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A STUDY OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF VOCATIONAL STRESS
AMONG PASTORAL MINISTERS IN THE NORTH MISSISSIPPI
ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH WITH STRATEGIES FOR
STRESS MANAGEMENT

BY

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A research project submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Approved by _____

Department _____

Date _____

DEDICATION

This project is lovingly dedicated to three special women in my life. . .

Roma Nell Rowland, my mother,
Marilyn Dees Rowland, my wife,
and
Marla Rae Rowland, my daughter,

---and they each know why!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No undertaking of this caliber is completed alone. The list of my helpers is almost endless. However, I would like to acknowledge my major contributors in this project--and therefore to my life.

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Also, 159 ministers serving pastoral appointments in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church were gracious enough to share intimately through the answering of a detailed questionnaire concerning the stress in their lives. Together we may have made the same important

discovery made by the comic strip character, Pogo: "We have met the enemy--and it is us!"

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CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
Chapter	
1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY.	1
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Theoretical Framework	5
Assumptions.	5
Definitions	6
Review of Related Literature	7
Amount of Literature.	8
Psychophysical Aspects of Stress	9
Stress and the Contemporary Minister	12
Theology of Self-Care	15
Design.	16
2. PSYCHOPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS	21
The Nature of Stress	21
In Search of a Definition	23
The Physiology of Stress	27
The Psychology of Stress	31
Stress as Related to the Individual.	36
Causes of Stress	41
Social Change	43
Work Environment	45

Technological Innovation	48
Effects of Stress	50
Physical Indicators	50
Psychological Indicators	52
Burnout.	53
Other Effects	54
Summary.	55
3. CONTEMPORARY FOUNDATIONS	56
Stress and the Contemporary Pastor	56
Causes of Stress	60
Role Confusion and Role Conflict.	60
Time Conflicts	64
Ambition and Success	68
The Urge to be Super-Human	70
Family Related Problems.	73
The Need of Support Groups	78
Relying on a Self-Sufficient Spirituality	81
Ages and Stages	82
The Effects of Stress	85
Implied Effects	86
Loneliness	86
Incompetent Ministry	88
Poor Self-Care	91
Burnout	93
Termination of Pastoral Ministry	97
Summary	99

4.	TOWARD A THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SELF-CARE	101
	Identifying the Need for a Theology of Self-Care	101
	The Call to Christian Ministry	106
	A Distinct Call for Distinct Individuals.	109
	A Distinct Call with Power and Authority	113
	A Distinct Call to be Whole	116
	Christ as a Model for Self-Care	119
	The Surety of Jesus	119
	Jesus was Sure of His Authority	120
	Jesus was Sure of His Calling	120
	Jesus was Sure of His Servant Role.	121
	Jesus was Sure of the Requirements of His Followers	122
	Jesus Recognized the Importance of Self-Care	123
	Classical Spirituality as a Model for Self-Care	126
	Solitude	128
	Silence	129
	Prayer	129
	Conclusion	131
	A Minister is a Limited Being	131
	Christ Desires Peace for Humankind	133
	Summary	137
5.	PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.	140
	Introduction to the Questionnaire	140
	Development of the Questionnaire.	141
	Scoring and Discussion of the Questionnaire	142
	Rationale for Questions Asked	143

Characteristics of Respondents	145
Age and Sex	145
Family Statistics	145
Education	146
Ministerial Experience	146
Health Issues	146
Conference Relationships	146
Conclusion	147
Identified Causes of Stress	147
Role Confusion and Role Conflict	147
Time Conflicts	149
Ambition and Success	150
Urge to be Super-Human	151
Family Related Problems	152
The Need of Support Groups	153
Relying on a Self-Sufficient Spirituality	154
Ages and Stages	154
Conclusions	157
Identified Effects of Stress	157
Loneliness	158
Incompetence	159
Poor Self-Care	161
Burnout	161
Termination of Pastoral Ministry	162
Conclusions	164
Other Related Observations	164
Conclusions	166

	Summary	166
6.	INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS	168
	Restatement of the Hypothetical Questions	168
	Presence of Vocational Stress Among Ministers	169
	Number of Years at Present Pastoral Appointment	169
	Theological Variances	170
	Time Related Matters	171
	Role Conflict and Role Confusion	172
	Conference Related Matters	176
	Support Systems in Times of Stress	178
	Stress and One's Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Health	180
	Stress as Related to Ministerial Stages	180
	Individual Stress as Related to the Stress of Others	183
	Stress as Related to Behavioral Patterns	185
	Presence of a Theology of Self-Care	186
	Stress and its Relationship to Termination of Ministry	187
	Restatement of the Problem	189
7.	CONTEXTUAL APPLICATIONS	191
	Strategies for Ministers	191
	Acknowledge the Anxieties in Ministry	191
	Develop a Practical Theology of Self-Care	192
	Accept Responsibility for Time Management	193
	Clarify Roles	193
	Design a Planned Agenda for Ministry	194
	Delegate Responsibilities	195
	Strategies for Spiritual Health	196

Spiritual Disciplines	196
Personal Retreat	197
Strategies for Physical Health	197
Plan for Physical Exercise.	197
Monitor Food Intake	198
Plan for Rest	198
Strategies for Emotional Health.	199
Take Charge and Let Go	199
Monitor Ambitions	200
Plan for Leisure	200
Develop a Positive Addiction	201
Maintain a Support System	201
Parish Support	201
Ministerial Colleagues.	202
Conference Leadership	202
Relational Support	202
Spiritual Support	202
Professional Counselor	203
Plan for Reflection	203
Strategies for Conference Leaders	203
General Suggestions	204
Build Trust Relationships	204
Enlistment for Pastors	204
Free District Superintendents for Pastoral Care	205
Slow Frequent Moving of Pastors.	205
Encourage and Model Better Health	205
Program Strategies	206

Seminars for Younger Ministers	206
Seminars for Clergy at Mid-Life	206
Pastoral Fellowship Opportunities	206
Pastor Parish Relationship Training.	207
Ministerial and Family Counseling	207
Strategies for the Laity	207
Remember, Your Pastor is a Person	207
Your Pastor is an Individual	208
Need for Community Involvement.	208
Need of Friendship	208
Need of Family Relationships	208
No Need to be Different	208
Need for Support	209
Get to Know Your Pastor	209
Learn the Pastor's Goals and Ambitions for Ministry	209
Learn How the Pastor Uses Time.	209
Learn the Pastor's Joys	210
Learn the Pastor's Pain	210
Encourage the Pastor's Health Practices	210
Learn Conference Structure	210
Encourage Continuing Education	211
Recognize the Call of the Laity	211
Summary.	211
8. SUMMARY	213
The Problem and its Design.	213
Findings and Inferences	215
Individual Causes of Stress	215

Identified Effects of Stress	216
Other Related Observations	216
Conclusions and Recommendations	217

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. SOURCES CITED	220
B. SOURCES CONSULTED	226

APPENDIXES

A. QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO PASTORAL MINISTERS IN THE NORTH MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE	235
B. COVER LETTER INCLUDED WITH THE QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO MINISTERS IN THE CONFERENCE	240
C. TABULATIONS OF RESPONSES FROM PASTORAL MINISTERS.	242
D. SAMPLE FORM FOR PASTORAL ROLE CLARIFICATION	345
E. EXAMPLE OF TIME-BLOC SCHEDULE	347

TABLES

Table	Page
1. Social Readjustment Rating Scale.	44
2. Life Change Rating Scale	58
3. Clergy Who are Most Affected by Stress	96
4. Sex of Respondents	243
5. Race of Respondents	243
6. Age of Respondents.	244
7. Marital Status of Respondents	244
8. Spouse Employment	245
9. Presence of Children at Home	245
10. Number of Children at Home	246
11. Highest Level of Education Achieved	246
12. Number of Years in Ministry	247
13. Rating of Respondents' Body Weight	247
14. Rating of Respondents' Physical Health	248
15. Rating of Respondents' Emotional Health	248
16. Rating of Respondents' Spiritual Health	249
17. Present Conference Relationship	249
18. Present Pastoral Appointment	250
19. Number of Years at Present Appointment	250
20. Respondents' Theological Stance	251
21. Perceived Theological Stance of the Church	251
22. Closest Friend of Respondents	252
23. Most Frequent Counselor of Respondents	252

24.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Prayer	253
25.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Devotions	253
26.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Bible Study	254
27.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Family	254
28.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Physical Exercise	255
29.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Hobbies	255
30.	Indication of Whether or Not Respondents Have Time for Relaxation	256
31.	Importance of Studying for Sermons to Respondents	256
32.	Importance of Preparing for Worship to Respondents	257
33.	Importance of Counseling to Respondents	257
34.	Importance of Teaching to Respondents	258
35.	Importance of Church Administration to Respondents	258
36.	Importance of Visiting Hospitals to Respondents	259
37.	Importance of Visiting "Shut-Ins" to Respondents	259
38.	Importance of Visiting in Homes of Members to Respondents	260
39.	Importance of Visiting "New-Comers" to the Community to Respondents	260
40.	Importance of Attending Meetings in the Local Church to Respondents	261
41.	Importance of Attending District Meetings to Respondents	261
42.	Importance of Attending Conference Meetings to Respondents	262
43.	Importance of Attending Meetings Beyond the Conference to Respondents	262
44.	Importance of Continuing Education to Respondents	263

45.	Importance of Studying for Sermons to Congregation	263
46.	Importance of Preparing for Worship to Congregation	264
47.	Importance of Counseling to Congregation	264
48.	Importance of Teaching to Congregation	265
49.	Importance of Church Administration to Congregation. . . .	265
50.	Importance of Visiting Hospitals to Congregation	266
51.	Importance of Visiting "Shut-Ins" to Congregation.	266
52.	Importance of Visiting Homes of Members to Congregation	267
53.	Importance of Visiting "New-Comers" to the Community to Congregation	267
54.	Importance of Attending Meetings in Local Church to Congregation	268
55.	Importance of Attending District Meetings to Congregation	268
56.	Importance of Attending Conference Meetings to Congregation	269
57.	Importance of Attending Meetings Beyond the Conference to Congregation	269
58.	Importance of Continuing Education To Congregation	270
59.	Frequency of Non-Support of Spouse	270
60.	Frequency of Disagreement with Family Members.	271
61.	Frequency of Disagreement with Church Members	271
62.	Frequency of Not Having Enough Time	272
63.	Frequency of Too Much Time Away From Home	272
64.	Frequency of "Politics" Experienced Within the Local Church.	273
65.	Frequency of "Politics" Experienced Within the Conference	273
66.	Frequency of Problems with Spouse Employment or Unemployment	274
67.	Frequency of Problems with Frequent Moving	274

68.	Frequency of Problems with Church Finances	275
69.	Frequency of Problems with Personal Finances	275
70.	Frequency of Problems with Inadequate Housing	276
71.	Feelings that Congregation Understands the Problems of the Pastor	276
72.	Feelings that Situation Utilizes Pastor's Training and Capabilities	277
73.	Feelings that Pastor has Difficulty in Saying "No!"	277
74.	Feeling Obligated to Participate in Community Functions	278
75.	Feelings of Meaning and Purpose in Work	278
76.	Feelings that Spouse Would Prefer the Pastor to Have Another Job	279
77.	Feelings that Pastor Can Depend Upon the Support of Conference Leaders	279
78.	Feelings of Satisfaction with Advancements Made in the Conference	280
79.	Feelings that the Conference Values Pastor's Ministry	280
80.	Feelings that Pastor Can Be Self in Work	281
81.	Feelings that Congregation is Indifferent to Becoming what Church Should Be	281
82.	Feelings of Satisfaction with the Church's Promotional Policies	282
83.	Feelings that Conference Leaders Can Be Trusted with Confidences	282
84.	Feelings that Few Ministers Have the Stress that I Do	283
85.	Feelings that One is Usually "Fighting Fires" and Not Working to a Plan	283
86.	Feelings that Conference Leadership Will Make Reasonable Effort to Advance One's Career	284

87.	Feelings of Guilt When Take Time For Spiritual Nurture	284
88.	Feelings that One is Doing the work that God Wants One to Do	285
89.	Feelings of Desire to be in Another Vocation	285
90.	Feelings that One Receives Adequate Recognition for Work Done	286
91.	Feelings that, as a Minister, One will Always Have a Job	286
92.	Feelings Most Days that One is Glad to be a minister	287
93.	Feelings of less "Zest" and "Enthusiasm" for Ministry than Before	287
94.	Feelings of Satisfaction with Salary Package	288
95.	Feelings that Congregation Respects the Privacy of One's Home	288
96.	Frequency of Feelings of Frustration	289
97.	Frequency of Feelings of Loneliness	289
98.	Frequency of Feelings of Fulfillment	290
99.	Frequency of Feelings of Confusion	290
100.	Frequency of Feelings of Depression	291
101.	Frequency of Feelings of Anger	291
102.	Frequency of Feelings of Competence.	292
103.	Frequency of Feelings of Helplessness.	292
104.	Frequency of Feelings of Shame	293
105.	Frequency of Feelings of Guilt	293
106.	Comparison of One's Salary Package with "Peers"	294
107.	Comparison of One's Salary Package with Other Professionals	294
108.	Comparison of One's Salary Package with Individuals in the Congregation	295

109.	Comparison of One's Salary Package with Ministers of Other Denominations	295
110.	Comparison of One's Salary Package with Ministers in Other United Methodist Conferences	296
111.	Frequency of Relying Upon Christian Faith In Stressful Situations.	296
112.	Frequency of Relying Upon One's Self in Stressful Situations	297
113.	Frequency of Relying Upon Another Minister in Stressful Situations	297
114.	Frequency of Relying Upon a Professional Counselor in Stressful Situations	298
115.	Frequency of Relying Upon One's Spouse in Stressful Situations.	298
116.	Frequency of One's Allowing Stress to Run its Course.	299
117.	Frequency of Managing Stress in Ministry by Spiritual Activities	299
118.	Frequency of Managing Stress in Ministry by Physical Activities	300
119.	Frequency of Managing Stress in Ministry by Taking Time Away	300
120.	Frequency of Managing Stress in Ministry by Attacking Problems Head On	301
121.	Frequency of Managing Stress in Ministry by Other Means	301
122.	Frequency of Enrolling in Continuing Education for Self-Fulfillment.	302
123.	Frequency of Enrolling in Continuing Education Because of Professional Duty	302
124.	Frequency of Enrolling in Continuing Education Because of Serious Problems in Ministry.	303
125.	Frequency of Enrolling in Continuing Education Because it is Required by the DISCIPLINE	303
126.	Frequency of Enrolling in Continuing Education for Fellowship with Others	304

127.	Probability of Being in Pastoral Ministry in Ten Years	304
128.	Probability of Being in Another Serving Vocation in Ten Years	305
129.	Probability of Being in Secular Employment in Ten Years	305
130.	Probability of Being Retired in Ten Years	306
131.	Rating of Personal Stress Level in Ministry	306
132.	Rating of Whether One is Never Late or Casual About Appointments	307
133.	Rating of Whether One is Not Competitive or Very Competitive	307
134.	Rating of Whether One Anticipates What Others are Going to Say or Being a Good Listener	308
135.	Rating of Whether One Never Feels Rushed or Always Feels Rushed	308
136.	Rating of Whether One is Impatient While Waiting or Can Wait Patiently	309
137.	Rating of Whether One Takes Things One at a Time or Does Many Things at Once	309
138.	Rating of Whether One Wants a Good Job Recognized or Tries to Satisfy One's Self	310
139.	Rating of Whether One is Slow Doing Things or Fast	310
140.	Rating of Whether One has Few Outside Interests or Many Outside Interests	311
141.	Rating of Whether One is Satisfied or Ambitious	311
142.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Personal Theological Stance	312
143.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Rating of Theological Stance of the Church	313
144.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with One's Most Frequent Counselor	314
145.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with the Non-Support of One's Spouse	315

146.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Not Having Enough Time	316
147.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with too Much Time Away From Home	317
148.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Frustration	318
149.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Loneliness	319
150.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Fulfillment	320
151.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Confusion	321
152.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Depression.	322
153.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Anger.	323
154.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Competency	324
155.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Depression	325
156.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Shame	326
157.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings of Guilt	327
158.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings that Spouse Would Prefer One to be in Another Job	328
159.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with a Wish to be in Another Vocation	329
160.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with the Level of "Zest" and "Enthusiasm" for Ministry	330
161.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feeling Glad to be in Ministry	331
162.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Dependence Upon Conference Leadership	332

163.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Being Satisfied with Advancements in the Conference	333
164.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Frequency of Encountering "Politics" Within the Conference	334
165.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings that Conference Values One's Ministry	335
166.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Satisfaction with Church's Promotional Policies	336
167.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Level of Trust of Conference Leaders	337
168.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Possibility of Serving in Pastoral Ten Years from Now	338
169.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Possibility of Being Retired Ten Years from Now	339
170.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Possibility of Being in Another Serving Vocation Ten Years from Now	340
171.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Possibility of Being in Secular Work Ten Years from Now	341
172.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Feelings that Few Ministers Have the Same Stress	342
173.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Level of Stress in Ministry	343
174.	Crosstabulation of Years in Ministry with Not Having Enough Time	344

Chapter 1

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this initial chapter is to introduce the basic developmental components of the research project. These components will be described in brief. The maturation process of the project will be traced from the time of inception to the final reporting of the results. The first major heading will present information concerning the choice of subject. The statement of the problem will identify the direction of the project. A theoretical framework for the development of the project will then be presented. A review of related literature will consider major literature that addresses the subject. The chapter will conclude by presenting the project in minuscule form.

Introduction

This particular project has been developing for a number of years. It began when this writer received a call to be a minister in 1970. At that particular time the writer had the misunderstanding that there could be no stressful situations in ministry if God had actually extended one a personal call to ministry. This assumption was challenged soon after beginning ministry in the local church. Life came to be a conflict. On the one hand, the writer went about doing his ministerial tasks with the dream of being the best pastor possible. There would be no task that he could not handle with the greatest efficiency. On the other hand, there was always that need and that longing to be a whole person as well as a minister. The conflict between pastor and person

was real. The two characters seemed to always be in conflict. The writer falsely assumed he was different.

Liberation came a few years later when this writer began to listen to the conversations of his ministerial colleagues in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church. They, too, were having the same struggles. However, along with the liberation from feeling alone in pastoral problems, there also came that realization that these struggles could very well be a professional hazard

This writer began to listen even more intently to colleagues at district and conference gatherings. Many conversations revealed confusion, anger, hurt, and mistrust. There was talk concerning constant time pressures and the pressure of having to do things that the minister had rather not do at all. There was also the insinuation of strained marriages and, on a few occasions, discussions of one's thinking about leaving the pastoral ministry. During these conversations, this writer listened and became aware of one response that almost always entered the discussion. Inevitably, when one pastor poured his heart out to others, other colleagues would respond, "Yes, I know where you are coming from because I have been there," or "I struggle with that, too."

During this period of reflection this minister sat down in his office one day and turned through the pages of the last ten issues of the Journal of the North Mississippi Annual Conference.¹ As the pages turned, he began to read names of persons with whom he was familiar. These persons had begun their ministry in the North Mississippi Conference and yet were serving there no longer. Some of them, for one reason or another, had transferred to other annual

¹This yearly journal is published by the North Mississippi Annual Conference and records the proceedings of the annual conference session, statistical tables, reports from boards and committees, and a listing of ministers related to the conference.

conferences. Several had left the pastoral ministry and were serving in other people-serving vocations. Others, however, had severed their relationships with the conference and had sought secular employment.

In this time of reflection, it was assumed that all of those colleagues had received the same calling to be in ministry as had this writer. Had they misinterpreted their call to ministry? Or, had they found pastoral ministry in the North Mississippi Conference too much of a burden for them. During this period of reflection this writer, too, found himself struggling with this latter question. Finally, the answer came. Yes, ministry in the North Mississippi Conference is worth the burden, but can this burden not be made easier? This project began with this thought. Enrollment in the Doctor of Ministry Program at Asbury Theological Seminary has become a vehicle for this project. The project dissertation became an avenue through which this writer could deal more closely with feelings of incompetency in ministry and the inability to maintain a balance between being a pastor and a person.

This project, then, may be seen as the mid-point of a personal pilgrimage. This writer noticed the problem in his ministry as well as in the ministry of others and a project was conceived. That conception was later formulated, researched, analyzed, developed, and finalized. The results will hopefully assist others who share similar problems. Hopefully they will be assisted in confronting and managing the stress that is involved in being both a pastor and a person.

Statement of the Problem

This study will identify, analyze, and interpret the causes and effects of vocational stress among pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Annual

Conference of the United Methodist Church which will be utilized to help these persons maintain a healthy balance between being a pastor and a person. More specifically, the study will answer the following questions:

1. Is vocational stress present in the life of ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church?
2. What support systems does a minister utilize in times of stress?
3. Is there a connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress?
4. Is stress higher in certain stages of one's ministerial career than it is in other stages?
5. Do ministers, as individuals, see themselves as the only minister affected by stress?
6. Is there an identifiable personality or behavioral pattern that causes some ministers to have a high level of vocational stress?
7. Do ministers in the conference have a theology of self-care that can be incorporated into their ministry?
8. Does a high level of vocational stress cause one to leave the ministry to which he/she has been called?

Answering the problem of this research should have an effect on the profession of ministry in the North Mississippi Conference. This study will provide impetus to pave the way for a concentrated effort to develop and maintain a healthy atmosphere in which ministers can fulfill their callings. The study will also assist ministers by providing guidance to assist them to maintain that delicate balance between pastor and person. This study is also limited in its scope. Ministry is not studied in light of the Wesleyan tradition, the Discipline of the United Methodist Church, or contemporary theology.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theory that God extends a call to all persons to be in ministry. Along with that call comes a call to be made whole² and also to be part of a wholistic ministry.³ Some of those persons called to be in ministry are ordained and set aside to shepherd others in ministry. These persons are given this responsibility because it best suits the gifts and graces that God has provided them. These individuals who have been called to a pastoral ministry differ with the other ministers in calling only. They are to maintain their personal identity in their ministry while being faithful to their calling.

Assumptions

This study is undertaken with a number of assumptions by the researcher. It is assumed that all pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Annual Conference have a desire to be faithful and whole in their vocational calling and, therefore, be as effective in their ministry as is humanly possible. It is also assumed that the minister is equally desirous of maintaining his or her personal identity in this ministry. It is also assumed that all stress cannot be seen as detrimental to one's being. A certain amount of stress is beneficial and, in fact, necessary to perform the various tasks in one's daily life and ministry.⁴

It is further assumed that the leadership in the conference seeks qualified persons to fill the role of pastoral minister and that this leadership seeks to alleviate distress among the ministers in the conference. It is also

²The concept implied is to be made complete in and through Christ.

³A wholistic ministry results when all parts of the ministry system are whole and working together in the context of ministry.

⁴Hans Selye, Stress Without Distress (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1975), pp. 19-20.

assumed that the laity of the Church has a desire to participate in developing and maintaining a healthy atmosphere in which ministers can fulfill their calling to Christian ministry.

Definitions

The following terms will be used throughout this study:

1. stress: the unwarranted force or pressure that threatens one's physical, and/or emotional well-being and, therefore, pushes one to or beyond the point of strain.⁵
2. strain: the condition of the body after it has been subjected to stress.
3. distress: damaging or unpleasant stress that is the direct result of one or more stressors.
4. stressor: the agent in one's life that the brain interprets as detrimental and, therefore, causes stress to occur.
5. burnout: the state of being physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually depleted and, therefore, rendered ineffective as a minister of the Gospel.⁶
6. dropout: one who chooses to discontinue his/her ministry; usually after suffering from undue stress.
7. Type A behavioral pattern: a set of aggressive, ambitious, time-urgent, impatient, and competitive behaviors found in an individual. This behavioral pattern, while considered desirable by many, is known to produce high levels of stress.⁷

⁵Suggested by Selye, Stress Without Distress, pages 11-21.

⁶Suggested by G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping with Clergy Burnout (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), p. 16.

⁷Suggested by Kenneth R. Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1977), pp. 124-134.

8. Type B behavioral pattern: an individual with behavior relatively absent of Type A behavior. Persons with this behavioral type are noted to have relatively lower levels of stress than do persons with Type A behavior.⁸

9. vocation: an occupation one enters into through a sense of calling from God.

10. pastoral minister: a minister who fulfills his/her calling by serving as pastor of one or more churches.

11. pastoral appointment: an assignment to a church or group of churches made by the resident bishop of a particular United Methodist conference.

12. appointive system: a system of pastoral placement in which the resident bishop of a particular conference appoints a particular pastor to a church after consultation with both the pastor and the church.

13. North Mississippi Annual Conference: that area of Christian ministry under the auspices of the United Methodist Church located in the northern one half of the state of Mississippi.

14. church leadership: the Bishop, District Superintendents, and Conference Council on Ministries staff of the North Mississippi Conference.

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this review of related literature is to identify books, articles, and other research that is relevant to the proposed problem. Most of the material reviewed has been written within the last ten years. The reason is rather obvious. The phenomenon of stress and stress-related diseases has only

⁸Suggested by Pelletier, loc. cit.

become popular in recent years. This review will include the amount of materials available, materials related to the psychophysiology of stress, materials concerned with contemporary stress in ministry, and finally, materials related to a theology of self-care. Those materials that have contributed most significantly to this research will be cited.

Amount of Related Literature

In recent years there has been a significant amount of written materials in the area of stress as it pertains to the human body and mind. When one looks closely at the literature that is available, one discovers that there is a significant overlapping in the materials printed. As might be expected, different authors approach the subject from their own perspective and draw conclusions based on these perspectives. Articles based on scientific research are available, but are prone to surface more slowly due to the time needed to research and verify findings.

Materials related to problems in the clergy ranks are becoming more plentiful and are generally popular in nature. It would seem as though there is a new understanding developing concerning ministers and their problems. Instead of seeking to cover up the issues, several writers have ventured to release books and articles testifying to the fact that it is all right for the minister to be human and therefore have the same struggles as the laity. If, then, it is all right for the minister to be human, it must be all right for the minister to talk about human conflicts in ministry. Several volumes that have surfaced in recent years are written by ministers, or persons serving as a counselor to ministers, who are not afraid to admit their humanness.

A research of the literature found a void in materials related to a theology of self-care. While several persons writing to address contemporary problems of the pastor make an attempt at a theology of self-care, all covered

the topic in only a few pages. This void in materials may very well call for some new approaches to ministry. Most contemporary theologies do not speak to the issues of self-care. The prevalent ideas for ministry in the past have been to do all that one can do, even if one's physical, emotional, or spiritual self becomes depleted. My hope is that as others recognize the devastating effect stress can have on one's ministry more attempts to provide a theology of self-care will be made.

Psychophysical Aspects of Stress

Hans Selye, a pioneer of stress research, offers two volumes that satisfactorily introduce one to the stress phenomenon and how it affects the physical body. His book The Stress of Life⁹ deals specifically with a history of the study of physical stress as well as a thorough explanation of how stress affects the human body. Another volume, Stress Without Distress,¹⁰ continues to report on Selye's stress research. This book also proclaims that all stress is not detrimental to the human body and that stress should not be something to be avoided at all times. Selye has been a prolific writer on the stress issue. He has contributed several articles to scientific journals outlining his thoughts on the subject.

Kenneth R. Pelletier, Assistant Clinical Professor at the Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute and the Department of Psychiatry, University of California School of Medicine, San Francisco, has contributed a book that has

⁹Hans Selye, The Stress of Life (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1976).

¹⁰Hans Selye, Stress Without Distress (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1975).

been most helpful in this research. As the title Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer¹¹ implies, the material presented relates to a wholistic approach to stress which includes both mind and body.

Two volumes written by Cary L. Cooper were helpful in this study. Cooper presents strategies for relieving stress at work as well as ways to cope with personal and family stress in the book The Stress Check.¹² Another volume by Cooper, Stress Research, Issues for the Eighties,¹³ attempts to clarify the problems that persons living in the eighties must face. Life After Stress,¹⁴ written by Martin Shaeffer, offers a good understanding of the nature of stress as does several other writers. Shaeffer argues that relaxation is the first line of defense against stress. He also emphasizes the need for sleep, exercise, and nutrition if one is to properly resist stress. Ogden Tanner and the editors of Time-Life Books present an excellent and sometimes dramatic view of how stress can be both good and bad for the human body and mind.¹⁵

The combined efforts of Walter McQuade and Ann Aikman offer an excellent understanding of stress and what it can do to one's body. They also suggest ways one can learn to resist stress. Another wholistic approach to

¹¹Kenneth R. Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1977).

¹²Cary L. Cooper, The Stress Check (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentiss-Hall, 1981).

¹³Cary L. Cooper, Stress Research, Issues for the Eighties (New York: John K. Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 1983).

¹⁴Martin Shaeffer, Life After Stress (New York: Plenum Press, 1982).

¹⁵Ogden Tanner and others, Stress (Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1976).

stress management is presented by Phil Nuernberger. In the book Freedom From Stress,¹⁶ he suggests that freedom from the malady can be found through diet, exercise, and the practice of meditation; especially yoga.

Four books were helpful in understanding burnout which can be seen as a result of prolonged stress. Herbert J. Freudenberger, a psychoanalyst who first coined the word "burnout," contributes a book by that same title.¹⁷ Freudenberger explains the phenomenon of burnout in detail and suggests those who are most prone to burnout. G. Lloyd Rediger approaches burnout from a clergy standpoint in his book Coping With Clergy Burnout.¹⁸ This small volume may very well be the most practical book dealing with the subject that is available today, since it is based on the author's many years of counseling with those suffering from clergy burnout and addresses the problem in practical ways. Donald E. Demaray, professor of preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary, also presents a book entitled Watchout for Burnout.¹⁹ This volume looks at the condition from a Christian perspective and suggests signs, means of preventing, and even a cure for burnout. Roy M. Oswald, of the Alban Institute, presents a significant work in workbook style. His volume entitled Clergy Burnout²⁰ is also written from the perspective of a minister.

¹⁶Phil Nuernberger, Freedom from Stress (Honesdale, PA: The Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy of the U.S.A., 1981).

¹⁷Herbert J. Freudenberger, Burnout, The High Cost of High Achievement (New York: Bantam Books, 1981).

¹⁸G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping with Clergy Burnout (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982).

¹⁹Donald E. Demaray, Watch Out for Burnout (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1983).

²⁰Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Burnout (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982).

Stress and the Contemporary Minister

Edgar W. Mills and John P. Koval conducted a detailed study of ministerial stress among nearly 15,000 Protestant clergy. The results of this study are printed in the volume Stress in Ministry.²¹ This is an excellent presentation and has become very important in the development of this project. The statistical materials and the printed questionnaire were most helpful. Another source of statistical material that proved to be invaluable was the work of Jud, Mills, and Burch.²² Their research was directed toward persons who have, for one reason or another, dropped out of pastoral ministry. The questionnaire, as well as the statistics, were valuable.

Three books were most significant in helping the writer to understand the struggle of the pastors who attempt to maintain their personhood in the context of a valid ministry. How to be a Minister and a Human Being²³ provided more input for the questionnaire than did any other work. This book, written by Harold C. Warlick, Jr., deals with the minister's self-image, one's relationship with the congregation, and one's relationship with one's family. Warlick, who serves as Director of Ministerial Studies, Harvard University Divinity School, probes deeply into the minister's life but does so in a sensitive manner. Gary L. Harbaugh presents a wholistic model for ministry in his work Pastor as Person.²⁴ He uses concrete examples of the pastor as a physical, thinking,

²¹ Edgar W. Mills and John P. Koval, Stress in Ministry (Washington, D.C.: Ministry Studies Board, 1971).

²² Gerald J. Jud, Edgar W. Mills, Jr., and Genevieve W. Burch, Ex-Pastor (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970).

²³ Harold C. Warlick, Jr., How to be a Minister and a Human Being (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982).

²⁴ Gary L. Harbaugh, Pastor As Person (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984).

feeling, relating, and choosing person. The Walk-on-Water Syndrome,²⁵ written by Edward B. Bratcher, also made a sizeable contribution to this study. The book makes the strong point that while one may be set aside for ministry, the pastor cannot be super-human or exceed human limitations. Bratcher deals with the issues of spiritual immaturity among clergy, problems with the clergy family, and the need of clergy support groups.

Roy M. Oswald offers another workbook, Clergy Stress,²⁶ that is a companion to his work Clergy Burnout cited earlier. Both of these works were instrumental in the development of the questionnaire used as a basis for this study. Oswald writes from his personal experience with ministerial stress as well as the experience of others. Both volumes are recommended for persons who are struggling with either stress or burnout in the pastoral ministry. Each work suggests excellent strategies for change.

Charles L. Rassieur also deals with ministerial stress in his book Stress Management for Ministers.²⁷ His emphasis is on the recovery of self for ministry. One significant chapter deals with a ministry within human limitations. William E. Hulme ventured to write about problems of the pastor as early as 1966.²⁸ Interesting referrals are made to the pastor's need to succeed as well as the personality problems of the pastor. Hulme notes problems with the

²⁵Edward B. Bratcher, The Walk-on-Water Syndrome (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984).

²⁶Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Stress (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982).

²⁷Charles L. Rassieur, Stress Management for Ministers (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1982).

²⁸William E. Hulme, Your Pastor's Problems (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966).

pastor's devotional life even at this early date. Lloyd J. Ogilvie, in Making Stress Work for You,²⁹ suggests ten proven principles for managing stress in ministry. Like others, Ogilvie, writes from his experience with ministerial stress. Archibald D. Hart deals with the emotional hazards of ministry in his book Coping with Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions.³⁰ One chapter addresses the issue of ministerial burnout. Donald Smith's Clergy in the Cross Fire³¹ specifically addresses the problem of role confusion and role conflict. Pastors are given guidance in ways to manage conflict of roles in this volume.

Two books do well in presenting problems with certain stages in ministry. Cecil R. Paul, in Passages of a Pastor,³² discusses three particular stages of ministry and the problems each stage presents the minister. The stages include early years in ministry, ministry at mid-life, and the latter years in ministry. Paul gives various examples of clergypersons in the three stages presented. Another work, The Mid-Life Crises of a Minister³³ written by Ray W. Ragsdale, deals with specific crises experienced by ministers at mid-life. The mid-life crises of the clergy spouse are also considered.

Articles that relate to stress in ministry are numerous. Alan C. Reuter suggests that ministers must first learn to recognize the pressures of stress

²⁹Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Making Stress Work for You (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984).

³⁰Archibald D. Hart, Coping with Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984).

³¹Donald P. Smith, Clergy in the Cross Fire (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973).

³²Cecil R. Paul, Passages of a Pastor (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981).

³³Ray W. Ragsdale, The Mid-Life Crises of a Minister (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1978).

before they are able to address the stress issues.³⁴ "Coming to Terms with Clergy Burnout," an article by William E. Hulme,³⁵ suggests that ministers are guilty of pushing important personal matters aside so they will have more time for ministerial matters. He argues that personal matters such as spiritual development, physical exercise, and hobbies could actually strengthen one's ministry if utilized.

Gaylord Noyce suggests stages in ministry similar to those recorded by Cecil R. Paul. He notes that the young stage, or learning stage as he labels it, is a time in which the minister usually learns that the local congregation's level of commitment is not as intense as the minister would desire. The article is entitled "The Seasons of a Cleric's Life."³⁶ Gordon MacDonald records the results of a Gallup Poll of those who are considering leaving the ministry in his article "Dear Church, I Quit."³⁷ He notes that those most likely to leave the pastoral ministry are those between the ages of 30 and 50, are from major denominations, and serve churches with 300 or less members.

Theology of Self-Care

There were no books discovered in the search of related literature that deal specifically with a theology of self-care. However, several writers do consider the issue in abbreviated form. Roy M. Oswald deals specifically with a

³⁴Alan C. Reuter, "Stress in the Ministry: Can We Fight Back?" Currents in Theology and Missions, 8:221, August, 1981.

³⁵William E. Hulme, "Coming to Terms with Clergy Burnout," The Christian Ministry, January, 1984.

³⁶Gaylord Noyce, "The Seasons of a Cleric's Life," The Christian Ministry, February 2-9, 1983.

³⁷Gordon MacDonald, "Dear Church, I Quit," Christianity Today, June 27, 1980.

theology of self-care in Clergy Stress.³⁸ He suggests that the minister must re-examine one's call to ministry if one is to care for one's self. One must come to realize that one's call is to serve God and not people in particular. The ministry to which one is called should be a personal ministry and not the ministry of others. G. Lloyd Rediger, in his book Coping with Clergy Burnout,³⁹ delegates a short chapter to theological considerations. He suggests that the minister is not often aware of personal limitations and therefore tends to take on a "Messiah complex."

Charles L. Rassieur contributes a chapter of his writing to the subject of human limitations, also.⁴⁰ He, too, suggests a problem with ministers assuming a "Messiah complex." His work wrestles with the issue of a theology of self-care in more detail than any work found. Warlick,⁴¹ Hart,⁴² and Harbaugh⁴³ mention the need of self-care but do not deal with the problem in detail. One particular article, "Jesus, a Model for Ministry," written by J. T. Holland,⁴⁴ offers Jesus as a model for ministry and suggests that Jesus was aware of the need of self-care during his earthly ministry.

Design

The planning stage of this Project-Dissertation included a research of literature that relates to the problem as identified above. The material included literature on stress, burnout, family, time management, the office of minister, job related stress, and physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Other materials included works relating to the nature of stress, the psychophysiology of stress,

³⁸Oswald, op. cit.

³⁹Rediger, op. cit.

⁴⁰Rassieur, op. cit.

⁴¹Warlick, op. cit.

⁴²Hart, op. cit.

⁴³Harbaugh, op. cit.

⁴⁴J. T. Holland, "Jesus, a Model for Ministry," The Journal of Pastoral Care, December, 1982.

and theology of self-care. This research was helpful in developing a theoretical framework and in providing fundamental principles which directed the course of the development. During the time of research, a Congregational Reflection Group was organized at First United Methodist Church, Louisville, Mississippi. However, in the process of research, the researcher moved to another community. Another Congregational Reflection Group was organized at Grace United Methodist Church, Grenada, Mississippi.

The work of these Congregational Reflection Groups provided the contextual impetus for the project. The major task of these groups was to develop a questionnaire that would yield sufficient data for a research project relating to ministerial stress. Several persons were involved in this task that took almost two years to complete. The Congregational Reflection Group looked at the life of the minister in detail. Since most of the persons making up the Congregational Reflection Group were lay persons, ministry was often considered from the perspective of the laity. The profession of ministry was viewed from many perspectives. This period of development was a time of questioning, reflecting, speculating, remembering, and discussing for all persons involved. Often there were moments of hurting with and hurting for ministers as the group considered the situation of the minister.

A first draft of the questionnaire was drawn and presented to the Congregational Reflection Group at Grace United Methodist Church. It was later presented to colleagues of this writer and then to Dr. Mel Mobley, a research consultant at Emory University. Each presentation called for rewriting certain questions for the sake of clarity. The completed questionnaire was then presented to the Bishop and the six District Superintendents of the conference

during a meeting in November, 1983. After approval from this group the questionnaire was ready to be mailed.⁴⁵

On December 10, 1983, questionnaires were mailed to all 265 ministers serving pastoral appointments in the North Mississippi Conference. A cover letter introducing the questionnaire, explaining the purpose of the research, and assuring anonymity to each respondent was included. The pastors began returning the questionnaires within a matter of days. Almost all testing instruments were received by January 1, 1984. A total of 159 persons completed the questionnaire which yields a 60 percent return rate.

The data was decoded by this researcher and then compiled and tabulated by a research assistant at the University of Mississippi Computer Center. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used in the compilation of the data. The compiled data was then presented to the Congregation Reflection Group at Grace United Methodist Church for reflection, discussion, and comments, as was the design of the contextual project. This research project is a product of this contextual project. It includes the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data disclosed by the respondents to the questionnaire.

The report of this study is presented in eight chapters and several appendices. Chapter One includes an introduction to the study, the statement of the problem, hypothetical questions to be considered by the study, theoretical framework, project design, and organization of the study.

⁴⁵The reader should note the limitations of the study. It cannot be considered scientific since a control group was not utilized; it reflects the self-perceptions of the respondents and the "lie factor" was not built into the instrument; and, finally, the interpretations of the data reflect the researcher's perspective on ministry.

Chapter Two begins to build a foundation for the study by exploring both the physiological and psychological aspects of stress. This includes an introduction to the nature of stress, the various causes of stress in contemporary society, and the effects of stress. A summary draws together the findings of the research.

Chapter Three continues to build a foundation for the project by exploring causes and effects of stress among ministers in contemporary life. The first major heading informs the reader about the presence of stress in ministry. This is followed by a detailed discussion of several causes of stress in ministry. The last section discusses the effects these stressors have on the clergyperson. The chapter is concluded with a summary.

Chapter Four develops a theological foundation for the study by pressing toward a theology of self-care. The need for such a theology is discussed in the first section. Secondly, a discussion considering one's call and one's uniqueness for ministry is presented. Next, a Christological model for ministry is offered. Another heading clarifies the need of the minister to do ministry within human limitations. Still another section suggests classical spirituality as a model of self-care. The last major heading will center around the discussion of Christ's desire for peace for all persons. Finally, a summary will conclude this chapter.

The purpose of Chapter Five is to introduce the reader to the questionnaire and then to present and analyze the responses. The questionnaire and its rationale are discussed in section one. The second section identifies the respondents, while the third major heading identifies and analyzes the causes of stress that were identified. The identified effects of ministerial stress are then presented and analyzed. The chapter ends with a summary.

Chapter Six interprets the findings. The information presented by the respondents is interpreted in light of the several hypothetical questions presented in the first chapter. These questions include concerns with stress among ministers in the North Mississippi Conference, the support systems available to ministers, the presence of stages of ministry that involve more stress, and whether or not stress causes ministers to dropout. When these questions have been considered and interpreted, the problem is restated.

Strategies for change are presented in Chapter Seven. Strategies to enable the minister to better manage stress are presented in the first section. The second section offers suggestions to conference leadership that will enable these leaders to help ministers reduce the level of stress in ministry that involves conference matters. Next, strategies are suggested to the laity of the Church that will provide a better atmosphere in which the minister can carry out his calling. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Chapter Eight summarizes the entire study. The problem and its design are considered in one heading. Findings and inferences are presented in the second heading. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are offered to end the chapter.

The appendices will include a copy of the questionnaire that was mailed to the 265 pastoral ministers in the conference, a copy of the cover letter that was included with the testing instrument, and a complete set of tables presenting the data gained from the responses.

Chapter 2

PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The purpose of Chapter Two is to begin to build a foundation for the study by exploring both the physiological and psychological aspects of stress. Three major headings will introduce the reader to stress and its influence on contemporary society. A discussion of the nature of stress will include a definition of stress as well as a detailed description of both the physical and psychological aspects of stress. This section will be followed by a discussion of stress as it is related to the individual personality. The second major heading will discuss the various causes of stress in contemporary society. Three major causes will be discussed. The third heading will describe the effects of stress. These effects will be grouped into four categories. Finally, a summary will draw together the findings of this particular area of research.

The Nature of Stress

Stress has been called "the Black Plague of the twentieth century."¹ The impact that stress has in contemporary society cannot be ignored. Cary L. Cooper emphasizes:

Stress in everyday life is greater than it has ever been. One doesn't have to be convinced of this reality by the media coverage of the death of an internationally known celebrity. . .the figures for coronary heart disease, alcoholism, and mental illness speak for themselves. They speak of human waste, unfulfilled dreams, of shattered and disillusioned children. . .²

¹Cary L. Cooper, The Stress Check (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1981), p. 12.

²Ibid., p. ix.

Kenneth R. Pelletier notices that stress related illnesses have long since replaced epidemic infectious diseases as the major medical problem of our time. He identifies four disorders that have become especially prominent in post-industrial nations: cardiovascular disorders, cancer, arthritis, and respiratory diseases. While stress cannot be blamed for all of these maladies, it can certainly be seen as a contributing factor. Pelletier continues with alarming statistics. According to him, 50 to 80 percent of all disease is attributed to stress related origins by most standard medical textbooks. An estimated 20 to 25 million people are afflicted with hypertension or high blood pressure in the United States alone. Thirty million Americans suffer from some type of insomnia. At least 30 to 50 percent of all patients entering a doctor's office may be categorized as the "worried well." These are persons who are usually in excellent health but need professional reassurance to alleviate their worrying.³ The effect of stress in our society is truly brought into focus when one adds to this information a list of the three best selling drugs in our country: an ulcer medication (Tagamet), a hypertension drug (Inderal), and a tranquilizer (Valium).⁴

Leaders of industry are noticing the huge costs of stress in their field of work. They have become alarmed by the cost of absenteeism, company medical expense, and lost productivity. Estimations based on national samples reveal that these costs are between \$50 billion to \$75 billion each year or more than \$750 for every worker in the United States.⁵

³Kenneth R. Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1977), pp. 6-8.

⁴"Stress: Can We Cope?," Time, June 6, 1983, p. 48.

⁵Ibid.

With these statistics in mind, it can be said that persons must learn to deal with the causes and effects of stress if they are to live and function at their best in a contemporary society. To do this, stress must be understood, especially how it affects the body.

In Search of a Definition of Stress

The word "stress" has found its way into our everyday vocabulary in recent years. However, the word has been used very loosely. One reason for this may very well be that the public has been bombarded with books, magazine and newspaper articles, and other media presentations on the subject. One recent document noted that there were about 6,000 publications on the subject in one year.⁶ Numerous seminars have been held to study both the causes and effects of stress and, also, to present ideas for preventative measures in the reduction of stress. However, few people seem to have arrived at a clear, concise definition of the term.

