used last year, so I have to
> confront him and say "you're no longer needed" and find a new guy and
> the confrontation is not my forte. I'm one to soft-pedal this type of thing. I
> felt like I was stronger in taking care of that issue and that problem, and I
> kind of felt like I could by feedback from the leadership of the church that
> they respected the way I handled it, maybe a little bit better than in some
> other areas. But that was one confrontation where someone had to be
> addressed and told your services are no longer needed and the reason why.
> In that again I did a fairly affirming job of it.

However, the preponderance of the responses tended toward indicating that little if any

change had taken place. This relative lack of change held true for Participants C, D, E, H,

and I. A typical response from this group would be that of Participant D. While

expressing humorously his belief that he had added an element of courage to his leadership style, he still readily acknowledged that *humble* remained his predominant style of leadership.

For another, Participant I, in addition to his perceived lack of change in style was the thought that change in that style was something he was glad did not transpire. The interview revealed a seeming philosophical bent toward embracing his particular style of leadership. Referring to the leadership seminar and the subsequent assessment online, he insisted that a change in leadership style in his particular case would not necessarily be beneficial:

> I don't think it changed my style preferences. While you know giving me the opportunity to think through others and other leadership dimensions, I think you always have another opportunity to gravitate back toward your dimension and/or style that that fits you. If I were maybe younger, a little more experienced, a little less experienced, I would think that there would be more room to move around within the leadership dimensions. But I think that after you begin to gravitate over the years, especially later years, where people can legitimately say that's how you are, I think you begin to match the sort of personality experience and recognize what you do well and what you don't do well a bit more clearly. So I think, my guess is that it would be hard to move for somebody who has been always in management and leadership.

Because I know Participant I well as a pastoral colleague, his body language, tone of voice, previous leadership experience, and personal gifting for ministry all point toward the sincerity of his belief.

Finally, some participants shared the expectation that, while no measured change transpired as a result of the leadership seminar, they did believe that changes to their leadership style either would or needed to take place in the future. Some examples of this needed change included an e-mail from Participant H, who believed he possessed a style that was not accurately rendered by the assessment. This pastor asserted, "I've realized

that there is more need for someone to 'take the bull by the horns' to get the congregation into a focused direction." Through conversation during the course of the leadership seminar, as well as the interview and e-mail processes, this adjustment would represent a significant change of leadership style for him.

Multiple pastors in this category stated in various ways the contention, "People want to be led," and affirmed that their task was to find a way to embrace a new style of leadership, even if they currently had not. Indicative of seeing the need for leadership change despite not yet having achieved it is Participant E. Multiple sources from this pastor reflected this thought, including both e-mail and interviews. Phrases such as, "I've had some definite decision changes regarding my leadership style." "I guess I have to put the hammer down," and, "Because the people in their congregation 'want to be led ... I'm looking forward to discovering a new way of thinking,'" are indicative of change needed but by their admission not yet achieved. As further evidence, Participant C noted some imminent changes coming to the congregation they served. He believed that while personally he had not changed because of the seminar, to address the changes at the church's doorstep adequately would "take a lot more extroverted leadership than I'm sometimes comfortable with. But that's okay because I think it will help me to grow, too." Clearly, the need for change in leadership style, either now or in the near future, factored into the thinking of many of the participants.

Research Question #3

What other influences, if any, have occurred in the lives of these pastors that may account for or contribute to the changes in the self-identified style of leadership subsequent to the seminar?

Pastors are no different than leaders of other groups and organizations. They experience influences that impact on their ability to lead. No pastor lives in a vacuum. Regardless of whether or not there is change in a given pastor's leadership style, a pastor has likely been exposed to multiple possibilities that may encourage that change, in addition to the effects of a single leadership seminar.

Table 4.3 delineates factors that the seminar participants articulated as potentially having an impact on their leadership style, and represents a summary of these finding.

Table 4.3. A Summary of Participants Self-Identified Factors Cited as Possibly Impacting Leadership Style

Identity	Self-identified factors cited as possibly impacting leadership style
Participant A	No reply
Participant B	No reply
Participant C	Age (maturation) Books provided
Participant D	Weekly discussion call from discipleship group
Participant E	Impact of family members, church board
Participant F	Impact of a specific situation on family
Participant G	Workplace setting, family situations
Participant H	Routine impact of daily life
Participant I	No factor cited

Perhaps the first significant observation in determining these additional factors is the impact of family situations on the pastoral leader. For Participants E, F, and G, the interviews conducted and e-mails received specifically and directly indicated the family. For Participant C, the family is directly implied, if not named. First, the interviews revealed the direct impact of family as a potential factor on leadership style. As an example of this influence, Participant G cited some current family situations being confronted as having potential to shape his leadership style. By relating a glimpse of

these challenging situations, he underscored the potential that to take the initiative to deal with them at the family level created the possibility of carrying over what was learned to his capacity to lead in the church level:

> [In] my immediate family I have a daughter and I am the leader of the home with my wife and my extended family. Also, my brother has some problems. In dealing with these I kind of feel like *things are being dealt with more thoughtfully* [emphasis mine] instead of just off the top of my head.

For this pastor, the interview context made clear that *the things being dealt with more thoughtfully* were the leadership situations in the church he was currently confronting.

