

ABSTRACT
AN EVALUATION OF PASTORAL SELF-LEADERSHIP
AND CHURCH HEALTH IN CHURCH PLANTS

by

Steven Allen Jackson

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the presence of self-leadership practices in church-planting pastors and the health of those churches. Research analysis correlated the degree of self-leadership in church-planting pastors to the churches' health. This descriptive study used standardized questionnaires to measure self-leadership and church health. The review of literature covered leadership and church health. Theological reflection focused on pastors as servants, shepherds, and stewards.

Thirty church-planting pastors and 263 leaders from those churches were surveyed.

The study revealed a positive but insignificant correlation between pastor self-leadership and church health.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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AND CHURCH HEALTH IN CHURCH PLANTS

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by

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CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Introduction

I shifted uneasily in my chair as the group gathered around me and took turns, one after the other, praying for me and for the church I was planting. Tears began to flow freely, my own as well as others', as we sensed God's presence in a powerful way. My heart was filled with a profound sense of gratitude for the group of fellow pastors praying for me and for the wonderful new church that would soon be planted in Georgia.

This event happened on a cold January morning five years ago in Houston, Texas. I was in Houston attending a conference on visionary leadership in the church. The larger conference had split out into smaller processing groups, and I was assigned to a group of church-planting pastors. As our first session together wound down, we decided to conclude in prayer. Someone asked if anyone in the group was planting a church that would be holding its first worship service in the near future for which the group could pray. I spoke up and said that I was. In just a few short weeks, the church I was planting would be holding its inaugural worship service in a high school auditorium in our town. When asked how I felt about things, I tried to sound strong and confident, but my feelings of fear and inadequacy must have betrayed me because when we began, the entire group spontaneously gathered around me to lay their hands on me and pray.

I consider that morning in Houston the beginning point of the journey that created the desire in me to undertake this research project. As I sat there that morning feeling scared and anxious but totally surrounded by the love of the dedicated pastors who took turns praying for me, I distinctly remember questions swirling through my mind. The

questions mainly concerned the role of the church-planting pastor and what, if anything, pastors can do to facilitate the health and vitality of the churches they are planting during the critical time of the church's birth and infancy. These questions were not intended in any way to diminish God's role in planting the church as a healthy, growing, vital congregation. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, "I will build my church" (NIV). The work of establishing and growing a healthy church is first and foremost God's work. God calls pastors to partner with him, however, and to employ all the gifts, graces, skills, creativity, and hard work they can muster to help fulfill God's vision for the Church.

In the days and weeks following that powerful time of prayer in Houston, I pondered these questions and more. Eventually, as the church plant with which I was involved moved through its initial stages of development, I began to understand I had more influence over certain aspects of the church-planting process than I did others. One factor in particular came up again and again. In fact, it became one of my toughest leadership challenges. The factor over which I had most control was myself. I discovered that if church planters ever hope to be effective leaders of others, they must first be able to lead themselves effectively. True leadership begins from within.

The Problem

The Christian Church in America is in trouble. Estimates are that 80 to 85 percent of all the churches in North America are plateaued or declining (Arn 16). Each year some thirty-five hundred to four thousand Protestant churches in North America close their doors for good (Schaller 173). Entire denominations are foundering. A twenty-year study of church membership between 1965 and 1985 revealed that virtually every mainline denomination is in decline, including the United Methodist (down 16 percent), Episcopal

(20 percent), Presbyterian (24 percent), and Disciples of Christ (42 percent) denominations. Figures released in 1991 indicate that more than 70 percent of all Southern Baptist churches are either plateaued or declining in membership. When this study is broadened to include all U. S. churches, the figure leaps to 80 to 85 percent (White and London 48). Threatening storm clouds have appeared, darkening the bright horizon of American Christianity (Malphurs 13). The critical question many churches in America face today is if they will survive. Clearly, something must be done.

The reasons why the Christian Church in America finds itself in this predicament are numerous. Chief among these reasons is the fact that the Church finds itself today in the post-Christendom, postmodern era, a time when the culture is more non-Christian in its outlook than at nearly any other time in history. Meanwhile, in the words of George G. Hunter, III, “many Western Church leaders are in denial; they plan and do church as though next year will be 1957” (Celtic Way 9). Many churches have lost touch with the communities they are trying to reach. Hunter laments, “Most traditional churches today cannot reach, or even communicate meaningfully with their unchurched, non-Christian neighbors” (Church 12). Churches must change in order to carry out the Great Commission effectively (Matt. 28:19-20) in the twenty-first century and beyond. In most cases traditional ways of doing ministry simply do not reach across the broadening chasm that exists between the modern world in which traditional churches thrived and the postmodern world in which leaders and organizations are required to do something entirely new (Cladis 29). The Church’s challenge today is to present the gospel clearly to people who look at Jesus through “secular, skeptical and technical eyes” (Towns and Bird 19).

Encouraging signs exist, however. Many are catching a vision of reaching unchurched Americans through the planting of dynamic, culturally relevant Great Commission churches (Malphurs 15). These church planters believe that planting new churches may be the answer, at least in part, to the growing crisis the church in America is facing. The presence of declining morale and numbers in existing churches is seen by these forward-thinking churches and leaders as an opportunity for the Lord to do a “new thing” (Isa. 43:19, NIV) among his people. Hundreds of these new churches have sprung up across the nation meeting in schools, civic auditoriums, movie theaters, hotels, funeral homes, and industrial warehouses. What these new churches and their leaders have discovered is that the gospel is best conveyed through the medium of culture. They have learned to be faithful to their calling while striving to be contextual, that is, culturally relevant within their specific setting (Guder et al. 18).

Accompanying the growing number of new church plants, each with a desire to be contextually and culturally relevant, is the demand for effective pastoral leadership in these settings. Leadership is critical in any venture but nowhere more so than in church planting. Church growth expert C. Peter Wagner even goes so far as to say that the church-planting pastor is “the principal key to a successful church planting endeavor” (Church Planting 51). A great deal is riding on the competency, character, vision, and influence of the church-planting pastor if these new churches are to succeed. Far too many church-planting efforts falter or fail because the pastors leading them labor under a faulty set of assumptions concerning pastoral leadership in a church plant. Anyone who begins a ministry brings to it certain assumptions that are either consciously or subconsciously in place (Malphurs 61). Even success in a long-standing pastorate does

not guarantee success as a church planter. In fact, success in an established church may make success even more difficult in a church plant because leadership in the two settings is so different. In addition, studies indicate people have more difficulty unlearning what they already know than they do learning something new. Some pastors who leave what they perceive to be the frustrations of leading an established congregation for the greener grass of a new church plant soon discover they are totally unprepared for the rigors and demands they encounter. Church planting is hard, lonely work requiring a unique approach to pastoral leadership. Transferring traditional and more familiar pastoral roles such as “theologian-in-residence,” “chaplain,” or “curer of souls” to a church plant setting often results in a quick exit for the pastor attempting to lead in that manner or the quick demise of the congregation that pastor is attempting to help plant.

Although considerable overlap exists, the characteristics of an ideal church planter are not the same as those of a pastor of an existing church (Wagner, Church Planting 51). Church-planting pastors must exhibit a high degree of self-initiative and self-motivation, qualities that are frequently lacking even among seasoned clergy. Church consultant Lyle Schaller contends church-planting pastors should be “psychologically healthy, inner-directed, future-oriented, goal-driven, self-confident, experienced, entrepreneurial, competent, happy, extroverted, enterprising, gregarious, skilled, highly committed, and wise” (111). Wagner’s profile of ideal church-planting pastors includes nine characteristics. They must be committed Christian workers, self-starters, be willing to endure loneliness, be adaptable, have a high level of faith, have a supportive spouse and family, be willing and able to lead, have a friendly personality, and finally, be clearly called by God to plant a church (Church Planting 52-55).

Schaller (38), Wagner (Church Planting 54), Aubrey Malphurs (105), and others conclude that pastoral leadership is a critical factor in the success of a church plant. Unfortunately leadership also turns out to be one of the weakest areas in pastoral ministry. Researcher George Barna reports in a 2001 survey that only 4 percent of American senior pastors claim to have the spiritual gift of leadership (Barna by Topic). Even more discouraging is the fact that if leaders are weak at leading others, the probability is high that they are weak leaders of themselves as well. In the lonely, often discouraging life of the church-planting pastor, weak self-leadership is an open invitation to personal and moral failure.

Church planters are often left to their own devices concerning the organizing, scheduling, and prioritizing of their work. In the beginning these leaders are not even answerable to a congregation since the congregation has not yet come into existence. Most often external supervision and guidance comes to the church planter from one or two denominational leaders or from a small group of leaders in the church plant. In the final analysis, church planters are their own leaders, and just like any other type leader, they can either be good leaders or bad leaders of themselves.

One of the primary assumptions of this study is that effective, enduring leadership is contingent upon effective self-leadership. People's ability to lead their own lives successfully provides the firm foundation from which they can lead others (Rima 17).

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the presence of self-leadership practices in church-planting pastors and the health of those churches. Many factors converge in space and time to result in a successful church plant. At a

minimum these include the pastor, the context of the church plant, and *kairos*, or God's timing. This research focused specifically on the role of the planting pastor in the church plant. Leading a church as a pastor involves the interaction among the person's sense of call, appropriate and honed spiritual gifts and personality, temperament, and style. This study zeroes in on one aspect of planting pastors' leadership style, namely their ability to lead themselves.

This study focused on a particular process of leadership called self-leadership. The basic premise of self-leadership is that if people ever hope to be effective leaders of others, they must first learn to lead themselves effectively (Manz, Art 2). Self-leadership involves leading oneself using three distinct but complementary strategies: (1) behavioral focused strategies, (2) natural reward strategies, and (3) constructive thought patterns (103-04). Behavior-focused strategies are aimed at increasing self-awareness leading to the management of behaviors involving unpleasant but necessary tasks (Manz and Neck 16). Natural reward strategies emphasize the desirability of recognizing and using the enjoyable aspects of a given task or activity toward the pursuit of more effective self-leadership (40). Constructive thought patterns involve the creation and maintenance of functional patterns of habitual thinking (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 45).

Self-leadership is not another example of the unbiblical individualistic American spirit of "every person for themselves" or the latest self-help strategy. Little room in the Church exists for individualism. The Church is the gathered community of believers all gifted and called to serve in unique and significant ways in unity with one another. The Apostle Paul reminds the church in Rome, and by extension all Christians, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought" (Rom. 12:3, NIV). Paul goes on to write, "Just

as each of us has one body with many members ... so in Christ we who are many form one body. [W]e have different gifts, according to the grace given us" (Rom. 12:4-6, NIV). One of those important gifts is leadership: "[I]f it [one's gift] is leadership, let him govern diligently" (Rom. 12:8, NIV).

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, always found a place for the individual but seldom found room for individualism. Wesley's emphasis on community with his class meetings, bands, and societies is well-known. D. Michael Henderson articulates Wesley's view on group participation versus acting as isolated individuals:

Wesley was convinced that all learning is expedited by group interaction whether the content of that learning is behavioral transformation, redirection of attitudes and motives, cognitive data gathering, strategic training, or social rehabilitation. It seems that he responded to every instructional need he met by establishing a group.... He felt that his own personal growth was largely due to participation in group experiences and he advocated them for others.... [T]here was always the people-to-people element in his solution to human problems and development. (132)

Self-leadership and collaborating with others are not conflicting concepts. The introduction of empowered work teams into the workplace represents one of the most important new organizational developments in years (Manz and Neck 81). Self-leadership is not only an integral dimension of individual performance but also a key element of team success (89). For individuals to reach their potential while working within teams, the individuals must still lead themselves (82). For these reasons and more, self-leadership is not an individualistic endeavor. Those studying and interpreting the concept of self-leadership are in agreement that the whole purpose of effective self-leadership is not to create superhero leaders; self-leadership is instead a method of empowering workers and leaders to be better team players. Team unity demands individual enrollment (Leider 192), and effective self-leadership involves a coordinated

effort between the leader (in this case the planting pastor) and the organization (the church) as a whole. A proper self-leadership perspective encourages leaders to find their own personal identities and modes of contribution within the context of the broader organization.

As for the possible negative impression of self-leadership being a part of the self-help movement, Charles Manz contends that in addition to its behavioral and cognitive components, self-leadership has another important component—the spiritual: “Time and time again over the last ten years, I heard from people that their religious beliefs were remarkably consistent with my self-leadership principles” (“Exploring”). Manz lifts up the spiritual aspect of self-leadership in his 1998 book The Leadership Wisdom of Jesus. This book includes a chapter specifically about self-leadership in which the author concludes that Jesus’ leadership was essentially empowering leadership from a spiritual center. The ministry of Jesus was largely about facilitating and unleashing the gifts and abilities of others. The way leaders lay the foundation to empower others is by mastering the art of leading themselves first (9).

Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal address the issue of spirituality and self-leadership in their book Leading with Soul. In that book the authors contend leaders must discover or rediscover their own “spiritual center” by taking a spiritual journey that begins with the self before they will ever be able to ignite the spirit of an organization (63).

Self-leadership as discussed in this research is based on several biblical-theological assumptions and has implications for faith and practice in the lives of church-planting pastors. The Bible frequently addresses the importance of leadership in general

and the importance of leaders' own ability to lead themselves. Stories about great leaders and leadership principles abound in the Bible including incidents from the lives of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Nehemiah, David, and Jesus to name a few. The Apostle Paul, writing to his young protégé in the faith, Timothy, speaks often of the need for Timothy to pay close attention to the manner in which he leads himself as he leads others. At times the Apostle Paul focuses more on Timothy's self-leadership than he does on giving specific advice on leading others in the churches for which Timothy was responsible (Rima 30).

In one sense self-leadership is almost entirely about stewardship, defined as using all God-entrusted resources wisely and in God-honoring ways. If God grants pastors the privilege of planting congregations, then they need to do all they can to be "good and faithful steward[s]" (Matt. 25:21, NIV) of that opportunity. Likewise, if denominational boards or local churches invest time, money, personnel, and other resources in church plants, the pastors leading those church plants should be good stewards of that with which they have been entrusted. Good stewardship begins with effective self-leadership.

Research Questions

1. What level of self-leadership does the church-planting pastor evidence?
2. What level of health does the church plant evidence?
3. What correlation is evident between self-leadership and church health?

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the key terms are defined.

Self-leadership is the leadership people exercise over themselves. Leadership is commonly described as "a process of influence," usually with regards to influencing

others (Manz and Neck 2). Self-leadership, by contrast, is about the intrapersonal process of influencing oneself. More specifically the term refers to the process of influencing oneself to establish the self-direction and self-motivation needed to perform (Manz, Art 5). Although this definition appears similar to the concept of self-control, the term, as used in this research, is much broader than the concept of self-control alone, as is borne out in the study.

A church plant is defined as a community of faith that has held its initial public worship service, and is still being led by its planting pastor, excluding house churches.

Church health is defined as the presence of and balance among eight church health characteristics as described in the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire. These characteristics are (1) authentic community, (2) empowering leadership, (3) engaging worship, (4) functional structures, (5) intentional evangelism, (6) mobilized laity, (7) passionate spirituality, and (8) transforming discipleship. These characteristics, when taken together, can be used to diagnose the health of a church (McKee 5).

Methodology of the Study

This was a descriptive study utilizing two standardized questionnaires. The tabulation of these questionnaires gave an indication of the level of self-leadership of each pastor and the level of church health of each church. Each pastor's level of self-leadership was then compared to the health of the church he or she planted to determine if a correlation exists between pastoral self-leadership and the health of those churches.

Subjects

The subjects of this study were pastors who graduated from the Beeson Pastor program at Asbury Theological Seminary and planted churches. The Beeson Pastor

program is a one-year, in-residence, full-scholarship course of study toward a Doctor of Ministry degree. As part of the program, Beeson pastors visit dynamic churches around the world and get the opportunity to interact with leaders from those churches. A high priority of the Beeson program is to train leaders to plant and develop culturally relevant and cross-cultural congregations. Since the program's inception in 1995, ninety-two Beeson pastors have completed the program with Doctor of Ministry degrees, and forty-two of these graduates have planted churches in at least nineteen different states. Thirty of these pastors from seventeen states participated in this study.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consists of thirty pastors who graduated from the Beeson Pastor program at Asbury Theological Seminary and planted churches and leaders from the congregations those pastors planted. For the pastors, the population was small enough to allow all the pastors who were eligible to participate and be included in the study. The population for the church health variable of this research was a sample from the churches. Fifteen adult leaders of each congregation were invited to participate, making a total of 480 potential subjects.

Variables

Two variables were measured in this research project: self-leadership and church health. Intervening variables that may have affected the outcome of this study include various contextual factors concerning both church-planting pastors and the church plants themselves. For the church-planting pastor, these variables might include the presence or absence of other leadership qualities and other personal demographics of the pastor including, but not limited to, age, gender, marital status, health, temperament, and

character issues.

For the churches involved, intervening variables could be the demographics of the church including, but not limited to, the population of the community, whether the church and/or community is growing or declining, the presence or absence of additional staff, whether or not the church plant had denominational ties, and the presence or absence of facilities.

Some of these intervening variables were measured using the questionnaires and then analyzed, but most were considered beyond the scope of this limited project.

Instrumentation

Self-leadership was measured using a standardized questionnaire called the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) designed by Dr. Jeffery Houghton and Dr. Christopher Neck. The RSLQ is a self-administered survey tool consisting of thirty-five items answered on a five-point Likert scale.

Church health was measured using a standardized questionnaire known as the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire (BCHQ) designed by doctoral students at Asbury Theological Seminary. The BCHQ is a self-administered survey tool consisting of sixty-nine items answered on a five-point Likert scale.

Data Collection

After contacting the Beeson Pastor's office at Asbury Theological Seminary to get permission to use the Beeson pastors as the population for this study, I sent a letter to each of the forty-two, church-planting pastors identified requesting their voluntary participation in this study and advising them they would receive a survey packet the next week. These packets were then mailed one week later. The packets included a cover

letter, one Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire, and fifteen Beeson Church Health Questionnaires. Self-addressed, stamped return envelopes were also provided for each of the sixteen questionnaires enclosed. The cover letter instructed the pastors to complete and return a self-leadership questionnaire on themselves along with instructions to distribute the church health questionnaires to fifteen of the adult leaders of their churches. To reduce the effects of bias during data collection as much as possible, care was taken to make the purpose of this research completely clear to the pastors and confidentiality was assured to both the pastors and church leaders.

Eventually thirty pastors and 263 church leaders completed questionnaires. As the completed instruments were returned, data was manually entered into a spreadsheet, which was then forwarded to a statistician for analysis.

Delimitations and Generalizability

This study was limited to Beeson pastors who have planted churches who voluntarily agreed to participate in this study and to the churches those pastors have planted. The project is, therefore, limited, and its findings should only be generalized to those pastors and churches that participated. I have identified several potential limitations below.

Since the pastors in the population have already been selected by someone to plant a church, the possibility exists that these leaders have already exhibited higher than normal self-leadership qualities, thus possibly skewing the self-leadership findings. Also, due to the wide variety of roles a church-planting pastor must fill (shepherd, teacher, preacher, evangelist, fund-raiser, administrator) some unexamined aspect of one or more of these roles could possibly be more important than self-leadership in terms of the

overall health of a church plant. These variables were considered but not controlled or measured as doing so was considered beyond the scope of this study.

As for the churches involved, since they are all new church plants, they could be more in touch with current trends in church health than existing churches operating under older paradigms. If so, these new churches should already be healthier, possibly even in spite of the planting pastor's self-leadership capacity. Also, the success or failure of any church can depend on a number of variables including doctrine, denomination, location, lay leadership, style of music, racial or socioeconomic makeup, relevance of preaching, and spiritual receptivity of members, not to mention more mundane variables such as service times, financial resources, and the church's physical plant (Anderson, Leadership 54). One or more of these factors could be unduly influencing the health of one or more of the church plants surveyed—more so perhaps than even the self-leadership capacity of the planting pastor. Few of these other variables concerning church health were measured, and no attempt was made to control them.

This research adds to the existing studies concerning leadership by pastors and church-planting leadership by pastors in particular. The findings of this study could be relevant to any denominational board or local church interested in planting healthy churches. The research could also be relevant to church-planting pastors interested in discovering how to lead healthier churches more effectively because self-leadership can be learned (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 17) and, thus, is not restricted to those who might be considered born or natural self-leaders.

Future research should be done to determine whether the results found in this study can be generalized to other church-planting pastors and churches. Research could

also be conducted to see if the findings of this study are relevant to the leadership practices of pastors in established churches as well as new church plants. Another possibility would be to develop a training course for church-planting pastors to teach these rising leaders effective self-leadership practices.

Theological Reflection

Time and again the Bible reveals that God's plan is to mold each of his followers into the character and likeness of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29 says, "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn of many brothers" (NIV). In addition to this general call upon all Christians to be conformed to the image of Christ, an even deeper and more specific charge is given to those engaging in pastoral leadership to be conformed to Christ's image as undershepherds of God's flock. James spells this idea out clearly in his epistle: "Not many of you should aspire to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly" (Jas. 3:1, NIV). Pastors are called to be the kind of leader David was: a "man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14, NIV). The people of God have longed for such a leader since at least the time of Moses:

Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, who may go out before them and go in before them, who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep which have no shepherd. (Num. 27:16-17, NIV)

First Timothy 3:1-13 lists the character and qualifications expected of pastors and emphasizes how carefully and dutifully pastors are to model life and minister the Word (Hayford 39). Those whom pastors influence are to become Christlike, but the likeness of Christ to which they aspire they must first see in the pastors themselves. God's eternal purposes have been entrusted to pastors as they guide God's people on his mission to

redeem a lost world (Blackaby and Brandt 1).

This noble and Christlike character for which God is searching in those he chooses to lead as pastors is far too important to be left to chance. Such character is instead the natural result of continued right thinking and exposure to God-like thought.

Self-leadership thought emphasizes that in many ways people choose who they are and what they want to become. It also recognizes that the world does not always cooperate with a person's goals but that people largely create the personal world within which each must cope. People influence their own actions in more ways than they can imagine (Manz, Art xi). Even though individuals function within a complex system of influence involving themselves, their behavior, and their world, they possess a great deal of choice concerning what they experience and what they can accomplish with their lives (13). Proverbs 23:7 affirms the importance of personal thoughts on actions: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (KJV). Here self-leadership thinking is definitely aligned with Scripture. How persons perceive and process information about themselves and the world around them has considerable impact on the ways in which they conduct themselves in the world. The Apostle Paul understood the power of individuals' thoughts to create their world as he challenged the believers at Philippi: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5, NASB). Paul impressed upon the Philippians the importance of thought patterns by exhorting, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Phil.4:8, NIV). Paul went on to link right thinking to appropriate action in this passage by completing his thought: "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or

seen in me—*put it into practice* [emphasis mine]. And the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:9, NIV).

Scripture stresses that the minds of believers must be shaped by the knowledge and love of God, and the more a person’s mind is shaped this way, the more that person’s ways of thinking and acting will be conformed to the pattern set out in Jesus Christ. Scripture is also clear that to remain fruitful a person must “abide” in Christ just as a branch must remain attached to the vine to bear fruit (John 15:1-5). This progression from the inner to the outer self is yet another point where Scripture and self-leadership thinking intersect. Self-leadership thinking holds that a person’s mental behavior (thoughts) is inevitably expressed through observable physical behavior. Leadership ultimately boils down to observable behaviors: Leadership is about what leaders do in order to get the people of God to do the work of the kingdom (Anderson, Leadership 48). Leith Anderson contends that the primary function of leaders is figuring out what needs to be done and then doing it. The call to imitate Christ, which is fed and developed through personal discipline and God-like thought patterns (cognitive aspect), ultimately expresses itself through effective ministry (behavioral aspect) in and to the world. This understanding forms an important part of the biblical-theological grounding of this research.

Another biblical-theological concept closely linked to those previously mentioned is the understanding that while what is inside leaders is important, that is, the thoughts and behaviors that are driving them, of equal or greater importance is that the leaders themselves know and understand what these thoughts and behaviors are, how they are formed in them, and how they are affecting them. Careful self-examination and a sincere

willingness to seek ways of improving themselves provide the foundation for effective leadership (Manz, Leadership Wisdom 13). Leaders must continually look within to discern what they value and what they want (Leider 190).

Jesus affirmed the importance of self-examination and leading from within in the Sermon on the Mount when he urged his hearers to “[f]irst take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove from your brother’s eye” (Matt. 7:4, NIV). Jesus was, in fact, the ultimate self-leader; he practiced self-leadership by following times of intense ministry activity with time set aside for reflection, prayer, fasting, and solitude (Hybels 184).

The Apostle Paul also encouraged self-examination when he wrote to the church in Corinth: “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves” (2 Cor. 13:5, NIV). Paul certainly seemed to know himself well and what was going on inside. He introduced himself as being “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless” (Phil. 3:5-6, NIV). Post-conversion Paul certainly seemed to know who he was and what his cognitive impulses were. Self-knowledge is essential if a leader wants to “[l]ove the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matt. 22:37, NIV).

The Bible contains numerous exhortations to leaders to exercise effective self-leadership. Many excellent case studies in effective self-leadership can be found in Scripture including the accounts of Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah, Paul, and Jesus. Sadly, the Bible also recounts several situations where leaders failed to exercise self-leadership (Rima 32). Moses lost his temper at the waters of Meribah and suffered the consequences

of his disobedience (Num. 20:8-11). David failed to exercise self-control leading to his sin with Bathsheba and its consequences (2 Sam. 11). Solomon's insatiable thirst for horses (1 Kings 10:26) and foreign wives (1 Kings 11:3-6) led to the Lord becoming angry with him and ultimately cost him the kingdom (1 Kings 11:9-11).