One must first consider a brief history of stress if one is to adequately understand the term. The concept of stress is not new. Hans Selye, a pioneer in the study of stress, suggests that even prehistoric man must have noticed that the loss of vigor as well as the feeling of exhaustion he felt after extreme labor, extended exposure to cold or heat, loss of blood, fear, or disease had something in common. While he may not have been able to understand his plight, he may have realized that he had exceeded his limits.⁷

⁶Ogden Tanner and others, Stress (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1976), p. 15.

⁷Hans Selye, Stress Without Distress (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1975), pp. 21-22.

While it is certain that scientists have in the past had "hunches" about the physical effects of stress observed in people and animals, Walter Cannon, the Harvard University physiologist, noted an automatic response to stress in his experiments with dogs and cats in the 1920s. Cannon noted that a complex animal body responds in a patterned way to any challenge to its equilibrium. While the intensity of the response varied according to the importance of the challenge, a stressed response will always follow the same general pattern.⁸

From his experimentation Cannon theorized that the body system, when faced by what it considers an enemy, will either prepare itself for battle with the enemy or flee to a place of safety. Cannon termed this basic response to danger a "fight-or-flight pattern."⁹

The concept of stress was first introduced by endocrinologist Hans Selye in 1936. Until that time the term had meant "physical strain or pressure," "hardship, straits, or adversity," or maybe "strain upon a bodily organ or mental power."¹⁰ Selye, who has since become known as the father of stress research, published a paper resulting from his curious investigation concerning the idea of "being sick."¹¹ At first Selye consciously avoided the term "stress" to describe the state that his research had discovered. However, he later changed his mind and by the mid 1940s began to use the term to describe his findings. This usage

⁸Tanner, op. cit., p. 11.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Martin Shaeffer, Life After Stress (New York: Plenum Press, 1982), p. 1.

¹¹Tanner, op. cit., p. 14.

was a reversal of the traditional view. Now stress became the result of an agent or force instead of the force of an agent itself.¹² For many years after that first publication Selye established stress as "a principal influence on all human behavior, whether in illness or in health."¹³

Even though Selye first noted and developed the concept of stress, he also recognizes the problem of defining stress:

Nowdays, everyone seems to be talking about stress. . .yet remarkably few people define the concept in the same way or even bother to attempt a clear-cut definition. The word stress like success, failure, or happiness means different things to different people.¹⁴

Tom Cox agrees with Selye concerning the problem of definition. He holds that "there is no single agreed definition in existence."¹⁵ Cox feels that this adds to the elusive concept of stress. While the concept is familiar with both layman and professional when it is used in a general context, it is understood by only a few when used in specific terms.¹⁶ Other writers agree with both Selye and Cox.¹⁷

Hans Selye deals with the problem of definition by defining stress on two levels. He defines the term in a general way by saying that stress is "essentially the rate of wear and tear in the body."¹⁸ Selye, however, notes

¹²Shaeffer, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

¹³Tanner, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁴Cary L. Cooper, Stress Research, Issues for the Eighties (New York: John K. Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 1983), p. 1.

¹⁵Tom Cox, Stress (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1978), p. 1.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 3; H. J. Eysenck, Encyclopedia of Psychology, Volume III (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 282.

¹⁸Hans Selye, The Stress of Life (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1976), p. 1.

the need for a more scientific definition and therefore defines stress as "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it."¹⁹

For a better understanding of this latter definition one must understand what Selye means by nonspecific. The demands made on our body are specific. For example, when the body is exposed to cold it shivers to produce more heat and the blood vessels contract to slow the loss of body heat. On the other hand, if our body is exposed to heat we begin to sweat so that body heat will be lost. Drugs or hormones in the body also produce specific actions. Diuretic drugs increase urine production while the hormone adrenalin increases the pulse rate and blood pressure. Selye reasons, "all these agents have one thing in common; they also increase the demand for readjustment. This demand is nonspecific; it requires adaptation to a problem, irrespective of what that problem may be."²⁰

For the sake of clarity and consistency the definition for stress used in this project will be the one previously identified in Chapter One: stress is the unwarranted force or pressure that threatens one's physical, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being and pushes one to or beyond the point of strain.

One cannot work with the concept of stress without also defining other terms that are directly related. These terms are stressor, distress, and strain. A stressor is an agent that triggers an alarm reaction in an individual. Selye defines stressor simply as the various factors that produce stress.²¹ As noted in Chapter One, the definition of stressor used and assumed throughout this project is "the agents in one's life that cause stress to occur." It should be

¹⁹Selye, Stress Without Distress, p. 27.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 27-28.

²¹Ibid., pp. 26-27.

noted that these stressors can be either positive or negative. Distress cannot be considered synonymous with stress, according to Selye. Distress is always negative or damaging while stress can be either positive or negative.²² Strain, while not used extensively in stress research, can be simply defined as the condition of the body subjected to stress.

Now that working definitions of the terms have been established one must move to a better understanding of how stress affects the human body. It is not the purpose of this project to explore in detail the physical and psychological effect stress has on the human body. This has previously been done by more qualified researchers.²³ However, for our purpose, one must come to understand what stress does to the body in a layperson's terms.

The body and mind are interrelated. They mesh together to form an integrated whole. One should understand that one's physiological and one's psychological being cannot be separated. However, for the convenience of this study only, the two will be separated.

The Physiology of Stress

Hans Selye's early research indicated that physiological stress is revealed by a specific sequence of events. Subsequently, this sequence of events was termed general adaptation syndrome (G.A.S.) or the biological stress syndrome. There are three phases to this syndrome. Alarm reaction is the fight-or-flight response that is triggered by what the body perceives as a threat. This threat is called a stressor. The stage of resistance is the phase in which the body attempts to adapt to or compensate for the bodily changes

²²Selye, Stress Without Distress, pp. 18-19.

²³See Selye, op. cit., as an example.

resulting from the previous alarm reaction. This is the body's attempt to return to normal. The stage of exhaustion occurs following a lengthy exposure of the body to the same stressor. After an extended period of exposure the body becomes adjusted to the stressor. However, if there is no relief from the stressor, the body's adaptation energy is depleted and the individual dies.²⁴

The alarm reaction may be seen as a physiologically complex and dramatic response in which the body's entire stress mechanism is mobilized. Adrenaline is released into the bloodstream at the recognition of a stressor. The heart begins to race and there is a feeling of excitement or fright. A number of other bodily changes begin to take place simultaneously. Breathing becomes shallow. Blood is transported from the skin and viscera to the muscles and the brain. The hands and feet become cooler as a result. Nourishment is redistributed to the muscles and other body parts needed to respond to the emergency.²⁵

The brain plays an important role in the alarm reaction. When the brain registers an emergency response, the hypothalamus, a part of the midbrain that controls feelings, sends electrochemical signals to the pituitary gland near the base of the skull. The pituitary gland in turn secretes a hormone called ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone) that activates the adrenal glands. These glands release corticoids into the bloodstream that carry the alarm message to other glands and organs.²⁶

²⁴Selye, Stress Without Distress, pp. 38-39; Phil Nuernberger, Freedom from Stress (Honesdale, PA: The Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy of the U.S.A., 1981), pp. 37-39.

²⁵Shaeffer, Life After Stress, pp. 2-3; Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 75.

²⁶Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 3; See Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 46-62. for an excellent, detailed description of the brain and stress.

The autonomic nervous system, a series of nerve pathways connecting several internal organs, is also motivated by the alarm reaction. Messages are sent through this pathway to the adrenals so that adrenaline will be released. This release causes an increase in heartbeat and respiration.²⁷

There are also accompanying reactions to the alarm reaction. Muscular tension often occurs in the lower back, or in the neck and shoulders. Tension headaches sometime result. The tension often persists after the alarm reaction has ceased. Another accompanying reaction is the release of hydrochloric acid by the stomach. While this is a normal process in the digestion of food, it becomes a problem when the stomach is empty. If this is the case, irritations to the linings of the stomach, the esophagus, and the upper intestines can occur. This in turn can lead to ulcers.²⁸

There are other accompanying reactions to the alarm reaction to stress. Since the cardiovascular system is mobilized by an alarm reaction, continuous or frequent alarms could eventually lead to cardiovascular disease or even heart failure. Also, large amounts of corticoids in the system for lengthy periods of time can cause serious damage, since the kidneys regulate the chemical composition and water content of the blood and tissues.²⁹

If the stressor that triggered the initial alarm response is still present, that response will be followed by a stage of resistance. The body begins to actively combat the stressor. The distinctive indicators noted in the alarm reaction begin to dissipate. They will finally disappear altogether during

²⁷Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 3.

²⁸Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 4; Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

²⁹Ibid.

this stage. Resistance to the particular stressor is high. The body appears to have returned to normal, however, this may be a stage of false hope. While the body's resistance to that particular stressor is high, valuable resources have been diverted from certain body parts to fight during the initial alarm reaction. General resistance to disease and other stressors may be low. There is also a danger that the stage of resistance will last for too long a period. The body's resources to resist the stressor may become depleted. If this happens the final stage of G.A.S. occurs.³⁰

This final stage of the syndrome is exhaustion. This happens when the body, or the particular system fighting the stressor, becomes worn out and breaks down. Ironically, at the state of exhaustion, the body once again begins to exhibit symptoms similar to those noticed in the initial alarm reaction. Glandular secretions rise and the heart rate and respiration increase. The burden may then be shifted to another system that is more capable of fighting the stressor. It is important to note that during this exhausted state the body is increasingly vulnerable to disease and organic dysfunctions. At this point stress-related diseases begin to become more noticeable.³¹

One can now begin to see the danger stress poses to the physical body.

Kenneth R. Pelletier notes:

At this point, the most important fact is that generalized, prolonged, and unabated stress places a person in a state of disequilibrium, which increases his susceptibility to a wide range of diseases and disorders.³²

³⁰Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 5; Nuernberger, op. cit., p. 39.

³¹Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 75; Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 5.

³²Pelletier, op. cit., p. 75.

The Psychology of Stress

We have seen the physiological factors of stress. Now we can turn our attention to the psychological factors. As mentioned above, it must be kept in mind that the physiological and psychological factors of stress are separated only for the convenience of this study.

How does the body know that a stressor is present and therefore mobilize all of the physical functions mentioned above? The mind signals the body that a stressor is present. When the mind recognizes something as a threat, whether it is good or bad, it quickly signals the body and the alarm reaction begins. Therefore one can see the importance of the mind in the concept of stress. Something becomes a stressor only when it is identified by the mind that it is stressful.³³ This process is not as simple as it may sound. In fact, an explanation of how this happens is far beyond the scope of this project. To present a brief description of how stress is related to the mind is important for our study.

The brain is the organ of the mind, physiologically speaking. However, our knowledge of the operation of the brain does not account for our knowledge of the operation of the mind. The science of psychology has evolved to describe the operation of the mind. According to McQuade and Aikman, "When we talk psychology, we talk not of the cerebrum and brain stem, but of the conscious and the unconscious, the id, the ego, and the superego."³⁴

³³Shaeffer, Life After Stress, p. 7.

³⁴Walter McQuade and Ann Aikman, Stress, (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), p. 97; See James Strachy, trans., The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1966), for details of the classic Freudian concepts of "id," "ego," and "superego."

Phil Nuernberger argues that:

The reason stress is so harmful is because we are unconsciously creating it. Consequently we come to accept stress as a "normal" part of everyday life. . . We do a variety of things to cope with (the) problem, much of which, however, is only palliative. For instance, medical treatment is focused upon the symptoms but does little for the underlying condition or cause. . . One reason for this is that stress is not a "thing" such as a germ, or virus, or bad water. It cannot be put on a slide under the microscope, or bottled, or separated into categories and counted. . . We still focus our attention outward in a futile attempt to "come to grips" with whatever it is out there that is a killer. In doing so, in looking for the causes externally, we have not paid attention to the sources of stress--the way we as individuals think, feel and act. . . In short, we have failed to understand the psychosomatic nature of stress.³⁵

If Nuernberger is actually correct, our unconscious self plays a role just as important as our conscious self does in the way our body responds to stressors.

Early stress research seemed to indicate that the mind's reaction to stressors could be predicted. Walter B. Cannon noticed what he called emergency reaction as he first worked with laboratory animals. This extreme reaction, according to Cannon, was nature's way of preservation. When an organism was confronted with extreme danger it sought to guarantee its survival by either fleeing or fighting. He called this the "fight or flight" principle. He noted that even the most vicious animals usually flee from danger. On the other hand, docile animals may fight if cornered. This same emergency reaction was also noticed in humans. Hans Selye later discovered that Cannon's emergency reaction could be considered an acute case of his alarm reaction discussed earlier.³⁶ This research might lead one to believe that stress reaction could be predictable.

³⁵ Nuernberger, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

³⁶ Schaeffer, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

Nuernberger adds another response to the stress reaction. He calls it the "possum response." He has observed that a significant number of people do not always respond in the traditional fight or flight modes suggested by Cannon. Instead, they respond to a threat by "passive withdrawal." Nuernberger reasons that instead of preparing to fight or run away when faced with a threatening situation some people just sort of roll over and play dead. The person becomes inhibited, exhibits decreased bodily functions, becomes inactive, and even depressed. In this mode one's "resources are not depleted; they are simply not utilized."³⁷

Pelletier adds even more doubt to the predictability of one's reaction to stress. People are physiologically equipped much the same as animals are equipped to cope with stress. However, humans have a higher awareness center than animals. Social factors are called into play by the mind as one encounters a stressor. He notes:

when human beings are subjected to major stress, they are roused to a fight-or-flight reaction in the same way that animals are. Herein lies the problem: an animal can deal with a threat through fight or flight, but we often cannot. Much of the stress we experience cannot be dealt with by fighting or running away, although our initial inclination may be to do one or the other. In our complex society with its highly refined codes of acceptable behavior, fighting and fleeing are often not considered appropriate reactions to stressful situations.³⁸

When an animal is aroused to fight or flight, his body undergoes a biochemical reaction similar to that which takes place in a person when a stressor is encountered. The animal then takes action by his natural responses of fighting or fleeing. Soon his body is back to a normal state. Because of social pressures, the reaction of a person must be different. A person often

³⁷ Nuernberger, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

³⁸ Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 69.

one's self in situations where there are no socially accepted responses. Enter, then, the social variable with the potential to cause stress. The result is a prolonged stress reaction for humans which, if repeated often enough or for long periods of time, can affect physical and psychological well being.³⁹

Human emotion must also be considered in the human response to stress. According to McQuade and Aikman, a problem presents itself to the mind in three stages. First, the mind perceives the problem. Next, the mind analyzes the problem. Finally, the mind reaches a decision about the problem. Logically, this is a reasonable response to a problem. However, logic usually gives way to emotions when a problem arises. Emotions help initially because they alert the body to the problem and call it into action. On the other hand, emotions hinder because they usually mobilize the body to respond physically. The social variables set by our society remind us that physical reactions seldom solve our problems.⁴⁰

Recent research seems to conclude that stressful situations affect people in different ways. How a certain stressor will affect a certain individual seems to depend upon a large number of variables. These variables include the person's emotional and physical makeup, past experiences, and the many factors that define the person's current life situation. Different individuals may respond to the same conditions in different ways. When subjected to a certain stressor one person may enter into a deep state of stress while another person may show increased alertness and improved performance, and still another person may appear to be "immune" to the stressor altogether. An individual may also enter into a stress state when subjected to one condition that is presumably stressful

³⁹Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

⁴⁰McQuade and Aikman, Stress, pp. 95-96.

and seem to totally ignore another similiar condition. Therefore, there seems to be no common, identifiable stress reaction. The mind simply refuses to allow this to happen by randomly denying potential stressors.⁴¹

The mind is the interpreter of our stressors. It seems to interpret stressors from the common, to the extreme, and even to the bazaar. Ogden Tanner and the editors of Time-Life Books present an example of the bazaar by describing ritual executions in primitive tribes. Walter Cannon, the Harvard physiologist, traveled to Australia to investigate stories of voodoo bone-pointing. When a tribesman breaks a sacred taboo, a witch doctor, or medicine man, points a magic bone or stick at the transgressor. Cannon gives a vivid report of what follows:

The man who discovers that he is being 'boned' is a pitiable sight. He stands aghast, with his eyes staring at the treacherous pointer, and with his hands lifted as though to ward off the lethal medium, which he imagines is pouring into his body. His cheeks blanch and his eyes become glassy and the expression of his face becomes horribly distorted. He attempts to shriek but usually the sound chokes in his throat, and all that one might see is froth at his mouth. His body begins to tremble and the muscles twist involuntarily. He sways backwards and falls to the ground, and after a short time appears to be in a swoon; but soon after he writhes as if in mortal agony, and covering his face with his hands, begins to moan. After a while he becomes very composed and crawls to his wurley(hut). From this time onwards he sickens and frets, refusing to eat and keeping aloof from the daily affairs of the tribe. Unless help is forthcoming in the shape of a countercharm administered by the hands of the Nangarri, or medicine⁴² man, his death is only a matter of a comparatively short time.

Stories such as this illustrate the important role one's mind plays in his reaction to stress. The governing influences of the mind must now be studied.

⁴¹Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, pp. 77-78; See Mortimer H. Appley and Richard Trumbull, Psychological Stress: Issues in Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), for a detailed summarization of research and clinical practices in this field.

⁴²Tanner, Stress, pp. 119-120.

Stress as Related to the Individual

As stated earlier, sources of pressure in life tend to evoke different reactions from different people. Each person has a totally distinctive, yet complex, set of attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, everyone responds to stress in a unique way. Some people are able to adapt their behavior so that their bodies can meet the challenge of a stressor. Others seem less able to cope or adapt to stressful situations. Several factors may contribute to these differences. According to Cary L. Cooper, these factors include: "personality, motivation, being well- or ill-equipped to deal with the problems in a particular area of expertise, fluctuations in abilities (particularly with age), insight into one's own motivations and weaknesses, etc."⁴³ It becomes necessary, then, to consider those distinct characteristics of an individual that become decision makers in one's response to stress. The majority of research in this area has been directed at one's personality and one's stress-prone behavior patterns.

The most popular personality measure used in research has been the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI).⁴⁴ Cooper provides a summary of these findings. A number of studies utilizing the MMPI indicated that before their illness, patients with stress-related coronary disease differ from persons who remain healthy. The occurrence of coronary heart disease actually broadens the deviation of the patients' MMPI scores even further. Also, patients found to have fatal disease tend to show greater signs of neuroticism, especially depression, than do those who survive a coronary disease. Studies

⁴³Cooper, The Stress Check, p. 15.

⁴⁴See Boris Semenoff, ed., Personality Assessment (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1966), pp. 359-383, for an introduction to MMPI.

using other personality measures report emotional instability among such patients. These tests can only serve as indicators since much more research is needed.⁴⁵

Sociologist Gordon E. Moss introduced two personality types in 1973. He labeled them as identified and autonomous personalities. He assumes that most persons seek to reduce the amount of uncertainty in life and to maximize the amount of security in order to insure survival. According to Moss, an identified person does this by finding organizations and other established social structures with which to identify. Since one is not a risk taker one feels secure in the group. On the other hand, the autonomous person depends on one's self as one tries to insure one's survival. Genuine security is found through complete independence and self-sufficiency. One develops one's own moral codes and is usually more socially and geographically mobile than the identified person.⁴⁶

These two personality types handle stress, and therefore their health, differently. The identified person is secure and continues a healthy pattern of life as long as one is able to maintain support groups. When, or if, one loses the support systems, however, one is ill-equipped to become self-sufficient. The autonomous person is in constant training to develop adaptive capabilities and inner resources to combat stress. In doing so one will incur many more stressful experiences than one's counterpart. The end result is that the autonomous personality is enabled to control much more readily than the identified personality.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Cooper, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

⁴⁶Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁷Ibid.

Daniel H. Funkenstein, working with a group of college students, researched behavioral patterns of persons under stress. One regular response from students undergoing intentionally stressful interviews was designated by the researchers as Anger-In. The students with this type of response turned their anger inward and blamed themselves for their predicament. This was the most gentlemanly response, they reasoned. However, this acquired gentility caused these students to suffer more severe stress reactions than did members of the Anger-Out group who vented their hostilities openly.⁴⁸

Research in the area of personality and stress reaction has been done by Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman. These cardiovascular experts began the work by looking at individual differences in temperament that could influence reactions to stress. After years of research they were able to identify two behavioral patterns in humans. They labeled the coronary-prone behavior Type A and the behavior causing a low risk to coronary disease Type B.⁴⁹

Friedman and Rosenman developed a profile on the two behavioral patterns. One must understand that no individual will possess only Type A or Type B behavior. There is a wide range of variation possible along the spectrum. However, distinct characteristics are readily recognized in individuals; especially those exhibiting Type A behavior. The researchers attribute the degree of Type A behavior in the United States to the Puritan work ethic of "work hard and get ahead" and the evolution of the economic system. Both actively encourage one to achieve, compete with others, and acquire material wealth. There are two traits, according to Friedman and Rosenman, that

⁴⁸ Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

⁴⁹ Nuernberger, Freedom from Stress, p. 10; Cooper, The Stress Check, pp. 16-17; It should be noted that while these behavioral patterns are helpful for this study, there is some debate as to their precise value.

automatically identify a Type A personality: excessive competition and a chronic sense of time urgency that always has deadlines to meet. Along with these two identifiable traits are several others. Some of these include: hostility that is easily aroused, a high degree of impatience, aggressiveness, and an extroverted personality.⁵⁰

In their book dealing with this matter, Type A Behavior and Your Heart, Friedman and Rosenman characterize a Type A person. Type A behavior is apparent when a person explosively accents key words in a tranquil situation. The Type A person will have a tendency to utter the last words of a sentence more rapidly than the opening words of a sentence. Such persons walk fast, eat in a hurry, and are noticeably impatient. During a conversation they will constantly attempt to return the conversation to matters of personal interest. When this is not possible, the individual becomes silent and self-occupied. Type A behavior is very noticeable in persons who feel guilty when they relax or take time off. This chronic sense of time urgency or "hurry sickness" will motivate them to over work and schedule more activities in less time. Finally, the Type A person tends to always evaluate self and others in terms of numbers.⁵¹

Friedman and Rosenman note that of all the characteristics that distinguish the Type A behavior the one most critical and most easily recognized because of its constant reoccurrence is the sense of time urgency. They observe:

Overwhelmingly, the most significant trait of the Type A man is his habitual sense of time urgency. . .The Type A man incessantly

⁵⁰ Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman, Type A Behavior and Your Heart (Greenwich: Fawcett, 1974), pp. 82-88.

⁵¹ Ibid.

strives to accomplish too much or to participate in too many events in the amount of time he allocates for these purposes.⁵²

The authors feel that the second most identifiable character of Type A behavior is the quest for material objects or wealth. This person does not seek these things for the personal value but because of the achievement it represents. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the gain of such wealth helps the individual to overcome deep-seated insecurities about self-worth. Friedman and Rosenman explain:

The Type A individual simply uses money as a numeral of his prowess or achievements and then more often than not liberally disposes of a large fraction of it. (T)he Type A man, after having striven for and obtained a certain number of dollars, doesn't care any more. . . about what use is made of the money. It is the number of dollars, not the dollars themselves, that appease. . . the insecurity of the Type A man.⁵³

It is at this point that Pelletier makes a very important observation. The insecurity found in the Type A personality may be due to a lack of reflection. This person is so time conscious and achievement oriented that little meaningful reflection takes place. Insecurity may stem from the fact that the individuals long-range life goals may not be well defined or there may be no goals at all. In short, Type A's are "concentrating always on today's achievements and spending little or no energy considering the far more important question, 'What is it all for?'"⁵⁴

The Type B behavior pattern tends to be the best model for life, however, little attention is paid to it. In fact, Type B behavior can be described as the opposite of Type A. Such a person is usually free from the sense of time

⁵²Friedman and Rosenman, op. cit., p. 70.

⁵³Ibid., p. 72.

⁵⁴Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 127.

urgency, has an ambition based on well thought out goals, has a sense of self-worth, is free from hostility, is not rigidly competitive, and often takes time away to reflect. Pelletier argues that the Type B person should not be overlooked. In fact, this type of behavior should become a model for stress reduction. "Type B is far more likely to achieve a life style approaching genuine happiness. Furthermore, a Type B's low-stress mode of behavior is much more conducive to health maintenance."⁵⁵

The research of Friedman and Rosenman and their associates seem to be the most convincing data that personal behavior patterns are related to stress. Their research has shown a definite relationship between Type A behavior and different forms of heart diseases. The risk of recurrent coronary heart disease is significantly related to this type of behavior.

Causes of Stress

The causes of stress are not easily identified. In trying to do so one must keep in focus the many variables the mind may use when identifying a potential stressor. Stressful situations affect different people in different ways. This effect is based upon a large number of variables. Some of these include the person's emotions, personality, past experience, physical condition, and current life situation. Or, as Selye summarizes, a stressor is what the brain recognizes as a threat.

The potential stressor does not have to be negative in character. Even positive, joyful experiences can become stressors. Selye uses an illustration of a mother who is suddenly told the tragic news that her only son has died in battle. However, years later she learns that the news was false when her son

⁵⁵ Pelletier, op. cit., p. 131.

unexpectedly walks into the room. While the specific results of the events, sorrow and joy, are opposite to each other, the effect of the stressor may be the same.⁵⁶

Martin Shaeffer places the causes of stress into four categories. The first category is considered to be those "obvious" stressors that are easily recognized in one's life. These stressors can be controlled by recognition and planning ahead. The second group is the "unnoticed" stressors. These, too, tend to almost always be present but are allowed to go unnoticed until they begin to cause a threat. These can be controlled with only a few adjustments to one's daily life. The third group of stressors are called "hidden" stressors because they are usually deep-seated problems that are not easily recognized. Sometimes professional help is needed to bring these stressors to the surface so they can be dealt with. The final group of stressors is made up of a vast number of chemical and environmental problems. The group could include air pollution and living in large cities. To reduce their effects one must avoid them, modify them, or use other methods. People have the least control over this latter group.⁵⁷

According to Kenneth R. Pelletier, both positive and negative "stress triggers" can be mainly attributed to our advanced technological society. He feels, "It is possible that twentieth century man has designed a social and economic structure which is antipathetic to his health and psychological well-being."⁵⁸ Pelletier believes that stress triggers can also be categorized in groups. For him, these groups are social change, work environment, and

⁵⁶Selye, Stress Without Distress, p. 29.

⁵⁷Shaeffer, Life After Stress, pp. 7-12.

⁵⁸Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 58.

technological innovation. The individual interprets these various "triggers" through one's complicated system of interpretation.⁵⁹

Social Change

"Perhaps more than anything else the twentieth century believes in change--and change itself can stress people."⁶⁰ Thomas H. Holmes and Richard H. Rahe of the University of Washington School of Medicine have become pioneers in research relating illnesses to social change. Their study has been a "systematic investigation of the relationship between social readjustment, stress, and susceptibility to illness."⁶¹ They have learned that both positive and negative social change does affect one's ability to cope with stress; especially if several life changing events happen in a short period of time. Pelletier argues, "When too many of these stimuli occur at once or in rapid succession, the result is too much pressure on the individual's physical and mental adaptive mechanism and the decision-making processes, and stress is the result."⁶²

Through their research Holmes and Rahe were able to devise a Social Readjustment Rating Scale that assigns varying numerical values to events that are typical in life. Many of these events would be considered occasions for joy and celebration, but are noted to cause social readjustment stress. This detailed list includes marriage, divorce, personal injury or illness, addition to family, change in work responsibilities, and death of spouse, family member, or close friend.⁶³

⁵⁹Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 84-108.

⁶⁰McQuade and Aikman, Stress, p. 12.

⁶¹Pelletier, op. cit., p. 108.

⁶²Ibid., p. 84.

⁶³See Table 1 for the Holmes Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale as presented by Pelletier, op. cit., pp. 110-113.

Table 1

Holmes Rahe
SOCIAL READJUSTMENT RATING SCALE

Event	Value
Death of spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marital separation	65
Jail term	63
Death of close family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
Fired from work	47
Marital reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Change in family member's health	44
Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39
Addition to family	39
Business readjustment	39
Changes in financial status	38
Death of a close friend	37
Change to different line of work	36
Change in number of marital arguments	35
Mortgage or loan over \$10,000	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
Change in work responsibilities	29
Son or daughter leaving home	29
Trouble with in-laws	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28
Spouse begins or stops work	26
Starting or finishing school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Revision of personal habits	24
Trouble with the boss	23
Change in work hours, conditions	20
Change in residence	20
Change in schools	20
Change in recreational habits	19
Change in church activities	19
Change in social activities	18
Mortgage or loan under \$10,000	17
Change in sleeping habits	16
Change in number of family gatherings	15
Change in eating habits	15
Vacation	13
Christmas season	12
Minor violation of the law	11

Based on the past year, a score of 150 would make one's chances of developing an illness or health change about 50%. A score of 300 increases the chances to almost 90%.

Recent major social changes that induce stress in individual members of society are discussed by Pelletier. The "social evolution" of the sixties forces many people to deal with new issues and to reexamine their existing values. One example of this is the Women's Liberation Movement which has caused both men and women to reinterpret masculine and feminine roles. The "idolization of youth" also causes social adaptation problems. Youth has become the most precious commodity in our society. As a result, young people fear becoming old and the old fear being abandoned. In recent years our society has seen the "devaluation of spiritual concerns." Organized religion does not have the influence it enjoyed in the recent past.⁶⁴ Pelletier sees this drastic decline of religious influence as a very notable societal change. He expresses that:

This has left people stranded in a materialistic society which has no clear belief system to relieve their anxieties about the meaning of existence and about death. We are not at all reconciled to our own mortality, and since we have no idea what is to come, this uncertainty is another major stressor in contemporary life. . . .When belief is absent, there is a feeling of incompleteness and a spiritual vacuum which can be extremely disconcerting. Each person today experiences the increased life stress of having to consider and resolve fundamental spiritual⁶⁵ questions in the midst of an increasingly materialistic society.

Work Environment

If one follows Pelletier's schema of "stress triggers", the work environment must be considered next. Cooper reasons that "in any job, there are a large number of environmental sources of work stress."⁶⁶ Pelletier agrees. "Job stress can be defined as a lack of harmony between the individual and his work environment" and "is one of the most universal and intense kinds of stress experience."⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, pp. 84-90.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 89. ⁶⁶ Cooper, The Stress Check, p. 20.

⁶⁷ Pelletier, op. cit., p. 90.

Emotional strain associated with one's job responsibilities has been noted to precede heart attacks in 91 percent of one group of coronary heart disease patients. Another study has indicated a higher measured job dissatisfaction and also a higher death-rate from coronary heart disease among certain occupational groups such as accountants and auditors than other occupational groups of the same socioeconomic status. Friedman, Rosenman and associates have completed studies that clearly illustrate the effects of time pressure and work overload in certain occupations. One study indicated a close relationship between job responsibility and stress. Still another study made of patients suffering with heart disease and a controlled group of healthy persons noted the two groups differed in three principle ways. The coronary patients described themselves as working excessive overtime, feeling hostile toward others who slowed them down, and experiencing job dissatisfaction. These complaints were rare in the controlled group.⁶⁸ It should be noted that each of these studies indicate a relationship between stress and the work environment.

Cooper identifies similiar work related pressures. He also makes the very important observation of one's role in the organization as a "major source of stress."⁶⁹ Three distinct stressors identified by Cooper in this area are role ambiguity, role conflict, and responsibility. Stress often results when one has inadequate information about his work role. This happens when there is no clearly defined area of work for the individual. He does not know the expectations of his colleagues nor the scope and responsibilities of his job. "The stress indicators related to role ambiguity (are) depressed mood, lowered

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 90-92.

⁶⁹Cooper, op. cit., p. 22.

self-esteem, life dissatisfaction, job dissatisfaction, low motivation to work, and intention to leave the job."⁷⁰

Role conflict surfaces when the individual becomes disjunctured. Such persons are torn by conflicting job demands, doing things that they do not want to do, or doing things they do not think are part of the job. This happens most frequently when a person is caught between two groups that demand different kinds of behavior or groups that interpret the function of his job in different ways. Several studies conclude that an organizational role that is "between departments or between the company and the outside world" is one of high conflict and that the persons in these positions run a higher risk of coronary diseases.⁷¹

Still another distinct stressor within an organizational role is responsibility. Studies have indicated that persons with a "responsibility for people" are more susceptible to coronary heart disease than are persons with a "responsibility to things."⁷²

Cooper also emphasizes the role that work relationships play in triggering stress reactions. This major source of stress relates to the individual's relationship with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates. Several behavioral scientist have reported research suggesting that "good relationships between members of a work group are a central factor in individual and organizational health."⁷³ Two significant studies concluded that:

mistrust of persons one worked with was positively related to high role ambiguity, inadequate communications between people, and

⁷⁰Cooper, The Stress Check, p. 23.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 23-25.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 25-26.

⁷³Cooper, op. cit., p. 26.

to "psychological strain in the form of low job satisfaction and to feelings of job-related threat to one's well being."⁷⁴

A final source of work related stress submitted by Cooper is that of simply "being in the organization" and the threat this brings to an individual. When one is in an organization his freedom is limited and, because of his association with the organization, he begins to lose his own identity and autonomy. He may not always feel a part of the decision-making process. At times he may feel a lack of communication and a lack of belonging. Also, he will sooner or later have to deal with the obvious "office politics." Quite naturally, these, too, increase one's level of stress.⁷⁵

The conclusion must therefore be made that one should not overlook the work environment as a cause of stress in contemporary human beings.

Technological Innovation

Pelletier feels that "another major contributor to the high generalized level of stress in the modern world is the sheer amount of technological innovation."⁷⁶ There can be no disputing that technology is constantly bringing about an increased need for one to adapt rapidly and frequently. The mass media constantly reminds us that we are in an ever-changing age. In fact, those who might pride themselves with keeping up with the latest developments may become anxious at the media overload.⁷⁷

People now live in a "global village" because of air travel and have the ability to move from culture to culture in a matter of hours. This faster mode

⁷⁴Cooper, op. cit., p. 26.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 30.

⁷⁶Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 94.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 94-95.

of travel may have its advantages but it also serves to breakdown the "protective barriers" found between cultures. Individuals often find themselves beyond a "supportive and homogeneous community."⁷⁸

Pelletier characterizes humans who have become victim of today's technological advances. Since everything around them seems to be speeding up, so do they. They are constantly trying to "save time" and find faster and easier ways to do their daily chores. Often they suddenly become aware that they have been thinking about what they have to do or what they would like to do while doing something that needs their undivided attention. The "deadline" has become the standard for measuring much of one's work. Work production is usually judged by quantity instead of quality.⁷⁹

This attitude of making time count is often extended into people's domestic life. This causes an unnecessarily stressful rush to acquire social position, respect, and material wealth. The ideas of doing something "constructive" and "accomplishing something" become engraved in modern human expectations. Before we realize it, our leisure time has also become regimented by the clock. Instead of allowing leisure time to help alleviate the time-related stressors humans become slaves to time. People become victims of "hurry sickness."⁸⁰ Pelletier warns, "When leisure becomes a rigidly scheduled source of stress in itself, a dangerous syndrome can result. This syndrome is frequently manifested by victims of coronary heart disease."⁸¹

⁷⁸Pelletier, op. cit., p. 95.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 96.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 96-97.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 97.

Certainly this list of contemporary causes of stress can in no way be considered exhaustive. However, it will give one an idea where the mind might discover potential stressors. Let us now turn our attention to the effects these stressors have on the human body and the quality of one's life.

Effects of Stress

Stress affects different people in different ways. According to Pelletier, "This is based upon a large number of variables in the person's emotional and physical makeup, past experience, and the constellation of factors defining his current life situation."⁸² Shaeffer agrees, "The signs of stress are many and they can vary greatly in different persons."⁸³ If one is to attempt to predict responses or understand how certain psychosomatic illnesses surface one must first know a great deal about that particular person.⁸⁴

Shaeffer notes, however, that "some manifestations of stress. . .are more usual than others."⁸⁵ If these common ways in which stress is believed to surface are examined more closely, one can begin to gauge the amount of stress in one's life.

Physical Indicators

There are several physical indicators that surface to give indication of the first phases of stress. One category can be labeled "nervous indicators." These indicators include nervous tics, muscle spasms, twitching eyelids, and other involuntary muscular movements. Frequent colds, sneezing, sniffles, and a

⁸²Pelletier, op. cit., p. 77.

⁸³Shaeffer, Life After Stress, p. 21.

⁸⁴Pelletier, op. cit., p. 77.

⁸⁵Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 21.

runny nose make up another group. Various muscle pains make up still another group. Notable muscle pains include pains in the back, chest, and shoulders, in various joints, and pains in other body parts.⁸⁶

Stomach related problems also signal early stages of stress reactions. These include indigestion, constipation, diarrhea, and a general "upset stomach." There are also the skin related problems of dermatitis, eczema and unexplained rashes.⁸⁷

A person's body language is also a good indicator of stress. One's posture may begin to slump. Arms may be crossed tightly. One may even drag one's feet when walking. A "catch all" category could include impatience, becoming startled by sudden noises, and tension headaches.⁸⁸ These are several notable physical indicators of stress. Nuernberger points out that "the list is almost endless."⁸⁹

If several of these initial physical indicators are experienced, especially for prolonged periods of time, the body may be at or near the stage of exhaustion. The body's resistance is weakened dramatically at this stage of the General Adaptation Syndrome and becomes susceptible to more serious disease and dysfunction.⁹⁰

The most frequent physical evidences of prolonged stress are hypertension, ulcers, heart disease, emphysema, spastic colon, hemorrhoids,

⁸⁶Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 22.

⁸⁷Nuernberger, Freedom from Stress, p. 9.; Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 22.

⁸⁸Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 22.

⁸⁹Nuernberger, op. cit., p. 9.

⁹⁰Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 23.

migraine headaches, allergies, arthritis, and possibly cancer.⁹¹ These more severe physical problems are the body's way of sending a powerful message. In fact, the body acts as a type of mirror and reflects the stress to which it is subjected.⁹²

Psychological Indicators

The effects of life's stressors go far beyond the physical. Schaeffer argues that behavior and feelings are important psychological indicators of stress. "During the alarm reaction and on into the stage of resistance, a variety of behavioral indicators can reveal the presence of the G.A.S. (General Adaptation Syndrome) taking place in your body."⁹³ These psychological indicators can be separated into three fairly distinct categories.

An individual's behavior patterns may begin to change under stress. Common but ineffective coping methods begin to surface. Smoking, excessive use of alcohol and other drugs, and overeating only serve to complicate the issues. Agitation and an increase of activity is noted. Signs of "hurry sickness" are easily noticed.⁹⁴ One may "walk faster, talk faster, even breath faster."⁹⁵ Cognitive processing patterns become disrupted. Normal patterns of organization may change. A person who is normally neat and well-organized may become messy and unorganized. The reverse of this organizational pattern may also happen. Memory problems may begin to surface. One may have problems with

⁹¹Schaeffer, op. cit., p. 23.; Nuernberger, op. cit.,p. 9; See McQuade and Aikman, Stress, pp. 21-92 for a detailed discussion.

⁹²Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 23.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Pelletier, Mind as Healer, Mind as Slayer, p. 126.

⁹⁵Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 24.

remembering details and keeping facts straight. Also, one's range of interest may be greatly reduced to include only a few specific ideals.⁹⁶

A third change of behavioral pattern has to do with emotions. As a result of stress one may develop a "fixated effect" and cling to one feeling or thought. There could be sudden outbursts of anger or joy as well as sharp mood changes. These mood changes will be toward depression or hyperactivity.⁹⁷ Schaeffer emphasizes, "Taken together, these various behavioral, cognitive, and emotional signs all point toward the experience of stress."⁹⁸ As with the physical signs of stress, the psychological signals become more pronounced as one moves toward the exhaustion threshold.⁹⁹

Certainly stress is not the only cause of the above symptoms. Diet, physical exercise, family history, and environment are other contributing factors. Still, stress can be seen as an underlying factor.

Burnout

Closely related to the effects of stress is the phenomenon of burnout. Hubert J. Freudenberger, the person who originally used the term for this syndrome, defines burnout:

To deplete oneself. To exhaust one's physical and mental resources. To wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by one's self or by the values of society.¹⁰⁰

While the terms burnout and stress are not synonymous, burnout can be identified with the stage of exhaustion in Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome.

⁹⁶Shaeffer, op. cit., p. 24.

⁹⁷Ibid. ⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Hubert J. Freudenberger, Burn-Out, The High Cost of High Achievement (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), p. 17.

When an individual pushes one's self too hard for too long a period of time, burn-out results.¹⁰¹

G. Lloyd Rediger relates burnout to the depressive syndrome. His description of a person suffering from burnout is very similiar to those suffering from severe stress reaction. The person is affected physically, emotionally, and spiritually. There may be a noticeable weight change. Physical energy is low. A lack of coordination or other motor difficulties may be noted. One may become apathetic and develop a one-track mind. One may be unable to concentrate and have random thought patterns. One may loose a sense of humor. There may also be a noticeable change in one's moral behavior. Spiritual disciplines may be lost.¹⁰² Rediger cautions that "a person seldom exhibits all of the above characteristics, but a combination of two or more from each of the categories usually marks the burned-out person."¹⁰³ Freudenberger describes a burned-out person as "someone in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by a devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected award."¹⁰⁴

Other Effects

There are several effects of stress that cannot easily be placed into the categories of physical or psychological effects. Neither can they be easily identified with burnout. These are very important factors of stress that cannot actually be documented. How can the fact that one is hindered from getting the

¹⁰¹Freudenberger, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁰²G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout, (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), pp. 15-16.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁰⁴Freudenberger, op. cit., p. 13.

most out of life be accurately documented? How can personal agony, duress, and mental anguish be reported? How can human potential stifled by the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, or even food be measured? Even though each of these abuses may be part of a stressful life, their effect on human life cannot be adequately measured.

Summary

This chapter has given a general, yet detailed view of how stress affects the human body and, therefore, the quality of one's life. Stress was defined as "the unwarranted force or pressure that threatens one's physical, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being and pushes one to or beyond the point of strain." Other terms relating to stress reaction were also defined. Stress triggers several intricate physical and psychological responses in the body. The mind seems to be the key controller of the stress reaction since it recognizes potential stressors. Different persons react to stress in different ways.

The many variables that are related to a stress reaction limit the predictability of the causes and effects of stress. Key factors controlling one's reaction to stress are personality and personal behavioral patterns. Causes of stress, while not easily identified, include social change, work environment, and technological innovation. The effect that stress has on individuals is also hard to predict. Physical indicators, psychological indicators, burnout, and other general effects of stress reaction were noted. After this introduction to stress and an understanding of its causes and effects we now move to identifying more specific stressors that must be confronted by the minister in the eighties.

Chapter 3

CONTEMPORARY FOUNDATIONS

The purpose of Chapter Three is to continue to build a foundation for the study by exploring the causes and effects of stress related to contemporary ministry. The first major heading will explore the presence of stress in the life of the contemporary minister. A discussion of several categories of ministerial problems that are known to cause stress will be presented under the second major heading. The last heading will then discuss the effects that these stressors have on the minister. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the findings.

Stress and the Contemporary Pastor

Gary L. Harbaugh helps keep the idea of the minister's personhood in proper perspective when he reveals that:

Pastors are persons. Most of the problems pastors experience in the parish are not caused by the pastor forgetting he or she is a pastor. Most difficulties pastors face in the parish arise when the pastor forgets that he or she is a person...The pastor is not only a person; he or she is a whole person, a whole person in Christ.¹

Since the pastor is a person, the pastor's life will be subjected to the several general causes of stress suggested in Chapter Two. However, there are also unique stressors related to the pastoral ministry and other helping professions. Harold C. Warlick, Jr. argues that "certain types of stress are

¹Gary L. Harbaugh, Pastor As Person (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), p. 9.

unique to the profession of ministry."² He suggests that "the problem seems not to lie in the presence of stress in the ministry but in the fact that little is understood about the sources of and solutions to stress in ministry."³ Roy M. Oswald, in an attempt to relate stress specifically to ministers, has modified the Holmes Rahe Readjustment Rating Scale presented in Chapter 2. This scale highlights several problems unique to the Christian minister.⁴ The pastor may actually strive to be a whole person but there are times in ministry when one feels very fragmented; anything but whole. This feeling of fragmentation can be the direct result of the several stressors that are directly related to contemporary ministers.⁵

A detailed study of 4,908 ministers in 21 Protestant denominations noted that 75 percent of the respondents have had one or more "major stress" periods in their careers. Pastoral work in the local church was blamed for two-thirds of this stress.⁶

As early as a quarter of a century ago, H. Richard Niebuhr called the clergy profession the "perplexed profession."⁷ Alan C. Reuter summarizes the plight of the Christian ministry in this way:

²Harold C. Warlick, Jr., How to Be a Minister and a Human Being (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), p. 31.

³Ibid., p. 33.

⁴Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Stress (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982), pp. 15-17; See Table 2 for this scale which indicates how stress is specifically related to the clergy profession.

⁵One should note that literature related to ministerial stress rarely, if ever, considers evil as a source of stress.

⁶Edgar W. Mills and John P. Koval, Stress in Ministry (Washington, D.C.: Ministry Studies Board, 1971), pp. 9-13.

⁷H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper, 1956), p. 48.