For Participant E, the impact of family on her leadership style found a different expression. This pastor illustrated the thought that two different groups, her family as well as the church board, were sending a similar message in that she needed to make some changes in how she was leading the local congregation. For this participant, the message received was she needed to be willing to let go of some of the hands-on activity she was doing that were not necessarily integral to the role of pastor, so she would be freed to do the things pastors are called to do. In this case, the pastor had taken on the task of arranging for and preparing the funeral dinners, provided as a ministry to grieving families. In addition to comforting the family, preaching the funeral message, and overseeing the ceremonial aspect of a funeral, the pastor had single-handedly taken on the job of funeral dinner coordinator. However, through the joint auspices of the family and church board, the pastor was preparing to change. Her observation was insightful:

> And as long as I keep doing it this way they'll say "you shouldn't keep doing it," but as long as I keep doing it why is there any reason for anyone to say to you, "here let me help you with this?" And I realize that if I keep at this pace how will we be able to grow, because I won't be able to be a pastor if I keep busy doing everything else. How can I handle a growing church if I keep doing this? I can't. And I'm ready for this church to grow.

> so I need to be the pastor of a growing church. So that means I don't do funeral dinners anymore.

Obviously, the twin factors of family and the church board shaped her toward leadership style change and growth in her ability to lead.

Participant C's observation did not name the family specifically but directly implied its impact. He noted a milestone birthday, and said, "I think part of turning 50 is a realization that I have to grow up sometime." Repeatedly in the course of the interview, he alluded to how church life and family life often intersected and stated that he had been at his current pastoral position for many years and hoped to remain many more. "Growing up sometime" included the sense that his leadership style needed to change to enable the congregation to take the needed steps forward, enabling not only relocation of the church but establishing the basis of continued tenure at the church, securing stability for the family as well. The pastor's exact words serve to express well his belief:

> Now is a good time and realizing that God placed us here, and my intention, unless God has something else in mind, is to stay a long time. And so for that to happen we have to grow here first. Not just numerically but in a lot of other ways as well, the dynamics of the church for instance. I have to step up to lead that process. And God's been helping me with that. It's a big challenge but it's a good challenge.

This assessment becomes further evidence that family and church dynamics do indeed shape and affect the pastor's ongoing leadership.

A second factor cited by the participants was the potential effect of the workplace on the pastoral leader. Participant G, who is bi-vocational, implied a type of mixing of leadership style and role. Due to the many years on the job, he believes he is looked upon as a leader in his workplace:

> I have a very strong presence, you know, at work being kind of older and having done the job so long ... I feel like that I've only got a few years left and I feel like I have more of a leadership role.

In the course of the interview, I had the sense that blurring, or perhaps mixture, existed in this pastor's self-assessment as leader in the two widely different domains in which he functions. His immediate reply to the question indicated a sort of cross-pollination of leadership role and style.

The additional factors of books currently being read as well as the routine of everyday life, may be mentioned here as well. The only elaboration I will give here is simply their mention by the participants because in the interviews the factor was only mentioned, and no elaboration was given in either case. The participants quickly moved on to other commentary, which strongly implied a bare minimum of impact of the factor on their lives.

Summary of Major Findings

The following list summarizes the major findings of the research questions:

1. Often employing the descriptive labels for leadership style used by Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm in *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership*, the majority of participants tended toward those labels which indicates a trend toward a collaborative, team-building style, eschewing those that would indicate a more dynamic, visionary style of leadership.

2. While most participants seemed to find the self-assessment of their leadership ability a difficult task, at the same time they had a tendency to define their current leadership abilities by the various sources of leadership training they had received in the past.

3. Even though most participants believed that little if any change had occurred as a direct result of the leadership seminar, they also concluded that some future change in their leadership style either needed or would need to take place.

4. Most of the participants acknowledge the possibility, if not the likelihood, that other intervening factors had taken place in their lives simultaneously with the leadership seminar that may have impacted their leadership style self-assessment.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Major Findings

From the outset of this study, I have proposed that the church of the twenty-first century is facing many challenges, and significant among them is the issue of pastoral leadership. As the difficulty of leading a church in a rapidly changing environment is confronted, many questions remain that must be answered. Among those are the uncritical acceptance of popularized leadership maxims by both pastors and laity, as well as the thinking that pastors who lead their flocks must do so by conforming to a supposedly biblically-mandated style of leadership, which is most often accepted as that of a strong, visionary, if not authoritarian leader. The problems compound for pastors if they neither possess the self-knowledge of how they lead (i.e., leadership style) nor possess the ability to change, adapt or acquire new skills for their personal leadership toolbox (i.e., leadership ability). Therefore, the purpose of this research study was to explore the perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors in the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change, if any, in their self-reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

As a result of the study, I humbly and tentatively propose a series of findings for the reader's consideration. Before each one is considered in turn, I will qualify the approach and the interpretation behind them.

First, the conclusions summarized by the major findings are tentative at best and should be understood as narrow in focus. Such is the nature of qualitative study. Sensing

insists, "The very nature of qualitative research looks at the depth of a particular context more than the breadth of multiple contexts" (214). While some validity exists in the conclusions drawn relative to the specific context studied, hesitancy is the rule of the day when considering the possibility of extrapolating the findings.

Second, the findings are interpretations of the data. As such, they are inherently limited by the capabilities and perspectives of the researcher. Equally valid interpretations of the data may arise from other interested parties, including, but not limited to, the participants in this study, those who will critique it as to its content in an academic environment, as well as others who may possess academic or professional expertise. The findings as presented in no way represent the last word in understanding the data gathered and its interpretations or implications.