In the final analysis, self-leadership is essential if a pastor wants to be a servant leader chosen by God to shepherd his people, stewarding his gifts appropriately to accomplish God's purposes in the context in which the leader is operating.

Overview of the Study

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature in the fields of leadership, self-leadership, and church health. The theological reflection in Chapter 2 focuses on pastoral leaders as servant leaders chosen by God to shepherd his people, stewarding their gifts appropriately to accomplish God's purposes in the context in which the leaders are operating.

Chapter 3 describes the design of the study and explains how the questionnaires were administered, tabulated, and processed.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the field research and answers the research questions. Descriptive profiles of the church-planting pastors, the church plants themselves, and the congregational leaders who participated in the study are also provided. Chapter four concludes with a summary of significant findings.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings, conclusions, implications, and limitations of this study. The chapter also includes recommendations for future study, and a concluding summary.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of selected literature considers the field of leadership, both secular and Christian, and the church health movement. The review includes an overview of the history of leadership research including the prominent ideas, models, and theories of the field. The review also covers the importance of the self in leadership theory and an overview of a particular model of self-management that includes both behavioral and cognitive strategies called self-leadership. The theological focus of the review is based upon the understanding of pastoral leaders as servant leaders chosen by God to shepherd their people, stewarding their gifts appropriately to accomplish God's purposes in the context in which the leaders are operating. A discussion of the evolution of the church health movement and a brief review of pertinent church health literature follows the review of leadership literature.

Leadership Defined

Few subjects have received as much attention in academic, business, and Christian literature in recent years as leadership. The widespread interest in the topic may be because leadership is such a mysterious process, as well as one that touches everyone's life (Yukl 1). Ralph Stogdill, a pioneer in the field of leadership, concludes that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (259). In his classic book author and scholar James MacGregor Burns echoes and extends Stogdill's thought with his observation that

leadership is “one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (2). Thousands of books have been written on the subject and scores of organizations have come into existence in the last decade offering leadership coaching and training classes. Universities have developed curricula and opened new schools of leadership. Despite the fact that leadership has been analyzed, written about, and discussed from every conceivable angle, a generally agreed-upon optimal perspective has yet to be identified (Yukl 10).

One reason for the difficulty in arriving at a workable understanding of the subject is because leadership has been studied as a subspecialty by such divergent fields as anthropology, education, political science, psychology, public administration, military science, theology, business, and others (Rost 15). Leadership has alternately been described as an art, a discipline, and a science and as such has come to mean all things to all people (7). A second reason for the difficulty in defining leadership is because even within the myriad disciplines that are studying the phenomena, researchers often define leadership according to their own individual perspectives and the aspect of leadership of most interest to them (Yukl 2). This self-serving parochialism artificially distorts the meaning of the term and hinders the possibility of arriving at a commonly agreed-upon definition and understanding.

Despite the confusion about the exact nature of leadership, a few points of consensus do exist. For example, most observers agree that leadership can be learned. The current consensus on the age-old question of whether leaders are born or made is “both.” A second point of consensus is that leadership is not the private domain of a few charismatic men and women. Leadership is instead “the process ordinary people use

when they're bringing forth the best from themselves and others" (Kouzes and Posner xx). Another point of general consensus is that the need for solid leadership has never been greater. Today's fast moving, increasingly complex, and sophisticated society presents enormous challenges that demand effective leadership. Globalization, deregulation, and the accelerating rate of technological progress are but a few of the challenges aspiring leaders face today (Steere 266). One other point of agreement among the authors, consultants, and practitioners of leadership whose material was reviewed for this research is that many of the problems organizations find themselves facing today stem from poor leadership, and the time is right for a new paradigm of leadership different from traditional management thinking (Covey 150).

Despite the fact that consensus has not been reached concerning a single workable definition of leadership, a review of the definition of the term from some of the more respected commentators and practitioners reveals a common theme.

Burns characterizes leadership as follows: "Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers" (18). John Gardner defines leadership as "the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers" (1). Joseph Rost defines leadership as "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (102). John Maxwell concludes that "[l]eadership is influence. That's it. Nothing more. Nothing less" (1). J. Oswald Sanders agrees with

Maxwell: “Leadership is influence, the ability of one person to influence others to follow his or her lead” (27). Peter Northhouse defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (3). Finally, Gary Yukl defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating the individual and collective efforts to accomplish the shared objectives” (7).

Even though one generally accepted conceptualization or definition of leadership does not exist, the notion of *influence* appears as a common theme in many definitions and in the literature on the topic in general. Ultimately, as Yukl notes, leadership involves influence to facilitate the performance of a collective task (19). For this particular research, which focuses on self-leadership, perhaps the most useful and helpful definition of leadership is simply “the process of influence” (Manz and Neck 2).

An Overview of Leadership Theory

Leadership theory finds its genesis near the dawn of civilization. People have been curious about the interaction between leaders and followers and the leadership-followership cycle throughout recorded history. Moses listened to his father-in-law Jethro and learned the leadership principle of involving and delegating certain responsibilities to qualified individuals (Exod. 18). Confucius sought laws of order between leaders and subordinates. Plato described an ideal republic with philosopher kings providing wise and judicious leadership (Sorenson). Even though people have been interested in the nature of leadership for centuries, the scientific study of

leadership has arisen primarily in the last two centuries and especially in the last sixty years. Several theories of leadership have become popular as the subject has emerged as a discipline over the years.

Great Man Theory

In the beginning, leadership skills were thought to be a matter of birth (Bennis and Nanus 5). The so-called “great man” theory was one of the most enduring and popular explanations of leadership especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Kirkpatrick and Locke 133). Theorists such as Carlyle, Galton, Woods, and James concentrated on the study of “great men” who had affected history (Clinton, Short History 15). This theory assumed leaders were born, not made, and that no amount of education or experience could change a person’s fate with regard to leadership. Those of the right breed can lead; all others must be led (Bennis and Nanus 5). This theory may have evolved in part from the understanding in many ancient cultures that leaders were, in part, divine. Many ancients believed that those who ascend to leadership positions were sent by the gods and had powers beyond those of mere mortals (Hallam).

Trait Theory

Early in the twentieth century, the “great man” theory evolved into what is called “trait theory” (Kirkpatrick and Locke 134). Trait theorists were not concerned with whether traits were inherited or not. They simply made the assumption that certain traits, that is, certain characteristics, capacities, motives, and patterns of behavior, do matter and that the presence of those traits differentiate leaders from non-leaders. Trait theorists suggested that by identifying positive leadership traits,

one could identify effective leaders and possibly train others to be effective leaders. Traits often singled out as being important for leaders to possess include certain physical, personality, and social factors as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northhouse 4). The main weakness of trait theory is the fact that a universal set of traits that consistently distinguishes leaders from followers has not been identified. Even so, trait theory remained the predominant view until Stogdill challenged the view as too simplistic in a perspective-shifting article written in 1948 (Elliston 13).

Behavioral Theory

The next phase of leadership theory emphasized the types of behaviors leaders exhibit: what leaders do and how they do it. The fundamental difference between trait theory and behavioral theory is that trait theorists focus on an individual's personal attributes, which suggests a particular leadership style. Behavioral theorists, on the other hand, take into consideration the interaction of the leader with the follower.

Douglas McGregor holds that "the theoretical assumptions management holds about controlling its human resource determines the whole character of the enterprise" (3). Based upon this assumption, McGregor comes up with a behavioral theory known as Theory X and Theory Y, which describe two basic approaches to leading people. Theory X leaders believe that employees dislike work and seek to avoid it. This theory leads to an emphasis on control and looks for ways to administer rewards and punishment. By contrast, Theory Y managers believe that followers work hard, are cooperative, and have positive attitudes. Accordingly, Theory Y

managers utilize participative management styles and external controls and punishment are not employed.

In the 1950s and 1960s, researchers at Ohio State and the University of Michigan conducted leadership studies focusing on the actual behavior of leaders and the performance and attitudes of their followers. Perhaps the most famous model to emerge from this research was a two dimensional managerial grid developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in 1964. Blake and Mouton's grid uses two axes: "concern for people," and "concern for task." The researchers then group observed behaviors into two major categories—consideration (people oriented) or initiating structure (task oriented)—and then characterize five different leadership styles according to a manager's emphasis on these two dimensions (15).

Situational or Contingency Theory

Emerging from the somewhat mixed signals about which behaviors by leaders generate the most worker production and satisfaction, a theory emerged commonly called "situational" or "contingency theory." The theorists in this group hold that trait and behavioral theories are inadequate. Situational theories assume the situation in which the group is operating also determines which style of leadership will be optimal. This approach recognizes that the leadership needed varies from situation to situation and argues no one, blanket, "best way" approach to leadership exists. Effective leadership depends on a mix of factors. Several models exist that attempt to explore and explain the relationship between style and situation.

Fred Fiedler was the first to put forth the notion that leadership effectiveness depends on the situation. Fiedler's approach departs from earlier trait and behavioral

models by asserting that leadership effectiveness is contingent on the leader's psychological orientation (people or task oriented) and on three contextual variables: group atmosphere (how well the leader and followers get along), task structure (highly structured or fairly unstructured job), and the leader's power position (how much power the leader possesses).

Researchers Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard established another contingency theory known as situational leadership theory. Hersey and Blanchard created a four-cell chart that names four distinct leadership styles: directing (telling), coaching (selling), supporting (participating), and delegating. Maturity levels were also set on a grid ranging from high competence/high commitment to low competence/low commitment. Hersey and Blanchard postulate that the optimal leadership style in any given situation can be determined by gauging the "readiness level" or maturity level of the followers in relation to the specific task that the leader is attempting to accomplish through the follower. The leader's style should be driven by the competence and commitment of the follower. Once the follower's maturity level is identified, the appropriate leadership style (task oriented or relationship oriented) can be employed.

Bolman and Deal offer yet another situational approach to leadership they call reframing organizations. They encourage leaders to examine their organizations through the use of four different vantage points or coherent perspectives, identified as "frames" that allow the leader to view the organization from different perspectives in order to get things done. Each of the frames has its own image of reality, and as leaders learn to apply all four, they should develop a greater appreciation and deeper understanding of the organization (Reframing Organizations 15).

To some extent each of the theories mentioned above views leadership on a transactional basis. Leadership is viewed as a process of exchange. The leader must recognize what followers want from their work and provide it. Good leaders know how to match the proper reward with the proper situation or contingency. Many argue, however, that transactional leaders operating in the models of leadership described above cannot provide all the inspiration and innovation followers need.

Transformational Theory

Around 1978, Burns introduced the next theory of leadership known as “transformational leadership.” This theory is described as a process by which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation instead of as a set of specific behaviors (20). The transformational leader’s goal is to establish and communicate a clear vision for the subordinate. This leadership style seeks to help followers grow and develop, to inspire others to higher performance, to educate and seek new ways to solve old problems, and to meet their various needs (Bass 53-54). Transformational leaders appeal to higher ideals and moral values such as justice and equality.

Ultimately, the problem with using a historical timeline view of leadership theory as it has been described here is that each theory, once it was superseded by a new perspective, was not completely discarded but continued to function, at least in some circles. Rost describes this confusing situation:

The theories did not run riot in any one separate time period, nor did they disappear from the picture when the next so-called dominant theory appeared on the scene.... [T]here were periods of heightened popularity for certain theories, but when that popularity waned, the theories remained in the minds and hearts of scholars and practitioners alike because they appealed to the structural-functional frame within

which most researchers operated and to the managerial psyche of most practitioners. (28-29)

Leadership Today

Prominent leadership theories in vogue today are perhaps best described as hybrids, combinations employing the best elements of many earlier theories. Current leadership literature and research emphasizes the importance of vision, empowerment, and collaboration. The leader is characterized as a person who has a vision of the organization's purpose and who is the keeper of the dream. A foundational characteristic of effective leaders under this modern understanding is the ability to have a vision of where the organization needs to go coupled with the ability to articulate that vision clearly so followers can identify their personal role in achieving that vision (Wilhelm 223). The sharing of power is another key element in effective leadership according to current leadership theory. Stephen R. Covey describes empowering followers as one of the three key roles of modern leaders (along with path finding and aligning). Covey asserts that people have enormous talent, ingenuity, intelligence, and creativity, but much of it lies dormant. The goal of good leadership is to unleash that talent by empowering followers so the mission or objective of the organization can be pursued jointly by leaders and followers alike (153). Bookstore shelves are overflowing with books about teams and teamwork and leadership today. Barna is convinced that leadership is most effective when it comes from teams and teams are the future of leadership:

[T]he answer does not lie in unearthing more of the superhero leaders who satisfy the grandiose, ever-expanding demands of people. The answer lies in combining the talents of gifted leaders to create synergistic outcomes. Team leadership is the only approach that carries the promise of satisfying the needs of our society. Solo leaders

will always have an important place in our present and future reality, but teams hold the key to the future. (Building 13)

Another emerging view of leadership is called superleadership. This new model is designed to facilitate the self-leadership energy residing in each person (Manz and Sims, Superleadership xvi). Superleaders employ a constellation of practical strategies designed to tap the intelligence, spirit, creativity, commitment, and potential of followers. These strategies include modeling, encouragement, goal setting, guidance, reinforcement, and constructive reprimand. The superleadership perspective holds that visionary leadership based on charisma often creates a system that is unable to function in the absence of the leader but instead collapses like a “house of cards” when the leader moves on (226). Leaders should model the use of self-leadership strategies to set an example for subordinates. As followers develop skills and confidence in self-leadership, leaders should encourage them to take more responsibility for their own work activities (Yukl 135).

Despite all that has been written on the topic, leadership continues to present a major challenge to the practitioners and researchers interested in understanding leadership’s essential nature (Northhouse 10). As has been shown, leadership is a vast and complex enterprise involving the constant interaction of three essential elements: the leader, the followers, and the situation (Wren 125). This research was particularly concerned with the intra-individual aspect of leadership and made use of the psychological theories of decision making, motivation, and cognition to explain the behavior of an individual leader; thus, the importance of the self in leadership theory must be reviewed.

Importance of the Self in Leadership Theory

Leadership, as defined in this study, is essentially the “process [or act] of influence” (Manz and Neck 2). The majority of leadership research and the theories emerging from that research have focused primarily on leadership as the process of influencing *others*, even though the emphasis of the studies has been more on those leading than those being led. This thinking is so prevalent that Bill Hybels suggests that if leadership is thought of as a compass, most leaders instinctively think of leadership as “south,” towards those under their care (181). A substantial body of contemporary research, however, has begun to focus on the importance of the leaders themselves, in particular the intra-individual process of influence leaders exert over themselves to shape and control their own behavior. Leadership is not just an outward process or act; people can and do lead themselves (Manz and Neck 2). What researchers and practitioners are discovering is that effective leadership starts on the inside of the leader and then moves outward to serve others (Blanchard, Hybels, and Hodges 171).

Martin Chemers claims that despite decades of scientific research on leadership, a gap exists in the current theories:

A major gap in most current leadership theories is the lack of attention to the leaders and followers as people. We focus on behavior or decision style with very little understanding of the values, needs, and motives which give rise to the observed behaviors. (97)

Even though the gap mentioned above does exist, the self as a key component in leadership is not an entirely new idea in the field. How people manage themselves and relate to those around them has been analyzed in management theory (Goleman, Working 6). By way of overview, several comments from respected scholars and

practitioners of leadership on the importance of the self in leadership theory are given below.

Richard J. Leider describes self-leadership as the “ultimate leadership task” and insists that for leaders to lead effectively, they must constantly refer to their own personal purpose, values, vision, and courage (192).

Peter Drucker asserts that self-development is a necessity, especially for nonprofit leaders (189). Drucker adds, “[O]nly you can make yourself effective, you cannot control anyone else” (191). Drucker even goes so far as to put self-knowledge (an element of self-leadership) on par with task knowledge (206). He concludes, “Leaders are not born, nor are they made—they are self-made” (222).

Edgar Schein, a leading voice in organizational culture studies, believes that leaders have an integral part to play in the formation and management of organizational culture. For Schein, leadership is most effective when leaders discover how to get to the deeper levels of culture to assess functionality and to instigate change there. The self is crucial in Schein’s conception because “in the end, cultural understanding and cultural learning must start with self-insight” (392).

Burns resists replacing the leader-follower dualism with self-leadership. He describes one-person leadership as “a contradiction in terms” (452) and insists that leadership is, by definition, a collaborative process that “emerges from the clash and congruence of motives and goals of leaders and followers” (460). He does go on to say, however, that in order to exert influence, leaders must first clarify within themselves their own personal goal or goals. Burns further weakens his contention that self-leadership is a contradiction in terms when he states that ultimately leaders

must make a decision: “whether we are really trying to lead anyone but ourselves, and what part of ourselves, and where, and for what purposes” (460).

Rost is even more adamant in his rejection of self-leadership as a valid conceptualization within the larger field of leadership. According to him, the notion of self-leadership is a “contradiction in terms” that is “totally incomprehensible” (74). Rost’s aversion to self-leadership must be taken in context, however. Rost wants to go even further and exclude dyadic relationships from the concept of leadership as well. He insists that leadership is better thought of as “larger, more complex, and less intimate” than just one or two people (109-10).

A study of ninety effective leaders by Bennis and Nanus strongly suggests that a key factor in these leaders’ effectiveness was the “creative deployment of self.” Bennis and Nanus insist that “the management of self is critical” (53), especially leaders’ self-knowledge and the capacity to nurture and develop their strengths, coupled with the ability to discern the fit between those strengths and weaknesses and the organization’s needs (57).

Warren Bennis claims the essence of leadership is full and free self-expression where leaders understand themselves and the world from the wisdom gained through the leaders’ own lives and experience: “The process of becoming a leader is much the same as the process of becoming an integrated human being.... At bottom, becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It is precisely that simple, and it’s also that difficult” (9). For Bennis, leadership involves a process of evolution of the self through constant growth, learning, and development.

Kouzes and Posner agree with Drucker, Bennis, and others that ultimately, at

its core, leadership is about the process of self-development:

Leadership is an art—a performing art—and the instrument is the self. The mastery of the art of leadership comes with the mastery of the self. Ultimately, leadership development is a process of self-development.... The quest for leadership is first an inner quest to discover who you are. (336)

Developing leadership skills begins with leaders clarifying their own values and vision: “You can’t lead others until you’ve first led yourself through a struggle with opposing values” (339).

Building on the work of the late Harvard psychologist David McClelland and others, Daniel Goleman popularized what is known as emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is rooted in the belief that success only partly depends on a person’s intellect. Goleman stresses the importance of people’s behavior and interaction with others in the opening lines of his book Working with Emotional Intelligence: “We are being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other” (3).

Goleman defines emotional intelligence as “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions effectively in ourselves and in our relationships” (Working 317). He identifies five components of emotional intelligence: (1) self-awareness, individuals’ ability to recognize and understand their own feelings and competencies; (2) self-regulation, the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods, to delay gratification in order to pursue goals, and the ability to recover well from emotional distress; (3) motivation, individuals’ ability to use their deepest preferences to move toward their goals; (4) empathy, the ability to sense what others are feeling and to build rapport with them; and,

(5) social skills, competency at handling emotions and feelings coupled with the ability to use those skills appropriately to persuade and lead others.

Goleman insists that while technical know-how and intellectual ability are important, other personal competencies such as self-awareness, self-discipline, persistence, and empathy are of greater consequence and these competencies “make up the greater part of the ingredients for excellence ... for leadership” (Working 3).

Emotional intelligence is what enables people to motivate themselves and to persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulses and delay gratification, to regulate moods, and to keep distress from overwhelming their ability to think clearly (Emotional Intelligence 34). The data suggests that emotional intelligence (EI) can be as powerful and, at times, more powerful than one’s intelligence quotient (IQ) (34). Goleman also contends that unlike a person’s intelligence quotient, which is set and fairly unchangeable from childhood, a person’s emotional intelligence can be developed and, in fact, usually does improve with age, maturity, and experience. Best of all, a substantial amount of research has been done that suggests that people who are “emotionally adept” are at an advantage in any domain of life and are more likely to be effective and content (36).

Goleman’s division of intelligence into different components builds on work going all the way back to the social intelligence theories emerging in the early part of the twentieth century. American educator and psychologist Edward L. Thorndike divides intelligence into three components: (1) abstract intelligence, the ability to understand and manage ideas; (2) mechanical intelligence, the ability to understand and manage concrete objects; and, (3) social intelligence, the ability to understand and relate to people (qtd. in “Intelligence Test”). Thorndike maintains that social

intelligence is different from pure intellectual ability and claimed that social intelligence was a key element in being successful in life, laying the foundation on which Goleman and others could build.

Harvard professor Howard Gardner, also building on the work of the pioneering Thorndike, explains his multiple intelligence theory. Gardner suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence based on IQ testing does not do justice to the full range of human intelligence. Instead, Gardner identifies seven (later eight) distinct intelligences and their accompanying learning styles to account for a broader range of human potential. These intelligences are musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, mathematical-logical intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, linguistic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. The eighth intelligence added later was naturalist intelligence.

H. Gardner defines intelligence as “the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings” (33). Gardner maintains both biological and cultural bases exist for the multiple intelligences. Most promising of all is Gardner’s assertion that these multiple intelligences can be strengthened and developed:

We can choose to ignore this uniqueness, strive to minimize it, or revel in it.... I suggest the challenge facing the deployment of human resources is how best to take advantage of the uniqueness conferred on us as the species exhibiting several intelligences. (45)

Of particular interest in this research on self-leadership is the intelligence H. Gardner identifies as *intrapersonal intelligence*—the ability to understand one’s own feelings and motivations. Intrapersonal intelligence involves peoples’ ability to gain access to their own internal emotional lives. Gardner, Goleman, and others insist that few

are encouraged or taught to develop the intrapersonal skills used to self-reflect and be sensitive to their own personal history, strengths and weaknesses, plans, and goals.

Assuming the brain does have multiple intelligence centers as Thorndike, Goleman, and H. Gardner assert, one key to effective learning and effective leading lies in unlocking all of these intelligences.

Self-Leadership Theory

Self-leadership is about the leadership people exercise over themselves to achieve the self-motivation and self-direction needed to behave in ways they choose to behave (Manz, Art 4). Self-leadership as it will mainly be discussed in this research is a relatively new leadership construct developed mainly by Manz. His model is built primarily upon research and theory in two areas of psychology: social cognitive theory and intrinsic motivation theory (Manz and Neck 5).

Social Cognitive Theory

Learning theories evolved from the behaviorist field of psychology as an attempt to explain how people think and what factors determine their behavior. Early research in behaviorism was conducted by Ivan Pavlov, Edward Thorndike, John Watson, and B. F. Skinner using animals. In time (as early as the 1920s), researchers began to discover limitations in the behaviorist approach to understanding learning. Many people came to view behaviorism as too simplistic, believing that it failed to account for the complexities of the human personality. Specifically, criticism was leveled at behaviorist theory because its focus on observable behaviors ignored the role played by cognition, the psychological result of perception, learning, and reasoning (“Social Learning Theory”). Behaviorism could not account for the fact

that people learn from watching each other (observational learning) and that people decide (engage in cognition) whether or not to do something. Dissatisfied with the capacity of behaviorist findings to explain behavior fully, social learning theory evolved. Social learning theorists did not abandon behaviorism; they simply placed more importance on cognition and social surroundings. Social learning theorists agree with behaviorists that human behavior is largely made up of responses to environmental stimuli, but social learning theorists contend that behavior is largely regulated through cognitive processes *prior to* the actual behavior occurring.

The social learning theories of Albert Bandura, for instance, went beyond behaviorism. Bandura argues that the simple stimulus-response explanation of animal behavior is inadequate: “Humans don’t just respond to stimuli, they interpret them” (Social Learning Theory 59). Bandura’s theory, which came to be known as social cognitive theory, proposes that an individual’s behavior is primarily determined by the ongoing relationship between three factors: the individual, that person’s behavior, and the environment. Bandura labels the continuous interaction between these cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants of behavior “reciprocal determinism.” For Bandura, the continuous interplay of this interaction, colored by perceptions of control, drives human behavior (Shirkey). Inherent within the notion of reciprocal determinism is the idea that humans have the ability to influence their own destiny. People are not only products of their environment; they, also, at least in part, create that environment.

Bandura’s 1986 book Social Foundations of Thought and Action provides the framework for much of his social cognitive theory. In that book, Bandura maintains

individuals have the ability to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions: “[W]hat people think, believe, and feel affects how they behave” (25). Bandura identifies five basic human capabilities that separate humans and their motivations and behavior from the simple stimulus-response world of animals: (1) symbolizing capability, the ability to give meaning to experiences through the formation of symbols such as words and images; (2) vicarious capability, the ability to learn from observing others or from reading without having to perform the behavior personally; (3) forethought capability, the ability to self-motivate and to guide actions in anticipation of future events; (4) self-regulatory capability, people’s ability to regulate their own behavior; and, (5) self-reflective capability, the ability to self-reflect about the adequacy of a person’s own thoughts and actions. These capabilities provide humans with the cognitive means to determine and regulate their own behavior. Humans are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically shaped and controlled by the environment. Instead humans function as contributors to their own motivation, behavior, and development within this network of reciprocally interacting influences.