Table 2
LIFE CHANGE RATING SCALE
Adapted by Roy M. Oswald

<u>Event</u>	<u>Average Value</u>
Death of Spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marital Separation	65
Death of close family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
Serious decline in church attendance	49
Geographical relocation	49
Private meetings by segment of congregation to discuss your resignation	47
Beginning of heavy drinking by immediate family member	46
Marital reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Change in health of family member	44
Problem with children	42
Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39
Alienation from one's Board/Council/Session/Vestry	39
Gain of new family member	39
New job in new line of work	38
Change in financial state	38
Death of close friend	37
Increased arguing with spouse	35
Merger of two or more congregations	35
Serious parish financial difficulty	32
Mortgage over \$50,000 (home)	31
Difficulty with member of church staff (associates, organist, choir director, secretary, janitor)	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
Destruction of church by fire	30
New job in same line of work	30
Son or daughter leaving home	29
Trouble with in-laws	29
Anger of influential church member over pastor action	29
Slow, steady decline in church attendance	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28
Introduction of new hymnal to worship service	28
Failure of church to make payroll	27
Remodeling or building program	27
Start or stop of spouse's employment	26
Holiday away	26
Start or finish of school	26
Death of peer	26
Offer of call to another parish	26
Change in living conditions	25

<u>Event</u>	<u>Average Value</u>
Revision of Personal habits	24
Negative parish activity by former pastor	24
Difficulty with confirmation class	22
Change in residence	20
Change in schools	20
Change in recreation	19
Change in social activities	18
Death/moving away of good church leader	18
Mortgage or loan less than \$50,000 (home)	17
Change in sleeping habits	16
Development of new friendship	16
Change in eating habits	15
Stressful continuing education experience	15
Major program change	15
Vacation at home	13
Christmas	12
Lent	12
Easter	12
Minor violation of the law	11

Scoring:

50 or below. unusually low
 100 or below. stress at manageable level
 150 or below. stress at manageable level
 200 or below. borderline--mild concern appropriate
 250 or below. serious concern to be exercised
 300 or below. more serious concern to be exercised
 350 or below. to be taken seriously
 above 350 to be taken very seriously

Increase in stress in ministry parallels the increase of stress in our society. The longevity of clergy, once a hallmark of the profession, is declining. The rates of suicide, divorce, alcoholism, depression, heart attack and other stress-related maladies are all significantly higher today among clergy. The dropout and early retirement rates are also up.

One must conclude, then, that stress is a real part of ministry and that its causes and effects must be considered in more detail.

Causes of Stress

The causes of stress specific to ministry are many. These causes have been grouped into categories by several researchers.⁹ The following categories are presented as an attempt to highlight the major causes of stress in the life of the minister. The following categories are not exhaustive, but fairly reflect the struggles in ministry today.

Role Confusion and Role Conflict

Edward B. Bratcher feels that role confusion and role conflict are perhaps the two greatest hindrances of fulfillment in ministry for both clergy and laity.¹⁰ It usually does not take the new clergy person long to realize that there may be wide gaps between one's preconceived ideal of the minister's role, the laity's expectation of the minister, and the actual role of one's ministerial duties. Niebuhr notes that "the contemporary Church is confused about the

⁸ Alan C. Reuter, "Stress in the Ministry: Can we Fight Back?" Currents in Theology and Missions, August, 1981, p. 221.

⁹ A most recent presentation is made by Edward B. Bratcher, The Walk On Water Syndrome (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984); While I do not follow his outline, he must be given credit for the idea behind many of the categories presented here; especially the motifs of being "super-human", having role confusion and role conflict in ministry, and being spiritually immature in ministry.

¹⁰ Bratcher, The-Walk-on-Water Syndrome, p. 131.

nature of ministry" and that there is no "clear-cut, generally accepted conception of the office of the ministry."¹¹ This insight seems to be true among both clergy and laity.¹²

Harold C. Warlick, Jr. questions whether the minister's job is a "divine burden" or a "mission impossible". He presents the clergy role ambiguity by paraphrasing an earlier writer:

The minister is both a professional and a generalist. Ministers teach but must solicit their own classes. They heal, but must do so without pills or a knife. They are sometimes lawyers, sometimes social workers, sometimes editors, sometimes entertainers, salespersons, decorative pieces for public functions, and are supposed to be scholars. They visit the sick, marry people, bury the dead, admonish the unethical, and try to stay sane when criticized. They plan programs and appoint committees when they can get volunteers. And they never have the choice not to preach.¹³

After making a similar assessment of the Christian ministry, James Smart questions, "Is it any wonder that young ministers, and some not so young, find themselves dragged in a dozen different directions as they try to fulfill the claims of the ministry?"¹⁴

According to Bratcher, conflict and confusion over one's role can "cause the clergy to have a high level of job-related tension, low job satisfaction, and low self-confidence."¹⁵ Jud, Mills, and Burch, while researching persons who dropped out of the pastoral ministry, discovered that some ex-clergy chose to leave the ministry because role confusion was too much

¹¹Niebuhr, op. cit., p. 50.

¹²Bratcher, op. cit., p. 126.

¹³Warlick, How to Be a Minister, p. 16.

¹⁴James D. Smart, The Rebirth of Ministry (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), p. 17.

¹⁵Bratcher, op. cit., p. 124.

with which to contend.¹⁶ When there is role confusion by the pastor the laity is often perplexed as well and tend to resort to withdrawal or open conflict. They may become disillusioned with the pastor's effectiveness and even leave the church altogether.¹⁷

Role ambiguity in ministry has three major contributors: the clergy, the laity, and the denominational leadership. The problem of the pastor is to maintain a good and faithful balance between the pastoral role and living a healthy, happy personal life. This is apparently not easy since clergy have a job that is noted for role conflict and confusion. The pastor must prioritize tasks many times throughout the day, choosing the particular role which should be taken at any given time. Of course, job-related priorities must come first and each task calls for a different pastoral role. The pastor must at times choose between parish work and the "other life" of being a parent, a spouse, or taking time for one's self. Role conflict in ministry extends far beyond what might be considered "working hours." Many pastors have problems explaining to their families, and quite often to themselves, why they are not at home many nights, and why they feel they cannot take time away for family trips.¹⁸

The biggest problem the pastor has to face may very well be the reluctance to accept the limitations of being a person. Pastors would like to be all things to all people, thus crowding physical, emotional, and spiritual limits. The pastor often gets little help from the laity in this matter. In fact, the

¹⁶Gerald J. Jud, Edgar W. Mills, Jr., and Genevieve W. Burch, Ex-Pastors (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970), p. 119.

¹⁷Bratcher, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

¹⁸Speed B. Leas, Time Management (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), pp. 57-58.

expectations of the laity may push the minister to the brink of being "super-human." Bratcher explains:

Many laypersons expect ministers to be ten feet tall and able to walk on water. More often than not this expectation is also accepted by the minister, who then finds himself in a vicious cycle--not¹⁹ being able to live up to the expectation, yet constantly trying to.

Archibald D. Hart feels that "most ministers believe that the work they are engaged in is the most important in all the world."²⁰ While this enthusiasm is to be commended, it can be harmful to the minister and to one's ministry. According to Hart, ministers may ascribe this importance to their profession in an attempt to compensate for the several sacrifices one feels must be made to be in ministry. These sacrifices may include a low salary for the amount of educational preparation and the loss of personal and family time.²¹ Whatever the reasoning, it is apparently easy for the minister to take on the role of being superhuman.

Denominational leaders also contribute to role ambiguity for the pastor by presenting a different view of the nature of the church than the pastor holds.²² This problem may not surface as much as does the role expectations of the laity, but it still produces anxiety. Denominational leaders usually view the church as world oriented and preoccupied with societal changes. Jurisdictional and conference leaders are closer to the local church and are more conscious of institutional success, the need for more members, and the need for finances.

¹⁹Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 22.

²⁰Archibald D. Hart, Coping With Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 19.

²¹Ibid, p. 20.

²²There seems to be a gap between the minister's understanding of the nature and work of the church and that articulated by denominational leaders and theological seminaries.

While the pastor probably agrees in principle with the denominational leaders, priorities lie in the success of the local church. Denominational leaders, on the other hand, can and do have influence on the minister's future in the denomination.²³

Time Conflicts

When one considers the pressures placed on the minister from within, the laity, denominational leadership, there is little wonder that another stress factor for the contemporary minister is the conflict with time. The expeditious use of time is an integral part of everything that the minister does. William E. Hulme agrees, "The open-endedness of the vocation--with its responsibilities of priest, prophet, administrator and community catalyzer--leads inevitably to time pressures."²⁴

The freedom to set their own time schedules may be a leading stressor for ministers. The tasks of ministers seem to be never-ending. They have the freedom to structure their own time and are not supervised as to its use. Most ministers do not have a written job description; rather they are guided in their tasks by unwritten expectations with few functions measured at the end of the day. Pastors have trouble knowing if anything has really been accomplished. Few people fully understand the responsibilities of pastors and wonder what they do after they step down from the pulpit.²⁵

Over-scheduled ministers may be compulsively busy. They may find within themselves the need to be strapped for time. Over-scheduling of time

²³Bratcher, op. cit., p. 129.

²⁴William E. Hulme, "Coming to Terms With Clergy Burnout," The Christian Ministry, January, 1984.

²⁵Leas, Time Management, pp. 56-57.

may be one way ministers have of proving to others the value and importance of acts of ministry.²⁶ Warlick agrees with this. He suggests that ministers tend to be "overly-consumed with their own work and their own sense of importance."²⁷ This can be attributed to the need of purposeful activity for one's self-esteem. If one remains busy one feels less vulnerable to those who do not understand the pastor's job.²⁸

Gary L. Harbaugh suggests that there are several common characteristics that make up a "pastoral personality." Many of these characteristics tend to intensify the time issue. Most ministers tend to be extroverted, sociable and people oriented. They seek out supportive interpersonal relationships and are able to assume a leadership role in groups. They enjoy having their work recognized and valued by others. Ministers tend to be idealistic, moral, work-oriented, and responsible. They may be ambivalent about authority; they may accept it and yet be resentful of it. They are usually quite dependent on what other persons think, feel, and want. Herein lies a danger of dependence-independence conflict. Pastors also have a tendency to like things planned and orderly. They tend to be perfectionists and have difficulty accepting their own humanity.²⁹ In summary, then, the "pastoral personality" signifies persons who like to build interpersonal relationships and yet be in control. They push themselves to perfection in an open-ended profession and may see time as an enemy rather than as a friend.

²⁶William E. Hulme, Your Pastor's Problems (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966), p. 132.

²⁷Warlick, How To Be a Pastor, p. 34.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Harbaugh, Pastor As Person, p. 70; Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 28.

"The struggle for time is further intensified by the pastor's idolatrous tendencies," suggests Hulme.³⁰ Since pastors are pressed by several matters, they are subject to lose sight of more important things. It is very easy for them to become lost in the work of the church. As time runs out for the minister, anxiety begins to build. Hulme cautions:

The anxious person is preoccupied with the quantitative aspect of time because he feels the pressure to prove himself. His self-worth--his success--depends upon his accomplishment. Since time is the medium within which his accomplishment must take place, he may lose the appreciation for the qualitative dimension of time when under pressure to "get things done." With his self-worth at stake, he takes himself too seriously and develops a "heavy touch" in his work."³¹

The "busyness" of the pastor may be caused by disorganization. While it may be the minister's personality to be organized, anxiety brought about by the pressure of time can cause the minister to become disorganized and undisciplined. Hulme argues that "much of the pressure of the ministry is due more to the lack of discipline in concentration than too much work."³² He goes further to suggest that one's good intentions need a plan of procedure. The assumption is that one allows many things to build up and then worries about all of them rather than concentrating on one of them. When one's concentration is divided, one's work is usually poor. A cyclical effect begins. Ministers worry about all that must be done in an allotted time. However, this worrying decreases the minister's concentration, thus time cannot be used effectively.³³

Busyness can also be the pastor's source of security. If the pastor is always in a rush with more things than can possibly be done, the feeling of

³⁰ Hulme, op. cit., p. 137.

³¹ Ibid., p. 139.

³² Ibid., p. 141.

³³ Ibid., p. 142.

importance is elevated. Therein lies the feeling of security. Busyness also becomes a good defense against doing those things one knows should be done if there was enough time. Too, a busy day provides the pastor a structured schedule in an otherwise unstructured environment. Still another bit of security for the pastor is that busyness can make one's decisions. When faced with a decision in ministry, the pastor simply states that there is no available time. When there is no time, a decision is not actually made. This tends to release the pastor of the responsibility and also the guilt involved.³⁴

The pastor could delegate some responsibilities, of course, and therefore be relieved of some time pressures. This would, in fact, involve more lay persons in the ministry of the church. However, when a pastor delegates responsibility, control of the outcome is relinquished. For an insecure person, this could present a problem. Also, if others are given responsibility and thereby prove their abilities to perform, the importance of the pastor seems to be reduced.

Many ministers, because of the pressure of time, tend to push important, personal matters aside so they can better perform job-related functions that they have determined to be "important." However, the personal matters that are pushed aside are usually matters that, if given ample time, could actually strengthen the pastor's total ministry. These include time for: spiritual development, regular physical exercise, hobbies, pursuits other than ministry, and social developments.³⁵

³⁴Hulme, op. cit., p. 148.

³⁵Willam E. Hulme, "Coming To Terms With Clergy Burnout," loc. cit.

Ambition and Success

There can be no denying that our contemporary society is highly success oriented and influences both pastor and laity significantly. Many ministers struggle with the concepts of ambition and success. These concepts must be properly considered in the Christian ministry since they have become major factors in the fulfillment of ministry. For example, some pastors leave the ministry because they do not feel successful. Churches have also asked for the dismissal of their pastor after determining that the pastor was not successful.³⁶

Warlick notes that the problem of ambition and success places the minister in a trap. The minister is expected to be strong and creative on the one hand, and self-less with no desire to personal acclaim on the other. Warlick argues, "In a world where tangible results and career accomplishments are valued more and more, ministers are haunted by the apparently decreasing social value of their work and the laity's demand that they seek no personal acclaim."³⁷ This causes the minister to wrestle with individual priorities and question how much ambition one should personally have in one's career.³⁸

Donald P. Smith notes that persons who seem to be successful ministers spend a good deal of time planning and setting priorities in ministry. Some ministers, however, reject any thought of career ambition. They reason that to set goals for their careers would imply that they were being ambitious and not relying on the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Smith refers to a study conducted

³⁶ Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 140.

³⁷ Warlick, How To Be A Pastor, p. 43

³⁸ Ibid.

by the Midwest Career Center reporting that fifty-four percent of the center's clients have no sense of goal-directedness.³⁹

Ambition is a necessary goal for ministers, according to George E. Sweazy. Since a minister is a self-employed person, the minister needs personal goals to maintain self-discipline. Ambition helps the minister to maintain good mental health in one's career. Career goals can provide the tangible evidence of the minister's progress in a profession where results are intangible. The minister can find encouragement by reaching specific goals.⁴⁰ Bratcher also witnesses the negative overtones of ambition.⁴¹

Frederick C. Van Tatenhove, in his book Ambition: Friend or Enemy?, deals with the problem of ambition from a Christian perspective. He reasons that we need to take a new look at our understanding of ambition:

Ambition itself. . .is neither good nor bad, but it can become one or the other. . .Ambition does not stand alone, nor should it be an end in itself. . .If ambition stands alone, it grows cold like a red hot ember removed from a fire. . .You connect it with some tangible expression. You can only observe ambition when it is expressed in actions, competitions, or projects. . .The yardstick for measuring the rightness or wrongness of ambition is the rightness or wrongness of the achievement to which it is directed or the rightness or wrongness of the means used to accomplish that achievement. Not the fuel but how it is used is the problem.⁴²

Bratcher advocates Christian ambition and notes that "failure to achieve success in ministry is generally defined as a situation in which both

³⁹Donald P. Smith, Clergy in the Cross Fire (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), p. 142.

⁴⁰George E. Sweazy, "The Place of Ambition in Ministry," The Princeton Seminary Bulletin, February, 1967, pp. 36-39.

⁴¹Bratcher, op. cit., p. 139.

⁴²Fredrick C. Van Tatenhove, Ambition: Friend or Enemy? (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 22-23.

clergy and laity have used inadequate models to measure success.⁴³ According to Bratcher, Christ had certain goals for his ministry and then challenged those who would follow after him to do likewise. "If these desired ends are to be achieved there must be ambition."⁴⁴ Ambition should be at the very heart of the Christian life. However, Bratcher cautions that ambition can become a "double-edged sword" if it is misused. Because of it, persons have been led to lie, steal, and use other people. He notes that "one of the most common destructive expressions of ambition among clergy is their manipulation of people to achieve ego-gratification."⁴⁵

The Urge to Be Super-Human

As mentioned earlier, the biggest problem the pastor has to face is the reluctance to accept one's own humanity. The members of a local congregation are often eager to push the pastor to the level of being super-human or attempting to go beyond one's human limitations. Sometimes before the pastor even realizes it, he or she has not only accepted this role but is pushing beyond human limitations. Bratcher warns about the persistence of the laity, "If you are talking about God, have been called to a church-related vocation, and have been ordained, you are considered super-human."⁴⁶ The problem does not end here. "When the laity place the clergy on a pedestal, the clergy give a helping hand, enjoy the intoxication of the higher elevation, and strive to stay on the pedestal. The cycle repeats itself."⁴⁷ The tragedy, in paradox, is that while the Bible teaches that pride and the personal desire to be like God are sinful and

⁴³Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 138.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 139. ⁴⁵Ibid., p. 141.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁷Ibid.

contribute to the fall of humankind, it is at this point that the minister most often falls prey to a desire to become what one cannot become.⁴⁸

It is usually out of a sincere desire to help persons and to alleviate the needs of individuals that the minister succumbs to the temptation to be super-human. Acting out of love and compassion, the minister strives to do more than is humanly possible. Bratcher suggests that ministers come to believe that God has called them to multiply the loaves and the fish and thereby feed the five thousand. He cautions, "Too often we forget that we are to be faithful and offer our five loaves and two fish and let God do the feeding."⁴⁹

G. Lloyd Rediger suggests that it may be the ministers' pretension that causes them to sin and take on a "Messiah Complex." Ministers pretend that they do not have the same limits of energy, insight, and time as do other human beings. They pretend that they can actually take over other persons' lives and responsibilities and live it for them. They pretend that their own lives, marriages, families, and financial affairs are not subject to the same limits as others. Also, they pretend that they can continue without proper rest, exercise, nutrition, and spiritual nurture. Due to their noble calling, they pretend that they are free of human limits.⁵⁰

The urge to be super-human leads to attitudes that can be destructive to the minister. One attitude is the feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem. When one accepts the role of super-human, one is expected to perform super-human feats. Since this is not always possible, the pastor may become

⁴⁸Warlick, How To Be a Minister, p. 57; Bratcher, op. cit., p. 25.

⁴⁹Bratcher, op. cit., p. 26.

⁵⁰G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), p. 29.

angry with oneself for this failure. If one tries again and fails one begins to see one's self as even more of a failure. Poor emotional health is the result.⁵¹

The pattern of self-punishment is further complicated if the minister tends to be a perfectionist. When one fails to live up to one's expectations of perfection one begins to lose feelings of self-worth. Since one cannot stretch beyond one's human limitations, failure and self-punishment may result. The end result may be self-hatred which is often masked by a superior or infallible attitude.⁵²

Unresolved anger is another attitude brought about by the urge to be super-human. Anger has traditionally been an unacceptable emotion in the realm of Christianity. Little distinction is made between anger as an emotion and the destructive action based on anger. Therefore, anger is suppressed. The pastor may be placed in the predicament of dealing with anger that one should not have while in a profession that may produce a great deal of anger. Anger is seldom resolved or even allowed to surface. However, the anger may eventually surface in depression, bitter or attacking sermons, career conflict, family conflict, or several other avenues.⁵³

Still another result of one's urge to be super-human is loneliness. The minister has a fear of intimacy which quite naturally brings about loneliness. Ministers are afraid that someone will discover that they are not super-human if they allow persons to get too close to them. Ministers do, however, strive for the praise they receive from the laity. To continue this praise, and yet protect

⁵¹ Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, pp. 26-28.

⁵² Ibid., p. 28.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 29-30.

their identity, parishioners may be held at arms length. When this happens relationships are maintained on a superficial basis.⁵⁴

As a means of coping with loneliness, some ministers may put on a professional mask. They tend to be void of emotions that generate warmth, love, compassion, sympathy, and empathy. They, therefore, may mask these emotions as they carry out their pastoral duties. Bratcher suggests that, "The minister will say the right words, smile at the right time, and appear to be sad in times of sorrow, but all without genuine feelings."⁵⁵ The minister, then, in an attempt to be super-human may have been robbed of that which was wanted most: genuine interpersonal relationships.

Family Related Problems

Not only does the minister and the laity expect the pastor to be super-human, they may expect the pastor's family to be a super family as well. Edward B. Bratcher sums up the plight of the parsonage family in this way:

. . .there still seems to be the belief that clergy marriages are less vulnerable to problems. This is not true. Ministry is a strain even on a strong marriage. Although some of the problems and pressures present in the minister's family are unique, many of them are shared with all families. Unfortunately, the clergy is often less willing to admit problems because such an admission could jeopardize their job. For this reason, many sores have festered within minister's families, causing great pain and leaving many scars.⁵⁶

The church still insists that the parsonage family be a "model" family. Some would go as far as to expect the parsonage family to be a "perfect" family.⁵⁶ Such expectations place a strain on both the pastor and the pastor's family. The minister, in an attempt to "practice what he preaches," may consciously or unconsciously put more pressure on the family to set an example for the congregation. This pressure is more subtle and may be even more

⁵⁴Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, pp. 30-31.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 84.

damaging than the pressure of the congregation. The minister may be forcing the family to help save face or not appear to be a hypocrite. While adding pressure to the family, the minister honestly believes that the involvement of the family in what is being done is of great value to them.⁵⁸ Bratcher cautions, "The pressure from the demands. . .can lead to anger within the spouse and children. Anger, in turn, blocks communication and promotes strained relationships."⁵⁹ Archibald D. Hart elaborates on the plight of the parsonage family, "The minister's family is an important professional criterion. . .There is hardly anything the minister does that doesn't have an impact on the family and vice versa."⁶⁰

It is difficult for the members of the pastor's family to have their own identity. They are usually regarded as "the preacher's family." The pastor's wife may be called "the preacher's wife," or even "Mrs. Preacher." The children are often called "the preacher's kid," or "P. K." for short. Personal names may seldom be used and, if so, the names used may very well match the names of the members of the previous parsonage family.

The minister's wife has a "rigid role" expectation cast on her the moment she marries a minister or at the time her husband decides to enter the ministry. The pastor often expects her to be the associate pastor of the church or at least the church secretary-receptionist. Of course she is expected to participate in all of the church activities. The congregation expects her to do such tasks as play the piano for worship, be a leader in the church-related

⁵⁷ Warlick, How To Be a Minister, p. 82.

⁵⁸ Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 88.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Hart, Coping With Depression, p. 133.

women's group, make pastoral visits with the pastor, always know about forthcoming church events, and always know where the pastor may be found. All of these matters may be further compounded if the wife chooses to pursue a professional career of her own and is limited in the amount of time she can give to the church and to her family.⁶¹

If the pastor is a female who also happens to have a family, the pressures are modified. Her husband will more than likely have his own career and have little time to give to the church. He is not expected to do many of the same things that a minister's "wife" traditionally is expected to do. The minister, on the other hand, is expected not only to do her ministerial tasks but also to be a mother and a housewife. This is true because our culture places more of the family nurturing responsibilities on the female.⁶²

The children of the pastor face a similar and often more stressful situation. Since they do not have the maturity nor the coping mechanisms to face the pressures of role expectations, the stress is usually greater. The "P. K." is expected to be the role model for all the other youth in the community and, therefore, set a good example. The child is to be a strong force in the church's youth program. If, in fact, one is caught pulling a normal childish prank, one is sure to be scolded because one is "the preacher's kid."⁶³

Since life in the parsonage can be compared to "a life in a fish bowl,"⁶⁴ there is little hope for privacy. The actions of each family member are scrutinized by the congregation and the community. If a family problem occurs,

⁶¹Warlick, op. cit., pp. 109-111; Bratcher, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

⁶²Warlick, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

⁶³Bratcher, op. cit., p. 91.

⁶⁴Warlick, op. cit., p. 105.

the entire community soon finds out, especially if the community is small. The parsonage family, then, has a tendency to conceal or even ignore personal problems. The pastor and the family usually have very few persons with whom they feel they can risk since the image of the pastor's family is at stake. The problem may be kept within the family in order to protect the "super" identity of the family. Loneliness is often the result.⁶⁵

The projection of role expectations and the unwillingness of the family to risk can be a stressor for the parsonage family. If the minister's spouse and children are not allowed to search for and maintain their own identities, stress often results. In most instances, when members of the pastor's family are in a stressful situation, so is the pastor.

Still another identifiable stressor for the parsonage family is the parsonage itself. While most professional persons choose a job and then decide where they will live, the United Methodist pastor is usually given no choice. One must live in the community where the church parsonage is located. The parsonage community may not always be the best location for the particular parsonage family. If the church polity calls for an appointive system for ministerial placement, more thought is often given to matching the pastor with the church than matching the family with the community.⁶⁶ Warlick points out that while many professionals live in a fish bowl, "few outside of ministry live in an immovable fish bowl."⁶⁷

The house itself can be a contributor to stress for the pastor's family. The family does not own the house, and, therefore, must treat it carefully.

⁶⁵Bratcher, op. cit., pp. 98-100.

⁶⁶Warlick, op., cit., pp. 109-111.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 110.

When building improvements are needed, there are often long delays while a church committee, or groups of committees, decides which action is best or least expensive. Some members of the congregation cannot understand why the repairs are needed to begin with and reason that the pastor's family must be destructive.⁶⁸

The pastor may also be guilty of neglecting the family. If the pastor is under pressure from the congregation, there may be little time to be a spouse and a parent. Bratcher notes that "many ministers can be faulted with having the immature belief that if they are doing God's work, God will take care of their wives and families."⁶⁹ Even at home the pastoral role may conflict with the family role. The pastor may be exhausted because of strenuous pastoral duties. One may be so "out of touch" with one's family that they do not include the pastor in their activities when time is available. Or, when the family does plan a special activity, the telephone is likely to ring and summons the pastor back to work.⁷⁰

The fact should not be overlooked that life in a fish bowl can lead to wholeness for the parsonage family. Warlick contends that clergy marriages are often better than non-clergy marriages because the couple is forced to learn how to communicate. Effective communication can be the dominant bond in any marriage. "Some of the very societal expectations forced on clergy actually contribute to their improved marriages."⁷¹ In their book entitled What's Happening to Clergy Marriages?, David and Vera Mace present research to

⁶⁸Warlick, loc. cit.

⁶⁹Bratcher, op. cit., p. 95.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 94-95.

⁷¹Warlick, op. cit., p. 106.

support this idea.⁷² Another study that was completed by the United Methodist Board of Ordained Ministry concluded that "because of the public nature of the clergy vocation, and because of the varied expectations of congregations toward the minister and partner, clergy spouses . . . are more quickly and intensely forced to deal with the issues of personal identity."⁷³

The Need of Support Groups

The Christian ministry can be a very lonely profession. A serious obstacle to fulfillment in ministry is the inability of the minister to find a support system in time of trouble. On the one hand clergypersons sometimes fail to see the need for help, while on the other hand the local congregation and the denomination both may fail to give the pastor adequate support when it is needed.⁷⁴

As mentioned above, the minister, in an attempt to hide the inability to be super-human, usually keeps persons at arm's length. Problems are kept within the parsonage to further hide true identity. This idea is reflected in the research of Mills and Koval. Two-thirds of the respondents to their study reported they took self-steps to resolve stress while only one-third reported seeking out colleagues, superiors, lay persons, and family for help. Only one-seventh reported seeking help from other ministers or denominational leaders.⁷⁵

⁷²David and Vera Mace, What's Happening to Clergy Marriages? (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), p. 36.

⁷³Miriam Herin, ed., The Interface of Marriage and Ministry (Lake Junaluska, North Carolina: Intentional Growth Center, The Lake Junaluska Assembly, 1981), p. 19.

⁷⁴Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 108.

⁷⁵Mills and Koval, Stress in Ministry, p. 55.

Ministers have a high tendency to turn to their spouses for support in time of stress. The study by Mills and Koval indicated that one-third of those responding found help from their spouse during periods of stress.⁷⁶ This suggests either of three factors: ministers prefer to keep their problems confined to the family; they simply do not feel comfortable with other support groups; or they do not have other support groups available to them.

Warlick notes that many ministers tend to confide in their spouses about vocational and personal difficulties even though the spouse can usually provide only limited sources of help. This practice of confiding in the spouse can place tremendous pressure on the clergy marriage.⁷⁷ Hart adds that such therapeutic help can and does take place in a marriage relationship. "However, he responds, "rarely have I found it possible for a spouse to serve as the exclusive therapist to a depressed partner, even when the spouse is a trained counselor."⁷⁸

Ministers often feel isolated from the support of their peers. Peers are commonly viewed as competitors rather than supporters.⁷⁹ Bratcher, however, suggests that "many ministers have found their vocational salvation in peer groups."⁸⁰ He advocates the organization of peer groups and professional growth groups. Roy W. Ragsdale laments, "Clergy persons without at least one good

⁷⁶Mills and Koval, op. cit., p. 28.

⁷⁷Warlick, How To Be a Minister, p. 86.

⁷⁸Hart, Coping With Depression, p. 131.

⁷⁹Warlick, op. cit., p. 86.

⁸⁰Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, p. 111.

friend in ministry with whom they can be utterly honest about their deepest feelings walk a lonely road."⁸¹

Bratcher also advocates the need for congregational support for the pastor. "In many ways this is one of the most important and also the least utilized facets of the minister's support system."⁸² This support system is utilized less frequently since the minister is reluctant to get too close to the congregation. Bratcher reasons that the congregation is the logical place to begin problem solving because it is the largest source of stress for ministers.⁸³ Ragsdale notes that pastors may be surprised when they open themselves to their congregation. "Ministers who have trusted their congregations and have been willing to risk their own pains and struggles before them, have been amazed at the capacity for compassion which emerges."⁸⁴

Still another avenue for ministerial support in stressful situations is the denominational church system. The authors of Ex-Pastors discovered that many persons who have left the pastoral ministry felt they had been betrayed by the denominational system when they were faced with problems.⁸⁵ Bratcher suggests that some denominational leaders may be more concerned with the preservation of institution and less concerned with individuals in that institution.⁸⁶ Ragsdale, on the other hand, suggests that many denominational leaders, while involved with the daily institutional demands, have a "pastor's heart" and are willing to listen.⁸⁷

⁸¹Roy W. Ragsdale, The Mid-Life Crises of A Minister (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1978), p. 24.

⁸²Bratcher, op. cit., p. 114.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 114-116.; See also Mills and Koval, op. cit., p. 54.

⁸⁴Ragsdale, op. cit., p. 26. ⁸⁵Jud, Mills and Burch, Ex-Pastors, p. 127.

⁸⁶Bratcher, op. cit., p. 120. ⁸⁷Ragsdale, op. cit., p. 22.

Whatever the reasons may be, it is obvious that many ministers may have no place to go when they hurt. Therefore, when they are faced with problems and have no adequate support systems available, anger, hurt and loneliness become the resulting emotions.

Relying on a Self-Sufficient Spirituality

Henri J. M. Nouwen notes that "one of the main reasons for the many frustrations, pains, and disappointments in the life of numerous Christian ministers is rooted in the still-growing separation between professionals and spirituality."⁸⁸ Many ministers may be facing a spiritual crisis. After being thrown into the hectic pace of "doing ministry," ministers are tempted to draw from the spiritual reserves they have gained in earlier years and make little effort at being committed to prayer and Bible study. Therefore, "a major cause of spiritual immaturity is the neglect of spiritual disciplines."⁸⁹ Another cause of the problem is the lack of training received by ministers. Ministers have not received the detailed spiritual training in their educational careers as many might expect.⁹⁰

Yet another cause of spiritual immaturity is the failure of the clergy to admit their problems. Again, because of the desire to protect themselves and therefore be forced to acknowledge their humanity, clergy seek to solve their spiritual crises themselves. One denomination reported that at least fifty percent of their ministers have had a serious faith crisis. However, eighty-three percent of this group indicated they solved the problem themselves. It seems

⁸⁸ Henri J. M. Nouwen, Creative Ministry (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1971), p. xix.

⁸⁹ Bratcher, op. cit., p. 49.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

that the minister becomes engulfed by the societal understanding of justification by works and fails to utilize the Church's emphasis of justification by grace.⁹¹

Nouwen observes that "ministry is not an eight-to-five job but primarily a way of life, which is for others to see and understand so that liberation can become a possibility."⁹² There is always the danger that ministers will allow themselves to become so involved in "doing ministry" that they neglect their own spiritual life. They may reason that God will take care of them spiritually if they will only expend themselves leading others to Christ. However, ministers are to lead others to a mature faith in Christ, they, too, must have a mature faith in Christ.

Ages and Stages

The final cause of stress in ministry to be discussed has to do with the age of the minister and the minister's particular life-stage. Research in recent years has noted the stress-proneness of certain ages and life-stages of ministers. According to Cecil R. Paul, a minister's career can be divided into three fairly distinct stages: young years in ministry, ministry in mid-life, and senior years in ministry.⁹³

Persons in their twenties and thirties find themselves in the first stage of their ministry. This is a period of vision, zeal and high energy. However, it is also a period of high stress for the minister. This stress usually comes from the discrepancy the young minister discovers between the idealized image of ministry and the actual realities of ministry. One may be shocked to find that

⁹¹Bratcher, op. cit., pp. 51-51.

⁹²Nouwen, op. cit., p. xxiii.

⁹³Cecil R. Paul, Passages of a Pastor (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981).

the "community of faith" often shows little concern over ministry to others. Through these discoveries ministers are forced to take a look at themselves as never before.⁹⁴ Gaylord Noyce makes a similar observation. He terms this stage "the learning stage" and warns the young minister, "You soon learn that church has levels of commitment not as intense as your own."⁹⁵ Mills and Koval found that futility is highest among young ministers and decrease with age and experience.⁹⁶

Stress may also develop when the young minister notices the relationship between the denomination and/or local church and secular institutions and ethics. The minister may go so far as to withdraw from society and encourage one's congregation to do likewise. The stress may be magnified when the congregation is apathetic to this suggestion. Part of the struggle may very well be that one does not have close contact with a person one considers a mentor.⁹⁷

Paul notes significant changes in the minister during the latter part of this period. There is a notice of maturity in the minister. One becomes more flexible and more open to change. There may be a period of testing one's faith which can be stressful. At this point one may feel a strong need to secure more academic training and return to school to pursue another degree.⁹⁸ Noyce suggests that the "Age Thirty Transition" is a time of reevaluation. The mid and late thirties will probably be a period of vigorous work in an attempt for career

⁹⁴Paul, op. cit., pp. 19-22.

⁹⁵Gaylord Noyce, "The Seasons of a Cleric's Life," The Christian Ministry, February 2-9, 1983, p. 90.

⁹⁶Mills and Koval, Stress in Ministry, p. 57.

⁹⁷Paul, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 35-45.

advancement. The minister is usually very creative and energetic in one's profession at this stage. One will probably move toward being one's own person and put aside earlier mentor relationships.⁹⁹

The second stage of ministry will usually materialize when the minister reaches the forties and fifties. During this period one begins to take a long, critical look at one's chosen profession and how one has progressed to date. One begins to note the physical changes in one's own body and realizes that one is growing older. Many of the stress factors mentioned above begin to make themselves known in one's life.¹⁰⁰

This second stage usually becomes a time of decision for the minister. The pastor may very well have reached a significant goal in ministry only to find that it was not all that one had expected it to be. By now one is probably regretting having put aside matters of great concern so that one could involve one's self totally in obtaining such goals. New ambitions in ministry are more closely tied with reality.¹⁰¹ One begins to reevaluate the vision of earlier years. In all of this one may begin to make drastic changes in life. One could very well find a new freedom in ministry and become a new person. On the other hand, one may, after reevaluating one's ministerial progress and most especially one's current salary, decide to leave the ministry altogether. Still another decision one can make is to make no decision at all. When this happens stagnation in ministry usually results.¹⁰²

The third stage in the clergy profession occurs when the minister reaches the sixties and is preparing for retirement. Noyce calls this a new

⁹⁹Noyce, op. cit., p. 91.

¹⁰⁰Paul, op. cit., pp. 46-60.

¹⁰¹Noyce, op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁰²Paul, op. cit., pp. 61-75.

period of stability. The minister has a renewed spiritual depth and has learned to allow others to be where they are without trying to change them.¹⁰³ However, Paul suggests that even though this may be a more relaxed period, it can also be a stressful period for the minister since it is a period of transition. The minister is at the stage where one must begin to terminate ministry. One may have been dead-ended for the last five to ten years and may have had very little motivation. If the pastor has over extended physically for several years to fulfill the ministerial role, there may be a noticeable physical and emotional decline. One may find it impossible to be as self-sufficient as one has been in the past.¹⁰⁴

Not only is this a period of transition, but it is a period of loss. It seems that the minister in this third stage is losing all that one has been accustomed to in the past. Soon the minister will lose the profession and along with that will go the role identity to which one has been molded. After retirement the minister must find other social groups since local congregations have been the social groups in times past. The retired minister will probably move to another community to which one must become accustomed. Income will be greatly reduced. If the minister does not find adequate replacements for these losses, the later years of life may be filled with a high level of stress.¹⁰⁵

The Effects of Stress

The effects that stress has on the contemporary minister is varied. Since the minister is human, one will suffer the same physical and psychological

¹⁰³Noyce, op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁰⁴Paul, op. cit., pp. 77-80.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 77-87.

effects discussed in Chapter Two. Also, because of the nature of the profession, one is subject to the effects of stress noticed in the helping professions.

Implied Effects

Several effects of ministerial stress have been implied in the above discussion of the causes of ministerial stress. When the minister struggles with role conflicts or time conflicts, one cannot give one's very best to the ministry to which one has been called. If one's spouse and children are unhappy with the "fish bowl" life, the pastor, too, is affected significantly. The minister is not happy when they are not happy. When the pastor struggles with interpersonal conflicts with ambition and success, one loses a measuring instrument for ministry. Low self-esteem and anger accompany the pastor's realization that one has human limitations and cannot be as super-human as the congregation desires.

If the pastor is void of support groups to help deal with doubts, fears, conflicts, and anxious moments, one may become a very lonely person. The effects of the minister's age and particular life-stage are still being considered, but it has been noted that age, maturity, and particular stages of ministry have a variety of effects on the pastor. It may be said, then, that several effects of ministerial stress are directly related to the causes of the stress.

Loneliness

Ministers lose self-confidence as they move toward their stress threshold; that point at which one can no longer function effectively because of the stress. Role conflict and role confusion are two major contributors to this malady. Ministers may have responded to God's call to ministry with a completely different understanding of a minister's role, thus they feel trapped in stresses and ambiguities that they are unprepared to manage.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Warlick, How To Be a Minister, pp. 33-34.

Warlick reminds us that ministry is a "self-initiating profession." The profession demands that clergy persons exercise "self-understanding" and "self-discipline" with respect to their time. They are given a certain amount of freedom in structuring their time.¹⁰⁷ The tasks of the pastor seem to be never-ending and many of them are unmeasurable at the end of the day. This freedom of time, plus an often unending and unmeasurable task, pushes the pastor toward the stress threshold.¹⁰⁸

Ministers are sincere about fulfilling their calling to the best of their abilities. Sometimes, in fact, they try too hard. At the encouragement of the congregation, and because of the desire to serve, pastors may take on a "Messiah role." Either consciously or unconsciously, many pastors try to be all things to all people. They pretend that they can push themselves to the limits physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The pastors reason that God will take care of them even if they do expend themselves because theirs are the most noble callings on earth.¹⁰⁹

Loneliness occurs in ministry when one finally discovers that one cannot exceed one's human limitations. The same restrictions of time, physical endurance, emotional health, and spiritual well-being apply to the pastor that apply to all other human beings. The minister does not take this realization lightly. One begins to doubt one's self, not one's humanity, nor one's role expectations. One reasons that there could be something wrong with one's self and becomes afraid that the congregation will discover these inadequacies. The minister, therefore, begins to cope with the situation by avoiding interpersonal

¹⁰⁷ Warlick, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁸ Leas, Time Management, pp. 56-57.

¹⁰⁹ Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout, p. 29.

relationships and becomes withdrawn. Loneliness is the result of these actions.¹¹⁰

Incompetent Ministry

Poor interpersonal relationships lead to loneliness in ministry. They also contribute to an incompetent ministry. As with other professions, Christian ministry demands a strong sense of self-worth as does the Christian ministry. However, few professions have the elusive potential to rob the professional of that same self-worth. When persons are struggling with self-esteem, they cannot establish and maintain genuine interpersonal relationships. Incompetency in ministry is the cyclical effect.

Edward S. Golden writes concerning incompetency in ministry. There are persons in ministry who have never been successful. This failure has resulted in "poor morale, disillusioned churches, disharmony within families of those (clergy persons), and the utter waste of a vast potential of human resources."¹¹¹ Several factors contribute to incompetency in ministry. All of the factors are not stress related, yet incompetency can certainly become a stressor for a minister.

The area of ministry in which one chooses to serve may not match the talents of that person. If one believes that God has called one to be a pastor and yet does not have the gifts to fulfill this calling, the result can be tragic. The person becomes trapped by one's own theological interpretation of God's call. One cannot leave the pastoral ministry since this would be understood as a

¹¹⁰Bratcher, Walk-On-Water Syndrome, pp. 30-31.

¹¹¹Edward S. Golden, "Management and Support of Church Personnel," Ministry Studies, May, 1969, p. 26.

desertion of a divine calling. On the other hand, one does not have the gifts to succeed in ministry. The end results are incompetency.¹¹²

Incompetency may result if there is an inequity in the matching of pastor, community, and church. When the pastor is linked with a church that expects or needs its pastor to have certain gifts and areas of expertise that one does not have, conflicts may result. The same may be said if the needs of the pastor and the pastor's family are not met by the community in which they live. The frustrations, anger, and conflicts that result can easily render the pastor incompetent.¹¹³

Conflicts are a part of life and often a part of the Christian ministry. However, all conflict is not negative. When conflict in the church becomes destructive it serves only to retard the ministry of the church. Bratcher suggests that incompetency on the part of the minister can lead to conflict. This happens "because ministers have a difficult time acknowledging their inadequacies."¹¹⁴ Congregations also have difficulty in accepting the pastor's limitations. "They expect them to be competent in all areas, and when one is not, there is a sense of disappointment that can lead to conflict."¹¹⁵ According to Bratcher, "The problem is compounded when pastors view their areas of incompetency as having no consequence on their ministry."¹¹⁶

Frequent moves are yet another contributor to pastoral incompetency. Some systems of pastoral placement have made it rather easy for the pastor to move from one church to another. Short pastorates have become the pastor's mode of operation when faced with conflict or the recognition of one's

¹¹²Bratcher, op. cit., p. 162.

¹¹³Warlick, How To Be a Minister, pp. 109-110.; Hart, Coping With Depression, p. 133.

¹¹⁴Bratcher, op. cit., p. 171.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

incompetency. The pastor simply chooses to move to another church rather than to develop competency in ministry or to face the conflicts that have developed in the church. At times the local church must take some responsibility for the frequent moving of the pastor because of its tendency to want the "perfect" pastor. Bratcher argues that because moving has become so easy for pastors, they have been given the freedom to "make the same mistakes over and over again," and that "bad habits developed in the first pastorate are often repeated in the second, third, and fourth."¹¹⁷

Bitterness may also lend itself to incompetency. There are several factors that can contribute to bitterness in a minister. When one fails to become the super-human that one tries to become, one may become bitter. Anger is directed toward the congregation because of their role expectations. Anger may also be cast at one's self for taking on such an impossible role expectation or because one cannot reach that expectation. Still another reason for bitterness is church politics. Laile E. Bartlett testifies to the existence of church politics in The Vanishing Parson. She suggests that there are two types of pastors: "those who enjoy people, process, and politics," and those who are "more task-, or product-oriented, or with single-tracked minds and the impatient urge to follow a particular channel."¹¹⁸

If church polity provides for an appointive system for pastoral placement, the minister may become bitter if one decides one did not get the church for which one was deserving or if a competitor received an appointment for which one was not deserving. Also, one may be angry at the "system" that

¹¹⁷ Bratcher, op. cit., p. 164.

¹¹⁸ Laile E. Bartlett, The Vanishing Parson, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 78.

has not allowed one to progress at a fast enough pace. Golden suggests that ministers may often become "bitter, beaten, and behaviorally ineffective."¹¹⁹

Poor Self-Care

Gary L. Harbaugh calls our attention to the fact that "the physical, mental, social, and spiritual do not stand in isolation. Each interacts with the other."¹²⁰ They are combined to make one a whole person. When one loses one's self in the role of being pastor, there is always a danger that one will neglect one's self-care. As the pastor continues to push toward human limitations, and beyond, symptoms usually surface "in the way the pastor physically feels, or thinks, or emotionally feels, or relates."¹²¹

G. Lloyd Reidger likens one's unwillingness to accept human limitations to the sin of Adam and Eve and the will to be like God. The minister's sin becomes magnified with the development of the "Messiah Complex" and the feeling that one can be all things to all people. In the pastor's own mind, one can expend one's self physically, emotionally, and spiritually because of one's noble calling. God will watch over one as long as one expends one's self for the good of the high calling. One is without limits.¹²² Roy M. Oswald refers to this feeling as "eschatological fatalism."¹²³

Sooner or later the minister learns that a minister is a physical being with physical limitations. The toll that stress takes on the minister's body must

¹¹⁹Golden, op. cit., p. 26.

¹²⁰Harbaugh, Pastor As Person, p. 93.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 73.

¹²²Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout, pp. 28-29.