Third, I hope sincerely that at least a small segment of the findings will find resonance with some portion of the audience who digests them. Because these findings are drawn directly from a study of clergy in active ministry, for example, I hope that other clergy who may happen upon these findings will have at least some small sense of identification with them and will, as Sensing says, find them "fitting" to whatever personal context is theirs (216).

First Finding—a Preference toward Collaborative versus Dynamic Leadership

Often employing the descriptive labels for leadership style used by Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm in *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership*, the majority of participants tended toward labels that indicate a trend toward a collaborative. team-building style, eschewing those that indicate a more dynamic, visionary style of leadership.

The styles observed and reported by the majority of the participants included those who self-assessed as *humble, affirming,* and *inclusive*. The more dynamic and visionary labels—*pioneering, commanding,* and *energizing*—are notably absent.

In reflecting upon the selection process used during the choice of the seminar participants in conjunction with the district superintendent, as well as interacting with them throughout the process of teaching the seminar, receiving their e-mails, and the subsequent interviews, this finding would seem to align well with the participants' expressed preferences. Most of the participants were relatively new to ministry and as such would seemingly tend toward a collaborative approach, at least at the outset, in the effort to gain leadership experience without being unduly exposed to the risk of standing alone and being proven wrong. Until a certain level of ministry skill and confidence is attained, pastors newer in ministry would reach out more readily to those around them in an effort to stand on solid ground.

This observation is not necessarily to say that leadership style is forcibly and exclusively collaborative in the early years to be replaced by a supposedly superior, more dynamic or visionary style later on. Indeed, Participants C and G, those with the most years of ministry experience in the study (twenty and ten years, respectively), indicated a more collaborative style as well. The evidence in this particular study would seem to advocate for the conclusion that numerous exceptions occur.

This finding would also seem to align with one of the factors of transformational leadership examined in a review of the literature, emotional intelligence. God calls pastors to advance the kingdom of Christ, which of necessity is in the context of working and dealing with people. If EI is the ability to read where people are and engage with

them on an emotional plane in order to lead them effectively, then the findings accord themselves well with this understanding. The leadership style tag, for instance, of being a *commanding* leader, which none of the participants ever verbalized to me following either occasion when the self-assessments were taken, is not at all aligned with EI. According to Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm, the commanding leader is not innately gifted in being emotionally astute. However, he or she is the "polar opposite (146)" of the *inclusive* leader, which did fit the self-description of some in the study and does embrace being emotionally attuned to people.

Biblically and theologically, some, but not conclusive, evidence that the findings would fit with certain aspects and understandings of New Testament leadership. In my treatment of the concept of *charisma* as the leadership gift, I determined that one cannot determine easily, or with any degree of certainty, an accurate understanding of *charisma*. Some believe that *charisma* represents uniquely the receiving of a divine gift for leadership, whereas others contend it was equally possible that *charisma* is the ability of a duly elected individual by an ecclesial process. This person, through the expression of natural endowments in the context of the church, fulfills the mandate for leadership. The common, popular understanding of *charisma* leans toward the dynamic, vibrant expression of leadership such as that manifested by King. If the second understanding is at all possible, then God-called individuals, even young in ministry and not possessing the more dynamic leadership styles, are still equally able to lead effectively, even if their style is more collaborative by nature.

For the practice of ministry, I am skeptical that this finding represents a call for change in how ministry is led. Clearly, in the course of classroom discussion during the

seminar itself, as well as in the interviews that followed, was that the dynamics of the congregations served by these participants were unique and called for leaders uniquely equipped to lead in those local church contexts. As the data showed, participants were willing to change if needed, as needed, but at the given moment when taking the self-assessment of leadership style, there was no clarion call for leadership style change by the participants themselves.

To explain this seeming reticence to change, a brief return to the thinking of Morgan W McCall, Michael M. Lombardo, and Ann M. Morrison is in order. In their study of management executives, leadership learned through the challenge of daily experiences is the most effective in contrast to leadership education alone (251-52). While a direct correlation between management executives and pastors may be a stretch, the principle is worth considering. A distinct change in leadership style may not happen for pastoral leaders until they find themselves thrust into situations where leadership change must happen.

Seconding Finding—a Tendency to Define Leadership Ability by Training Received

While most participants seemed to find the self-assessment of their leadership ability a difficult task, at the same time they tended to define their current leadership ability by the various sources of leadership training they had received in the past.

This finding may be the most difficult of the four in this study to interpret, conceivably due in part to the perceived difficulty of the participants to arrive at what they thought was a suitable response to the question posed during the interview. Perhaps the most reasonable explanation of this reticence to respond by the participants is closely linked to the leadership style they perceive themselves as having. As noted several times,

the large majority embraced self-descriptions of *affirming, inclusive,* and *humble.* Each of

these has notable elements of being self-effacing, of not necessarily or unduly calling

attention to oneself. Therefore, to self-evaluate in the presence of another pastor—as I

interviewed each one—risked the possibility to be self-aggrandizing. For Nazarene

pastors shaped in the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition, such an approach would be consistent

with holiness theology and certainly understandable. Many Nazarene pastors are

acquainted with what is known as Wesley's Covenant service. We quote this prayer, the

language updated, as reflective of the theology that typifies many Nazarene pastors:

> I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. (qtd. in Whaling 59)

Hence, the theological background may explain the reluctance to self-evaluate one's

ability.

While I did not choose in this study to select the leadership style of the Old

Testament character Saul for examination, this observation correlates well with his

description following his divine appointment as king of Israel. Even though he possessed

the human traits esteemed by others for leadership, when the time came for his

recognition to be king, he "has hidden himself among the supplies" (1 Sam.10:22).