Bandura views the human mind as an active force that constructs a person’s own reality by selectively encoding information from the environment and then performing behavior on the basis of personal values and expectations (Stone).

Ultimately, Bandura depicts human motivation and behavior as a system in which the beliefs persons hold about their own abilities and competencies directly affect the outcome of their efforts and powerfully influence the ways in which they behave. Self-reflection enables people to stand apart from themselves and analyze

their own experiences and thinking and, in so doing, alter future thinking and behavior patterns accordingly. Bandura believes that this ability to self-reflect is the most distinct human characteristic of all (Social Foundations 21).

An important part of the self-reflective capability of humans is the concept of self-efficacy. Building on Julian B. Rotter's theory of expectancy, Bandura argues that people's expectations about the outcome of situations are heavily influenced by whether or not they think they will succeed at the things they attempt. Bandura introduces the term *self-efficacy* for this concept, arguing that it has a high degree of influence not only on a person's motivation but also on that person's performance:

Unless people believe they can produce desired results and forestall detrimental ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties. Whatever other factors may operate as guides and motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to produce effects by one's actions. ("Social Cognitive Theory" 10)

These beliefs influence whether people think pessimistically or optimistically overall and can either be self-enhancing or self-hindering. For instance, people tend to avoid engaging in tasks where their perceived efficacy is low, and they are more likely to undertake tasks where perceived efficacy is high (Bandura, Social Foundations 393). Also, when people perceive high efficacy in a task, they are more likely to persist in that task. Perceived self-efficacy "intensifies and sustains the effort needed to realize a difficult performance, which are [sic] hard to attain if one is doubt-ridden" (394). Ultimately, perceived self-efficacy directly affects the outcome of a person's efforts and powerfully influences the ways in which that person behaves: "Research shows that people who regard themselves as highly efficacious act, think and feel differently from those who perceive themselves as inefficacious. They produce their own future, rather

than simply foretell it” (394).

Bandura concludes that self-efficacy is developed from the influence of four sources upon the individual: (1) mastery experience, a history of achievement of actually performing the task itself; (2) vicarious experience, observing successes and failures of others who are perceived as similarly competent; (3) social persuasion, belief of personal competence in the individual offered by trusted others; and, (4) physiological states, such as fear, anxiety, or stress (399).

Cognitive self-leadership strategies are mainly concerned with the issue of how individuals can constructively manage patterns of thinking, which in turn influence behavior (Manz and Neck 27). Manz’s theory of self-leadership builds on social cognitive theory primarily using what he calls “Thought Self-Leadership.” Thought self-leadership has been conceptualized as a process of influencing or leading oneself through cognitive strategies to establish and maintain constructive thought patterns. This perspective suggests that by effectively applying the cognitive strategies of self-dialog, mental imagery, and managing beliefs and assumptions, individuals can enhance their own thought patterns, self-efficacy perceptions, and performance (Neck, Neck, Manz, and Godwin 480).

Manz and Neck insist that people have a choice about what they focus on and think about (59). Furthermore, building on Bandura’s notion of reciprocal determinism, Manz and Neck suggest that the content of each person’s unique psychological world largely determines the way that person behaves, and that the person’s behavior, in turn, helps determine the nature of his or her physical world. In this sense people are capable of creating a unique world within themselves in which

their experience of life is largely what they make of it: “We carry in our minds a world that is more real to us than the physical one within which we live” (59). The effective control of people’s own thought processes and the potential they have to redesign their psychological worlds, then, is perhaps the most important aspect of self-leadership. While behavioral strategies are useful and important, individual thought processes lie at the core of self-leadership (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 37).

Intrinsic Motivation Theory

The second area of psychology from which Manz’s concept of self-leadership is derived is known as intrinsic motivation theory. The intrinsic motivation perspective accentuates the importance intrinsic, or innate, rewards have on an individual’s motivation, behavior, and performance. Natural rewards are incentives built into the task itself; positive aspects of an activity that are built into that particular activity an individual. For example the opportunity to be outside (a reward to some) while doing the needed task of weeding a garden.

Motivation can be thought of as the psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction, and persistence of goal-directed voluntary actions. To be motivated is to be moved to do something (Ryan and Deci, “Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations” 54). Early researchers who hypothesized about motivation include Pavlov and Skinner. These pioneers’ theories were developed largely through research using animals and are based on the idea that learning is a function of change in overt behavior. This concept, called *operant conditioning*, proposes that changes in behavior are the result of an individual responding to events in the environment

(stimuli). A response involves some action on the part of the learner. When a desired stimulus-response pattern is reinforced (rewarded), the individual is conditioned to respond in a particular manner, and learning has occurred. Skinner was particularly concerned with these external motivators of behavior and believed that all learned behaviors were based on external reinforcement:

We are concerned, then, with the causes of human behavior. We want to know why men behave as they do.... By discovering and analyzing these causes we can predict behavior; to the extent that we can manipulate them, we can control behavior. (23)

Eventually, even though operant theory was still in vogue, researchers began to question behaviorist psychology and its insistence that all behavior is shaped by its consequences. One of these researchers was a psychologist named Deci who began to explore the concept of intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation results in behavior performed for its own sake. The motivation for the behavior is derived from doing the task or activity itself, “without the necessity of separable consequences” (Deci and Ryan 233). In contrast to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation is behavior performed to acquire a reward or as an act of external compliance with the motivating factor being some consequence brought about by the performance or nonperformance of that behavior.

Edward Deci and Richard Ryan propose an “organismic dialectic,” which holds that humans are “active, growth-oriented organisms who are naturally inclined toward integration of their psychic elements into a unified sense of self and integration of themselves into larger social structures” (229). This perspective identifies three basic needs people have—autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Intrinsic motivation thinkers believe that filling these basic human needs is more

important to people than receiving external rewards. These needs “appear to be essential for facilitating optimal functioning of the natural propensities for growth and integration, as well as for constructive social development and personal well-being” (Ryan and Deci, “Self-Determination Theory” 68). A growing body of research indicates that intrinsic motivation is a stronger influence on human behavior than extrinsic rewards. Related research suggests that intrinsic motivation in a task typically declines when external rewards are given for that behavior, especially as regards creative tasks (Kohn). Deci’s conclusion is an important one: “Intrinsic motivation, not external motivation, lies at the heart of creativity, responsibility, healthy behavior and lasting change” (9).

Manz’s theory of self-leadership builds upon intrinsic motivation theory by suggesting that people should tap into the power of natural rewards in exercising self-leadership by identifying aspects of their lives that they naturally enjoy and then increasing these as much as possible (Manz and Neck 47). Building on Deci’s intrinsic motivation theory, Manz and Neck suggest that three aspects of activities make them seem naturally rewarding: they produce feelings of competence, self-determination, and a sense of purpose. Manz and Neck recommend two primary ways people can use natural rewards to enhance self-leadership: (1) build more naturally enjoyable features into their activities and (2) focus their thoughts intentionally on the naturally rewarding aspects of their activities (46).

Building on both social cognitive theory and intrinsic motivation theory, Manz proposes a model of self-influence he calls self-leadership. He conceptualizes self-leadership a number of ways including (1) a journey to self-discovery and self-

satisfaction, (2) a method of self-influence, (3) a technique for self-efficacy, (4) a source of behavioral control, and (5) a process of self-fulfillment (Brown 20). Manz's comprehensive self-leadership model consists of a number of specific strategies people can employ to improve their self-leadership. Ultimately the appropriate application of this cluster of strategies should help individuals become effective self-leaders and achieve personal effectiveness in their lives. Personal effectiveness is defined by Manz as "success in achieving our goals as well as our satisfaction with our work, ourselves, and our lives" (Art 90). This definition relies heavily on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, which Manz redefines as, "our level of effectiveness in dealing with our world" (104).

As described earlier, the concept of self-efficacy comes from social cognitive theory, which holds that individuals are proactively engaged in their own self-development and in many ways create their own worlds. The beliefs people have about themselves are important factors in people's perceptions of their own personal effectiveness. Low self-efficacy judgments (that is, people do not believe they can handle a particular challenge) can lead them to exaggerate their own weaknesses and exaggerate the difficulty of the situation in question. This perceived low self-efficacy, in turn, leads to a heightened state of anxiety and stress that can detract from the person's performance. High self-efficacy judgments do just the opposite and enhance the potential to accomplish the task (Art 104). Still drawing on the seminal work of Bandura, Manz asserts that self-efficacy judgments come from at least four sources: (1) observing the performance of others and their successes and failures, (2) verbal persuasion, where the listener is convinced he or she can succeed, and (3)

people's perceptions of their own physical and emotional reactions to a challenge (calm versus anxious). These three sources of self-efficacy judgments all involve reactions to others. The fourth important source of perception of self-efficacy is the most important one, namely a person's own performance history. If individuals experience success in a difficult situation, their perception of self-efficacy is improved. Conversely, if they experience failure, their perception of self-efficacy will be undermined (105). Eventually this process forms a critical feedback loop: if people believe they are personally effective, they are likely to become even more so. If they do not believe they are personally effective, they are likely to become even less effective. Therefore, the best way for an individual to develop a positive belief in his or her own effectiveness is by successfully handling the challenges they face in life (105).

Manz hypothesizes three distinct but complementary self-leadership strategies in his model (Brown 25). These three strategies are (1) behavioral focused strategies, (2) natural reward strategies, and (3) constructive thought patterns (Manz, Art 103-04).

Behavioral Focused Strategies

The first set of strategies focus on managing the individual's own behavior. These strategies are especially useful for motivating and leading the person in the face of difficult, "unappealing but necessary tasks" (Manz, Art 16). Manz identifies six behavioral focused strategies, which he divides into two general classifications: (1) those that alter the world and the way it impacts the individual and (2) strategies that people directly impose on themselves to influence their behavior.

Under world-altering strategies, Manz includes what he labels “management of cues” (Art 21). Management of cues involves arranging and altering reminders in a person’s environment to facilitate desired personal behaviors. For instance, people might use physical cues like “to-do” lists to focus their efforts and to improve effectiveness. Other self-cueing strategies include removing negative cues, such as distractions or temptations from the person’s immediate environment, and increasing positive cues, such as placing reading material next to a favorite chair to encourage reading or associating with role models who act in ways consistent with the person’s values (Manz and Neck 20). Charles Manz and Christopher Neck identify a total of five ways to employ cues to help in the exercise of self-leadership: (1) using physical cues as reminders of important tasks, (2) using cues to focus attention on important behaviors and tasks, (3) identifying and reducing or eliminating negative cues that are distracting, (4) identifying and increasing positive cues in the environment, and (5) associating with people who cue desirable behavior (21).

The remaining behavioral self-leadership strategies are all self-imposed and include self-observation, self-set goals, practice, self-reward, and self-punishment.

Self-observation involves observing and gathering information about personal behavior to determine when, why, and under what conditions individuals engage in certain behaviors (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 45). Manz suggests a five-step process for using self-observation as a basis for self-leadership: (1) identifying behaviors that need to be increased or decreased, (2) keeping a record of the frequency and duration of these behaviors, (3) noting the conditions that exist when those behaviors are displayed, (4) identifying other important factors that may

explain why these behaviors occur, and (5) whenever possible keeping a written record of self-observations (Art 24). The key to using self-observation as a self-leadership technique is developing a system of self-observation that is helpful but simple enough to use without becoming burdensome.

A second self-imposed behavioral strategy is self-goal setting. The use of personal goals is an important way to provide direction in self-leadership (Manz, Art 25). By establishing goals for both immediate tasks and long-range achievements, self-direction and priorities are clarified. Examples of a short-term, self-set goal might include a salesperson setting a goal of six sales calls per day. An example of a long-range goal might be for that salesperson to earn an MBA degree. Manz suggests a six-step course of action for self-goal setting: (1) conducting a self-analysis to identify long-term goals, (2) setting long-term goals based upon this analysis, (3) establishing short-term goals to direct immediate efforts, (4) making sure all goals are specific and concrete, (5) making sure the goals are challenging yet attainable based upon personal abilities, and (6) apprising others of these goals to provide added incentive to achieve them (26).

The third self-imposed, behavioral strategy is practice. Practice is the physical or mental rehearsal of an activity in advance. Practice can be a powerful strategy to improve behavior. Thinking through and practicing important tasks before they are done “for keeps” can contribute significantly to performance (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 20). Practice can be done on both a physical and mental level. Olympic athletes, for instance, practice their events repeatedly at a physical level as well as rehearse them mentally before competing (Manz and Neck 34). Other

individuals, such as salespeople, can benefit from role playing, which is a form of practice. To employ practice as a strategy to improve behavior, Manz recommends identifying the important components of upcoming challenges and then practicing those aspects, physically and mentally, while pairing that practice with rewards by imagining a positive outcome from performing the task well (Art 33).

The fourth self-imposed, behavioral strategy is self-reward. Performance can be enhanced by administering rewards to oneself based upon successful completion of an activity. Self-administered rewards can be concrete and physical, like dinner out at a nice restaurant, or they can be private, mental creations such as imagining the future success and benefits due to the completion of the task at hand (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 23). Manz offers four practical steps for persons to practice self-leadership by rewarding themselves: (1) identifying objects, thoughts, and images that are self-motivating, (2) identifying which behaviors and activities are especially desirable, (3) developing self-rewards based upon the successful completion of an activity or upon engaging in desirable behavior, and (4) developing the habit of self-praising and self-rewarding for their accomplishments (Art 29).

The fifth self-imposed, behavioral strategy is self-punishment. Self-punishment is related to self-reward in that it focuses on self-applied consequences for a person's own behavior, but in this case it involves negative rather than positive reinforcement of the behavior. Research indicates that self-punishment is generally *not* an effective strategy for controlling behavior; therefore, self-punishment should be used sparingly if at all. Recently, many self-leadership theorists have moved away from the term "self-punishment" toward the term "self-correcting feedback" (Manz

and Sims, New Superleadership 83). Charles Manz and Henry Sims now believe a more effective way to employ this behavioral strategy is to use failure as learning opportunities by providing positive, encouraging, self-corrective feedback to increase long-term effectiveness (83). Manz suggests five steps for gaining control of self-punishment patterns: (1) identifying behaviors that cause guilt, (2) identifying actions that result in self-criticism, (3) identifying destructive self-punishment tendencies, (4) working on reducing or eliminating habitual destructive self-punishment patterns, and (5) employing alternative strategies to self-punishment for dealing with negative behavior such as identifying and removing rewards that support the negative behavior or by establishing rewards that are more desirable than the negative behaviors that could be substituted for them. Manz insists self-punishment should be reserved for only the most serious and destructive behaviors (Art 31-32).

Natural Reward Strategies

The second major category of self-leadership strategies Manz identifies is what he calls “natural reward” strategies to enhance self-leadership. These strategies build on intrinsic motivation theory and involve identifying and positively utilizing the natural rewards already present in activities in ways that make the activity more palatable (Art 44).

Manz recommends two strategies using natural rewards to enhance self-leadership. The first strategy is to build more naturally enjoyable features into activities. Manz offers three ways to create such an environment: (1) choosing a pleasant context for the task that would make it more appealing, (2) identifying activities that could be built into the tasks that would make them more rewarding,

and (3) redesigning the task by working in the contexts and building in the activities that make them more naturally rewarding (Art 47).

The second natural reward strategy Manz suggests is to focus intentionally on the naturally rewarding aspects of activities. With any activity a person's thoughts can be directed toward the unpleasant aspects of that activity or they can be focused on the more naturally rewarding aspects of that activity. The latter of these two choices naturally makes the activity more enjoyable. Manz provides a five-step process to accentuate the natural rewards of an activity. The first step is to identify the more enjoyable aspects of the task. The second step is to distinguish between the rewarding aspects of the task that are built into the task itself and those that are external. The third step is to focus on the pleasant rather than the unpleasant aspects of the task. The fourth step is to focus on the rewards intrinsic in the task itself to obtain motivation and satisfaction for the activity. The final step is to continue to develop the ability and habit of distinguishing and focusing on the natural rewards of activities (Art 51).

Constructive Thought Pattern Strategies

The self-leadership perspective identifies a third and final category of self-leadership strategies called "constructive thought patterns." These strategies involve establishing constructive and effective patterns of thinking that focus more on opportunities than on obstacles. Just as people often develop habitual behavioral tendencies over time, they also develop habitual patterns of thinking (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 38). Constructive thought pattern strategies are envisioned as "a process of influencing or leading oneself through the purposeful control of one's

thoughts” (Neck, Stewart, and Manz 283).

While acknowledging the difficulty of changing habitual thought patterns (Manz and Sims, New Superleadership 109), self-leadership theorists hold that people can and often do learn to change habitual patterns of thinking and behavior. Furthermore, managing individual thought processes is considered the single most important self-leadership strategy of all (Superleadership 37).

Manz and Sims offer three tools to help facilitate this cognitive approach to self-leadership. They label the first tool “managing beliefs.” Beliefs or assumptions are fundamental to thinking, and an especially powerful characteristic of beliefs is that they frequently become self-fulfilling (Superleadership 38). Manz provides a five-step checklist to guide attempts to examine and improve a person’s belief system: (1) identifying the types of tasks and activities for which the individual’s beliefs are especially important, (2) analyzing the accuracy of those beliefs, (3) questioning whether the beliefs positively or negatively affect the person’s actions and feelings, (4) isolating any inaccurate dysfunctional beliefs and challenging them, and (5) identifying positive, functional beliefs to replace the dysfunctional ones (Art 59).

A second method of establishing constructive thought patterns involves imagination and is based on the premise that people carry unique mental images of the world around with them in their heads. These mental images occur naturally and can have a constructive or a destructive influence (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 39). Positive mental images can enhance a person’s competence, performance, and enjoyment of a task or activity while negative mental images can just as easily detract

from, and even undermine, performance. Often these mental images are dysfunctional. Manz and Neck identify eleven primary categories of dysfunctional thinking: (1) extreme thinking, an “all-good” or “all-bad,” black and white perspective; (2) overgeneralization, generalizing a specific failure as a pattern of failure; (3) mental filtering, allowing a single negative detail to filter and distort thinking negatively; (4) disqualifying the positive, mentally disqualifying a positive from being possibly relevant; (5) mind reading, drawing negative conclusions despite any concrete evidence; (6) fortune-telling, arbitrarily predicting that things will turn out badly; (7) magnifying and minimizing, exaggerating the importance of negatives or minimizing the importance of positives; (8) emotional reasoning, interpreting reality based on negative emotions; (9) “should” statements, self-dialog using imperatives such as “should,” “must,” and “ought”; (10) labeling and mislabeling, describing a person or event negatively; and, (11) personalization, assuming blame for events or outcomes that the person is not primarily responsible for causing (66-67).

The goal in the self-leadership strategy of using the imagination is to challenge dysfunctional mental habits by purposefully forming constructive mental images (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 39). Manz proposes several steps using the imagination to facilitate desirable performance. The first step is to analyze current mental imagery to discover if thinking is focused on positive or negative outcomes of challenging tasks. Effective use of mental imagery should facilitate and not hinder confidence and performance of tasks. Images held should be realistic and reasonable. The second step is to identify any destructive thought patterns such as the tendency to

imagine negative results in a habitually unrealistic manner. The third step is to work to eliminate any destructive thought patterns by choosing to think about more positive, constructive things. The last step is to choose to imagine purposefully sequences of events and outcomes that help clarify and motivate (rather than hinder) efforts (Art 62).

The third constructive thought pattern strategy involves individuals learning to speak more effectively to themselves using self-talk. Everyone talks to themselves, often in a negative or self-defeating manner (Manz, Art 64). Research from several fields provides support for the relationship between an individual's self-talk and performance (Neck, Stewart, and Manz 287). Observing patterns of internal dialog and replacing dysfunctional self-talk with constructive self-dialog is a major step toward improving a person's psychological world and a productive way to help effectively manage thinking (Manz and Sims, Superleadership 41). The steps toward using self-talk advantageously include (1) analyzing current self-talk tendencies to determine if current self-talk is constructive, motivational and helpful; (2) identifying negative self-talk that should be eliminated and identifying more constructive self-statements to replace the negative ones; (3) practicing constructive self-talk—out loud at first, and then internalizing it; and, (4) purposefully using self-talk as an advantage when faced with challenges and difficulties.

The interaction of individuals' beliefs and assumptions, imagined experience, and self-talk help shape their mental world—the psychological world people carry around inside that influences their actions, feelings, and perceptions. Human behavior is both an influence and a result of human thought patterns (Manz and Neck

72). The objective in practicing thought pattern self-leadership is to redesign the individual's mental world and, in so doing, to redirect stereotyped sequences of behavior called scripts on which people automatically rely when faced with certain situations into more effective and functional patterns of thinking and behaving (Manz, Art 67-68).

Ultimately the primary concerns of self-leadership are people's thoughts and behaviors and how those affect their personal effectiveness, defined as their success at achieving their goals as well as their satisfaction with their work, themselves, and their lives (Manz and Neck 107). The underlying premise of the self-leadership perspective is that people can influence or control their own thoughts and behaviors through specific cognitive and behavioral strategies and ultimately impact individual and organizational performance (Neck and Manz 682). Manz posits that the self-leadership perspective has applications across a wide variety of fields including dealing with personal problems, athletics, and vocational problems (Art 73). He concedes that systematic attempts to study and apply self-leadership methods in work organizations are still at a relatively early stage of development. Not surprisingly, one area where self-leadership is proving particularly helpful is in uniquely autonomous jobs such as salespersons, doctors, dentists, teachers, and other positions where people find that, to a large degree, they must be their own managers (77). Pastors, and particularly church-planting pastors who frequently operate with little or no external supervision, fall into this autonomous group. Pastoral leadership in a church-planting endeavor demands a high level of self-leadership. To be effective, church planters must rely heavily on such self-leadership strategies as self-observation (for

instance, keeping a daily log of how time is spent), self-set goals, self-reward, cueing strategies, and thought self-leadership in order to direct personal thoughts and behavior.

Pastoral Leadership in the Church

The pastoral leader is the primary spiritual leader for the gathered community of faith whose most important task is to lift up the vision and promises of God before that particular community of believers (Lee 104). God has entrusted his eternal purposes to pastors as congregational leaders to see that his mission to redeem a lost world is accomplished. Christian ministry is energized by the pivotal conviction that Christ himself ordained and established the pastoral office for the edification and guidance of the Church (Oden 51). Pastoral leadership has been defined by many observers, and a review of a few of these definitions may prove helpful.

Robert Dale defines pastoral leadership as “an action-oriented, interpersonal influencing process practiced in a congregational setting” (22). Robert Clinton defines pastoral leadership as “a dynamic process in which a man or woman with God-given capacity influences a specific group of God’s people toward His purposes for the group” (Making of a Leader 14). Malphurs defines Christian leaders as “godly people (character element) who know where they are going (vision element) and have followers (influence element)” (106). Of particular interest in the context of this research is the fact that the concept of *influence* is prominent in each of these, and many other definitions of pastoral leadership.

Since the self-leadership construct mainly used in this research comes from outside the Church, a question Elmer Towns and Warren Bird (and others) are asking

must be considered: “How far into the study of secular leadership can the Church go to determine biblical church leadership?” (41).

Differences in secular versus Christian leadership are characterized by Steve Mills:

God’s way of leadership often opposes man’s way. Man focuses on power and freedom. God focuses on submission and responsibility. Man is concerned with gain and immediate fulfillment. God is concerned with giving and lasting achievement. Man yearns for the praise of men and self-gratification. God yearns for pure praise and self-control. Man is assertive and strives to lead men. God is patient and wants men to follow Him. Man feeds on competition and seeks control. God wants cooperation and expects servanthood.

One response to the question concerning to what extent Christian leaders can look to secular models of leadership is to simply to say that because God works in the whole world as well as in the Church, much can be learned from the larger world of leadership that applies within the Church (Hobgood 65). Spiritual leadership involves natural and spiritual qualities, yet even the natural qualities and processes of leadership are supernatural gifts since all good things come from God (Sanders 28). Nevertheless, God’s people, including pastoral leaders, are called to be “in” but not “of” the world. That is the essence of Jesus’ prayer found in John 15:17-18 for his disciples then and now: “They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world; [but] as you have sent me ... so I have sent them into the world” (NIV). Harris Lee provides a helpful insight when he makes a critical distinction concerning the ultimate source of leadership in the Church:

Leadership in the church may use insights from the world, but it is rooted in the faith “once delivered to the saints.” Church leaders may quote James Burns, Warren Bennis, Peter Drucker and Tom Peters, but they are inspired by the Lord of the church, by the prophets and the apostles, and by the fact that leadership is a gift, a calling and a

ministry. (19)

Harris' comments affirm the importance of grounding the role and function of pastoral leadership biblically and theologically. Leadership models for the Church must be drawn from the Bible and evaluated in terms of accountability to Christ (Elliston 22).

Pastor as Servant, Shepherd, Steward Leader

This study of pastoral self-leadership is grounded in the biblical-theological understanding of pastoral leaders as servant leaders chosen by God to shepherd their people, stewarding their gifts appropriately to accomplish God's purposes in the context in which the leaders are operating. This understanding of pastoral ministry is based in part on a helpful model developed by Edgar Elliston (23-24) using three biblical metaphors: servant, shepherd, and steward.