¹²³Oswald, Clergy Stress, p. 37.

eventually be paid. The price is maladies such as high blood pressure, peptic ulcers, heart disease, muscle tension, dermatitis, and headaches. These physical problems may cause the pastor to evaluate the situation, however, irreversible physical damage may have already occurred.¹²⁴

The emotional drain of prolonged stress also reminds the pastor of one's personhood. After one's mind has traveled the monorail of ministry for so long, one becomes emotionally drained and discovers that one no longer has control over one's emotions. Anger is quick to surface. One becomes anxious for the future. Depression may become evident. The pastor suffers from low self-esteem. Recovery from a state such as this will come slowly.

Probably the last indicator of poor self-care to surface is the pastor's knowledge of one's spiritual limits. The minister may become aware of these limitations earlier but may have tried to keep them hidden. No one is to ever know that the pastor has spiritual problems. One of the easiest activities to get crowded out of an already busy schedule is time for one's own spiritual nurture.

The tragedy of the pastor's being ruled by a "Messiah Complex" is that one becomes expended. One becomes so busy doing "Kingdom" work that one has no energies left over when there is a need to minister to the people of God.¹²⁵ The pastor must take the caution of Charles L. Rassieur:

Being a messiah is not taking care of oneself. Practicing heroics day in and day out is not ministry. At its worst it is an attempt to manipulate people; at its best it is still a denial of one's humanity and finitude.¹²⁶

¹²⁴Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Making Stress Work for You (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 20.

¹²⁵Charles L. Rassieur, Stress Management for Ministers (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1982), p. 124.

¹²⁶Ibid.

Burnout

The phenomenon of "burnout" can be very real when the minister encounters stress for a long period of time. If the minister fails to recognize human limitations and continues to live as though one has no limits, burnout is a possibility. This syndrome of total depletion affects the pastor physically, emotionally, and spiritually.¹²⁷ Rediger agrees that:

A person cannot be burned out in only one of these categories although one category may be visibly or deeply affected. Burnout is the exhaustion of all physical, emotional, and spiritual resources. . . . When a person is burned out, she or he is incapable of functioning at more than a minimal level in any of these three categories.¹²⁸

Herbert J. Freudenberger, a psychoanalyst, first used the term "burnout" to describe his own depleted condition.¹²⁹ Since that time the term has found extensive use in our society. Donald E. Demaray holds that negative thinking and depression are main characteristics of the burnout victim. "That negativity can take any number of expressions like irritability, cynicism, gossip, anger, rigidity, pessimism, or unwillingness to listen."¹³⁰ He adds that burnout is a result of an intensified desire to achieve a goal. "Every moment must be invested. Push, push, push is a way of life. Only unbending high expectations, really a kind of perfectionism, can answer this awful drive."¹³¹ Hart indicates that burnout generally leads to a progressive loss of ambition, idealism, energy,

¹²⁷ Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Burnout (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982), p. 12.

¹²⁸ Rediger, op. cit., pp. 16-18.

¹²⁹ Herbert J. Freudenberger, Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement (New York: Bantam Books, 1980), pp. xvii-xxii.

¹³⁰ Donald E. Demaray, Watch Out For Burnout (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), p. 13.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 14.

calling, and purpose."¹³² Lloyd J. Ogilvie defines burnout simply as doing "too much for too long, under too much pressure without clear goals and an adequate inflow of inspiration and strength."¹³³

According to Rediger, a person who is burned out may be capable of keeping appearances and handling minimal tasks; especially those tasks that one has become competent in doing. However, any additional pressure may cause the person to collapse altogether or at least attempt to cope by withdrawal, apathy, or confusion. This person may become physically ill or develop an erratic behavior. Rediger suggests that there are three levels of functioning for burnout victims: functional, malfunctional, and dysfunctional.¹³⁴

Burnout is becoming more noticeable among people who work with other people. These professions include doctors, counselors, social workers, and ministers.¹³⁵ Not every minister burns out, but Warlick reports that "hundreds of ministers. . .fall victim each year to clergy burnout."¹³⁶ Rediger cautions, "Clergy are in a stressful vocation. We who are clergy need to alert ourselves to the possibility of clergy burnout and find ways not only to avoid it but to enrich our living and ministry."¹³⁷ Harbaugh points out that personality characteristics quite often found in ministers, such as perfectionism, work orientation, and control, lead to burnout. These characteristics, however, can

¹³²Hart, Coping With Depression, p. 113.

¹³³Ogilvie, Making Stress Work For You, p. 120.

¹³⁴Rediger, op. cit., p. 18.

¹³⁵Ogilvie, op. cit., p. 119.

¹³⁶Warlick, op. cit., p. 30.

¹³⁷Rediger, op. cit., p. 11.

usually be associated more with law than with the gospel.¹³⁸ This observation suggests that burnout among clergy may be a product of a spiritual immaturity.

Hart records specific reasons for clergy burnout. Ministry is people oriented and yet people are the cause of many of the minister's frustrations. When people work with people, there are bound to be misunderstandings, miscommunication, ulterior motives, and the like. This occurs most often in the ministry and can be very damaging. The fact that there are no boundaries in the minister's work also leads to burnout. No pastor ever finishes the job. The minister is on call each hour of every day. Still another reason for clergy burnout is that the minister often lacks criteria for measuring accomplishments. Setting standards to be used in evaluation is difficult in ministry. Finally, Hart feels that because ministers are sometimes put on a pedestal they are subject to burnout. The position of high visibility and the nature of the calling bring honor and distinction. They also create certain hazards that the minister must face.¹³⁹

Roy M. Oswald notes that most clergy will burn out under a sufficient number of adverse conditions. Some ministers, however, are more susceptible than others. Characteristics exhibited by those prone to burnout include: idealism, over-commitment, rigidity, social activism, ease of discouragement, a desire to please, role confusion, ambition, and impatience.¹⁴⁰ Oswald suggests that persons go through four predictable stages on the way to burnout. The first is enthusiasm. The individual has high hopes, high energy, and unrealistic expectations. When one begins to notice personal, financial, and career needs

¹³⁸Harbaugh, op. cit., p. 71.

¹³⁹Hart, op. cit., pp. 115-122.

¹⁴⁰Oswald, op. cit., p. 15. See Table 3 for a detailed list of clergy persons who are most affected by burnout.

Table 3

CLERGY WHO ARE MOST AFFECTED BY BURNOUT
Roy M. Oswald

Under a sufficient number of adverse conditions, most clergy will burn out. Some, however, are particularly susceptible.

- Idealistic, over-committed clergy
- Clergy with rigid standards for executing ministry
- Clergy who are activists in social ministry
- Clergy in direct contact with the poor, the sick, the dying, where setbacks and discouragements are the order of the day
- Women clergy in ministry who have not entirely shed the roles of mother and homemaker, and are under the temptation to try to be superior at both.
- Clergy with high needs or who attempt to please everyone (low tolerance for dissonance in the parish)
- Clergy who avoid conflict
- Clergy who have difficulty saying "no" to protect personal boundaries for rest, relationships and recreation.
- Clergy who suffer from role confusion
- Clergy involved in direct ministries to a lot of hurting people with large case loads of pastoral counseling
- Clergy who care a lot, have a sense of mission and are vulnerable to the excessive demands of others
- Clergy who cannot compromise or admit defeat but bring their habitual dedication to whatever thankless situation they encounter
- Clergy who fall into the category of Type A personalities (From the book, Type A Behavior and Your Heart by Meyer Friedman and Ray H. Rosenman, 1974)
- Clergy with a high drive for achievement
- Clergy who are hurried, impatient, easily angered

the period of stagnation begins. Frustration is the third stage. The victim begins to question personal effectiveness, the value of making an effort, and the obstacles involved in reaching a goal. According to Oswald, frustration is the decision-making stage. The individual can either rechannel one's energy and return to the first stage of enthusiasm or move to the final stage which is apathy. This final stage is a point of depletion.¹⁴¹

Burnout can have a tragic effect on one's ministry. The key to avoiding ministerial burnout is to deal with clergy ego. The clergy person must learn that one cannot satisfy one's longing for self-worth through the image of being super-human. William E. Hulme reminds us that "our life is more than our work, including our ministry, even as grace is more than the fulfillment of any goals. God is bigger than our limits; therefore we can with grace accept them."¹⁴²

Termination of Pastoral Ministry

"There is a high correlation between burnout and clergy who call it quits," argues Oswald.¹⁴³ Christianity Today conducted a Gallop Poll of those who were considering leaving the ministry. The results indicate that those most likely to terminate their ministry are between the ages of thirty and fifty, from major denominations, theologically "liberal" or "neo-orthodox," and the pastor of a church with 300 members or less.¹⁴⁴ The literature relating to clergy burnout supports these findings.

Jud, Mills, and Burch conducted an extensive study of persons who have left the clergy profession. They found several significant reasons for the

¹⁴¹Oswald, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

¹⁴²Hulme, "Coming to Terms with Clergy Burnout," p. 7.

¹⁴³Oswald, op. cit., p. 17.

¹⁴⁴Gordon MacDonald, "Dear Church, I Quit," Christianity Today, June 27, 1980, pp. 16-17.

termination of ministry but no one dominant reason. Some of the leading factors were a sense of personal and professional inadequacy, being unable to relocate when necessary, problems of spouse and children, an opportunity to put one's training and skills to their fullest use, and personal illness. Most persons leaving the ministry did so by their third position in ministry. The age group most likely to leave the pastoral ministry were those 35-49 years of age. Those 34 years of age and under made up the next highest group.¹⁴⁵

Young ministers enter the ministry with excitement and great expectation. The church also has great expectations. Before one realizes it, one has assumed a role entirely different than what one had expected. One becomes frustrated and begins to lose one's sense of self-worth. The stressed minister may move to another church to help alleviate these problems. However, one will probably use the same "techniques" here as were used in the previous situation. The minister may move again in a short period of time and the results may be the same. One soon begins to reason, "If I cannot be a good pastor, I can be a good. . ." If one's struggle persists one will terminate one's ministry.

Oswald compares clergy under severe stress with a school of whales that beach themselves because of their stress in an attempt to commit suicide. He holds that certain clergy persons may "beach" themselves after long periods of stress. This is done by extra-marital relationships, alcoholism, stealing money from the church, and the like. The clergy person is guilty of professional suicide to find relief from stress that has weakened one's physical, emotional, and spiritual capacities.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵Jud, Mills and Burch, Ex-Pastors, pp. 44-50.

¹⁴⁶Oswald, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

The minister is not the only party involved in this termination of ministry. If the local church defines the minister as ineffective, the minister's relationship with that particular church will soon be terminated. In a called system of pastoral placement, the minister may find it difficult to receive a call from a church after providing inadequate leadership in previous positions. Other systems of church polity make provisions to terminate the minister's professional career if the minister is determined to be ineffective after a period of testing.

Summary

This chapter has noted several causes and effects of stress found in contemporary Christian ministry. Stress seems to be caused by the gaps one discovers between one's preconceived ideas about the minister's role, the roles the laity projects on the minister, and the actual role assumed by the minister. One's ability to manage one's time in ministry and the discrepancies between planning for ministry and being led by the Holy Spirit also are noted to cause ministerial stress. The idea that one can exceed human limitations in ministry and still find favor with God because of the nature of one's calling may also be a cause of stress for ministers. Stress may be caused by the expectation that the pastor's family be a model family for the church. If ministers do not have a valid support group with which to share frustrations, stress can result. If the pastor begins to rely upon a faith developed earlier and does not allow for significant spiritual renewal in one's personal life, stress may develop. Finally, stress may be caused by the several stages through which the minister usually passes.

These causes of stress may affect the minister by bringing on bouts with loneliness. Ministerial incompetency may result because of pastoral conflicts. Poor physical, emotional, and/or spiritual health may also develop as

the pastor pushes beyond human limitations. If one pushes too far for too long, burnout may result. Finally, if the level of stress is high and constant, one may terminate one's pastoral career.

While this chapter has attempted to present a detailed understanding of current problems in ministry, the reader should note that the professional ministry is not something to be avoided or even pitied for the problems involved. Research of other professions would probably yield similar information. God calls persons into the pastoral ministry and gives them the grace to function. However, it is the assumption of this study that one must identify the problem before that problem can be properly addressed. When one reflects on the predicament of the clergy, the need of a well-founded theology of self-care becomes evident.

Chapter 4

TOWARD A THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SELF-CARE

Chapter Four will develop a theological foundation for the study by suggesting a theological understanding of self-care. The need for this theology will be clarified under the first major heading. A detailed discussion considering one's uniqueness for ministry and one's summons to be made whole and be a part of a wholistic ministry will be presented. Christ as a model for a ministry which includes self-care will then be presented. Another major heading will clarify the need of the minister to do ministry within human limitations. Another section will offer classical spirituality as a model for self-care. The last major heading will include an understanding of Christ's desire for peace for all men. A summary will conclude the chapter.

Identifying the Need for a Theology of Self-Care

A major discovery in Chapter Three was that ministers often battle with stress in their personal and professional lives when they do not care for themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually. One primary responsibility of the Christian is self-care. This includes accepting theological responsibility for one's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Christ gave the command to "love your neighbor as yourself."¹ One can understand this to mean more than

¹Matthew 22:39b, The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons LTD, 1952). Note: This version is used exclusively in this Project-Dissertation.

having a great love and concern for mankind. At best, Christ was speaking of a reciprocal love. One is not only to love one's neighbor, but one is also to love one's self. In fact, one is inhibited in the ability to love others until one first comes to love one's self. The evidence of this self-love or self-care will surface in two ways. One will first acquire the ability to care for one's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Secondly, because of this ability of self-care, one will be better equipped to love one's neighbor and to fulfill the ministry to which one has been called.

Those serving in Christian ministry have a high regard for their neighbor. This caring is expected. In fact, it is demanded. Christ wants the best for humankind. He modeled this fact during his earthly ministry through his teaching, healing, comforting and bringing the dead back to life. This caring for humankind did not end with the resurrection of our Lord. He instructed those who would be his followers to continue in that tradition and do likewise.

The minister, however, is often guilty of forgetting about self-care because of the genuine zeal to bring about the best for one's neighbor. It is at this point that the minister develops an "eschatological fatalism."² This fatalistic attitude comes from the feeling that God will take care of his own. The minister reasons, "God will take care of me, body, mind and spirit, if I extend myself completely in His work." The future is secure for this particular minister. If the ultimate goal in life is to be with the Lord after death, it is perfectly reasonable to mortgage one's body against that final goal.³

One can borrow from Abraham Maslow the idea that, to be the best person one can be, one must first satisfy basic personal needs. Maslow noted

²Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Stress (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982), p. 37.

³Ibid.

these needs to be security, sociability, esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization. According to Maslow, these needs provide one with meaning and purpose in life. Human beings without meaning and purpose in life go through "random floundering."⁴ This idea can be extended to the personality of one in Christian ministry. If one is to be the best minister possible one must first take care of one's basic personal needs which can be no different from the basic needs of other human beings.

William Glasser noted that every person has basic physiological and psychological needs. He defined them as "the need to love and to be loved and the need to feel that we are worthwhile to ourselves and to others."⁵ Leonard Sweet helps us relate this idea to the clergy profession when he writes that "the besetting sin of the clerical profession is "altar ego," defined as the pathological desire and expectation to be liked by everyone."⁶ Somewhere ministers have arrived at the notion that if they sow love and compassion in their ministerial functions they will also reap love and compassion. Ministers must take caution here, however. No matter how they try, there will always be people that will not accept them.⁷

Ironically, it is through the minister's desire to be faithful to God's calling and not to sin that one sins. Sin can be understood as the violation of God's will, thus resulting in our failure to fulfill our potential before God. One sins by not trying to become all that God has given one the ability to become.

⁴Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1962).

⁵William Glasser, Reality Therapy: A New Approach to Psychiatry (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1965), p. 9.

⁶Leonard I. Sweet, "The Nerve of Failure," Theology Today, July, 1977, p. 144.

⁷Ibid.

One fails God when one does not accept all the possibilities that God has placed in one's life. One also fails God when one does not accept the limits God has placed on humanity.⁸

One explanation of the minister's predicament is what Harold Warlick terms "unmatched theology."⁹ While Warlick feels it is impossible to absolutize such categories, there are basically three ways of doing theology. Dogmatic theology, dealing with answers or clarifying what is true or false, is the theology the public sees in the minister. It is what one says one believes. Systematic theology deals with questions and can be seen as an intellectual theology that emphasizes those questions the minister believes to be important. Operational theology, an experiential approach which deals with one's situation in life, is a third way of approaching theology. Operational or practical theology is essentially how one's beliefs operate in one's life. A minister's value system and life-style are reflected by this theology.¹⁰ Carlyle Marney refers to this latter theology as Instrumental theology and considers it the theology of the "working priest."¹¹ Calian suggests to the pastor that he allow theology to be the "living out" of a faith rather than only verbalizing one's faith. He also encourages the clergy to "integrate the experiences and events of life into a meaningful framework under God."¹²

⁸G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), pp. 27-32.

⁹Harold C. Warlick, Jr. How to Be a Minister and a Human Being (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), p. 47.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Carlyle Marney, "Fundamentals of Competent Ministry", Duke Dininity School Review, Winter, 1976, p. 8.

¹²Calian, "Can We Expect Greatness from the Clergy?" The Christian Century, May 25, 1977, p. 510.

A problem arises when these three theologies are not matched. When this happens "the systematic theology becomes what the minister wishes he or she believed and dogmatic theology becomes what the minister wants the public to think the minister believes."¹³ One can therefore see the need for the minister to wed the three theologies for a more wholistic ministry.

The need for a more wholistic approach to ministry is viewed from a different angle by Harold Burgess.¹⁴ Burgess suggests that to have a more effective ministry one must discover how to integrate theory and practice. He credits David Moberg with the idea that "those of us who by virtue of our theology ought to rely most heavily on the work of the Holy Spirit to bring about conversion strangely tend to rely even more heavily upon practices rooted in the behavioral sciences--i.e. reinforcement, persuasion, social pressure, and the like."¹⁵ According to Burgess, a "significant problem" occurs when tension is not maintained between theology and ministry in that "there is no close check on the direction our practices may be taking--no ready check on whether we may not, in fact, be producing mutant fruit."¹⁶

A major role of a theology of ministry, says Burgess, is to develop a working relationship "between theology which is espoused and actual practices of ministry."¹⁷ He offers John Wesley as a model. "For Wesley. . .there was a

¹³Warlick, op. cit., p. 47.

¹⁴Harold Burgess, "A Wesleyan Theology of Ministry," Wesleyan Theological Journal, Spring, 1983, pp. 30-43.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 33; One excellent tool to implement this is the keeping of a dialogical journal.

very real synapse between theology and ministry."¹⁸ His ministry was an outflow of his theology. Wesley's "truth-about-God-in-relation-to-man" theology maintained a constant tension between awareness of God's truth and his awareness of man's need. Wesley's ministry, then, was an outflow of his theology.¹⁹

Burgess cautions:

there may be a tendency for us Wesleyans to be loyal to our theology in a manner that indeed approximates a heavenly theory which is not fully rooted into our ministry. Wesleyan theology, however, works best when it is hot, permeating one's mind, one's heart, and one's actions. What I am suggesting, then, is that one benchmark of a more adequate theology of ministry is one which features a healthy integration of the evidences of faith and the faith itself; of the truths to which we assent with the playing out of these truths in the work of the ministry.²⁰

A minister is called to discover one's own value and be set free to fulfill the tasks of the calling. This discovery can be brought about through a theological understanding of self-care. One can move toward a theological understanding of self-care by a deeper understanding of the call to ministry, recognizing Christ as the supreme model for ministry, considering classical spirituality, acknowledging the limits of finite man, and recognizing Christ's desire for peace for all mankind.

The Call to Christian Ministry

Dietrich Bonhoeffer probably said it best, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."²¹ In this bold and startling statement one can see the radical nature of Christian discipleship. Not every Christian is called to the

¹⁸Burgess, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁹Ibid. ²⁰Ibid.

²¹Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1963), p. 7.

literal martyrdom that Bonhoeffer faced.²² However, every Christian is called to a discipleship that is founded on a radical faith in Christ rather than personal cost. Those who would be followers of Christ must be fully committed to the Master as well as to the Master's message. David Watson, writing on the subject of discipleship, reminds us that:

When Jesus took the initiative in calling people to follow him, when he called them primarily to himself and not just to his teachings, when he expected from them total obedience, when he taught them to serve and warned them that they would suffer, and when he gathered around him a diverse group of very ordinary people, he was obviously creating a radical and unique pattern of discipleship.²³

Jesus had come to lay down his life for others, therefore, those who would be his disciples were called on to do the same. This call was extended to all persons.

In contrast to Bonhoeffer and to Watson, we are reminded of the promise of Jesus, "My burden is light and my yoke is easy."²⁴ Those who discover the meaning of the call in terms of their own uniqueness affirm that promise. Those who do not may find themselves struggling under a wearisome weight and wonder what is wrong.²⁵ The desire of Christ for all those who are called to be in ministry, then, is fulfillment and rest.

While the call of Christ is extended to all persons the focus of this project is on those set aside to be ministers of the gospel. Therefore, our focus

²²Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a contemporary theologian, was murdered by the Nazis during World War II.

²³David Watson, Called to Discipleship, World-Changing Discipleship (Wheaton, Illinois: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1982), p. 6.

²⁴Matthew 11:29-30.

²⁵Lewis McBurney, Every Pastor Needs a Pastor (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1977), p. 21.

will be directed toward Christ's call to the clergy. The Lutheran bishop, Herbert Chilstrom, reminds us that:

in the deepest sense there is no difference between the clergy and other Christians. Both stand under the judgment of grace. But this does not mean that there is no difference in calling. The office of the minister stands as distinct and essential to the life of the church. And when we look for qualified persons to fill that office we look for those who have, more than anything else, (an) irresistible call to preach the gospel.²⁶

H. Richard Niebuhr, in The Purpose of the Church, indicates that a call to Christian ministry includes four elements: the call to be a Christian is the call received by all to become a disciple of Jesus Christ and do as Christ demands; the secret call comes when a person feels one's self invited or even summoned by God to take up the work of the ministry; the providential call is the divine guidance present in one's life in all circumstances that cause one to become equipped for and able to secure the talents necessary for the exercise of ministry; and, finally, the ecclesiastical call is a summons and an invitation made by a community or an institution of the church to a person inviting one to engage in ministry.²⁷ Niebuhr continues by summarizing the Church's expectation of its ministers:

The Church everywhere and always has expected its ministers to have a personal sense of vocation, forged in the solitariness of encounter with ultimate claims made upon them. It has also generally required that they show evidence of the fact that they have been chosen for the task by the divine bestowal upon them, through birth and experience, of the intellectual, moral, physical and psychological gifts necessary for the work of the ministry. Finally, in one form or another, it has required that they be summoned or invited or at least accepted by that part of the Church in which they undertake to serve.²⁸

²⁶ Herbert W. Chilstrom, "The Pastoral Calling From the Perspective of a Bishop," Word and World, Fall, 1981, p. 332.

²⁷ H. Richard Niebuhr, The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry (New York: Harper, 1956), p. 64.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

A Distinct Call for Distinct Individuals

Christ calls us as distinct individuals. God made us distinct individuals. We each have our own physical, emotional, and spiritual characteristics. God has created us through the many possible combinations of these characteristics. We are individuals and God knows us as individuals. He reminds us that he knows even the number of hairs on our heads.²⁹ We are distinct. We are known and accepted by God as we are.

God calls distinct individuals in distinct, personalized ways. According to Henry Shaeffer, "there is a great variety in the call-experiences."³⁰ Deratany agrees that there are no stereotype patterns that God uses to call persons to special services, just as there are no set patterns by which God calls persons to salvation. Since God sees us as unique individuals he deals with each individual uniquely.³¹

God's call for a specific purpose may have begun when Abraham was told, "Go from your country . . ."³² While this may be seen as a sending forth, it was also a call. From that day forward the call of God has echoed to humankind. Moses heard the voice of God saying, "Come, I will send you to Pharoah . . ."³³ and also the promise, "I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak."³⁴ Isaiah was overpowered by a vision and assured of forgiveness before he finally responded, "Here am I! Send me."³⁵ Samuel, Saul,

²⁹Matthew 10:30.

³⁰Henry Shaeffer, The Call to Prophetic Service (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1926), p. 12.

³¹Edward Deratany, When God Calls You (New York: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1976), p. 55.

³²Genesis 12:1. ³³Exodus 3:10. ³⁴Exodus 4:12. ³⁵Isaiah 6:8.

David, Jeremiah, and Amos are among the list of others who were chosen for a specific task.

The original disciples were called in a variety of ways. It is interesting to note that none of the twelve offered himself for discipleship.³⁶ Jesus took the initiative and personally called the four fishermen: Peter, Andrew, James, and John.³⁷ Later he extended the same personal call to Matthew, the tax collector.³⁸ At least one disciple was brought to Jesus.³⁹ The Bible does not record how the remaining disciples were brought into this select group.⁴⁰

The Apostle Paul experienced a unique calling.⁴¹ He was a Jew, educated by the strict standards of the Pharisaic law. While on his way to Damascus to return followers of the "Way" to Jerusalem for punishment, he had a traumatic experience. A great light from heaven appeared above him. He fell to the ground as a voice asked, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" The rest is history. Paul began to preach boldly in the name of the Lord. Christians today are pleased to call him the first Christian missionary.

These different approaches by God are as common in contemporary times as they were earlier. The famous missionary to Africa, David Livingstone, was a young lad when he felt that God was calling him to be a medical missionary to China. However, China was soon closed to missionaries because of an opium war. Through a series of events, Livingstone's missionary zeal was channeled to Africa. There he served to become one of the best known missionaries in modern times.⁴² Billy Sunday, one of the most famous evangelists

³⁶Chilstrom, op. cit., p. 2.

³⁷Matthew 3:18-22. ³⁸Matthew 9:9. ³⁹John 1:45-51.

⁴⁰Deratany, op. cit., p. 55.

⁴¹Acts 9:1-30. ⁴²Deratany, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

of this century was converted after a young man invited a group of baseball players, of which he was a part, to the Pacific Garden Mission for worship. At that particular time Sunday was a famous professional baseball player. He and his group were walking out of a saloon on Sunday afternoon when they received the invitation. "I turned to the boys who were with me and said, 'I'm through, boys. We've come to the parting of the ways.'"⁴³

The varying way in which God calls persons into ministry can be identified even closer to home for those in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church. Faban S. Clark, a noted clergyman with outstanding skills in ministry with small membership churches, first heard God's call in a cotton field. He heard that same voice again as a soldier while laying in a foxhole in the heat of battle during World War II. "There in that foxhole I promised God that if he would just let me live to return home I would preach the gospel."⁴⁴

W. F. Appleby has served the United Methodist Church in numerous ways during his many years of ministry. He relates his call to ministry in this manner:

It was on June 24th as I was reading the Bible in my room in the boarding house. Strange as it might seem, it was those words of Jesus that stood out in bold "Box Car Letters". . . "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." I turned to another portion of the word of God only to read, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" To this I made my dedication, "Here am I, send me."⁴⁵

⁴³Lee Thomas, The Billy Sunday Story (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p. 47.

⁴⁴Commission on Christian Vocations, My Call to Preach (Grenada, Mississippi: The North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1961), pp. 11-12.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 1.

Ruth Wood has the distinction of being one of the first women to enter the pastoral ministry in the North Mississippi Conference. At the time of her calling her husband was already serving as a minister in the conference. When she felt God's tugging, she began to ask the same questions that both lay and clergy alike were asking. These questions concerned the fact that she was a woman, a wife, and a mother. Finally she responded, "Lord, I don't know how you're going to do it, but here I am."⁴⁶

Another leading minister in the North Mississippi Conference, Merlin D. Conoway, records that he cannot put his finger on any one dramatic event as he remembers his call to ministry. Instead, his call came as a culmination of several very significant events. These events include the Christian education he received at home, the inspiration of ministers in his local church, and the encouragement of members of his local church.⁴⁷

It may be said, then, that Christ's call to, "Follow me," is initiated by Christ, extended to distinct individuals, and delivered in a personal way. We may be reminded by Edward Deratany:

Since the call to ministry is very personal, we err when we try to force it into a stereotyped mold. God deals with each of us differently, and His will for each of us is different. Within the call of God there is room for individual variation, for the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and for each individual to work out with his God exactly what it is that God wants him to do.⁴⁸

⁴⁶The Committee on Enlistment for Church Occupations, My Call to Ministry (Grenada, Mississippi: The North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1975), p. 36.

⁴⁷The Committee on Enlistment for Church Occupations, My Call to Preach by Black Pastors in the North Mississippi Conference (Grenada, Mississippi: The North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1975), pp. 1-2.

⁴⁸Deratany, op. cit., p. 57.

A Distinct Call With Power and Authority

God's call is extended to one as one is, but with the power to become.

After his resurrection, Christ spoke to his followers saying:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I will be with you always, to the close of the age.⁴⁹

The message implied is that Christ has been given power and authority and he, in turn, gives power and authority to his followers who would commit themselves to continuing in the ministry that he had begun. The comfort comes to the follower in knowing that Christ will be with him in this undertaking.

During his earthly ministry, Christ dispersed power and authority to his followers when they were given specific tasks to perform. After having chosen his group of original disciples, Jesus called them together and gave them power and authority over unclean spirits and to heal every disease and infirmity.⁵⁰ It can be assumed, then, that when Christ sets persons apart for specific tasks today, he makes sure that they are given sufficient power and authority to complete the task.

Where did the authority of Jesus originate? The source of his authority was a puzzle to many who witnessed his power.⁵¹ Several times Jesus refused to disclose the source of his power.⁵² However, the Gospel of John reveals that his power came from God.⁵³ The Book of Acts also reveals this same source of power and authority for Jesus.⁵⁴ This same Jesus who received his power and

⁴⁹Matthew 28:18-20. ⁵⁰See Matthew 10:1, Mark 3:15, and Luke 9:1

⁵¹See Luke 20:2 for an example.

⁵²See Matthew 21:23-24, Mark 11:28-29, or Luke 20:28.

⁵³See John 5:27, 10:18, and 17:2. ⁵⁴Acts 10:38.

authority from God empowers those who will follow him. Jesus promised his followers that they would receive power from on high⁵⁵ and that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit to be his witnesses throughout all of the earth.⁵⁶ Kee and Shroyer suggest that the knowledge that one's authority comes from Christ is a must for the Christian worker. Ministry "will take on a new meaning when it is done for Christ's sake. It will save the worker from the fretfulness that comes from his own ambitions and failures."⁵⁷

The minister's authority may also originate elsewhere, according to Jackson W. Carroll. He defines authority as "legitimate power" and suggests that much of the clergyperson's authority comes from the church or some other institution in which he serves. This authority is extended for two reasons. The first is because the minister is understood to have a close and intimate connection with God. The minister is expected to possess or demonstrate spiritual qualities that signify a close relationship with the Holy Spirit. Secondly, the church extends authority to the minister because of one's expertise in religious tradition and its application to life. He is understood to be knowledgeable in the scriptures, Christian tradition, theology, and ethics. He is to also exemplify skills in preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.⁵⁸

It can be understood, then, that the power of the minister comes from God, through Christ. The authority that God extended to the human Christ is extended to mankind through the working of the Holy Spirit. The church, acting

⁵⁵Luke 24:39. ⁵⁶Acts 1:8.

⁵⁷Howard C. Kee and Montgomery J. Shroyer, The Bible and God's Call (Nashville: Interboard Committee on Christian Vocations, 1962), p. 36.

⁵⁸Jackson W. Carroll, "Some Issues in Clergy Authority," Review of Religious Research, December, 1981, pp. 100-103.

on behalf of God, extends to the minister an invitation to practice power and authority through the ministry of that institution. In accepting this power and authority, the minister does so with the understanding that one is not giving one's all to ministry, but that one is giving something that is not in one at all. The minister is "presenting himself, and all that he is, as a channel for something that is not in him, the grace of God."⁵⁹ Harold C. Warlick also reminds us that "a main function of the ministry is equipping persons and groups to live with greater power and effectiveness."⁶⁰ The minister must do more than minister to the needs of persons. The minister must also equip persons for ministry.

The person who has the task of equipping others for ministry also has the task of staying equipped for ministry themselves. This can be done through the Christian understanding of denying one's self. A call to Christian ministry is a call to a denial of self. One must be willing to put one's self aside and live a life that will model completely and efficiently the nature of Christ.

In a discourse to a group of followers, Jesus exclaimed, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."⁶¹ Ladd is careful to point out that the word "deny", used in this context, does not mean self-denial. For Ladd, self-denial means simply denying one's self of the pleasures of this life. However, denial of self has an opposite meaning. It means "the renunciation of one's own will that the Kingdom of God may become the all-important concern of life."⁶²

⁵⁹Halford E. Luccock, In the Minister's Workshop (Nashville: Abindgon, 1944), p. 18.

⁶⁰Warlick, How to be a Pastor, p. 49.

⁶¹Mark 8:34.

⁶²George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p. 132.

Henri Nouwen suggests the Desert Fathers, a group of spiritual searchers who withdrew to the Egyptian Desert during the fourth and fifth centuries, as models for ministers searching for ways to be completely open to God's will. Their flight into the desert was their way of escaping the temptations to conform to the world. This retreat was not merely an escape, however. It was a time of renewal through solitude, silence and prayer.⁶³

According to Nouwen, "Solitude is the furnace for transformation."⁶⁴ It allows our false compulsive self to be transformed into the new self of Jesus Christ. A compassionate ministry flows from that transformed self. Silence is important to the minister since it makes us pilgrims, guards the fire within us, the Holy Spirit, and teaches us to speak. Prayer, for the Desert Fathers, could not be separated from solitude and silence. For them, prayer was not an activity of the mind but of the heart. Prayer from the heart challenges us not to hide anything from God and to surrender ourselves unconditionally to him.⁶⁵

A Distinct Call to be Whole

God's call to the individual is a call to be liberated and whole. Jesus summarized his own mission and message by recalling prophetic statements from the Book of Isaiah. He saw as one of his tasks to "set at liberty those who are oppressed."⁶⁶ Henlee Barnette argues that the best translation of this verse is "to let the broken victims go free." While Isaiah originally referred primarily to those broken by political and social forces, Jesus extended the meaning to include those who are broken physically, emotionally, and spiritually. A large part of Jesus's ministry was spent ministering to those in need of physical,

⁶³Henri J. M. Nouwen, The Way of the Heart (New York: Ballantine Books, 1981).

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 13. ⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 13-41.

⁶⁶Luke 4:18

emotional, and spiritual healing. He committed himself to setting people free of their oppressions so they could be whole.⁶⁷

One must have control of his physical, emotional, and spiritual resources to be considered whole. Brokenness occurs when one loses control of any one or all of these resources. If one is to be whole and remain whole, one must accept theological responsibility for self. When clergy persons attempt to meet the needs of others out of their own resources, they become broken and incomplete. The temptation to become a "Messiah" often expends the pastor physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The minister acts as though that which has been done in Christ must be redone in the person of the minister. Such actions create a gulf between the minister's espoused theology and the minister's practiced theology.

As discussed in Chapter Three, one becomes depleted physically, emotionally, and spiritually when one tries to exceed one's human limitations. Liberation and healing come when the minister realizes that one does have limits and cannot be all things to all people. To be whole, the minister must accept the call to ministry along with one's human limitations. One is called to fulfill one's own ministry and not the ministry of others. Liberation and wholeness come only when the minister accepts theological responsibility for self and seeks to reach one's own potential through the development of personal gifts and graces.

While the individual is called into ministry on one's own merits, it must be understood that one's calling comes in the midst of the people of God. While the minister is an individual, the minister is not called alone. God's call is extended to all who will dedicate themselves to his purpose. Each person, then,

⁶⁷ Henlee H. Barnette, Your Freedom to Be Whole (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984), p. 15.

is called with a specific task in mind. Together, all of those who answer God's call to "make disciples of all nations," will pool their gifts and graces to form a wholistic ministry.

The Apostle Paul referred to a wholistic ministry when he wrote his letter to the church at Rome saying, "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individual members one of another."⁶⁸ In this writing Paul suggests a "systems approach" to ministry.⁶⁹ This approach to ministry presents four principles or characteristics. These include: wholism in which the whole is equal to more than the sum of its parts; open synergism presupposes that the whole is made up of many different parts or subsystems and that if one subsystem is changed all the other subsystems are affected; isomorphism suggests "linkage" and presupposes that every one of the subsystems has the same inherent purpose and goal; and congruence in which all of the parts fit together to make a whole.

If, in fact, all Christians are "fellow workmen for God,"⁷⁰ as Paul suggests, they must work together to form a wholistic ministry much stronger than that which would result if each person carried out one's ministry in isolation. Certain lay persons have gifts that certain clergy do not have. Also, certain clergy have gifts that certain other clergy do not. To complete this cycle, certain lay persons have gifts that certain other lay persons do not. If all

⁶⁸Romans 12:4-5.

⁶⁹The "systems approach" to ministry was first introduced to this writer by Dr. Wayne Goodwin during Seminar II of the Doctor of Ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary, January, 1982.

⁷⁰I Corinthians 3:9.

of these gifts are combined under the umbrella of a common goal, a wholistic ministry results. The individual dynamics are not lost, but amplified.

The potential for ministry is not reached until the minister becomes part of the whole ministry of God. When this happens the clergy person becomes a very important part of a whole that is working toward a common ministry. We are called to a Biblical view of wholeness which "can be understood only when the individual is seen in relationship with others."⁷¹ While being part of this wholistic ministry, the minister maintains personal uniqueness at all times.

Christ as a Model for Self-Care

The ministry of Jesus can serve as a model for all ministers. One does not have to search the scriptures at length to discover two primary tasks of his ministry; to alleviate the needs of individuals and to direct all persons to God. Christ did this kind of ministry time and again. J. T. Holland testifies, "One fact stands out - Jesus was a minister."⁷² Jesus was also more than a minister. He was a minister who knew the importance of self-care and how to practice the care of his human self.

The Surety of Jesus

A close look at the scriptures helps one to understand that Jesus was sure of who he was and whose he was. When one recalls Jesus' various acts of ministry, one must conclude that Jesus knew his source of authority, that he recognized the importance of his calling, and that he was sure of his ministerial function.

⁷¹Gary L. Harbaugh, Pastor as Person (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), p. 18.

⁷²J. T. Holland, "Jesus, A Model for Ministry," The Journal of Pastoral Care, December, 1982, p. 255.

Jesus was sure of his authority. It has been noted above that several persons questioned the source of Jesus' authority. When others inquired about the source of his authority, Jesus often refused to answer.⁷³ His reasons for doing so are debatable and far beyond the scope of this project. However, it is important to note that Jesus knew from whence his authority came. It came from God. One particular hint to this knowledge can be seen at the close of Jesus' last meal with his disciples. He shared a lengthy discourse with his disciples then lifted his eyes toward heaven and prayed, "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. . ."⁷⁴ God has given Jesus power, or authority, over all flesh. George Ladd understands this to mean that Jesus "has power over all flesh to give eternal life to whom the Father wills."⁷⁵ Jesus' power came from God. He knew this and found his authority in this knowledge.

Holland notes that "Jesus was aware of his own authority and acted upon it so that it became a vital dimension of his ministry."⁷⁶ He holds that this knowledge of authority occurred in three main areas of Jesus' ministry. Knowledge of his authority is exemplified in the authority of Jesus to forgive sins, his ability to confer authority upon his disciples, and the authority that he exercised over the law, the sabbath, and the temple.⁷⁷

Jesus was sure of his calling. Jesus was not only sure of his authority, he was sure of his calling. The first recorded glimpse to his knowledge comes

⁷³See Mark 11:29-33 for an example.

⁷⁴John 17:1-2.

⁷⁵Ladd, op. cit., p. 249.

⁷⁶Holland, op. cit., p. 258.

⁷⁷Ibid.

from the account of Jesus' experience in the temple when he was only twelve.⁷⁸ Even at an early age he seems conscious of his calling to ministry. Kee and Shroyer indicate that Jesus became aware of his great calling at his baptism.⁷⁹ Also, there can be little doubt that Jesus was sure of his call and of his mission in life when he proclaimed the beginning of his earthly ministry. After his temptation in the wilderness, he entered the city of Nazareth and then went to the synagogue. This was his custom since it was the sabbath day. In the synagogue he stood to read and chose for his text words of the prophet Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."⁸⁰

When he had finished reading, he said to his listeners, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."⁸¹ Jesus knew his was a special calling.

Jesus was sure of his servant role. In the words of Jesus, "The Son of Man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."⁸² He clearly understood his role in ministry as being a servant. The whole of his ministry testified to this understanding.

Michael Green argues that Jesus came to understand his role of servant through the prophet Isaiah. The four Servant Songs of Isaiah⁸³ suggest three

⁷⁸Luke 2: 49.

⁷⁹Kee and Shroyer, The Bible and God's Call, p. 31.

⁸⁰Luke 4:18-20. ⁸¹Luke 4:21.

⁸²Mark 10:48.

⁸³Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-7; and 52:13-53:12.

great themes: obedience, witness, and endurance. These same themes run through the ministry of Jesus.⁸⁴ Whatever the origin of his understanding of his servant role, Jesus modeled it for his disciples and encouraged them to become servants also.⁸⁵ According to Ladd, Jesus' idea of love meant selfless service to his fellow man.⁸⁶

Jesus was sure of the requirements of his followers. Those who chose to follow him would have to bear their own crosses. At one point in his ministry, Jesus turned to the multitude about him and offered them a discourse in the cost of discipleship. He reminded them, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple."⁸⁷

Ladd points out that a cross is not to be considered a burden, but an instrument of death. He notes, "Suffering, persecution, and martyrdom must be expected of Jesus' disciples. . . To take up one's cross means to be willing to go as far as Jesus went to a martyr's death."⁸⁸ The requirements of one who would follow Jesus today can be no different from those who would have followed him during his earthly ministry. One must be willing to undergo the hardships of contemporary society.

The Apostle Paul encourages the Phillipian Christians to have the mind of Christ, who took the form of a man, chose the role of servant, dedicated himself to God, and died on the cross.⁸⁹ If one is to have the mind of Christ today, one must model the humility, the service, the dedication to God, and the willingness to die that Jesus modeled.

⁸⁴Michael Green, Called to Serve (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), pp. 12-13.

⁸⁵John 13:4-5.

⁸⁶Ladd, op. cit., p. 280.

⁸⁷Luke 14:27.

⁸⁸Ladd, op. cit., p. 202.

⁸⁹Philippians 2:5-8

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the contemporary theologian who condemned the church for offering "cheap grace," suggests that discipleship is hard and costly. However, he reminds us that, "Jesus asks nothing of us without giving us the strength to perform it."⁹⁰ Because of these words of assurance, and because Jesus himself promised that his burden would be easy and his yoke light, the contemporary servant can rejoice in the requirements of the Lord.

Jesus Recognized the Importance of Self-Care

The goal of the ministry of Jesus was servanthood. His actions in ministry demonstrated his knowledge of the importance of self-care if he was to maintain the integrity of his ministry. The scriptures witness the fact that Jesus had an unmistakable desire to care for himself physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Jesus withdrew from the grueling tasks of his ministry on several occasions according to the four gospels. This withdrawal was seldom easy. On several occasions when Jesus withdrew alone, or with his disciples, a crowd of curious persons usually soon followed.⁹¹ C. Milo Connick notes one specific withdrawal after the "meal for many" when Jesus arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon⁹² and offers several theories suggested by scholars for this retreat. Jesus may have felt the need for a Gentile mission, but this idea is contradicted by Jesus' desire for seclusion and his reluctance to heal. He may have retreated in an attempt to flee the hostile Herod since Herod had earlier beheaded John the Baptist. Still others suggest that Jesus withdrew to escape the enthusiasm of those friends who wished to make him a king. However, he

⁹⁰Bonhoeffer, op. cit., p. 40.

⁹¹See Mark 6:30ff; Luke 4:42ff; and John 10:40 for examples.

⁹²Mark 7:24.

may have been escaping the hostility of his critics as well. A final reason for the withdrawal of Jesus to Tyre and Sidon may have been for rest and prayer.⁹³ Irregardless of the conclusion one reaches for this particular incident, the conclusion must be made that Jesus noted the importance of time away to maintain a balance in his ministry.

Physical rest was important to Jesus.⁹⁴ The expectations placed on the ministry of Jesus by himself and others cannot be overestimated. However, Hart points out that "Jesus knew better than to push himself and his followers to the point of exhaustion."⁹⁵ He was aware of his physical limitations. "The fact that Jesus could miraculously heal the sick did not give license for the abuse of his or anyone else's body and mind."⁹⁶ Oswald insists that:

. . .we misinterpret the Kenosis of Christ, His self-emptying. He cared for others, He gave Himself to others, yet He never allowed Himself to become burned out.⁹⁷ It seems to me that He followed a good theology of self-care.

Jesus was also in touch with his emotions. Holland notices that "because he was aware of his feelings, he could understand the feelings of others."⁹⁸ Often Jesus expressed love. For instance, his love, or compassion, caused him to restore the life of the only son of a widow at Nain.⁹⁹ Also, there is no secret about the love that Christ had for Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus.¹⁰⁰

⁹³C. Milo Connick, Jesus: the Man, the Mission, and the Message (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentiss-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 183-184.

⁹⁴Mark 6:31.

⁹⁵Archibald D. Hart, Coping With Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 18.

⁹⁶Ibid. ⁹⁷Oswald, Stress, p. 42.

⁹⁸Holland, op. cit., p. 261.

⁹⁹Luke 7:11-15. ¹⁰⁰John 11:15.