Subsequently, God himself must divinely reveal where Saul was to the people to propel

Saul to the leadership position as king of Israel, which was chosen for him. The

expression of genuine leadership, even in a biblical context, is not always visionary and

dynamic but can be manifested humbly.

The participants' responses relating to the defining of their leadership abilities by the training they have received in the past seems to at least correlate in part with our findings in the review of the literature. In the discussion of whether leaders are born or made, Michael Frank contended that "many principles of leadership can be learned by almost anyone" (388). Most of the participants made reference to experiences in the past, including the recent past, that have shaped their thinking, including seminars, denominational initiatives, and personal reading. An important qualifier to this observation is that several of the pastors during informal discussion with me after the formal interview bemoaned what they thought was an apparent lack of emphasis on leadership training during their official pastoral ministry training. Others were appreciative of the leadership seminar and concluded along with Gibbs that some skills were not only going to have to be acquired, but some unlearned as well in the course of future ministry (9-10, 16).

Third Finding—Future Change Needs to Occur

Even though most participants believed that little if any change had occurred as a direct result of the leadership seminar, they also concluded that some future change in their leadership style either needed or would need to take place.

The capacity to change, while difficult in any domain, seems particularly so in the church and, by association, those who lead Christ's church. Alan Nelson and Gene Appel believe, "[E]stablishing new habits is harder for churches than for other organizations. When you compare churches with for-profit corporations, you will begin to think that churches are genetically inclined to be slower" (43-44). After reflecting upon the results

of the leadership seminar, my observation is that pastors echo the difficulty to change that their churches exhibit.

This sampling of pastors in general did not experience self-observed change as a result of the seminar. However, I observed that these pastors in general did sense the need to acquire the leadership tools necessary to change and adapt to ever-changing circumstances.

Anecdotally and ironically, a story used as a part of teaching the leadership seminar became somewhat of a moment of awakening for several of these pastors. During the development and subsequent teaching of the seminar, the Cincinnati Reds baseball team qualified for the divisional playoffs, only to fail miserably and lose in the first round. The fallout caused their then-manager, Dusty Baker, to lose his job. The story of Baker's fall from grace as a manager, due to what many, including professional sports writers, thought to be his inability to change his managerial style, became the springboard for much conversation among the pastors in both the interviews and e-mails exchanged (Daugherty). For them, Baker's experience became the incident that allowed them to draw parallels to their own experiences as pastor/leaders and likely served as an impetus to begin to be open to change.

When reflecting on the literature reviewed, the thinking regarding the change process should be carefully nuanced. If change, as understood by the pastors' responses to the question proposed, is narrowly defined as the adoption of marked or dramatic changes in leadership style as a result of the leadership seminar, then scant evidence exists in the literature that dramatic shift in style takes place. However, if change can be more broadly defined as an openness to doing things differently and a willingness to learn

and appropriate new skills to deal with ever-changing circumstances, then the findings align more closely with what the literature reveals. The observations of both Frank and Gibbs would certainly apply, namely that leadership principles can be learned by anyone (Frank 381) and that new dynamics need to be learned and others, unlearned (Gibbs 9-10). The same thinking is one of the primary emphases of the *8 Dimensions of Leadership* where the writers contend that change is not only desirable but indeed necessary in today's fast-paced environment (Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm xi).

How this finding aligns with the biblical and theological basis for change in pastoral leadership style appears somewhat less certain. Most of the biblical and theological framework presented is more concerned with the fact that leadership of the church by an individual is one that God has called, and that this leadership flows from a divine *charisma*. The evidence of this God-called leader to change his or her leadership style according to varying circumstances is less clear. According to Agosto's work, Paul the apostle did vary his approach to the church in Corinth, and these approaches were, in order of priority, personal visit, use of an emissary, and, finally, as a last resort, the writing of a personal letter (108). However, much about the biblical approach to leadership and, in particular, the necessity to change leadership styles according to the needs of various congregations that is unknown.

For the minister in active pastoral practice, the implication drawn from the participants' responses is that change in leadership style is indeed difficult, but an openness to it is necessary. If Roxburgh is correct, many churches find themselves in a state of liminality. Defined, liminality is when a group—in this context, a local congregation—finds that its status and way of working is so radically different that it

loses its sense of how to function in the new situation (81). One of the participants in this study was a young pastor whose context closely parallels Roxburgh's definition. For this individual, who began his career in pastoral ministry at a local church in this situation, the challenge became for his congregation, "change or die." By this young pastor's assessment, the church had been through a rapid succession of pastors, and the local church governing board lacked cohesiveness and direction. While self-defining as *humble* in leadership style, clearly this style was ill-suited for dealing with certain challenges, particularly those involving people and personality conflicts. It became clear that he needed to lead in these situations with a firmer hand than he was currently doing. At the writing of this dissertation, the challenges this pastor confronts continue, but through personal conversation and discussion, he admits that he has adjusted his approach (i.e., style) to address more directly some of what this congregation is facing.

Fourth Finding—Other Factors Exist that Impact the Self-Assessment of Leadership Style

Most of the participants acknowledge the possibility, if not the likelihood, that other intervening factors had taken place in their lives simultaneously with the leadership seminar and that may have impacted their leadership style self-assessment.