Pastor as servant leader. The first guiding image for pastoral ministry is that of servant leader. Pastors voluntarily and willingly submit to the sovereign authority (lordship) of Jesus Christ to obey him as directed (Elliston 23). While the Bible is full of rich models for pastoral leaders, from kings to sages, Roman rulers, elders, bishops, deacons, household heads, and more, the place for pastoral leaders to start is with the stance and style of Jesus (Dale 25). Jesus of Nazareth embodied the heart and methods of a fully committed and effective servant leader (Blanchard, Hybels, and Hodges xi). Jesus Christ, the Bible records, "made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant" (Phil. 2:7, NIV) to come and lead his straying sheep back to safety. Jesus announced his model for leading when he said he came "not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28, NIV).

Jesus modeled the paradox of leading by serving.

As mentioned above, the Church has much to learn from the secular side of leadership, but servant leadership is one area where the world can (and has, in some instances) take a lesson from Christ and his Church. The term “servant leadership” was coined by Robert Greenleaf, but Greenleaf credits the ministry of Jesus with ideally embodying the concept:

I see Jesus as a man, like you and me, with extraordinary prophetic insight of the kind that we all have some of. He has chosen a new mission among his people to bring, among other things, more compassion to their lives. He is a leader, as I see it, in the fullest meaning of the term. (324)

One example of Jesus’ servant-leader style is described in the thirteenth chapter of John when Christ bent down to wash his apostles’ feet over his followers’ objections. As he assumed the posture of a servant and washed the dust from their feet, Jesus taught his disciples, “The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is the apostle greater than he that sent him” (John 13:16, NIV). In modeling servant leadership for his closest followers, Jesus had more in mind than just being a good example as Sanders points out:

Jesus’ teaching on servanthood and suffering was not intended to merely inspire good behavior. Jesus wanted to impart the *spirit of servanthood* [emphasis mine], the sense of personal commitment and identity that he expressed when He said, “I am among you as He who serves” (Luke 22:27). Mere acts of service could be performed with motives far from spiritual. (23)

In the Gospels, Jesus is depicted as frequently comparing the ways of secular rulers versus God’s preferred style of leading by serving (see Matt. 20:20-28; Mark 10:35-44; Luke 22:24-27). Again and again Jesus denounces worldly leaders who “lord it over others” (Matt. 20:25, NIV) and take advantage of their power instead of

offering self-giving service. Jesus paid a steep price for being a servant leader, but those whose goal is to follow in his footsteps as servant leaders can be encouraged by the results of Jesus' servant leadership, which was resounding success at fulfilling God's will (Thrall, McNichol, and McElrath 114).

Most agree that the reason Jesus knew that servanthood is God's preferred posture for leadership and why he was so successful as a servant leader was because Jesus' actions flowed naturally from his intimate relationship with God the Father. Jesus' whole life revolved around communication with his heavenly Father in prayer and doing what God the Father wanted him to do. The fact that Jesus spent plenty of time alone in prayer is a lesson for any servant leader who chooses to follow in Christ's footsteps: obedience flows from an intimate personal relationship with God.

In the final analysis, just wanting to be servant leaders does not make leaders servants. To be unselfish servants, leaders must become something they cannot be by nature. Their hearts must be changed. They must come to the end of their self-sufficiency and there find "God-sufficiency" (Thrall, McNichol, and McElrath 171-72). However a person arrives there, the Church desperately needs strong servant leaders to plant churches that will win the unchurched people of the twenty-first century for Christ (Malphurs 148).

Pastor as shepherd leader. A second primary image that guides pastoral leadership is that of shepherd. Pastors are called and commissioned to function as shepherds (Elliston 24). Adam Hamilton points out that in the Old Testament the concept of leadership was synonymous with shepherding the people of Israel (15). God guided, fed, and protected the people of Israel as they wandered through the

wilderness. In addition God appointed men and women as shepherds to tend the flock of Israel. The job of the shepherd, traditionally defined, included supervision of the herd, protection from predators, searching for stray sheep, caring for sick and injured sheep, and leading the flock to places with adequate food and water (Gentz 969).

Sadly, many equate the image of shepherd with power over the flock, and this unfortunate idea is subsequently taken into the role of pastor. In reality the role of a shepherd is one of accountability. The shepherds who watch over the flocks in a pastoral society typically do not own the flocks they tend but instead care for them for their fathers and grandfathers. Thus, the image of shepherd is better understood in terms of accountability instead of power. This imagery is clear in 1 Peter 5:1-4 where elders are described as shepherds who are to be accountable to the “chief shepherd” (Elliston 159).

Sometimes, these “under shepherds” did their job well, but the Old Testament points out that often they did not. In Ezekiel 34, the kings of Israel are denounced as they are described as shepherds of Israel who have exploited the flock because they have allowed it to become endangered through their negligence as shepherds. The only hope the prophet Ezekiel holds out for the people of Israel is one particular shepherd, David, who, according to Scripture, will “tend them and be their shepherd” (Ezek. 34:23, NIV). Ironically, even David had to endure problems with self-leadership in the Bathsheba episode (1 Sam. 1-26) as he sought to lead the people of God.

Moving to the New Testament, the flock is arguably Jesus’ favorite description of the Church. In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus describes himself as the

“Good Shepherd” who knows his sheep by name (John 10:11, NIV). In his reinstatement of Peter after his resurrection, Jesus equates “truly loving” him with “taking care of my [Jesus’] sheep” (John 21: 15-17, NIV). Shepherds following Jesus’ model are not only called and commissioned to function in the positive ways Jesus did, they are also warned in 1 Peter 5:1-5 about taking advantage of the flock for personal gain and for being careless (Elliston 24).

The Greek word for shepherd is *poimēn*. In Jeremiah 23, leaders who are to lead the people of Israel bear this title. The word also receives limited use in the New Testament, most notably in Ephesians 4:11 where it refers to specific duties of church leaders and in the book of Acts in Paul’s farewell to the Ephesian elders where he charges them to “[k]eep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds [*poimainein*] of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood” (Acts 20:28, NIV). Of particular interest in the context of this research on self-leadership and church-planting pastors is the fact that Paul reminded the Ephesian elders to keep watch not only over “the flock” but also over “yourselves.”

Clearly the figure of the shepherd was so widely imprinted on the minds of the people to whom Paul, and Jesus before him, spoke that the image needed no elaboration (Oden 52). Even though modern ears and perceptions might not grasp this image as clearly, the symbolism of pastors as shepherds of God’s flock is still important and clear enough to be a guiding metaphor for pastoral leadership today.

Pastor as steward leader. A third guiding image for pastoral leadership is as a faithful steward. The etymology of the Greek word for steward, *oikonomos*, is

helpful here as the term is derived from the words *oikos*, “house,” and *nemein*, “to manage.” The term is alternatively translated “manager” or “steward” and is the term from which the modern terms “economy” and “economize” are taken. The term can be thought of as providing stewardship in the sense of the appropriate, thrifty, and proper use of a resource or resources as well as extracting the maximum possible benefit from the resource. Although all Christians are stewards in a general sense, pastors are called to stewardship at a higher level. Spiritual leaders are entrusted with the message of the gospel, gifts for ministry, and a missiological task or ministry to perform (Elliston 24). As such, leaders are seen as trustees who are expected to guard what has been entrusted to them (1 Tim. 6:20), to employ that trust to the owner’s advantage according to the owner’s [God’s] will, and to express and employ those gifts to the best of their ability (Elliston 24). Leadership is accountable for results according to Drucker, and good leaders constantly ask themselves if they are truly being faithful stewards of the talents entrusted to them (47).

In Luke 12:35-48, Jesus tells a parable of servants who are waiting for their master’s return. The parable concludes with the familiar verse, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked” (Luke 12:48, NIV). Many lessons can be drawn from this parable, among them a stewardship lesson concerning spiritual leaders’ treatment of their flocks and the expression of the leaders’ gifts on behalf of the flocks. The primary message of this parable, when viewing it from this perspective, is that spiritual leaders are accountable for the knowledge, resources, abilities, and other gifts with which God has blessed them. If leaders have been given

much, then God expects that much more from them. Leaders are expected to make the most of whatever they have been given. Before any leader can be a “steward of the vision,” he or she must first be a “steward of the self” (Steinke, How Your Church Family 104).

Pastoral Leaders as Equippers

The pastor’s call, according to Thomas Oden, is to “proclaim the gospel, administer the sacraments, and to provide a well-conceived order for spiritually caring for the flock” (155). How these functions are best carried out has been formulated in several different conceptualizations over the years. Most of the models that have emerged, especially in recent years, incorporate the idea that pastoral leadership consists principally in learning how to empower, enable, and enrich the leadership of others (158). The Bible emphasizes that one of the primary roles of pastors is to be equippers of others.

For instance, in Exodus 18, Jethro advises Moses that he should not attempt to lead his ministry alone but instead should equip the people so they can make their own decisions. He tells Moses, “What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (Exod. 18:17-18, NIV).

In 2 Timothy, the Apostle Paul exhorts young Timothy to equip others to teach by saying, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:2, NIV).

The most frequently cited passage to invoke pastors as equippers is found in

Ephesians 4:11-12:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. (NIV)

The Bible seems to suggest that an important function of pastors is to equip and enable the congregation for ministry, not to become superstar, "do-it-all" leaders.

That was the pattern in the first-century Church and what the twenty-first-century Church must learn anew; the Church in the postmodern world must return the ministry to the people (Cladis 124).

Manz and Sims' concept of "superleadership," mentioned earlier in this review concerning emerging views of leadership, aligns well with pastoral leadership's newly recovered primary function of equipping and enabling the congregation. The goal of superleadership is to draw out the unique potential of each individual by leading them to tap into their own intelligence, spirit, creativity, and commitment (Superleadership 224). Superleadership is about leading others to lead themselves. Manz and Sims' description seems like an excellent synopsis of Jesus' own leadership strategy. The strategy of the early Church is also reflected in this description. Wise leaders today will learn from these important voices and begin to lead others to lead themselves.

Church Health and the Church Health Movement

This section of this review focuses on the relevant church health literature including the evolution of the church health movement, the Church as an organic unit, systems theory, characteristics of healthy churches, and includes relevant biblical passages and theological reflection concerning the nature of church health.

The Evolution of the Church Health Movement

The church health movement grew out of the church growth movement, so a look back at that evolution is helpful. The dawn of the church growth movement is generally held to coincide with the publication of Donald McGavran's book The Bridges of God in 1955. McGavran, a missionary to India, challenges the nineteenth-century missionary strategy of gathering individual converts into colonies or compounds isolated from the mainstream of their own society. McGavran recognizes that every nation is made up of various layers of clans, tribes, and castes, so he urges missionaries to utilize the existing "bridges" of family and kinship ties within each people group to reach people *within* the bounds of their own social groupings. McGavran believes this new perspective on missions is an organic concept since people in the world are already naturally divided into these social groupings: "Since the human family, except in the individualistic West, is largely made up of such castes, clans and peoples, the Christianization of each nation involves the prior Christianization of its various peoples as peoples" (44). McGavran's assertion that people prefer to become Christians without having to cross racial, linguistic, social, or class boundaries eventually came to be known as the "homogeneous unit" principle of church growth.

Perhaps the most significant contribution McGavran makes, however, is his insistence that evangelism and discipleship cannot be compartmentalized into two separate disciplines with different emphases (Rainer 169). Taking the Great Commission seriously, McGavran holds that winning the world for Christ involves not only winning new converts for Christ, which McGavran refers to as "discipling,"

but also what he calls “perfecting” the converts. Much of the confusion, McGavran explains, is caused by a misunderstanding concerning the Church’s mission:

The constant improvement of the existing church is mandatory on all Christians. God commands it and the church will languish without it. No one should minimize the importance of perfecting. At the same time, all should be certain that undisciplined pagan multitudes be added to the Lord before they can be perfected. ... She [the Church] always has a two-fold task: winning unbelievers to Christ and growing in Grace. While these tasks overlap, they are distinct. Neither should be slighted. (Understanding 123)

McGavran believes lost people need to be reconciled to God and then “perfected” in a local church in fellowship with believers of similar culture and behavior (“Church Health and Church Growth”). McGavran was disturbed that so much energy and so many resources were being expended in the name of evangelism while so few actual disciples were being made. McGavran’s frustration led him to begin using the phrase “church growth” instead of the word “evangelism” (Rainer 169). Church growth principles, such as the homogenous unit principle were first identified overseas in foreign missions, and then eventually brought back to the United States and applied on the home mission field and in local churches. By the mid-seventies, the church growth movement was in full bloom.

The church growth movement was not without its critics, however. The movement was always unpopular in some circles, but as the movement’s influence grew, so did the dissenting voices. Criticisms of the practice and theology of the movement came mainly in three areas. First, the movement was criticized by those who claimed the movement had essentially redefined the Church as a human association of like-minded people. These detractors argue that this definition is a far cry from the model presented in Scripture. A second criticism leveled at the

movement was that its adherents tend to stress technology and methodology over the means of grace. Still another criticism aimed at the church growth movement concerns what some claim is an unhealthy preoccupation with “numbers.”

Because of these criticisms and others, and perhaps simply because of the natural evolution of any idea, around the mid-seventies in many circles the conversation began shifting away from church *growth* and more toward church *health*. Donald McGavran and Win Arn, another pioneer in the church growth field, carry on an extended conversation about church growth and, in that conversation, address the subject of church health. In their book, the authors suggest that diagnosing church health is an important and worthwhile endeavor: “Doctors and dentists tell us of the need for regular check-ups. The same is true of the church. Each church board needs to have at least an annual picture of the health and growth of the church” (74). This “conversation” between McGavran and Arn, which occurred in 1973, may be the earliest mention of the relationship between church growth and church health (“Church Health and Church Growth”).

In 1979, Wagner published the book Your Church Can Be Healthy in which he explores the idea of diseases that could affect church health and laments the lack of research into church health: “[U]p until now, there has been no systematic and sustained effort that I know of to develop what we are calling the field of church pathology” (20). In a follow-up book titled The Healthy Church, Wagner suggests a list of nine diseases that affect church health: (1) *ethnikitis*, an island of one kind of people in the midst of a community of another kind of people; (2) old age, the church dying because children of members move away (Wagner later renamed this disease

“ghost town disease”); (3) people blindness, blindness to important cultural differences that exist in people; (4) sociological strangulation, the unmet need to add another service, additional parking, or other facilities; (5) koinonitis, an unhealthy inward focus sometimes referred to as naval gazing; (6) hyper-cooperativism, a blurring of the distinctive identity of a congregation; (7) arrested development, where people are not growing in their relationships with God or with one another; (8) St. John’s syndrome, Christianity in name only, routine faith; and, (9) hypopneumia, a lack of presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life and ministry of the church (30-112).

The result of this new interest in church health and its relationship to church growth is that today many churches are moving away from purely numbers-driven church growth strategies to an emphasis on growing healthy churches (Towns and Bird 21). Perhaps the greatest grassroots boost to the emergence of the church health movement from church growth movement was the publication in 1995 of Rick Warren’s immensely popular book The Purpose Driven Church. In that book, Warren asserts that “the key issue for churches in the twenty-first century will be church health, not church growth” (17). Warren goes on to suggest that church growth is not an end unto itself but instead is the natural by-product of a healthy church: “Healthy churches don’t need gimmicks to grow—they grow naturally” (17). More than 320,000 pastors and church leaders from over 120 countries have attended Warren’s Purpose Driven Church conferences to hear his message emphasizing church health over church growth. These pastors and leaders have then taken Warren’s message of the importance of becoming a healthy, well-balanced church back to their respective

churches, creating a groundswell of interest in church health.

The Church as an Organic System

To speak of church *health* is, in many ways, a return to a more biblical understanding of the Church as a living organism: a living, breathing body, rather than a well-oiled machine. Biblically speaking, the Church of Jesus Christ is depicted primarily as a living organism and secondarily as an organization. Everything about the Church involves life. Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, is a living Savior. The Church includes individuals who have been made alive spiritually as the result of a new birth (John 3:3; Eph. 2:1-3). Both individually and corporately the Church is inhabited by the living Spirit (John 14; 1 Cor. 3:16-17), and its affairs are governed by a living book (Heb. 4:12) (Jenson and Stevens 9). The Apostle Paul characterized the Church organically with his “body of Christ” metaphor: “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Cor. 12:27, NIV; see also Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19). Warren reminds his readers of another of Paul’s organic principles (1 Cor. 3:6-9) when he admonishes his readers, “Don’t worry about the growth of your church.... [Instead] keep watering and fertilizing and cultivating and weeding and pruning” (394). Jesus himself often used organic imagery in his preaching and teaching, including such familiar living images as seeds, sheep, birds of the sky, lilies of the field, mustard plants, and fig trees.

Jesus’ ministry on earth was in large part about “wholeness” in an organic sense, centering on wholeness and healing. Peter announces Jesus’ holistic ministry: “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and ... he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because

God was with him” (Acts 10:38, NIV). Healing episodes involving Jesus include healing a paralytic and then urging him to “take up your mat and go home” (Mark 2:11, NIV), restoring a woman with a blood disease who was “healed” (Matt. 9:22), and healing and restoring to life Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56). When questioned why he spent time with “tax collectors and sinners,” Jesus replied, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Matt. 9:12, NIV). Healing, health, and wholeness always took precedence over rigid institutional rules and staid organizational hierarchies. Jesus was interested in organic, “body-life” ministry, not organizational or institutional wrangling. The Church would do well to take its cue from Jesus’ understanding of the Church as an organic whole.

Systems Theory

To be healthy and whole in a biblical sense is to be complete, with each part of the whole functioning as it was designed to do so by God. One important perspective that the church health movement recognized that was a departure (some would say an advance) from church growth thinking could be described as the difference in systems thinking versus purely mechanistic thinking.

In the minds of many church health theorists, church growth thinkers tend to describe church organizational behavior, structure, and practice purely in terms of prediction and control—like a machine. This linear, causal way of thinking is derived from the Newtonian “cause and effect” way of viewing the world. The Newtonian mechanistic paradigm is a perspective based on observing nature and then developing theories as to why things happened as they did. Isaac Newton observed the combined forces of gravity and acceleration as he watched an apple fall from a tree. Applying

mathematics to his observations, Newton then deduced various laws of motion (physics), which he used to describe what he had seen. These “laws” were subsequently used by Newton and the scientists who followed him to explain how the world works in terms of a mechanical system. By the end of the twentieth century, this mechanistic approach was the predominant worldview in Western civilization, permeating not only the scientific arena but also spreading into other aspects of thought and culture. The basic assumption of the mechanistic worldview is that the material world is made up of a multitude of separate objects assembled like a huge machine. The natural extension of this assumption is that all phenomena, no matter how complex, can be understood by reducing them into their most elemental or basic components and then looking for the principles by which they interact.

In time, scientists began to realize that the Newtonian model was insufficient to explain the universe as completely as was originally thought. Ironically, the most devastating challenge to the mechanistic view came from the discipline that provided the view’s greatest triumphs—physics (Grenz 50). Researchers in physics such as Albert Einstein made scientific breakthroughs that led to new understandings. Today most agree that the universe is not composed of individual isolated particles; instead, they are far more dependent on their context and on their relationships to one another than the mechanistic model allowed (52). Unfortunately, many people, including some church growth thinkers, are still working under the Newtonian construct, viewing the world, including the Church, as a mechanism and not an organic system. The emerging consensus, however, is that the world is relative, participatory, and complex, not the simple, static, objective world Newton envisioned (53).

Systems theory is a more organic and helpful way to think about the world, including the Church. German biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanffy was the first to present a general systems theory. Von Bertalanffy advocates abandoning the mechanistic cause and effect, stimulus-response understanding of the world for a new more holistic paradigm that considers the ongoing, vital interaction of all the connected parts that make up the whole:

There appear to exist general system laws which apply to any system of a certain type, irrespective of the particular properties of the system and of the elements involved. These considerations lead to the postulate of a new scientific discipline which we call general system theory. Its subject matter is formulation of principles that are valid for “systems” in general, whatever the nature of their component elements and the relations or “forces” between them. General system theory, therefore, is a general science of “wholeness” which up till now was considered a vague, hazy and semi-metaphysical concept. (37)

Systems theory conceptualizes the world in terms of a series of interrelated and interconnected systems. Instead of viewing the world as a series of isolated, unrelated parts, systems thinking looks at the “ongoing, vital interaction of the connected parts” (Steinke, How Your Church Family Works 4). Important concepts in systems theory include synergy, the understanding that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, interdependence, the state of mutual dependence that elements in a system share, and interconnection, the state of interconnectedness the elements in a system share. The important corrective that systems thinking offers, and by extension church health thinking offers, is its movement beyond the linear, Newtonian, cause and effect perspective to study patterns of behavior and the systemic interrelationships among the various interconnected parts of a system. Systems thinking results in a much richer and deeper understanding of the system, as

well as new perspectives on how to optimize the health and benefits of that system.

Since being introduced, systems theory has proven to be one of the best ways to understand and manage organizations and complex realities. Systems thinking has been applied in many other fields, including businesses, families, schools, and churches. Of special interest in the Church has been the application of systems theory in the field of family therapy (Stevens and Collins xxii).

Dr. Murray Bowen was one of the first to apply systems theory to family therapy. The kernel of Bowen's thought was that individuals are best understood within the context of family relations. The interconnectedness of the family functions like a spider web where a change in one part of the family unit reverberates throughout the family unit to other members.

Dr. Edwin Friedman, a rabbi and family therapist, studied with Dr. Bowen and applied the insights of Bowen's work to religious institutions. Friedman uses family systems thinking to show how leadership in congregations can best be understood and transformed by having an awareness of three related systems that directly affect organizational leadership: (1) the personal multi-generational family system of the leader, (2) the congregation itself as a system with both functional and dysfunctional elements, and (3) the family systems of the congregation's membership. Using case studies, Friedman demonstrates how these three systems intertwine with one another to make an organization such as a church, school, or family function in a certain way. Friedman holds that understanding the dynamics of these three subsystems and how they affect one another is the key to effective, transformative leadership.

Peter Steinke, a student of Friedman's, has also made valuable contributions in applying family systems to churches with his book Healthy Congregations. Steinke believes congregational health begins with mature, self-differentiated leaders. He identifies seven factors of health in a church: (1) sense of purpose, (2) appraisal and management of conflict, (3) clarity of beliefs, direction, and responsibility, (4) mood and tone of personal interaction, (5) mature interaction between leaders and those following, (6) processes of healing, and (7) an emphasis on resources rather than weaknesses (79-85).

Steinke also proposes seven helpful health-influencing responses to the leadership challenge on which leaders can focus: (1) self, not others, (2) strength, not weaknesses, (3) process, not content, (4) challenge, not comfort, (5) integrity, not unity, (6) system, not symptom, and (7) direction, not condition (How Your Church Family Works 109). Steinke concludes, "So focused, leaders can be stewards of themselves and therefore stewards of the vision. Being self-defined, they can be trusted with the community's definition of itself" (109).

Of special interest in the context of this research is the family systems concept of *self-differentiation*, which was introduced by Bowen. Self-differentiation has both intrapersonal and interpersonal implications. The intrapersonal aspect relates to leaders' ability to be objective, define themselves, be responsible for their actions and for their responses to others, and maintain integrity in the face of systemic pressure. The interpersonal aspect of self-differentiation has to do primarily with all the ways leaders are able to stay in touch with the family system while remaining self-defined. Friedman describes self-differentiation as leaders' ability to stand apart

from, and yet remain connected to, those being led:

Differentiation means the capacity of a family member to define his or her own life's goals and values apart from surrounding togetherness pressures, to say "I" when others are demanding "you" and "we." It includes the capacity to maintain a (relatively) nonanxious presence in the midst of anxious systems, to take the maximum responsibility for one's own destiny and emotional being. It can be measured somewhat by the breadth of one's repertoire of responses when confronted with crisis. The concept should not be confused with autonomy or narcissism, however. Differentiation means the capacity to be an "I" while remaining connected. (27)

The family systems perspective treats the concept of the self in leadership not by focusing on the differences between leaders and followers as most leadership theories do. Family systems thinking focuses instead on the organic nature of the leader-follower relationship as parts of the same organism (Friedman 228). Friedman believes that successful leadership depends not only on leading families toward their goals, but also on maximizing the health and functioning of families and their leaders along the way. Friedman stresses the importance of leaders taking responsibility for their position as leaders and moving forward with their vision without being distracted by resisters:

The basic concept of leadership through self-differentiation is this: If a leader will take primary responsibility for his or her own position as "head" and work to define his or her own goals and self, while staying in touch with the rest of the organism, there is a more than reasonable chance that the body will follow. There may be initial resistance but, if the leader can stay in touch with the resisters, the body will usually go along. (228)

Based on this understanding, Friedman holds that self-differentiated leaders in a family systems approach to leadership must keep three components of their leadership role in mind. First, leaders must define themselves and stay in touch. Second, leaders must have the capacity and willingness to take nonreactive, clearly

conceived, and clearly defined positions. Finally, leaders must be able to deal with the inevitable sabotage that will come (229-30).

While some have argued that family theory should not be applied to churches because churches are not “families” in the truest sense of that word, many leaders have found the insights of family systems theory helpful in enabling them to understand congregational life better. Steinke, in his book How Your Church Family Works, observes at least two areas where systems thinking coincides with the biblical perspective:

Most notable is the interrelatedness of all things.... Trinitarian faith, for instance sees all reality in relationship. God is three separate persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—yet one.... God is also separate from what is created, while not disengaged from it. (117)

Viewing churches as organic realities—systems of interrelated and interconnected people and processes—opens up new ways to empower the Church for its irreplaceable work in the world today and offers pastoral leaders new ways of understanding and engaging in their important role in the Church. To lead well, pastors must focus on leading themselves before they focus on leading others, and they must consider how people in living systems like the Church affect each other. As pastors learn to lead this way, they will discover they are able to lead more calmly even in the midst of an anxious congregation (Herrington, Creech, and Taylor xv).