John, too, refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.¹⁰¹ Christ also knew anger which was vented at one point in the temple because of his disgust over those who bought and sold there.¹⁰² Christ's anger also surfaced when the Pharisees questioned his healing a certain man's withered hand on a sabbath day.¹⁰³ The death of Jesus' friend Lazarus and the resulting grief of his sisters brought Jesus great pain.¹⁰⁴ He wept over the city of Jerusalem after concluding that the people therein had rejected him.¹⁰⁵ The demonstration of these emotions "reveal that Jesus' feelings were readily available to him and that he ran the whole gamut of human emotions."¹⁰⁶ If one is to live a life of self-care, one must learn to stay in touch with one's emotions.

The maintenance of the spiritual realm of his life was also important to Jesus. He remained in constant communication with God. The scriptures remind us that Jesus often withdrew to pray.¹⁰⁷ Harold Rodgers notes that "prayer was a way of life for Jesus. Jesus listened constantly for the voice of God."¹⁰⁸ Luke records Jesus spending the entire night in prayer.¹⁰⁹ He prayed not only to maintain his spiritual health but for his fellow workers in ministry.¹¹⁰ This prayer linkage was continued throughout his life; even to the cross where he placed his spirit in his Father's hands.¹¹¹

Jesus also saw the need of a support system in his ministry. He had an unusual ability to relate to people. His ability to achieve rapport with persons

¹⁰¹John 19:26; 20:2. ¹⁰²Matthew 21:12ff. ¹⁰³Mark 3:1-6.

¹⁰⁴John 11:33-38. ¹⁰⁵Luke 19:41-44. ¹⁰⁶Holland, op. cit., 261.

¹⁰⁷See Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35; and Luke 9:28 for examples.

¹⁰⁸Harold Rodgers, Jesus as Man, (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1979), p. 88.

¹⁰⁹Luke 6:12. ¹¹⁰See John 17. ¹¹¹Luke 23:46.

was exceptional. Since he was in touch with his own feelings he was able to respond appropriately to others at their level and according to their particular needs.¹¹²

Jesus cultivated relationships by being transparent and open. His personality attracted multitudes. Those about him were impressed with his genuine caring. People were the center of his ministry. It seems only natural that Jesus was usually surrounded by several persons. The most intimate support group to Jesus was the band of twelve disciples. Certainly Jesus called the twelve to assist him in his earthly ministry and to train them for a future ministry. However, Jesus also needed the intimacy provided by the group. Often he called them aside for instructions. At other times, he shared his innermost feelings with them. He also cultivated a close relationship with an inner circle of disciples made up of Peter, James, and John. At times he called these persons apart for a special closeness.¹¹³

It was through these practices that Jesus was able to maintain the pace of his ministry. He realized that he must take care of himself physically, emotionally, and spiritually if he was to maintain the quality of ministry that was so important to him. He also saw the need for others to do likewise.

Classical Spirituality as a Model for Self-Care

Those who answer the call of Christ and dedicate themselves to be shepherds in the faith should remain sensitive to the need of balancing the Christian life with both an "active" and a "passive" spirituality. The temptation

¹¹²Holland, op. cit., p. 262.

¹¹³See Mark 9:2 for an example.

is for the minister to model one's life after that of a corporate business person. Following this model, the minister is constantly active or "doing." Little or no time is spent in reflection concerning one's ministry. This model tempts one to be a doer of the faith only.

The Desert Fathers, and their comrades in the faith, offer a more appropriate balance to the Christian life.¹¹⁴ These early monastics began to flourish toward the end of the fourth century when Roman emperors had become Christians. Persecution of Christians ended and it was no longer possible for the Christian to follow Christ's example by the shedding of their own blood. A new form of martyrdom emerged. If the world was no longer their enemy, then the Christians must become enemies of the world. Many Christians retreated to the Egyptian desert in an attempt to escape the temptation to conform to the world.¹¹⁵

George Maloney writes concerning these Christians:

They did not run away from the world in cowardliness or in self-centered egoism, but, rather, as conscious cocreators, fighters at the most advanced outposts, "men intoxicated with God," . . . they were eschatological prophets, building a community, a way of life with God that most closely would resemble the life to come in the eschaton. Although living in a body in time and space, they pointed to a transfigured, spiritual existence outside of time and space.¹¹⁶

These early Christians searched to experience God with all of their heart, mind, and strength. They understood that this experience could be made possible only if they could go apart from the world and live "in the solitude of

¹¹⁴This study of classical spirituality is not to be considered exhaustive. Much more is to be done in the future. However, the selected aspects presented here are indicative of this early spirituality.

¹¹⁵George A. Maloney, ed., Pilgrimage of the Heart (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 19.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 18.

constant prayer and austere penance."¹¹⁷ Louis Bouyer describes this way of life as "the Gospel alone, heard and taken literally by simple souls."¹¹⁸ Henri Nouwen suggests that these early fathers sought this inner presence with God through solitude, silence, and prayer.¹¹⁹ These virtues should be considered more closely.

Solitude

Antony, who has been called the "father of monks," was one of the first Christians to live a life of solitude. Born around 251, Antony followed the example of the Apostles and left everything to follow Jesus. He lived in solitude near the edge of his village for twenty years after having first disposed of his worldly possessions. He resigned himself to a simplified life that included simple work, reflection, prayer, and fasting.¹²⁰

Solitude is not simply a time away from the world, or privacy. Instead, "it is the place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born."¹²¹ One does not enter solitude to flee from the world but to allow opportunity for one's self to be transformed for the sake of the world. In solitude Christ remolds us in his own image and frees us from the world.

Nouwen summarizes the value of solitude for the minister of the Gospel. Solitude molds self-righteous people into persons who are gentle, caring and forgiving. In solitude one becomes so aware of their lives and sinfulness and also God's greater mercy that their entire lives become ministry. In that, there is little difference between doing and being.¹²²

¹¹⁷Maloney, op. cit., p. 19.

¹¹⁸Louis Bouyer, The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers (New York: The Seabury Press, 1982), p. 306.

¹¹⁹Nouwen, Way of the Heart, p. 4. ¹²⁰Bouyer, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

¹²¹Nouwen, op. cit., p. 15. ¹²²Ibid., p. 22.

Silence

Arsenius, an educator at the imperial courts of Constantinople, asked God to direct him to a way of life leading to salvation and was led into the desert. While in the desert, he asked the same question again and heard a voice instructing him to "be silent."¹²³ This period of silence was a devout practice of the early fathers. They praised silence as "the safest way to God."¹²⁴

Silence, then, was an important discipline in the pilgrimage of the early monastics. It can also become a significant discipline for the contemporary pilgrim of the Christian faith. The contemporary life is bombarded with words. Because of this bombardment, words have lost their creative power. Communication, which is the main function of the word, is reduced. One must return to silence, therefore, if one is to communicate with God and be empowered through God's silence.¹²⁵

The writers of the Desert Fathers distinguished three aspects of silence. The first concerns the belief that words lead one to sin. Speaking involves one in the affairs of the world. It is difficult to speak about world affairs without becoming involved with the world. Another reward of silence is that it feeds the life of the Holy Spirit within. If one speaks constantly, there is no time for reflection and the presence of the Holy Spirit is not tended and kept alive. Silence also teaches one to speak. A word that comes out of silence and reflection is powerful. It is out of silence that God speaks.¹²⁶

Prayer

The voice heard by Arsenius not only suggested that he be silent but that he "pray always." A distinctive form of spirituality that emerged from the

¹²³Maloney, op. cit., p. 20. ¹²⁴Nouwen, op. cit., p. 29.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 30-33. ¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 34-41.

early monastic movement was hesychasm, or tranquility. Maloney suggests that Arsenius, who seems to have taken the voice in the desert literally, was a perfect example of a true hesychast. This form of spirituality depicts one whose own asceticism is combined with grace to form a being under the direct influence of God. This state was the goal of the early fathers.¹²⁷

Solitude was not being alone to the hermits, it was being alone with God. Silence was more than not speaking, it was speaking to God. These two, solitude and silence, provided the context in which prayer was practiced. Hesychia was the rest that came as a result of unceasing prayer.¹²⁸

Prayer should not be seen only as an activity of the mind but as an activity of the heart. The early monastics withdrew from the world so that they might eventually attain purity of the heart. Prayer, for these early Christians, was contemplative. Christian perfection could only be attained through a life of constant prayer.¹²⁹

Nouwen suggests that "the prayer of the heart challenges us to hide nothing from God and to surrender ourselves unconditionally to his mercy."¹³⁰ This prayer does not allow us to limit relationships with God to pious emotion or well-chosen words. Instead, it is a prayer that flows directly to God from the very center of one's being. This is the kind of prayer through which one finds strength to "do" ministry.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Maloney, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

¹²⁸ Nouwen, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

¹²⁹ Maloney, op. cit., pp. 20-23.; John Wesley may have been influenced by the early fathers in his quest for perfection. An example of this influence may be found in his tract "The Character of a Methodist" where he describes a Methodist as one who "prays without ceasing" and who is "pure in heart."

¹³⁰ Nouwen, p. 61. ¹³¹ Ibid., pp. 60-61.

Conclusion

One can find in the spiritual disciplines of the early monastics a sense of "being" through which one can "do" ministry. The two must be well-balanced. Solitude, silence, and constant prayer can provide one with strength for ministry. One must remember that being precedes doing. What one does in ministry must flow out of who one is before God. An effective ministry, therefore, flows directly from one's spiritual-care.

A Minister is a Limited Being

One of the most difficult things for minister's of the gospel in our contemporary society to do is understand that they are limited creatures. In their zeal to fulfill their calling, they urge themselves onward until they reach the physical, emotional, and spiritual limitations that God has placed on humankind. At this point they often become frustrated and try even harder and strain those limitations even further. Their actions and their refusals to accept limitations summarize their sins; they want to be like God.

Humankind's struggle to live within limits is certainly not new. In fact, the very first sin of humankind may have been recorded in Adam and Eve's unwillingness to accept their limits. Their greatest temptation in the episode of the Fall was in the encouragement of the serpent that "you will be like God"¹³² Their desire to exceed their limitations and be like God led to their downfall.¹³³ God had created humankind in his own image. He also gave humankind dominion over all the earth; the fish, the birds, every living thing.¹³⁴

¹³²Genesis 3:5. ¹³³Rediger, Burnout, p. 28

¹³⁴Genesis 1:27-30.

However, humankind wanted more-- to be like God. The desire was to cross the line of demarcation between humans and God.

Charles L. Rassieur helps one to understand ministers and how they may be allured to exceed their limits. He argues, "All ministry is defined and measured by the ministry of Jesus Christ. All who respond to his call to live a life of faithfulness to God are called to a life of giving themselves for others."¹³⁵ The minister, then, comes to understand that the denial of one's self to be the ultimate goal for ministry. The problem lies in the minister's understanding of where the power and resources to lead such a life of self-denial originate. The minister may elevate one's self to the point of thinking such power comes from within. Rassieur warns:

. . .the power to accomplish that kind of ministry does not come from the Christian. . .The power to endure is possible only because Christ himself is the Suffering Servant. "I am the vine, you are the branches. . .Apart from me you can do nothing."(John 15:5)¹³⁶

Rediger warns ministers, "We are tempted to play God because we identify so closely with God."¹³⁷ The warning is real. In the desire to fulfill the call in which God has entrusted them and also through the urging of others who would have them become "superhuman," the pastors forget their limits. Rediger continues in a profound chastisement of ministers who often develop a "Messiah complex:"

. . .we pastors act as if we do not or should not have the same limits of energy, insight, and time that we know other human beings have. We pretend we can actually take over responsibility for another person's life, marriage, family, faith or for a congregation's growth in grace. We pretend that our marriages, families, and financial affairs will not fail like anyone else's when we don't give

¹³⁵Charles Rassieur, Stress Management for Ministers (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1982), p. 38.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 40.

¹³⁷Rediger, op. cit., p. 29.

them appropriate attention. We pretend that we can go on and on without proper rest, change of pace, exercise, nutrition, and spiritual nurture and that there will be no consequences. We pretend that, because we are in this noble calling called "the ministry," we somehow become free of human limits(. . .you will be like God. . .).¹³⁸

It is important for minister's to recognize their limits as persons and as pastors. To do this they must set certain priorities in life. They must come to the understanding that God is the creator and Christ is the redeemer. Mankind can be neither creator nor redeemer because God created mankind to be neither. But, mankind can be human and live the life of dominion over all the earth as God intended. When ministers reach this understanding of God's intended order and thereby live lives exemplifying this basic understanding, they will then be free to be ministers of the gospel within the confines of God's limitations. Or, as Carlyle Marney suggests, when ministers learn that they are not Messiahs they can then be human and live and love in the way God intended.¹³⁹

Christ Desires Peace for Humankind

Lloyd J. Ogilvie raises a pertinent question for ministers today, "If the Messiah has come, why is there no peace and tranquility?"¹⁴⁰ While it is true that Christ came to set men free, many persons do not reap the peace that is the direct benefit of finding freedom in Jesus Christ. The minister of the gospel in a contemporary society must acknowledge one's need for peace as well as acknowledge one's source for peace. When this is accomplished, one will then be

¹³⁸Rediger, loc. cit.

¹³⁹Marney, "Fundaments of a Competent Ministry," p. 8.

¹⁴⁰Ogilvie, Making Stress Work for You, p. 34.

able to move toward a biblical view of wholeness for all persons which is "a person called to a life of love and peace with oneself, others, and God."¹⁴¹

Jesus expressed his desire for peace for others at many points in his ministry. He bade the woman who washed his feet and anointed them with oil to "go in peace."¹⁴² The woman who had been plagued with a flow of blood for twelve years received this same farewell after she was healed.¹⁴³ In teaching his disciples, Jesus proclaims "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid."¹⁴⁴ This proclamation seems to indicate that Christ offers a peace that is totally different from a type of peace that is offered by the world. He offers a peace for those who are afraid and troubled.

What is this peace that Jesus offers so freely? Kittel helps one to understand what Christ wills for all persons. The Greek word used for peace is "eirene". Kittel writes that the Greek concept of peace was not primarily a relationship between several people or even an attitude. According to him, eirene indicates a state of being or a state of mind. The Hebrew understanding of the state of peace, or "shaloam," was "well-being." The New Testament interpretation of eirene is similar. It is understood as the opposite of disorder. Kittel emphasizes three concepts noticed in the New Testament usage. They are: "peace as a feeling of peace and rest," "peace as a state of reconciliation with God," and "peace as the salvation of the whole man in an ultimate eschatological sense."¹⁴⁵ Kummel adds further meaning by noting that peace

¹⁴¹ Harbaugh, Pastor as Person, p. 20.

¹⁴² Luke 7:50. ¹⁴³ Luke 8:48. ¹⁴⁴ John 14:27.

¹⁴⁵ Gerhard Kittel, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. II., trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 400-412.

also means the understanding that Christ has overcome the world and that the Christian who has peace in Christ finds deliverance from the power of the world.¹⁴⁶

G. Lloyd Rediger suggests that there are four kinds of peace available to the Christian. One is that kind of peace reached after conflict has ceased or after the task is finished. Another kind of peace is that tranquility which can be found in the midst of toil and conflict. Still another kind of peace is the peace of surrender. This state of mind comes when one totally surrenders himself and all of his life conflicts to God through Christ.¹⁴⁷ Still another version of peace is the learning of contentment. The individual comes to terms with the givens of life and realizes that he has limits.¹⁴⁸ Certainly the Christian minister must seek each of these kinds of peace at various points in ministry. However, when one is searching for a better way to implement self-care in ministry, the latter two categories, peace of surrender and the learning of contentment, are extremely important.

Ogilvie points out that it may be possible to believe in Christ and yet not have peace. This happens when the individual does not allow Christ to have complete control of his life.¹⁴⁹ He argues, "Christ came to set men free of the stress syndrome. He assumed our human nature and went to the cross to reconcile us with God and to heal our troubled minds."¹⁵⁰ When one surrenders one's self completely to Christ and allows Christ to control one's mind, body, and spirit, one will find peace.

¹⁴⁶Werner Georg Kummel, The Theology of the New Testament (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 259.

¹⁴⁷See Matthew 11:28ff.

¹⁴⁸Rediger, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

¹⁴⁹Ogilvie, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 35.

Charles L. Rassieur sees self-care as a prerequisite to ministry. His experience gained in counseling ministers indicates the need for ministers to take care of themselves for the sake of their ministry. Those ministers who have learned to practice self-care agree that the pastor must reach "a spiritual understanding that taking care of one's self, one's needs and interests, is the prerequisite to ministry."¹⁵¹

Carlyle Marney argues that one way of learning contentment in ministry is to recognize that "God has other messengers."¹⁵² Peace is hard to obtain when the minister has the understanding that the minister is the only worker in the Kingdom of God or that the minister is the most important worker. With this attitude, the pastor is prone to exceed his physical, emotional, and spiritual limits. Rediger points out that one of the joys gleaned from experience in ministry is the ability to let go of "intense and inappropriate change agendas for self, others, and the church."¹⁵³ When this happens "we no longer crucify ourselves on the cross of our own idealism."¹⁵⁴ This letting go should not be seen as compromising our standards, neglecting our calling, or even becoming lazy. Rather, it can be interpreted as the wisdom of trusting in God and the striving for self-care in a complex profession. According to Rediger, "Our response to the Great Commission of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20) is not to change everything that is wrong with the church but to be faithful in preaching and teaching discipleship."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹Rassieur, op. cit., p. 55.

¹⁵²Statement by Carlyle Marney in an address ("Spent Arrows - Mood of Exhaustion") to a group of ministers, (tape on file in Reigner Recording Library, Union Theological Seminary).

¹⁵³Rediger, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁵⁴Ibid. ¹⁵⁵Ibid.

Peace for Oswald comes by reinterpreting one's call to ministry as "primarily a call to serve God, not necessarily to serve people."¹⁵⁶ He understands that God first calls the minister to be a liberated, whole human being. The pastor's first responsibility to the congregation "is to be a joyful, redeemed human being."¹⁵⁷ If this understanding is to work appropriately, ministry must be understood "as a communal activity with people in mission, rather than as work for them" since the minister cannot maintain health and wholeness apart from the congregation.¹⁵⁸

If ministers are to have the peace that Christ offers, they must conclude that their call is to serve God in the way that God would desire. Henri Nouwen elaborates:

. . .the minister has to find his place in life, to discover his own contribution, and to affirm his own self: not to cling to it and claim it as his own unique property, but to go out, offer his services to others, and empty himself so that God can speak through him and call man to new life.¹⁵⁹

When this is done, one can find the peace in ministry that Christ has extended all the while.

Summary

Every Christian has the theological responsibility for self-care. When one learns to care for one's self physically, emotionally, and spiritually, one is then released to care for others. One explanation of the minister's failure to cultivate self-care is because of a difference in an espoused theory in ministry

¹⁵⁶Oswald, op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁵⁷Ibid. ¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Nouwen, Creative Ministry, p. 52.

and the actual practice of ministry. The minister's theology encourages one to function in one manner while one's actual practice of ministry is different.

The call to Christian ministry should be taken seriously. The minister is called to a life of self-sacrifice and to the role of a servant as exemplified by Christ. God's call is extended to individuals; each of whom has specific gifts and graces for ministry. The call is extended to persons as they are but with the power to become. The ordinary becomes the extraordinary because of God's call and the fulfillment of that call. This call is also a call to become whole. Completeness comes when one is in control of his physical, emotional, and spiritual faculties. This call is to also become a part of a whole. The individual is called to merge one's own uniqueness with the uniqueness of others and form a wholistic ministry.

Jesus was able to take on the role of a servant because of the power and authority he received from God. He in turn extends that same power and authority to all who will become his followers. Jesus' earthly ministry may be seen as a model for self-care since he recognized his calling as a commission from God. His authority and role clarity came from God as well. Jesus recognized the need for personal support groups and therefore cultivated such relationships. Too, he practiced a life style that monitored his physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

Ministers should maintain a balance between "being" and "doing". One model to help one with this balance is the one suggested by the early spiritual fathers. When one lives a life of solitude, silence and prayer purity of heart may be found. Only then can the minister allow this purity to flow into the actual doing of daily ministry.

One of the most difficult tasks for the contemporary minister is to recognize and accept limitations. The minister would prefer to exceed the

physical, emotional, and spiritual limits that God has placed on each life. The minister would, in fact, prefer to be like God. However, when one strives to be like God, one becomes less effective as a person. Freedom and wholism come when one learns that to become like God is an impossibility. This recognition of human limitations frees one and allows one to become fully man. It is only at this juncture that the minister can become effective in the Christian call of servanthood.

Chapter 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the questionnaire that has given research impetus for this project, present the data, and analyze the responses. The questionnaire and its rationale will be discussed in section one. The second section will identify the respondents by providing demographical information. The third major heading will identify causes of ministerial stress that were identified by the questionnaire. This will be followed by a generalized look at the effects of ministerial stress identified by the questionnaire. The causes and effects of stress will be identified according to those categories established in Chapter Three. A third heading will be used to identify causes and effects of ministerial stress that can not easily be placed into the other groupings. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

Introduction to the Questionnaire

Every person serving a pastoral appointment in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church was mailed a detailed questionnaire in an attempt to identify causes and effects of ministerial stress among ministers in the conference. A total of 265 questionnaires¹ was mailed in December, 1983. A cover letter was included which introduced the questionnaire, explained the purpose of the research, and assured anonymity to

¹See Appendix A for this questionnaire. As indicated in Chapter One, the reader should rate the limitations of the questionnaire. It does not utilize a controlled group and reflects the self-perceptions of the respondents. The interpretation reflects the personal perceptions of the researcher.

all respondents.² A self-addressed, post-paid envelope was also provided so that the completed questionnaire could be returned with the least trouble. Within a matter of days responses to the questionnaire were received. Almost all were returned by January 1, 1984. A total of 159 persons responded yielding a return rate of 60 percent.

Development of the Questionnaire

The development of a questionnaire that would yield valid responses for this research project was a major part of a contextual project involving several persons over a two year period. The major input for this task came from persons in two local churches who were willing to give their time and take part in a Congregational Reflection Group that met on a regular basis.

The questionnaire developed as the Congregation Reflection Groups looked at the life of the minister in detail. The profession of ministry was viewed through several lenses. The pastor's professional life was considered as was his personal life. Family, finances, and support groups were considered. Congregational conflicts, the system of pastoral appointment, and church politics were also investigated. The use of time, resources, and education were brought into focus. This was a time of asking questions, reflecting, speculating, remembering, discussing, and finally hurting with and hurting for ministers. Research for this project coincided with the development of the questionnaire and provided impetus and direction for the groups.

A first draft of the instrument was finally drawn and presented to the Congregational Reflection Group at Grace United Methodist Church. Some

²See Appendix B for this cover letter.

questions were rewritten for clarity after much discussion from this group. The questionnaire was presented to ministerial colleagues of the researcher for their suggestions. The instrument was presented to a research consultant, Dr. Mel Mobley at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, for his counsel. Further rewriting for clarity resulted from his suggestions. The completed instrument was again presented to the reflection group at Grace Church. Since the questionnaire had now expanded to four legal-size pages, the group agreed that it should be reduced to four letter-size pages to limit the respondent's initial reaction to the length of the instrument and hopefully encourage a better response. After being completed and ready to mail to the clergypersons, the questionnaire was presented to the Bishop and District Superintendents of the North Mississippi Conference during a cabinet meeting in November, 1983. These conference leaders gave their approval of the project and the questionnaire was mailed.

Scoring and Discussion of the Questionnaire

The research instrument was designed for ease of response as well as ease of decoding and tabulation. Questions were kept as short and concise as possible. All possible responses were kept on a scale of one to six, with one being the lowest possible scoring and six being the highest, so as not to provide the respondent with a mid-range response. This would encourage the respondent to consider his response in more detail. When scoring results are discussed in this chapter, as well as following chapters the data will be divided into a "lower quadrant" and an "upper quadrant." The lower quadrant will include responses 1, 2, and 3 while the upper quadrant will include responses 4, 5, and 6. This is done for ease of discussion only. The actual responses will be reproduced in tables throughout this and following chapters.

Those involved in the development of the questionnaire saw the importance of questions that would yield the personal demographics of the respondents. Age, sex, race, marital status, number of children at home, spouse employment, and educational level were considered imperative for comparative purposes during the study and for future reference. Also considered important for comparative purposes were the number of years one had been in ministry, one's present conference relationship, position in the church, and the number of years at one's present appointment.

Most of the questions asked in the questionnaire originated from research of ministerial stress. However, some questions were raised to test a particular hypothesis. Research indicated that ministers plagued by stress often neglect their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Question 10, therefore, asked the respondent to rate one's health in these categories. An assumption from the responses to this question was that stress may develop if there is a discrepancy in the minister's theological stance and what the minister perceives the theological stance of the Church to be. Questions 14 and 15 were asked for this purpose. Some researchers have suggested that a minister relies too much on the spouse for friendship and counseling which aggravates the stress situation, therefore, questions 16 and 17 were presented.

There is considerable research that deals with the minister's conflict with the personal use of time. Question 18 was asked to allow the respondents to identify how they use their personal time. Questions 19 and 20 were asked so that a possible conflict between the pastor and congregation over ministerial roles might be identified. Question 21, located in the heart of the instrument, allowed the respondents to rate known stressors in his particular situation. A gleaning of sentences suggested by research was presented in question 22 with

the expectation of arriving at a general understanding of the respondents' view of themselves, their ministry, the congregation, and conference leadership.

According to this research, one's stress is often vented through one's emotions. Question 23 allows the respondent to examine several "feeling" words and rate them according to their frequency in life. The developers of this questionnaire speculated that one specific stressor for ministers in the North Mississippi Conference was low salary. Question 24 allows the respondent to indicate accordingly. Seminaries offering advanced degrees have indicated that some students pursue an advanced degree because of dissatisfaction in ministry. Often this is a last attempt at gaining confidence and competency before the individual changes careers. Question 25 offers the respondent an opportunity to indicate reasons for enrolling in continuing education experiences.

Where do pastors go and what do they do when they encounter a stressful situation? Questions 26 and 27 allow them to answer. Question 28 asks the ministers where they perceive themselves to be ten years later. The assumption behind this particular question was if one was struggling with the pastoral ministry one might also be considering leaving the pastoral ministry for another serving vocation or for secular employment. Question 29 allows the respondent to identify the level of stress encountered in ministry. Extensive research has been done in trying to relate stress to personality types. It has been determined that persons with Type A Behavior pattern are more prone to stress-related diseases. Question 30 is an attempt to gather enough information about the respondent to determine dominant behavior patterns. The last available response on the questionnaire allows the respondent to express any feelings about the testing procedure or to add information that could be helpful to the research project.

Characteristics of Respondents

The persons responding to the questionnaire provide a good representation of the ministers in the North Mississippi Conference. The following information will serve to introduce the reader to the characteristics of the respondents.

Age and Sex

As could be expected, the majority of respondents to the questionnaire were male. In fact, 157 were male and two were female.³ There were 265 available pastoral appointments in the Conference at the time the instrument was mailed and only five of these appointments were served by female ministers. One hundred twenty-one of the respondents were white and thirteen were ethnic minority.⁴ However, 25 persons did not respond to the question concerning race.⁵ Fifty-one percent of the ministers range from 36-55 years of age. Twenty-two percent are 26-35 years old. Ministers who are in the 56-65 range account for over 21 percent of the respondents.⁶

Family Statistics

A total of 150 respondents were married, three were single, one separated, and five were divorced.⁷ The clergy who have spouses that do not work beyond the home total almost 54 percent. Forty-six percent of clergy spouses work beyond the home.⁸ Most ministers who are married have either

³This information is presented in Table 4 in Appendix C. All of the tables referred to in this chapter are located in Appendix C.

⁴Table 5.

⁵One possible suggestion for the lack of response to this question is the placement of the question on the right hand side of the questionnaire.

⁶Table 6. ⁷Table 7. ⁸Table 8.

two or three children still at home. However, several have only one child at home.⁹

Education

Seminary graduates constitute 36 percent of the respondents. Twenty-two percent indicated they have received formal education beyond seminary. The remaining respondents indicated an educational range from less than high school to graduate study beyond college.¹⁰

Ministerial Experience

The respondents to the questionnaire have a broad range of experience in ministry. In fact, the responses were relatively the same in most categories. The smallest group of respondents, with the exception of the two persons with over forty years experience, have six to ten years experience in ministry.¹¹

Health Issues

Ninety-one of the 159 respondents indicated that they were in the normal weight range. Fifty-eight reported themselves to be overweight, while only four persons reported being underweight.¹² Ninety-five percent evaluated themselves as being in the upper quadrant concerning their physical health. Emotional health was rated in this same quadrant by nearly 94 percent while 96 percent evaluated their spiritual health to be in the upper quadrant.¹³

Conference Relationships

One hundred nine of the respondents are ministers in full connection¹⁴ with the annual conference. The remaining responses were relatively similar. A total of 146 respondents are either senior pastors or pastors in charge.¹⁵

⁹Table 10. ¹⁰Table 11. ¹¹Table 12. ¹²Table 13.

¹³Tables 14, 15, and 16. ¹⁴Table 17. ¹⁵Table 18.

Surprisingly, almost 73 percent of the ministers completing the instrument have served their present pastoral appointment only three years or less.¹⁶

Conclusion

1. The persons responding to the questionnaire present a good representation of the conference.

2. The majority of the respondents were Caucasian men between the age of 36 and 55.

3. The majority were married to spouses that do not work beyond the home and have two or three children at home.

4. Well over one half of the respondents were seminary graduates with a broad range of ministerial experience.

5. Over one-third of the ministers were reported to be overweight, but approximately 95 percent perceive themselves to have good physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

Identified Causes of Stress

The causes of stress identified by the questionnaire can be categorized into the same groups of stressors that have been identified and discussed in Chapter Three. Therefore, these causes will be categorized in a like manner for presentation here.

Role Confusion and Role Conflict

Role confusion and role conflict is indicated by the respondents to the questionnaire. This indication is evident foremost in the discrepancies in the ministerial roles and functions that the pastor notes as important compared to

¹⁶Table 19.

how the pastor perceives the importance of these same roles and functions to the congregation.¹⁷ While there is agreement on certain functions, there is a ten percent or larger disagreement on several items. The two perceptions of roles and functions are relative in sermon preparation, church administration, visitation in hospitals and the homes of members, visiting the shut-ins, and attending meetings at the local church. However, discrepancies are noted in several other pastoral functions. The minister perceives preparation for worship to be of more importance than it is to the congregation. There was an 18 percent discrepancy in the importance the minister places on counseling and how the minister understands the congregation to value the role as a counselor. Visiting new comers to the community is also seen as more important to the pastor than it is to the congregation.

The largest variance in ministerial functions was noted in the latter categories presented. Ministers rate attendance at church related meetings beyond the local church to be much more important than they perceive the congregation to value their attendance at these meetings. There is almost a 33 percent variance in the minister's role of attending meetings on the district level. This variance increases to 43 percent when attendance at conference level meetings is evaluated. The variance decreases to 16 percent with the consideration of the pastor's attendance at meetings beyond the conference. The final discrepancy noted in ministerial roles and functions is found in the importance placed on continuing education for the pastor. Ministers value the continuing education experiences for themselves almost 34 percent above what they perceive their congregation to value them.

¹⁷ See Tables 31-58 for a comparison of the respondents' understanding of the importance of certain pastoral functions and the importance they perceive the congregation to place on these same functions.

Other hints of role confusion and role conflict were noted in ministers' responses to other questions. Over 46 percent of the respondents feel obligated to participate in community functions that they do not enjoy.¹⁸ Thirty-two percent noted feelings of guilt when they took time for their own spiritual nurture.¹⁹ Also, 48 percent feel that they do not receive the recognition for the work they accomplish.²⁰

Time Conflicts

The research in Chapter Three indicates that ministers struggle with the use of time. Those responding to the questionnaire were no exceptions to this research. When the respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they have enough time in several categories their response was indicative of a time struggle. A compilation of all the responses yielded responses in the upper quadrant for almost all categories presented. Over 53 percent indicated that they did not have sufficient time for prayer.²¹ When the respondents rated the time they have for personal devotionals, their response was almost identical.²² Only Bible study and family time dropped into the lower quadrant and both of these responses reached approximately 48 percent. More than 64 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not have sufficient time for physical exercise.²³ Time for hobbies and relaxation is even more difficult to find. Almost 69 percent suggested that there was not enough time for hobbies,²⁴ while 73 percent indicated that they had insufficient time for relaxation.²⁵

When asked to rate several noted stressors in ministry, 68 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not have enough time.²⁶ The amount

¹⁸Table 74. ¹⁹Table 87. ²⁰Table 90. ²¹Table 21.

²²Tables 26 and 27. ²³Table 28. ²⁴Table 29.

²⁵Table 30. ²⁶Table 62.

of time their profession requires them to be away from home was a problem with almost 55 percent of the ministers.²⁷ Still another problem with time conflict in ministry surfaces in the responses to behavioral characteristics. Almost 78 percent indicated that their intent is never to be late.²⁸ Yet, over 68 percent always feel rushed,²⁹ 58 percent do many things at one time,³⁰ and nearly 68 percent indicate that they can accomplish tasks quickly.³¹

Ambition and Success

Over 67 percent of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that they are ambitious, and an identical number see themselves as competitive.³² Almost 71 percent see themselves working to a plan and not just "fighting fires" in their ministry.³³ Admittedly, it is difficult to note one's ambitions and preference for success through the completion of a survey instrument. However, satisfaction with one's salary and one's job satisfaction can be seen as indicators. Those responding to the questionnaire were given random opportunities to indicate their feelings in these two categories.

One-third of the ministers responding indicated that they were not satisfied with their salary package.³⁴ The respondents were given the opportunity to compare their salary package with other ministers and other professionals. Forty percent of the respondents feel that their salary is lower than ministers in their peer group, or ministers who are relatively the same age, have similar experience, and the same relationship to the annual conference.³⁵

²⁷Table 63. ²⁸Table 132. ²⁹Table 135. ³⁰Table 137.

³¹Table 139. ³²Tables 141 and 133. ³³Table 85.

³⁴Table 94. Salary package for ministers in the North Mississippi Conference includes a base salary and travel expenses. It may also include utilities, family hospitalization insurance, continuing education funds, and other compensation specified by the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations.

³⁵Table 106.

Eighty-one percent of those responding view their salary package as lower than that of other helping professionals.³⁶ Almost 60 percent feel that their salary compensation is lower than that of the persons in their congregation.³⁷ Nearly 68 percent see their salary package as lower than ministers of other denominations and ministers in other United Methodist Conferences.³⁸ It should be noted, also, that 48 percent of the clergy report feelings that problems with personal finances contribute to the stress in their ministry.³⁹

Most ministers indicate that they are satisfied with their profession. Over 91 percent feel they can be themselves in their work.⁴⁰ Meaning and purpose is found in the work of 97 percent of the respondents⁴¹ and almost 95 percent feel that they are doing the work that God wants them to do.⁴² However, sixteen persons, or 10 percent of the respondents, wish they were in some other vocation.⁴³ Almost 49 percent feel that they do not get adequate recognition for the work they do.⁴⁴

Urge to be Super-Human

The problem of the minister's urge to be super-human is indicated in the responses to the questionnaire. Almost 90 percent of the clergy responding indicated that they frequently rely upon their own personal sources when in a stressful situation.⁴⁵ There is also an indication that ministers responding would like to shelter their problems and not share them with those beyond the parsonage. Over 65 percent indicated that their spouse was their closest

³⁶Table 107. ³⁷Table 108. ³⁸Tables 109 and 110.

³⁹Table 69. ⁴⁰Table 80. ⁴¹Table 75. ⁴²Table 88.

⁴³Table 89. ⁴⁴Table 90. ⁴⁵Table 112.

friend.⁴⁶ Over 73 percent indicated the spouse was their most frequent counselor,⁴⁷ while 87 percent revealed the spouse was a supporter in times of stress.⁴⁸

The tendency to keep ministerial problems inward is also indicated by the responses dealing with relationships with persons beyond the parsonage. Nearly 57 percent of the respondents feel that their congregations do not understand the problems they have in ministry.⁴⁹ Also, 49 percent feel that they cannot trust conference leadership to keep confidences.⁵⁰

The research presented in Chapter Three indicates that unresolved anger and a sense of loneliness are direct results of a minister's urge to be super-human. Over 36 percent of the ministers reported frequent feelings of loneliness,⁵¹ while almost 29 percent reported frequent feelings of anger.⁵²

Family Related Problems

The respondents to the questionnaire did not generally indicate that family related issues were a significant problem for them. One factor signifying problems with family has to do with the difficulty the minister has in finding time for his family. Over 47 percent noted that they never have enough time with their families.⁵³ Almost 15 percent indicated the lack of spouse support in their ministry as a problem.⁵⁴ Nearly 13 percent reported disagreements with family members as a cause of stress.⁵⁵ A problem with their spouses's employment or unemployment is experienced by nearly 25 percent of the respondents.⁵⁶ Frequent moving is a problem for over 26 percent of the clergy

⁴⁶Table 22. ⁴⁷Table 23. ⁴⁸Table 115. ⁴⁹Table 71.

⁵⁰Table 83. ⁵¹Table 97. ⁵²Table 101. ⁵³Table 27.

⁵⁴Table 59. ⁵⁵Table 60. ⁵⁶Table 66.

responding.⁵⁷ Inadequate housing is reported to be a problem with only 13 of those completing the questionnaire.⁵⁸

Thirty-three persons, or 21 percent of the respondents, think their spouse would prefer them to be in another job.⁵⁹ Only 11 percent of the respondents feel that their congregation does not respect the privacy of his family in the home.⁶⁰

The Need of Support Groups

The inability of ministers to develop support systems is indicated by their responses to the testing instrument. The pastor seems to depend most upon the spouse as a friend, a counselor, and a support person in times of stress. When asked to reveal their closest friend, over 65 percent of the respondents named their spouse.⁶¹ The next most often mentioned friend was another United Methodist minister. However, less than 18 percent of the clergy responded in this way.

When asked to note their most frequent counselor, 73 percent of the respondents suggested their spouses.⁶² The second counselor mentioned most frequently was again another United Methodist minister. Only 13 percent named this second source of counseling support. Another minister, not necessarily a United Methodist, was suggested as someone used as a resource to manage stress in ministry 40 percent of the time by the respondents.⁶³ However, the spouse was suggested as a resource nearly 88 percent of the time.⁶⁴ The ministers revealed that they depended upon their Christian faith and themselves most often when looking for ways to manage ministerial stress. A professional counselor is considered less than eight percent of the time.⁶⁵

⁵⁷Table 67. ⁵⁸Table 70. ⁵⁹Table 76. ⁶⁰Table 95. ⁶¹Table 22.

⁶²Table 23. ⁶³Table 113. ⁶⁴Table 115. ⁶⁵Table 114.

Relying on a Self-Sufficient Spirituality

One hundred percent of the ministers answered in the upper quadrant when asked if they frequently relied upon their Christian faith in times of stress.⁶⁶ They also reported relying upon spiritual activities almost 85 percent of the time as a means of managing stress in ministry.⁶⁷ However, there is evidence that the respondents do not arrange their life in a way to allow the development of a deep spiritual relationship with God. When questioned about the availability of personal time approximately one half of those responding indicated there was not enough time for prayer, devotionals, or Bible study. Nearly 54 percent reported that they did not have enough time for prayer,⁶⁸ while 53 percent reported that there was not enough time for devotionals.⁶⁹ Finally, 48 percent reported a lack of time for Bible study.⁷⁰ To add to this dilemma, over 31 percent of the respondents reported feelings of guilt when they take time for their own spiritual nurture.⁷¹

Ages and Stages

Some of the most significant revelations that come from the responses to the questionnaire are related to the number of years of experience in the ministerial profession by the respondents. The responses indicate that persons in the earlier years of ministry tend to see themselves as theologically more conservative, but they tend to move toward a moderate theological stance as they gain experience in ministry.⁷² These same individuals see the theological stance of the Church to be more liberal during their earlier years in ministry, but tend to see the Church to have a more moderate stance as they gain experience in ministry.⁷³

⁶⁶Table 111. ⁶⁷Table 117. ⁶⁸Table 24. ⁶⁹Table 25. ⁷⁰Table 26.

⁷¹Table 87. ⁷²Table 142. ⁷³Table 143.

The study indicates that ministers will usually trust other ministers less as they accumulate experience in ministry. Those ministers with 21 to 30 years experience rely least on other ministers.⁷⁴ Their trust is placed most often in their spouses. Young ministers, on the other hand, struggle most often with non-support of their spouses.⁷⁵ At the same time, more experienced ministers rely more often on former church members as confidants.⁷⁶

There is some indication that experience enables clergypersons to arrange their schedules to allow time for spiritual formation, physical exercise, hobbies, and relaxation. Even though most ministers struggle with time, those ministers with more experience indicated less time strain.⁷⁷ Ministers with six to twenty years experience have more problems with their ministry requiring them to be away from home than do those in other categories.⁷⁸

The most obvious stages of ministry that encounter stressors are those in the first few years of ministry and those at mid-career. Younger ministers experience feelings of helplessness, confusion, anger, and guilt.⁷⁹ The feeling of competence is less among ministers with six to ten years of experience.⁸⁰ This group also reports the highest feelings of shame in relationship to their profession.⁸¹ Ministers with less than six years experience have less support from their spouse.⁸² Spouses of these clergypersons are most likely to wish their partners were in another vocation.⁸³ The ministers, themselves, are also more likely to wish they were serving elsewhere.⁸⁴

⁷⁴Table 144. ⁷⁵Table 145. ⁷⁶Table 144. ⁷⁷Table 146.

⁷⁸Table 147. ⁷⁹See Tables 148-157. ⁸⁰Table 154. ⁸¹Table 156.

⁸²Table 145. ⁸³Table 158. ⁸⁴Table 159.

Those serving for 21 to 30 years in pastoral ministry also experience difficulties. The feelings of loneliness and depression are highest at this point in their career.⁸⁵ This group reports the least amount of zest in ministry.⁸⁶ They are also less satisfied with being a minister on a daily basis.⁸⁷ Confidence that conference leaders will come to their rescue during times of conflict is lowest at this stage in ministry.⁸⁸ Persons in this group are least satisfied with their advancement in the conference.⁸⁹

Ministers have different opinions about their relationship with the conference and trust in conference leadership. Feelings about politics in the conference fluctuate significantly with one's years of experience.⁹⁰ Those with five or less years experience understand conference politics to be low. However, those with six to ten years experience see the degree of politics to increase significantly. These feelings drop to the previous level for those with 11 to 20 years experience before rising sharply for those with 21 to 30 years experience. Finally, the feelings of conference politics drops drastically for those with 31 to 40 years experience.

Those respondents with less than six years experience in ministry feel the conference values their ministry. Oddly enough, the ministers with six to ten years experience understand the conference to value their ministry least.⁹¹ This group also shows the least satisfaction with church promotional policies⁹² and the most distrust in conference leaders.⁹³

⁸⁵See Tables 149 and 152. ⁸⁶Table 160. ⁸⁷Table 161.

⁸⁸Table 162. ⁸⁹Table 163. ⁹⁰Table 164. ⁹¹Table 165.

⁹²Table 166. ⁹³Table 167.

Conclusions

1. The respondents report a high degree of role conflict which is indicated by discrepancies in the minister's perception of ministerial functions and the importance the minister perceives the congregation to place on these same functions.
2. There is a high level of stress related to the time the respondents have for the practice of spiritual disciplines, family, hobbies, and relaxation.
3. Two-thirds of those responding to the questionnaire indicate that they are ambitious, yet 91 percent are satisfied with their profession.
4. The tendency to be super-human surfaces in one's relying upon one's self to a high degree in times of stress.
5. The minister's spouse is reported to be the minister's closest friend, most frequent counselor, and usual support in times of stress.
6. The most noticeable family problem among the respondents is the lack of time the pastor can spend with family.
7. A spiritual immaturity may be indicated by the facts that the respondents do not order their lives to provide time for spiritual disciplines and that almost one-third of the respondents noted feelings of guilt when they took time for their own spiritual nurture.
8. Persons in the first few years of ministry and those in the mid-career years experience the most stress in ministry.

Identified Effects of Stress

Several effects of ministerial stress have been implied in the above discussion of the causes of stress identified by the respondents to the questionnaire. The categories grouping the effects of ministerial stress

identified in Chapter Three will be used below as the effects of stress identified by the respondents are presented.

Loneliness

Chapter Three identified loneliness as an effect of ministerial stress. Reasons given for loneliness in the clergy profession are role conflict and role confusion, time conflicts, trying to be all things to all people, and the urge to exceed human limitations. The responses to the survey instrument identified some of these problems.

Over 36 percent of the respondents indicated they experience loneliness frequently.⁹⁴ Loneliness is most prevalent in ministers who have 21 to 30 years experience.⁹⁵ Frequent loneliness was indicated by 42 percent of the respondents in this particular category.

The discrepancies in the responses of the clergy perception of ministerial functions and the importance the clergy perceive the congregation to place on the same functions have been discussed earlier. There was a large variance in several ministerial functions that would indicate the possibility of role confusion and role conflict.⁹⁶

As indicated above, ministers in the North Mississippi Conference struggle with time conflicts.⁹⁷ The respondents indicated strong time conflicts in every category presented. Over 50 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not have sufficient time for prayer, devotionals, physical exercise, hobbies, and relaxation. Sixty-eight percent of the clergypersons indicated that not having enough time was a stressor in their ministry. Time away from home

⁹⁴Table 97. ⁹⁵Table 149. ⁹⁶Compare Tables 31-58.