To approach the interpretation of this finding, understanding the scope and limitation of the leadership seminar in which the participants engaged may be beneficial. By design and by necessity, the leadership seminar process was limited in scope. The first moments in which the pastors participated through the conclusion of the final interview, reflects a duration of approximately three months (early October 2013 through mid-January 2014). Actual contact hours in a teaching context totaled six, which was two

hours per evening, distributed over three consecutive Tuesday evenings in November. The amount of time invested by each participant in reading the leadership books during this time period is unknown, as is the time taken to respond via e-mail. The personal interviews typically lasted fifteen to thirty minutes, with time on either side invested in informal discussion and conversation. Without unnecessarily belaboring the specifics, in the wider picture of the context of the participants' lives, the leadership seminar reflected a relatively small amount of time compared with some of the other elements cited by the pastors as potentially impacting their leadership styles. Many of those mentioned—family, the influence of church boards and other groups inside of the local church, and certainly time spent daily in the workplace for those pastors who are bi-vocational—represent far more potential for influence on the participants' lives if for no other reason than the sheer quantity of hours spent together. Additionally, these factors would hold sway in the participants' lives, not only simultaneously with the seminar, but certainly long before and long after the seminar concluded.

I raised this very question during the course of the literature review. I asked if traditional training in preparation for the challenges of leadership, or facing the challenges of everyday experiences that come with the leader's job that best facilitates the leader's growth and learning. The evidence, both here and in the literature, seems to indicate that while formal training, such as embodied in the leadership seminar, has a role, it appears that the encountering of the day-to-day challenges that best facilitates the development of leadership capacities and competencies (McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison 251-52). This thought may hold true even when considering the fact that some of the participants experienced a sense of failure when reflecting on their leadership

abilities or lack thereof. In an e-mail during the time period of the seminar, one participant stated, "The poor result of many years as a leader in the church has me to be seeking a stronger leadership style." However, the very fact that this pastor was seeking to be better equipped for leadership and was willing to learn in the seminar may be an affirmation of Robert B. McKenna, Tanya N. Boyd, and Paul R. Yost who contend that situations resulting in negative outcomes may ultimately have more potential for learning and growth than those that stem from uniquely positive circumstances (190-201).

Direct parallels to the biblical and theological framework developed in this study regarding this finding may be difficult to draw. While basic human characteristics have not changed over the course of two thousand years, the context in which ministry is conducted today varies substantially. Jeremiah the prophet did not participate in a weekly "discussion call" by telephone as did Participant D, nor did the likelihood exist that Paul was shaped by then-current books on leadership, which Participant C noted as a significant factor.

However, then and now, leaders do not exist in a vacuum. I suspect that the biblical leaders of yesteryear, similar to leaders of today, were shaped by a multiplicity of factors that directly affected how they led in the circumstances in which they found themselves. As noted, the church context in Corinth demanded a variety of leadership strategies and approaches by Paul, which were not necessarily similar to the other churches with which he dealt with in the New Testament. For example, I may cite the approach taken by Paul as he sought to exercise leadership for the church in Philippi. In stark contrast with Corinth, he lacked direct knowledge as to what was happening in Philippi due to being imprisoned (Phil. 1:12-14; 2:19). His leadership style, then, was to

lead by letter due to his current circumstances. Whether in biblical times or in contemporary situations, leaders are shaped, and shaped significantly, by the influences around them. Therefore, understanding the role of a leadership seminar on the practice of pastoral ministry remains a valid concern.

The indications of the study would seem to say that it is one factor among many. Given the results of the interviews, while such a seminar was appreciated by the participants, and even served as a touchstone for learning, place must be given for the many factors with which pastoral leaders deal on a routine basis. Perhaps the word *holistic* enters into the discussion here. While valid to evaluate the various findings of this study, possibly the best approach would be to examine the pastor, and the pastor's leadership styles and abilities, holistically in lieu of trying to dissect and estimate in isolation the impact of a single, three-month leadership journey. In light of the findings, at least in the sampling studied by this project, the larger pastoral leadership journey is a matrix of experiences and life events that are unique to each pastoral leader.

Implications of the Findings

When a researcher arrives at the moment of stating the implications of a study, Tim Sensing suggests that the thought of *implication* and *significance* are tightly intertwined (226). Said otherwise, he believes that implications bring us to the "so what?" moment of the study (212). Their meaning and impact for the future must be determined now that the findings have been determined and elucidated.

All implications are, at least to some degree, tentative. They may spawn some very specific recommendations. However, I offer these tentative implications in the light of what has been discovered.

First, *substantive change in pastoral leadership style is difficult.* The findings of this particularly study indicate that, for most of the pastors, little if any change was noted by the participants in leadership style when comparing self-assessments from before and after the leadership seminar. Certainly, many possible reasons for this lack of change can be advanced. Some viable explanations include deeply ingrained, innate personality traits that characterize individual style, the relatively short duration of the leadership seminar process when compared to other factors that serves as the operational basis from which a pastor exercises leadership, a reluctance to adopt new patterns and habits and styles when the current ones seem either to be working or are, for the moment, effective.

However, for this particular sampling, change of leadership style appears to remain difficult to accomplish. This seeming inability to change seems to accord well with what some have said, not just in the context of leadership but concerning life in general. Nicolo Macchiavelli in *The Prince* said over five hundred years ago, "It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things" (23).