Church Health Characteristics

Healthy churches, like healthy people, should exhibit certain vital signs (Wagner, Your Church Can Grow 32). As church health thinking has come to be more in vogue, numerous scholars, teachers, and practitioners have published lists of characteristics of healthy, effective churches. These lists vary in the number of

quality characteristics used by the writers as well as in the scientific effort exerted to create the lists. Some of the lists were compiled using large-scale, verifiable, scientific research projects, while others have emerged from the personal ministry experience of pastor-practitioners, and still others are so-called “biblical models.” Unfortunately, while numerous authors have written about church health, little effort has been put forth by these writers to interact with each other’s ideas or to develop a comprehensive definition of church health (Day 2). What follows is a brief overview of some of the more well-known lists of church health characteristics.

Perhaps the earliest proposed list of church health characteristics was Wagner’s “seven vital signs of a healthy church,” which he developed around 1976. Wagner maintains that the vital signs of healthy churches are identifiable and must be described in ways both intrinsically accurate and helpful to others (Your Church Can Grow 43). His list includes (1) a positive, possibility-thinking pastor, (2) a well-mobilized laity, (3) the ability to meet members’ needs and expectations, (4) the proper balance between celebration, congregation, and cell, (5) homogeneity, (6) evangelism that produces disciples, and (7) biblical priorities (159).

Five years later, George Peters alludes to church health when he contends that to be a growing and multiplying church, the church must be “fit” (138). Peters believes the early Church as described in the book of Acts provides the best glimpse at what a physically healthy church looks like. The author lists nine qualities of the early Church that the Church today should emulate. A “fit” church must (1) experientially know the presence of the Holy Spirit, (2) be united by a common faith, (3) submit itself to God-ordained leadership, (4) be molded into a unified,

functioning community, (5) train its members in the school of discipleship, (6) proclaim a clearly defined and relevant message, (7) continue in prayer, (8) live in the realm of miracles, and (9) suffer and sacrifice joyfully (139).

Also writing in 1981, Ron Jenson and Jim Stevens stress the importance of church health and suggest that to sustain the health of a church, three factors are involved: focusing on a biblical product, maintaining biblical presuppositions, and following biblical principles (13). The authors contend that leadership is crucial to church health and argue that if leaders do not take their responsibility seriously, they will find themselves presiding over a collection of programs instead of guiding a living, dynamic organism (16). Jenson and Stevens predate Warren in their assertion that if churches will concentrate on staying healthy, growth will naturally occur. The authors propose one of the longer lists of “principles,” which must be functioning properly if a church is to be healthy and growing. These important principles include (1) prayer, asking and expecting God to do the miraculous; (2) worship, the experience of meaningful corporate celebration; (3) purpose, the church must be united around common objectives; (4) diagnosis, the church must analyze the local church and community; (5) priorities, the church must emphasize important activities and values; (6) planning, the church must project ways to achieve objectives; (7) programming, the church must build ministries that move toward desired objectives; (8) climate, the church must radiate love, service, witness, and expectancy; (9) leadership, the leadership of the church must motivate and guide toward desired objectives; (10) laity, the church must utilize the strengths of individuals; (11) absorption, the church must establish a strong sense of belonging; (12) small groups,

the church must develop deep interpersonal relationships; (13) discipleship, the church must promote commitment and spiritual multiplication; (14) training, the church must equip its members with knowledge, skills, and character; and (15) evangelism, the church must present the gospel effectively (17).

Anderson, pastor of Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, argues that what is healthy for one church may be different from what is healthy for another. Each church needs to define church health for itself. He believes this unique definition is discovered through a process of comparison, consultation, and self-evaluation (Church 128). Anderson provides a “practitioner” viewpoint when he suggests that a healthy church is one that (1) glorifies God, (2) produces disciples, (3) exercises the spiritual gifts of every member, (4) relates positively to its environment (outreach), (5) reproduces through evangelism, (6) incorporates newcomers into the life and leadership of the church, (7) has an openness to change, (8) trusts God, and (9) looks good on the outside as a sign of health (129-42).

Warren, of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, California, is also a strong advocate of church health and provides another practitioner viewpoint. Warren uses a biblical model based on the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) and the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:36-40). From these two familiar passages of Scripture, Warren extracts what he calls the “five tasks that Christ ordained for his church to accomplish” (103). Warren believes that balancing these five New Testament purposes ensures that a church will be healthy (129). He emphasizes that the church is not called to do one thing; the church is called to do many things, which is why balance is so important. Balance is such a critical factor in

church health in Warren's mind that he penned a ninth beatitude: "Blessed are the balanced; for they shall outlast everyone" (128).

Stephen Macchia provides still another practitioner perspective, having served in the pastorate and as president of the Evangelistic Association of New England. He and his colleagues interviewed some eighteen hundred New England believers and identified ten characteristics of healthy churches. Macchia's list includes (1) God's empowering presence, (2) God-exalting worship, (3) spiritual disciplines, (4) learning and growing community, (5) a commitment to loving and caring relationships, (6) servant-leadership development, (7) an outward focus, (8) wise administration and accountability, (9) networking with the body of Christ, and (10) stewardship and generosity (23).

Moving to the more scientific studies, perhaps the most scientific of all, and one of the more popular church health theories around today, is the work of Christian Schwarz called "Natural Church Development." Schwarz conducted a study of more than one thousand churches in thirty-two countries on all six continents. Schwarz delineates between what he calls "technocratic" thinking, which relies on human effort, and what he calls the "biotic" or natural approach, which utilizes God-given principles of growth and life. Schwarz argues that relying on human ways is futile. "We cannot expect [technocratic thinking] to help the living organism called 'the church'" (62). Schwarz believes that many popular church growth concepts and practices are technocratic and their methods are insufficient because they are "inconsistent with God's plan" (7). Schwarz holds that such attempts are misguided and that the key to healthy, growing churches is to "let God's growth automatisms

flourish, instead of wasting energy on man-made programs” (7). Based on his extensive research, Schwarz comes up with what he calls “eight essential qualities of healthy churches”: (1) empowering leadership, (2) gift-oriented ministry, (3) passionate spirituality, (4) functional structures, (5) inspiring worship services, (6) holistic small groups, (7) need-oriented evangelism, and (8) loving relationships. Schwarz’s research demonstrates a significant qualitative difference between growing and declining churches in all eight of these quality areas (39). His “environmental” approach to church health is gaining popularity and acceptance in a variety of congregational and denominational settings even though natural church development does have its critics who claim Schwarz’s findings are not as scientific or as statistically verifiable as he claims they are.

A second comprehensive, scientific study was the U. S. Congregational Life Survey conducted in April and May 2001. The self-described goal of this survey was to provide a closer look at congregational vitality and to describe the current American religious landscape. The U. S. Congregational Life Survey was the largest and most representative profile of worshipers and their congregations ever conducted in the United States. More than two thousand congregations and over thirty thousand worshipers from many denominations completed a survey that resulted in a list of indicators of congregational health. The U. S. Congregational Life survey health characteristics include (1) spiritual formation, (2) meaningful worship, (3) congregational participation, (4) a sense of belonging, (5) caring for children and youth, (6) a community focus (outreach), (7) an emphasis on faith sharing, (8) a welcoming community, (9) empowering leadership, and (10) a future focus

(Woolever and Bruce, Beyond the Ordinary 10). Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce contend that the stronger a church was perceived in each of these areas, the healthier the church was. Affirming a systems approach to understanding congregational health, the authors conclude, “Because the dimensions of congregational life are interrelated, dynamics in one place will directly affect all other areas” (Field Guide 25).

After reviewing and contrasting a number of lists of health characteristics, a collaborative research team in the doctor of ministry program at Asbury Theological Seminary defined eight church health characteristics (McKee 33). The Beeson church health characteristics are (1) authentic community, (2) empowering leadership, (3) engaging worship, (4) functional structures, (5) intentional evangelism, (6) mobilized laity, (7) passionate spirituality, and (8) transforming discipleship.

In this research the Beeson characteristics are used to gauge church health. These characteristics were chosen because they represent an attempt to engage and interact seriously with the various authors and practitioners and their respective lists concerning exactly what constitutes church health.

Research Methodology

The purpose of research is to seek conclusions leading to new truths. Research has been defined as the “systematic and objective analysis and recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations, principles, or theories, resulting in prediction and ultimate control of many events that may be consequences of causes of specific activities” (Best 8). Descriptive research, such as this study, involves the description, recording, analysis, and

interpretation of conditions that now exist and most often include some kind of comparison or contrast in an attempt to discover relationships between variables in a situation (15). In this study, standardized instruments were used to measure the degree of self-leadership in several church-planting pastors as compared to the health of those churches to determine the degree of correlation that exists between the two variables “pastoral self-leadership” and “church health.”

Survey research is often used to determine the incidence, distribution, and relationships of certain variables (Wiersma 15). Survey research is not just casual observation or informed guessing. Survey research requires careful planning, collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered (Best 118). William Wiersma suggests a seven-step method of conducting survey research: (1) the planning stage, where the research problem is defined and the survey is designed, (2) the development of a sampling plan, (3) the preparation for data collection, including the construction of an interview schedule or questionnaire, (4) the data collection stage, (5) the translation of the data that has been collected in preparation for analysis (coding), (6) the data analysis, synthesis, and interpretation, and (7) conclusions and reporting (176-78).

This study utilized standardized questionnaires with selected-response items. The standardized instruments were carefully examined to ensure that the questions asked actually produced useable data relevant to the questions raised by the research problems. The selected-response items on both questionnaires used were based on a five-point Likert scale by which respondents indicated their level of agreement with a given statement.

Care was also taken in other areas to ensure that many of the pitfalls and problems commonly associated with survey research were avoided in this study. Wiersma provides a helpful list of common mistakes to avoid: (1) failure to allow enough time for all the steps, (2) problems with the sampling procedure such as not enough resources to test or other sampling problems, (3) poorly constructed questionnaires, (4) failure to follow up adequately with nonrespondents, and (5) inadequate procedures for assembling and tabulating the data (206).

One major task faced by all researchers is to select measures in their research that are appropriate and can be expected to produce consistent results from one situation to another (Borg and Gall 25). The degree to which an instrument actually measures what the instrument is designed to measure is called the instrument's validity. The degree to which an instrument can be expected to provide consistent results in measuring what it is supposed to measure is called an instrument's reliability. Whenever an instrument is used, its validity and reliability must be taken into consideration (Wiersma 333). This research was carried out using previously tested, highly valid, and reliable measures for the characteristics the study researched.

Conclusions

Church health, like effective pastoral leadership, is difficult to describe. Both church health and effective pastoral leadership are much easier to recognize than they are to define. Effectively leading a healthy church appears to be the result of the interplay of multiple, complex factors. Perhaps more importantly, leadership and church health do not occur in theory. They must occur in the real world, and reality is inevitably more complex than theory. Leaders are forced to act out of real values in

concrete situations; they do not have the luxury of acting “theoretically” (Dale 14). Today more churches and parachurch organizations exist than ever before (Clinton, Making of a Leader 39). Each one of these organizations that desires to be faithful to God needs effective leadership and excellent health and should strive for both.

One key concept that has emerged in the review of both leadership and church health is the importance of systems theory and systemic thinking to pastoral leadership and church life. Thinking systemically involves viewing the relationship patterns between the subsystems of an organism (such as a church) or a group of people (such as leaders and followers). Warren, for instance, defines church health systemically by describing it as the proper balance and interplay between Christ’s purposes for the church. Most of the lists of church health characteristics include effective leadership as being crucial to church health. Schwarz found a positive correlation in his research between growing, healthy churches and pastors who were focused systemically on both the goals of the church as well as the relationships that permeate the congregation (22). Authors Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James Furr explain why a systems approach to church health and pastoral leadership is preferable:

A simple cause-and-effect view is too shallow to show the complexities of congregational life. Systems thinking is a far more accurate and useful approach for transformational leaders.... The comprehensive and interactive thinking of a systems perspective improves a leader’s ability to perceive current reality, discern vision, and improve mental models.... Congregations are spiritual and human social systems that are complex, connected and changing. (144)

Systemic leadership is accomplished through self-differentiation, which calls for leaders to be “self-determined while remaining connected” (Stevens and Collins

27). The literature reveals that both leaders and churches have some degree of control over their behavior and choices and responsibility for their choices. Skinner describes how people shape their own destinies: “To a considerable extent an individual does appear to shape his own destiny. He is often able to do something about the variables affecting him. Some degree of self-determination of conduct is usually recognized” (228).

Self-leadership and church health both call for the exercise of varying degrees of control and responsibility (stewardship) in order to optimize the results of pastoral leaders and the health of churches. This degree of control and responsibility granted to leaders and churches should not be interpreted as undermining or diminishing God’s role in the matter. Effective pastoral leaders and healthy churches will continue to rely on God’s Spirit but must always strive to be effective stewards of their gifts, natural abilities, and acquired skills. As Max DePree points out, both the leader and the church should focus on process and potential:

It’s not a matter primarily of whether or not we reach our particular goals. Life is more than just reaching our goals. As individuals and as a group we need to reach our potential. Nothing else is good enough. We must always be reaching toward our potential. (50)

The challenge is for leaders and churches to accept responsibility for developing and using what God has provided in accordance with his will until that leader or church hears the sweetest commendation of all: “Well done, good and faithful servant!... Come and share your master’s happiness!” (Matt. 25:21, NIV).

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study was designed to determine if a correlation exists between the self-leadership practices of church-planting pastors and the health of the churches those pastors planted. This study focuses on a particular group of church planters who are graduates of the Beeson Pastor program at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Summary of the Problem and Purpose

Even though a large percentage of Americans claim to believe in God, pray regularly, and consider themselves religious, the Christian Church in America finds itself in crisis today (Guder et al. 1). Estimates are that 80 to 85 percent of all churches in North America are plateaued or declining (Arn 16). One reason for the declining morale and numbers in the Church in America is because many churches are tradition bound and unable to relate to the increasingly skeptical, secular communities in which they find themselves today. One hopeful sign in the midst of the Church's declining influence is the emergence of new generation church plants that have discovered that "the gospel is always conveyed through the medium of culture" (Guder et al. 18). The advent and rapid expansion in the number of these church plants brings the demand for effective pastoral leadership in these new paradigm churches. In fact, in the view of many consultants, religious leaders, and authors, pastoral leadership is the single most important factor in a new church plant.

Compounding this problem is the fact that pastoral leadership in a church plant is markedly different from leading in an established pastorate. The skills and aptitudes

required for pastoral success in a church plant are different than those called for in an existing, established church. Schein provides a helpful insight when he notes that founding leaders (such as church-planting pastors) need great self-insight; whereas, midlife leaders (such as pastors of established churches) need the ability to decipher the surrounding culture and subcultures (378). Church-planting pastors must also exhibit a higher degree of self-initiative and self-motivation than pastors of established churches. Self-starting, entrepreneurial leaders are needed for church planting. Church-planting pastors are often left with little or no external supervision and, therefore, must call upon their own intrapersonal leadership to plan, prioritize, and execute their ministry effectively.

The world today needs healthy, vital churches to reach and disciple the world for Christ. One possible answer to this crisis may be to plant healthy twenty-first century churches led by pastors who exhibit high levels of self-leadership.

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the presence of self-leadership practices in church-planting pastors and the health of those churches. This purpose was accomplished through correlating the degree of self-leadership evidenced by church-planting pastors to the health of the churches those pastors planted. The anticipated outcome of this study was a positive correlation between highly self-led pastors and church health.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study in order to fulfill its purpose.

Research Question 1

What level of self-leadership does the church-planting pastor evidence?

A survey instrument was used to measure self-leadership skills, behavior, and cognition of church-planting pastors including (1) behavior-focused strategies, (2) natural reward strategies, and (3) constructive thought pattern strategies.

Research Question 2

What level of health does the church plant evidence?

A survey instrument was used to measure eight quality health characteristics in a congregation. These characteristics were (1) authentic community, (2) empowering leadership, (3) engaging worship, (4) functional structures, (5) intentional evangelism, (6) mobilized laity, (7) passionate spirituality, and (8) transforming discipleship.

Research Question 3

What correlation is evident between self-leadership and church health?

The relationship of congregational leader perceptions of the level of each church's health was correlated to self-perceived, self-leadership levels present in the church-planting pastor of that church. A positive correlation between the presence of self-leadership characteristics in church-planting pastors and the health of those churches was anticipated.

Variables

Two variables were measured in this study, and their level of correlation was assessed. The two variables were (1) the self-leadership practices of church-planting pastors and (2) the health of the churches those pastors planted.

Intervening variables that may have affected the outcome of this study include various contextual factors concerning both the church-planting pastor and the church itself. For the church-planting pastor, these might include, but are not limited to, the

presence or absence of other leadership qualities and other personal demographics of the pastor such as age, gender, marital status, health, temperament, and character issues.

Concerning the churches involved, intervening variables could include the demographics of the church such as the population of the community, whether the community or church was growing or declining, the presence or absence of additional staff, whether or not the church had denominational ties, and the presence or absence of facilities.

A few of these intervening variables that possess the potential to affect the outcome of the study were measured and examined, but most were considered beyond the scope of this limited project.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of thirty church-planting pastors who graduated from the Beeson Pastor program at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, and congregational leaders from those churches. Originally, forty-two church-planting Beeson pastors were identified, and each one was invited to participate in the study. This number was eventually reduced to thirty due to a lack of response by some pastors and by others being ineligible to participate for a variety of reasons. The thirty who participated did so by completing and returning a self-leadership questionnaire.

For the church health component of this research, a convenience sampling method was used. The church-planting pastors were asked to select up to fifteen adult church leaders from each congregation and to ask them to participate by completing and returning a church health questionnaire. Two hundred sixty-three church leaders of the possible 450 potential leaders from the thirty churches eventually completed and returned church health questionnaires.

Instrumentation

This project was a descriptive study that utilized a standardized research instrument to measure self-leadership and a second standardized research instrument to measure church health.

Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire

The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) was the standardized instrument used in this research to measure self-leadership. All of the church-planting pastors were asked to complete and return this instrument to determine their level of self-leadership. The RSLQ instrument consists of thirty-five items representing the three primary self-leadership dimensions: behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies. These three dimensions are further broken down into nine distinct subscales. Five subscales relate to behavioral-focused strategies: self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cueing. One subscale covers the natural reward strategies: focusing thoughts on natural rewards. Finally, three subscales relate to constructive thought pattern strategies: visualizing successful performance, self-talk, and evaluating beliefs and assumptions (Houghton and Neck 677).

The RSLQ is a self-reporting questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale with labels ranging from “Not At All Accurate” to “Completely Accurate,” indicating the relative accuracy of a descriptive statement of subject behavior. The RSLQ was developed by Houghton and Neck by building on previous versions of self-leadership questionnaires developed by J. S. Anderson and G. E. Prussia and J. F. Cox.

Beeson Church Health Questionnaire

The Beeson Church Health Questionnaire (BCHQ) was the standardized instrument used in this research to measure church health. The BCHQ was developed using Robert F. DeVellis' guidelines in scale development (51-89) by Scott B. McKee, James Kinder, Brian Law, and Keith Conway Taylor as a part of a collaborative research project at Asbury Theological Seminary. After analyzing several well-known lists of characteristics of healthy churches, the group decided upon eight characteristics of healthy churches: (1) mobilized laity, (2) engaging worship, (3) intentional evangelism, (4) authentic community, (5) transforming discipleship, (6) passionate spirituality, (7) empowering leadership, and (8) functional structures (McKee 5).

The BCHQ consists of sixty-nine items answered using a five-point Likert scale with labels ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," which indicate the relative accuracy of descriptive statements concerning the subject church. Following DeVellis' suggestion (34), the team evaluated the items through a split-half reliability test based on correlations between scale scores, with questions having significant correlations being included in the final questionnaire (Law 46).

Validity and Reliability

Both instruments used in this research have been tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha testing, which verified these questionnaires' internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is expressed as a correlation coefficient ranging in value from 0 to +1. The higher the alpha is, the more reliable the instrument is. Reliability coefficients of .70 or higher are generally considered acceptable (Nunnally 230-34).

The coefficient alphas from the RSLQ indicate the instrument is a reliable and

valid tool that effectively reflects self-leadership theory in the assessment of self-leadership skills, behaviors, and cognitions. Cronbach coefficient alphas in the nine distinct subscales of the RSLQ are as follows: (1) visualizing successful performance (scale $\alpha = .085$), (2) self-goal setting (scale $\alpha = .084$), (3) self-talk (scale $\alpha = .092$), (4) self-reward (scale $\alpha = .093$), (5) evaluating beliefs and assumptions (scale $\alpha = .078$), (6) self-punishment (scale $\alpha = .086$), (7) self-observation (scale $\alpha = .082$), (8) focusing on natural rewards (scale $\alpha = .074$), and (9) self-cueing (scale $\alpha = .091$) (Houghton and Neck 682-83). The range on these alpha coefficients, from 0.74 to 0.93, represents an improvement over previous attempts to develop a reliable instrument. For instance, alpha coefficients for the instrument developed by Cox ranged from 0.69 to 0.93. Alpha coefficients on the Anderson and Prussia instrument ranged from 0.69 to 0.91.

Reliability data for the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire was unavailable.

Data Collection

Forty-two pastors were identified as graduates from the Beeson Pastor program who have planted churches. Each of these pastors received a letter requesting their voluntary participation in this study and advising them they would receive a packet of information concerning the research in one week's time. Survey packets were mailed to the pastors the next week. The packets contained a cover letter explaining the importance of the study, one copy of a Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire for the pastor, fifteen copies of the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire for the church leaders, and sixteen, self-addressed, stamped return envelopes. The pastors were asked to complete and return their self-leadership questionnaire and to distribute the church health questionnaires to fifteen adult leaders of the church for them to complete and return.

Of the forty-two pastors identified, one decided not to participate in the study and two others never responded leaving thirty-nine potential pastors and churches. Of the thirty-nine remaining churches, nine were eventually disqualified: two churches had not yet held their first public worship service, three pastors were no longer at the churches they planted, two pastors did not actually plant the church they are now leading, one church did not qualify because it had been in existence too long, and one congregation failed to return any church health questionnaires even though the pastor did return his questionnaire. In the end a total of thirty pastors and 263 church leaders participated in the study.

Data Analysis

Upon receipt of the questionnaires, data analysis began. First, the data from each questionnaire was entered into a spreadsheet. The spreadsheets were then forwarded to Dr. Jeffery D. Houghton of Abilene Christian University, who performed the statistical analysis for this research using the Statistical Package for Social Services (SPSS).

Delimitation and Generalizability

This study was delimited by design to include only church-planting pastors who graduated from the Beeson Pastor program and the churches those pastors have planted. As such the project is limited, and its findings should only be generalized to those church-planting pastors and churches that participated. The study relied on the voluntary participation of the church-planting pastors and used a convenience sampling method for the churches. These sampling methods could possibly limit the study as their use introduces concerns about willingness and integrity.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter addresses the research questions that guided this research and provides an overview of study findings. Sample characteristics are reported first, including descriptive profiles of the church-planting pastors, the church plants themselves, and the participating congregational leaders. Following the profiles, the first two research questions of the study are addressed by reporting the findings of the statistical analysis performed on the two questionnaires used in the research. Significant findings are displayed in several tables. The third research question is then addressed by examining the correlation between the level of self-leadership evident in the church-planting pastors and the level of church health. The chapter concludes with a summary of significant findings.

Sample Characteristics

Characteristics of three different groups are provided in this section. This information was obtained from responses to several contextual questions found on both the RSLQ (see Appendix A) and the BCHQ (see Appendix C). A profile of the church-planting pastors is given first, followed by profiles of the participating churches and the congregational leaders.

Profile of Pastors

As detailed in Table 4.1, the Beeson pastors participating in this study appear to be a fairly homogenous group in terms of age, gender, race, number of years of full-time ministry, and church-planting experience.

Table 4.1. Characteristics of Pastors

Pastor	Age	Gender	Race	Yrs. in Ministry	Other Plants
1	36	M	W/C	7-10	0
2	47	M	W/C	11+	0
3	35	M	W/C	11+	0
4	40	M	W/C	11+	0
5	36	M	W/C	11+	0
6	40	M	W/C	11+	0
7	48	F	W/C	11+	0
8	44	M	W/C	11+	1
9	36	M	W/C	11+	0
10	48	M	W/C	11+	1
11	39	M	W/C	11+	0
12	38	M	W/C	11+	0
13	36	M	W/C	7-10	0
14	47	M	W/C	11+	0
15	34	M	W/C	7-10	0
16	36	M	W/C	11+	0
17	42	M	W/C	11+	0
18	33	M	W/C	3-6	0
19	35	M	W/C	7-10	0
20	37	M	W/C	11+	0
21	41	M	W/C	11+	0
22	40	M	W/C	11+	1
23	37	M	W/C	11+	0
24	41	M	W/C	11+	0
25	40	M	W/C	3-6	0
26	53	M	W/C	11+	1
27	39	M	W/C	11+	0
28	34	M	W/C	11+	0
29	43	M	W/C	7-10	0
30	36	M	W/C	11+	0

The group is one hundred percent Caucasian, and all but one pastor is male. Over two-thirds of the group has eleven or more years of ministry experience and only four have any prior church-planting experience. While the pastors' ages range from 33 to 53—a spread of twenty years—the standard deviation of the ages is only 4.96, which indicates a narrow spread (see Table 4.2). The median age of the group is around 40 ($M = 39.70$), and the group appears to be tightly clustered around that age.