⁹⁷See Tables 24-30.

was identified as a problem. The ministers also indicated that time conflicts with their behavioral patterns.⁹⁸

The questionnaire did not specifically address the issue of one trying to be all things to all people. However, respondents were asked questions concerning whether they could be themselves in ministry and if they felt they were doing what God would have them do. Over 91 percent of the respondents feel that they can be themselves in their ministry,⁹⁹ while almost 95 percent feel that they are doing what God wants them to do.¹⁰⁰

Incompetence

Incompetence in ministry, according to research presented in Chapter Three, is caused by the mismatch of a pastor's talents with the requirements of the profession, an inequity in the matchings of pastor, community, and church, family disharmony, frequency of moves, and bitterness on the part of the pastor. The persons completing the questionnaire identified some of these characteristics in their ministry. The majority of respondents indicated that their talents and training were being utilized in their present ministry. In fact, almost 78 percent of the respondents feel this way.¹⁰¹ These statistics suggest little inequity in the matching of pastor and community.

Family tensions do not seem to be a serious problem when one considers the overall response to the questionnaire. However, there are isolated cases that signify family problems. Ministers have a problem securing sufficient time for their families.¹⁰² Younger ministers have problems with spouses supporting them in their ministry.¹⁰³ This same age group indicated by a higher frequency that their spouses would prefer them to have another job.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸See Tables 132, 135, 137, and 139. ⁹⁹Table 80. ¹⁰⁰Table 88.

¹⁰¹Table 72. ¹⁰²Table 62. ¹⁰³Table 145. ¹⁰⁴Table 158.

Inadequate housing, that might lend itself to family disharmony, is seen as a problem by only 13 percent of the respondents.¹⁰⁵

The most substantial information gleaned from the responses may be the revelation of frequent moving by ministers in the conference. The statistics indicate that 73 percent of the ministers have served their present appointment three years or less.¹⁰⁶ Over 52 percent have served their present appointment only two years or less, while 25 percent are serving their first year in their present pastoral appointment. This information reveals that approximately 25 percent of the respondents move each year.

Bitterness was not included in the feeling words presented for frequencies by the respondents. However, anger was included. Nearly 75 percent of the respondents indicated frequent feelings of anger.¹⁰⁷ Bitterness does surface at other points in the questioning. Particular points have to do with conference relationships. Forty-six percent of the respondents indicated problems with politics in the conference.¹⁰⁸ Over 40 percent said they could not depend on the support of conference leaders in time of conflict.¹⁰⁹ A total of 35 persons indicated they were not satisfied with their advancement in the conference.¹¹⁰ Thirty-nine persons indicated feelings that the conference does not value their ministry.¹¹¹ Only 49 percent of those responding feel that they can trust conference leaders to keep confidences.¹¹² One respondent even wrote in the margin near this question, "Are you kidding?" Also, over 47 percent do not think the conference leadership will make every reasonable effort to advance their careers.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵Table 70. ¹⁰⁶Table 19. ¹⁰⁷Table 101. ¹⁰⁸Table 65.

¹⁰⁹Table 77. ¹¹⁰Table 78. ¹¹¹Table 79. ¹¹²Table 83.

¹¹³Table 86.

Poor Self-Care

Chapter Three and Chapter Four have argued for the need for self-care among ministers. However, there are indicators that the respondents do not practice the best rules of self-care. Ministers simply do not arrange their time schedules to provide sufficient time for matters relating to their own health. The respondents indicate that they do not have enough time for prayer, devotionals, and Bible study.¹¹⁴ Another factor in the development of one's spiritual care surfaces when 32 percent of the respondents indicated that they feel guilty when they do take time for their own spiritual nurture.¹¹⁵ Approximately 50 percent of the respondents revealed that they seldom have enough time for spiritual disciplines. Sixty-four percent indicate that they do not have sufficient time for physical exercise.¹¹⁶ Almost 69 percent indicated they do not have enough time for hobbies,¹¹⁷ while nearly 73 percent do not have time for personal relaxation.¹¹⁸

Other indicators of poor self-care may be found in the way the respondents rate their health. At least 95 percent of the group perceive their physical, emotional, and spiritual health to be good.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, over 37 percent of the respondents see themselves as being overweight.¹²⁰

Burnout

As indicated earlier, burnout in ministry is an increasing problem. Indicators of burnout are negative thinking, depression, loss of ambition, undefined goals, spiritual immaturity, and impatience. The negative thinking aimed toward conference leadership has been considered above. The lack of

¹¹⁴See Tables 24, 25, and 26.

¹¹⁵Table 87. ¹¹⁶Table 28.

¹¹⁷Table 29. ¹¹⁸Table 30.

¹¹⁹Compare Tables 14, 15, and 16.

¹²⁰Table 13.

confidence in conference leadership is supported by the responses to the questionnaire.

Thirty-two persons indicated frequent feelings of depression in their ministry.¹²¹ The questionnaire indicated a fairly high level of ambition among the respondents. However, the questionnaire does not provide indicators for the loss of ambition among the respondents. The response to one particular question does indicate that ministers do have definite goals toward which they are working.¹²² Still, 45 persons admitted they usually "fight fires" in their ministry and do not work toward definite goals. A spiritual immaturity among the respondents has already been alluded to in previous discussion. Finally, almost one-half of the respondents reported themselves to be impatient.¹²³

One danger of burnout is that one encounters one or more stressors over a prolonged period of time. Those responding to the survey indicated frequent stress in several categories.¹²⁴ The fact that there is never enough time is the most significant stressor. This is followed by problems presented with having to spend time away from home. Politics within the conference, personal finances, and church finances are other leading stressors identified by the respondents.

Termination of Pastoral Ministry

If ministers are subjected to stressful conditions for long enough periods of time there is always danger that they will terminate their pastoral ministry. The research presented in Chapter Three indicates that while there is no one dominant reason causing ministers to drop-out, there are leading factors that have been identified in the lives of those who have left the pastoral ministry.

¹²¹Table 100. ¹²²Table 85. ¹²³Table 136.

¹²⁴Compare Tables 59-70.

These factors include a sense of personal and professional inadequacy, being unable to relocate when necessary, problems with the family, lack of opportunity to use one's skills and training, and personal illness. Few of these factors were identified by this study. However, there are indications of possible termination in specific situations.

Young ministers may be given reasons for termination of ministry since several of them feel their spouses would prefer them to be in another vocation and since they are most susceptible to lack of support from their spouse.¹²⁵ In fact, four persons, or nearly 15 percent of this group, indicated that they wished they were in another vocation.¹²⁶

Six persons, or nearly 19 percent of those with 21 to 30 years of experience in ministry, indicated they wished they were in some other vocation.¹²⁷ This group also indicated the highest level of loneliness and depression in their ministry, as indicated above. This group is less satisfied in ministry on a daily basis¹²⁸ and have the least confidence in conference leadership.¹²⁹

When asked to evaluate the level of stress in their ministry, 93 persons, or 60 percent of the total respondents, indicated that their stress was manageable. Another 53 persons, or 34 percent, admitted that their stress was manageable but taking its toll on their health. Three persons revealed that their stress in ministry was higher than desirable which called for either reduction in the stress level or finding another vocation. One other person indicated that the stress level was much too high which calls for radical action.¹³⁰ In response to the question asking where they saw themselves serving ten years later, the

¹²⁵See Tables 158 and 145. ¹²⁶Table 159. ¹²⁷Table 159.

¹²⁸Table 161. ¹²⁹See Tables 162 and 167. ¹³⁰Table 131.

respondents usually responded as one might predict.¹³¹ Their likelihood to be in pastoral ministry decreased with age, while their likelihood to be retired increased with age. Approximately one-third of all the responses indicated the possibility of being in another serving vocation ten years later.¹³² Those with less than six years in ministry indicated the highest possibility of being in secular employment ten years later. Those with 21 to 30 years experience presented the second highest response.¹³³

Conclusions

1. Over one-third of the respondents indicated frequent loneliness which may be caused by role conflicts as well as time conflicts.
2. Incompetency in ministry is indicated best by the high frequency of moves from one church to another made by the respondents.
3. Poor self-care is evident in the way pastors arrange their schedules to allow time for their own physical, emotional, and spiritual care.
4. Indicators of negative thinking, depression, spiritual immaturity, and impatience that can cause clergy burnout are evident in several respondents.
5. A possible termination of ministry is most evident in young ministers who suffer most with non-support of their spouses and have the highest desire to be in some other vocation.

Other Related Observations

Two particular observations should be made that do not necessarily fit into the categories listed above. One has to do with the dominant clergy behavioral pattern while the other involves the minister's total perception of ministry. Each may be seen as related to both the cause and effect of

¹³¹See Tables 168 and 169. ¹³²Table 170. ¹³³Table 171.

ministerial stress. Both of these observations can be gleaned from the responses made by those completing the research instrument.

The majority of the ministers responding present indications of a Type A behavioral pattern, which is conducive to stress related maladies. While this testing should not be seen as conclusive, it can be seen as a strong indicator. Over 77 percent of the ministers reported that their intent was never to be late for appointments,¹³⁴ and almost 69 percent feel that they always feel rushed.¹³⁵ One-half of the respondents are impatient,¹³⁶ while nearly 59 percent report that do they many things at once.¹³⁷ A similiar number reported that they were fast at doing things.¹³⁸ Nearly 68 percent reported themselves to be ambitious.¹³⁹ Each of these behavioral characteristics are noted in persons with Type A behavior.

Other indicators reported by the respondents are not in line with Type A behavior. Almost three-fourths of those responding see themselves as good listeners as opposed to anticipating what others are going to say.¹⁴⁰ It is possible that the ministers perceive themselves to be better listeners than they really are or that their ministerial training and experience have enabled them to be good listeners. Over 54 percent reveal that they seek to satisfy themselves in their profession and are concerned less with pleasing others.¹⁴¹ However, it has been reported earlier that over 25 percent of the respondents indicated that they do not get the proper recognition for the job they do.¹⁴² Nearly 59 percent report several interests outside of ministry.¹⁴³ The open-endedness

¹³⁴Table 132. ¹³⁵Table 135. ¹³⁶Table 136. ¹³⁷Table 137

¹³⁸Table 139 ¹³⁹Table 141. ¹⁴⁰Table 134. ¹⁴¹Table 138.

¹⁴²Table 90. ¹⁴³Table 140.

of the question allowed the respondent to interpret the meaning of "interests outside of ministry." As indicated above many respondents also reported that they do not have time for such endeavors. There are strong indications that the respondents are aware of the overall occupational hazards in ministry. When asked to compare the level of stress they have in ministry with the stress of others, most indicated that they had no more stress than their colleagues. In fact, less than 18 percent of the respondents feel that they have more stress than do their colleagues.¹⁴⁴ Many of the respondents also recognize the need to manage stress in ministry and are able to do so. Nearly 59 percent of the respondents report that they are able to manage their stress without major problems.¹⁴⁵

Conclusions

1. There are several indications that the majority of the respondents have Type A behavior.
2. Several respondents indicate that they are aware of stress in ministry and are able to manage it sufficiently.

Summary

This chapter has introduced the reader to the questionnaire that has given research impetus for the project, presented the data, and analyzed the responses. A total of 265 questionnaires were mailed to the ministers serving pastoral appointments in the North Mississippi Conference. The return rate was sixty percent. This instrument was designed for ease of response and ease of tabulation. Specific research rationale determined each question asked.

¹⁴⁴Table 84.

¹⁴⁵Table 131.

The respondents are a good representation of the ministers in the conference. Of those responding, 157 were male and 2 were female. One hundred twenty-one respondents were white. One-half of the ministers ranged from thirty-six to fifty-five years of age. Almost all of the respondents were married. Thirty-six percent were seminary graduates. Those responding indicated a broad range of ministerial experience.

Major causes of stress in ministers in the conference include role conflict, time related matters, lack of support groups, and the lack of time for spiritual disciplines. Effects of stress are indicated in loneliness, frequent moving, poor self-care, possible burnout, and possible termination of one's ministry. The majority of the respondents indicate the presence of Type A behavior.

Chapter 6

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Now that the data gleaned from the responses of 159 persons completing the questionnaire has been presented and analyzed, the next step is the interpretation of those findings. The purpose of Chapter Six is to interpret the causes and effects of ministerial stress prevalent among the respondents in light of the problem and hypothetical questions presented in Chapter One. Each of the eight questions will be considered through the interpretation of the responses made by those completing the questionnaire. When the questions have been restated, considered, and interpreted, the problem will then be restated.

Restatement of the Hypothetical Questions

The questions presented at the beginning of this study will be used to interpret the findings of the study. The questions include:

1. Is vocational stress present in the life of ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church?
2. What support systems does a minister utilize in times of stress?
3. Is there a connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress?
4. Is stress higher in certain stages of one's ministerial career?
5. Do ministers, as individuals, see themselves as the only minister affected by stress?
6. Is there an identifiable personality or behavioral pattern that causes some ministers to have a high level of vocational stress?
7. Do ministers in the conference have a theology of self-care?

8. Does a high level of vocational stress cause one to leave the ministry to which he/she has been called?

Presence of Vocational Stress Among Ministers

The questionnaire revealed several areas related to ministry that have the potential to cause stress in the clergy profession. The major areas will be presented below.

Number of Years At Present Pastoral Appointment

The respondents to the questionnaire indicate a high rate of mobility among ministers in the conference.¹ The statistics indicate that nearly three-fourths of those respondents will move from one pastoral appointment to another every three years. Over one-half will move every two years. This information suggests that ministers may not have a high level of stress, but may have a high level of ministerial incompetency.

The research presented in Chapter Three suggests that one effect of ministerial stress is incompetency in ministry. One major cause of this incompetency is the frequency of moves from one church to another. The reasoning is that frequent moving does not allow the minister nor the minister's family to adequately associate themselves with a congregation and a community. Short-term ministry is also one technique ministers may use to escape facing the problems of their ministry. One way to allude the problems that surface in almost every congregation is to move away from them. However, in a short period of time the minister will face similar problems in another setting. If one is not willing to face the issues at hand, one will be forced to move again.

¹See Table 19.

Frequent moving may also be the minister's way of refusing to face one's own incompetency in ministry. If one moves often one will be given the opportunity to use the same ingrained techniques and will not be forced to expand one's ministerial talents.

Theological Variances

One assumption made by those who developed the questionnaire was that ministers may have a higher level of stress if they hold a different theological stance than what they perceive the Church to have. The responses to the research instrument indicate theological variances perceived by some ministers.² This variance is most noticeable among younger ministers who have a tendency to see themselves as theologically conservative while they see the Church to be more liberal. As one gains experience in ministry, however, these understandings begin to change. Persons with more ministerial experience usually see themselves becoming more moderate and see the Church doing the same.

The theological variance noticed in younger ministers may be seen as a rather normal pilgrimage for many. When one first enters the ministry, one has great expectations of changing the institutional church for the better. This better understanding is usually more conservative than it has been in the past. The perception usually comes from one beyond the ministerial profession looking inside it. However, when one enters the profession one's ideas may change. The church may not be as wrong as one had previously thought. One may lose the enthusiasm to change the institution to other ministerial matters that seem to be more pressing at the time. As noted earlier, the learning stage of ministry is

²See Tables 21 and 22.

a time at which the younger minister learns that the congregation is not as intent as the minister is about change. Without a support system for change, the young minister may give up on the dream.

Time Related Matters

The proper use of time is a problem for over one-half of those responding to the questionnaire. Their response to a question asking them to indicate whether they have sufficient time in several categories indicated a problem with time.³ The responses revealed that approximately 50 percent of the pastors do not have sufficient time for prayer, devotionals, Bible study, and family. Time for physical exercise, hobbies, and relaxation is even more elusive to the pastor.

The ministers seem to understand the need for spiritual disciplines and family support more than the need for rest, relaxation, and time away from ministerial tasks. However, if 50 percent or more of the pastors completing the questionnaire struggle with having sufficient time to practice the spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith, a crisis in ministry may be near at hand.

Since the pastor has the freedom to work out a time schedule, those things that are scheduled would seem to be most important. With this in mind, it can be argued that the minister's self-esteem is often more important than the minister's self-care. The respondents have less time for physical exercise, hobbies, and relaxation. These functions are important to one who seeks to be whole and be a part of a wholistic ministry.

The respondents need to learn to discipline themselves in their ministry. Not having enough time was a complaint of 68 percent of the respondents.⁴ This indicates a lack of self-discipline in an open-ended profession. Very few of the

³See Tables 24-30.

minister's tasks can be considered "complete" at the end of the day. The freedom the pastor has to set a time schedule may very well be the greatest cause of stress. While the minister may be over-scheduled, it could be because of personal choice. This may be one way ministers have of proving their own importance to themselves and all the persons around them. Several persons indicated that they do not receive adequate recognition for the work they do. This conflict with time is one way ministers can force recognition.

Role Conflict and Role Confusion

The respondents to the questionnaire indicated a strong possibility of role conflict and role confusion among ministers in the conference.⁴ There is a definite discrepancy between the minister's understanding of the importance of several ministerial functions and how important the minister perceives these same functions to be to this congregation. The perception is that ministers and their congregations usually agree on pastoral matters such as sermon preparation, visiting in hospitals, the homes of church members, and the homes of shut-ins, church administration, and the pastor's attendance at meetings in the local church. However, the minister understands the roles as worship planner and pastoral counselor to be more important personally than does the congregation. The same may be said of the ministerial task of visiting newcomers to the community.

The minister may perceive the congregation to be asking their pastor to be more visible in the community. Most of the tasks where the perceptions are similar call for the pastor to be visible in the local community. Certainly preaching well prepared sermons for community worship services call for a high

⁴ Compare Tables 31-44 with 45-58.

degree of visibility. So do the tasks of visiting the hospital, visiting in homes of members, and visiting shut-ins. The laity may assume that if one is a good church administrator one will find time to do more important ministerial tasks.

Pastoral counseling is usually done in the pastor's office or in the home of the person seeking counseling. Therefore, the pastor is not as highly visible as one might be if performing other tasks of the ministry. Visiting the homes of newcomers may be seen by the layperson as the minister leaving the established bounds of the church community where the minister always has more than enough to keep busy. On the other hand, this may be understood as an effort to include other persons whom the laity feel are not necessarily needed in the congregation.

The pastor, however, seems to be struggling with a need to fulfill a calling to be a minister to all people. For the minister, the role of pastor can be performed just as well as a counselor at certain junctures as it can be by being a preacher. Organizing for worship has a place in ministry as does preparing for worship. Visiting newcomers to the community may very well be one way the pastor, on behalf of the church, reaches out to others.

The largest variances in the minister's perception of the importance of roles to both the minister and the congregation usually have to do with the minister's attendance at meetings beyond the local church. In fact, as the minister moves away from the local church, the variances increase. The minister sees attendance at district meetings to be almost 33 percent more important personally than does the congregation. This variance increases to 43 percent for conference level meetings. Several points can be made here. The clergy probably interprets the attendance of district meetings and conference level meetings as important in advancing one's career. If one is to be part of a connectional church, one must take part in connectional meetings beyond the

local church. The laity have a tendency not to understand the importance of such gatherings for the minister. They may see their minister's most important responsibility to be tending the local church, for which one is paid an ample salary.

Meetings beyond the local church are important to the pastor because they provide the pastor with opportunities for fellowship with other ministers and conference leaders. This idea is broadened when one considers the importance the minister places on conference-level meetings. Such gatherings offer the minister better opportunities of fellowship with others. The minister may very well be searching for support and understanding from places beyond the local church. This may also be a time when the ministers feel they can actually "be themselves" away from the local congregations. They do not have to be as guarded and, therefore, do not have to keep persons at a distance to maintain a role of being super-human.

The large variance in responses may also be representative of the minister's perception that the local congregation would have their pastor spend more time in the parish. The further the pastor moves away from the bounds of the local church the more one perceives the congregation to disagree. The congregation may be encouraging the pastor to stay in the church community where the pastor can be seen doing ministry.

The importance of attending meetings beyond the annual conference decrease for both the pastor and one's perception of the congregation. Still, there is a 16 percent discrepancy. Meetings beyond the annual conference do not provide the pastor as much fellowship with peers and are not as important. On the other hand, the local congregation understands that meetings beyond the conference are far less frequent than district and conference events and, therefore, do not present as much of a threat to the pastor's time.

These same ideas carry over to the discrepancies in how the minister perceives the role of continuing education.⁵ Clergy value continuing education experiences for themselves almost 34 percent higher than what they perceive their congregations to value them. Almost 70 percent of the ministers responded that they enroll in continuing education through a sense of duty to their profession. It is important that they keep abreast of the changes in their field. However, nearly 80 percent reported that they enroll in such experiences for the fellowship with others. The congregation, on the other hand, seems to be issuing a call for the pastor to remain in the community and "do ministry" rather than going away and learning new ways to do ministry. The congregation may be urging the pastor to put what is already known to work in the parish.

Possible role conflict and role confusion are noted in other responses to the questionnaire. Over 46 percent of the respondents feel obligated to participate in community functions that they do not enjoy.⁶ Since they do not make such decisions to please themselves, it must be assumed that they participate in these activities at the urging of the local congregation or because they feel this would be good for the church. Thirty-two percent of the respondents feel guilty when they take time for their own spiritual nurture.⁷ This guilt comes from the decision to use time for themselves and not as the local parish would dictate. The decision to do ministry without the aid of regular spiritual disciplines comes from a poor theology of self-care. The pastor understands one's call to be of service to others when one should first be a servant of God. There is a great gulf between one's espoused theory and one's theory of practice.

⁵See Tables 122-126.

⁶Table 74.

⁷Table 87.

Conference Related Matters

Several ministers are struggling with their relationship to a connectional system. This struggle should not be seen as totally negative. Some of the struggles and even dissatisfactions may be seen as faults of any connectional system and not confined to the North Mississippi Annual Conference. While several respondents indicate problems with matters related to the conference, an overwhelming 80 percent indicate that, as a minister, they will always have a place to work.⁸ Without trying to press a point, one can assume that the majority of these respondents anticipate maintaining a connection with the conference.

Almost 50 percent of the respondents indicate experiencing "politics" within the conference on a frequent basis.⁹ The question was presented in a way to allow all respondents to interpret what "politics" meant to them. Usually, however, politics in this context is understood to be something less than desirable. One segment of the questionnaire presented several statements having to do with conference relationships. Many of these statements were rated negatively by those responding. There seems to be a rather high lack of trust of conference leadership by the respondents. Almost 39 percent of the ministers do not feel they can depend on conference leadership in times of conflict.¹⁰ Again, the question was left open-ended to allow for individual interpretation. At the same time, approximately 50 percent of the respondents reported feelings that they cannot trust conference leaders to keep confidences.¹¹ One pertinent point is evident. Many of the clergypersons are hesitant to use conference leaders as support systems in times of stress. This

⁸Table 91.

⁹Table 65.

¹⁰Table 77.

¹¹Table 83.

lack of trust may be because the ministers realize some of the conference leaders may very well have a voice in their appointment to their next church.

The respondents presented conflicting information concerning their advancement in the conference. Over three-fourths of the clergy indicate that they are satisfied with their advancement in the conference.¹² A similar number of the respondents have the feeling that the conference values their ministry.¹³ However, 52 percent said they were dissatisfied with the conference promotional policies.¹⁴ On this same line of thought, only 45 percent feel that the conference leadership will make every reasonable effort to advance their career and professional standing.¹⁵

One must assume that there is a lot of underlying tension in the lives of conference ministers. On the one hand, they are relatively satisfied with their particular appointment. The feeling that their present situation uses their talents and capabilities was presented by 78 percent of the respondents.¹⁶ A large majority feels that the conference sees their value as a minister and are satisfied with their advancement in the conference. On the other hand, over one-half are dissatisfied with the promotional policies that placed them where they are. The key to understanding the dilemma may be in the fact that only 45 percent feel that the conference will work at helping them to advance their careers. While the group is relatively satisfied with this particular appointment, or at least their advancement to this point, they seem to be uncertain about the future. Their ambition for future days in an appointment system is evident. So is their anxiety.

¹²Table 78. ¹³Table 79.

¹⁴Table 82. ¹⁵Table 86.

¹⁶Table 72.

Support Systems Utilized in Times of Stress

The clergy responding to the questionnaire have difficulty developing appropriate support groups. One question on the questionnaire asked the clergy to rate the frequency one relied upon certain support systems when in a stressful situation.¹⁷ Every respondent reported to frequently rely upon Christian faith at such times. At other points, the respondents rated their spiritual health to be good. However, some of these same respondents reported a lack of time for spiritual disciplines and a sense of guilt when they took time for their own spiritual nurture. While it is admirable and, of course, expected for the clergyperson to rely upon Christian faith during times of stress, it must be assumed that this faith may not be as mature as it could be.

The support system that follows one's Christian faith in frequency of use is one's self. Ninety percent of those responding reported that they frequently rely upon themselves in times of stress. This finding supports the temptation of the clergy to assume a "Messiah complex" and take care of their own needs. The reasoning may be that nothing can happen that cannot be handled since one is super-human.

The clergy spouse is another strong support system in stressful situations. The spouse was indicated as a frequent support 88 percent of the time. The trust placed in one's spouse is in line with other responses made to the questionnaire. The spouse was identified as the closest friend of 65 percent of the responding ministers, while 73 percent report the spouse to be their most frequent counselor. The fact that the ministers have a strong relationship with their spouse can be appreciated. However, this makes the minister's spouse the one person most frequently used as a support system. This may present problems

¹⁷The responses to this question are found in Tables 111-115.

in the parsonage. The minister may share frustrations in ministry with the spouse. The spouse then becomes involved in the stressful situation. After sharing these frustrations, the minister may find release from stress. The spouse, on the other hand, may become frustrated and begin a cyclical effect by sharing frustrations with the minister.

Still other systems of support are other ministers and professional counselors. Both are used to a lesser degree than the three support systems mentioned above. Another minister is frequently used as a support in times of stress by only 38 percent of the respondents. The majority of the clergypersons sharing their problems with other ministers are younger ministers. As one gets older, one is less likely to share with other ministers. It should be noted that this other minister does not necessarily have to be another United Methodist minister. However, less than four percent of the respondents identified a minister of another denomination as a frequent counselor in response to an earlier question.

Less than eight percent of the respondents report a frequent reliance upon a professional counselor when difficulty arises. This low response may be due to the small number of professional counselors readily available to the clergy in the conference. However, it is more probable that most of these ministers choose not to share their problems beyond the parsonage. This is in keeping with the assumed "Messiah complex" of the minister.

One fault of the questionnaire in this particular area is the failure to list conference leadership as a possible support group in times of stress. Some of the ministers probably do use these persons as sounding boards. One of the important functions of the Bishop and the District Superintendents is to maintain a counseling relationship with the ministers of the conference. Since most conference leaders are ministers, the respondents may have included these

persons in the "other minister" response. However, it would be interesting to gather this information because of the feelings of mistrust of conference leadership.

Stress and One's Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Health

Contrary to earlier predictions, this study has found little connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress. At least 95 percent of the respondents rated their physical, emotional, and spiritual health as good. These ratings automatically voided any comparisons that might have been made. A crosstabulation of the few ministers rating either of these three areas of their health to be poor and all possible responses provided no significant findings. Over 36 percent of the clergy indicated that they are overweight, but crosstabulations of this information did not produce significant findings.

One possible related revelation has to do with one's experience in ministry. Ministers who have more experience in ministry are usually more able to order their life to allow more time for spiritual disciplines, hobbies, relaxation, and physical exercise. These persons do not normally have as much stress as younger ministers who possibly have not learned to organize their ministry to provide time for these activities. However, there are also other factors that cause stress in the early years of ministry.

Stress as Related to Ministerial Stages

Some of the most interesting findings of this study are related to stress and various stages of ministry. Two particular stages of ministry produce more stress than others. These are the early stage of ministry, which includes the

first ten years, and the mid-career stage, which includes those with 21 to 30 years of experience.

Younger ministers encounter a higher frequency of stress than do other ministers as they attempt to get started in their ministerial careers. These persons have a tendency to be idealistic and want to change what they perceive to be wrong with the institutional Church. These ministers reported a higher frequency of feelings related to helplessness, confusion, and guilt.²¹ Those who have less than six years experience are prone to feel the conference values their ministry to a high degree. Such feelings can probably be attributed to the idealism of younger clergy. This younger group experiences less support from their spouse than do older ministers. Also, their spouses are more likely to wish the ministers were in some other vocation. The clergypersons, themselves, are also more likely to have this wish. The responses indicate that the younger minister and the family struggle as the minister gets settled into a new career, as would any young professional family.

Those with six to ten years of ministerial experience report feeling competent less than any other age group. These persons show the least satisfaction with church promotional policies and the most distrust of conference leadership. They also feel that the conference values their ministry less than any other age group. Persons in this experience group seem to be struggling with the impact that they will have on the Church. It is highly probable that these persons have already experienced difficulty in persuading their congregations to have the same fervor for ministry that they have. Struggles similar to this cause feelings of incompetency to surface. Ministers at this stage have usually not been invited to hold prestigious positions within the conference even though they feel that they have much to offer. Therefore,

they reason that the conference does not value their ministry and, thus, question conference promotional policies.

Ministers who have 21 to 30 years experience also have a high level of stress. The feelings of loneliness and depression are highest during this stage of their career. They report the least amount of zest in ministry and are less satisfied with their profession on a day-to-day basis. This group indicates the least confidence in conference leadership. Also, persons in this experience group are least satisfied with their advancement in the conference. It is evident that persons in this group are going through a time of career evaluation. Retirement is now in sight. Ministers begin to realize that they are not as young as they have been and know that younger clergypersons are more in demand than ministers who have experience but are older. This time of career reflection may bring about depression and loneliness.

After several years in pastoral ministry the pastor may discover that one has not advanced in the conference as had been expected earlier. With retirement rapidly approaching, one may realize that one has not made adequate plans for a retirement with financial security. The minister is prone to second guess the decision to enter ministry at all. One reasons that one would now be in a better position if one had chosen some other profession. On the other hand, some ministers may have reached their goals in ministry only to find that the sacrifices were not worth the prize. Their children have more than likely left home and the pastor realizes that sufficient time was not spent with them. The pastor may even realize that there has been neglect of physical, emotional, and spiritual health in pursuit of the ministerial goals. This, too, causes the minister to become resentful. There is a strong need to place the blame of one's predicament on someone; so conference leadership is often blamed.

Ministers in the various experience levels have a variety of feelings about the presence of conference politics.²² Those with less than six years experience understand conference politics to be low. However, those with six to ten years experience report a significant increase in the degree of conference politics. These feelings drop to the previously low level for those with 11 to 20 years experience but rise sharply for those with 21 to 30 years experience. The feelings of conference politics drop drastically for those with 31 to 40 years experience. This fluctuation of feelings is illustrative of the problem stage reported by the respondents. Ministers with less than six years experience are busy getting settled in their own careers and do not experience political problems. However, after five years, ministers begin to settle and want to broaden their horizons and have more input in conference matters. Feelings of frustration are evident. There is then a settling down period as those with 11 to 20 years are extended invitations to become conference leaders. However, when the ministers with 21 to 30 years experience begin to evaluate their ministry, the feeling of conference politics rises again. The anxiety level drops after this stage because those who have a higher rate of experience are either involved as conference leaders or are no longer pursuing advancement in their careers.

Individual Stress as Related to the Stress of Others

The respondents to the questionnaire reveal strong evidence that they are aware of the overall stress in ministry. When those responding to the instrument were asked to compare the level of their vocational stress to that of others, most persons indicated that they have no more stress than do other ministers.¹⁸ Only 18 percent of the respondents report feeling that they have

¹⁸Table 84.

more stress than their colleagues. It would seem probable that they recognize stress in ministry to be an occupational hazard. This observation is supported by the responses to another question presented by the research instrument. Many of the respondents indicated that they recognize the need to manage stress in ministry and are able to do so.¹⁹ Almost 59 percent of the respondents report being able to manage the stress in their ministry without major difficulty. One would expect these persons to be aware of the presence of stress in ministry if they do a reasonable job managing their own vocational stress. One must recognize a problem before one is able to manage it properly.

While only 18 percent of those reporting feel that their stress is higher than that of their colleagues, it must be remembered that this figure represents 28 persons who have responded to God's call to ministry. This should be considered a significant number who feel that ministry presents them with more problems than it does others. A crosstabulation of those who have such feelings by the various categories of experience in ministry presented produces interesting information.²⁰ Almost 22 percent of the ministers with less than six years experience feel they have more stress than other ministers. An almost identical response is gathered from those ministers with 21 to 30 years experience. As indicated above, these two experience groups have the highest level of stress in ministry. One can only assume that these ministers, because of the frequency of stress encountered in their ministry, assume that they are less able to deal with vocational stress than are their colleagues in ministry. Thirty percent of the respondents with less than six years of experience report that stress is taking its toll on their physical, emotional, and spiritual health, while

¹⁹Table 131.

²⁰Table 172.

an overwhelming 45 percent of those in the 21 to 30 year category report the same.²¹ One person in this group responded that the amount of stress in ministry must be reduced or other employment would be sought.

Stress as Related to Behavioral Patterns

The last series of questions presented by the questionnaire were an attempt to identify both Type A and Type B behavioral characteristics. Several of the responses indicate a high level of Type A behavioral pattern among the ministers in the conference.²² Research presented in Chapter Two reveals the stress related maladies experienced by those who indicate a Type A behavioral pattern. Even though this testing instrument cannot be seen as conclusive, it does give a strong indication of this behavioral pattern. A majority of the respondents report dominant characteristics relating to never being late, always feeling rushed, impatience, doing many things at one time, being fast doing things, and being ambitious. These specific characteristics are associated with Type A behavior.

All of the responses did not agree with all the Type A characteristics presented, however. Almost three-fourths of the ministers see themselves as good listeners. A majority indicate that they are more interested in pleasing themselves than they are in pleasing others, and have several interests outside ministry. These indicators suggest a slant toward a Type B behavioral pattern. While it is not the intent of this study to argue against the responses, there may very well be a contradiction in the responses made. A few observations should be inserted. The respondents may perceive themselves to be good listeners because they have been taught that clergypersons should be good

²¹Table 173.

²²Compare Tables 132-141.

listeners, or, they may have been trained to do so through their education and experience. Also, while these respondents indicate a desire to please themselves, over 25 percent responded earlier that they do not get adequate recognition for the job they do. Finally, the ministers report several outside interests, and yet also report insufficient time for hobbies and relaxation.

Presence of a Theology of Self-Care

The clergypersons responding to the research instrument present conflicting responses concerning the presence of a theology of self-care in their ministry. Admittingly, a difficulty arises when one attempts to identify a definite theological position by the answers presented to a questionnaire. There are limitations to such an instrument. Yet, several indicators are recognized.

According to the respondents, one must assume that most of the ministers in the conference practice a theology of self-care. An overwhelming number reported that their physical, emotional, and spiritual health is good. This response, if valid, indicates a theology of self-care is present. However, in recent years, insurance claims made by ministers in the conference have shown a high rate of stress related illnesses which would indicate that the general health of the ministers is not nearly as good as reported.²³

Other responses by those completing the questionnaire suggest a need for a theology of self-care. The greatest point of contention is noticed in the lack of time reported by the respondents. Well over one-third of those responding note that they are overweight. A majority of the ministers suggest that they do not have sufficient time for prayer, Bible study, and personal

²³This information was provided by the Committee on Insurance for the North Mississippi Conference through which all conference members have health coverage.

devotionals. The group also reports a higher rate of time conflicts with physical exercise, hobbies, and relaxation. Also, nearly 32 percent of those responding report feeling guilty when they take time for their own spiritual nurture. The mounting evidence would suggest that the ministers in the conference do not have a practical theology of self-care.

Ministers with less experience have more difficulty with time and can therefore be considered to have less time to practice a theology of self-care.²⁴ A crosstabulation of years of ministerial experience with the feeling that one does not have enough time indicates a gradual decline in time urgency as one gains experience in ministry. However, the release of a sense of time urgency does not mean that the minister learns to practice a theology of self-care on a higher level.

Stress and its Relationship to Termination of Ministry

Indicators provided by the respondents to the testing instrument suggest a correlation between vocational stress and the termination of one's ministry. The fact has already been established that a high level of stress is indicated by younger ministers. The highest level of a lack of spouse support is noted by those with less than six years experience in ministry. Many ministers in this group perceive their spouse to wish they were in some other vocation. Four of the respondents in this experience group, or 15 percent of the group, indicated that they, too, wish they were in another vocation. The highest possibility of being in secular employment ten years later came from this group.

²⁴Table 174.

Ministers in another stage of ministry previously identified to have a high level of stress suggest possibilities that they may terminate their ministry. Six persons, or nearly 19 percent of those with 21 to 30 years experience in ministry, indicate that they wish they were in some other vocation. This group indicated the highest level of loneliness and depression as well. They are less satisfied in ministry on a daily basis. They also have the least confidence in conference leadership as well as their ministerial colleagues. This experience group had the second highest response to the question suggesting that they will be in secular employment ten years later.

Approximately one-third of all the respondents indicate a strong possibility of being in another serving vocation ten years later. As a response to the question asking them to evaluate the level of stress in their ministry, 60 percent indicated that their stress is manageable.²⁵ Another 34 percent, or 53 persons, admit that even though stress in ministry is manageable, it is taking its toll on their health. Three persons indicated that the level of stress in their ministry was high enough that it must be reduced or they must find another vocation. One other person indicated that personal stress levels were so high that radical action was necessary.

When one considers these indicators, one must make the correlation that a high level of vocational stress does, in fact, cause a few ministers to terminate their pastoral ministry. If the 53 persons who suggest stress is manageable but taking its toll on their health do not learn how to better care for themselves, they may look for employment elsewhere. A total of 16 persons have indicated that they wish they were in another vocation. Ten of these

²⁵Table 131.

persons have been identified to be in ministerial stages that produce a high level of stress. Four persons, who may be included in the 16 persons named above, suggest that the level of vocational stress in their career must be reduced or they will have to leave the profession for a less stressful position.

Restatement of the Problem

This study has identified, analyzed, and interpreted the causes and effects of vocational stress among pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church. The reported results of this study will be utilized to help persons maintain a healthy balance between being a pastor and a person. More specifically, the following findings have resulted:

1. Vocational stress is present in the lives of pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church.
2. The support systems used most frequently by ministers involved in this study are their Christian faith, themselves, and their spouse.
3. The responses to this study indicate an insignificant connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress in ministry.
4. Vocational stress was found to be highest among younger ministers and persons with 21 to 30 years experience in pastoral ministry.
5. While most ministers recognize vocational stress to be an implied hazard of pastoral ministry, a small number of persons with high levels of stress see themselves to have more stress than their colleagues.
6. The majority of the ministers in this study group indicate Type A behavioral characteristics which are known to cause high levels of stress.

7. While a vast majority of the ministers in the group report very good physical, emotional, and spiritual health, a need for a practical theology of self-care is indicated.

8. A definite correlation between vocational stress and the termination of pastoral ministry is indicated.

Chapter 7

CONTEXTUAL APPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present contextual applications of the study by providing strategies for change. Strategies to enable the minister to better manage stress will be presented in the first section. The second heading will offer suggestions to conference leadership that will enable those leaders to help ministers to reduce the level of stress in ministry in areas that concern the conference. Next, strategies are suggested to the laity of the Church that will help to provide a better atmosphere in which the minister can carry out the calling. Finally, a summary will conclude the chapter.

Strategies for Ministers

Several strategies for change have resulted from the study of the ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church. These strategies are presented with the hope that stress will be reduced among the ministers in the conference. One will note that these suggestions are not original, but these are suggestions that may not be used as frequently as possible.

Acknowledge the Anxieties in Ministry

Ministry is a vocation known for its anxieties. It is a profession that deals with people and, therefore, is by its very nature filled with anxiety. Since ministry is unpredictable and ever-changing, it must have its share of anxiety. If the minister is to maintain a proper balance between being a pastor and a person, one must acknowledge that one's profession is an anxious profession.

Anxiety can easily become a threat to one's security since, in its simplest form, it convinces one that something bad is about to happen. Anxiety can also act as an alarm to remind one that something needs to be done about the present situation. Many persons have been conditioned to convince themselves that certain anxieties do not exist since acknowledgement of certain anxieties suggest that something is wrong with them. There are those who feel that in the spiritual realm, if one does admit anxiety, one is questioning one's faith. However, anxiety is God's way of redirecting the body when it needs new direction.¹

Anxiety in ministry must be acknowledged and not denied. Many important matters for the minister will not be finished today. Persons who need pastoral assistance today may look for it again tomorrow. Those cases that the pastor thinks are closed today may very well open again next week. Certainly the pastor should be concerned with ministerial tasks; this is one's calling. However, many areas of ministry are beyond one's control. This realization should bring relief to the anxiety one may have about one's ministry.

Develop a Practical Theology of Self-Care

The minister must develop a practical theology of self-care if one is to resist stress while involved in a people-serving vocation. It is important that one wrestle with this theological issue on an individual basis and not simply accept a theology presented by others. The clergyperson must learn to properly integrate one's faith with the actual practice of ministry. In doing so, one must take theological responsibility for good health. The minister's total ministry must be an outflow of one's theology.

¹Brooks R. Faulkner, Burnout in Ministry (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981), pp. 126-127.

The theology of self-care presented in Chapter Four may be used as an outline through which one can develop a personal theology of self-care. This presentation includes: an understanding of one's call to ministry, the recognition that Christ is the supreme model for ministry, acknowledgement that man is a limited being, the suggestion of classical spirituality as a model for self-care and the recognition that Christ desires peace for all humankind.

Accept Responsibility for Time Management

Every pastor is responsible for the management of ministry. The relationship between stress and the need for time management has been made clear by this study. The minister is given almost total control of the time schedule. Stress results with improper time management. Good time management is a skill that can be learned and should be practiced diligently. The following suggestions are presented as ways the pastor can learn to manage time.

Clarify Roles. The pastor must gain an adequate understanding of how one is spending one's time before roles can be clarified. One way to do this is to keep an honest, detailed record of how one uses time over a certain period. Recording the use of time for a two-week period should be sufficient for most pastors. After the use of one's time has been ascertained, one can then begin to clarify roles in ministry. The pastor should categorize roles and write them down for clarity.² A record should be kept of the actual time spent fulfilling these roles. The next step in the role clarity process is for the pastor to present these roles used to the congregation for consideration. This can best be done by working with the governing body of the congregation.³ This body

²See Appendix D for an example suggested by Roy M. Oswald, Clergy Stress (The Alban Institute: Minister's Life Resources, Inc., 1982), p. 102.

³The Administrative Board or the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations should be consulted in the United Methodist Church.

can help the minister rank the roles to best benefit the pastor and the congregation.

There is one added benefit of allowing the laity to help in clarifying the roles of the pastor. Lay persons often have no idea how the pastor uses time. When this information concerning the pastor's use of time is presented to the laity, they become less likely to criticize the pastor for not using time properly. They also become aware of the several roles their pastor is expected to fill.

Design a Planned Agenda for Ministry. The solution is just emerging when the pastor's roles are clarified. The best way one can learn the discipline of time management is to work to a plan. G. Lloyd Rediger suggests that "we literally must impose our pastoral intentionality on our schedule or the schedule will impose its energy-draining demands on us."⁴ The pastor, then, must learn to devise a plan to provide an organized schedule for ministry and for life.

One method of scheduling time is the Time-Bloc Method. This method makes the use of the time visible to the pastor. It helps one to be more realistic about the use of time and helps one to see the pattern of ministry for the day and the week.⁵ Rediger suggests that by using a plan similar to the Time-Block Method one can accomplish ministry, be a good spouse, parent, and friend. It may also be possible to finish the day with energy left over. When completing the Time Bloc sheet, first priority should be given to self-nurture time which includes sleep, nutrition, exercise, and spiritual formation. Next priority should be to allow time needed to be a good spouse, parent, and friend. Regular deadline tasks for the week should then be added. Finally, the

⁴G. Lloyd Rediger, Coping With Clergy Burnout (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1982), p. 65.

⁵Ibid., pp. 73-74; See Appendix E for an example of this method.

remaining available time is filled with optional tasks. Some writers suggest that the minister should always allow time for parish emergencies that usually take a significant amount of the pastor's time.

Delegate Responsibilities After the minister has clarified roles and carefully prepared a calendar for the coming week, there will still be tasks that the minister feels should be done. At this point the pastor must learn to either delegate or drop the tasks. Many tasks can easily be done by some other responsible person, while others can be consciously dropped without any recoil.⁶

Delegating responsibilities can be one way to involve others in one's ministry. This also reinforces the idea of a wholistic ministry. Ministers are often guilty of assuming responsibilities that could easily be done by others simply because it is less trouble than working with someone else. Some pastors are good at hinting that help is needed to complete a certain task but never asking specific persons for help. The involvement of others can be beneficial to the persons as well as to the pastor. As more people are involved in the tasks of the church, more leadership is developed. Others are given the opportunity to prove to themselves that they can get the task done.⁷

The minister, in order to delegate effectively, must learn to overcome guilt. When delegating responsibility, the minister will not be in control of the outcome. There will also be times when the minister will not or cannot be present at church gatherings. A feeling of guilt about shirking pastoral duties may result. However, the pastor with clearly defined goals will find freedom in delegating responsibilities.⁸

⁶William E. Hulme, Your Pastor's Problem (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1966), p. 151.

⁷Ibid., pp. 152-153.

⁸Ibid.