A second implication would be that, for this sampling, *somewhat of a dichotomy exists between where the participants self-evaluated themselves in the area of leadership ability and the sense of not yet being where a future ministry situation would demand that they needed to be.*

The implication of this dichotomy is significant, if not sobering. If the pace of cultural change is rapid and ever-increasing, and if that this general trend is impacting churches and ministry, then those who engage in equipping ministers, particularly in leadership training, must find ways to enable them to resolve the tension between pastors'

current leadership abilities and those needed for the future. While optimistic to think that a three-month leadership journey will be sufficient close that gap, yet some mechanisms to do so should be sought for the long-term health of Christian congregations and the pastors who lead them. A possible suggestion would be an element that is ongoing and open-ended (e.g., a form of leadership coaching). This coaching could serve in conjunction with the specific start and end dates of the leadership seminar that served as the intervention for this study. Another suggestion in the Nazarene context is the very recent discussion of mandating a specific number of continuing education units (CEU) for every pastor to be obtained each year. While these CEUs will not address leadership studies, those that do could serve as an ongoing tool for leadership formation.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations to this study are significant. First, this study purported to examine a limited sample of pastors actively serving in one district (Southwest Ohio) in one evangelical denomination (the Church of the Nazarene) in one country (the United States). In addition, the study did not address others who serve as ministers in that district who were in capacities other than pastor (e.g., associate pastoral ministry, youth ministers, music ministers, educational roles) Next, I desired from the outset of the seminar to choose those whom the district superintendent and I believed could best use the insights and teachings gained from such a seminar. By default, therefore, other potential ministers were not considered. Due to the intentional limitation of the scope of the seminar (i.e., believing that approximately ten pastors would be an optimal size for the sampling), those who perhaps may have qualified as potentially benefitting from it simply were not part of the invitation list. One can only speculate as to whether their

presence may have altered the dynamics of the seminar or the findings themselves. Finally, an additional limitation is understanding and evaluating the mind-set of those chosen to participate in the seminar. Perhaps some of the participants viewed the fact of their having been chosen as either punitive, (e.g., I must be underperforming to have been selected for this study) or remedial (e.g., My leadership skills must be substandard). This observation is particularly poignant when considering the lack of response by Participants A and B in the study. Of course, their actual thinking will likely never be known, but does indeed reflect a significant limitation of the study.

Unexpected Observations

In the development of the leadership seminar, one of the key teaching components was Sugerman, Scullard, and Wilhelm's *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership*. The tool seeks to understand leadership style by labeling the eight major styles equally across a wide spectrum. Going in to the seminar, I expected to hear from the participants themselves who sensed the freedom to share with me results that would reflect a somewhat even distribution across the major styles. Quite unexpectedly, this anticipated result was not at all the case. As noted in the findings, the vast majority were concentrated in three segments alone (*humble, affirming,* and *inclusive*) to the complete exclusion of others (*commanding, pioneering,* and *energizing*).

A further surprise was the assumption I made going in that the leadership styles likely to be encountered among the pastors taking the *8 Dimensions* assessment would be those that popularly associated with dynamic, visionary, even forceful leadership. (i.e., *commanding, pioneering,* and *energizing*). The assessment indicated the exact opposite

which was very much unexpected, particularly so that not a single pastor/leader self-described in the dynamic and visionary categories.

Recommendations

If implications are tentative by nature, then recommendations would be much more concrete. These spring from my viewpoint as researcher. Hopefully I will serve as an active practitioner of pastoral ministry (I currently serve as a local church pastor), advocating for change, improvement, and advancement in the cause of Christ and the furtherance of his kingdom.

First, *much more needs to be done in the area of leadership training in the Church of the Nazarene, specifically for those ministers who do not have bachelor's or master's level theological training.* A recurring theme in the discussions, both at the classroom level and during the course of the interviews and e-mails, indicated a strong need and desire for more training in leadership than what the participants had previously received. Conversely, for those who had already experienced a formal leadership training component during the course of their advanced theological training, many among them expressed gratitude for what they had already received and an appreciation of the need for something ongoing to deepen their capacities for leadership further. My personal observation was a hunger on the part of the pastors involved for leadership training and often personal appreciation expressed to me as the researcher for the seminar they experienced.

Second, due to the limited scope of the sampling that was the subject of this study, *additional research needs to be done to assess the leadership styles and abilities of other pastors who did not fit the criteria of this study.* While I personally believe that

many facets of this study may be generalizable to other parts of the pastoral ministry population, additional work needs to be conducted to see if indeed this possibility exists. For example, are the findings applicable to those pastors who have been in ministry for many years? Would one obtain similar results for those who live in areas other than Southwest Ohio? Are the principles valid among pastors who are not from the Nazarene denomination? Even though an effort was made to include women pastors and those of African-American descent, would the outcomes change if these populations were targeted specifically and if the seminar had included primarily those who were women and African-American? These questions and others impact the overall potential of this study to effect positive change in the lives of pastoral leaders.

Postscript

The journey to the completion of this study has been just over two years in the process. During that time, my ideas have evolved from a vague, innate sense that something should be done to help pastors with the challenges they face in leading churches to an actual plan to do so.

To say that I have changed in the process would be an understatement. Like so many aspects of pastoral ministry, to engage in them requires that the pastor himself or herself be immersed and challenged by them. For the pastor who preaches or teaches, to have anything to present of value to a congregation means that he or she must be willing to do the hard labor of sermon study and preparation but knowing that in the end the biblical principles gleaned from such study will have taken root in the pastor's soul.

Likewise, this willingness to work hard in pursuit of a worthy goal has hopefully been true of conducting this study. In simply developing the seminar to present to

pastoral colleagues, I had to be saturated with the various leadership ideas and approaches that would eventually make their way into lectures. Powerpoints, and discussion subjects. If not a single other pastor benefitted from such preparation. little doubt exists that I did.