Table 4.2. Pastors' Age

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PAGE*	30	33	53	39.70	4.96

* PAGE = Pastor's age as reported on RSLQ

Personal telephone conversations and extensive e-mail correspondence with the pastors during the data collection phase of this research provided anecdotal evidence confirming the pastors share many common characteristics. Shared qualities noticed while interacting with the group include self-confidence, enthusiasm, a strong sense of God's call on their lives, friendliness, initiative, humility, sincerity, passion, and vision.

Profile of Church Plants

The church plants participating in this study were not as similar a group as the pastors were. Table 4.3 highlights some of the diversity in the group. Differences that stand out include the variety of denominations and locales of the churches. Nine different denominations are represented, and the churches are scattered across seventeen different states. The churches are also located in an assortment of different-sized cities: Two are located in cities that have populations between five thousand and fifteen thousand, six are found in cities with populations of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand people, thirteen are located in cities with populations of from fifty thousand to 200,000, and nine are located in cities with populations of 200,000 or more. Average weekly worship attendance is still another characteristic that varies widely among the church plants. Average weekly worship attendance ranges from a low of only six worshippers in one church to a high of 1,060.

Table 4.3. Characteristics of Church Plants

Church	Denomination	City, State	Population	Style	Attend.	Property	Age	Growing Area
1	UMC	Wichita, KS	50-200,000	C	204	No Owned	2004	Y
2	UMC	Lexington, KY	200,000+	C	157	No Owned	2001	Y
3	UMC	Loganville, GA	50-200,000	C	165	No Owned	2002	Y
4	UMC	Sugarland, TX	50-200,000	C	665	0-2 yrs	1996	Y
5	UMC	Tupelo, MS	15-50,000	C	1060	No Owned	1998	Y
6	F. Methodist	Columbus, GA	200,000+	C	396	No Owned	1997	N
7	UMC	Newnan, GA	50-200,000	B/M	85	No Owned	2000	Y
8	F. Methodist	Parker, CO	50-200,000	C	300	No Owned	2004	Y
9	UMC	Fayetteville, GA	50-200,000	B/M	552	3-6 yrs.	1995	Y
10	UMC	Pembroke Pines, FL	15-50,000	C	300	0-2 yrs.	1997	Y
11	UMC	Daphne, AL	50-200,000	C	105	0-2 yrs.	1999	Y
12	Nazarene	Tucson, AZ	50-200,000	C	170	11+	2000	Y
13	UMC	Orlando, FL	200,000+	C	50	No Owned	2001	N
14	UMC	Northport, AL	50-200,000	B/M	150	No Owned	1998	Y
15	Wesleyan	Chapel Hill, NC	15-50,000	C	425	11+	2002	Y
16	Gen. Baptist	Wentzville, MD	15-50,000	C	134	No Owned	2001	Y
17	UMC	Royal Palm Beach, FL	15-50,000	C	752	0-2 yrs.	1997	Y
18	F. Methodist	Gilbert, AZ	200,000+	C	6	No Owned	2003	Y
19	UMC	Des Moines, IA	200,000+	C	30	No Owned	2002	Y
20	UMC	Hot Springs Village, AR	5-15,000	C	185	0-2 yrs.	1998	N
21	UMC	Deltona, FL	50-200,000	C	390	No Owned	1998	Y
22	Brethren	Montgomeryville, PA	200,000+	C	138	No Owned	1997	Y
23	UMC	Urbana, MD	5-15,000	C	125	No Owned	2002	N
24	ELCA	Roanoke, TX	15-50,000	B/M	30	No Owned	2003	Y
25	Non-Denon.	Decatur, GA	200,000+	B/M	60	No Owned	2004	N
26	C & MA	Fox Island, WA	50-200,000	C	483	11+	1983	Y
27	Nazarene	Lexington, KY	200,000+	C	100	No Owned	2004	Y
28	UMC	McDonough, GA	200,000+	C	340	No Owned	2001	Y
29	UMC	Floyds Knobs, IN	50-200,000	C	56	No Owned	2003	Y
30	UMC	Shreveport, LA	50-200,000	B/M	90	No Owned	2003	Y

One characteristic shown in Table 4.3 that many of the church plants have in common is worship style. Contemporary worship is the norm in eighty percent of the congregations (denoted by a “C” in Table 4.3). Other similarities in the church plants revealed by the questionnaires are ones that would be commonly expected in new churches. For example, 70 percent of the churches do not own any facilities. Also, the average age of the churches is low, just over five years. One other notable similarity in the churches is that when the pastors were asked to describe the community in which their church was located, 83 percent chose the response “growing and thriving.”

Profile of Church Leaders

The last group profiled is the 263 church leaders who participated in this study by completing and returning a Beeson Church Health Questionnaire (BCHQ). Tables 4.4 and 4.5 highlight some of the important findings gleaned from analysis of this group. Almost 88 percent of the church leaders who participated in this study were married. The percentage who described their personal spiritual life as growing was even higher at almost 94 percent. Surprisingly, not a single one of the leaders described their spiritual life as “declining,” which was one of the three choices on the questionnaire (along with “growing” and “plateaued”). The congregational leaders were split almost exactly in half along gender lines with 132 males and 131 females responding. The average age of the leaders was 44 years old, slightly higher than the mean age of the church-planting pastors (39.70). The percentage of total income from all sources given to the church reported by the leaders had a mean of 9 percent and a median of 10 percent.

Table 4.4. Characteristics of Church Leaders

Marital Status			Gender		Spiritual Life		
Married	Single	Other	Male	Female	Growing	Plateaued	Declining
231	22	10	132	131	247	16	0

Table 4.5. Church Leader Age and Giving

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CLAGE*	263	16	82	44	4.96
CLGIV**	263	0	25	9	4.78

* CLAGE = Church leader age as reported on BCHQ

**CLGIV = Church leader giving as reported on BCHQ

Descriptive Statistics

Two questionnaires were used in this study to answer the three research questions formulated to guide the research. The descriptive statistics generated by analysis of the responses to these questionnaires were used to answer research questions one and two:

1. What level of self-leadership does the church-planting pastor evidence?
2. What level of health does the church plant evidence?

Self-Leadership Characteristics

Research question number one concerned the level of self-leadership of each church-planting pastor. The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ) was used to measure all three major dimensions of self-leadership in the church-planting pastors: behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies, along with nine different subscales within those dimensions.

As shown in Table 4.6, the pastors perceived themselves as being strongest in the

behavior-focused strategies of self-cueing (4.57) and self-goal setting (4.15) with a .42 difference between the means of these two strategies. The weakest two areas of self-leadership were in the behavior-focused strategies of self-punishment (3.64) and self-reward (2.62). The difference between the strongest perceived self-leadership strategy and the weakest was 1.95. The means of the nine strategies were also fairly high, with most at or approaching four on a five-point scale.

Table 4.6. Self-Leadership Statistics by Strategy

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Behavior-focused strategies	Self-goal setting	4.15	0.71
	Self-reward	2.62	1.12
	Self-punishment	3.64	0.92
	Self-observation	4.03	0.60
	Self-cueing	4.57	0.69
Natural reward strategies	Focusing thoughts on natural rewards	4.06	0.60
	Visualizing successful performance	3.79	0.90
Constructive thought pattern strategies	Self-talk	4.00	1.04
	Evaluating beliefs and assumptions	3.81	0.77

Self-Leadership Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.7 provides the overall descriptive statistics for pastor self-leadership within the church-planting pastor group. The pastor self-leadership (PSL) scores shown were obtained by calculating individual scores for each of the thirty respondents on the RSLQ. The sum total of each church-planting pastor's responses to the thirty-five questions in the RSLQ was used as that pastor's self-leadership score (PSL). Subjects scored from a minimum of 93 to a maximum of 165 on the RSLQ. The mean score was

134.40 with a standard deviation of 18.72.

Table 4.7. Overall Self-Leadership Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PSL*	30	93	165	134.40	18.72

* PSL = Pastor Self-Leadership (RSLQ score)

Self-Leadership Levels

In that no generalized scoring from previously collected RSLQ data is available, no existing benchmark or standard of “high” or “low” self-leadership as determined by the RSLQ exists. Therefore, in declaring the level of self-leadership evident in each church-planting pastor as “high” or “low,” this simply means “high” or “low” relative to the group of pastors participating in this study. Table 4.8 lists the comparative levels of pastor self-leadership within the group of pastors. Any pastor in the sample may be compared to the rest of the pastors and to the mean of the set of thirty pastors (134.40). Those pastors scoring above the mean perceive themselves as being more highly self-led relative to others in the data set while those pastors scoring below the mean view themselves as being lower in self-leadership relative to the others in the data set.

Table 4.8. Individual Pastor Self-Leadership Scores

Pastor	PSL Score*
1	150
2	135
3	120
4	129
5	145
6	130
7	138
8	142
9	147
10	113
11	137
12	126
13	115
14	109
15	148
16	93
17	165
18	154
19	142
20	146
21	143
22	106
23	126
24	153
25	157
26	99
27	160
28	154
29	119
30	131

*** Sum of RSLQ responses**

To get a clearer picture of perceived pastor self-leadership, the pastors have been divided into three groups in Table 4.9. The measures “high,” “moderate,” and “low” are all relative measures determined by selecting a cut point one-half a standard deviation (in this case 9) above and below the mean and then categorizing the pastors above and below those points as “high” or “low” and those in between as “moderate.” These cut points are arbitrary, but the result gives a clearer comparative picture of the self-perception of self-

leadership in the group of pastors.

Table 4.9. Relative Perceived Self-Leadership in the Data Set

Perceived Self-Leadership	Pastor Self-Leadership	Number of Pastors	% of Pastors
High	>143	11	37
Moderate	125-143	11	37
Low	<125	8	26

Church Health Characteristics

Research question number two concerned the level of church health of each of the participating church plants. The Beeson Church Health Questionnaire (BCHQ) was used to measure eight indicators of church health in each church: authentic community, empowering leadership, engaging worship, functional structures, intentional evangelism, mobilized laity, passionate spirituality, and transforming discipleship.

As shown in Table 4.10, the church leaders perceived their churches as being strongest in engaging worship (4.43) followed closely by a tie between authentic community and mobilized laity (both at 4.39). The weakest two areas of perceived church health were transforming discipleship (4.02) and empowering leadership (4.07). The difference between the strongest perceived area of church health and the weakest was only .41. Also noteworthy is the finding that the means of the eight characteristics were all above four (on a five-point scale) and therefore relatively high.

Table 4.10. Church Health Statistics by Characteristic

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engaging worship	263	1.86	5	4.43	.60
Passionate spirituality	263	2.43	5	4.21	.49
Intentional evangelism	263	2.86	5	4.25	.43
Mobilized laity	263	2.33	5	4.39	.50
Functional structures	263	2.29	5	4.27	.58
Empowering leadership	263	2.14	5	4.07	.58
Transforming discipleship	263	2.57	5	4.02	.47
Authentic community	263	2.00	5	4.39	.50

The doctoral students who developed the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire at Asbury Theological Seminary used their instrument in four different denominations—the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), Western Canadian District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (WCDCMA), the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church (WOCUMC), and the General Association of Baptist Churches (GAGBC). Table 4.11 shows the results of their research. Their findings are based on a Likert scale with opposite poles from the ones used in this research (that is, 1 = Strongly Agree and 5 = Strongly Disagree).

Table 4.11. Church Health Characteristics Comparison between EPC, WDCMA, WOCUMC, and the GAGBC

	EPC (N=15)		WDCMA (N=28)		WOCUMC (N=45)		GAGBC (N=9)	
	M	Std. Dev	M	Std. Dev	M	Std. Dev	M	Std. Dev
Engaging worship	1.88	.66	1.94	.67	1.86	.58	1.86	.58
Passionate spirituality	1.95	.60	2.07	.58	2.01	.54	1.96	.53
Intentional evangelism	2.00	.50	2.04	.49	2.11	.48	2.09	.45
Mobilized laity	2.01	.58	2.14	.59	2.17	.56	2.26	.51
Functional structures	2.08	.68	2.01	.55	2.17	.56	2.29	.59
Empowering leadership	2.18	.63	2.19	.54	2.29	.54	2.44	.57
Transforming discipleship	2.21	.49	2.33	.47	2.36	.50	2.33	.46
Authentic community	2.29	.48	2.39	.40	2.34	.40	2.34	.42

Source: McKee 76.

Taking into account the reverse polarity of the Likert scale between the studies, both similarities and differences exist between the developers' findings and the findings of this study. As reported in McKee's dissertation, all four denominations had similar rankings in their top characteristics (76). The top three characteristics in that study were engaging worship, passionate spirituality, and intentional evangelism. Only one of these three made the top three in the present study, engaging worship, which was also this study's number one characteristic. As for the lowest areas, the developers' findings revealed the bottom three, or lowest characteristic, as authentic community, transforming discipleship, and empowering leadership. Here one more agreement exists, with two of these also making the bottom of the list in this research. Interestingly, the third, authentic community, was at the other end of the scale as the second highest characteristic in this study.

Church Health Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.12 provides the descriptive statistics for overall church health. The overall church health (OCH) score was obtained by calculating an individual score for each of the 263 respondents on the BCHQ and then averaging the scores for all the respondents from each church to arrive at an overall church health score.

Table 4.12. Overall Church Health Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
OCH*	30	204	257	229.90	12.70

* OCH = Overall Church Health (Aggregated Mean of BCHQ Responses)

Levels of Analysis

Before averaging the church leaders' individual responses to obtain a composite score for church health, levels of analysis calculations were performed to determine if aggregation was appropriate. Verifying the possibility of aggregation was necessary because the church health questionnaires used in this research measured church health at the *individual* level; each church leader's perception of church health was revealed in the BCHQ that person completed. Church health, however, is an *organizational/group* level concept. Averaging the individual perceptions of health to get an overall picture of church health was not statistically correct without first determining if aggregation was appropriate. This assessment was done using the L. R. James, R. G. Demaree, and G. Wolf's Rwg index of rater agreement to justify aggregation (90). Rwg Values falling between 0 and 1 and greater than .7 indicate sufficient interrater agreement to aggregate. Table 4.13 contains the Rwgs for the data set. Aggregating across levels from the individual level to the group/church level was justified because there was sufficient

interrater agreement to aggregate as determined by the Rwg indices, all of which were above .70 and between 0 and 1.

Table 4.13. Church Health Scores and Rwg's

Church	OCH Score*	Rwg's
1	239	0.98895
2	228	0.989203
3	207	0.986882
4	224	0.989322
5	242	0.992605
6	243	0.99064
7	240	0.992467
8	242	0.992342
9	223	0.983976
10	227	0.98332
11	204	0.979815
12	215	0.984106
13	210	0.982974
14	231	0.989101
15	240	0.992582
16	241	0.991382
17	232	0.986838
18	237	0.991786
19	231	0.995219
20	234	0.983593
21	204	0.990912
22	234	0.987002
23	227	0.993088
24	257	0.989752
25	239	0.989931
26	231	0.983403
27	238	0.98226
28	215	0.987174
29	234	0.98895
30	228	0.989203

* Aggregated mean of BCHQ responses

Church Health Levels

As was the case with the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire, no generalized scoring from previously collected BCHQ data was available, which meant no existing

standard measurement of “high” or “low” overall church health using the BCHQ was available for comparative purposes. Therefore, the level of overall church health evident in each church plant as expressed in this research should be considered “high” or “low” only in a relative sense, that is, in comparison to the other churches in the sample. Table 4.13 lists the comparative levels of overall church health within the thirty church sample. The overall church health score is comprised of an aggregated mean of the BCHQ responses. Any church in the sample may be compared relative to the rest of the churches and to the mean of the set of thirty churches (229.90). Any church scoring above the mean would have a higher than average view of church health relative to others in the data set, and any church scoring below the mean would have a lower than average view of church health relative to the others in the data set.

A clearer picture of perceived overall church health was obtained by dividing the church plants into three groups in Table 4.14. The relative measures “high,” “moderate,” and “low” were determined by choosing a cut point one-half a standard deviation (in this case 6) above and below the mean, and then categorizing the churches above and below those points as “high” or “low” and those in between as “moderate.” These cut points are arbitrary, but the result provides a more focused representation of how the leaders of these thirty churches perceive their church’s health.

Table 4.14. Relative Perceived Church Health in the Data Set

Perceived Church Health	Overall Church Health	Number of Churches	% of Churches
High	>236	11	37
Moderate	224-236	12	40
Low	<224	7	23

Correlation Analysis

The third question guiding this research concerns the relationship, if any, between self-leadership in church-planting pastors and the health of those churches: What correlation is evident between self-leadership and church health?

The main hypothesis of this study was that a positive correlation between the level of self-leadership in church-planting pastors and the level of church health in the churches might suggest a constructive relationship between pastor self-leadership and church health. Correlation analysis was used to determine the answer to the final research question. The analysis was first performed at the overall scale level. Single and multiple regression analyses were then performed to substantiate the finding of the correlation analysis. After that, correlation analysis was carried out at the subscale level to identify any significant correlations that might exist between the eight BCHQ subscales and the nine RSLQ subscales that may not have been reflected at the overall scale level.

The purpose of correlation analysis is to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables. In this particular study, correlation analysis was used to examine the strength of the relationship between the two variables “pastor self-leadership” (PSL) and “overall church health” (OCH). These associations were computed using a Pearson’s product moment coefficient. A Pearson’s product moment coefficient, more commonly known as simply a Pearson correlation, measures the degree of the relationship between two variables (strong or weak) and the direction of the relationship (positive or negative) using a statistic called a correlation coefficient usually denoted by a lower case “r.”

A Pearson’s coefficient can fluctuate from +1 to – 1. The plus or minus sign in front of the coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship between the two

variables. If the coefficient is positive, the two variables behave in tandem and in the same direction; that is, if one goes up, the other goes up and if one goes down, the other goes down. If the coefficient is negative, the two variables behave in tandem but in opposite directions: if one goes up, the other goes down. The closer the coefficient of correlation is to +1 or -1, the stronger the association is between the two variables. If the Pearson coefficient is exactly zero, no relationship exists between the two variables (“Interpreting Correlation Results”).

Table 4.15 displays the Pearson’s correlation coefficient between pastor self-leadership and church health along with some other correlations. None of the variables in the table are very strongly related to overall church health. The correlation coefficient between pastor self-leadership and overall church health is .18. Of the variables shown, pastor self-leadership has the strongest relationship. Also of note is the significant negative correlation between church age and pastor self-leadership.

Table 4.15. Overall Correlation Analysis

		ATT	CAGE	OCH	PAGE	PSL
Pearson Correlation	ATT	1.00	.507**	.011	.046	.145
	CAGE	.507**	1.00	-.158	.508**	-.407*
	OCH	.011	-.158	1.00	.137	.180
	PAGE	.046	.508	.137	1.00	-.344
	PSL	.145	-.407	.180	-.344	1.00
Sig. (2-tailed)	ATT	.	.004	.953	.809	.443
	CAGE	.004	.	.406	.004	.026
	OCH	.953	.406	.	.471	.340
	PAGE	.809	.004	.471	.	.063
	PSL	.443	.026	.340	.063	.
N	ATT	30	30	30	30	30
	CAGE	30	30	30	30	30
	OCH	30	30	30	30	30
	PAGE	30	30	30	30	30
	PSL	30	30	30	30	30

** . Cor. is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Cor. is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

ATT = Average Church Attendance CAGE = Church Age OCH = Overall Church Health (Aggregated Mean of BCHQ Responses) PAGE = Pastor Age PSL = Pastor Self-Leadership (RSLQ Score)

To verify the findings of the Pearson correlation, two additional analyses were executed. The first was a simple linear regression with pastor self-leadership as the predictor of overall church health. The second additional analysis was a multiple regression analysis including the other variables analyzed in the Pearson correlation in Table 4.15.

Linear regression analysis is the statistical analysis of the linear relationship of two variables. Simple linear regression is used to describe the relationship between two variables. The R Square value (r^2) gives the proportion of variance that can be predicted by the regression model using the data provided and is commonly reported as a percentage. The Adjusted R Square value gives the proportion of variance that can be predicted using the regression model on a new set of data. Multiple regression analysis is used to describe the relationship between one predicted variable and many predictor variables (“Interpreting Linear Regression”).

As shown in Tables 4.16 and 4.17, the results of these analyses support the findings of the Pearson correlation. A weak but statistically insignificant positive relationship was found between pastor self-leadership and overall church health. In the simple linear regression (see Table 4.16), pastor self-leadership explained an insignificant 3 percent of the variance and the adjusted R square was -.02. Adding the other variables in a multiple regression (see Table 4.17) also revealed little difference, with only the pastors’ age and church age even approaching significance.

Table 4.16. Simple Linear Regression Analysis**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.180 ^a	.033	-.002	12.7143

ANOVA^b

Model	Perceived Church Health	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	152.378	1	152.378	.943	.340
	Residual	4526.322	28	161.654		
	Total	4678.700	29			

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	214.440	17.112	1		152.378	.943
	PSL	.122	.126		28	161.654	

^a. Predictors: (Constant), PSL^b. Dependent Variable: OCH

Table 4.17. Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables Entered/Removed ^b			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	PSL ATT PAGE CAGE ^a		Enter

^a. All requested variables entered^b. Dependent variable: OCH**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.366 ^a	.134	-.005	12.7329

^a. Predictors: (Constant), PSL, ATT, PAGE, CAGE**ANOVA^b**

Model	Perceived Church Health	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	625.511	4	156.378	.965	.444 ^a
	Residual	4053.189	25	162.128		
	Total	4678.700	29			

^a. Predictors: (Constant), PSL, ATT, PAGE, CAGE^b. Dependent Variable: OCH**Coefficients^a**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	184.980	31.597	1	5.854	.000
	ATT	8.438E-03	.013	.165	.663	.513
	CAGE	-1.139	.904	-.373	-1.259	.220
	PAGE	.930	.578	.363	1.608	.120
	PSL	8.801E-02	.155	.130	.569	.575

^a. Predictors: (Constant), PSL

The final correlation analysis performed was at the subscale level to identify any significant correlations that might exist between the eight BCHQ sub-scales and the nine RSLQ subscales that may not have been evident when correlating at the overall scale level. This analysis is detailed in Appendix E.

The results of this last analysis revealed few cross correlations as would be expected since very little correlation was found between the overall scores on both instruments. The two subscales of the BCHQ that were most strongly correlated with the RSLQ subscales were empowering leadership and passionate spirituality.

Summary of Significant Findings

This study had several significant findings.

1. The pastors who have completed the Beeson Pastor program and planted churches are, for the most part, a homogenous group.
2. The churches planted by the Beeson pastors are more diverse than the group of pastors who planted them.
3. The church leaders of the churches planted by Beeson pastors, like the Beeson pastors themselves, are a fairly homogenous group, with one exception (gender).
4. The pastors scored highest in the self-leadership strategies of self-cueing and self-goal setting, and lowest in the areas of self-punishment and self-reward. The means of the scores in all the strategies were fairly high, with most at or near four on a five-point scale.
5. Although a fairly even spread was discovered among the pastors in the categories of “high,” “moderate,” and “low” self-leadership, the group is skewed towards high self-leadership with eleven churches in the “high” category and only eight in the

“low” category.

6. The churches’ health was perceived to be strongest in the areas of engaging worship along with a tie between authentic community and mobilized laity. The lowest perceived areas of church health were transforming discipleship and empowering leadership. Scores on all eight church health characteristics seemed relatively high, with all eight means above four on a five-point scale. Noticeable differences were observed in the relative strengths of the Beeson characteristics discovered in this study versus other research using the BCHQ.

7. Although a fairly even spread was revealed among the churches in the categories of “high,” “moderate,” and “low” health, the churches are skewed towards high church health with eleven churches in the “high” category and only seven in the “low” category.

8. Based upon the Pearson correlation coefficient of .18, no significant correlation appears to exist between pastor self-leadership and overall church health. This finding was substantiated by two regression analyses.

9. Correlation analysis between the eight subscales of the BCHQ and the nine subscales of the RSLQ indicated many of the subscales with no relationship at all. The two subscales of the BCHQ most strongly correlated with the RSLQ subscales were empowering leadership and passionate spirituality.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This study's primary objective was to determine if the presence of a particular trait in church-planting pastors—self-leadership—has an impact on church-plant health. A positive relationship between pastor self-leadership and overall church health was anticipated. This concluding chapter discusses the findings, conclusions, implications, and limitations of this study. The chapter also includes recommendations for future study and a concluding summary.

Finding 1: Homogeneity of the Pastors

The descriptive analysis in this study revealed that the church-planting pastors were a fairly homogenous group sharing several characteristics including age, gender, race, number of years of full-time ministry, and church-planting experience.

Several factors could be involved in the makeup of this group that may have resulted in these commonalities. One possible explanation is that the Beeson Pastor program is a highly selective program and those who have gone through the program were screened and selected in part based upon having certain characteristics deemed desirable by the leaders of the Beeson Pastor program. This screening could create a potential selection bias fostered by the seminary's criteria for choosing Beeson Pastor candidates. A second possible explanation is that although the group of pastors comes from nine different denominations, 63 percent are United Methodist pastors and over 90 percent share a Wesleyan heritage. Thus the homogeneity of the group could reflect, in part, that particular denomination's (or tradition's) preference for a certain type church-

planting pastor. As with the first possible explanation, selection bias could be introduced if such a preference by the United Methodist Church or Wesleyan tradition was involved.