Strategies for Spiritual Health

One of the most needed disciplines in the ministerial profession are those related to spiritual formation. These spiritual disciplines are also some of the most neglected by the pastor. The danger is that, contrary to the thought of some, pastoral ministry does not enhance one's spiritual life; it drains it. Pastors should never assume that because they are actively involved in ministry, prepare for sermons each Sunday, and lead devotionals in community meetings that their spiritual life is being adequately nurtured. When pastors are pushed for time it becomes relatively easy to overlook their spiritual disciplines. If this happens often the pastor may be guilty of relying on an immature faith. If the pastor is to maintain spiritual health, there must be a plan for it. Spiritual health will not develop without proper assistance. A time for the spiritual disciplines should be placed on the pastor's daily calendar. Spiritual depth comes only with time and attention.

Spiritual Disciplines. Clergypersons are urged not to allow their prayer life to become commonplace. If one notices that prayer time is becoming commonplace, the time, frequency, and procedure for this spiritual discipline should be considered. There are several methods that one may use to approach scripture. It is suggested that clergypersons use a variety of methods until a method is found that matches the minister's lifestyle. For example, a friend of this researcher reads scripture for a few minutes each morning before he begins his daily jogging. He then meditates on the scriptures as he jogs. Meditation may be guided by contemporary devotional guides or other useful materials.

One discipline that has been neglected by contemporary Christians is fasting. This discipline may be seen as both a spiritual and a physical discipline. Fasting was practiced extensively in the Old and New Testament periods and

should be revived. Those who do practice fasting arrange their schedule to practice one-day fasts each week or fasts for three to five days each month.

Personal Retreat. A growing spiritual practice among clergy today is personal retreat. The pastor leaves the parish for a short period of time of reflection and renewal. This retreat may be alone or with a group of colleagues. The length of time varies. Some pastors feel they can easily arrange for a one-day retreat each month. Others feel that a long weekend each quarter is more suitable for their ministry. Whatever the length of time of retreat, the important point is that the retreat be planned and not allowed to happen by chance. The model of the Desert Fathers presented in Chapter Four would serve well in one's personal retreat.

Strategies for Physical Health

The clergyperson's physical health is often taken for granted as is spiritual health. Many pastors have neglected their physical health until there is no chance for a healthy rebound. As with their spiritual nurture, pastors assume that if they expend themselves in their ministry, their physical health will take care of itself. The truth is that their physical health declines. If the pastor has the desire to be at best in ministry, physical health must be closely monitored.

Plan for Physical Exercise. Pastors are notorious for neglecting their physical exercise. However, one important aspect of self-care is a regular pattern of physical exercise. Those who exercise on a regular basis are healthier, have less coronary-vascular disease, fewer frustrations, and an overall satisfaction with life argues Phil Nuernberger.⁹ The pastor should be sure to organize his week to allow for sufficient physical exercise.

⁹Phil Nuernberger, Freedom from Stress (Honesdale, PA: The Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy of the U.S.A., 1981), p. 140.

Monitor Food Intake. Significant evidence has surfaced in recent years suggesting that one truly is what one eats. One's food intake is closely correlated with the stress in one's life. Roy W. Oswald suggests that when one's body is in a state of stress because of the emotional or physical strain placed on it, one should be careful and not complicate the matter with poor nutrition. The body is placed into further shock when subjected to empty calories, caffeine, food additives, saturated fats, and meals with little nutrition. Oswald further suggests that one would favor our bodies by reducing the amount of salt, sugar, bleached white flour, and red meat taken in.¹⁰

Plan for Rest. One's physical rest is taken for granted much too often. When the pastor has a rigid schedule it is very easy to push the body beyond the recommended physical limits. The pastor should understand that physical rest can be a means for renewal for performance of daily ministry and, therefore, arrange the day accordingly. Periods of rest should be planned daily and the minister should be disciplined to take time off in a regimented manner. Some pastors schedule at least one day each week to allow time to get away from church-related activities. Since ministry must by its very nature be flexible, the pastor should be adaptable enough to take another day when important ministerial functions take priority on the regularly scheduled day off.

Another problem related to physical rest that is often encountered by pastors is the inability to schedule and follow through with vacation time. This should be scheduled well in advance and not scheduled in conjunction with clergy conventions, workshops, or seminars. Vacation time should be a time of rest and relaxation for the pastor and the pastor's family and not taken only because one has a meeting in a given area.

¹⁰ Oswald, op. cit., pp. 83-86.

Strategies for Emotional Health

The emotional health of the pastor is another area of neglect. As with physical and spiritual health, pastors assume emotional matters will take care of themselves. Emotional health, then, is often left to chance. If the pastor is to best manage vocational stress, emotional health must be part of the strategy for change. The following suggestions are presented to assist pastors in this endeavor.

Take Charge and Let Go. One important technique for the pastor to learn is the ability to take charge and let go. This idea is a combination of assertive behavior and relaxation. Ministers are subject to feelings that their lives are being controlled by others. Archibald Hart suggests that this attitude often leads to "resentment and anger, a loss of self-respect, and depression."¹¹ Christian assertiveness is called for in this situation. Since many ministers do not know how or even when to be assertive, they may become victims of manipulation. Being assertive simply means that the minister takes charge of life without feeling guilty.

The other part of this technique, letting go, is just as simple. One must not only learn to take charge of one's life, one must learn to let go of those things that are beyond one's control. The emotional build-up in life must be released through a relaxation process. Many relaxing techniques may be practiced including prayer as was practiced by the Desert Fathers, meditation, bio-feedback, and hypnosis. The purpose of the technique chosen is to allow the total physical and emotional system to return to a normal state of relaxation.

¹¹ Archibald D. Hart, Coping With Depression in the Ministry and Other Helping Professions (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1984), p. 147.

Monitor Ambitions. The more ambitious one is the more susceptible one is to stress. Ambition creates the drive to be successful. Often one is consumed by this ambitious will. The minister can, either consciously or unconsciously, slip into this competitive way of life. The urge to be pastor of a certain church, reach a certain salary level, get special recognition for preaching abilities, or increase the number attending the present church may control all of one's life. While these urges are not necessarily negative, the will to achieve these goals at any cost can be very stressful for the pastor. It is important that the pastor learn to keep tabs on the ambition to succeed in ministry. Roy Oswald counsels, "If we want to be ambitious and strive to take on more responsibility and more complex roles, then we need to ascertain whether or not our lives are whole and healthy--physically, emotionally, and spiritually."¹²

Plan for Leisure. As mentioned above, one should not leave leisure opportunities to chance. Ministers are urged to develop interests beyond the realm of their ministry that will offer them leisure time. The list of such activities could be endless. Some ministers have found that working with their hands in activities including woodwork, electronics, needle-point, and metalwork result in a finished project and therefore give them a sense of completion that is not always available in ministry. Others have found creative works such as photography, oil painting, drawing, and wood carving allow them to express themselves in ways other than their chosen profession. Still others have found that outdoor activities including camping, fishing, hiking, and boating bring renewal to their ministry by adding to their emotional stability. The individual should choose leisure activities that provide the most satisfaction and emotional

¹²Oswald, op. cit., p. 99.

release and then make sure that they claim time away from their profession to enjoy them.

Develop a Positive Addiction. William Glasser notices that people who are joggers and meditators share an addiction similar to those addicted to drugs, alcohol, gambling, and eating. The basic difference was that their addiction is positive whereas their counterparts have a negative addiction.¹³ Ministers should develop some positive activity that becomes a part of their daily routine and gives them something for which to look forward. This activity should give the minister the feeling of doing something good for one's self when it is completed.

Maintain a Support System

Contrary to popular belief, the pastoral ministry is not a lone ranger profession. However, many ministers have allowed it to become a lonely profession because they have not developed the trust needed to provide a competent support system for ministry. There are several persons, or groups of persons, that can provide support for the pastor and, therefore, alleviate some of the stress encountered. These relationships should be cultivated and not left to develop at will. The quality of support received from these support systems is a major factor in the ability to withstand strain and tension in ministry.

Parish Support. Certainly the pastor must have the support of the local congregation if one is to be involved in an effective ministry. The clergyperson must actively work to develop this system. Oswald warns that there is no way for the pastor to "remain alive, physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy,

¹³William Glasser, Reality Therapy (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

and professionally effective unless some segment of the community affirms his or her efforts."¹⁴

Ministerial Colleagues. There is a need for ministers to lessen the competition between themselves and their colleagues and use their colleagues as the excellent support system they are capable of becoming. This will not be an easy matter for those who cannot monitor and control their ministerial ambitions. The ministers must develop a mutual trust before they are able to share their hurt, loneliness, and threats with one another.

Conference Leadership. This study has shown that there is a great need for ministers to regain trust and confidence in their conference leaders. Only when this happens will conference leaders become the support system to the ministers that they should be. The initial move must come from the pastors as they attempt to develop relationships with these leaders that will support them in their times of stress.

Relational Support. One revelation of the study is that ministers rely heavily upon their spouses for support in times of stress. While this is not to be necessarily discouraged, ministers should be aware of the problems caused if the spouse is the only support person. Clergypersons should learn to cultivate other support groups as well as maintain the support of the spouse. Those persons who happen not to be married should seek out personal friends to substitute for the support others receive from their spouses.

Spiritual Support. Who is the pastor's pastor? This question should not be considered lightly. If the pastor is to grow spiritually, there must be someone to serve as a spiritual advisor. One should turn to this person unashamedly in

¹⁴Oswald, op. cit., p. 73.

times of a crisis of faith. This spiritual mentor should become intimately involved with the pastor's spiritual health.

Professional Counselor. A professional counselor should also be included in the pastor's support system. This person could provide in-depth counseling for the pastor and the pastor's family when a need developed. Pastors should discard the idea that something is "wrong" with an individual who visits a professional counselor. There are usually several times in ministry that a pastor could greatly benefit from a relationship with one who has professional training in counseling.

Plan for Reflection

One of the difficulties of ministry is that pastors are often so busy doing ministry that they never take the time to consider what they have actually done in ministry. Pastors are urged to develop ways that will allow them to reflect on the ministry performed on a daily basis. One excellent way for doing this is the keeping of a dialogical journal. One takes the time on a regular schedule to think about what has or has not been done in ministry and then records these reflections. The keeping of a journal will help the minister to understand the mode of operation in context of ministry, and it will also help in working through difficult problems in ministry. Another type of reflection useful to some clergy is reflection in conjunction with personal retreat. The pastor uses a regularly scheduled time of retreat to reflect on recent acts of ministry.

Strategies for Conference Leaders

One underlying assumption of this study has been that vocational stress is related to the ministers, the laity, and the occupational system to which they belong. This particular section deals with strategies for change that can be

brought about by the leadership in the occupational system, the leaders of the North Mississippi Conference. It is hoped that these suggestions will not only benefit leaders in the conference, but that they will have impact on church officials beyond the annual conference. In making these suggestions, activities and programs already in progress have not been overlooked. Some of these suggestions have already been implemented by conference leaders.

General Suggestions

Several general suggestions for conference leadership flow from this study. The goal is to establish relationships with clergypersons in the conference that will guide, motivate, and offer security in order to reduce stress in ministry.

Build Trust Relationships. One important need in the conference is to strengthen trust relationships between the pastor and conference leadership. This endeavor has to be seen as a two-way street. However, one must realistically admit that conference leadership must implement the process since the pastors indicate a lack of trust for conference leaders.

Enlistment for Pastors. A careful look should be given to the entire process of pastoral enlistment. Local churches, District Boards of the Ordained Ministry, the Conference Board of the Ordained Ministry, and conference leaders should work together in the screening process of persons who are selected for ordination by the conference. Donald P. Smith has noted that sometimes the recruiting systems for seminaries have more input concerning who is to be ordained than the church body legally responsible for the actual ordination.¹⁵ Technically, the conference seeks and recruits candidates for

¹⁵ Donald P. Smith, Clergy in the Cross Fire (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), p. 118.

ministry. However, if those in authority have a tendency to approve all persons because of their educational level, both the ordinands and the local church stand to suffer.

Also, a valid attempt should be made to inform those seeking ordination that the clergy profession is a rewarding but also demanding one. With appropriate vocational counseling, some persons who plan to enter the clergy profession because they wish to be "in ministry" can be guided to other vocations more suitable to their gifts and graces.

Free District Superintendents for Pastoral Care. In reality, the District Superintendent is pastor of every clergyperson in a particular district. However, the responsibilities of the District Superintendent have grown throughout the years. The administrative load and the required attendance at the meetings of several conference boards and agencies have robbed District Superintendents of valuable time. The result is that there is little time to relate to the pastors in the district, and, often times, pastors have no one else to whom they can turn. The District Superintendent, then, must be relieved of several responsibilities to allow for wholesome pastoral care of pastors.

Slow Frequent Moving of Pastors. Conference leaders must address the problem of frequent moves from one church to another by the clergy. This study indicates that approximately 75 percent of the ministers move in a three-year period. These frequent moves do not allow the pastor to work through many of the stressors facing ministers. Instead, the pastor usually makes the same mistakes repetitively. Those who serve longer appointments are more prone to have a more stable ministry and, therefore, to have less stress.

Encourage and Model Better Health. Conference leaders should encourage the pastors to practice good health habits. In fact, they should lead the way by modeling good physical, emotional, and spiritual health for both

clergy and laity. Annual physical examinations should be considered. Possibilities for physical exercise, emotional stability, and spiritual nurture should be suggested for all.

Program Strategies

The following programs are suggested for consideration by conference leaders and conference program groups. These suggestions are presented with an understanding of the difficulties encountered with "programming" for better health. Still, they suggest a starting point for conference participation in the management of stress in ministry.

Seminars for Young Ministers. Young ministers need to be aware that the early years in ministry are formative years and, therefore, often produce high levels of stress. One way to bring about this awareness is to have annual seminars for younger pastors. These seminars should address stressors such as role confusion and role conflict, non-support of spouses, survival tactics for the young pastor, and personal finance. These seminars could also provide opportunities for young ministers to establish friendships and support groups that would sustain their ministry for years to come.

Seminars for Clergy at Mid-Career. Informative seminars should be provided annually for clergypersons at mid-career. These seminars should address specific issues involving ministers at this stage of their profession. These issues include: loneliness and depression in ministry, clergy burnout, planning for retirement, and goal setting for the last half of one's ministerial career. As with the seminars for younger pastors, these occasions can provide opportunities for fellowship with colleagues. Hopefully, needed trust relationships would result.

Pastoral Fellowship Opportunities. Programs providing pastors and their families opportunities for fellowship with their peers should be strongly

considered. These programs should be structured to allow sufficient time for fellowship and leisure. The opportunities, too, could lay foundations to allow pastors and their families to be less competitive and more supportive of one another.

Pastor-Parish Relationship Training. Conference leadership should take every opportunity to train Committees on Pastor-Parish Relations how to function properly. A well-functioning committee can be invaluable to both the pastor and to the local congregation. Training for these committees should include information on how to work with the pastor in matters involving time management, role clarification, and salary negotiation.

Ministerial and Family Counseling. Trained professional counselors should be made readily available to pastors and their families. A counseling service of this caliber would show a concern for the mental health of the pastors and their families. It would also give pastors a reasonable option for counseling in times of stress.

Strategies for the Laity

Probably the most important person playing a part in the reduction of ministerial stress, with the exception of the pastor, is the layperson in the local congregation. The following strategies are suggested so the layperson can help the minister in the real struggle of being both a pastor and a person.

Remember, Your Pastor is a Person

One of the hardest ideas for the laity to remember is that their pastor is also a person. Many persons expect their pastor to be different; in fact, super-human. The laity should learn that the pastor is human and, therefore, has human desires, pains, joys, and limitations.

Your Pastor is an Individual. God calls distinct individuals to be pastors. The pastor's individuality should be maintained in ministry. Each minister has an individual uniqueness to offer the local congregation. The laity must remember that while their pastor will probably have the same desire to be effective in ministry as a previous pastor, their present pastor is not that person. The way one goes about exerting effectiveness in ministry may be different than any previous pastor.

Need for Community Involvement. The minister enjoys most of the same things in life that others enjoy. One way to help the pastor be a person is through involvement in the daily activities of the community. The pastor should be treated no differently than a layperson would be treated. The pastor, too, enjoys a social life. On the other hand, allow the pastor the freedom to choose the level of involvement; just as laypersons are allowed to choose their involvement in community activities.

Need of Friendship. Friendship is important to the pastor. While the pastor should be allowed to pick personal friends, the congregation should be conscious of the pastor's need for friendship. Friends of the pastor may be chosen from persons within the congregation as well as persons beyond the congregation.

Need for Family Relationships. As a person, the pastor has the same family responsibilities as do other persons. One important freedom that could be given the pastor is to allow the parsonage family the same privileges that are allowed other families in the community. The local congregation should be sensitive to the pastor's need for quality family time and help arrange for that time.

No Need to be Different. One inner-most desire of most pastors is to be the same as other persons. The minister usually has no desire to be different.

However, the laity has a tendency to treat the pastor differently. When this happens, the pastor may very well be pushed outside the daily activities of the community because he or she has been made different. One's ministry to the community is then limited.

Need for Support. Because the pastor is a person, there is a constant need for support from the laity. Try as one may, one simply cannot be effective in ministry to the church and community without the dedicated support of the congregation. The layperson should encourage the pastor in every endeavor and assist the pastor in reaching the desired leadership potential. One simple and effective way to do this is to pray for the pastor daily. With the constant support of a congregation that prays daily for the pastor, the pastor will seldom fail.

Get to Know Your Pastor

An important means for the laity to help their pastor manage vocational stress is simply to get to know the pastor. When this is accomplished, the layperson can more adequately support the minister in the profession.

Learn The Pastor's Goals and Ambitions for Ministry. Most pastors have goals and ambitions for their ministry and the local church that many laypersons will never discover. The reason for this lack of discovery is usually not because the pastor hides these goals and ambitions, but because many lay persons may not care enough to find them out. They have not become close enough to the pastor to allow for a discussion of goals and ambitions.

Learn How the Pastor Uses Time. One of the greatest conflicts between the pastor and the laity is over the use of the pastor's time. Often there is a misunderstanding of the roles of the pastor and the time requirements of these roles. The layperson should become interested in learning how the pastor uses

time. The discovery may be enlightening and the laity's ideas can be useful in helping the pastor to clarify roles.

Learn the Pastor's Joys. The pastor usually has joys in life just as other persons do. However, the pastor may not have anyone beyond the family with whom to share these joys. Usually, one is more than willing to share one's happiness with others. When the layperson learns the joys in the pastor's life, the realization comes that laity have some of the same joys.

Learn the Pastor's Pain. The pastor is human and, therefore, subject to all of the same pains in life that persons in the congregation may encounter. The pastor may be reluctant to share these pains with the congregation, but, on the other hand, seldom has anyone other than the spouse to listen. Sensitive persons in the congregation can become good pastors to the pastor when there is pain in the pastor's life.

Encourage the Pastor's Health Practices

Pastors need encouragement to maintain their physical, emotional, and spiritual health. If the laity offers encouragement in these endeavors, the pastor is automatically given permission to use time in these practices. Pastors should also be encouraged to take at least one day off each week. Laypersons should see that the pastor follows through on the plans for this day off as well as follow through on sufficient vacation time. Both the pastor and the church will benefit from the resulting renewal.

Learn Conference Structure

Laypersons in general are not as knowledgeable about the structure of the United Methodist Church as they should be. Instead, they often view the conference as a pastoral sending agency. Armed only with this understanding, laypersons are often critical of the pastor's concern for conference relationship. However, when one does understand the minister's part in the conference

system, one can better understand the pastor's need to attend district and conference events. Also, the laity will be prepared to better support the pastor in this conference relationship.

Encourage Continuing Education

The clergy profession, like most other professions, is constantly changing. If the pastor is to stay abreast of these changes, there must be involvement in meaningful continuing education experiences. The congregation should support the pastor in this process. Continuing education will allow the pastor to stay current with the profession and guard against stagnation.

Recognize the Call of the Laity

The pastor can be more effective in ministry when the laity are more effective in ministry. Laypersons should acknowledge God's call for them to be in ministry as well as God's call for the pastor to shepherd them in that ministry. The pastor has not been called to do ministry on behalf of the local congregation. Rather, the pastor has been called to be in ministry with them. The pastor's effectiveness in ministry is directly related to the congregation's effectiveness in ministry.

Summary

Contextual application of this study has been suggested by the several strategies for clergy, conference leaders, and laity that flow from this project. Ministers have been encouraged to become more familiar with the anxieties of ministry and to develop a practical theology of self-care. They have been provided with suggestions that should help them in their struggle to manage their time. Strategies for spiritual, physical, and emotional health have been offered. The minister has also been encouraged to maintain a system of support and to plan for reflection as a means of strengthening ministry.

Conference leaders were also presented strategies to help the minister manage vocational stress. General suggestions included: building trust relationships with the pastors, to be more intentional in the enlistment of pastors, allow more time for District Superintendents to be involved in pastoral care, and to consider the problem of frequent moves by the pastor. Program strategies suggested to conference leaders included: annual seminars for young pastors and for clergy at mid-career, to offer more opportunities for pastoral fellowship, provide training for Pastor-Parish Relations Committees, and, finally, securing qualified counselors for the pastor and the pastor's family.

The last section offered suggestions for the persons who make up the congregation served by the pastor. These laypersons were encouraged to see their pastor as a person, to get to know their minister, and to encourage the pastor's health practices. It was also suggested that the laity become more familiar with the conference connectional system and that they encourage the pastor in the area of continuing education. Laypersons were also encouraged to consider their call to ministry more carefully and to be in ministry with the pastor.

Chapter 8

SUMMARY

The research reported by this project has explored the causes and effects of vocational stress among ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church. This investigation involved the development of a detailed questionnaire through which data might be obtained, a presentation and analysis of the data, and an interpretation of the findings. This research was based upon and then compared to the research related to psychophysical aspects of stress, stress as related to the contemporary minister, and suggestions for a theology of self-care presented in the early chapters. Recognizing the limitations of this project, conclusions and recommendations are identified in this chapter. The problem and its design will be considered under the first heading. The next heading will involve findings and inferences. Finally, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations will be made for future study.

The Problem and its Design

The problem of this study was to identify, analyze, and interpret the causes and effects of vocational stress among pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The information gathered will be utilized to help persons maintain a healthy balance between being a pastor and a person. From the review of related literature and during the contextual project concerned with the development of an appropriate questionnaire, several questions began to emerge relating to vocational stress among ministers. These hypothetical questions were collected and used to provide guidelines for the study. These questions were as follows:

1. Is vocational stress present in the life of ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church?
2. What support system does a minister utilize in times of stress?
3. Is there a connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress?
4. Is stress higher in certain stages of one's ministerial career than it is in other stages?
5. Do ministers, as individuals, see themselves as the only minister affected by stress?
6. Is there an identifiable personality or behavioral pattern that causes some ministers to have a higher level of vocational stress?
7. Do ministers in the conference have a theology of self-care that can be incorporated into their ministry?
8. Does a high level of vocational stress cause one to leave the ministry to which he/she has been called?

These questions were used as a uniform basis against which the findings of the study could be compared. Also, several principles emerged from the review of related literature which provided guidelines for the development and design of the project. These principles include: 1. Stress affects the total human body and, therefore, the quality of one's life. 2. The many variables that are related to a stress reaction limit the predictability of the causes and effects of stress. 3. Every Christian has the theological responsibility of self-care. 4. God calls distinct individuals to share their gifts and graces in ministry. 5. One of the most difficult tasks for the contemporary clergyperson is to recognize and accept one's own human limitations. 6. Problems a minister may incur in ministry usually stem from a sincere desire to best fulfill the call to ministry. 7. God desires peace for all persons.

The design of this study included two major components. The first component involved planning, research, analysis, and interpretation of the data related to vocational stress. The second component flowed from the first and was centered in a contextual project with the responsibility to design a detailed questionnaire that would provide sufficient research data needed to complete a project of this magnitude. The data rendered was then analyzed and interpreted. Strategies for change flowed from the interpretation of the findings.

The contextual project involved persons from two congregations over a period of four years. The persons making up the reflection groups looked at the clergy profession in detail as they developed a useable questionnaire. Major impetus for the study came from the 159 ministers of the North Mississippi Conference who responded to the questionnaire.

Findings and Inferences

The study provided a general indication of the causes and effects of vocational stress among ministers in the North Mississippi Conference. These findings are reviewed as follows:

Identified Causes of Stress

1. The respondents report a high degree of role conflict which is indicated by discrepancies in the minister's perception of ministerial functions and the importance the minister perceives the congregation to place upon these same functions.
2. There is a high level of stress related to the time the respondents have for the practice of spiritual disciplines, family, hobbies, and relaxation.
3. Two-thirds of those responding to the questionnaire indicate that they are ambitious, yet 91 percent are satisfied with their profession.

4. The proneness to be super-human surfaces in one's relying upon one's self to a high degree in times of stress.

5. The minister's spouse is reported to be the minister's closest friend, most frequent counselor, and usual support in times of stress.

6. The most noticeable family problem among the respondents is the lack of time the pastor can spend with the family.

7. A spiritual immaturity may be indicated by the facts that the respondents do not order their lives to provide time for spiritual disciplines and that almost one-third of the respondents noted feelings of guilt when they took time for their own spiritual nurture.

8. Persons in the first few years of ministry and those in the mid-career years experience the most stress in ministry.

Identified Effects of Stress

1. Over one-third of the respondents indicated frequent loneliness which may be caused by role conflicts as well as time conflicts.

2. Incompetency in ministry is indicated best by the high frequency of moves from one church to another made by the respondents.

3. Poor self-care is evident in the way pastors arrange their schedules to allow time for their own physical, emotional, and spiritual care.

4. Indicators of negative thinking, depression, spiritual immaturity, and impatience that can cause clergy burnout are evident in several respondents.

5. A possible termination of ministry is most evident in young ministers who suffer most with non-support of their spouses and have the highest desire to be in some other vocation.

Other Related Observations

1. There are several indications that the majority of the respondents have Type A behavior.

2. Several respondents indicate that they are aware of stress in ministry and are able to manage it sufficiently.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions drawn from this study in light of the hypothetical questions asked at the outset are as follows:

1. Vocational stress is present in the lives of pastoral ministers in the North Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church.

2. The support systems used most frequently by ministers involved in this study are their Christian faith, themselves, and their spouses.

3. The responses to this study indicate an insignificant connection between one's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and vocational stress in ministry.

4. Vocational stress was found to be highest among younger ministers and ministers with 21 to 30 years experience in pastoral ministry.

5. While most ministers recognize vocational stress to be an implied hazard of pastoral ministry, a small number of persons with high levels of stress see themselves to have more stress than their colleagues.

6. The majority of the ministers in this study group indicate Type A behavioral characteristics which are known to cause high levels of stress.

7. While a vast majority of the ministers in this study group report very good physical, emotional, and spiritual health, a need for a practical theology of self-care is indicated.

8. A definite correlation between vocational stress and the termination of pastoral ministry is indicated.

Several issues are suggested by this research project that provide possibilities for future study. One dominant issue focuses on the relationship

between vocational stress and various age-levels and experience levels of clergypersons. This study has only been able to touch the surface of this important issue. A more detailed study of these ages and stages could prove very valuable to ministers, conference leaders, and vocational counselors.

A study detailing the laity view of ministerial stress would prove to be very interesting. Research of this nature could be compared with this particular study to see if laity have the same perceptions of vocational stress for ministers as do the clergy.

A major part of the learning process for this project has come from the designing of the questionnaire presented to the pastoral ministers serving in the North Mississippi Conference. It can be assumed that the designing, sending forth, tabulation, analyzation, and interpretation of a questionnaire of this size will always bring about second guesses and frustration. The second guessing comes because there were questions omitted that should have been included. The frustration surfaces because there comes a point at which the designing stage of the questionnaire must end so that the instrument can be sent to the respondents. Every question could not be included. The final results are that some questions were redundant and therefore invited the same responses. Other questions might have been included to address pertinent issues in a better way.

Still another interesting study could be made of how conference leaders perceive ministers and vocational stress. One would assume that their perceptions would provide a significantly different point of view on vocational stress.

A detailed study could be made comparing ministerial stress with one's understanding of a theology of the cross. Also, a comparative study could be made between ministerial stress and the currently popular "survivor psychology."

Since time management was indicated to be a significant problem for ministers, another study could compare how a minister values time with the value other professional persons place on time. Also, an actual time study could be made to determine if ministers are actually honest with themselves about their struggles with time-related matters.

Finally, a detailed study dealing with the causes and effects of frequent pastoral moves would be of great value. A study of this nature could indicate how frequent moves by the clergy affects the pastor, the family, the local congregation, and the connectional system.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO PASTORAL MINISTERS IN THE NORTH MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE

"TYPES OF STRESS IN MINISTRY"

PLEASE CIRCLE APPROPRIATE RESPONSES.

1. Sex:
 1. male
 2. female
2. Race:
 1. white
 2. ethnic minority
3. What is your present age?
 1. 0-25
 2. 26-35
 3. 36-45
 4. 46-55
 5. 56-65
 6. over 65
4. What is your present marital status?
 1. single
 2. married
 3. separated
 4. divorced
 5. widowed
5. Is your spouse employed outside the home?
 1. yes
 2. no
 3. does not apply
6. Do you have children at home?
 1. no
 2. yes...how many? _____
 3. does not apply
7. Highest level of education achieved?
 1. less than high school graduation
 2. high school graduation
 3. some college
 4. college graduation
 5. some seminary
 6. seminary graduation
 7. graduate work beyond college
 8. graduate work beyond seminary
8. Number of years in ministry?
 1. 1-5
 2. 6-10
 3. 11-20
 4. 21-30
 5. 31-40
 6. over 40
9. Do you consider yourself—
 1. under weight
 2. normal weight
 3. over weight
10. Please rate your health in the following categories:

	very poor			very good		
1. physical health	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. emotional health	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. spiritual health	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. What is your present conference relationship?
 1. part-time local pastor
 2. full-time local pastor
 3. student local pastor
 4. associate member
 5. probationary member
 6. full connection
12. Please circle the appropriate response concerning your pastoral appointment:
 1. pastor in charge
 2. senior pastor
 3. associate pastor
 4. special appointment
 5. retired supply
 6. retired
13. Number of years at present appointment?
 1. 1
 2. 2
 3. 3
 4. 4
 5. 5
 6. 6-10
 7. over 10
14. What would you consider your theological stance to be?
 1. fundamental
 2. conservative
 3. moderate
 4. liberal
 5. other (you specify) _____
15. What would you consider the theological stance of the United Methodist Church?
 1. fundamental
 2. conservative
 3. moderate
 4. liberal
 5. other (you specify) _____
16. Who do you consider to be your closet friend?
 1. spouse
 2. another United Methodist minister
 3. a minister of another denomination
 4. a member of your present church
 5. a member of a former church
 6. other (you specify) _____

(over)

17. When you "hurt", who is your most frequent counselor?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. spouse | 4. a member of your present church | 6. other (you specify) |
| 2. another United Methodist minister | 5. a member of a former church | _____ |
| 3. a minister of another denomination | | _____ |
| | | _____ |

18. Listed below are a few ways a minister can spend PERSONAL TIME. Please indicate whether or not you have enough time in each of the areas.

	never enough			always enough		
1. prayer	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. devotion	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Bible study	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. family	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. physical exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. hobbies	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. relaxation	1	2	3	4	5	6

19. Listed below are several areas of ministry. Please rank them according to THEIR IMPORTANCE TO YOU.

	little importance			very important		
1. study for sermons	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. preparing for worship	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. counseling	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. teaching	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. church administration	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. visiting hospitals	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. visiting "shut-ins"	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. visiting homes of members	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. visiting "new comers" to the community	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. attending meetings in the local church	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. attending district meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. attending conference meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. attending meetings beyond the conference	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. continuing education	1	2	3	4	5	6

20. Now, please rate the same areas of ministry according to THEIR IMPORTANCE TO YOUR CONGREGATION.

	little importance			very important		
1. study for sermons	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. preparing for worship	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. counseling	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. teaching	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. church administration	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. visiting hospitals	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. visiting "shut-ins"	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. visiting homes of members	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. visiting "new comers" to the community	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. attending meetings in the local church	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. attending district meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. attending conference meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. attending meetings beyond the conference	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. continuing education	1	2	3	4	5	6

21. Listed below are several stress causing factors for ministers. Please rate each factor according to the frequency you encounter it.

	seldom			frequently		
1. non-support of spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. disagreement with family members	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. disagreement with church members	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. not enough time...	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. time away from home	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. "politics" within the local church	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. "politics" within the conference	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. spouse employment/unemployment	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. frequent moving	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. church finances	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. personal finances	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. inadequate housing	1	2	3	4	5	6

22. Please indicate whether or not you agree with the following statements (and to what degrees):

	strongly disagree			strongly agree		
1. My congregation understands the problems I have in ministry.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My situation utilizes my training and capabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I have difficulty in saying, "No!"	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. As a minister, I feel obligated to participate in community functions I do not enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I find meaning and purpose in my work	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I feel that my spouse would prefer me to have another job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I can depend upon the support of conference leadership in times of conflict.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I am satisfied with the advancements that I have made in the conference.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I feel that the conference values my ministry.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I can be myself in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. My congregation is indifferent to becoming what I think the church should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I am satisfied with the church's promotional policies.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I can trust conference leadership to keep confidences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Few ministers have the stress that I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I am usually "fighting fires" and not working to a plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Conference leadership will make every reasonable effort to advance my career and professional standing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I feel guilty when I take time for my own spiritual nature.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I feel I am doing the work that God wants me to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. I wish I were in some other vocation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I receive adequate recognition for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. As a minister, I will always have a place to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Most days I am glad that I am a minister.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I no longer have the "zest" and "enthusiasm" for ministry that I once had.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I am satisfied with my salary package.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. My congregation respects the privacy of my home.	1	2	3	4	5	6

23. Listed below are several "feeling" words. Please rank them according to the frequency you experience them.

	seldom			frequently		
1. frustration	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. lonely	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. fulfillment	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. confusion	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. depression	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. angry	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. competent	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. helplessness	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. shame	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. guilt	1	2	3	4	5	6

24. Consider your salary package (salary, travel, utilities, continuing education, etc.). How does it rank compared to the categories below?

	very low			very high		
1. ministers in your "peer group"	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. other professionals	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. individuals in your congregation	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. ministers of other denominations	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. ministers in other United Methodist conferences	1	2	3	4	5	6

"TYPES OF STRESS IN MINISTRY"

Page 4

25. When you find yourself in a stressful situation, what/who do you rely upon most?

	seldom			frequently		
1. your Christian faith	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. yourself (attitudes, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. another minister	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. professional counselor	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. your spouse	1	2	3	4	5	6

26. How do you usually manage stress in ministry?

	seldom			frequently		
1. allow it to run its course	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. spiritual activities (prayer, Bible study)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. physical activities (jogging, walking, golf)	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. take time away (day off, retreat, vacation)	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. attack problem head on	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. other (you specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. What are your usual reasons for enrolling in a continuing education experience?

	seldom			frequently		
1. self-fulfilment	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. professional duty	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. a serious problem in ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. required by the DISCIPLINE	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. fellowship with others	1	2	3	4	5	6

28. Where do you see yourself serving TEN YEARS FROM NOW?

	not possible			very possible		
1. pastoral ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. another serving vocation	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. secular employment	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. retired	1	2	3	4	5	6

29. I feel the stress level of my ministry is—

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. too low | 5. Much too high. I need to take radical action to get help or reduce the causes of stress. |
| 2. manageable | 6. Other (you specify) _____ |
| 3. manageable, but taking its toll on me physically, emotionally, and spiritually. | _____ |
| 4. Higher than desirable. I need to either reduce stress or find other work. | _____ |

30. Please circle the number between each pair of characteristics that most closely represents your behavior.

1. never late	1	2	3	4	5	6	casual about appointments
2. not competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	very competitive
3. anticipate what others are going to say	1	2	3	4	5	6	good listener
4. never feel rushed	1	2	3	4	5	6	always rushed
5. impatient while waiting	1	2	3	4	5	6	can wait patiently
6. take things one at a time	1	2	3	4	5	6	try to do many things at once
7. want good job recognized by others	1	2	3	4	5	6	satisfy yourself no matter what others may think
8. slow doing things	1	2	3	4	5	6	fast (eating, walking, etc.)
9. few interests outside ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6	many outside interests
10. satisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	ambitious

31. Please use the following space to express any feelings that you feel might be helpful.

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER INCLUDED WITH THE QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO
MINISTERS IN THE CONFERENCE

DANNY R. ROWLAND

Council on Ministries

P. O. Drawer U

Grenada, MS 38901

December 8, 1983

TO: Pastors Serving Churches in the North Mississippi Annual Conference
FROM: Danny R. Rowland **DRR**
RE: Continuing Education Research

As part of my continuing education program at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, I am researching the various causes and effects of vocational stress among ministers serving churches in the North Mississippi Conference. I can do this more effectively if you will take the few minutes required to complete the enclosed questionnaire. The results should benefit all ministers serving churches in our conference, and our conference leadership, as we all wrestle with this very important issue.

This questionnaire is being sent to every minister serving a pastoral appointment in the conference. Bishop C. P. Minnick, Jr. and the District Superintendents have given their approval to this project.

It is important that you understand that this is my personal project and is not an undertaking of the Conference Council on Ministries to which I am appointed. The project has actually evolved from the various struggles that I have had in ministry. I expect to gain many insights to ministry as you share with me. I see it as an enriching experience for me personally.

Since a lot of time and expense is involved in this project, **please take some time this week to complete the questionnaire.** In doing so you can be assured that (1) the information from any individual will be kept confidential, (2) there is no "right" or "wrong" answer (please share your feelings freely) and (3) the questionnaire is not coded in any way. When you complete the form and mail it back in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, there is no way for me (or anyone else) to know who completed it. Even local postmarks will not be a clue to the respondent since I will personally open each envelope and place the questionnaire with the others without reading it at that time. This is an important matter for me. I ask for your trust. It is much more important to me that a questionnaire is completed than it is to know who completed it.

The results of your responses will be mailed to you as soon as possible in the "Conference Coordinated Mailing"

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this important project.

DRR:ja
enclosure

APPENDIX C

TABULATIONS OF RESPONSES FROM PASTORAL MINISTERS

TABLE 4
Sex of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	157	98.7
Female	2	1.3

Table 5
Race of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
White	121	76.1
Ethnic Minority	13	8.2
No Response	25	15.7

Table 6
Age of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
0-25	1	.6
26-35	35	22.0
36-45	41	25.8
46-55	40	25.2
56-65	34	21.4
Over 65	8	5.0
No Response	0	0.0

Table 7
Marital status of respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Single	3	1.9
Married	150	94.3
Separated	1	.6
Divorced	5	3.1
No Response	0	0.0

Table 8

Is your spouse employed outside the home?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	70	44.0
No	82	51.6
Not Applicable	5	3.1
No Response	3	1.3

Table 9

Do you have children at home?

	Frequency	Percent
No	57	35.8
Yes	99	62.3
Not Applicable	3	1.9

Table 10
Number of children at home

	Frequency	Percent
1	35	22.0
2	39	24.5
3	20	12.6
4	4	2.5
5	1	.6
No response	60	37.7

Table 11
What is the highest level of education achieved?

	Frequency	Percent
Less than High School	2	1.3
Some College	20	12.6
College Graduate	9	5.7
Some Seminary	25	15.7
Seminary Graduate	57	35.8
College Post Graduate	11	6.9
Seminary Post Graduate	35	22.0
No Response	0	0.0

Table 12
Number of years in ministry?

	Frequency	Percent
1-5	30	18.9
6-10	23	14.5
11-20	39	24.5
21-30	32	20.1
31-40	32	20.1
Over 40	2	1.3
No Response	1	.6

Table 13
Do you consider yourself---

	Frequency	Percent
Under weight	4	2.5
Normal weight	91	57.2
Over weight	58	36.5
No Response	6	3.8

Table 14
Rating of physical health

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	1	.6
3	7	4.4
4	36	22.6
5	68	42.8
6	47	25.6
No Response	0	0.0

*A value of "1" indicates very poor and a value of "6" indicates very good.

Table 15
Rating of emotional health

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	2	1.3
3	5	3.1
4	21	13.2
5	80	50.3
6	48	30.2
No Response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates very poor and a value of "6" indicates very good.

Table 16
Rating of spiritual health

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	0	0.0
3	3	1.9
4	28	17.6
5	66	41.5
6	59	37.1
No Response	2	1.3

* A value of "1" indicates very poor and a value of "6" indicates very good.

Table 17
What is your present conference relationship?

	Frequency	Percent
Part time local pastor	7	4.4
Full time local pastor	9	5.7
Student local pastor	12	7.5
Associate member	9	5.7
Probationary member	13	8.2
Full connection	109	68.6
No response	0	0.0

Table 18

What is your present pastoral appointment?

	Frequency	Percent
Pastor in charge	134	84.3
Senior pastor	12	7.5
Associate pastor	7	4.4
Special appointment	3	1.9
Retired supply	2	1.3
Retired	1	.6
No response	0	0.0

Table 19

Number of years at present appointment?

	Frequency	Percent
1	41	25.8
2	42	26.4
3	33	20.8
4	12	7.5
5	8	5.0
6-10	18	11.3
Over 10	5	3.1
No response	0	0.0

Table 20

What would you consider your theological stance to be?

	Frequency	Percent
Fundamental	10	6.3
Conservative	43	27.0
Moderate	86	54.1
Liberal	14	8.8
Other	5	3.1
No response	1	.6

Table 21

What would you consider the theological stance of the United Methodist Church?

	Frequency	Percent
Fundamental	3	1.9
Conservative	12	7.5
Moderate	78	49.1
Liberal	60	37.7
Other	4	2.5
No response	2	1.3

Table 22

Who do you consider to be your closest friend?

	Frequency	Percent
Spouse	104	65.4
Another U. M. minister	28	17.6
Other Denomination Minister	1	.6
Member of present church	8	5.0
Member of former church	10	6.3
Other	7	4.4
No Response	1	.6

Tabel 23

Who is your most frequent counselor?

	Frequency	Percent
Spouse	112	70.4
Another U.M. minister	20	12.6
Other Denomination minister	6	3.8
Member present church	5	3.1
Member former church	1	.6
Other	9	5.7
No response	6	3.8

Table 24

Please indicate whether you have enough time for prayer?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	8	5.0
2	33	20.8
3	43	27.0
4	26	16.4
5	33	20.8
6	14	21.0
No responses	2	1.3
*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.		

Table 25

Please indicate whether you have enough time for devotions?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	27	17.0
3	49	30.8
4	33	20.8
5	33	20.8
6	7	4.4
No Response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.		

Table 26

Please indicate whether you have enough time for Bible study?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	25	15.7
3	44	27.7
4	44	27.7
5	32	20.1
6	5	3.1
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.

Table 27

Please indicate whether you have enough time for your family?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	28	17.6
3	40	25.2
4	48	30.2
5	30	18.9
6	3	1.9
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.

Table 28

Please indicate whether you have enough time for physical exercise?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	12	7.5
2	40	25.2
3	46	28.9
4	31	19.5
5	20	12.6
6	4	2.5
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.

Table 29

Please indicate whether you have enough time for hobbies.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	19	11.9
2	46	28.9
3	41	25.8
4	26	16.4
5	18	11.3
6	4	2.5
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time

Table 30

Please indicate whether you have enough time for relaxation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	21	13.2
2	39	24.5
3	53	33.3
4	26	16.4
5	13	8.2
6	3	1.9
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates never enough time and a value of "6" indicates always enough time.

Table 31

Please rank study for sermons according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	0	0.0
3	4	2.5
4	18	11.3
5	63	39.6
6	73	45.9
No response	1	.6

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 32

Please rank preparing for worship according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	1	.6
3	12	7.5
4	30	18.9
5	66	41.5
6	49	30.8
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 33

Please rank counseling according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	2	1.3
3	14	8.8
4	60	37.7
5	55	34.6
6	26	16.4
No response	2	1.3
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 34

Please rank teaching according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	3	1.9
3	22	13.8
4	46	28.9
5	51	32.1
6	32	20.1
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 35

Please rank church administration according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	12	7.5
3	38	23.9
4	57	35.8
5	39	24.5
6	11	6.9
No response	1	.6

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 36

Please rank visiting hospitals according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	1	.6
3	5	3.1
4	26	16.4
5	70	44.0
6	56	35.2
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 37

Please rank visiting "shut-ins" according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	2	1.3
3	13	8.2
4	41	25.8
5	67	42.1
6	35	22.0
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 38

Please rank visiting homes of members according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	7	4.4
3	40	25.2
4	52	32.1
5	44	27.7
6	13	8.2
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 39

Please rank visiting "new comers" to the community according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	4	2.5
3	13	8.2
4	37	23.3
5	64	40.3
6	36	22.6
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 40

Please rank attending meeting in the local church according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	2	1.3
3	29	18.2
4	36	22.6
5	51	32.1
6	39	24.5
No response	2	1.3
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 41

Please rank attending district meetings according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	4	2.5
2	16	10.1
3	40	25.2
4	48	30.2
5	34	21/4
6	16	10.1
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 42

Please rank attending conference meetings according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	16	10.1
3	33	20.8
4	53	33.3
5	33	20.8
6	15	9.4
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 43

Please rank attending meetings beyond the conference according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	35	22.0
3	50	31.4
4	31	19.5
5	10	6.3
6	4	2.5
No Response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 44

Please rank continuing education according to its importance to you.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	4	2.5
3	11	6.9
4	43	27.0
5	55	34.6
6	41	25.8
No response	2	1.3

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 45

Please rank study for sermons according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	0	0.0
3	13	8.2
4	24	15.1
5	61	38.4
6	55	34.6
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 46

Please rank preparing for worship according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	4	2.5
2	5	3.1
3	20	12.6
4	34	21.4
5	55	34.6
6	37	23.3
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 47

Please rank counseling according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	6	3.8
3	34	21.4
4	41	25.8
5	50	31.4
6	19	11.9
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 48

Please rank teaching according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	7	4.4
2	8	5.0
3	28	17.6
4	45	28.3
5	53	33.3
6	12	7.5
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 49

Please rank church administration according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	7	4.4
2	18	11.3
3	26	16.4
4	51	32.1
5	28	17.6
6	22	13.8
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 50

Please rank visiting hospitals according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	1	.6
3	10	6.3
4	14	8.8
5	60	37.7
6	69	43.4
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "4" indicates very important.		