APPENDIX A

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR OUTLINE

Session 1: The Making of a Leader

(based on *The Making of a Leader*, by J. Robert Clinton)

Major idea: God's plan for a leader is to arrange for his or her growth in leadership over

the course of a lifetime.

I.   Definition of leadership.
        A. "Leadership is a lifetime of lessons."
        B. Activity—sharing with person seated next to you the ways in which God has
           been at work in your past, shaping you toward leadership.
II.   The phases in a lifetime of leadership.
        A. Sovereign Foundations.
        B. Inner Life Growth phase.
        C. Ministry maturing.
        D. Life maturing.
        E. Convergence.
        F. Afterglow (celebration)
        G. Concluding activity for the section—creation of personal time-line.
III.   The Leader's Character
        A. Challenges to the development of godly character.
        B. The definition of an *integrity check*.
        C. Examination of biblical passages: Daniel 1:8-21, 1 Samuel 8:21
        D. The definition of an *obedience check*.
IV.   The Leader's Challenges.
        A. The danger of plateauing.
           1. Definition of a plateau.
           2. Danger signs indicating plateauing.
              a. Lack of leadership replication.
              b. Not recognizing, or refusing to recognize, new ministry challenges and
                 assignments.
        B. The challenge of dealing with change.
           1. The reality of cultural and societal change.
           2. Activity—develop short lists of changes to our culture, as well as changes
              in the church, that have been observed in the last 10 years.
           3. The fast pace of change.
              a. Roxburgh's concept of liminality.

      b. Activity—(groups of 3)

      c. The testing of conflict

         i. The reality of the existence of conflict in church life.

         ii. Activity—brainstorming.

      d. The need for proactive growth in leadership capability

         i. Educational/literary growth.

         ii. The need for a leadership mentor.

Session 2: The 8 Dimensions of Leadership

(based on *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership* by Jeffrey Sugerman, Mark Scullard, and

Emma Wilhelm)

Big idea: A leader is not locked into a particular leadership style but can grow and

      change.

I.   A leader may choose alternative ways of thinking, acting, and behaving in the
leadership activities for which he or she is responsible.

    A. Various hypothetical situations a pastor may encounter in the context of the
exercise of ministry.

      1. Conflict between SS classes competing for the same space (room).

      2. The role of the pastor as seen by long-term members who do not want
change, versus newer, educated young professionals who want a say in the
future of the church.

    B. Small group discussion of other potential challenging situations for pastoral
leaders.

II.   Some foundational principles from the 8 Dimensions of Leadership.

    A. We all approach leadership from a unique starting point—a combination of
our own psychological make-up, intelligence, training, and experience.

    B. To be a leader is to make tough decisions, often being forced to choose
between competing demands, but what makes it a truly messy endeavor is the
fact that people are involved.

    C. Growth in leadership means that now, more than ever, you will have times
when you have to focus your leadership energy in new directions, which will
be a stretch for you.

      a. Everyone has a psychological comfort-zone toward which they
gravitate.

      b. Change is inevitable. What works for you as a leader today may not
work next year.

    E. Additional Considerations.

        a.   The call of Jeremiah—Jer. 1:5

        b.   Roxburgh's concept of liminality

        c.   Practical examples from congregational life today (small group discussion)

III.   The DiSC model

    A. Background—Marston's model

       1. D—Dominance

       2. I—Influence

       3. S—Steadiness

       4. C—Conscientiousness

    B. Refinement and expansion of the model—the 8 dimensions.

       1. Presentation of the model.

       2. The concept of two axes.

          a.   North-South

          b.   East-West

Session 3: Situational Leadership

(based on *The Situational Leader* by Paul Hersey and *Leading at a Higher Level* by Ken

Blanchard et al.)

Major idea: A leader may change his or her approach to leading a specific group of

        people based upon the motivation and capabilities of those within the group.

I.   What Situational Leadership Theory is.

    A. One of the most widely known theories of managerial leadership.

    B. Definition: Situational leadership refers to when the leader or manager of an organization must adjust his style to fit the development level of the followers he is trying to influence. With situational leadership, it is up to the leader to change his style, not the follower to adapt to the leader's style.

    C. Basic premises:

       1. People can and want to develop.

       2. There is no best leadership style to encourage that development.

II.   The Situational Leadership Matrix.

    A. Two variables:

       1. Commitment of the followers.

       2. Competency of the followers.

    B. Exploration of the matrix (right to left)

       1. Directing—High directive and low supportive behavior.

       2. Coaching—High directive and high supportive behavior.

3. Supporting—Low directive and high supportive behavior.
4. Delegating—Low directive and low supportive behavior.

III. Application of Situational Leadership to the local church.

A. Strengths:

1. It is an excellent framework for interpersonal relations, which is the milieu in which the church operates.
2. It has been widely pragmatic and successful in the business context.
3. It is likely to be appreciated by those who are led using its principles.
4. It allows a pastor to vary his or her leadership style based on the composition of the group he or she is leading, as opposed to trying to make a *one-size fits all* leadership style work.
5. It may enable the growth (or even the survival) of the church when previous methods are no longer working.

B. Weaknesses:

1. When working with people who are gifted and highly qualified, SLT employed by the leader may be perceived as a *tweak* as opposed to substantive leadership capability or change.
2. SLT may have a different degree of effectiveness among varying ethnicities.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol
The Pastor as Leader: Assessment, Change and Growth in Pastoral Leadership
Style and Ability
David C. Crofford

To the interviewee: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today in this setting and for your willingness to be interviewed. This interview is an integral part of the research process for the study being undertaken, and I am grateful to you for your participation.