The common characteristics of the pastors also raise issues beyond the scope of this research. For instance, the fact that 100 percent of the church-planting pastors were Caucasian could reflect a bias in the denominations involved for planting primarily Caucasian churches. The fact that only one pastor in the group was a female could possibly reflect yet another bias. The median age and years of ministry experience suggests something might be important about having church planters who are approximately 40 years old with a certain amount of ministry experience. Further research is necessary to determine if any of these suggestions have merit. Hopefully someday these ideas will be examined by other researchers. The relatively small sample size used in this study prohibits making any more specific conclusions with regards to these particular issues. The possibilities, however, are intriguing.

Finding 2: Diversity of the Church Plants

The descriptive analysis in this study revealed the churches planted by the Beeson pastors are a more diverse group than the pastors themselves. These differences include the diversity of locations in which the churches have been planted, the relative size of the churches in terms of average worship attendance, and the diversity of denominations represented, along with their accompanying diverse theological and ecclesial values.

The finding concerning the diversity of denominations of the churches and the differences in average worship attendance is not surprising. The diversity of denominations (nine were represented) can be explained by the unifying factor of the Beeson Pastor program. The Beeson Pastor program is a nationally respected program

drawing pastors from the full spectrum of denominations in the United States as well as abroad. The diversity of denominations could have both strengthened and weakened this research. As mentioned in finding one, the fact that 63 percent of the churches were United Methodist and over 90 percent share a Wesleyan tradition could introduce a bias and limit the applicability of the findings in this research. Conversely, the nine different denominations represented include some rather diverse groups (e.g., Lutheran, General Baptist, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Brethren). This diversity could be viewed as strengthening the study's findings across denominational lines.

The second finding concerning the broad range in average worship attendance is also not unexpected because average worship attendance is related to so many contextual factors in a church plant such as local demographics, style of worship, age of the church plant, service times, and more. Start-up worship attendance figures typically fluctuate widely in church plants, from low key first service launches to gigantic, well-orchestrated and funded launches.

Perhaps the most interesting finding concerning the churches has to do with the third diverse feature: the churches are located in such varied population centers ranging from under five thousand to over 200,000. The key to interpreting this aspect of diversity might be found in the pastors' responses indicating that all but four of the church plants are located in "growing" areas versus "plateaued" or "declining" areas (see Table 4.3 p. 100). Perhaps what is important is whether the area the church is planted in is growing, regardless of the actual current population of that locale.

The perception of the areas as growing also raises an interesting methodological issue in the study. Of the ten contextual questions asked on the RSLQ, only one was

subject to personal interpretation: the question concerning the condition of the community in which the church is located (growing and thriving, plateaued, declining). Recalling Bandura's concept of "reciprocal determinism" mentioned in the review of literature (humans are not only products of their environment; they also create it) further research would be interesting concerning the communities in which these church plants are located to see if they truly are "growing and thriving" or if this description is more a product of the pastors' selective perception. The potential humans have to redesign their own psychological world has an important impact on motivation, performance, and behavior. In that sense, perhaps what matters most is whether the pastor (and perhaps other leaders) *believes* the area in which the church is planted is growing, regardless of the actual condition. Interestingly, the church leaders were asked this same question in a slightly different fashion, and 89 percent of that group reported their churches were in "growing and thriving" communities.

Finding 3: Homogeneity of the Church Leaders

The church leaders responding to the BCHQ, like the church-planting pastors, are a fairly homogenous group (age, marital status, and giving) with the exception of gender (split almost fifty-fifty).

The uniformity of the church leaders was not a surprising finding. As mentioned earlier in the study, McGavran's "homogeneous unit" principle asserts that people prefer not to cross certain sociological barriers and instead tend to attract, and to be attracted to, people like themselves. A reasonable assumption, therefore, would be that the leaders of the church plants would share many things in common with the pastors who planted these churches and vice versa.

The main difference between the pastor and the church leader profiles was gender. The church leader group was almost perfectly divided along gender lines while the pastor group was almost exclusively male. While the gender inequity within the pastor group is regrettable, the gender diversity in the church leader group was welcomed and strengthens this research by removing a potential bias.

One aspect related to this finding that the pastors and church leaders are fairly alike, both within their own groups and when considered group to group, would be the suggestion that few of the church plants are targeting nontraditional populations. The church leaders are typically married, middle-aged, and give the traditional 10 percent of their income to their local church. This perception could be distorted, however, since the church health responses came from church leaders versus less involved members.

Finding 4: Pastors' Self-Leadership Strengths and Weaknesses

The church-planting pastors scored highest in self-leadership in the strategies of self-cueing and self-goal setting and lowest in self-punishment and self-reward.

The two highest rated areas, self-cueing and self-goal setting, is not an unexpected result because these two strategies are ones that even non-self-led persons might occasionally employ. Such incidental use of these strategies would result in a higher and more positive response rate to the subscale questions that asked specifically about these two strategies. Self-cueing involves using physical objects as reminders to focus attention on what needs to be done, for example using a “to do” list. Self-observation involves people determining when, why, and under what circumstances they engage in certain behaviors. Neither of these activities would be limited to just the highly self-led.

The interesting aspect of the findings on self-leadership strategies relates to the

lowest rated strategy—self-reward. Self-reward was not only the lowest strategy; it was the lowest by a substantial margin (1.02). The surprising aspect of this finding is that self-reward usually goes hand in hand with self-goal setting. In this instance, however, the two strategies are found at opposite ends of the spectrum. One explanation could be that pastors do not like to think of themselves as desiring self-reward because self-reward appears akin to self-indulgence and, therefore, seems “wrong” to them. After all, the Bible asserts that the believer’s reward is in heaven (Matt. 5:12; Heb. 11:13); therefore, the thought of rewards on earth for what God has called pastors to do might have seemed unacceptable to the pastors, hence, the low scores concerning that strategy.

The low scores in self-reward are even more understandable when considering the Wesleyan tradition over 90 percent of the pastors represent, which is deeply rooted in holiness. Furthermore, reflecting back on the theological understanding of being a pastor enunciated in this study, surely shepherding, servant-like, stewarding pastors would feel uncomfortable with the idea of rewarding themselves for bending their knees to wash the dust from the feet of those they serve. Such an idea goes against the grain of everything for which this group of pastors stands.

Finding 5: Relatively “High” Self-Leadership Ratings

After classifying the pastors as being either “high,” “moderate,” or “low” in self-leadership based upon an arbitrary cut point, a fairly even spread between the classifications was found. A skew does exist towards high self-leadership with eleven pastors in the “high” category and only eight in the “low” category.

The somewhat even distribution of the pastors in terms of self-leadership from “high” to “low” was not unexpected because this distribution was practically forced when

the group was divided using one-half the standard deviation above and below the mean as the cut point. What is interesting about this finding is the slight skew towards high self-leadership found in the group. This skew could suggest that the pastors in this group are actually “above average” in self-leadership.

As mentioned earlier in the study, the fact that these pastors have already been selected by someone to plant a church could mean that they have already exhibited “above average” self-leadership. If so, this previous recognition of potential self-leadership traits could be perceived as a selection bias. This particular bias is going to be difficult to avoid in any study using church-planting pastors, however. The only way to avoid such a bias would be to find a group of church planters who decided on their own to plant churches.

One other indicator that the group of pastors might be more highly self-led is the relatively high mean scores on all the strategies. All the mean scores are on the healthy end of the scale, at or approaching four (see Table 4.6 p. 103).

These results appear to confirm that the group may be fairly highly self-led, but the finding is ambiguous enough that such a statement would be difficult to defend.

Finding 6: Church Health Strengths and Weaknesses

The church leaders rated their churches as healthiest in engaging worship followed by a close tie between authentic community and mobilized laity. The lowest aspects of church health were transforming discipleship and empowering leadership.

This finding is not surprising. As for the stronger areas, church plants typically focus on the three areas of worship, building relationships, and getting as many people as possible involved in the ministry early on because these are necessary, foundational

building blocks to launching effectively. A church plant must have fairly engaging worship or visitors will not return. Likewise, if no one is friendly, if no sense of community exists, visitors are not as apt to return either. As for an emphasis on a mobilized laity, church planters and congregational leaders alike know that every available hand is needed to cover all the myriad tasks required to hold a worship service as a church plant. Church plants typically meet in schools, theaters, or other borrowed spaces, which means extra work setting up, taking down, and tackling many other tasks more established churches do not have to consider. Lay mobilization is not an option for a church plant.

The finding that lay mobilization is high on the agenda for these church planters also ties back to the understanding that self-leadership and collaboration are not conflicting concepts. The purpose of self-leadership is not to create superhero “do-it-all” leaders but is instead a method of mobilizing an army of others who are able to lead themselves. Theologically speaking this finding aligns with the notion of church-planting pastors as equippers. Pastors who believe strongly in lay mobilization, as this group appears to do, recognize that pastoral leadership is, at its core, about equipping and empowering others to do the work of the kingdom.

The weakest area, transforming discipleship, is not surprising because often in the beginning only one primary teacher is available to a church plant—the church-planting pastor. Discipleship programs begin to grow and flourish as new Christians mature or mature Christians join the church plant to share the teaching load.

The perceived weakness in empowering leadership is also not that surprising. Church-planting pastors, as “keepers of the vision,” are often reticent to loosen their grip

until sufficient momentum and direction has been achieved in a church plant. Leadership is often very centrist in church plants with the pastor and perhaps a small council or board doing most, if not all, of the leading. In time, as new believers mature and as the community begins to internalize the church's vision as their own, church-planting pastors and church boards will begin to empower others with the authority and power necessary to make the vision a reality.

Schein addresses the importance founding leadership has in establishing this momentum with regard to organizational culture: "Leadership is originally the source of beliefs and values that get a group moving in dealing with its internal and external problems" (26). Schein goes on to explain how leaders need to evolve with the organization: "Whereas founding leaders most need self-insight, midlife leaders most need the ability to decipher the surrounding culture and subcultures" (378).

As for the noticeable differences that were observed in the relative strengths of the Beeson characteristics discovered in this study versus the research conducted by the developers of the BCHQ instrument, these differences are perhaps in large part due to the fact that this current research was carried out with church plants while the other research used more established churches as subjects. Churches, like all living things, have life and health cycles (Dale 84). Characteristics of health present or absent may depend, at least in part, on what stage in the life cycle a church finds itself. As mentioned above, engaging worship, authentic community, and a mobilized laity may be more important for a new church plant than for a two hundred year old church. With the exception of authentic community, the two studies are fairly close. One possible explanation for this anomaly is that perhaps the people in the more established churches know one another so well that

conflict has erupted causing them to rate authentic community low. Meanwhile, the people in the newly established church plants do not know one another well enough for conflict to have arisen yet, and the momentum of the dream is so strong that authentic community is still a somewhat idealized value. Stated another way, perhaps the people in the newer churches are still on their “best behavior.”

Finding 7: Relatively “High” Church Health Ratings

As with self-leadership in the pastors’ group, after classifying the churches as being “high,” “moderate,” and “low” in church health, a fairly even spread between these classifications was found. A slight skew was observed towards “high” health, however, with eleven churches in the “high” category and only seven in the “low” category.

The interpretation of this finding is similar to the finding in the pastors’ group concerning self-leadership levels. The relatively even distribution from “high” to “low” was expected because the group was divided using one-half the standard deviation above and below the mean as a cut point, which should have resulted in three evenly distributed groups. The skew towards high church health disclosed by this division could suggest the churches in this group are actually “above average” in church health.

Another aspect of the analysis that revealed the churches might be healthier than average was the relatively high mean scores on all the church health characteristics. Without exception all of the characteristics had means greater than four on a five-point scale. These high means indicate the churches appear to be fairly healthy across the board (see Table 4.10 p. 107).

The possibility that these churches might be above average in health was anticipated in Chapter 1 where the point was made that since these churches are all

relatively new church plants they could be more attuned to current trends in church health than older, more established churches might be. Somewhat counterbalancing this rationale for the possibility of higher than normal health for these church plants is a finding of the group who developed the BCHQ. In their study they discovered that all eight characteristics were highest within churches when the pastor had served ten to fifteen years while the lowest health was observed when the senior pastor had served seven to ten years (McKee 106). This finding could represent good news to the churches in this study as it could infer that the best years of health for these churches are still to come.

Finding 8: Insignificant PSL to OCH Correlation

Research question number three was answered by the last two findings in this study, which used correlation analysis to examine the strength of the relationship between the two variables “pastor self-leadership” (PSL) and “overall church health” (OCH). A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a statistically insignificant correlation of .18. Two forms of regression analysis were used to confirm this finding.

The answer to research question number three concerning the relationship between pastor self-leadership and church health is that a positive relationship does exist, but the correlation is not a statistically significant one. While this finding was not the anticipated outcome, a few aspects of this result are worth discussing.

First, on the positive side, a correlation was found between pastor self-leadership and overall church health, and the correlation was in the predicted direction (positive). The correlation could have been zero, which would have indicated no correlation exists, or, worse yet, a negative number, which would have indicated a potential negative impact

of pastor self-leadership upon church health.

Another positive aspect of this finding is that pastor self-leadership was more strongly correlated to church health than any of the other contextual variables measured including average church attendance, church age, and pastor age. Pastor self-leadership had the strongest relationship to church health among these other variables, even though the relationship was not that strong.

One very interesting finding in the correlations was the negative correlation between church age, pastor age, and pastor self leadership. The negative correlation between pastor self-leadership and church age ($-.407$) could suggest that pastor self-leadership is more important to the health of newly planted churches (where the need for pastor self-leadership is greatest) than at older, more established church plants, where the need for pastor self-leadership is not as great. The negative correlation could also suggest that church-planting pastors perhaps lose their focus over time, and their sense of urgency diminishes once the church plant becomes more established.

On the negative side, the positive correlation found between pastor self-leadership and church health was statistically insignificant. Another negative is that the positive correlation could also be due to chance, as the sample was relatively small. The correlation could also be due to some systematic error factor such as social desirability. Since church health and self-leadership are both generally considered “good” things, the church leaders may have been tempted to rate their churches as healthy and the pastors to rate themselves as self-leaders, thus introducing bias. This social desirability bias could have caused some degree of correlation. Self-reporting may have introduced measurement errors as well.

The simple linear regression analysis substantiated the weak positive Pearson correlation finding. Adding the other variables in a multiple regression revealed a slight relationship between the pastor's age and church age. This finding, that longer established churches with correspondingly older pastors are likely to be healthier, seems related to the finding of the BCHQ developers that longer established churches with longer tenured (and hence older) pastors tend to be healthier (McKee 106). The relationship between church age, pastor's age and tenure, and church health warrants further investigation by other researchers.

Finding 9: Subscale Correlation Findings

In an effort to dig deeper, correlation analysis was carried out between the eight subscales of the BCHQ (the eight characteristics) and the nine subscales of the RSLQ (the nine strategies).

As was expected after the results of the overall analysis, the subscale analysis revealed very few cross-scale correlations. Few cross-scale correlations were expected since the overall analysis disclosed so little correlation.

The most interesting aspect of the subscale analysis was the finding that of all the subscales, the two subscales of the BCHQ most strongly related to the RSLQ subscales were empowering leadership and passionate spirituality. The correlations observed were all moderate ones, but only three correlations were found at .4 or higher across both the questionnaires for all seventeen of the subscales, and all three of these correlations were found in these two subscales (see Appendix E). The average correlations were also much higher across these two subscales than any of the others. In fact, much of the overall .18 correlation between pastor self-leadership and overall church health was found in the

relationship between these two subscales. Many of the other subscales show no relationship at all. The correlations found still do not show a significant relationship between pastor self-leadership and overall church health, but the stronger relationship between these subscales does carry some potential implications.

For example, the subscale analysis could suggest that pastor self-leadership has the strongest impact on overall church health in these two areas. The bulk of the overall correlation appearing in these two subscales suggests that these are two areas of church health that could most directly be affected by a self-leading pastor. Perhaps the explanation for this finding is that many of the other church health items relate to programmatic aspects of the church, to the respondents themselves, or to structural features of the church. Few of these are as easily influenced by the pastor as the two subscale characteristics that came out the highest. Reading the scale items for empowering leadership and passionate spirituality (see Appendix D), these two subscales of health concern the extent to which effective leadership exists and the extent to which a healthy spiritual atmosphere is being created in the church. Both of these can, and are, more directly influenced by the pastor than most of the other subscales. The fact that these two subscales are where the majority of the significant cross-scale correlations were located, therefore, seems logical.

Interestingly, empowering leadership came out rated low relative to the other BCHQ subscales on the overall analysis. This apparent incongruence is explained by the difference in the two kinds of measurement involved, however. One measurement had to do with the strength of a given subscale relative to other subscales as indicators of church health. The other measurement (subscale analysis) gauged the *strength of correlation*

between the health subscales and self-leadership (using the RSLQ subscales). Thus, when discussing the relative strengths or weaknesses of the church health characteristics discovered in the overall analysis of church health (see Table 4.10 p. 107), these findings of strength or weakness refer to church health relative to the other characteristics.

Strength of correlation is another matter. No matter how strong or weak a given BCHQ subscale is when compared to the other BCHQ subscales, that same subscale could still have a stronger or weaker correlation with an RSLQ subscale. Thus, the possibility exists that two of the weaker church health indicators (compared to other church health subscales) could be more or less related (stronger or weaker correlation) with the RSLQ subscales. In fact, that situation is exactly what occurred in this research.

The subscale analysis finding suggests that pastor self-leadership manifests itself most through the church health subscales of empowering leadership and passionate spirituality. In this sample these are the church health areas where the pastors' self-leadership characteristics have the most impact on church health.

The findings concerning *empowering leadership* seem especially helpful. As mentioned in finding 6, the churches in this study were relatively weak in empowering leadership. This weakness may be due to the pastors' reticence to share their leadership early on in the process out of fear that the church might take a direction other than the one the pastor believes is God's vision for the church. The fact that many church plants experience a third-year blowup possibly confirms this fear. Malphurs believes the ideal for church-planting pastors is the leader who strikes a balance between the two gifts of leadership and management (107). Leaders who are adept at developing visions and strategies who can then effectively delegate, empower, and bring order to the complex set

of variables involved in leading a church plant are most likely to be successful (106). Stated another way, power can be shared effectively without creating authoritarian tyrants or power brokers. The key to effectual empowerment may be to ground that empowerment sufficiently in the vision and values of the founder(s) so that the danger of individuals running off in different directions is greatly lessened. This grounding will not happen automatically, however. As Schein points out, founding leaders must be systematic in sharing their vision and values with their organization (220). What is required is a willingness to be open about the vision, a deep passion for that vision, finding others who share the vision, and then employing strong socialization practices to reinforce and perpetuate the vision (225). Schein suggests founding leaders embed the assumptions they hold and thereby create culture in several ways, including deliberate modeling, teaching and coaching by what they pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis, and through many other primary and secondary ways (231).

The negative correlation between pastor self-leadership and church age discovered in finding 8 implies that pastor self-leadership is more important to the health of newly planted churches than to older, more established churches. When taken together, these three findings—that the churches in this study were relatively weak in empowering leadership, that self-leadership appears to be more important in newly planted churches, and that empowering leadership is one of the most important ways pastor self-leadership can impact church health—appear to imply that pastors should look for ways to share leadership early on in the church-planting process as a function of self-leadership. As pointed out earlier, Manz contends that Jesus' leadership was essentially empowering leadership from a spiritual center (Leadership Wisdom of Jesus 9). Therefore, one of the

primary ways for church-planting pastors to express their self-leadership, especially early on, is to be intentional at facilitating and unleashing the leadership gifts and abilities of others as the vision and values of the founder(s) are grounded in those being empowered.

In the final analysis, pastor self-leadership appears to be only one of many factors that influence a church leader's perception of church health as measured by the BCHQ. Self-leadership is important for church planters, especially at the early stages of the planting process and especially in the health areas of empowering leadership and passionate spirituality. Self-leadership is apparently only one of many factors that lead to overall church health in the long run. In the meantime, traits in church-planting pastors more important than self-leadership that impact church health remain to be discovered (should they exist).

Implications of Findings

The implications of this study lend partial support for an increasing awareness and emphasis on the importance of self-leadership in church-planting pastors. The findings also appear to indicate an important distinction between self-leadership in "the world" and self-leadership in the Church. When this study began, a substantial positive correlation between church-planting pastor self-leadership and church plant health was anticipated. If such a relationship had been found, the implication would be that self-leadership aptitude tests could be given to potential church-planting pastors to help identify those pastors most likely to plant healthy churches. In addition, self-leadership training courses could have been developed for potential and existing church-planting pastors to strengthen self-leadership skills, which would, in turn, strengthen the church plants' health.

Even though the relationship between self-leadership and church health turned out to be statistically insignificant, such a finding does *not* mean self-leadership traits in church-planting pastors are not important. As has been demonstrated, self-leadership does have a positive, though fairly insignificant, effect on church health. As such, totally ignoring self-leadership when selecting or training a church planter would be a mistake. What this relatively insignificant finding may imply, instead, is that a difference exists in self-leadership from a purely secular versus a spiritual perspective.

Assuming “spiritual” self-leadership is different than “secular” self-leadership may explain why the correlation between pastor self-leadership and church health was not as significant as, say, business owner self-leadership and the health of that business. In Romans 12:2 Paul urges the believers in Rome not to be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. The Greek word for “transformed” used in this verse is the same word found in the transfiguration accounts, *metamorphoo*. The term connotes a divine process of change that occurs by the power of the Holy Spirit within the believer, which is subsequently made visible to the world. The kind of transformation Paul suggests here, and that Jesus underwent at the transfiguration, is something radically different than merely willing oneself to be different or better. This change is something that occurs from the inside out and is something God alone can make happen. The Holy Spirit brings about this change with and through the cooperation of the person involved. Because the person’s thinking is changed (internal change), changed behavior follows (external change). As Paul points out, this newness of life is the perfect antidote for resisting the pressure of the world, which constantly does its best to mold people to its agenda.

In other words, one possible explanation for the lower than expected correlation between pastor self-leadership and church health might be that Manz's ideas on which this research relied so heavily do not translate that easily or well into the church because they tend to understate God's role in the hoped-for transformation of the leader. Rethinking Manz from this perspective suggests that anyone willing to read and understand what he offers and then to employ the strategies he suggests in their endeavors can and will be a better self-leader. The *believer*, however, or more specifically the *pastor* who wishes to be more effective for God and to have that increased effectiveness benefit the health of his or her church, must rely on God and work in partnership with his Spirit through prayer and other spiritual disciplines in order to achieve the kind of self-effectiveness in the church Manz proposes and encourages.

In addition to its failure to translate smoothly into the church at the individual leader level, Manz's theory also stumbles at the institutional level because his conceptualization does not take into account the mystery of God's *kairos*. As mentioned early in this study, in Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build my church" (NIV). Jesus never said, "I will build this corporation," or "I will build this airline, army, or school." Matthew 16:18 stands as a healthy reminder that the work of establishing and growing a healthy church is first and foremost God's work, and God will do so in his own time and in the ways he sees fit. The church stands apart from all other institutions in this regard. The failure of Manz's ideas to translate seamlessly into the church does not mean church plants and church planters cannot benefit from the self-leadership strategies Manz proposes, however. Despite the fact that ultimately church planting success or failure depends on God's *kairos*, "hard, bold plans to carry out God's unswerving purpose that

all people be reached with the gospel are demanded” (McGavran Understanding Church Growth 194).

Citing Ephesians 4:15-16, Lee provides a healthy reminder that the church is always more than a mere human organization. The church is unique; it is Christ’s body and owes its life and existence to the Holy Spirit (64). The church is both human *and* divine. While the church is a human society that works through social and institutional structures, at its deepest levels it remains a community of faith, dependent upon the call, presence, and mystery of God’s Spirit (69).

Contributions to Research Methodology

This study does contribute to research methodology. First of all, this is the first time the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire has been used in the Church. This instrument, while standardized, is still being modified in order to arrive at a more complete and accurate measure of self-leadership. Use of the instrument in another field (in this case the Church) and the resultant data the questionnaire generated can and should be used as feedback to help make the tool better. Those who continue to refine the RSLQ instrument can use this data and findings of this research to help evaluate how accurately the questionnaire measured self-leadership in concrete ways.

The use of the Beeson Church Health Questionnaire also adds to the growing body of data received using that instrument as well. Hopefully the next researcher who uses either of the two questionnaires used in this study will benefit by what has been learned in this research about the complex mixture of factors that make up church health and pastor self-leadership.

Limitations and Weaknesses

This study was limited by design to graduates of the Beeson Pastor program who have planted a church. The limitation of using the Beeson Pastor group means the findings of this study may not be applicable in a more generalized setting. The applicability of the findings of this study remains unclear and limited at best to Beeson pastors who plant churches.

The validity of the study is further limited by the lack of a generally accepted benchmark of either church health or effective self-leadership. All the results of this study are relative; this research is incapable of determining to what degree the pastors in this study are self-led compared to church-planting pastors as a whole. The entire group of pastors could possibly be more highly self-led than the average church planter as was suggested by the higher number of pastors that were rated “high” versus “low” in this study and by the relatively high scoring (most means on both questionnaires were at or above four on the health characteristics and self-leadership strategies). The same applies for the question of church health. With no universal benchmark for church health, all the rankings given in this study are relative. This lack of a standard limits the validity of the study.