Table 51

Please rank visiting "shut-ins" according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	2	1.3
3	8	5.0
4	19	11.9
5	67	42.1
6	56	35.2
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 52

Please rank visiting homes of members according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	10	6.3
3	31	19.5
4	44	27.7
5	38	23.9
6	28	17.6
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 53

Please rank visiting "newcomers" to the community according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	12	7.5
3	20	12.6
4	26	16.4
5	49	30.8
6	42	26.4
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 54

Please rank attending meetings in the local church according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	6	3.8
3	30	18.9
4	34	21.4
5	56	35.2
6	21	13.2
No response	9	5.7
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 55

Please rank attending district meetings according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	38	23.9
3	44	27.7
4	28	17.6
5	14	8.8
6	2	1.3
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 56

Please rank attending conference meetings according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	33	20.8
2	44	27.7
3	41	25.8
4	19	11.9
5	11	6.9
6	3	1.9
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 57

Please rank attending meetings beyond the conference according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	62	39.0
2	42	26.4
3	28	17.6
4	15	9.4
5	4	2.5
6	0	0.0
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.		

Table 58

Please rank continuing education according to its importance to your congregation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	18	11.3
2	19	11.9
3	33	20.8
4	46	28.9
5	28	17.6
6	10	6.3
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates little importance and a value of "6" indicates very important.

Table 59

Please rate non-support of spouse according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	77	48.4
2	33	20.8
3	20	12.6
4	10	6.3
5	10	6.3
6	2	1.3
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 60

Please rate disagreement with family members according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	51	32.1
2	53	33.3
3	32	20.1
4	11	6.9
5	6	3.8
6	1	.6
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 61

Please rate disagreement with church members according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	45	28.3
3	44	27.7
4	25	15.7
5	12	7.5
6	3	1.9
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 62

Please rate not having enough time according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	8	5.0
2	15	9.4
3	26	16.4
4	30	18.9
5	49	30.8
6	25	15.7
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 63

Please rate too much time away from home according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	14	8.8
2	19	11.9
3	36	22.6
4	47	29.6
5	28	17.6
6	8	5.0
No response	7	4.4
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 64

Please rate "politics" within the local church according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	22	13.8
2	44	27.7
3	38	23.9
4	23	14.5
5	18	11.3
6	8	5.0
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 65

Please rate "politics" within the conference according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	13	8.2
2	31	19.5
3	39	24.5
4	22	13.8
5	31	19.5
6	19	11.9
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 66

Please rate problems with spouse employment/unemployment according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	61	38.4
2	36	22.6
3	19	11.9
4	17	10.7
5	14	8.8
6	7	4.4
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 67

Please rate frequent moving as a stressor according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	53	33.3
2	41	25.8
3	20	12.6
4	21	13.2
5	15	9.4
6	5	3.1
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 68

Please rate church finances as a stressor according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	29	18.2
2	37	23.3
3	26	16.4
4	31	19.5
5	22	13.8
6	9	5.7
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 69

Please rate personal finances as a stressor according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	24	15.1
2	31	19.5
3	25	15.7
4	33	20.8
5	31	19.5
6	11	6.9
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 70

Please rate inadequate housing as a stressor according to the frequency you encounter it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	72	45.3
2	41	25.8
3	20	12.6
4	10	6.3
5	7	4.4
6	3	1.9
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 71

My congregation understands the problems I have in ministry.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	4	2.5
2	20	12.6
3	42	26.4
4	55	34.6
5	26	16.4
6	6	3.8
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 72

My situation utilizes my training and capabilities.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	10	6.3
3	20	12.6
4	37	23.3
5	64	40.3
6	20	12.6
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 73

I have difficulty in saying "No!"

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	7	4.4
2	13	8.2
3	21	13.2
4	42	26.4
5	46	28.9
6	24	15.1
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 74

As a minister, I feel obligated to participate in
community functions I do not enjoy.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	20	12.6
2	23	14.5
3	41	25.8
4	43	27.0
5	27	17.0
6	2	1.3
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree
and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 75

I find meaning and purpose in my work.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	0	0.0
3	3	1.9
4	10	6.3
5	52	32.7
6	88	55.3
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree
and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 76

I feel that my spouse would prefer me to have another job.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	81	50.9
2	18	11.3
3	22	13.8
4	11	6.9
5	10	6.3
6	12	7.5
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 77

I can depend upon the support of conference leadership in times of conflict.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	19	11.9
2	19	11.9
3	24	15.1
4	35	22.0
5	37	23.3
6	19	11.9
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 78

I am satisfied with the advancements that I have made in the conference.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	12	7.5
2	10	6.3
3	13	8.2
4	35	22.0
5	49	30.8
6	32	20.1
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 79

I feel that the conference values my ministry.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	11	6.9
3	22	13.8
4	43	27.0
5	44	27.7
6	27	17.0
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 80

I can be myself in my work.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	3	1.9
3	7	4.4
4	27	17.0
5	68	42.8
6	46	28.9
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 81

My congregation is indifferent to becoming what I think
the church should be.

1*	15	9.4
2	31	19.5
3	28	17.6
4	44	27.7
5	28	17.6
6	8	5.0
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 82

I am satisfied with the church's promotional policies.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	20	12.6
2	24	15.1
3	38	23.9
4	43	27.0
5	19	11.9
6	10	6.3
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 83

I can trust conference leadership to keep confidences.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	15	9.4
2	23	14.5
3	40	25.2
4	41	25.8
5	22	13.8
6	12	7.5
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 84

Few ministers have the stress that I do.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	51	32.1
2	46	28.9
3	28	17.6
4	16	10.1
5	8	5.0
6	4	2.5
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 85

I am usually "fighting fires" and not working to a plan.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	34	21.4
2	39	24.5
3	36	22.6
4	31	19.5
5	10	6.3
6	4	2.5
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 86

Conference leadership will make every reasonable effort to advance my career and professional standing.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	15	9.4
2	14	8.8
3	43	27.0
4	38	23.9
5	29	18.2
6	13	8.2
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 87

I feel guilty when I take time for my own spiritual nurture.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	57	35.8
2	26	16.4
3	23	14.5
4	23	14.5
5	20	12.6
6	7	4.4
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 88

I feel that I am doing the work that God wants me to do.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	3	1.9
3	2	1.3
4	8	5.0
5	44	27.7
6	95	59.7
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 89

I wish I were in some other vocation.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	97	61.0
2	26	16.4
3	14	8.8
4	8	5.0
5	6	3.8
6	2	1.3
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 90

I receive adequate recognition for the work I do.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	5	3.1
3	29	18.2
4	34	21.4
5	48	30.2
6	31	19.5
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 91

As a minister, I will always have a place to work.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	11	6.9
2	6	3.8
3	15	9.4
4	21	13.2
5	40	25.2
6	60	37.7
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.		

Table 92

Most days I am glad that I am a minister.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	4	2.5
2	2	1.3
3	3	1.9
4	17	10.7
5	49	30.8
6	78	49.1
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 93

I no longer have the "zest" and "enthusiasm" for ministry that I once had.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	58	36.5
2	37	23.3
3	18	11.3
4	23	14.5
5	15	9.4
6	3	1.9
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 94

I am satisfied with my salary package.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	18	11.3
2	15	9.4
3	19	11.9
4	32	20.1
5	46	28.9
6	24	15.1
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 95

My congregation respects the privacy of my home.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	4	2.5
3	7	4.4
4	14	8.8
5	55	34.6
6	69	43.4
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates strongly disagree and a value of "6" indicates strongly agree.

Table 96

Please rate the frequency you experience frustration.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	13	8.2
2	28	17.6
3	30	18.9
4	45	28.3
5	31	19.5
6	9	5.7
No response	3	1.9
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 97

Please rate feeling lonely according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	28	17.6
2	43	27.0
3	28	17.6
4	28	17.6
5	20	12.6
6	8	5.0
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 98

Please rate feeling fulfillment according to the frequency you experience it.

1*	2	1.3
2	5	3.1
3	11	6.9
4	36	22.6
5	72	45.3
6	28	17.6
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 99

Please rate feeling confusion according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	22	13.8
2	50	31.4
3	36	22.6
4	36	22.6
5	9	5.7
6	3	1.9
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 100

Please rate feeling depression according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	32	20.1
2	57	35.8
3	35	22.0
4	15	9.4
5	14	8.8
6	3	1.9
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 101

Please rate feeling angry according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	18	11.3
2	50	31.4
3	43	27.0
4	30	18.9
5	11	6.9
6	4	2.5
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 102

Please rate feeling competent according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	10	6.3
3	10	6.3
4	30	18.9
5	78	49.1
6	23	14.5
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 103

Please rate feeling helplessness according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	31	19.5
2	54	34.0
3	40	25.2
4	15	10.1
5	8	5.0
6	6	3.8
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 104

Please rate feeling shame according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	73	45.9
2	48	30.2
3	19	11.9
4	6	3.8
5	6	3.8
6	3	1.9
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 105

Please rate feeling guilt according to the frequency you experience it.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	41	25.8
2	62	39.0
3	25	15.7
4	15	9.4
5	8	5.0
6	4	2.5
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 106

How does your salary package rate compared to ministers in your "peer group?"

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	12	7.5
2	21	13.2
3	28	17.6
4	47	29.6
5	32	20.1
6	12	7.5
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates very low and a value of "6" indicates very high.

Table 107

How does your salary package rate compared to other professionals?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	45	28.3
2	53	33.3
3	25	15.7
4	20	12.6
5	6	3.8
6	3	1.9
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates very low and a value of "6" indicates very high.

Table 108

How does your salary package rate compared to individuals in your congregation?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	13	8.2
2	23	14.5
3	53	33.3
4	43	27.0
5	15	9.4
6	2	1.3
No response	10	6.3

*A value of "1" indicates very low and a value of "6" indicates very high.

Table 109

How does your salary package rate compared to ministers of other denominations?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	19	11.9
2	40	25.2
3	40	25.2
4	30	18.9
5	15	9.4
6	2	1.3
No response	13	8.2

*A value of "1" indicates very low and a value of "6" indicates very high.

Table 110

How does your salary package rate compared to ministers in other United Methodist conferences?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	27	17.0
3	51	32.1
4	33	20.8
5	11	6.9
6	4	2.5
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates very low and a value of "6" indicates very high.		

Table 111

When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you rely upon your Christian faith?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	0	0.0
3	0	0.0
4	24	15.1
5	64	40.3
6	70	44.0
No response	1	.6
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 112

When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you rely upon yourself (attitudes, etc.)?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	0	0.0
2	2	1.3
3	15	9.4
4	45	28.3
5	69	43.4
6	21	13.2
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 113

When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you rely upon another minister?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	26	16.4
3	40	25.2
4	43	27.0
5	13	8.2
6	5	3.1
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 114

When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you rely upon a professional counselor?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	92	57.9
2	39	24.5
3	9	5.7
4	4	2.5
5	8	5.0
6	0	0.0
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 115

When you find yourself in a stressful situation, do you rely upon your spouse?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	9	5.7
3	5	3.1
4	18	11.3
5	60	37.7
6	56	35.2
No response	6	3.8

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 116

Do you usually manage stress in ministry by allowing it to run its course?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	19	11.9
3	25	15.7
4	51	32.1
5	42	26.4
6	11	6.9
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 117

Do you usually manage stress in ministry with spiritual activities (prayer, Bible study)?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	6	3.8
3	16	10.1
4	47	29.6
5	57	35.8
6	27	17.0
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 118

Do you usually manage stress in ministry by physical activities (jogging, walking, golf)?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	15	9.4
2	21	13.2
3	38	23.9
4	40	25.2
5	30	18.9
6	10	6.3
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 119

Do you usually manage stress in ministry by taking time away (day off, retreat, vacation)?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	25	15.7
2	29	18.2
3	30	18.9
4	33	20.8
5	29	18.2
6	7	4.4
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 120

Do you usually manage stress in ministry by attacking problem head on?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	7	4.4
3	28	17.6
4	42	26.4
5	60	37.7
6	11	6.9
No response	8	5.0
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 121

How do you usually manage stress in ministry?
Other (you specify)

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	1	.6
2	0	0.0
3	1	.6
4	6	3.8
5	11	6.9
6	9	5.7
No response	131	82.4
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 122

Do you enroll in continuing education experiences for self-fulfillment?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	8	5.0
2	1	1.3
3	15	9.4
4	31	19.5
5	69	43.4
6	30	18.9
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 123

Do you enroll in continuing education experiences because of professional duty?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	11	6.9
2	14	8.8
3	21	13.2
4	42	26.4
5	46	28.9
6	22	13.8
No response	3	1.9
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 124

Do you enroll in continuing education experiences because of a serious problem in ministry?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	47	29.6
2	48	30.2
3	29	18.2
4	17	10.7
5	8	5.0
6	3	1.9
No response	7	4.4

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 125

Do you enroll in continuing education experiences because it is required by the DISCIPLINE?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	33	20.8
2	15	9.4
3	15	9.4
4	31	19.5
5	29	18.2
6	31	19.5
No response	5	3.1

*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.

Table 126

Do you enroll in continuing education experiences for fellowship with others?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	9	5.7
3	18	11.3
4	33	20.8
5	61	38.4
6	28	17.6
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates seldom and a value of "6" indicates frequently.		

Table 127

In ten years do you see yourself serving in the pastoral ministry?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	5	3.1
2	2	1.3
3	9	5.7
4	12	7.5
5	43	27.0
6	74	46.5
No response	14	8.8
*A value of "1" indicates not possible and a value of "6" indicates very possible.		

Table 128

In ten years do you see yourself serving in
another serving vocation?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	50	31.4
2	31	19.5
3	14	8.8
4	24	15.1
5	16	10.1
6	6	3.8
No response	18	11.3

*A value of "1" indicates not possible and
a value of "6" indicates very possible.

Table 129

In ten years do you see yourself serving in
secular employment?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	71	44.7
2	35	22.0
3	19	11.9
4	7	4.4
5	5	3.1
6	5	3.1
No response	17	10.7

*A value of "1" indicates not possible
and a value of "6" indicates very possible.

Table 130

In ten years do you see yourself retired?

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	86	54.1
2	12	7.5
3	9	5.7
4	2	1.3
5	13	8.2
6	28	17.6
No response	9	5.7
*A value of "1" indicates not possible and a value of "6" indicates very possible.		

Table 131

I feel the stress level of my ministry is:

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	2	1.3
2	93	58.5
3	54	34.0
4	3	1.9
5	1	.6
6	3	1.9
No response	3	1.9
*A value of "1" indicates too low; "2" indicates manageable; "3" indicates taking its toll; "4" indicates reduce or find other work; "5" indicates radical change necessary; and "6" indicates other (you specify).		

Table 132

Please indicate whether you are never late or casual about appointments.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	40	25.2
2	53	33.3
3	28	17.6
4	15	9.4
5	12	7.5
6	8	5.0
No response	3	1.9

*A value of "1" indicates never late and a value of "6" indicates casual about appointments.

Table 133

Please indicate whether you are not competitive or are very competitive.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	9	5.7
2	18	11.3
3	23	14.5
4	38	23.9
5	54	34.0
6	13	8.2
No response	4	2.5

*A value of "1" indicates not competitive and a value of "6" indicates very competitive.

Table 134

Please indicate whether you anticipate what others are going to say or are a good listener.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	3	1.9
2	10	6.3
3	27	17.0
4	54	34.0
5	48	30.2
6	13	8.2
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates anticipates what others are going to say and a value of "6" indicates good listener.		

Table 135

Please indicate whether you never feel rushed or always feel rushed.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	10	6.3
3	33	20.8
4	66	41.5
5	26	16.4
6	14	8.8
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates never feel rushed and a value of "6" indicates always rushed.		

Table 136

Please indicate whether you are impatient while waiting or can wait patiently.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	15	9.4
2	25	15.7
3	35	22.0
4	43	27.0
5	26	16.4
6	11	6.9
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates impatient while waiting and a value of "6" indicates can wait patiently.		

Table 137

Please indicate whether you take things one at a time or try to do many things at once.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	8	5.0
2	17	10.7
3	39	24.5
4	48	30.2
5	32	20.1
6	11	6.9
No response	4	2.5
*A value of "1" indicates take things one at a time and a value of "6" indicates try to do many things at once.		

Table 138

Please indicate whether you want good job recognized by others or satisfy yourself no matter what others think.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	11	6.9
2	22	13.8
3	37	23.3
4	44	27.7
5	32	20.1
6	7	4.4
No response	6	3.8
*A value of "1" indicates want good job recognized by others and a value of "6" indicates satsify yourself.		

Table 139

Please indicate whether you are slow doing things or fast (eating, walking, etc.).

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	6	3.8
2	7	4.4
3	38	23.9
4	53	33.3
5	38	23.9
6	14	8.8
No response	3	1.9
*A value of "1" indicates slow doing things and a value of "6" indicates fast.		

Table 140

Please indicate whether you have few interests outside ministry or many outside interests.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	9	5.7
2	22	13.8
3	34	21.4
4	43	27.0
5	32	20.1
6	17	10.7
No response	2	1.3
*A value of "1" indicates few interests outside ministry and a value of "6" indicates many outside interests.		

Table 141

Please indicate whether you are satisfied or ambitious.

Value	Frequency	Percent
1*	11	6.9
2	22	6.9
3	28	17.6
4	56	35.2
5	34	21.4
6	14	8.8
No response	5	3.1
*A value of "1" indicates satisfied and a value of "6" indicates ambitious.		

Table 142

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by
personal theological stance.

	Fundamental	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal	Other
1-5	4 13.3 40.0	12 40.0 27.9	8 26.7 9.4	4 13.3 28.6	2 6.7 40.0
6-10	2 8.7 20.0	9 39.1 20.9	9 39.1 10.6	2 8.7 14.3	1 4.3 20.0
11-20	1 2.6 10.0	10 25.6 23.3	24 61.5 28.2	3 7.7 21.4	1 2.6 20.0
21-30	3 9.7 30.0	6 19.4 14.0	19 61.3 28.2	2 6.5 14.3	1 3.2 20.0
31-40	0 0 0	6 18.8 14.0	24 75.0 28.2	2 6.3 14.3	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 1.2	1 50.0 7.1	0 0 0

Table 143

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by
theological stance of the United Methodist Church.

	Fundamental	Conservative	Moderate	Liberal	Other
1-5	1 3.3 33.3	3 10.0 25.0	12 40.0 15.4	13 43.0 22.0	1 3.3 25.0
6-10	0 0 0	1 4.3 8.3	10 43.5 12.8	11 47.8 18.6	1 4.3 25.0
11-20	0 0 0	1 2.6 8.3	22 56.4 28.2	15 38.5 25.4	1 2.6 25.0
21-30	1 3.2 33.3	3 9.7 25.0	17 54.8 21.8	10 32.3 16.9	0 0 0
31-40	1 3.2 33.3	4 12.9 33.3	16 51.6 20.5	9 29.0 15.3	1 3.2 25.0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 1.3	1 50.0 1.7	0 0 0

Table 144

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by
who is most frequent counselor.

	Spouse	Another UM Minister	Other Denom. Minister	Member Present Church	Member Former Church	Other
1-5	21 70.0 18.9	5 16.7 25.0	2 6.7 33.3	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 6.7 22.2
6-10	14 60.9 12.6	5 21.7 25.0	2 8.7 33.3	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 8.7 22.2
11-20	27 73.0 24.3	7 18.9 35.0	1 2.7 16.7	2 5.4 40.0	0 0 0	0 0 0
21-30	25 80.6 22.5	0 0 0	1 3.2 16.7	3 9.7 60.0	0 0 0	2 6.5 22.2
31-40	23 79.3 20.7	3 10.3 15.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 3.4 100	2 6.9 22.2
Over 40	1 50.0 .9	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 11.1

Table 145

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by
non-support of spouse.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	16 53.3 20.8	4 13.3 12.1	3 10.0 15.0	2 6.7 22.2	4 13.3 40.0	1 3.3 50.0
6-10	9 40.9 11.7	7 31.8 21.2	3 13.6 15.0	1 4.5 11.1	1 4.5 10.0	1 4.5 50.0
11-20	20 55.6 26.0	4 11.1 12.1	6 16.7 30.0	2 5.6 22.2	4 11.1 40.0	0 0 0
21-30	14 43.8 18.2	11 34.4 33.3	4 12.5 20.0	2 6.3 22.2	4 3.1 10.0	0 0 0
31-40	16 55.2 20.8	7 24.1 21.2	4 13.8 20.0	2 6.9 22.2	0 0 0	0 0 0
Over 40	2 100 2.6	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 146

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by not having enough time.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	1 3.3 12.5	3 10.0 20.0	3 10.0 11.5	7 23.3 23.3	8 26.7 16.3	8 26.7 33.3
6-10	1 4.5 12.5	2 9.1 13.3	3 13.6 11.5	3 13.6 10.0	9 40.9 18.4	4 18.2 16.7
11-20	0 0 0	2 5.6 13.3	9 25.0 34.6	10 27.8 33.3	12 33.3 24.5	3 8.3 12.5
21-30	4 12.5 50.0	4 12.5 26.7	5 15.6 10.2	4 12.5 13.3	10 31.3 20.4	4 15.6 20.6
31-40	2 6.7 25.0	4 13.3 26.7	5 16.7 19.2	6 20.0 20.0	9 30.0 18.4	4 13.3 16.7
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 3.8	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.0	0 0 0

Table 147

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by too much time away from home.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	3 10.0 21.4	3 10.0 15.8	11 36.7 30.6	5 16.7 10.6	5 16.7 17.9	3 10.0 42.9
6-10	2 9.1 14.3	1 4.5 5.3	4 18.2 11.1	6 27.3 12.8	8 36.4 28.6	1 4.5 14.3
11-20	3 8.3 21.4	3 8.3 15.8	9 25.0 25.0	17 47.2 36.2	3 8.3 10.7	1 2.8 14.3
21-30	3 9.7 21.4	8 25.8 42.1	6 19.4 16.7	7 22.6 14.9	6 19.4 21.4	1 3.2 14.3
31-40	3 10.0 21.4	4 13.3 21.1	6 20.0 16.7	11 36.7 23.4	5 16.7 17.9	1 3.3 14.3
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.1	1 50.0 3.6	0 0 0

Table 148

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of frustration.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	3 10.7 23.1	7 25.0 25.0	2 7.1 6.7	7 25.0 15.6	6 21.4 20.0	3 10.7 33.3
6-10	0 0 0	4 17.4 14.3	3 13.0 10.0	8 34.8 17.8	7 30.4 23.3	1 4.3 11.1
11-20	2 5.3 15.4	5 13.2 17.9	11 28.9 36.9	15 39.5 33.3	3 7.9 10.0	2 5.3 22.2
21-30	4 12.5 30.8	5 15.6 17.9	9 28.1 20.0	8 25.0 17.8	4 12.5 13.3	2 6.3 22.2
31-40	3 9.4 23.1	7 21.9 25.0	5 15.6 16.7	7 21.9 15.6	9 28.1 30.0	1 3.1 11.1
Over 40	1 50.0 7.7	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 3.3	0 0 0

Table 149

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of loneliness.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	4 14.3 14.3	8 28.6 18.6	6 21.4 21.4	2 7.1 7.4	4 14.3 20.0	4 14.3 50.0
6-10	2 8.7 7.1	7 30.4 16.3	4 17.4 14.3	3 13.0 11.1	7 30.4 35.0	0 0 0
11-20	6 15.8 21.4	11 28.9 25.6	8 21.1 28.6	8 21.1 29.6	5 13.2 25.0	0 0 0
21-30	7 22.6 25.0	5 16.1 11.6	6 19.4 21.4	6 19.4 22.2	4 12.9 20.0	3 9.7 37.5
31-40	9 28.1 32.1	11 34.4 25.6	4 12.5 14.3	8 25.0 29.6	0 0 0	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.3	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 12.5

Table 150

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of fulfillment.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	0 0 0	1 3.6 20.0	3 10.7 27.3	4 14.3 11.4	12 42.9 16.7	8 28.6 28.6
6-10	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 8.7 18.2	7 30.4 20.0	10 43.5 13.9	4 17.4 14.3
11-20	0 0 0	3 7.9 60.0	2 5.3 18.2	11 28.9 31.4	17 44.7 23.6	5 13.2 17.9
21-30	1 3.1 50.0	1 3.1 20.0	2 6.3 18.2	0 28.1 25.7	14 43.8 19.4	5 15.6 17.9
31-40	1 3.3 50.0	0 0 0	2 6.7 18.2	4 13.3 11.4	17 56.7 23.6	6 20.0 21.4
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 100 2.8	0 0 0

Table 151

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of confusion.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	3 10.7 13.6	7 25.0 14.0	9 32.1 25.0	4 14.3 11.4	4 14.3 44.4	1 3.6 33.3
6-10	5 21.7 22.7	6 26.1 12.0	4 17.4 11.1	8 34.8 22.9	0 0 0	0 0 0
11-20	6 15.8 27.3	17 44.7 34.0	6 15.8 16.7	9 23.7 25.7	0 0 0	0 0 0
21-30	6 18.8 27.3	11 34.4 22.0	7 21.9 19.4	3 9.4 8.6	3 9.4 33.3	2 6.3 66.7
31-40	2 6.3 9.1	8 25.0 16.0	9 28.1 25.0	11 34.4 31.4	2 6.3 22.2	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.0	1 50.0 2.8	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 152

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of depression.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	6 21.4 18.8	8 28.6 14.0	9 32.1 25.7	1 3.6 6.7	2 7.1 15.4	2 7.1 66.7
6-10	4 17.4 12.5	11 47.8 19.3	5 21.7 14.3	1 4.3 6.7	2 8.7 15.4	0 0 0
11-20	8 21.1 25.0	11 28.9 19.3	9 23.7 25.7	6 15.8 40.0	4 10.5 30.8	0 0 0
21-30	5 15.6 15.6	13 40.6 22.8	7 21.9 20.0	3 9.4 20.0	3 9.4 23.1	1 3.1 33.3
31-40	8 25.0 25.0	14 43.8 24.6	4 12.5 11.4	4 12.5 26.7	2 6.3 15.4	0 0 0
Over 40	1 50.0 3.1	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.9	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 153

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of anger.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	2 7.1 11.1	11 39.3 22.4	6 21.4 14.0	6 21.4 20.0	2 7.1 18.2	1 3.6 25.0
6-10	5 21.7 17.8	4 17.4 8.2	9 39.1 20.9	3 13.0 10.0	1 4.3 9.1	1 4.3 25.0
11-20	3 7.9 16.7	12 31.6 24.5	13 34.2 30.2	6 15.8 20.0	3 7.9 27.3	1 2.6 25.0
21-30	4 12.5 22.2	10 31.3 20.4	9 28.1 20.9	6 18.8 20.0	2 6.3 18.2	1 3.1 25.0
31-40	4 12.5 22.2	10 31.3 20.4	6 18.8 14.0	9 28.1 30.0	3 9.4 27.3	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	2 100 4.1	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 154

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of competency.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	1 3.6 50.0	1 3.6 10.0	1 3.6 11.1	4 14.3 13.3	16 57.1 20.5	5 17.9 21.7
6-10	0 0 0	2 9.1 20.0	2 9.1 22.2	3 13.6 10.0	11 50.0 14.1	4 18.2 17.4
11-20	1 2.7 50.0	0 0 0	5 13.5 55.6	8 21.6 26.7	20 54.1 25.6	3 8.1 13.0
21-30	0 0 0	2 6.3 20.0	1 3.1 11.1	8 25.0 26.7	16 50.0 20.5	5 15.6 21.7
31-40	0 0 0	4 12.9 40.0	0 0 0	7 22.6 23.3	15 48.4 19.2	5 15.6 21.7
Over 40	0 0 0	1 50.0 10.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 4.3

Table 155

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of helplessness.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	4 14.3 12.9	7 25.0 13.0	9 32.1 22.5	6 21.4 40.0	1 3.6 12.5	1 3.6 16.7
6-10	5 21.7 16.1	10 43.5 18.5	4 17.4 10.0	1 4.3 6.7	0 0 0	3 13.0 50.0
11-20	9 23.7 19.0	13 34.2 24.1	9 23.7 22.5	4 10.5 26.7	2 5.3 25.0	1 2.6 16.7
21-30	9 28.1 29.0	11 34.4 20.4	9 28.1 22.5	0 0 0	2 6.3 25.0	1 3.1 16.7
31-40	4 12.9 12.9	13 41.9 24.1	9 25.8 20.0	4 12.9 26.7	2 6.5 25.0	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.5	0 0 0	1 50.0 12.5	0 0 0

Table 156

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of shame.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	15 53.6 20.5	7 25.0 14.9	4 14.3 21.1	1 3.6 16.7	0 0 0	1 3.6 33.3
6-10	11 47.8 15.1	7 30.4 14.9	0 0 0	1 4.3 16.7	2 8.7 33.3	2 8.7 66.7
11-20	20 52.6 27.4	10 26.3 21.3	5 13.2 26.3	1 2.6 16.7	2 5.3 33.3	0 0 0
21-30	15 46.9 20.5	10 31.3 21.3	4 12.5 21.1	1 3.1 16.7	2 6.3 33.3	0 0 0
31-40	11 35.5 15.1	12 38.7 25.5	7 19.4 31.6	2 6.5 33.3	0 0 0	0 0 0
Over 40	1 50.0 1.4	1 50.0 2.1	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 157

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry
by feelings of guilt.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	7 25.0 17.1	11 39.3 18.0	3 10.7 12.0	5 17.9 33.3	1 3.6 12.5	1 3.6 25.0
6-10	9 39.1 22.0	6 26.1 9.8	3 13.0 12.0	1 4.3 6.7	2 8.7 25.0	2 8.7 50.0
11-20	8 21.1 19.5	18 47.4 29.5	8 21.1 32.0	1 2.5 6.7	3 7.9 37.5	0 0 0
21-30	8 25.0 19.5	16 50.0 26.2	3 9.4 12.0	3 9.4 20.0	1 3.1 12.5	1 3.1 25.0
31-40	9 29.0 22.0	9 29.0 14.8	7 22.6 28.0	5 16.1 33.3	1 3.2 12.5	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	1 50.0 1.6	1 50.0 4.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 158

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by feeling that spouse would prefer me to be in another job.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	12 42.9 14.8	3 10.7 16.7	3 10.7 14.3	2 3.6 9.1	6 21.4 60.0	3 10.7 25.0
6-10	12 52.2 14.8	1 4.3 5.6	5 21.7 23.8	2 8.7 18.2	0 0 0	3 13.0 25.0
11-20	20 54.1 24.7	7 18.9 36.9	5 13.5 23.8	3 8.1 27.3	0 0 0	2 5.4 16.7
21-30	14 43.8 17.3	5 15.6 27.8	5 15.6 23.8	5 15.6 45.5	0 0 0	3 9.4 25.0
31-40	22 71.0 27.2	2 6.5 11.1	3 9.7 14.3	0 0 0	3 9.7 30.0	1 3.2 8.3
Over 40	1 50.0 1.2	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 10.0	0 0 0

Table 159

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by a wish to be in some other vocation.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	17 63.0 17.7	5 18.5 19.2	1 3.7 7.1	1 3.7 12.5	2 7.4 33.3	1 3.7 50.0
6-10	16 69.6 16.7	3 13.0 11.5	3 13.0 21.4	1 4.3 12.5	0 0 0	0 0 0
11-20	20 54.1 20.8	9 24.3 34.6	4 10.8 28.6	2 5.4 25.0	2 5.4 33.3	0 0 0
21-30	16 50.0 16.7	6 18.8 23.1	4 12.5 28.6	3 9.4 37.5	2 6.3 33.3	1 3.1 50.0
31-40	25 80.6 26.0	3 9.7 11.5	2 6.5 14.3	1 3.2 12.5	0 0 0	0 0 0
Over 40	2 100 2.1	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 160

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by having the same level of "zest" and "enthusiasm" for ministry.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	16 59.3 27.6	7 25.9 18.9	2 7.4 11.1	2 7.4 9.1	0 0 0	0 0 0
6-10	8 34.8 13.8	5 21.7 13.5	4 17.4 22.2	3 13.0 13.6	3 13.0 20.0	0 0 0
11-20	14 36.8 24.1	9 23.7 24.3	4 10.5 22.2	6 15.8 27.3	5 13.2 33.3	0 0 0
21-30	6 19.4 10.3	12 38.7 32.4	4 12.9 22.2	4 12.9 18.2	2 6.5 13.3	3 9.7 100
31-40	13 40.6 22.4	4 12.5 10.8	3 9.4 16.7	7 21.9 31.8	5 15.6 33.3	0 0 0
Over 40	1 50.0 1.7	0 0 0	1 50.0 5.6	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 161

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by feeling glad, most days, that I am a minister.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 3.6 5.9	9 32.1 18.4	18 64.3 23.4
6-10	1 4.3 25.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	3 13.0 17.6	8 34.8 16.3	11 47.8 14.3
11-20	2 5.4 50.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	7 18.9 41.2	13 35.1 26.5	15 40.5 19.5
21-30	1 3.2 25.0	2 6.5 100	3 9.7 100	3 9.7 17.6	5 16.1 10.2	17 54.8 22.1
31-40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	3 9.7 17.6	13 41.9 26.5	15 48.4 19.5
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.0	1 50.0 1.3

Table 162

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by dependence upon support of conference leadership in times of conflict.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	2 7.1 10.5	3 10.7 15.8	3 10.7 12.5	8 28.6 23.5	7 25.0 18.9	5 17.9 26.3
6-10	2 9.1 10.5	6 27.3 31.6	2 9.1 8.3	5 22.7 14.7	5 22.7 13.5	2 9.1 10.5
11-20	3 7.9 15.8	7 18.4 36.8	4 10.5 16.7	10 26.3 29.4	9 23.7 24.3	5 13.2 26.3
21-30	5 16.1 26.3	3 9.7 15.8	8 25.8 33.3	7 22.6 20.6	4 12.9 10.8	4 12.9 21.1
31-40	7 22.6 36.8	0 0 0	7 22.6 20.2	4 12.9 11.8	11 35.5 29.7	2 6.5 10.5
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.7	1 50.0 5.3

Table 163

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by being satisfied with the advancements made in the conference.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	0 0 0	1 3.8 10.0	1 3.8 7.7	6 23.1 17.1	12 46.2 25.0	6 23.1 18.8
6-10	1 4.3 8.3	0 0 0	2 8.7 15.4	5 21.7 14.3	8 34.8 16.7	7 30.4 21.9
11-20	4 10.8 33.3	3 8.1 30.0	3 8.1 23.1	11 29.7 31.4	10 27.0 20.8	6 16.2 18.8
21-30	5 16.7 41.7	4 13.3 40.0	5 16.7 38.5	7 23.3 20.0	6 20.0 12.5	3 10.0 9.4
31-40	2 6.3 16.7	2 6.3 20.0	2 6.3 15.4	6 18.8 17.1	11 34.4 22.9	9 28.1 28.1
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.1	1 50.0 3.1

Table 164

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by frequency of encountering "politics" within the conference.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	3 10.0 23.1	8 26.7 25.8	6 20.0 15.4	3 10.0 14.3	5 16.7 16.1	5 16.7 26.3
6-10	2 8.7 15.4	2 8.7 6.5	6 26.1 15.4	5 21.7 23.8	3 13.0 9.7	5 21.7 26.3
11-20	3 7.9 23.1	8 21.1 25.8	11 28.9 28.2	1 2.6 4.8	11 18.9 35.5	4 10.5 21.1
21-30	2 6.5 15.4	4 12.9 12.9	6 19.4 15.4	10 32.3 47.6	5 16.1 16.1	4 12.9 21.1
31-40	3 10.0 23.1	9 30.0 29.0	10 33.3 25.6	2 6.7 9.5	5 16.7 16.1	1 3.3 5.3
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 100 6.5	0 0 0

Table 165

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by feeling that the conference values my ministry.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	0 0 0	0 0 0	3 11.5 13.6	6 23.1 14.3	12 46.2 27.3	5 15.2 18.5
6-10	0 0 0	3 13.0 27.3	4 17.4 18.2	10 43.5 23.8	3 13.0 6.8	3 13.0 11.1
11-20	2 5.3 33.3	3 7.9 27.3	5 13.2 22.7	9 23.7 21.4	11 28.9 25.0	8 21.1 29.6
21-30	2 6.3 33.3	1 3.1 9.1	7 21.9 31.8	13 40.6 31.0	6 18.8 13.6	3 9.4 11.1
31-40	1 3.2 16.7	4 12.9 36.4	3 9.7 13.6	4 12.9 9.5	12 38.7 27.3	7 22.6 25.9
Over 40	1 50.0 16.7	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 3.7

Table 166

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by satisfaction with church's promotional policies.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	4 14.3 20.0	1 3.6 4.2	8 28.6 21.1	8 28.6 19.0	3 10.7 15.8	4 14.3 40.0
6-10	3 13.0 15.0	8 34.8 33.3	4 17.4 10.5	5 21.7 11.9	3 13.0 15.8	0 0 0
11-20	4 10.5 10.0	8 21.1 33.3	12 31.6 31.6	8 21.1 19.0	3 7.9 15.8	3 7.9 30.0
21-30	3 10.0 15.0	4 13.3 16.7	10 33.3 26.3	12 40.0 28.6	0 0 0	1 3.3 10.0
31-40	6 18.8 30.0	3 9.4 12.5	4 12.5 10.5	9 28.1 21.4	9 28.1 47.4	1 3.1 10.0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 5.3	1 50.0 10.0

Table 167

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by level of trust of conference leadership to keep confidences.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	2 7.4 13.3	4 14.8 18.2	5 18.5 12.5	10 37.0 24.4	4 14.8 18.2	2 7.4 16.7
6-10	2 9.1 13.3	4 18.2 18.2	9 40.9 22.5	3 13.6 7.3	2 9.1 9.1	2 9.1 16.7
11-20	4 10.5 26.7	7 18.4 31.8	9 23.7 22.5	13 34.2 31.7	4 10.5 18.2	1 2.6 8.3
21-30	3 9.4 10.0	4 12.5 18.2	11 34.4 27.5	5 15.6 12.2	5 15.6 22.7	4 12.5 33.3
31-40	4 12.9 26.7	3 9.7 13.6	6 19.4 15.0	10 32.3 24.4	6 19.4 27.3	2 6.5 16.7
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 4.5	1 50.0 8.3

Table 168

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by
serving ten years from now in pastoral ministry.

	Not Possible 1	2	3	4	5	Very Possible 6
1-5	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 6.7 16.7	10 33.3 23.3	18 60.0 24.7
6-10	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 4.5 8.3	7 31.8 16.3	14 63.6 19.2
11-20	1 2.8 20.0	0 0 0	2 5.6 22.2	2 5.6 16.7	13 36.1 30.2	18 50.0 24.7
21-30	1 3.6 20.0	0 0 0	4 14.3 44.4	2 7.1 16.7	6 21.4 14.0	15 53.6 20.5
31-40	3 10.7 60.0	2 7.1 100	3 10.7 33.3	5 17.9 41.7	7 25.0 16.3	8 28.6 11.0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 169

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by seeing yourself as retired ten years from now.

	Not Possible					Very Possible
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	27	2	0	0	0	0
	93.1	6.9	0	0	0	0
	31.8	16.7	0	0	0	0
6-10	17	3	0	0	0	1
	81.0	14.3	0	0	0	4.8
	20.0	25.0	0	0	0	3.6
11-20	24	2	3	0	1	4
	70.6	5.9	8.8	0	2.0	11.8
	28.2	16.7	33.3	0	7.7	14.3
21-30	14	2	4	1	5	5
	45.2	6.5	12.9	3.2	16.1	16.1
	16.5	16.7	44.4	50.0	38.5	17.9
31-40	3	3	2	1	7	16
	9.4	9.4	6.3	3.1	21.9	50.0
	3.5	25.0	22.2	50.0	53.8	57.1
Over 40	0	0	0	0	0	2
	0	0	0	0	0	100
	0	0	0	0	0	7.1

Table 170

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by seeing yourself in another serving vocation ten years from now.

	Not Possible 1	2	3	4	5	Very Possible 6
1-5	9 31.0 18.0	6 20.7 20.0	4 13.8 28.6	5 17.2 20.8	3 10.3 18.8	2 6.9 33.3
6-10	9 42.9 18.0	2 9.5 6.7	3 14.3 21.4	4 19.0 16.7	3 14.3 18.8	0 0 0
11-20	8 24.2 16.0	9 27.3 30.0	4 12.1 28.6	7 21.2 29.2	4 12.1 25.0	1 3.0 16.7
21-30	12 42.9 24.0	4 14.3 13.3	2 7.1 14.3	4 14.3 16.7	4 14.3 25.0	2 7.1 33.3
31-40	12 41.4 24.0	9 31.0 30.0	1 3.4 7.1	4 13.8 16.7	2 6.9 12.5	1 3.4 16.7
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 171

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by seeing yourself in secular employment ten years from now.

	Not Possible					Very Possible
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-5	16	6	2	1	3	1
	55.2	20.7	6.9	3.4	10.3	3.4
	22.9	17.1	10.5	14.3	60.0	20.0
6-10	14	6	0	0	0	0
	70.0	30.0	0	0	0	0
	20.0	17.1	0	0	0	0
11-20	10	14	6	3	0	1
	29.4	41.2	17.6	8.8	0	2.9
	14.3	40.0	31.6	42.9	0	20.0
21-30	15	3	6	1	2	1
	53.6	10.7	21.4	3.6	7.1	3.6
	21.4	8.6	31.6	14.3	40.0	20.0
31-40	15	6	5	2	0	1
	51.7	20.7	17.2	6.9	0	3.4
	21.4	17.1	26.3	28.6	0	20.0
Over 40	0	0	0	0	0	1
	0	0	0	0	0	100
	0	0	0	0	0	20.0

Table 172

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by feelings that few ministers have the stress that I do.

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1-5	12 42.9 24.0	6 21.4 13.0	4 14.3 14.3	4 14.3 25.0	1 3.6 12.5	1 3.6 25.0
6-10	9 39.1 18.0	8 34.8 17.4	3 13.0 10.7	2 8.7 12.5	1 4.3 12.5	0 0 0
11-20	13 35.1 26.0	12 32.4 26.1	6 16.2 21.4	2 5.4 12.5	4 10.8 50.0	0 0 0
21-30	9 28.1 18.0	10 31.3 21.7	6 18.8 21.4	4 12.5 25.0	2 6.3 25.0	1 3.1 25.0
31-40	7 23.3 14.0	9 30.0 19.6	8 26.7 28.6	4 13.3 25.0	0 0 0	2 6.7 50.0
Over 40	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.2	1 50.0 3.6	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 173

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by stress level of ministry.

	Too Low 1	Manage- able 2	Taking Its Toll 3	Reduce Or Other 4	Radical Change 5	Other 6
1-5	0 0 0	20 66.7 21.5	9 30.0 17.0	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 3.3 33.3
6-10	1 4.3 50.0	14 60.9 15.1	8 34.8 15.1	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0
11-20	0 0 0	25 65.8 26.9	11 28.9 20.8	1 2.6 33.3	0 0 0	1 2.6 33.3
21-30	0 0 0	15 48.4 16.1	14 45.2 26.4	0 0 0	1 3.2 100	1 3.2 33.3
31-40	1 3.2 50.0	19 61.3 20.4	9 29.0 17.0	2 6.5 66.7	0 0 0	0 0 0
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	2 100 3.8	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0

Table 174

Crosstabulation of number of years in ministry by not having enough time.

	Seldom 1	2	3	4	5	Frequently 6
1-5	1 3.3 12.5	3 10.0 20.0	3 10.0 11.5	7 23.3 23.3	8 26.7 16.3	8 26.7 33.3
6-10	1 4.5 12.5	2 9.1 13.3	3 13.6 11.5	3 13.6 10.0	9 40.9 18.4	4 18.2 16.7
11-20	0 0 0	2 5.6 13.3	9 25.0 34.6	10 27.8 33.3	12 33.3 24.5	3 8.3 12.5
21-30	4 12.5 50.0	4 12.5 26.7	5 15.6 19.2	4 12.5 13.3	10 31.3 20.4	5 15.6 20.8
31-40	2 6.7 25.0	4 13.3 26.7	5 16.7 19.2	6 20.0 20.0	9 30.0 18.4	4 13.3 16.7
Over 40	0 0 0	0 0 0	1 50.0 3.8	0 0 0	1 50.0 2.0	0 0 0

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE FORM FOR PASTORAL ROLE CLARIFICATION

PASTORAL ROLE CLARIFICATION
Suggested by Roy M. Oswald

Role	Order in which time should be spent	Order in which time is actually spent	Actual % of time
Preacher	1	2	20%
Pastor	2	3	18%
Theologian	3	4	14%
Marketer	4	6	4%
Administrator	5	1	33%
Traveler	6	5	11%

APPENDIX E

EXAMPLE OF TIME BLOC SCHEDULE

Time-Bloc Schedule Indicator
G. Lloyd Rediger

Date _____

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY

OPEN MORNING

LUNCH

AFTERNOON