Please be assured that your responses will be treated with utmost care and confidentiality. Following the interview process with all the participants in this study, the responses will be compiled and analyzed in an anonymous fashion. Once the results of the interviews have been completed and subsequently reported in the study, all original interview data will be erased.

Major category #1: Prior to the leadership seminar, how would you have best described your particular style of leadership in the ministry position you hold? How did you determine this?

Major category #2: Following the conclusion of the seminar, how would you now best describe your particular style of leadership? Has there been a perceived change since you have participated in the seminar? If so, what is that change? How do you perceive that change (or changes) to have occurred? If not, why not?

Major category #3: Have there been any changes in your personal life that may account for changes (if any) in your style of leadership? If so, what do you understand those to be?

Concluding questions: Anything you want to add? What should I have asked you that I did not think to ask?

APPENDIX C

EXAMPLE OF SURVEY RESULTS FROM THE EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF

LEADERSHIP

Below is an example of the results participants received in response to the online

assessment taken in preparation for the leadership seminar. Please note that these results,

listed in my name as the researcher, were obtained for the purposes of demonstration

only.

The 8 Dimensions of Leadership
DiSC: Strategies for Becoming a Better Leader

Prepared for: David Crofford

Your Primary Leadership Dimension is: Affirming

Affirming leaders want to inspire groups to succeed, to engage others in open communication, and, more than anything, to create a positive, collaborative environment. These leaders build a sense of personal connection with each team member, and this helps people to perceive themselves as part of a team. Affirming leaders generally aren't as geared toward independence as some other leaders. In fact, they look for opportunities to collaborate, and in some regards, they can seem almost free of ego. As a result, they take almost as much pride in seeing someone else come up with a brilliant idea as in coming up with it themselves.
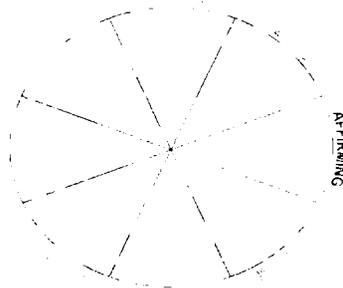
How to Navigate the Book Based on Your Responses
- Read Part 1: The 8 Dimensions of Leadership Model.
- Take a deeper dive into your primary dimension in Chapter 5, "The Affirming Leader."
- Learn the leadership lessons that are most relevant to you in Chapter 17, "Lessons from Resolute Leaders," Chapter 18, "Lessons from Commanding Leaders," and Chapter 19, "Pulling it all Together."

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

**The Pastor as Leader: Assessment, Change and Growth in Pastoral Leadership
Style and Ability
David C. Crofford**

Dear [participant],

My name is Dave Crofford, and I am a Doctor of Ministry participant at Asbury
Theological Seminary.

I am conducting research on the topic of pastoral leadership, particularly as it relates to
the ability for the pastor to assess, change, and growth in his/her ability as a pastoral
leader. I would like to invite ten people to be a part of this study, and you have been
selected, should you so desire.

Since some of the aspects of this study involve surveys, interviews, and e-mail, I want to
assure you that your responses throughout the course of the study will be kept
confidential. All data collected will be stored in a secure area, and any information
included in the report (which is the doctoral dissertation) will not identify any participant.
Your name will not be used, and every effort will be made to keep confidential the
identities of the participants.

I believe pastoral leadership is more vital than ever, and the intent of this study is to
enable pastors to benefit from the findings that this study anticipates. My hope is that
churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have
taken the time to participate.

Once the research is completed, I will keep any information received, either written or
electronic, until my dissertation is written and approved. At that time, all information
received will be destroyed.

Please know that you can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions on any survey,
interview, or e-mail request. I realize that your participation is entirely voluntary and I
appreciate your willingness to consider being part of the study. Feel free to call or write
me at any time if you need any more information. My number is 513-429-5328 and my e-
mail is xxxxxxxxxxxx.

If you are willing to assist me in this study, please sign and date this letter below to
indicate your voluntary participation. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

David Crofford

I volunteer to participate in the study described above and so indicate by my signature below:

Your signature: _____
Date: _____

Please print your name: _____

APPENDIX E

STATEMENT OF INTENDED OUTCOMES

As stated in the purpose statement of this study, the specific goals were to explore

the perceptions of pastors on the Southwest Ohio District regarding their self-reported

leadership style, their self-perceived or self-described leadership ability, and the change,

if any, in their reported leadership style and ability after participating in a leadership

seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

The key factor in this assessment was the ministry intervention of the leadership

seminar. The seminar was developed with the intent of giving the pastoral participants

specific tools for their leadership toolbox, equipping them to have the ability to change

their style of leadership, should their self-assessment indicate that this was a felt need on

their part.

Therefore, it was the intention of the seminar that the following outcomes take

place:

1. By experiencing the leadership seminar, the pastoral participants would

understand the context of today's ministry environment as one of increasing and rapid

change.

2. By experiencing the leadership seminar, it was my hope as not only the

researcher but also the facilitator of the seminar that each pastor would have the

opportunity and ability to arrive at an understanding of their current styles and abilities

regarding leadership.

3. Finally, by experiencing the leadership seminar, an intended outcome was that

each pastor exit the seminar process with specific tools enabling them to effect change in

their leadership style and ability, should that change be warranted according to their self-

assessment of the need for change.

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