The primary weakness of the study was the methodological weakness of having a relatively small sample size. First of all, only thirty churches were involved in the study, which is a relatively small number. Second, only 263 church leader responses were completed and returned out of the 450 sent (a 58 percent return). The relatively small number of responses to the BCHQ reduces the probability that perceptions of church health were accurately portrayed.

Another weakness encountered was the method used to measure church health. Distributing questionnaires exclusively to church leaders limited perceptions of church health to only those who were more involved in the churches and left out less involved members' perspectives. Limiting church health responses to leaders only meant running the risk that the leaders were more likely to be strongly attached to the church-planting pastor, which could introduce significant bias. Compounding this risk was the method by which questionnaires were distributed. Each of the pastors was asked to find up to fifteen leaders to complete and return a questionnaire. No controls were placed on who the pastor actually chose to complete the questionnaires, and no attempt was made to monitor how the pastors explained the study to potential respondents. In the end, the method chosen to collect church health data was deemed acceptable, though far from perfect.

Unexpected Findings

The main unexpected finding of this research was the relatively small impact self-leadership in church-planting pastors appears to have on church health. While the research reveals that pastor self-leadership has a positive relationship to church health, the extent appears to be very limited. This unexpected result in no way detracts from the value of the study, however. Instead the result reveals one factor, insignificant as it may be, among many, that impacts church health in church plants.

The subscale analysis findings concerning self-leadership as it relates to empowering leadership and passionate spirituality was also unexpected but welcomed.

Recommendations for Further Study

Many questions remain unanswered by this study, and further exploration of both self-leadership in the church and church health is welcomed and needed. As is often the

case when doing research, more questions have perhaps been raised than have been answered. One area ripe with possibility concerns the question of which characteristics or personal traits of a church-planting pastor have the greatest impact on church health. This research selected one such feature—self-leadership—and demonstrated that particular characteristic's relatively minor role in church health. While this research narrowed the possibilities with its findings, the question of which qualities in a church-planting pastor are most important with regard to church health remains.

An even broader study, but one certainly worth the effort, would be to research which factors other than the pastor are most critical in overall church health in church plants. This research revealed a few variables that are apparently not as important as pastor self-leadership—average church attendance, church age, and pastor's age, but many other factors remain to be explored.

Finally, this study concerning self-leadership in church-planting pastors in no way exhausts what can be learned about the impact of self-leadership in the Church. Further research on self-leadership between pastors and church boards, within church staffs and ministry teams, the role of self-leadership in preaching, or the role of self-leadership in discipleship in the church, and many other important applications come to mind that are worthy of further research. In short, self-leadership appears to offer many potential benefits to individual pastors and to the Church as a whole and is, therefore, a concept worthy of further study and research.

Summary and Conclusion

Two broad statements sum up what has been discovered in this study. First, the world in which the Church operates is one where everything is related; therefore,

effective pastor leadership and optimal church health appear to have more to do with the proper balance and interplay between all the different systems involved than with some simplistic “one size fits all” solution.

This first statement has to do with the systemic nature of the world in which the Church finds itself. The world is comprised of one giant system. None of life is truly lived in a vacuum or in isolation. Instead, pastoral leadership and church health, like everything else, is part of a vast, complex, web of relationships between multiple sets of systems and subsystems. Thankfully, Christianity’s trinitarian faith models this interplay of relationships and affirms it as “good.” One implication of the systemic nature of the Church and the world is that in the end, some great ideas and concepts come along and shake the entire system to its foundations while others barely cause a ripple (like pastoral self-leadership, as was proved in this study). This study may have been a “minor tremor” and not a full-scale earthquake, but regardless, the study clarified thinking concerning the relationship between pastor self-leadership and church health and, therefore, was worth the effort.

The second broad statement of summation is this: Leadership and church health are both as much a mystery as they are an art or a science; both are extremely complex, multivariate subjects.

Perhaps the answers for which the Church longs—such as what makes one church healthy and another diseased, and what makes one leader successful and another fail—are mysteries, forever hidden in God. Even if the answers the Church seeks are hidden in God, the Church and its leaders must never stop trying to answer these important questions. Each discovery brings the Church closer to the truths being sought. In God’s

sovereignty he may forever keep the answers for which the Church longs to himself. Still, however, the Church and the world it inhabits hungers for good leadership and desperately needs strong leaders and healthy churches. This deep hunger and powerful need means pastors, scholars, academicians, and others must continue the quest to understand what is required to plant and lead healthy churches as a pastor and what the exact nature of optimal church health really is.

In one sense the results of this study are disappointing, perhaps even frightful, because this research has demonstrated that pastors can be highly self-led—they can be efficient, motivated, competent and highly proficient in their leading—but still fail to give a congregation what it needs most at any given time to ensure optimal church health.

The answer concerning which keys will unlock the door of understanding to effective pastoral leadership and excellent church health in church plants remains elusive. Perhaps the deeper question is whether or not such a key exists. If everything is related as was asserted in the first summary statement above, the search for one, or even two or three, “keys” to effective church-planting pastor leadership or church health may be flawed from the beginning.

Perhaps the Church should learn anew the lessons of the great Church leaders of the past like St. Augustine, who hold that “understanding is the reward of faith.” The solutions needed just might be found in a book by helpful practitioners like Drucker, or Burns, or Steinke. Another option for the Church to consider, however, is whether these answers will come primarily through prayer and belief in God above, “from whom all good gifts come” (Jas. 1:17, NIV).

The critical issue before the Church is whether Christ’s bride will choose to

depend on God's revelation or the Church and academy's best reasoning and resources to respond to the questions she seeks to answer. The best response to this dilemma was touched upon earlier in this study; the best response is "both." Effective pastors and healthy churches of the twenty-first century and beyond must continue to rely on God's Spirit, while at the same time striving to make the most of their gifts, graces, natural abilities, and acquired skills. Leaders must continue to cast vision, identify core values, persevere with integrity, generate momentum, and equip and empower others. Leaders must also take the time and make the effort to listen to the still, small voice from above, and, in so doing, never stray far from the only reliable fount of wisdom and power.

APPENDIX A

REVISED SELF-LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read each of the following items carefully and try to decide how true the statement is in describing you by using the scale provided and writing the appropriate number in the box to the right of each statement.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>NOT AT ALL ACCURATE</i>	<i>SOMEWHAT ACCURATE</i>	<i>A LITTLE ACCURATE</i>	<i>MOSTLY ACCURATE</i>	<i>COMPLETELY ACCURATE</i>

1. I use my imagination to picture myself performing well on important tasks.
2. I establish specific goals for my own performance.
3. Sometimes I find I'm talking to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me deal with difficult problems I face.
4. When I do an assignment especially well, I like to treat myself to some thing or activity I especially enjoy.
5. I think about my own beliefs and assumptions whenever I encounter a difficult situation.
6. I tend to get down on myself in my mind when I have performed poorly.
7. I make a point to keep track of how well I'm doing at work (school).....
8. I focus my thinking on the pleasant rather than the unpleasant aspects of my job (school) activities.....
9. I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish.
10. I visualize myself successfully performing a task before I do it.
11. I consciously have goals in mind for my work efforts.
12. Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through difficult situations.
13. When I do something well, I reward myself with a special event such as a good dinner, movie, shopping trip, etc.
14. I try to mentally evaluate the accuracy of my own beliefs about situations I am having problems with.....
15. I tend to be tough on myself in my thinking when I have not done well on a task.
16. I usually am aware of how well I'm doing as I perform an activity.
17. I try to surround myself with objects and people that bring out my desirable behaviors.
18. I use concrete reminders (e.g., notes and lists) to help me focus on things I need to accomplish. ...
19. Sometimes I picture in my mind a successful performance before I actually do a task.....

1	2	3	4	5
<i>NOT AT ALL ACCURATE</i>	<i>SOMEWHAT ACCURATE</i>	<i>A LITTLE ACCURATE</i>	<i>MOSTLY ACCURATE</i>	<i>COMPLETELY ACCURATE</i>

20. I work toward specific goals I have set for myself. ☐
21. When I'm in difficult situations I will sometimes talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me get through it. ☐
22. When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like. ☐
23. I openly articulate and evaluate my own assumptions when I have a disagreement with someone else. ☐
24. I feel guilt when I perform a task poorly. ☐
25. I pay attention to how well I'm doing in my work. ☐
26. When I have a choice, I try to do my work in ways that I enjoy rather than just trying to get it over with. ☐
27. I purposefully visualize myself overcoming the challenges I face. ☐
28. I think about the goals that I intend to achieve in the future. ☐
29. I think about and evaluate the beliefs and assumptions I hold. ☐
30. I sometimes openly express displeasure with myself when I have not done well. ☐
31. I keep track of my progress on projects I'm working on. ☐
32. I seek out activities in my work that I enjoy doing. ☐
33. I often mentally rehearse the way I plan to deal with a challenge before I actually face the challenge. ☐
34. I write specific goals for my own performance. ☐
35. I find my own favorite ways to get things done. ☐

CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

[To be answered by the pastor of the church]

CONCERNING YOU, THE PASTOR

1. Your Name _____
2. Your Age _____
3. Your Gender: ____Male ____Female
4. Your Race: **(Check one)**
 ____ White/Caucasian ____ Black/African American ____ Hispanic ____ Native American ____ Other

5. How long have you been in fulltime pastoral ministry?
 _____0-2 yrs. _____3-6 yrs. _____7-10 yrs. _____11 yrs. or more
6. Are you the church-planter of this church? _____Yes _____ No
7. How many other churches have you planted besides this one? **(Check one)**
 _____0 _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4 _____5 or more

CONCERNING YOUR CHURCH

1. What is the name of your church?

2. What year was this church planted? _____
3. What denomination is this church? _____
4. Has this church held its first public worship service? _____Yes _____ No
5. What is the name of the town and state your church is located in? _____
6. Facilities: Owned or not and age: **(Check one)**
 _____ No owned church facility (meeting in a rented or borrowed space)
 If owned or built, what is the age of your facility? ____ 0-2 yrs. ____3-6 yrs. ____7-10 yrs. ____11 yrs. or more
7. How large is the population within 20 minutes of your church **(Check one)**
 _____ Under 5,000 _____5,000-15,000 _____15,000-50,000 _____ 50,000-200,000 _____200,000+
8. Describe the community your church is located in? **(Check as many as apply)**
 ____ Growing and thriving ____Plateaued ____Declining ____Urban ____Suburban ____Rural
9. How many full or part-time paid staff are there in your church besides yourself? **(Check one)**
 _____0 _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4 _____5 or more
10. Describe the style of worship at your church **(Check one)**
 _____Traditional _____Contemporary _____Blend/Mix of Traditional and Contemporary

ANNUAL STATISTICAL DATA

Year	Average Weekly Worship Attendance	Baptisms	Conversions
1999			
2000			
2001			
2002			
2003			

Thank you so very much!
*Please mail this completed questionnaire in the
 self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.*

APPENDIX B

REVISED SELF-LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE SCALE ITEMS

Self-Goal Setting

- 2. I establish specific goals for my own performance.
- 11. I consciously have goals in mind for my work efforts.
- 20. I work toward specific goals I have set for myself.
- 28. I think about the goals I that intend to achieve in the future.
- 34. I write specific goals for my own performance.

Self-Reward

- 4. When I do an assignment especially well, I like to treat myself to some thing or activity I especially enjoy.
- 13. When I do something well, I reward myself with a special event such as a good dinner, movie, shopping trip, etc
- 22. When I have successfully completed a task, I often reward myself with something I like.

Self-Punishment

- 6. I tend to get down on myself in my mind when I have performed poorly.
- 15. I tend to be tough on myself in my thinking when I have not done well on a task.
- 24. I feel guilt when I perform a task poorly.
- 30. I sometimes openly express displeasure with myself when I have not done well.

Self-Observation

- 7. I make a point to keep track of how well I'm doing at work (school).
- 16. I usually am aware of how well I'm doing as I perform an activity.
- 25. I pay attention to how well I'm doing in my work.
- 31. I keep track of my progress on projects I'm working on.

Self-Cueing

- 9. I use written notes to remind myself of what I need to accomplish.
- 18. I use concrete reminders (e.g., notes and lists) to help me focus on things I need to accomplish.

Focusing Thoughts on Natural Rewards

- 8. I focus my thinking on the pleasant rather than the unpleasant aspects of my job (school) activities.
- 17. I try to surround myself with objects and people that bring out my desirable behaviors.
- 26. When I have a choice, I try to do my work in ways that I enjoy rather than just trying to get it over with.
- 32. I seek out activities in my work that I enjoy doing.
- 35. I find my own favorite ways to get things done.

Visualizing Successful Performance

- 1. I use my imagination to picture myself performing well on important tasks.
- 10. I visualize myself successfully performing a task before I do it.
- 19. Sometimes I picture in my mind a successful performance before I actually do a task.
- 27. I purposefully visualize myself overcoming the challenges I face.
- 33. I often mentally rehearse the way I plan to deal with a challenge before I actually face the challenge.

Self-Talk

- 3. Sometimes I find I'm talking to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me deal with difficult problems I face.
- 12. Sometimes I talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to work through difficult situations.
- 21. When I'm in difficult situations I will sometimes talk to myself (out loud or in my head) to help me get through it.

Evaluating Beliefs and Assumptions

- 5. I think about my own beliefs and assumptions whenever I encounter a difficult situation.
- 14. I try to mentally evaluate the accuracy of my own beliefs about situations I am having problems with.
- 23. I openly articulate and evaluate my own assumptions when I have a disagreement with someone else.
- 29. I think about and evaluate the beliefs and assumptions I hold.

APPENDIX C

BEESON CHURCH HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Listed below are 54 statements that describe characteristics of our church and your relationship to it followed by 15 personal questions. Please rate your perceptions of the strength of each characteristic by using the scale provided and writing the appropriate number in the box to the right of the statement. Your responses will be treated confidentially, and your participation will help our church leaders be better informed as we seek to discern future strategic initiatives for our church.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY DISAGREE</i>	<i>NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY AGREE</i>	<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>

1. I enjoy getting together with other people from my church outside of church events..... ☐
2. The leaders of our church seem rather defensive..... ☐
3. I find the sermons convicting, challenging, and encouraging in my walk with God..... ☐
4. Our church has a very clear purpose and well-defined values..... ☐
5. My local church actively reaches out to its neighborhood through spiritual and community service..... ☐
6. My church affirms me in my ministry tasks..... ☐
7. I regularly practice the spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation)..... ☐
8. I have a close enough relationship with several people in my church that I can discuss my deepest concerns with them..... ☐
9. Our church is led by individual(s) who articulate vision and achieve results..... ☐
10. I find the worship services spiritually inspiring..... ☐
11. Our church clearly communicates our mission statement..... ☐
12. Prayer is the highlight of the worship service..... ☐
13. Tithing is a priority in my life..... ☐
14. New ministry ideas are normally appreciated and encouraged..... ☐
15. The music in the church services helps me worship God..... ☐
16. I do not know my church's plans and direction for the years ahead..... ☐
17. I am actively involved in a ministry of this church..... ☐
18. Our church relies upon the power and presence of God to accomplish ministry..... ☐
19. My prayer life reflects a deep dependence on God concerning the practical aspects of life..... ☐

1	2	3	4	5
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY DISAGREE</i>	<i>NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY AGREE</i>	<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>

20. I have experienced a lot of joy and laughter in our church..... ☐
21. There are few training opportunities in our church..... ☐
22. The worship at this church is so inspiring that I would like to invite my friends..... ☐
23. The church teaches that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven..... ☐
24. I do not know my spiritual gift(s)..... ☐
25. There is a sense of expectation surrounding our church..... ☐
26. Our church has a clear process that helps develop people's spiritual gifts..... ☐
27. I experience deep, honest relationships with a few other people in my church..... ☐
28. The lay people of our church receive frequent training..... ☐
29. Excellence is an important value in how we accomplish ministry..... ☐
30. The church shows the love of Christ in practical ways..... ☐
31. I enjoy the tasks I do in the church..... ☐
32. There is an atmosphere of generosity within our church..... ☐
33. I would describe my personal spiritual life as growing..... ☐
34. The love and acceptance I have experienced inspires me to invite others to my church..... ☐
35. I look forward to attending worship services at this church..... ☐
36. I have confidence in the management and spending of our church's financial resources..... ☐
37. In our church the importance of sharing Christ is often discussed..... ☐
38. I feel that my role in the church is very important..... ☐
39. Our church emphasizes the person and presence of the Holy Spirit..... ☐
40. My church needs to place more emphasis on the power of prayer..... ☐
41. The leaders and members of our church enjoy and trust one another..... ☐
42. When I leave a worship service, I feel like I have "connected" with other worshippers..... ☐
43. My church is open to changes that would increase our ability to reach and disciple people..... ☐
44. Our church has very few programs that appeal to non-Christians..... ☐
45. I share my faith with non-believing family and friends..... ☐

1	2	3	4	5
<i>STRONGLY DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY DISAGREE</i>	<i>NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE</i>	<i>MODERATELY AGREE</i>	<i>STRONGLY AGREE</i>

46. This church operates through the power and presence of God..... ☐
47. I rarely consult God's word to find answers to life's issues..... ☐
48. The leaders of our church seem to be available when needed..... ☐
49. We have an effective and efficient decision-making process in my church..... ☐
50. When I leave a worship service, I feel I have had a meaningful experience with God..... ☐
51. People rarely come to know Jesus Christ as their savior in our church..... ☐
52. The teaching ministry of this church encourages me to be involved in ministry..... ☐
53. I currently enjoy a greater intimacy with God than at any other time in my life..... ☐
54. I believe that interpersonal conflict or misconduct is dealt with appropriately and in a biblical manner..... ☐

PERSONAL INFORMATION

55. Your Age..... ☐
56. Gender
1. Female..... ☐
2. Male..... ☐
57. Marital Status
1. Single..... ☐
2. Married..... ☐
3. Widowed..... ☐
4. Other: _____ ☐
58. Number of Children..... ☐
59. The following are a regular part of my spiritual life. **Check all that apply**
1. Bible Study..... ☐
2. Devotional times..... ☐
3. Family devotional time..... ☐
4. Ministry..... ☐

5. Prayer..... ☐
6. Sharing my faith with others..... ☐
7. Other spiritual disciplines..... ☐
60. Which best describes your current involvement with the local church you attend most? **Check one.**
1. Attendee only..... ☐
2. Leadership board member..... ☐
3. Ministry leader/teacher..... ☐
4. Pastoral Staff..... ☐
61. Are you a member of this church?
1. Yes..... ☐
2. No..... ☐
62. Approximately how many years have you been involved with this particular church?..... ☐
63. Which of the following best describes how often you attend weekend worship services? **Check one.**
1. Visitor..... ☐
2. 1-2 times a month..... ☐
3. 3 or more times a month..... ☐
64. In the past year, what percentage of your total income from all sources did you give to your local church (approximately)?..... ☐
65. Our current staff is _____ for the ministries of our church. **Check one.**
1. Understaffed..... ☐
2. Adequate..... ☐
3. Overstaffed..... ☐
66. I actively participate in a small group or ministry team
1. Yes..... ☐
2. No..... ☐
67. How would you describe the community within which your church is located? **Check one.**
1. Growing and thriving..... ☐
2. Plateaued..... ☐
3. Declining..... ☐

68. The size of our church facility is adequate for our current ministries

- 1. Yes..... ☐
- 2. No..... ☐

69. I would describe my personal spiritual life as

- 1. Growing ☐
- 2. Plateaued..... ☐
- 3. Declining..... ☐

Thank you very much!
*Please mail this completed questionnaire in the
self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.*

APPENDIX D

BEESON CHURCH HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE SCALE ITEMS

Authentic Community

1. I enjoy getting together with other people from my church outside of church events.
8. I have a close enough relationship with several people in my church that I can discuss my deepest concerns with them.
54. I believe that interpersonal conflict or misconduct is dealt with appropriately and in a biblical manner.
20. I have experienced a lot of joy and laughter in our church.
27. I experience deep, honest relationships with a few other people in my church.
34. The love and acceptance I have experienced inspires me to invite others to my church.

Empowering Leadership

41. The leaders and members of our church enjoy and trust one another.
48. The leaders of our church seem to be available when needed.
2. The leaders of our church seem rather defensive.
9. Our church is led by individual(s) who articulate vision and achieve results.
14. New ministry ideas are normally appreciated and encouraged.
21. There are few training opportunities in our church.
28. The lay people of our church receive frequent training.

Engaging Worship

35. I look forward to attending worship services at this church.
42. When I leave a worship service, I feel like I have “connected” with other worshippers.
50. When I leave a worship service, I feel I have had a meaningful experience with God.
3. I find the sermons convicting, challenging, and encouraging in my walk with God.
10. I find the worship services spiritually inspiring.
15. The music in the church services helps me worship God.
22. The worship at this church is so inspiring that I would like to invite my friends.

Functional Structures

29. Excellence is an important value in how we accomplish ministry.
36. I have confidence in the management and spending of our church’s financial resources.
43. My church is open to changes that would increase our ability to reach and disciple people.
49. We have an effective and efficient decision-making process in my church.
4. Our church has a very clear purpose and well-defined values.
11. Our church clearly communicates our mission statement.
16. I do not know my church’s plans and direction for the years ahead.

Intentional Evangelism

23. The church teaches that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven.
30. The church shows the love of Christ in practical ways.
37. In our church the importance of sharing Christ is often discussed.
44. Our church has very few programs that appeal to non-Christians.
51. People rarely come to know Jesus Christ as their savior in our church.
5. My local church actively reaches out to its neighborhood through spiritual and community service.
45. I share my faith with non-believing family and friends.

Mobilized Laity

17. I am actively involved in a ministry of this church.
24. I do not know my spiritual gift(s).
31. I enjoy the tasks I do in the church.
38. I feel that my role in the church is very important.

- 6. My church affirms me in my ministry tasks.
- 52. The teaching ministry of this church encourages me to be involved in ministry.

Passionate Spirituality

- 12. Prayer is the highlight of the worship service.
- 18. Our church relies upon the power and presence of god to accomplish ministry.
- 25. There is a sense of expectation surrounding our church.
- 32. There is an atmosphere of generosity within our church.
- 39. Our church emphasizes the person and presence of the Holy Spirit.
- 46. This church operates through the power and presence of God.
- 53. I currently enjoy a greater intimacy with God than at any other time in my life.

Transforming Discipleship

- 7. I regularly practice the spiritual disciplines (prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation).
- 13. Tithing is a priority in my life.
- 19. My prayer life reflects a deep dependence on God concerning the practical aspects of life.
- 26. Our church has a clear process that helps develop people's spiritual gift(s).
- 33. I would describe my personal spiritual life as growing.
- 40. My church needs to place more emphasis on the power of prayer.
- 47. I rarely consult God's word to find answers to life's issues.

APPENDIX E

SUBSCALE CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Pearson r		AC	EBA	EL	EW	FS	IE	ML	NR	PS	SC	SGS	SO	SP	SR	ST	TD	VSP
AC	1.00																	
EBA	-.104	1.00																
EL	-.124	-.033	1.00															
EW	.593**	.124	.688**	1.00														
FS	.683**	-.033	.688**	1.00														
IE	.658**	-.018	.846**	.837**	1.00													
ML	.320	.070	.261	.378**	.378**	1.00												
NR	.806**	.442*	.442*	.770**	.770**	.442*	1.00											
PS	-.016	-.086	-.086	-.086	-.086	-.086	.054	1.00										
SC	.328	.328	.328	.328	.328	.328	.328	.328	1.00									
SGS	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	.546**	1.00								
SO	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	.510**	1.00							
SP	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	.265	1.00						
SR	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	-.056	1.00					
ST	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	.333	1.00				
TD	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	.225	1.00			
VSP	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	.666**	1.00		
AC																		
EBA	.583																	
EL	.514	.514																
EW	.000	.864	.000															
FS	.923	.000	.000															
IE	.084	.713	.164	.001	.039													
ML	.000	.798	.000	.000	.000	.015												
NR	.661	.017	.155	.933	.774	.650	.775											
PS	.256	.110	.000	.011	.001	.426	.066	.076										
SC	.517	.168	.058	.769	.681	.823	.933	.001	.062									
SGS	.847	.044	.053	.808	.805	.934	.876	.002	.019	.003								
SO	.828	.301	.121	.615	.656	.610	.820	.004	.079	.001	.000							
SP	.572	.543	.557	.801	.740	.183	.476	.459	.796	.002	.276	.157						
SR	.504	.931	.025	.595	.223	.924	.335	.043	.062	.025	.399	.060	.770					
ST	.318	.001	.060	.369	.180	.412	.162	.007	.006	.019	.037	.047	.072	.134				
TD	.003	.768	.002	.000	.002	.101	.896	.94	.013	.896	.401	.863	.094	.735	.233			
VSP	.848	.016	.219	.335	.875	.895	.547	.000	.050	.006	.001	.007	.315	.463	.000	.843		

Sig. 2 Tail

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Variable Codes

AC = Authentic Community	EBA = Evaluating Beliefs and Assumptions	EL = Empowering Leadership
EW = Engaging Worship	FS = Functional Structures	IE = Intentional Evangelism
ML = Mobilized Laity	NR = Natural Rewards	PS = Passionate Spirituality
SC = Self-Cueing	SGS = Self Goal Setting	SO = Self-Observation
SP = Self-Punishment	SR = Self-Reward	ST = Self Talk
TD = Transforming Discipleship	VSP = Visualizing Successful Performance	

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